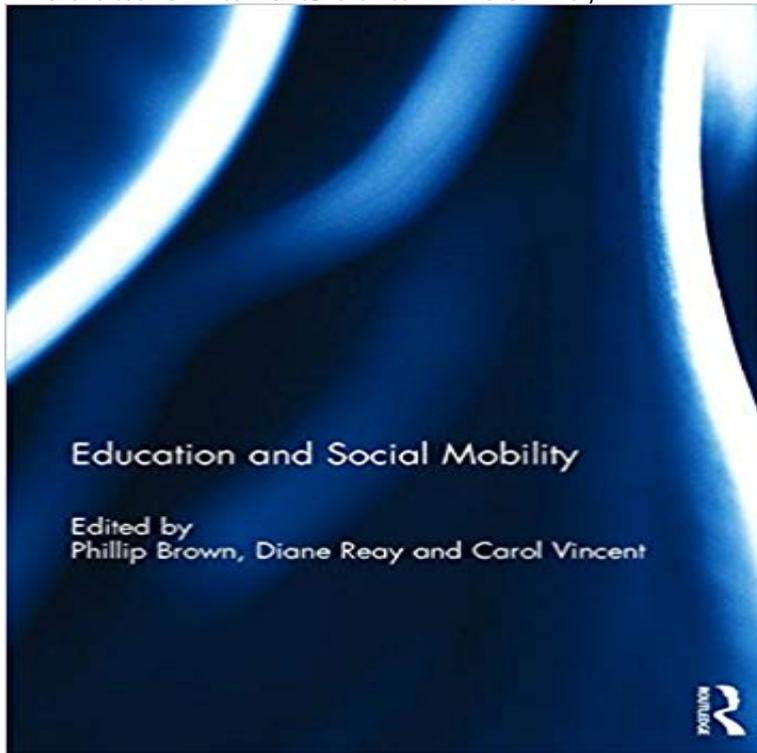


Education and Social Mobility



The study of education and social mobility has been a key area of sociological research since the 1950s. The importance of this research derives from the systematic analysis of functionalist theories of industrialism. Functionalist theories assume that the complementary demands of efficiency and justice result in more meritocratic societies, characterized by high rates of social mobility. Much of the sociological evidence has cast doubt on this optimistic, if not utopian, claim that reform of the education system could eliminate the influence of class, gender and ethnicity on academic performance and occupational destinations. This book brings together sixteen cutting-edge articles on education and social mobility. It also includes an introductory essay offering a guide to the main issues and controversies addressed by authors from several countries. This comprehensive volume makes an important contribution to our theoretical and empirical understanding of the changing relationship between origins, education and destinations. This timely collection is also relevant to policy-makers as education and social mobility are firmly back on both national and global political agendas, viewed as key to creating fairer societies and more competitive economies. This book was originally published as a special issue of the *British Journal of Sociology of Education*.

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