

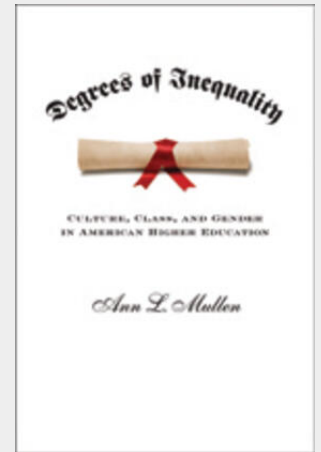
Mullen

Degrees of Inequality

Culture, Class, and Gender in American Higher Education

2011 Educator's Award. Delta Kappa Gamma Society International 2011 Outstanding Publication in Postsecondary Education, American Educational Research Association, Division J Degrees of Inequality reveals the powerful patterns of social inequality in American higher education by analyzing how the social background of students shapes nearly every facet of the college experience. Even as the most prestigious institutions claim to open their doors to students from diverse backgrounds, class disparities remain. Just two miles apart stand two institutions that represent the stark class contrast in American higher education. Yale, an elite Ivy League university, boasts accomplished alumni, including national and world leaders in business and politics. Southern Connecticut State University graduates mostly commuter students seeking credential degrees in fields with good job prospects. Ann L. Mullen interviewed students from both universities and found that their college choices and experiences were strongly linked to social background and gender. Yale students, most having generations of family members with college degrees, are encouraged to approach their college years as an opportunity for intellectual and personal enrichment. Southern students, however, perceive a college degree as a path to a better career, and many work full- or part-time jobs to help fund their education. Moving interviews with 100 students at the two institutions highlight how American higher education reinforces the same inequities it has been aiming to transcend.

Educator's Award, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Outstanding Publication in Postsecondary Education, American Educational Research Association, Division J Degrees of Inequality reveals the powerful patterns of social inequality in American higher education by analyzing how the social background of students shapes nearly every facet of the college experience. Interviews with 100 students at Yale University and Southern Connecticut State University dramatically illustrate how American higher education reinforces the very inequities it has been aiming to transcend. "In this finely crafted qualitative study of the factors that lead to social stratification between institutions of higher education, Mullen demonstrates that the meaning of a college degree varies for different kinds of students at different kinds of institutions. An important and challenging work."—Choice "The theoretical and research-based insights generated by this book provide a useful foundation for education researchers as well as for public and institutional policy makers who seek productive approaches to reducing differences in higher education outcomes based on social background."—Educational Researcher "Paints a vivid and disturbing picture of the growing class divide in American higher education."—Innovations blog, Chronicle of Higher Education "By comparing the experiences of students at institutions only a few miles but worlds apart, Ann Mullen underscores how American higher education perpetuates inequalities in the social order."—Diverse Issues in Higher Education "Mullen addresses a lacuna in the evidence base: students' perspectives on their place in the hierarchy, and how they choose a university."—Times Higher Education



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