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John E. Roemer
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Democracy, Education, and Equality

Many believe that equality of opportunity will be achieved when the prospects of children no longer depend upon the wealth and education of their parents. The institution through which the link between child and parental prospects may be weakened is public education. Many also believe that democracy is the political institution that will bring about justice. This publication asks whether democracy, modeled as competition between political parties that represent different interests in the polity, will result in educational funding policies that will, at least eventually, produce citizens who have equal capacities (human capital), thus breaking the link between family background and child prospects. In other words, will democracy engender, through the educational finance policies it produces, a state of equal opportunity in the long run? Several models of the problem are studied, which vary according to the educational technology posited, that is, the relationship between family inputs, school inputs, and the eventual human capital of the adult the child becomes. The main innovation of the publication is to model political competition between parties as ruthless. The policies that parties may choose lie in a very large policy space: they need be of any parametric functional form. Equilibrium in the game of party competition is a variant of the author's "party-unanimity Nash equilibrium," or PUNE.

John E. Roemer is the Elizabeth S. and A. Varick Stout Professor of Political Science and Economics at Yale University. He has published extensively in economics, political philosophy, and political science. His recent books include *Political Competition* (2001), *Equality of Opportunity* (1998), *Theories of Distributive Justice* (1996), and *A Future for Socialism* (1994). He was elected a Fellow of the Econometric Society in 1986 and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy in 2005.

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JER
Yale University
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