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SOURCE (OR PART OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCE):

Type	Dissertation
Title	Essays in the economics of education
Author	J.D. Levin
Faculty	Faculty of Economics and Business
Year	2002
ISBN	9051706480

FULL BIBLIOGRAPHIC DETAILS:
http://dare.uva.nl/record/104849

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More than forty years have passed since the pioneering work of Mincer, Schultz and Becker first became published, marking the birth of the economics of education. Over this period, the literature in this field has flourished producing a wealth of studies measuring the effectiveness of educational inputs and practices (educational production) and the benefits schooling provides to individuals and society as a whole (returns to schooling). *Essays in the Economics of Education* attempts to contribute to this body of literature by addressing mainstream topics in these areas with a special focus on the Dutch educational system and labor market. In this respect the analyses in this book serve to expand the international evidence on educational production and returns to schooling. Included is a collection of five empirical essays that investigate policy-oriented issues such as:

- Is reducing class size a good policy to pursue in order to improve Dutch primary education and does class size reduction affect high and low performing students differently?
- Are Catholic primary schools in the Netherlands really better in terms of scholastic achievement than their public counterparts and, if so, why might this be the case?
- What is the private rate of return to an individual's schooling investment in the Netherlands and how can we account for the participation in schooling paths for which there are negligible returns?

Jesse Levin (1969) completed his undergraduate studies in economics at the University of Oregon. He then began his graduate education in economics with a special emphasis on public finance at San Francisco State University, during which time he also served as an intern with the State and Local Government Group of DRI/McGraw Hill, Inc. Following the completion of his master's degree he moved to the Netherlands to pursue a doctorate in economics at the Tinbergen Institute and University of Amsterdam, and later joined the research institute Schooling, Labor Market and Economic Development (SCHOLAR). He is currently a research scientist at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) investigating educational finance issues.

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