

Closing the Gender Gap: Post War Educational and Social Changes

Madeleine Arnot

*Sociology of Education,
University of Cambridge,
United Kingdom and George
A. Miller Endowment Visiting
Professor, UIUC*

March 23, 2000

Thursday 7:30 pm

Room 407, Levis Faculty Center
919 West Illinois Street, Urbana
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sponsored by:

Bureau of Educational Research
Department of Educational Policy Studies
Institute of Communications Research

In conjunction with:

College of Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Department of Political Science
Department of Sociology
European Union Center
Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities
International Programs and Studies
Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory
Women's Studies Program

Series support provided by:

Office of the Chancellor
Office of Affirmative Action
Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and the
Graduate College
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
The Center for Advanced Study
George A. Miller Endowment
George A. Miller Committee
Peggy Harris Memorial Fund
The Council of Deans

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, 333-1118.