The production of ignorance seems a topic at once vital and whimsical: of obvious significance to scholars, educators, and citizens, but an inversion of commonplace assumptions about the purpose of schools. Readers of this journal can probably imagine the tacit omissions, moral and patriotic sermons, and anti-intellectual claptrap to which schools subject children—and schools come in for their fair share of criticism in this edited volume—but the authors also cast a much wider net in their analysis of ignorance.

*Miseducation* breaks its topic into three thematic sections. “Legalizing Ignorance” examines campaigns to suppress truth through censorship or misinformation, each prosecuted by a particular interest group: slaveholders, broadcasters, political operatives, Christian activists, and corporations. The focus of these early chapters is the degradation of political thought and public discourse, and their most striking insights come either at moments when ignorance fully divorces its victims from reality or when reality inconveniently intrudes. For instance, when slaveholders come to believe their own propaganda about black inferiority, forgetting the evidence of equality that led them to create it in the first place (p. 29); or when broadcasters, worried that the very mention of syphilis would corrupt children, receive a mother’s plea for information to cure her thirteen-year-old daughter from the disease (p. 45); or when the Johns Committee, seeking political leverage with a salacious report on Florida’s gay and lesbian teachers, comes under scrutiny itself for disseminating “obscene and pornographic” material (p. 59). Both Adam Shapiro and Kevin Elliott have excellent chapters on the historical and legal origins of “manufactured doubt” (p. 87), with unsurprising but unsettling insights about how interest groups manipulate public opinion.

The second section, “Mythologizing Ignorance,” focuses on myth and identity formation—basically, how ignorance has typecast out-groups or solidified in-groups. Examples include the rural nostalgia underlying progressive education reform, the characterization of Asian-American students as a “model minority,” the parallel universe depicted in conservative homeschooling textbooks, and the disciplinary biases that limit research in the history of education. These case studies do not present unwavering commitment to misinformation; they instead explore the boundaries between knowledge and ignorance, and the
social cost when groups lose sight of those boundaries. For example, Adam Laats points out ways in which conservative publishers “adopted some of the language and ideas of mainstream histories” and in which mainstream textbooks themselves represent “a saga of civic pieties to be swallowed on faith,” but also underscores the core difference between the groups—namely, that most textbooks do not countenance “a deliberate replacement of mainstream historical knowledge with a declaration of faith” (pp. 169, 177).

The last section, “Nationalizing and Globalizing Ignorance,” examines instances of government propaganda in the United States, Germany, the USSR, Israel, and China. At their best, these chapters move beyond the image of monolithic nation-states to subtler questions about the stories that governments tell their people and people tell themselves. How America used metaphors of education to ease its rise as an imperial power, say, or Israel forged national identity through conflict. Unifying public sentiment requires a multitude of institutions, including but not limited to schools, and the cooperation of a broad swath of the population. As E. Thomas Ewing perceptively notes of the USSR, “Controlling the past involved the operation of agency, the capacities of actors, and the dynamics of social interaction as much as, and at times more than, demands and threats made by a dictatorial regime” (p. 271).

*Miseducation* assembles work from an impressive group of historians, all of whom offer insightful, well-written commentaries on a range of topics. In that respect, the book offers something for everyone in the field. Moreover, all the chapters include consistent references to agnotology (the study of ignorance) and Robert Proctor’s distinctions between its “native,” “passive,” and “active” varieties, providing a point of departure for further discussions of ignorance and education.

Absent any significant criticisms of the book, there is one matter of emphasis that I would like to raise, perhaps as a way to start those discussions. Taken as a whole, *Miseducation* seems to equate complexity with nuance, even irony, but not with paradox. That is, its case studies “ease us into an understanding of the way the mythmaking process works, evolves, adapts, and takes on surprising detours,” but in the end they yield “clear and predictable” lessons about knowledge and power (pp. 340, 344). When one recognizes the kaleidoscopic sources of miseducation and the innumerable reasons for which people withhold truths, it seems far too simple to open by contrasting the “ignorance and superstition” of medieval scholastics with the enlightenment of today’s scholars—a characterization that no medievalist would accept—or to conclude with an indictment of corporate school reform, as editor A. J. Angulo does (pp. 3, 346). If “the human brain is hard-wired to forget and ignore,” if information becomes comprehensible through
elision, silence, and metaphor, if political action requires unifying symbols and slogans, then surely we are all guilty of miseducation (p. 342). Postmodernists recognized that problem as early as the 1970s, but with the exception of Donald Warren’s historiographical essay, *Miseducation* spends little time examining self-deceptions or half-truths propagated in good faith or put to worthy ends. It offers only passing insight into the most sacred and intellectually stultifying of educational institutions, the family, or the role that the public itself plays in perpetuating ignorance. What of Richard Hofstadter’s claim that America is hostile to critical thought not despite but because of its democratic traditions, with attendant questions about equality, conformity, and the role of expertise in a free society? And what about the constructive uses of ignorance by educators themselves: the affected naïveté with which Socrates leads his interlocutors through their errors, the “noble lies” that Plato equates with justice and social harmony, or the veil of deception with which Rousseau cultivates his students’ independence? When future scholars take up Angulo’s call to study ignorance—as they should—I would encourage them to foreground unexpected and uncomfortable questions, lest they conclude that more information will in itself dispel ignorance or that they are somehow immune from the blindness that they condemn in others. The unfortunate truth is that assumptions can go unscrutinized within academia as often as they do outside of it.

**University of Maryland**

Campbell F. Scribner


Thomas Fallace presents a rigorous intellectual history of race and the development of the progressive education movement from 1880 to 1929. In tracing the intellectual development of key thinkers and their influence on educational policy, curriculum, and administration, he uncovers some major intellectual shifts. In particular, he highlights a move from “a belief in the biological-anatomical inferiority of non-Whites to a belief in the sociocultural inferiority of non-Whites” (p. 6). While the group of sociologists, educators, and educational psychologists that Fallace studied diverged greatly, he underscores how they shared a presumption that nonwhite groups were plagued by a lack of sociocultural development.

The book’s core arguments are framed by the theory of “recapitulation,” which presumes that “the development of the individual retraced
the sociological history of the human race, and that non-White social
groups represented an earlier, inferior status” (p. 7). In other words,
the theory presented a hierarchical view of social groups, ranking them
based on how they measured against Western standards of civiliza-
tion. Fallace contends that the educational ideal of “child-centeredness”
emerged from this theory of recapitulation and ethnocentrism. By ex-
ploring the thinking of key scholars across disciplines, he demonstrates
how recapitulation “dominated the production and dissemination of
professional knowledge in the social sciences and education” (p. 33).
These thinkers directly influenced the development of the new educa-
tion. To substantiate the crosscurrents of these intellectual ideas in the
world of educators, Fallace offers analyses of textbooks, reports from
committees formed by the National Association of Education, writings
by influential figures of progressive education, and more.

