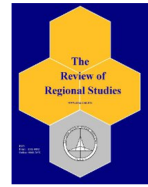




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BOOK REVIEWS

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Newbold, K. Bruce, Wilson, Kathi (2019) *A Research Agenda for Migration and Health*. Edward Elgar Publishing, US. ISBN: 978800379473, 176 pp., \$125.15 (hardback).

Reviewed by *Dinushka Paranavitana*, West Virginia University

A Research Agenda for Migration and Health contains nine subsections that explore the various issues migrants face and the health care available to them. This includes issues for migrants who leave their home countries and the difficulties they face, as well as the consequences of migration for source countries with high migration rates. Each chapter is dedicated to a subsection of healthcare care issues, providing a discussion of the past and present situation, describing how and what causes led to present issues, and highlighting future consequences and policy actions are necessary to remedy the problems.

Migration is, in general, a period of stress, and as Darlington-Pollock et.al (2018) points out population movements are often associated with wider spread of diseases. The first chapter of the book begins with an introduction to the general issues faced by migrants, providing an overview for the chapters that follow. Immigrants who move to developed countries are generally healthier than the average natives in the destination country; however, issues arise once migrants arrive in the destination country - this is known as the healthy immigrant effect. One of the contributing factors could be that migrants face barriers to accessing healthcare due to factors such as language, not having proper insurance coverage, transportation costs, and significant cultural differences that make healthcare in the new country inaccessible. This book aims to offer more than just coverage of the immigrants face difficulties accessing healthcare. The chapters also provide insight on how migration affects healthcare in the global south by siphoning healthcare workers and other medically qualified professionals. This leads to a brain drain, where source countries spend on educating their natives but end up essentially “exporting” qualified individuals who seek better work and life opportunities.

This book also aims to cover a wider lens of migration than the norm, including not only migration to the US but also other countries that have large immigrant populations,

including Canada and many European countries. It also highlights the importance of defining a migrant, specifically the marked differences between someone who has planned to migrate versus refugee migrants who are forced to leave their countries and are much more unprepared to move to a different culture. The second chapter provides insight into how migration from the global south affects disabled persons particularly looking into Guyana as an example, where out-migration of healthcare workers has disrupted the Guyanese healthcare system for the disabled. A large number of individuals working in medical and healthcare fields have migrated elsewhere both due to push factors such as poor working conditions, low access to new technology, staff shortages, political instability, and racial divisions as well as pull factors from the global north providing better work opportunities and higher incomes. This out-migration in the Caribbean creates high vacancy rates in the medical industry that are between 50% to 90%, according to Connell (2007). This affects the quality and quantity of health care services for individuals, particularly disabled persons. Bach (2006) notes that to cope with the loss of medically skilled personnel, governments and private sector healthcare providers delegate and substitute work with assistants to ensure that medical resource persons with less transferable skills are used more effectively. Disability rates in this region are also higher, particularly among women, who often are subjected to violence that leads to death or injuries resulting in disabilities. Mental health resources are also scarce, and suicide rates are high, and many associate mental health issues with the practice of witchcraft.

The third chapter focuses on the migration of healthcare workers and other immigrants who travel for medical purposes. This chapter highlights that International Medical Graduates (IMG) who are qualified medical practitioners need to reaccredit themselves to obtain residency positions in their new destination countries. Gaining access to medical resources in destination countries can be difficult, and many immigrants travel to their home countries to seek medical care. This is particularly notable among older immigrants Villa Torres (2017). If immigrants speak the host country's languages, Sun (2010) notes that they are more likely to have better health outcomes and an increased uptake of medical testing.

Women migrant workers face higher rates of discrimination and exploitation, particularly in foreign countries. This has resulted in adverse effects on women's rights, and this is detrimental to women's health and sexual, reproductive, and mental health. Most often the working conditions are poor, and they have little in terms of protection. Female migrant workers, especially those in the sex trade, face much higher risks of being victims of physical violence and sexual assault. In addition, they also face a higher prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV, and this permeates the continued cycle of unequal access to healthcare along with the stigma and discrimination associated with sex work. This chapter advocates for better services to address the needs and rights of these migrant worker women, particularly better access to healthcare and more gender-specific migration policies.

Refugees are a group of migrant workers who undergo more difficulties than individuals who choose to immigrate to a foreign destination. One particular challenge is the lack of access to food, particularly food that is culturally similar to theirs. The next chapter advocates for efforts to address cultural food insecurity. Creating a more holistic approach to managing food banks and sources would benefit refugees, particularly when selecting culturally inclusive food items. Most research in this field focuses on accessibility and affordability

but lack of diversity in cultural food options is an unresearched area. Wu (2012) points out that lack of adequate food can be detrimental to pregnant mothers, leading to maternal malnutrition and increasing newborn mortality.

