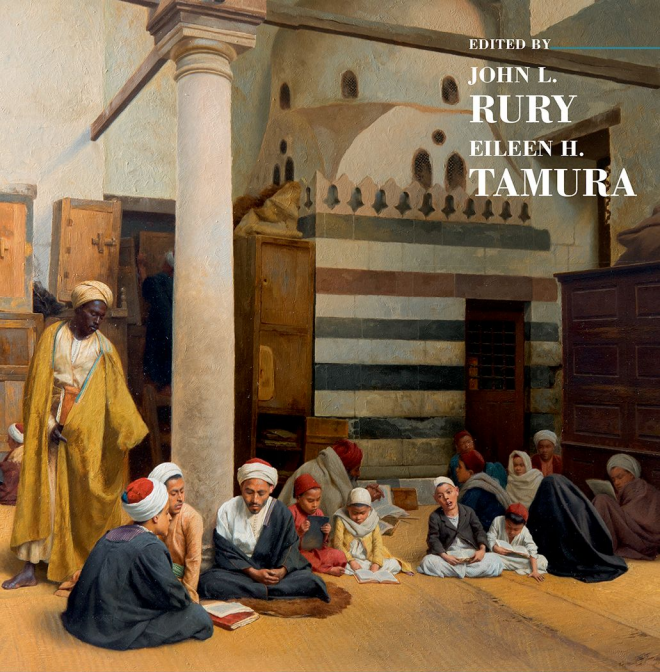




EDITED BY

JOHN L.

RURY

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TAMURA

≡ The Oxford Handbook of
**THE HISTORY
OF EDUCATION**

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

THE HISTORY
OF EDUCATION

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and

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INTRODUCTION

a multifaceted and flourishing field

JOHN L. RURY AND EILEEN H. TAMURA

THE history of education is an old and expansive field of scholarship, global in purview and touching upon a wide range of issues in social, intellectual, and political history, along with other scholarly domains. Systematic historical accounts of education as a discrete institutional domain appeared at least as early as the first half of the nineteenth century, in concert with the rise of state-affiliated schooling, and even earlier in more general terms. For the next century or more, most work in the field focused on emergent national systems of education, a major development of the period. It was not until the twentieth century that the history of education began to develop as an identifiable subfield of teaching, research, and writing in many countries, although it lacked such academic accoutrements as scholarly journals and regular professional conferences until the latter twentieth century. Like many other realms of historical scholarship, it took a while for the history of education to acquire a distinctive academic identity.

Once the field had gained a firm academic footing, the body of scholarship within it expanded enormously, especially after the 1960s. Much of this work has been published in English, but it has increased in other languages as well. For the most part, this growing research literature has retained a preoccupation with educational problems in particular locales, framed by state systems of schooling. But exposure to the work of scholars in other disciplines, the social sciences in particular, has offered a somewhat wider purview to consider as well. As a result, the history of education has begun to transcend disciplinary borders as a coherent and integrated field in many respects, even if much research and writing remains focused on topics defined in national terms. At the same time, it has experienced a variety of interpretive and methodological debates and, consequently, has undergone considerable change.

THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A FIELD

The earliest modern historical accounts of teachers and schools date from the eighteenth century. Although historical accounts of education were written before the rise of formal or specialized teacher training in the nineteenth century, the emergence of this institutional apparatus provided a firm professional footing for the field. In these circumstances the history of education as a course of study flourished. It was intended to provide prospective teachers with an understanding of pedagogical theories and methods of teaching that had been utilized in the past, along with a commitment to nationalistic goals for popular education. Such instruction was often didactic in nature, a litany of failures and successes in the quest to establish clear guidelines about preferred approaches to education. The history of education also became a means of developing professional identities for educators, especially as school systems grew in size and complexity. The field became widely associated with narratives of progress, often depicting modern schools as marching forward in the face of adversity, typically with contemporary bureaucratic and differentiated administrative structures portrayed as the pinnacle of educational thought and practice. The purpose of such history was less a matter of critical reflection on educational problems of the past than reinforcement of professional commitment to existing school organizations and the social and political purposes they served.

Given this orientation, the research agenda and historiography of the field was rather constricted through much of the first half of the twentieth century, and for some time afterward as well. Since it was generally taught in schools or departments of education, it was largely isolated from historians working elsewhere in universities, many of whom—like liberal arts scholars in many fields—held a rather low opinion of the intellectual merits of education as an academic domain. There were a small number of academic historians who studied certain aspects of educational history, but most viewed it as a rather specific topic within social or cultural history rather than a clearly distinctive and established branch of historical scholarship. The result was a degree of incoherence and arrested development, with some topics—such as university history—receiving considerably more attention than most others. A strong tradition of research on the history of ideas in education was especially notable in Europe and exerted influence elsewhere.¹ But the field remained largely isolated from broader trends in the study of history. It would take a period of profound social and economic change in the late twentieth century to finally alter this state of affairs.

