

cies, this policy package shares very much resembles that featured in different works by the Danish sociologist Esping-Andersen. As a response to the advent of new social risks and to promote a sustainability society, Esping-Andersen [2002] proposed a combination of social investment policies such as labour market activation, lifelong learning, child benefits, free day care, and income guarantees. Both accounts share the goal of efficiency, increasing future returns and preventing social exclusion.

In sum, in *Justice Across Ages* Juliana Bidadanure offers a very detailed and thorough account of age-group justice and its implications for public policy. Her theoretical account, already presented in earlier work, is now much more refined and rigorous. The strength in her account lies also in its encompassing nature, addressing both age-group and cohort justice, in offering a robust egalitarian take on age inequalities, and in its openness to intersectional concerns related to other important social categories such as race, class, and gender. Her account could still benefit, however, from a clearer stance on the question of individual responsibility and a further elaboration of intersectionality.

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Katie Martin: *Evolving Education: Shifting to a Learner-Centered Paradigm*
San Diego, CA, 2021: IMPress, 197 pp.

'As much as we want grades to reflect what students know and do, they often communicate what teachers value and how well students can comply with those rules' (p. 90). The above quote highlights what this book is about: changing teaching from being school-oriented to learner-oriented. The author emphasises that it is time to create a new normal to pursue learner-oriented teaching by building a fundament on connection, flexibility, purpose, agency, relationships, and authentic learning. For our author this is how the future of education should be, as it helps the education system to evolve, rather than remain stagnant. Changing the system to become more learner-oriented, the author claims, will help students to develop the skills that empower them to grow, solve problems, and learn. When they have these skills, students can proceed to study any subject and to learn and solve problems on their own, as these skills are fundamental for everyone and for every course a student may study.

The book is divided into three sections, each of which has a question as its heading. This question is answered through different chapters, each of which challenges us to continually ask ourselves to redefine what success looks like in the education system. The author asks us to adopt a broader understanding of the term success and how

to apply this in practice. We are challenged to reflect upon ways to redesign classrooms and the entire school system and to start focusing on improving the lives of students by including new technologies, learning sciences, and pedagogy, the aim being to centre the focus on learners and away from grading.

In the introduction, the author sets out three overall questions for educators who want to practice learner-oriented teaching. These questions are for the readers, to take with us as we read, and function as the framework the book is built upon. The first part gives us an insight into what it means to place students in a holistic context and explains why it is important to create a new normal instead of adhering to standard practices. This is done with exercises that show how the educator is able to get to know each learner and how this influences their ability to learn. The author provides examples from her own family to show what it means in practice and to emphasise how changing the perspective towards being more holistic will improve each learner's ability to learn and solve problems. This change in perspective results in a change in perception of what a learner should be like, so that each one is treated as unique instead of being placed in a standard framework. She therefore encourages teachers to make their students take responsibility for their own learning as this makes the students curious about themselves too. The author highlights the importance of making students aware of their own skills and of the competences they gain in class in order to give them a deeper understanding of how these skills and competences can be put into practice in almost every course and subject. What is also essential is the value of the relationships that students have with others outside the classroom. This point also emphasises the importance of believing in the students both inside the classroom and outside the classroom.

The second part explores key elements of learner-oriented education and provides real-life examples of empowered learning, personalised learning, competency-based learning, and authentic learning. The focus in these examples is not on major changes but on the changing small habits and routines, such as the questions teachers ask students and how the learning environment influences students along the way. This section explores the field of teachers empowering their students to investigate different pathways and find their best way of learning any subject. The teaching therefore does not start with the subject or the content of the course but rather with focusing on each learner and the way in which they learn best to ensure they feel successful in the course. The author argues that this does not have to be a major shift and shows how this approach will help to attain the results that are expected from the outside. The students are thereby encouraged to move at their own pace and to change their own perception about learning.

The last section challenges us, as readers, on how we can change our mindset. As teachers are often influenced by demands and expectations from the outside, the author gives examples of ways of making more systematic and widespread changes. As mentioned, this is not about major shifts but is rather about the small steps that can be made inside the classroom that will change the education and school system. The chapters in this section encourage teachers to make their students design a plan of how they can reach the goals that are set with the knowledge they have. This section builds upon the preceding ones, taking the knowledge and practices from empowering students to get them to take responsibility for their own learning in a way that suits them. Thus, the students also become the experts on the plan that should be designed for them so that they can reach their goals and are therefore not

placed in a standardised context. The teacher is thus not the centre of the learning process but is someone who facilitates and helps the students evolve during a course as they study a subject by continually giving them feedback and asking the necessary questions.

The book guides its reader towards taking the steps necessary to change education to make it adopt a more learner-oriented paradigm. It continually asks questions to encourage our curiosity and ensure we understand why this is an important change and what can be done about it as a teacher. Likewise, it also shows that this process is not a linear road and changing the education system means focusing on more than one thing. Hence, it gives us the impression how much more we should consider inside the classroom than only the content of the subject. Moreover, the book also asks whether the way the education system is built today is perhaps not beneficial for students, as it may not be improving the skills and competences students are expected to have. The current system does not create an environment in which teachers look at each individual and how they learn in their own, meaningful way. Admittedly, changing mindsets and how educators approach this may be difficult, as it also requires a change of behaviour and beliefs on the part of teachers. However, the book raises several questions that are presented in a respectful, honest, and direct manner, while emphasising how changing one's own perception will help the students teachers teach. Each chapter ends with questions that readers can answer and little boxes in which to write in the answers. This small but very efficient tool helps readers to reflect on a higher level about how to change their mindset to become more learner-oriented and thereby also put this into practice themselves. If readers of this book start to change their mindset, their behaviour may change, too, and thereby also their teaching. This is

done in a simple way, where the three parts are arranged to make readers more curious about the what, how, and why. The book also contains several real-life examples of the responses that may occur during the changes and how changing will benefit students and ultimately also the education system. Thus, it is not only a theoretical book but also a practical book to which everyone who works in teaching should turn. The book is not a finish line, nor does it offer just one solution; however, it provides deep insight into what a learner-oriented education system is, why it is essential, and how it can be applied in practice. Readers are encouraged to start with themselves and then expand into the classroom in order to make the changes in the system. It encourages readers to centre learning around the students rather than around the teachers' rules, and thereby expand the students' learning outcome. The book provides several arguments as to why the education system should be made more learner-oriented and encourage teachers and other educators to apply the learner-oriented practices inside the classroom. It also encourages readers, if they are teachers, to reflect on the questions they ask themselves before they start teaching, as this will change the way teachers teach. In this way the education system will be changed one step at a time.

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Bryn Rosenfeld: *The Autocratic Middle Class. How State Dependency Reduces the Demand for Democracy*

Princeton, NJ, 2021: Princeton University Press, 296 pp.

Broadly speaking, assessments of post-communist transitions have ranged between pessimism [Offe 2004], cautious realism