

can grasp the whole picture. In addition, given that all knowledge and truth claims are shaped by individual consciousness and perspectives, they should be treated as pieces of reduced data generated from our social world. Moreover, nowadays social scientists are only “specialists in a particular area of research” (p. 112): sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, political science, philosophy, law, linguistics, history, and so forth. To understand the “broader dynamics” (p. 112) of our social world, bringing reduced data from a wide range of perspectives will be the only solution.

Regarding the second question, unlike natural sciences, social sciences not only change our social world but are inseparable parts of our social world. Positivists propose that we should apply findings from social research to devise better policies and practices that improve the quality of human life and make a better world. From a different perspective, relativists, interpretivists, and intersubjectivists suggest that our social research “creates new meanings about the issues and events taking place in people’s personal lives. When social scientists engage in this work, they have already entered the ring. . . . In this sense, they are inescapably joining in the ongoing struggle to define social reality” (p. 119). Moreover, Gattone notes that we should be cognizant of the “power/knowledge nexus” (p. 110)—that is, the knowledge gained from the social sciences is likely to maintain “a way to guide individual and collective consciousness” and “further enhance the power of political and economic organizations” (p. 89). Therefore, while our social world is ever changing, the understanding of our social world is also “provisional” instead of being “absolute,” “fixed,” and “universal,” “as new evidence and new ways of making sense of the world emerge” (p. 84).

Turning to the final question, intersubjectivists believe cooperation and consensus among social scientists are “an essential step in bringing together disparate outlooks and in making informed decisions in academia and in society as a whole” (p. 92). Through open debate and cooperative discussion, social scientists are able to “operate from a place of mutual understanding while

also engaging in empirical inquiry to connect one’s analysis to the everyday world” (p. 93). Therefore, a single piece of reduced data is just noise, but the replicated findings from multiple pieces of reduced data might be meaningful. Like natural scientists, social scientists should integrate various reduced data to understand “the larger social whole” (p. 56). However, we should also concede that the conclusions drawn from open communication are not absolute truth, but context-specific. Moreover, social scientists should acknowledge the existence of ambiguous, unreasonable, irrational, and uncertain parts in reduced data from our social world and anticipate “murky results” (p. 107) from the analysis of interpretation of such data.

In sum, this is an excellent book for understanding the development of various epistemological orientations in social sciences. Methodologically, it not only provides us principles that we must follow when conducting our own social research but also explains why these principles are important for social scientists. This book will be useful for undergraduate and graduate students taking courses in sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and other disciplines.

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*The Education Trap: Schools and the Remaking of Inequality in Boston*, by **Cristina Viviana Groeger**. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. 384 pp. \$35.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780674249110.

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The famed promise of more education as *the* solution to economic inequality did not start with the 1970s neoliberal turn. As this historian’s account describes, elites were also prescribing it in the early days of transitioning to mass formal education in the United States. And, as is true today, adding new education systems back then also mainly reorganized inequality rather than repairing it. *The Education Trap: Schools and the Remaking of Inequality in Boston* offers a striking empirically driven narrative to present the shift to new formal education opportunities,

enrollments, and requirements in Boston between 1880 and 1940. The data include personal correspondence, workplace memos, and trade journals, as well as regional employment and education records. Cristina Viviana Groeger's work clarifies a range of ways that this historical education transition mainly helped advantaged populations secure the best outcomes, recreating a new round of highly stratified work conditions.

The book documents how prior to the education expansion, training for better jobs mostly occurred "on-the-job." Importantly, it stresses how not even professionals had much formal education. Instead, they prepared for work by receiving free on-the-job training, based on personal networks. This was the case for modest jobs as well as lucrative ones. Added formal education replaced much of this, but not in ways that equalized access; the advantaged classes still got the best jobs, and the most disadvantaged groups were still largely cut out from living-wage jobs. These challenges are known today, and Groeger shows just how far back they go.

To me, the section on lawyers in Chapter Five was particularly effective, especially given the prestige and high training costs of that professional pathway today. As the book tells it, few lawyers attended law schools until the 1940s. Instead, they apprenticed. Prominent white lawyers pushed this change, aiming to block "too many" new lawyers from entering the profession, especially those from minoritized racial and ethnic groups (pp. 206, 217). They used their influence to constrain field access for status and financial reward by pushing in bar association mandates, alongside lobbying private elite universities and state administrations to regulate what counted as a qualified law education. I thought this case was a helpful example of how groups of privileged professionals overtly used added academic credentials to facilitate new forms of social closure for good jobs.