Like many other subfields of historical research and writing, the history of education was deeply affected by the global social and political upheaval that occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Education had become a critically important aspect of social and economic development, as enrollments in secondary and tertiary sectors of national school systems increased rapidly around the world. As expectations for educational attainment rose sharply, inequality in access to advanced levels of schooling and the means of academic success became highly potent political issues. Migration patterns that brought millions of newcomers from the countryside to major cities, occurring in the nineteenth century in industrialized countries and some decades later in developing nations, highlighted urban poverty. Social class differences that had simmered before the turn of the twentieth century

once again became significant issues of contention during the 1960s and beyond, especially with the decline of factory employment and the heightened importance of formal education. In a relatively short time, education became a vital social question, affecting a large and growing segment of the world's population, and a new generation of historians became interested in exploring previously unexamined dimensions of its past.²

The history of education was hardly the only field of historical inquiry to be affected by the social and political turmoil of the era. Historical scholarship in much of the world was turning decisively away from the political orientation of earlier research and writing, toward an abiding focus on social and economic history. It was the era of "history from the bottom up," influenced by social protest, much of it on campuses in Western countries, and by a resurgence of academic Marxism that took a variety of forms. Left-wing historians such as Eric Hobsbawm and E. P. Thompson in Britain and members of the *Annales* School in France became influential sources of inspiration, along with the Bielefeld School in Germany and figures such as Peter Stearns, Gerda Lerner, and Herbert Gutman in the United States. There was renewed interest in history as uncovering dimensions of social change that had long been overlooked, especially the experiences of nonelite or otherwise ordinary people and the circumstances that helped shape their lives.³

Working in the spirit of the "new social history," historians began to examine previously unexplored dimensions of the educational past as well. This was the era of revisionism in educational history, a development evident in a number of countries. Harvard colonial historian Bernard Bailyn contributed to it in 1960 by calling for greater attention to the vast array of formal and informal educational influences that shaped learning in an era before modern school systems had appeared. In addition to this, historians such as Philippe Ariès in France and Brian Simon and Joan Simon in Great Britain, along with Michael Katz and Clarence Karier in the United States, also offered new ways of thinking about the role and development of education in different contexts. Like Bailyn's, theirs was not a narrative of progress in the face of adversity. Rather, it was a tale of inequity and conflict, struggle against dominant and exploitative authorities, and the identification of deeply rooted cultural change. As a consequence, perceptions of the field began to change. In this light, education no longer seemed like a narrow and isolated estuary in the landscape of historical research and writing. It was an institution, after all, that touched upon almost all of society, including groups that had long suffered discrimination and exclusion. These new educational histories were hardly tales of advancement and triumph. This was the great appeal of this flavor of revisionism in educational history: it seemed to turn on its head the conventional narrative long associated with the field.

This changing conceptualization of the past was hardly limited to educational historians. The rise of the so-called new history kindled an interest in education among other academic historians, and a growing number began to examine schools, students, and teachers as aspects of popular experience that warranted sustained investigation, particularly with respect to their roles in the larger social context. One telling sign of this was an international faculty seminar focusing specifically on the history of education, directed by prominent British historian Lawrence Stone at Princeton University between 1969 and 1973. Reflecting this changing scholarly landscape, the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, *Daedalus*, offered a special issue in 1971 titled "Historical Studies Today," featuring articles by Stone, Hobsbawm, Felix Gilbert, and a number of other scholars on various aspects of historical study, including one on the history of education. Written by John Talbott,

a young historian at Princeton who studied French education, that contribution signaled a decisive turn for the field. Talbot argued that education stood at the nexus of the study of children and families, literacy and social status, and many other facets of social history that had been long neglected. Even if he was dubious about its standing as a unique field of study, it represented a clarion call for a broader, more expansive way of thinking about education as a historical question.⁴

Attention to education as an object of historical study was abetted by the rise of parallel subfields that often touched upon it, even if only tangentially. These developments also reflected the impact of the new social history. As suggested earlier, the pioneering work of Ariès was quite influential, well beyond educational history. His provocative thesis about the “discovery” of childhood prompted additional historical studies of children in France and other countries, along with renewed attention to the history of families and family life around the world. Accordingly, the history of childhood and the history of the family emerged as growing areas of study during the 1970s and beyond. These developments were influenced by heightened interest in gender as a long-ignored dimension of historical experience, especially following the work of Louise Tilly and Joan Scott on women’s roles in family life. Somewhat more closely related to education, the history of literacy also came into view as a distinctive topic of research at about the same time, drawing attention from economic and social historians, in addition to scholars interested in the history of education. For a time, studies in so-called psychohistory also proved to be stimulating to historians studying education. As cultural history came into fashion during the 1980s and 1990s, this too cast education in a somewhat new light. All of these various fields of historical study shared an interest in one facet or another of human development, an abiding concern of education as a domain of institutional and individual activity. These events helped to make the history of education a point of interest to a much wider range of scholars than had been the case prior to the 1960s.⁵

At the same time that the history of education was being reconsidered in this light, a minor methodological revolution was beginning to agitate the discipline of history, one with important implications for the study of education in the past. With the advent of modern computing for research and data analysis, it became possible to utilize large-scale quantitative evidence to address a wide range of historical problems. Understandably, these methods were most readily used by economic historians, but it was not long before they were employed in social history as well. This adaptation was pioneered by Fernand Braudel and his colleagues in the *Annales* School during the 1950s and 1960s. Elsewhere Stephan Thernstrom’s studies of social mobility were quite influential in the United States, as was the work of Peter Laslett’s research group on family structure in Britain. There were many others, and certain subfields such as urban history were dramatically revived. It certainly appeared as though time-honored approaches to historical research and writing were on the verge of being fundamentally changed.