The book is divided into six chapters, which are more thematic
than chronological. Fallace begins by presenting the intellectual context
in which the progressive education movement began during the late
nineteenth century and how the prevalent ideas on race were generated
from the theory of recapitulation. He then charts how this theory was
operationalized through policy for nonwhites in the United States and
territories under U.S. control. In the third chapter, Fallace shows how
the theory of recapitulation informed broader educational reforms to
address urban crises as white immigrant populations grew in American
cities. The three final chapters explore the development of race and
educational reform during the World War I period through the late
1920s. Some educational and social science thinkers came to rely on
statistical models of intelligence and heredity, others maintained a belief
in the sociological deficiency of nonwhites, and finally, a small number
expressed a more radical view of cultural relativity in which all human
groups were believed to be equally civilized.

The first systematic educational application of the recapitulation
theory can be seen in the education offered to Native Americans and
southern blacks around the turn of the twentieth century (p. 38).
Ironically, while boarding schools and the Hampton-Tuskegee model
appear to clash alongside John Dewey’s general theory of child-centered
education and learning by doing, Fallace shows how, paradoxically,
the theory of recapitulation informed them all. The theory “rein-
forced White supremacy in explicit and implicit ways” and at the same
time justified “a more humane, child-centered approach to education”
(p. 35). This is an inherent dilemma that Fallace brings to the attention
of his readers.

Textbooks and school literature during these early years of pro-
gressive education disseminated ideas about racial hierarchy to stu-
dents and often drew directly upon the theory of recapitulation. Fallace
Fallace notes a subtle shift between 1900 and 1916, when some scholars began to take more of an anthropologically informed approach to the theory of recapitulation. John Dewey included. They came to believe that the sociological deficiency of less-developed social groups was a result of learned behavior or was environmentally informed (p. 59). A more dramatic shift took place after World War I. “Between 1915 and 1925, most educators slowly replaced the hierarchical language of savagery-barbarianism-civilization with the allegedly more scientific, quantitative language of innate intelligence and heredity” (p. 102). Nonetheless the “savage-barbarian-civilization hierarchy” that traced the linear stages of human development maintained its application as a commonsensical ordering system, even if the language and assessment methods shifted. Thus, there was a shift from the theory of recapitulation to heredity and eugenics; this took place alongside the development of Frantz Boas’s more radical assertion of cultural relativity.

Fallace is clear to point out that there were dissenting views that challenged the fundamental ideals of recapitulation—in particular, the anthropological school of thought under Boas. Boas and his associates developed the alternative perspective of cultural relativity, which charged that social groups should be viewed independently through their own unique histories and contexts rather than relying on a prescribed sociological hierarchy. Additionally, cultural pluralists such as W. E. B. Du Bois and others presented a more inclusive ideology, which suggested that all social groups in the United States made contributions to a pluralistic transnational culture, thus challenging the ethnocentricity of white thinkers (p. 109). The cultural gifts movement of the 1920s also embodied this cultural pluralism. However, Boas’s conception of cultural relativity, which also asserted that all human groups were equally civilized, was never fully embraced during these years of progressive education.

Ultimately, Fallace makes the bold claim that the cultural-deficit thinking regarding nonwhite students began with sociologist Lester Frank Ward and pre-1916 John Dewey (p. 145). While Dewey and
Ward are often positioned to have had an egalitarian approach to race and education, broadly speaking, “they nevertheless espoused a belief in the sociological inferiority of non-White groups” (p. 146). Thus, this author challenges scholars of education to recognize how the previous labeling of pioneering educational thinkers such as John Dewey as egalitarian continues to obscure how he, among others, helped sustain white supremacist ideology. Fallace also challenges readers to consider the fact that child-centeredness, which continues to be a primary pillar in progressive education, directly stems from the theory of recapitulation, which considers nonwhite adults and white children to be mentally equivalent (p. 11).

Perhaps one aspect of the text that could have been more developed was the treatment of scholars of color. I found this area to be thin in presentation and analysis. A deeper engagement with the intellectual thought of men and women of color, who challenged notions of recapitulation (which Fallace does acknowledge) could have provided useful balance and more complicated understandings of their diverse perspectives. For instance, Carter G. Woodson was grouped with all scholars of color as “the pluralists” who “focused their discussion of culture on the contributions of the educated, urban elite of each marginalized group, but were dismissive of their agrarian, premodern populations” (p. 108). It is slightly reductive to clump the intellectual thought of all scholars of color into this one category. A deeper engagement with Woodson would have challenged the idea that he believed that “pre-modern” African groups were not “sociologically valuable” (p. 122). Woodson’s *The Negro in Our History* (1922) and *African Heroes and Heroines* (1944) present his thinking in a manner that directly challenges this idea. At times, Woodson’s treatment of premodern African groups closely mirrored Boas’ notion of relativity, and these two scholars were closely affiliated. Boas attended Woodson’s annual meetings of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in the early 1920s and even served on the board of this organization during the late 1920s. More details on this relationship can be found in the notes section of Woodson’s *Journal of Negro History*.

Overall, this book makes a great contribution to the history of race and education. The text is written with great clarity, and the author’s central claims are lucidly stated throughout. This intellectual history is necessary for teachers and educational scholars to develop a conceptual understanding of how prevailing white supremacist ideology shaped the policy and orientation of dominant educational thinkers. Fallace highlights how residual effects of recapitulation even showed up in the scholars we often remember as the most forward thinking of their time. Furthermore, he raises questions about how these ideals persist as we continue to borrow from these intellectuals. This is an important
text that explores some of the inherent contradictions of progressive education.

**Harvard University** Jarvis R. Givens


In this carefully designed, exhaustively researched, and persuasively argued book, Leah Gordon reveals the monumentally important but previously occluded history of how social science research on race in the mid-twentieth century came to revolve around questions of prejudice rather than around conditions of power. Gordon shows how foundation funding, the politics of postwar knowledge production, and a rightward drift in the national political culture all worked in concert to promote what she names as *racial individualism*, an approach that promotes an understanding of racism as private, personal, individual, and aberrant. Within the frame of racial individualism, discrimination and rights violations are seen to stem from intentional acts by people with irrational beliefs or from mutual miscommunications and misunderstandings. Social scientists using this approach seek to identify the personality traits that lead to bigotry, to measure the degrees and dimensions of intergroup tensions, and to propose practices that could lead to changes in individual attitudes.

