

of democratic governance that reach beyond liberal democracy. So, in this sense at least, the answer to the question that forms the title of della Porta's book, "can democracy be saved?", is yes. A different question, however, concerns what the future holds: will democracy be saved?

No one can claim the answer to that question. However, della Porta's exploration identifies three important barriers to such a wider transformation that merit further examination. The first is state resistance. In an important chapter on conflicts between these new social movements and governments, della Porta explores the emerging new strategies of police and state repression and control. They are, in some ways, as inventive as the democratic innovations she celebrates elsewhere in the book, though with different implications for democracy. More broadly, we can expect those who now enjoy the privileges of executive or representative power to resist the press for different kinds of democracy. Second, far from embracing state-originated democratic innovations, social movement organizations are often indifferent or skeptical (p. 173). Even though this skepticism is sometimes justified, it is difficult to see how democratic reform will achieve depth or scale absent working alliances between social movement organizations and political officials both committed to that goal. Finally, there is in most societies at present a dearth of political leaders who understand and are open to the project of deepening deliberation and participation in their governance institutions. Sometimes, as with the Workers' Party in Brazil at the end of the twentieth century, there is a systematic confluence of interest among officials in the political success and expansion of participatory democracy. Much more often, however, officials' commitments regarding democratic reform are idiosyncratic and episodic. How, then, can public officials be made to take a deeper interest in deepening their democratic institutions? Della Porta argues that social movements are the key, and she is likely correct.

The Rise of Women: The Growing Gender Gap in Education and What It Means for American Schools, by **Thomas A. DiPrete** and **Claudia Buchmann**. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2013. 277pp. \$37.50 paper. ISBN: 9780871540515.

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The Rise of Women: The Growing Gender Gap in Education and What It Means for American Schools is a detailed account of how women have approached and even surpassed men in many different dimensions of educational outcomes over the past three decades. Thomas DiPrete and Claudia Buchmann begin with the premise that while we should celebrate the higher educational outcomes of women, we should also be concerned about signs that men are falling behind, especially during a time when income returns to education have increased. They stipulate that if men had a similar educational profile as women today, their unemployment rates and earnings would be higher than we see today. Their book is also motivated by the concern that young men are somehow suffering in school as academic achievement is linked to femininity and increasingly seen as incompatible with masculinity.

DiPrete and Buchmann have two general goals. First, they detail how the gender gap in educational attainment has changed over the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in the United States. Second, they are interested in analyzing gender differences in educational achievement and attainment from a lifecourse perspective. Their monograph is divided into three sections. Part I focuses on "Trends in the Macro Environment." Part II examines "Academic Performance, Engagement, and Family Influence." Part III analyzes "The Role of Schools." They provide detailed description and analysis of statistics from a wide range of data sources. There are too many results to summarize here, but they show a lot of very useful descriptive tabulations and graphs—especially useful to researchers who are looking for a summary of gender differences in a wide range of educational outcomes. Since

both of these authors have worked on this question for a decade, they are well equipped to provide an overview of their previous work as well as the research of others.

They show that girls outperform boys especially in terms of grades over the life course. In terms of mathematics test scores, boys and girls are similar at the start of school (kindergarten), but diverge by the end of kindergarten, and the gap becomes well-established by the middle of elementary school (p. 84). Girls outperform boys in terms of reading test scores and maintain their edge throughout elementary school and beyond.

Another interesting finding comes from the chapter on family background and how it may differentially affect boys versus girls. Despite theoretical positions that higher SES families may espouse more gender-neutral norms (hence one would expect girls to benefit more from having high SES parents), they find that boys are more sensitive to parental SES differences (p.153). The gap between boys and girls in terms of grades is narrower among boys and girls from higher SES backgrounds. Less surprisingly, boys who live with two parents exhibit better behavioral outcomes.

By the time youth enter college, girls continue to earn higher grades than boys and they choose very different majors from boys (which may account for some of the GPA gap). Since girls are more likely to choose fields like education, the humanities, and the social sciences while boys are more likely to choose the physical sciences and engineering, one might imagine that the difference in majors may account for at least some of the gender gap in college GPA. Historically, boys and girls majored in very different fields in college, and this somewhat accounted for their earnings gap later in life. In 1965, the dissimilarity index across fields of study was about 50. By 1984, it was 23, but it has remained at that level even in the most recent National Center for Education Statistics data set ELS (Education Longitudinal Study of 2002). However, DiPrete and Buchmann argue that women have nearly reached parity in terms of professional fields like medicine, law, and business. They have increased their numbers and shares in terms of "science majors." However, the relative proportion of women who major in the physical sciences

and life sciences has been stagnant since the 1980s, which are the earliest data they show (pp. 182–183).

