Closing the Gender Gap: Post War Educational and Social Changes

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Room 407, Levis Faculty Center
919 West Illinois Street, Urbana
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Striking new findings regarding educational achievement in England suggest one of the most extensive reversals in patterns of social inequality in contemporary times. Girls have not only caught up with boys in test scores, but in a number of subject areas have decisively pulled ahead. How do we account for such a dramatic reversal in academic fortunes? And what implications do these findings have for public policy here in the United States?

Madeleine Arnot contends that Victorian principles of gender differentiation embedded in traditional schooling have been unintentionally transformed by social democratic and conservative government reforms including those initiated by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. As a result there has been a sea change in girls attitudes to work and family life, which is not necessarily matched by a similar change in boys' attitudes.

For background information, please consult www.cas.uiuc.edu or the Miller Events Line, 333-1116.