Gordon’s research helps us see how racism acquires its determinate social meanings through what Michael Omi and Howard Winant call *racial projects* that produce historically and socially specific forms of racial formation. In demonstrating how racial individualism worked to protect and promote the unearned advantages of whiteness, Gordon shows how scholars and civic leaders focused on the moral and psychological frames deployed by Gunnar Myrdal in *An American Dilemma* while ignoring his extended arguments on behalf of social democratic economic and political reforms. She explores the ways in which ties to southern white “moderates” led administrators at the Rockefeller Foundation to support scholars who framed debates in ways that accommodated segregation. In a similar vein, Gordon discloses how the efforts by the Committee on Education, Training, and Research in Race Relations at the University of Chicago to measure racial tensions by studying the attitudes of white individuals precluded analysis of the coordinated and collective actions of social collectives,
displaying what Herbert Blumer would later call “race prejudice as a sense of group position.” Gordon’s chapter on the prejudice reduction activities of the National Conference of Christians and Jews discloses a group committed to education and reconciliation but not to white contrition or restitution. This group took a decidedly apolitical educational approach based on the assumption that racial antagonisms stemmed largely from fear, unfamiliarity, superstition, and misunderstandings rather than from group-based hoarding of opportunities, resources, amenities, profits, and power. Within this framework, activities of the National Conference could only teach people to live with injustice more pleasantly and politely, an approach that ultimately reinforced rather than reduced segregation.

Among the many substantive original and generative contributions that From Power to Prejudice makes, one of the most important comes from Gordon’s history of how the social relations of research shaped the reception and recognition of particular forms of research design. Racial individualism had ideological causes and consequences, but it thrived within social science, at least in part, because measuring the attitudes of individuals enabled a veneer of scientific rigor and legitimacy that studies of groups did not have. Gordon explains that “the postwar politics of knowledge production also gave researchers methodological reasons to ask questions that individuals could answer” (p. 89). Statistical findings require that significant numbers (n) are submitted to analysis in order to determine whether various differences are statistically and socially significant. Larger numbers produce statistical findings deemed more robust. Statistics obtained from individuals—such as attitude surveys—produce a large “n” (as many numbers as there are individuals); in contrast, a statistic obtained from a group results from folding together all members of the group as 1 “n,” requiring much more extensive surveying to demonstrate statistical significance. The result is a methodological impetus to focus on individuals rather than groups.

Thus, measuring individual attitudes became a focus of research on race not so much because attitudes mattered as causal factors of racial subordination, but simply because they could be measured more easily than more complex factors. Gordon’s insight here resonates with long-standing arguments mounted by Tukufu Zuberi (among others) that identify seemingly race-neutral decisions about research design as a crucial arena for unconscious, unwitting, and uninterrogated perpetuation of racial subordination and exclusion.

Yet the white racial frame that dominated midcentury social science research did not exist unopposed. In two extraordinary chapters—one on the Race Relations Institutes at Fisk University and the other on the Journal of Negro Education at Howard University—Gordon presents
the ideas, analyses, and arguments that emanated from researchers in historically black institutions connected to the experiences and aspirations of working class and impoverished African Americans. Completely shut out of any substantial support from mainstream foundations whose administrators assumed that the best research could be conducted only in elite white institutions, scholars in the orbits of research at Fisk and Howard viewed racism as structural, systemic, collective, and cumulative, rather than individual, intentional, aberrant, and episodic. What Myrdal viewed as an American dilemma seemed to them merely an oppressor’s psychosis grounded in guilty recognition of having done harm to blacks and suffused with fear-laden fantasies that blacks might retaliate. For these scholars, prejudice constituted the social norm in U.S. society, not a pathological exception. Their aim was not so much to reduce prejudice as to equalize living conditions, opportunities, and life chances.

According to Gordon, racial individualism dominated social science research and public policy between 1949 and 1964. It began to be challenged when masses in motion took to the streets in nonviolent and violent protests in both the North and South that called attention to the enduring depths and dimensions of structural racism manifested in educational inequality, housing and employment discrimination, and race-based policing, charging, and sentencing practices. Yet its premises persist everywhere today. As literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin has taught us, no part of the past ever disappears completely, all the moments of history are still present in abeyance, waiting for their homecoming day. The racial individualism of the middle of the past century informs a host of recent decisions by the Supreme Court rejecting efforts to desegregate schools (Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 in 2007), to assure fair hiring practices (Ricci v. DeStefano in 2009), and to protect voting rights (Shelby v. Holder in 2013). Although largely discredited as scholarship, the social science framing of racial individualism evident in Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s 1965 report to President Johnson blaming black poverty not on racial oppression but on what he viewed as the tangle of pathologies in black families and in the “Broken Windows” analysis of crime advanced by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling in 1982 that calls for draconian repression of minor “quality of life” crimes still guide the actions of police officers, judges, and social welfare agencies. Yet the critical race scholarship emphasizing social systems and structures that was nurtured and sustained at Fisk and Howard decades ago persists in the present as well in critical race studies in law advanced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, Cheryl Harris, and Devon Carbado; in psychology by Glenn Adams and Phia Salter; and in sociology by Stephen Steinberg, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, and Tukufu Zuberi.
The patterns of the past shape both the perils and the promise of the present. *From Power to Prejudice* reveals a hidden history that affects us all. Which parts of the past become dominant in the present and future remain to be determined by the sagacity of our scholarship and the strength of our civic engagements. No matter what path we take or make, however, we will be powerfully fortified and enlightened by the lessons that Leah Gordon provides for us in this tour de force of excellent research, astute analysis, and empirically rich and theoretically broad and persuasive exegesis and argument.

*University of California*  

**George Lipsitz**


Andrew R. Highsmith’s brilliant book, *Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan, and the Fate of the American Metropolis*, is a sweeping case study that traces the policies and decisions that contributed to the rise and fall of Flint, Michigan, over the course of the twentieth century. Building on other works in urban and metropolitan history, Highsmith examines the factors that “transformed Flint from a segregated company town into a “hypersegregated” postindustrial metropolis” (p. 5). By arguing that Flint’s endless quest for urban renewal contributed more to mass suburbanization, racial and economic segregation, deindustrialization, and political fragmentation than white flight and corporate neglect, his study makes a critical contribution to the history of inequality and metropolitan development. Highsmith contends that the driving forces in Flint’s history have been “renewal and reinvention more than decline and abandonment” (p. 6). In doing so, he pushes scholars to reconsider the policies and decisions that government officials made and the unintended consequences that their actions had on places like Flint. Even though residents disagreed with one another about how to improve Flint, during much of the century they remained optimistic and hopeful that the city would have a bright future.