The authors conclude the book by stating that schools should do more to promote the educational outcomes of boys—however, these policy recommendations which include improving the quality of instruction to closer linkages between schooling and labor market skills are generalizable to all students.

Despite its strengths in providing a broad historical overview and a detailed portrait of the gender gap over the life course, the book leaves the reader with some unanswered questions. First, the authors wrote sparingly about race and ethnic differences—this is surprising, given that 40 percent of today's youth are from minority backgrounds. There are a few mentions of African Americans, even fewer mentions of Hispanics, and virtually nothing on Asian Americans, despite the fact that the race and ethnic gaps in educational outcomes and family SES far surpass the overall gender gap. Virtually all Asian American youth grow up in two-parent households, while the majority of African American youth grow up in single-parent households. In fact, despite the lower achievement of blacks and Hispanics, the gender gap within these groups also favors girls—this means that black and Hispanic boys are at much higher risk than white boys. In contrast, Asian Americans overall enjoy higher levels of educational performance than whites, and Asian American boys are doing just fine. Also, if black and Hispanic boys have the worst behavioral outcomes, to what extent is the gender story told about today's youth driven by certain race and ethnic groups? If girls are doing so well in school, and school achievement and attainment ought to be predictive of labor market outcomes, why does the earnings gap between men and women exist immediately upon college graduation? Do girls have to outperform boys just to have a chance of reaching parity in the labor market? If so, why should researchers be more concerned with the educational outcomes of boys versus girls?

Overall, DiPrete and Buchmann have provided a very detailed and compelling set of analyses on the historical trends and current patterns of gender differences in educational

outcomes. They have provided a great service to those interested in gender differences. However, I agreed less with the premise that we need to worry about all boys more than girls in terms of educational achievement and attainment. I suspect that black and Hispanic boys are most at risk while white and Asian boys are less so, and this story should have received more attention.

How We Die Now: Intimacy and the Work of Dying, by **Karla A. Erickson**. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2013. 192pp. \$25.95 paper. ISBN: 9781439908242.

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This small book is both more complicated and, a bit sadly, more simple than one might first think. From the title, one expects it to be part of the growing tradition of books critiquing the American way of death and dying. But most of *How We Die Now* feels like a not particularly convincing ad for Winthrop House, a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) somewhere in the Midwest. The bad rep that nursing homes have is discussed and thoughtfully critiqued. But then we move back into the ad for Winthrop House, and the critique, and the dying, rather fade from sight.

The problem is a disjuncture between the object of study, Winthrop House, and the stated aim of the book, to examine how we die now and how we do the work of dying. They do not match. Winthrop House is, as Karla Erickson repeatedly and carefully points out, NOT a nursing home, not a place of care for people who need intimate care, not a place for dying. It has a wing, a space within which does that, but that is NOT what the place is about. What makes a “continuing care” facility different from other “over 55” communities is that people can be moved through to the final stop, what in lay terms would be a “nursing home,” without leaving the larger institutional setting (or “campus” as they call it at Winthrop House). A CCRC is a place that offers “independent living,” with the promise of moves, if and as needed, to increasingly dependent living and on into

entirely dependent dying. The “independent living” part of Winthrop House is perhaps best illustrated by an anecdote Erickson offers as an example of how community members come together and self-regulate. One of the people in independent living was stranded in his apartment for four days after a fall. That is indeed pretty independent living. No one is providing ongoing care if you can lie on your floor for four days. “Residents were understandably concerned about such an event recurring. They immediately organized a campus-wide buddy system for all single residents. Individually and collectively, residents are self-determining” (p. 78).

There is a huge disconnect, larger than I think Erickson is willing to acknowledge, between those living at Winthrop House and those dying there: in this community of active volunteers, they do NOT volunteer for the dying care. The continuity that Winthrop House offers is of course part of the appeal—saving one’s children or self the later project of finding a nursing home—but the desire to avoid going “across the street” into the nursing-home-like part sounds no different from the desire of people who moved into easy-to-care-for apartments in their post-children years to avoid nursing homes. Erickson seems to confuse the retirement part, those 55-plus years, with the end-of-life part. Elder care is not dying care. Maybe that’s more obvious to me because I am 65?

The elder-care part of this place is quite upscale. It is 90 percent white, including the workers. It offers decorating services, customized meals. It is not that all the residents are wealthy. But there is something very definitely elite about it. It is linked to the local college, with professors going back and forth, giving lectures or placing their parents there, some ultimately moving in themselves. As with the whiteness, the over-all upscaleness is both recognized and yet somehow not—certainly by the residents but sadly too by the author. She cheerfully explains how it is much more like a school than like a prison. She compares the atmosphere to a “dorm,” as apparently do many of the residents. But who has schools where we are grouped together for “fun”? Who got to go to places with dorms? The schools I went to were far more prison-like than apparently Erickson’s were. When I ask my students at my public