An overarching theme of this book is that immigrants all have different needs, particularly as they arrive with diverse cultural backgrounds and need specific healthcare resources. One of the issues that they face is that since most funding comes from taxes paid by non-immigrants, these programs are underfunded. The presence of anti-immigrant policies and attitudes contribute towards discrimination against immigrants and also reduce their access to healthcare and other services.

This book provides a nice overview and introduction to the cross-section of issues related to health and migration and insights into further areas of research that can be pursued in the future.

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Reeves, Richard V. (2017) *Dream Hoarders: How the American Upper Class is Leaving Everyone Else in the Dust, Why That is a Problem, and What To Do About It* Brookings Institution Press Washington, DC. ISBN: 978-0-8157-3448-, 150 pp., \$17.38 (paperback).

Reviewed by Ian Maupin, West Virginia University

Dream Hoarders is many things. It is engaging. Richard Reeves's prose is easy to digest. It pulls you forward with interesting anecdotes and stories from Reeves's life and recent

history. The book is concise and well constructed. At barely over 150 pages, each point is made carefully and then builds into the next chapter towards its thesis. It is thoughtful and well-researched. Reeves draws from a broad spectrum of research including economics, sociology, and psychology using the insights of all the different branches of study to convince the reader of his arguments. But to sum up *Dream Hoarders* in one word, I would use the word convicting.

After a brief discussion of the sociological and political forces that led to the rise of Donald Trump as President of the United States in 2016 and Brexit carrying the ballot boxes in the US and the UK in 2016, Reeves, a British immigrant to the United States, wastes no time in turning an accusatory finger towards the reader and himself. "We proclaim," he says directly to his audience, "the benefits of free markets but are largely insulated from the risks they can pose. Small wonder other folks can get angry." Reeves knows his audience well. He knows that the people likely to read a book about wealth and class inequality in the United States from a Brookings Institution researcher are likely to fall into what he calls the American upper middle class. His readers probably received graduate. Certainly, college degrees from respected universities have worked their way through the corporate and social ladder to make comfortable incomes and generally lean "progressive" politically. They care about inequality and lack of opportunity for minorities and the disenfranchised in the United States. Demographically, this class is defined as being in the top 20% of income and wealth.

Reeves's message is simple: You are part of the problem.

The argument is also straightforward. Each of the next several chapters develop the central argument, starting by showing that the upper middle class, the top 20% in wealth and income, is leaving the rest of the country behind in terms of income and wealth growth - not just the top 1%. This fact is not problematic by itself, but then he shows that wealth allows parents to create very different upbringings for their children. Children of upper-middle-class parents are far more likely to grow up in stable homes, go to the best schools and eventually colleges, and receive excellent internships. Furthermore, these opportunities are often achieved at the expense of children from other backgrounds through legacy university admission programs. These extra opportunities not only prepare the children of the upper middle class better, but they are specifically designed to give them a competitive advantage in the modern, service, and knowledge-driven economy. Together, these factors create a glass floor for people above the fifth quintile, and a glass ceiling for those below it. Reeves draws on a lot of evidence to show that social mobility in and out of the top 20% is much lower than in other divisions of the economy.

The final chapter is devoted to Reeves's proposals for solutions. I think the thoughtful reader - even one who agrees with Reeves's main argument - will most likely find differences with him. Some of Reeves's proposed solutions will draw little disagreement from those who have agreed with his argument. Several will, I think, raise disagreements, such as his suggestion for more government intervention and assistance for early parents in the form of home visiting. Since only a chapter of the book is set aside for this discussion, Reeves has no time to delve deeply into each idea. This final section is the weakest and least well-developed. However, the advocating for a specific policy is not the main point of the book, it can be forgiven.

Overall, the book left a strong impression on me. Perhaps part of the reason is that

Reeves's message hits close to home for me. As a young academic trying to establish a career in economics, I am on the cusp of the upper middle class. I desire and hope my work can contribute to positive social change in our country. Still, I must admit that I decided to pursue graduate school to open doors to an above average, secured paycheck. I am a direct benefit of many of the systems Reeves describes. Through generational wealth and connections, I attended a liberal arts university and secured an internship with a national think tank - eventually opening doors to graduate programs. Did I work hard and develop natural talents? Absolutely. But if I had not been born in the middle class, these doors would not have been available - or at least would have been much more difficult. I believe many who read this work will also see themselves in the people Reeves writes about, but even those who do not will find the work enjoyable and engaging to read. Prepare, however, to feel challenged and convicted if you find yourself among the dream hoarders.

Novak, William J. (2022) *New Democracy: The Creation of the Modern American State*. Harvard University Press ISBN: 978-0674260443, 384 pp., \$46.00 (hardback).