In his introduction, Highsmith, like other scholars, is particularly critical of the language of de facto and de jure segregation, which he asserts promotes outdated ideas of Jim Crow and perpetuates a North-South binary. According to Highsmith, segregation throughout the nation has followed a similar path—from a combination of statutory and legal forces, to discriminatory administration or public policy
decisions, and, finally, to popular forces. These three phases make up his three-part typology: legal segregation, administrative segregation, and popular segregation. Legal segregation refers to segregation that comes from “statutory, constitutional, or judicial mandates” (p. 9). These measures included state laws that mandated segregated schools and court decisions that upheld racially restrictive housing covenants. Administrative segregation signifies the forms of racial segregation that stem from “the administration of government policies and programs or the exercise of the state’s bureaucratic powers” (p. 9). These actions include federal mortgage insurance policies, racially gerrymandered school district boundaries, and segregated housing patterns. Popular segregation includes “patterns of racial partition driven to at least some significant degree by nonstatist forces and actors, though often with the endorsement of statutes, judicial decrees, or administrative procedures” (p. 9). Examples of these forces encompass business owners who refused to admit black customers or white parents who prohibited their children from interacting with people of color. Highsmith notes that these three kinds of segregation often overlapped, and thus, as he says, this typology offers scholars a more flexible way to think about the subtle variations among the various modes of Jim Crow.

Highsmith asserts that a case study of Flint allows scholars to consider the implications of what he calls metropolitan capitalism—a system, in the case of Flint, in which both General Motors (GM) and white suburbanites supported racial segregation and suburbs rather than cities, but also one in which these parties differed “about how best to maximize the return on their investments” (p. 13). Highsmith shows how suburban capitalists promoted the fragmentation of local governments while corporate officials searched for ways to maintain their ties to the city until Flint’s demise seemed inevitable in the 1970s and 1980s. According to Highsmith, the fact that GM remained committed to the city necessitated the “need for an alternative periodization of urban deindustrialization” (p. 14). His alternative periodization pays careful attention to the later phase of deindustrialization that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s and affected cities like Flint; Youngstown, Ohio; and Gary, Indiana. Additionally, Highsmith’s work forces historians to reevaluate the long-standing Rust Belt-Sunbelt economic model. Scholars who promote this model argue that the postwar era witnessed a shift from an economy based in Rust Belt cities in the North to new Sunbelt cities in the South and West. Highsmith criticizes this model, noting that neither the Rust Belt nor the Sunbelt “has ever been a coherent geographic region. Rather, the Rust Belt and Sunbelt are narratives of regional development that mask important countervailing realities at the local level” (p. 15).
The book is divided into ten chapters that trace the history of Flint from its origins as a company town to one of the poorest cities in the nation. In the first chapter, Highsmith examines the history of Flint’s rise and illustrates how GM officials built plants and homes near the city center instead of the more “gritty and underdeveloped suburbs” (p. 28). Over time, Highsmith notes these actors became intimately involved with Jim Crow policies that segregated residents into distinct neighborhoods throughout the city. Chapter 2, which will interest many historians of education, analyzes the involvement of the Mott Foundation in establishing and supporting Flint’s community education program. This program brought millions of dollars into the city’s public schools and promoted the ideals of schools as social centers. However, at the same time, foundation officials and school board members implemented policies and programs that divided citizens by race and class. Foundation and school officials wanted residents to interact with one another and believed that the school was the perfect site to do so, but they also believed that black and white residents were so “incompatible that they could not forge meaningful ties across those racial divides” (p. 55). Community education and racial segregation were deeply related in the city of Flint. Chapter 3 investigates how GM’s labor practices generated Jim Crow policies in the auto city and provides insights about the reactions of union leaders and autoworkers to these policies. The fourth chapter offers a different perspective on the suburbs—one that illustrates the shortcomings and difficulties in Flint’s suburban communities as they struggled to provide residents with essential resources such as water and sewers, and how suburban residents used their political capital to secure the resources that they needed to lead a middle-class lifestyle. Some suburban areas were more successful than others. Chapter 5 details Highsmith’s idea of metropolitan capitalism and the movement of GM’s factories and jobs to Flint’s inner-ring suburbs.

The second part of the book, “Fractured Metropolis,” is a detailed analysis of the attempts to renew and remake Flint in the postwar period. Chapter 6 documents the postwar policies and programs that intensified racial segregation and how residents both promoted and resisted these initiatives. Chapters 7 and 8 examine the Civil Rights Movement and the crisis of the suburbs in the 1960s. Chapter 9 contributes to the vast scholarship on school desegregation and encourages scholars to consider the ways in which Flint does and does not fit into the traditional narrative. Like other cities in the North, the federal push for desegregation in Flint took place decades after Brown v. Board of Education, which complicated the choices for desegregating the schools as well as the commitments among blacks and whites to do so. Highsmith shows that the Mott Foundation’s decision to withdraw funding for
community education dovetailed with attempts to desegregate Flint’s schools. The final chapter traces the fall of Flint as GM moved and demolished many of the factories that had once supported the city and its workers.

While Highsmith clearly makes important contributions to the field of metropolitan history and the history of education, his treatment of the public school system only occurs in two chapters, and thus his analysis of schooling is peripheral to his larger argument about inequality, race, and space in metropolitan Flint. Moreover, his focus on the officials who created these policies and the white residents who supported them sometimes overshadows the ways in which black residents themselves challenged and/or supported these policies on the ground. As I was reading, I wanted to know more about the people of Flint, the individuals who had the power to create these changes and those who lacked the power to resist them. At times he includes stories and quotations about the reactions of residents, but the book could have gone further to describe the effects of these policies on the lives of the children and families who remained in Flint—the very children whom so many of us are concerned about today as the city struggles to eradicate lead from its drinking water.

Harvard University/Barnard College  Erika M. Kitzmiller


John J. Laukaitis’s Community Self-Determination: American Indian Education in Chicago, 1952–2006 is a history of American Indian education in postwar Chicago. Using community and government documents as well as oral histories, Laukaitis argues that education was the central avenue through which Native Americans in Chicago asserted self-determination.

Laukaitis uses “community self-determination,” the concept that undergirds the book, in three ways: it emphasizes “understanding community as a physical place, especially as it relates to the context of local challenges and local actions; ... the existence of a group of people who self-identify as connected to one another based on their American Indian ethnic lineage and heritage; ... [and] an American Indian tribal ethic that places the well-being of the community ahead of the individual” (p. 2). But community self-determination meant lit-

Chapter 1, “Relocation and Urbanization: American Indians in Uptown Chicago,” explores the factors that caused Native people to move to Chicago, including the termination and relocation policies of the postwar era. It also documents the deplorable conditions in which Native people found themselves. As Laukaitis notes, from 1951 to 1973, more than 100,000 Native people moved from reservations to cities. Many moved to the Uptown neighborhood, six miles north of the Loop, because of its affordability; yet the neighborhood was also riddled with crime and terrible housing conditions.

