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Economic Inequality and Higher Education: Access, Persistence, and Success

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women's large decreases. For example, between 1960 and 2000, the half-hour increase in French men's time spent performing child care did not nearly counter-balance the nearly 50% decline in French women's hours devoted to that responsibility. This seems at odds with the authors' claim that time with children increased for men and women in all countries over the period.

Of the book's claims, the one most liable to generate controversy may be the contention that the data do not support arguments of a second shift being disproportionately borne by women. The authors base this conclusion primarily on evidence of gender equality in the total work hours (paid and unpaid) of husbands and wives. But where one would most expect to find the second shift imbalance is between full-time working women and full-time working men in households with couples—and yet the only analyses in the book that disaggregate the data by the employment status of mothers are those in Chapter 5. This choice by the authors seems particularly surprising given the background question of how increasing maternal employment has affected maternal time with children. Where the authors limit the analysis to employed women, they do find evidence of an inequitable distribution of the second shift onto women: employed mothers averaged a 71-hour week, compared to 52 hours for non-employed mothers and 64 hours for fathers. If employed mothers had been further disaggregated into part- and full-time employment, the authors might have found even longer workweeks among full-time employed mothers, which would further support the second shift argument.

Even if total hours are the same for men and women, this measure does not capture intensity of effort. Although this limitation is endemic to the time diary method and is not at all the fault of the authors of this book, its presence necessitates caution in making claims about equitable workloads. If women are more likely than men to multi-task, they might be working harder and doing more of the second shift, even when total hours appear equivalent. While time diary methodologies offer excellent quantitative data on activities, they may undercount the complex and multiple uses of time. For example, the worrying, planning, and problem-solving involved in child- and household-related tasks are not captured in an activity diary in which the main activity recorded might be driving, sleeping, personal care, or leisure. If women disproportionately do the problem-solving, such a diary may undercount their second shift work and also play into the "overestimates" of household task time in stylized questions regarding time use.

All of this begs the question of power and choice between men and women in "deciding" what their relative contributions to paid and unpaid work will be. Even where total hours of work are equal when one adds paid and unpaid work together, does this finding signal equality when one sees such a strong gendered pattern persist? Those two patterns in combination may, on the contrary, indicate gender inequality in power and choice in terms of decisions about who does the money-producing and care-producing work. Do women really have the marital and economic bargaining power to choose more paid work, particularly when men do not step in to make up the lost care-giving work of employed women? There is no revolution in the home in terms of men's domestic hours to parallel the gender revolution in paid work hours. The authors do briefly discuss these issues of power and choice in the last chapter of the book.

Clearly, this is a provocative and important book that contains a wealth of new information regarding the changing time use patterns in American families. In addition to being a new resource for family scholars, sociologists, demographers, and policy-makers, among many others, the data and arguments presented in this book—especially in conjunction with the new releases of the American Time Use Surveys—are sure to inspire additional research into American time use.

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Economic Inequality and Higher Education: Access, Persistence, and Success. Edited by Stacy Dickert-Conlin and Ross Rubenstein. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007. 272 pp. ISBN 978-0-87154-320-2, $35.00 (hardcover).

In recent decades, economic inequality in the United States has increased dramatically. Thomas Lemieux demonstrated in "Increasing Residual Wage Inequality: Composition Effects, Noisy Data, or Rising Demand for Skill?" that a substantial portion of the increase in economic inequality can be traced to an increase in the returns to higher education (*American Economic Review,* 96:3, June 2006). Given these facts, it is important to study whether students from low-income families are attending and graduating from college. If there

are significant barriers to higher education for students from low-income families, then economic inequality in the United States will continue to persist and may actually increase over time. The papers in this thought-provoking volume, which is the product of a conference convened by Stacy Dickert-Conlin and Ross Rubenstein, examine low-income students' access to and outcomes in colleges and universities.

The disparities in college attendance and college graduation between students from low- and high-income families are staggering. Robert Haveman and Kathryn Wilson use data from the Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) to provide estimates of the effects of parental income on college attendance. Within the PSID, the authors find that 71% of students in the top economic quartile attend college, compared to 22% of students in the bottom economic quartile. The authors also perform simulations that show a positive correlation between income inequality and inequality in educational attainment.

The next two chapters describe the difficulties students encounter in the transition from high school to college. In the first of these chapters, Michael Kirst argues for more cooperation between K-12 programs and colleges. The author highlights several problems that stem from a lack of communication between high schools and colleges. First, the materials emphasized in high school graduation exams and college entrance exams are often very different. This lack of cohesiveness confuses students and leads to their being under-prepared for college. Second, the author notes that many students do not know what they need to do in high school in order to be successful in college. Often, students who choose to enroll at open-enrollment post-secondary institutions mistakenly believe that since they can enroll in college courses, they are prepared for college courses. Michael Kirst suggests that states provide financial incentives for cooperation between colleges and K-12 educators. With more cooperation, the author is hopeful that each state would develop a cohesive K-16 educational strategy enabling students to succeed in higher education.

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that many students are under-prepared for college curricula when they enter college and therefore require remediation. Eric Bettinger and Bridget Long provide an overview of remediation in higher education. The key question with respect to policies to help under-prepared students is who should be held accountable. Should the task of bringing these students up to snuff fall on four-year colleges, or community colleges, or both? Or should the high schools that failed to prepare their students adequately be held accountable, somehow? The authors use unique information on students enrolled in the public higher education system in Ohio to describe the effects of remediation. They find that remediation does help students, but whether it is a good use of resources is left unanswered. Unfortunately, the data do not include information on costs, making it impossible to evaluate whether the benefits outweigh the costs.