Reviewed by *Brian W. Sloboda*, University of Maryland, Global Campus

I am writing this book review as the United States Supreme Court ended its 2023-2024 consequential term against the administrative state. The Court limited again the power of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to impose regulations designed to slow climate change. The Supreme Court invalidated the Chevron Deference, which allowed deference to the agency if part of a statute was ambiguous. These decisions are unpopular with Americans, who prefer a state protecting human well-being. Could these court's decisions be only one among many indications that American democracy is in crisis? Also, in 2016, a political advisor to the Trump campaign, Steve Bannon, famously said, "Deconstruction of the administrative state." The latter modern ideas fit the theme of Novak's book, *The New Democracy*, which examined the vision of the Progressive Era intellectuals and reformers convinced that government could and should help all people thrive. These progressives articulated a new vision of American democracy about far more than voting and adequate political representation. That "new capacious democratic vision," Novak writes, included "public provisioning and public accomplishments that could lift all people in securing a substantively democratic way of life."

Novak's book, *The New Democracy*, offers a transformative perspective on democracy. In recent years, there has been much concern espoused by the mainstream media about the alleged effects on democracy in the United States. As the audience continues to listen to these posed threats to democracy, what does democracy mean? Traditionally, democracy was meant to be procedural, entailing elections, majority rule, and free speech to encourage informed decision-making with constitutional limits on governmental power. However, William Novak offered a different conception of democracy as he outlined in his book. He surveyed the growth of state power from the Reconstruction Era after the Civil War to the Progressive Era; Novak asserted that progressives sought to "make modern American democracy more equalitarian, more critical, more substantive, and more public" (p.18). The latter

gave rise to a new form of democracy in the United States that challenges our preconceived notions and invites us to reimagine the possibilities of democracy.

Novak starts his problematic account of the growth of this new democracy by rejecting the constitutional foundations before the Civil War. The latter reflects the current mantra as espoused by the modern political left with the rejection of the constitutional framework created by the Founders. Why? They believed that the current constitutional framework imposed obstacles to the expansion of government, which irked the progressives. After reading *New Democracy*, Novak rejects the Hobbesian view that government should be grounded in individual rights. Any individual rights claims are downgraded in favor of public welfare and good. In this vision of a new world, can individuals dissent? As viewed by the progressives and the modern left, any dissent seems to lend itself to disobeying government authority.

While carefully reading *New Democracy*, Novak argued that the Fourteenth Amendment established a new conception of national citizenship that enabled the new democracy or the modern state. How so? Stressing the shortcomings of private common-law adjudications in governing society, progressives pictured the police power as an affirmative authority to legislate for the public welfare. The progressives loathed capitalism and advocated reining private businesses, e.g., price controls and antitrust measures. Novak favors the expansion of administrative agencies and proclaims “was the functional vehicle of the larger socioeconomic policy goal of public provision to achieve a more just distribution of power and resources in a democratizing and modernizing society” (p. 220). More importantly, he did not explain what it means by a more equitable distribution of resources and how the administrative agencies can precisely achieve these goals.

The United States experienced significant changes after the Civil War because of the rise of corporations and technology. Novak pointed out that political restraints and skepticism toward government also helped shape economic and social policy thinking. Novak emphasized the increased use of public law from 1865 to 1932 was designed to overhaul American society and usher in a new democratic state focused on social change and egalitarian goals. In essence, the experts or social scientists during this time were more paternalistic rather than advancing the ideals of democracy, and these social scientists were the experts when designing the new democracy. The latter philosophy continued into the 2000s, and their belief can be summarized by Marthe Kent formerly of the Department of Labor in 2000,

“I like having a very direct and very powerful impact on worker safety and health. If you put out a reg, it matters. I think that’s really where the thrill comes from. And it is a thrill; it’s a high. . . I love it; I absolutely love it. I was born to regulate. I don’t know why, but that’s very true. So as long as I’m regulating, I’m happy.”

Consequently, it led to the rise of administrative law used by administrative agencies to promulgate regulations that continuing to this day. Recall that social scientists were the experts during this era, so administrative agencies were staffed with unelected bureaucrats with little oversight by Congress or the courts. Astonishingly, Novak acknowledged these criticisms, but he believed that the rise of the administrative state was the appropriate path forward. More importantly, he never examined whether these administrative agencies accomplished their objectives when implementing their regulatory agendas and how they impacted the public. The latter is also practiced in modern times. In essence, Novak sees the administrative state as a vehicle to achieve the goals of substantive policies to reach

egalitarian distributive outcomes throughout the United States.

New Democracy is an interesting read concerning Novak's interpretation of the Progressive Era intellectuals and reformers who were convinced that government could and should help all people. These progressives articulated a new vision of American democracy, which is not about voting and representation. The motif of their goals is the "new capacious democratic vision," Novak writes, including "public provisioning and public accomplishments that could lift all people in securing a substantively democratic way of life." The good part of this book is the revival of early historiography, which demonstrates the real revolution of the American government after the Civil War. This book demonstrated the substantial increase in the American government's scale and scope before the New Deal. Some readers may be interested in the sweeping analysis of the seventy years between the Civil War and the New Deal. This will be an essential read, especially for those interested in untangling the progressive movement's goals and objectives.