Chapter 2, “The Heart of the Community: The American Indian Center in Chicago,” analyzes the formation of the American Indian Center (AIC) in 1953. At first, the AIC served both the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the community’s purpose of helping advertise relocation. After realizing the problems of relocation that the BIA grossly misrepresented, the Native community took action to assist recent migrants to Chicago. The AIC provided a sense of community for Native people. While the AIC suffered through several changes in leadership in the early years, by 1959 the AIC had 540 active members. They also expanded their mission to include counseling, referral services, emergency assistance, casework, and education programs. By the 1960s and 1970s, the AIC had moved toward including education and social services as the major points of emphases. For instance, by 1967, they began the Explorers Program, an after-school program for students in first through eighth grade. Serving some 250 students a year, the program was designed to improve the educational experience of Native youth in Chicago Public Schools. They also formed, in 1969, the Project Head Start program, which was necessary to reach younger children. These programs were used to help youth maintain their Native cultures within Chicago.

Chapter 3, “Matter of Mission: St. Augustine’s Center for American Indians,” explores the relationship between Native people and the Episcopal Church, which provided social services, including job placement, clothing, and assistance finding housing, handling more than six thousand cases by 1963. The chapter provides an early blueprint for understanding how education developed with a focus on counseling and educational programs for children. Chapter 4, “The Promise of Empowerment,” analyzes the Native American Committee, formed in 1969. A more “combative” group, it started out as a separate committee within the AIC but later splintered. Upon separating, they received a $60,000 grant from the Indian Education Act and formed
an adult education program specifically aimed for adults to earn their GED.

Chapter 5, “Bright Stars of Hope: Little Big Horn and O-Wai-Ya-Wa,” documents the formation of Little Big Horn High School in 1971 and O-Wai-Ya-Wa Elementary School in 1973, both Native-controlled schools in Chicago. These schools were founded to respond to local conditions of education, including the reported 90 percent dropout rate of Native youth and worked closely with Chicago Public Schools, unlike the formation of Native-controlled schools based upon militant tactics, such as Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis. The goals of these Native-controlled schools in Chicago were threefold: “(1) address the core problems that affected the educational experiences of American Indian children, (2) improve parental and community involvement, and (3) increase teacher effectiveness in working with American Indian students” (pp. 75–76). Perhaps the most important outcomes of these schools were introducing Native history as a core part of the curriculum and demonstrating that Native people could thrive in an urban setting. Due to the pressures of desegregation, the fact that Native people were no longer concentrated in Uptown, and a lack of funding, these schools closed in 1982. While short-lived, they provided the community with a guiding light for community-controlled educational programs for youth.

Chapter 6, “Education for a Credential Leadership: NAES College,” documents the formation of Native American Educational Services College in the early 1970s. Connected with Northeastern University’s University Without Walls program, Chicago’s Native community helped create a dynamic curriculum for adults who desired college degrees but who wanted to continue working within the community. The original goal was to help students who had gained experience working in Native community organizations maintain their ties and develop theoretical knowledge to go along with their practice. An exceptional endeavor, NAES was plagued by its attempt to receive accreditation. Financial struggles and mismanagement hurt the development of the college, and in 2005 the college canceled its fall semester after losing accreditation. The history of this college, though, reveals both the will of Native community development and the limitation of no sustained financial backing.

The final chapter analyzes the formation of the Institute for Native American Development at Truman College in 1979. This chapter sheds light on the experience of Native people in higher education in urban contexts and a Native community’s relationship to a public institution of higher learning. The chapter concludes by reiterating the lack of studies of Native people in urban areas, and emphasizes how exploring education in urban areas might serve as one framework to do such work.
Community Self-Determination is a welcome contribution to studies in community education, curriculum development, and American Indian studies. It offers important insight into the links between education and urban Native history. However, missing from this narrative is the recent scholarship within urban indigenous studies, which raises significant questions for the study of urban Native history.

We can divide studies in urban Native history into two camps: urban Indian history and urban indigenous history. Urban Indian history tends to focus on the migration of Native people to cities in the postwar era. This approach tends to privilege assimilation over cultural maintenance, often looking at Native peoples’ move to cities as a deficit. This book offers a slightly more positive approach, but it follows a similar narrative. Urban Indian histories are also microsocial histories, which are often divorced from larger trends within the city, including the engagement of Native communities with other people of color. Finally, urban Indian history frames Native people as a “minority” among “minorities” in cities, furthering settler colonialism’s major goal: Native invisibility, something that the majority of urban historical scholarship perpetuates more generally.

In contrast, urban indigenous history finds creative ways to reinsert erased Native histories into the history of cities. Coll Thrush’s Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place (2007), for example, analyzes how indigeneity was used in the construction of modern Seattle. Thrush’s work also illuminates how urban indigenous histories are often less community social histories than they are cultural and intellectual histories. Finally, urban indigenous history has taken more care to analyze gender, especially the role of women, in maintaining indigenous cultures in cities.

Community Self-Determination is a piece of urban Indian history. It is a straightforward and necessary history; however, the approach has limits. For instance, a significant question arising from Laukaitis’s narrative that would benefit from a reading of scholarship in urban indigenous studies is what a gendered approach to analyzing education as a form of community self-determination would mean for Chicago’s community. As Susan Lobo as well as Susan Applegate Krouse and Heather Howard have argued in “Urban Clan Mothers: Key Households in Cities” (2003) and Keeping the Campfires Going: Native Women’s Activism in Urban Communities (2009), respectively, women were often the key catalysts for indigenous self-determination in cities. There are indigenous women throughout the book, such as Dorene Wiese, who is still working in the vineyards of Native education in Chicago, but very little is said about how she, and others, experienced Chicago as Native women.
Despite these critiques, if you are concerned with a deeper understanding of urban indigenous education and community struggle and progress, this book is for you.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Kyle T. Mays


Perhaps no college has garnered more media attention of late than Oberlin. Press coverage of student demands for everything from culturally sensitive cuisine to curriculum has tarred the progressive Ohio institution with all that is seemingly wrong with the liberal arts: overly sensitive students unprepared for the rigors of working life; a hopelessly liberal faculty unwilling to engage with conservative ideas; and a politics of privilege so perverse that administrators respond to student protest with—of all things—more administrators. And yet, to take some students’ word for it, Oberlin has abandoned its founding commitment to social justice and has embraced capitalism, imperialism, and even white supremacy.