Students from low-income families are more likely to attend two-year colleges than four-year colleges. Dan Goldhaber and Gretchen Peri review the literature on the effects of community colleges on educational attainment. What they label the "democratization effect" is the belief that community colleges increase students' educational attainment; the "diversionary effect," in contrast, is the belief that community colleges actually lower the educational attainment of students, since some of these students would have attended four-year colleges had community colleges not existed as an alternative. Goldhaber and Peri call for more research on whether students successfully transfer from community colleges to four-year colleges.

The next two chapters focus on how costs affect educational attainment. Amy Ellen Schwartz documents the large increases in listed tuition and fees at colleges and universities. She then details the changes in net prices over the same time period. She finds that while there have been significant increases in listed tuition and fees, there have also been significant increases in financial aid. Amanda Pallais and Sarah Turner focus on specific programs implemented by elite universities, private and public, to attract and retain students from low-income families. The evidence so far suggests that these policies help to boost the application rates of these students, but whether their graduation rates have also risen is not yet clear. The authors do suggest that, to some extent, the implementation of an aggressive financial aid policy by one college induces other colleges to enact similar policies. This chapter provides some insight into the competitiveness of colleges and how this force could be used to help boost the enrollment rates of low-income students.

One problem Ronald Ehrenberg discusses is the severe financial strain under which many public colleges now labor due to the deficits in state budgets. This could have enormous implications for low-income students. The outreach programs and financial aid programs examined by Sarah Turner and Amanda Pallais may be cut when public support for higher education falls.

Another problem is an increased emphasis on merit aid, which could come at the expense of need-based aid. Among the more novel suggestions in the book is Ehrenberg's proposal that more measures of the volume of low-income student enrollments be incorporated in *U.S. News and World Report*'s much-consulted rankings of colleges and universities. That addition, he argues, could channel colleges' competitiveness into efforts to improve low-income students' enrollment and graduation rates.

This collection of articles provides an excellent overview of the challenges facing students from low-income families, evaluates potential policies, and highlights avenues for future research. For all students, researchers, and policy-makers interested in higher education, it is a must read.

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Suburban Sweatshops: The Fight for Immigrant Rights. By Jennifer Gordon. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005. 384 pp. ISBN 0-674-01524-X, $27.95 (hardcover); ISBN 978-0-674-01524-1, $16.95 (paper).

In *Suburban Sweatshops,* Jennifer Gordon presents a moving account of empowerment and grass-roots organizing of the most vulnerable in our society—undocumented workers—and describes the transformation of a legal clinic into a participatory, member-run workers' center. The book chronicles the development of the Workplace Project, the non-profit organization that Gordon founded in suburban Hempstead, New York. It began in 1992 during a period of expanding immigration, and within a few years it confronted a harsh anti-union backlash. The Project addressed workplace abuse and exploitation of immigrant workers through legal representation. More significantly, however, it promoted effective community building along with political and collective action among disenfranchised Latinos.

Gordon begins by exposing readers to the daily struggles of immigrants employed in the low-wage and informal sectors of the economy, where substandard wages and working conditions are the norm for the undocumented, and more egregious exploitation and abuse are not unusual. She effectively portrays the sweatshop conditions that exist even outside of urban centers. These workers' dream of earning enough to return to their home countries with savings sufficient to buy a house vanishes quickly under the harsh economic realities of miserable wages and a high cost of living. Two jobs are needed just to survive in this context where the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs are reserved for immigrants. Not only poverty and humiliation, but significantly higher workplace injury and fatality rates are borne by immigrant workers. Along with other statistics, the book cites National Academy of Sciences data indicating that Latino immigrants die on the job at a 250% higher rate than average workers in the United States. Regardless of working conditions, virtually all of the undocumented face complications from not having appropriate legal documentation. The consequences include workplace precariousness, inability to acquire a driver's license, and difficulty opening a bank account; even registering children in school and reporting a crime become challenges at best without appropriate documentation. The constant threat of detection, detention, and deportation looms heavily in immigrant communities.

An important theme throughout the book is labor organizing. Gordon does a skillful job of weaving in historical information about union organizing of immigrant workers and the creative campaigns being used by some unions, while acknowledging labor's xenophobic roots and the anti-immigrant sentiment that continues in some sectors of the movement. She reminds us that it was the labor movement that helped pass the Employer Sanctions provision of the Immigration Control and Reform Act of 1986, which requires employers to verify the employment eligibility of workers. Even pro-immigrant unions have been challenged when immigrants are brought in as strike breakers in organizing or bargaining campaigns. Gordon notes the willingness of Cesar Chavez in the 1970s to call the INS to deport farmworkers being used as strike breakers. The Workplace Project supported unionizing campaigns and helped workers connect with unions, refusing to believe that the worst-off immigrants were unorganizable. Unfortunately, these efforts were unsuccessful for the most part. More positive outcomes occurred from the less traditional forms of organizing. Gordon also discusses infusing nontraditional tactics and strategies into traditional union-organizing campaigns. One nontraditional area of growing national import to the labor movement involves workers' centers. The AFL-CIO's affiliation of 20,000 independently created groups of workers between 1888 and 1955, which Gordon insightfully recounts, is highly relevant today. After *Suburban Sweatshops* was published, the AFL-CIO