Groeger also provides an insightful specific look into the well-known-to-sociologists gendered transition from "clerks" to "secretaries" during the turn of the twentieth century. The data reveal how those in the new "secretary" position

performed a narrower set of office tasks and were blocked from (previously open) options for advancement. Meanwhile, the prior "clerk" tasks and job mobility paths were relocated to new middle-management jobs held by white men. The data also establish that while many white women gained greater opportunities than were available before the education turn, these were still mainly not living-wage jobs—nor were they jobs leading to advancement prospects. The most striking aspect of the analysis indicates how the entrance of women as "secretaries" enabled better work prospects for class-advantaged white men.

Central to the book's argument is the fact that more education did not improve work conditions for the most disadvantaged groups. This is shown largely through original analysis of historical employment and education statistics. These data show that most people at the bottom of Boston's labor hierarchy did not do any better in terms of work outcomes after they got more formal education. This result is measured by occupations before and after added years of school. Most of these workers were laborers before and remained so after. The lack of value more education had for these types of employment is also nicely exhibited by drawing from historical "help ads" after the education transition. In their list of desired job qualifications in potential employees, these employer ads make no mention of scholastic qualifications.

The book is clear that there were social and political benefits of more education while still revealing how added schooling did not improve work options for the most disadvantaged groups, whom elites claimed to be aiding. Regular people were interested in more school for learning English if they were not proficient—many were immigrants—and a great number of people also flocked to schools for the free babysitting for their kids. As well, some were motivated to attend school for basic skills or for preparation for their citizenship tests. Among working-class teenagers, African Americans' high school enrollment outpaced all other groups. However, racist hiring still limited African Americans to the lowest jobs. Moreover, the above-mentioned job ad descriptions showed clear

evidence of job channeling based on raced, classed, and gendered expectations. These types of discrimination and general patterns of social closure, while clearly awful, are not surprising for the time period.

The analysis showing what employers wanted and what they got pairs with existing critical theorists' interpretations of the historical transition to more formal education in the United States. The education shift expanded employer control over most workers, recreated new bureaucratic forms of social closure over the best jobs, and trained people without a guarantee of work—newly paid for by state inputs or by the trainees themselves. Yet this historical analysis shows there was no “smoke-filled room” to remake inequality in modern work through schools. (A too-quick critical read of the past may give that impression.) Business leaders were openly eager to thwart worker power using enlarged formal education channels paid for by the state. Industry captains hustled to expand formal education in order to undercut craft unions and courted state officials with their desires to curb labor “radicalism” with education. They hoped to expand the labor pool by offering training programs outside of the purview of union apprentices, and better socialize dutiful workers.

The point in the book that stands out to me most is how this employer-favored education transition happened largely through multiple class-privileged interest groups. Elite philanthropists were crucial players, even though their interests were distinct from those of employers. These reformers prescribed educational solutions as a means of helping disadvantaged groups. Their expectation was that education would uplift low-level jobs and consequently spawn higher wages in jobs like domestic work. Importantly, these elites aiming to be humanitarians can be seen here as participating in the destruction of worker power that occurred during this period, helping employers apply public resources and marketing for more formal education according to their specific liking. Thus, like today, privileged-class reformers in the late 1800s devised strategies for desirable worker outcomes through education. And, as Groeger

stresses, this tactic overlooks employers' concern with restraining wages.

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*Coerced: Work under Threat of Punishment*, by **Erin Hatton**. Oakland: University of California Press, 2021. 304 pp. \$85.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780520305397.

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People banished to the archipelago of U.S. prisons, clients of social welfare programs, college athletes, and doctoral students in the sciences are not groups one typically imagines as having a lot in common. In *Coerced: Work under the Threat of Punishment*, Erin Hatton argues that despite their differences, these workers have important shared experiences: rather than enjoying the standing of rights-bearing laborers, they are all socio-legally constructed as dependents who do not perform work as conventionally understood and cannot earn fair wages. Excluded from the privileges of employment laws, they are rendered more vulnerable to their bosses' caprice and power and suffer greater sanctions than their more-protected counterparts. Though all labor relations operate through a degree of coercion, prison, welfare, athletic, and university workers suffer more substantial and devastating threats to their social position. Hatton writes, “I find that in all of these cases, as different from each other as they are, workers' status as something other than rights-bearing employees allows for their supervisors to have unusually expansive punitive power over them” (p. 9).

This, Hatton contends, is status coercion, the ability to pressure and intimidate workers through invasive sanctions and complete control over their rank. Employers are empowered to act beyond setting wages, hiring, and firing to engage ruthless disciplinary practices—consigning someone to solitary confinement, revoking parole, and withdrawing workfare earnings—and to create vicious labor conditions—requiring non-compete clauses, demanding long, unpredictable, and unreasonable work hours, and