And so it is that a college once defined by its dedication to equal rights has come to symbolize a national crisis in higher education. Even before the campus protests of November 2015 catapulted liberal arts colleges like Oberlin into debates over conservatism, sexual assault, and free speech, scholars such as Andrew Delbanco, Fareed Zakaria, and Michael Roth felt called to defend them. As state governors threaten to cut public funding for higher education, college presidents respond by asserting the importance of the liberal arts to a democracy. They have been hard at work making the case that a high-cost education typified by small classes, residential learning, and interdisciplinary thinking remains necessary.

As timing goes, J. Brent Morris could not have asked for a better moment for a book launch. While Oberlin, Hotbed of Abolitionism: College, Community, and the Fight for Freedom and Equality in Antebellum America aspires to be more than a history of a singular institution, it will invariably interest those eager to understand the historical relationship between the liberal arts and social activism. When Morris began researching Oberlin more than a decade ago, he could not have anticipated how contemporary events might reinforce his work’s relevance. Yet he could have told readers that Oberlin, even in its
early years, was no stranger to controversy. Those eager to understand the current conversations about the relationship between politics and higher education will likely find many parallels between the present and the past, when revivalists invented Oberlin as a “utopian community” and refuge for persecuted activists (p. 2).

While Morris’s study is ostensibly about higher education, he engages more with the historiography of abolition. He argues that antebellum historians have overlooked Oberlin’s importance to both Western history and antislavery. Quoting abolitionist activist Lewis Tappan, Morris agrees with his assessment that “Oberlin turned the scale in all of the Northwest.” The central purpose of his research, he explains, is “to illuminate and emphasize that fact” (p. xi).

The “Oberlin” in Morris’s account has three distinct meanings: first, the “Oberlin Collegiate Institute” founded in 1833 by antislavery activists eager to promote “equal rights” and “emancipation”; next, the Ohio town of the same name, created as a “utopian community” settled to “prepare the world” for Christ’s second coming; and, finally, the “symbolic idea” of a town and college united in the protracted fight against chattel slavery (p. 2–3).

By defining Oberlin in three ways—as “the town, the college, [and] the idea”—Morris offers several correctives to abolitionist historiography (p. 8). Oberlin’s importance to the abolitionist movement, he asserts, was more than symbolic. While historians usually focus on New York or New England, Oberlin, Ohio, was equally a “movement center,” one that cultivated and connected reformers, enabling them to develop and implement protest strategies (p. 2). In this way, Oberlin highlights the importance of the American West to antislavery history. Moreover, he notes, because historians have privileged William Lloyd Garrison’s Massachusetts and the Tappan brothers’ New York, they have misinterpreted the movement’s history. While antislavery factions did splinter in the 1840s over the place of politics in antislavery protest, the Oberlin ideal retained its coherence. It did so because activists there espoused pragmatism, endorsing whatever tactics best advanced their objectives (p. 7).

In the history of higher education, Oberlin Collegiate Institute claims significance because of its early willingness to enroll African Americans, both men and women. Although the college’s student body remained overwhelmingly white throughout the antebellum era, it did enroll more students of color than “all other American colleges combined” before the Civil War (p. 4). Administrators elected not to segregate classes, religious meetings, or residential spaces. Morris takes pains, however, to highlight the realities of antebellum integration. While Oberlin did admit black students, only 3 percent of its student body was African American prior to 1865 (p. 67). Nor did the
college employ faculty of color. At the same time, however, Oberlin as an ideal promoted an egalitarian and racially inclusive society. Because of the institution’s public commitment to equal rights, it continued to attract African American activists and educators, including John Mercer Langston and Mary Jane Patterson.

The story Morris tells about Oberlin advances chronologically, following a traditional timeline of abolition. Oberlin, “the idea,” existed before it was a college or a community. It originated from evangelical Yankees eager to emigrate west, to train “Christian soldiers” prepared to “save the world and inaugurate God’s government on earth,” and to eradicate slavery (p. 12). Within two years of settling the town, Oberlin’s new residents had founded an institution of higher education dedicated, in part, to preparing missionaries to spread the gospel of abolition (p. 2–3). To keep tuition low and scholars humble, the school operated on the manual labor system whereby students spent their spare hours working in nearby fields and factories.

As the 1830s advanced, administrators made antislavery activism a central pillar of the college mission. While their counterparts at other liberal arts colleges, including Amherst, Hamilton, and Miami, sought to limit on-campus abolitionism, Oberlin’s trustees welcomed students, most notably the “Lane Rebels,” who dedicated themselves to antislavery activism. As a consequence, Oberlin “became a beacon for the nation’s most progressive students” and a training ground for black and white leaders of abolitionism (p. 3).

By mid-century, Oberlin, “the college” and the “community,” had become a political and intellectual epicenter of antislavery activism. While parts of the movement splintered in the 1840s and 1850s, particularly over the question of whether to engage with politics, Oberlin’s antislavery community never divided along such lines. Morris describes their activism as practical. “Instead of ideological exclusivity,” he asserts, Oberlinites “appreciated the value of anything that could be used to their advantage” (p. 165). His story culminates with the most iconic act of antislavery protest, helping fugitives flee from slavery. He leaves his readers midway through the Civil War, when Abraham Lincoln secured reelection and many Oberlin students, black and white, left to fight for freedom in the Union Army.

How Oberlin drifted away from its founding objectives occupies just a few pages in the epilogue. While Morris acknowledges that Oberlin’s campus became formally segregated by the turn of the twentieth century, he offers readers little explanation for this transformation. Instead, in his estimation, Oberlin’s original politics continue to define it, irrespective of present failures to live up to such lofty objectives.

At times, one also wishes Morris had engaged even more directly with the politics of knowledge production. He clearly has great
admiration for an institution that linked social activism to student learning, but he does less to illuminate the consequences of placing politics at the center of the curriculum. What price, if any, did Oberlin’s students pay for an administrative decision to design an education with a particular political orientation? Do politics have a place inside the classroom? Should the liberal arts, instead, remain true to a classical curriculum, striving to train students to see issues from all sides and to ask and answer big questions?

Oberlin, the idea and the institution, raises a host of foundational questions about the historical relationship between higher education and social activism. Readers will have to find answers at the book’s analytical margins. Perhaps because Oberlin’s founders espoused the right ideals—emancipation and equal rights—Morris finds nothing troubling about pairing political activism and higher education. But those who most vociferously challenge and defend the liberal arts today do take issue with this premise. Historians of education may wish he had done more to query these assumptions, despite his desire to focus on Oberlin’s involvement with abolition. By engaging more deeply with the purpose and meaning of a liberal arts education, he might have helped readers better understand how a college once defined by its willingness to admit black students now stands as a symbol for a national crisis in higher education, and how it happened that, according to some of its critics, Oberlin drifted so far from its radical ideals that it has ceased to be a safe place for all of its students.

Amherst College

Hilary Moss


When David Potts’s first volume on the history of Wesleyan—*Wesleyan University, 1831–1910: Collegiate Enterprise in New England*—appeared in 1992, it offered a gold standard for institutional history by connecting its nuanced, detailed story of one institution to the historical context of American higher education. Coming twenty-three years after its predecessor, this second volume does not disappoint. Here Potts takes Wesleyan into the twentieth century, and when the story ends in 1970, Wesleyan has become a modern, sturdy institution entering its new phase as a “little university.” In tracing this history, Potts gives
historians a trove of information and perspective on the modernization of American higher education, along with a model for crafting significant institutional history.

This work stands out for both depth and organization. The story of these seven decades takes more than four hundred pages, with another two hundred for notes and charts to buttress the findings. However, Potts fully intends such a thorough roadmap. Recognizing that few are likely again to comb the mile-long shelf of Wesleyan’s well-tended archives, he lays a path for subsequent historians to find, study, and reinterpret data on Wesleyan and its history. Happily, a reader rarely feels lost in the “high pixel count” (p. xxii), as Potts organizes the story through both chronology and theme.

Chronology makes sense for such a sweeping history. Here, each chapter represents a decade, and some chapters are longer than others, depending on developments. Within chapters, Potts highlights recurrent themes, again letting significance determine his scholarly attention. Arguing that colleges are themselves “organisms,” he presents a story “researched and written as the biography of an organism . . . [with] a steady eye on all its vital organs” (p. xix). Those “organs” consist of actors, including faculty, students, administrators, trustees, and alumni; methods, especially curriculum, admission decisions, and campus investment; and means, most notably, money, whether from tuition, foundations, donors, or other enterprises. With such a wide scope, Potts appeals to Wesleyan-based readers looking for specific material, such as the growth of fraternities or how campus facilities grew, as well as to scholars exploring curriculum change or faculty growth at a representative New England college.

Scholars will find here many threads that follow signature twentieth-century developments: growth and change in administrative functions; shifts in collegiate enrollments and student demography, including race, class, gender, and religion; curricular debates; the impact of two world wars, both on the campus and on the faculty and students (and in Wesleyan’s case, presidents) who chose military service; the impact of the Great Depression; the lengthy, nuanced shift from denominational identification (Methodist) to secular status following acceptance into the Carnegie Foundation pension plan; ongoing efforts to match and supersede a comparison group (here, the “Little Three” prestigious liberal arts colleges: Williams, Amherst, and Wesleyan); the role of philanthropy; and shifts in faculty focus.

In this abundant book, three emblematic stories highlight different intersections of Wesleyan’s importance and larger significance. The first opens Potts’s book: the 1913 resignation of Professor Willard Fisher. Fisher’s case is prominent in studies of academic freedom and the creation of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).
At a time before contract rights, tenure, and academic freedom were well established on American campuses, Fisher provided a test case for faculty seemingly ousted for expressing unpopular or unwelcome opinions. Having taught economics and social science at Wesleyan since 1892, Fisher had increasingly distanced himself from colleagues and the campus environment. A challenging “independent” personality, Fisher freely expressed radical, even socialist, viewpoints. He taught Marxism, endorsed trade unions, and supported boycotts. Eventually, Fisher entered local politics and twice served as mayor of Middletown, Connecticut, all while teaching at Wesleyan.

The incident that precipitated the college’s pressure and his decision to resign came when Fisher publicly questioned the value of churchgoing, an unwelcome opinion on a campus still working to dislodge its Methodist roots. Such a public statement provided the spark the college—especially the trustees—needed to agitate for Fisher’s dismissal. Potts traces efforts whereby certain trustees and the president effected Fisher’s resignation. He also demonstrates that, except for some mild remonstrances when Fisher left, Wesleyan’s faculty and students showed little upset over a case that subsequently gained national recognition. Enlarging the case from local anomaly to national exemplar, Potts shows how members of the American Economic Association took up Fisher’s case as an early test of academic freedom, and how those leaders used Fisher to establish the AAUP’s approach to academic freedom, job security, and tenure.

A second notable Wesleyan story also exemplifies historical developments: the thirty-two-year career of Victor L. Butterfield, who joined Wesleyan as its first formal director of admissions. After eight years of increasingly central administrative roles, Butterfield became the college’s president in 1943, serving until 1967. His career typifies the mid-twentieth century growth of collegiate administration as well as an individual’s impact on a campus.

Before Butterfield’s arrival in 1935, Wesleyan’s admissions work—like that of most campuses—was handled by a faculty member given teaching relief to manage the workload. But as the Depression challenged enrollments, colleges increasingly strategized recruitment efforts. Butterfield brought energy and new ideas to student recruitment: he developed an impressive publication showcasing Wesleyan and its views on liberal education (precursor to later “view books”), began requiring the Scholastic Aptitude Test to measure intellectual depth in the applicant pool, and traveled to high schools around and beyond New England to cast a wider net.

Butterfield soon moved beyond admissions. He held a PhD in philosophy from Harvard, was well connected to faculty and administrators at prestigious institutions, and was devoted to ideals of liberal
education. With this intellectual heft, Butterfield made strong connections with Wesleyan’s faculty, soon becoming associate dean, and eventually the number three person in Wesleyan’s administrative hierarchy. He was a suitably strong presence when long-serving president James McConaughy joined the war effort by heading United China Relief in New York City. When McConaughy’s strong political ambitions—leading to the governorship of Connecticut in 1946—prompted his departure, Butterfield was tapped as the new Wesleyan leader.

Butterfield’s story addresses challenges to liberal education during mid-century; he argued passionately for the importance of character and service, even while pressure grew for practicality and specialization. He also exemplifies strong presidential influence over faculty growth, shaping Wesleyan’s future by personally recruiting and nurturing dozens of new faculty. Before departmental specialization and authority were clearly established, this energetic president handpicked teachers who supported his view of interdisciplinarity as the foundation of liberal arts. And when some changed perspective over time, especially as Wesleyan developed university ambitions, Butterfield exemplifies tensions between faculty strength and administrative influence.

A third notable story, while quite specific to Wesleyan, demonstrates both the impact of financial good fortune and the ongoing significance of auxiliary enterprises in collegiate history. In 1948, trustee Stuart Hedden led Wesleyan’s purchase of American Education Press, publisher of the school-based *My Weekly Reader*. Combining careful management with the largesse of burgeoning postwar school enrollments, Wesleyan’s seventeen-year ownership of the press would net revenue of $125 million. In this history, Potts finds a gold mine of information about how colleges approached financial challenges after World War II (seeking more students and new ventures), how they stretched investments beyond obvious educational connections (one college bought a macaroni manufacturer, another an auto parts business), how such moves caught the sharp attention of the Internal Revenue Service (both Congress and the IRS challenged such questionable applications of tax-exempt status), and how Wesleyan—carefully managing its investment and the tax implications—reaped financial rewards that assured its fiscal stability and reputational growth.

Scholars will readily find in Potts’s history similar cases and stories that illustrate or complicate historical questions. Some quibbles result naturally from the book’s encyclopedic nature. For instance, the Fisher case, which opens chapter one with an engaging narrative style, demonstrates the authorial challenge of sustaining such narration when the material inevitably becomes a careful chronicle of less-dynamic aspects of Wesleyan life. Also, although Potts excels at bringing a wider historical lens to Wesleyan’s story, the continued comparisons to Amherst and
Williams feel limiting. Readers gain a good sense of how prestigious New England men’s colleges navigated the mid-twentieth century, but hunger for discussion placing Wesleyan beyond that context. Finally, the last chapter on the 1960s pales in comparison to its predecessors. The material is covered more quickly and in a year-by-year approach lacking deep attention to matters such as the radical student movement or changes in the federal role. Although Potts acknowledges that the start of Wesleyan’s “little university” period in the 1960s “is left to others to pursue” (p. 383), a reader nevertheless wishes for deeper coverage of that important decade. Overall, this history is clearly a labor of love by an alumnus with impeccable historical skills and keen appreciation for the value of institutional history. If every American college somehow commanded similar attention, our work as historical analysts would be immensely invigorated.

Wheaton College Linda Eisenmann


What is the relationship between research and practice in K–12 classrooms and what does it tell us about American education? Jack Schneider considers this critical question in his 2014 book, *From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolhouse: How Scholarship Becomes Common Knowledge in Education*. Schneider argues that the bulk of educational research with practical implications, of which he claims there is plenty, rarely informs its intended audience—classroom teachers. He surmises this is due to the lack of time K–12 teachers have to consume it in any given workday, a structural problem over which they have little control. Schneider also contends that local control is a formidable obstacle to getting educational research to inform practice. On this point, Schneider laments the fact that the real benefits of educational research are lost because of decisions on “how things are taught” at the local level or, as he states, “when teachers close their classroom doors, they are the ultimate arbiters of teaching method” (p. 6). Schneider argues that we have a structural and cultural problem, but also that teachers are at the root of this predicament, since, as he claims, they have “the least capacity to consume research” yet “have the greatest power to implement it” (p. 6).

Schneider suggests that it would take a large coordinated effort to solve the research-practice gap, but offers historical cases where that
divide narrowed. In fact, Schneider argues that there have been particular scholarly ideas that have proven especially attractive to classroom teachers. These ideas possess four salient characteristics: perceived significance, philosophical compatibility, occupational realism, and transportability. The first characteristic of import for teachers is perceived significance. Teachers require research to be of practical value, and it needs to have universal value or, in other words, it must transfer across content and grade levels. According to Schneider, neither the celebrity of the scholar’s institution nor the sophistication of the research design or robustness of its findings will convince teachers like the practicality of its implications. Second, teachers are interested in philosophical compatibility—research that supports beliefs they already hold as educators. This would include ideas such as “all children can learn” (p. 8). The third characteristic is occupational realism, which is the test of how expediently a research idea can be implemented within the context of the classroom. Ideas that can be adopted with ease would, in all likelihood, be readily accepted into more classrooms. The final and fourth characteristic Schneider offers is transportability. This element is key to Schneider’s argument, since it focuses on the idea that research that is easily boiled down to a straightforward idea or set of ideas has a greater chance of wider dissemination among teachers.

Schneider takes these characteristics, applies them to four research ideas that he estimates met these criteria, and examines their history. He traces the research and implementation lives of Bloom’s Taxonomy, multiple intelligences, the project method, and direct instruction. He devotes a chapter to each in which he details how the particular research-based practice was introduced to K–12 educators. Schneider explores why some of these ideas made headway quicker than others and how some had uneven acceptance, e.g., direct instruction, but remained popular, albeit if not with the same group of educators over time.

He also analyzes why ideas like multiple intelligences were readily picked up by teachers and applied to their classroom practice and marketed relentlessly by professional developers and curriculum publishers. To demonstrate further how these ideas succeeded over others, Schneider includes a chapter that examines competing ideas for each of those he highlighted as successful. He holds up these nonexemplars that did not meet his four characteristics, even though they possess value as educational research. This is an effective way to demonstrate how ideas that came about with similar attributes, but that did not meet all of the criteria, did not prove successful with teachers.

In the final section of the book, Schneider concludes by proposing a solution based on the four characteristics that, according to Schneider, make research more accessible and translatable to K–12 classroom teachers. He expands the notion of each characteristic by
suggesting ways that we might attach strategies to promote them. For example, perceived significance could be enhanced by having colleges of education serve as clearinghouses of research for that which is most significant and relevant for teaching and learning. He continues this idea with each characteristic and proposes ways in which scholars, for the most part, and to some degree teachers, policy makers, and others, can be engaged in solutions of bridging the research-practice divide. As he brings the book to a close, he attempts to thwart skeptics from taking issue with his solutions and the need to bring teachers to the table, rather than endorse reform efforts that sidestep them. Schneider’s authenticity on this point is somewhat lacking: many of his solutions privilege the “ivory tower” over the “schoolhouse” and echo his comment that research needs to be vetted for teachers, since he believes they lack the capacity to understand it.

*From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolhouse* presents case studies of important research ideas with instructional implications. These historical accounts are valuable contributions to the history of education. Schneider also gives a solid answer to his central question: What is the relationship between research and practice in K–12 classrooms and what does it tell us about American education? The response is a textured one with a complicated and uneven relationship between educational research, teachers, and classroom practice due to the decentralized system of education in the United States. However, it is not lost on readers that this is of great concern and frustration to Schneider. Also of concern to him is that he believes teachers lack the capability, and perhaps the interest, in making sense of educational research to improve teaching and learning. This oversimplification of teachers detracts from the book’s overriding aim at proposing solutions. A more nuanced approach would acknowledge that just as American education is diverse and complex, so are its teachers. Many teachers are quite capable of reading research and integrating it into their practice and have done so beyond the four examples Schneider gives. There is a wealth of educational research that can improve teaching and learning. The reality of a decentralized system of education does make it difficult to disseminate quality and practical research, but this means there is a great deal for researchers to learn about how to better reach their target audience—classroom teachers—which Schneider acknowledges. Perhaps solutions where we work jointly to learn together for our mutual benefit and, most importantly, the improved learning of K–12 students, are in order.

Loyola University, Chicago Ann Marie Ryan