By the late 1960s historians of education had begun using these methods to study inequality in education and its relationship to factors such as ethnicity and social class, especially in quantitative studies of school attendance. This body of work developed first in North America but eventually spread to other parts of the world. Since education research was historically linked to the development of statistical methods and schools had generated a wide variety of statistical data for decades, the connection seemed natural for some educational historians, but not for many others, particularly those who had long focused on the

history of educational ideas. The quantitative era of historical research in education thus turned out to be relatively short-lived, as it was in the larger historical profession. This somewhat fleeting attraction to quantification illustrates educational historians' rather eclectic approach to evidence and methodology. This was true long before the quantitative revolution and remains so today.⁶

What has emerged in the types of evidentiary sources used by educational historians includes not only written documents and statistical data, the latter of which have not been entirely eschewed, but also increasing sophistication in analyzing photographs, film, archaeological findings, building and furniture design, oral histories, and the like. These developments in sources and methods provide a wealth of material that enables scholars to examine the lives and experiences not only of educational leaders and other prominent figures but, importantly, of those who constitute most of society: ordinary people, including children and youth, parents, and teachers.

In conjunction with changing methodological approaches and new forms of historical evidence, historians of education also became more conscious users of social theory. There were sharp debates about the links between schools and industrialization, literacy and social inequality, and a number of related questions that could be tied to sociological theories of conflict and change. Historians of education waded into these controversies, representing a wide variety of viewpoints and dispositions. Neo-Marxist perspectives became quite influential during the 1970s, finding expression in historical writing about education on both sides of the Atlantic. The reaction within the field differed in these settings, however, becoming rather shrill in the United States, while finding a more sympathetic reception in Great Britain, in Europe, and elsewhere. Perhaps the more important lesson was that it had become quite impossible to think of the history of education without considering a larger theoretical frame of social and economic conflict and change. Clearly the days when a celebratory history of educational growth and success would suffice were long gone, and while some lamented this, most historians were unwilling to tolerate such an unsophisticated and sanguine account of the educational past.⁷

THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Historians have responded to the global nature of education, reaching far back to premodern times and in all areas of the world. East Asia, for example, has been an important region for historical studies. Scholars have examined Chinese educational traditions dating back to the second millennium BCE, when scribes learned the practice of etching symbols onto deer and turtle shells. From these early times, China developed a sophisticated educational tradition based on Confucian ethics, which eventually spread throughout East Asia and beyond. Since the late twentieth century, scholarship on East Asia has moved into the history of women's education and the history of literacy, and local studies have brought to light the wide diversity within the nation-states.

Ancient Greece and Rome have also been places for fertile historical research. Historians have found a wealth of sources in students' work and teaching materials, including exercises

in reading, handwriting, and composition, as well as literary works used for edification. Of continued interest to historians are the linkages between these past practices and later Western developments in education, including those of medieval Europe, and extending well beyond in time.

Independent of its educational linkages with ancient Greece and Rome, medieval Europe achieved a consequential development that began in the twelfth century. This was the inception and gradual evolution of a form of higher education that became the university, with Christian theology taking center stage in the curriculum. Historians have examined these changes, as well as the spread and further development of the university, including its increase in professionalization and secularization during the centuries that followed.

Other far-reaching changes occurred in Europe and North America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as the emergence of the research university that was pioneered by Germany and influenced by the Industrial Revolution, and the use of universities as places of research for military purposes during and after the two world wars. Beginning in the late twentieth and continuing into the twenty-first century, increased globalization witnessed the heightened internationalization of student bodies, the establishment of satellite campuses situated beyond national borders, and virtual, online courses that reached students worldwide.

A global phenomenon, first occurring in Europe and North America beginning in the twentieth century, and later in Asia and parts of Africa and Latin America beginning later in the century, was the dramatic rise in student enrollment, often encouraged by governments seeking to boost national development. At the same time, this remarkable increase in demand for postsecondary education created tensions coming from the lack of sufficient public funding, as well as the limited human and physical capacity to meet the needs of increased enrollment.

Substantial historical work has been achieved on these far-reaching developments in higher education, focused particularly on Europe, North America, and Asia. Since the late twentieth century, issues of race and ethnicity, class, gender, and religion as they impact higher education have garnered increasing interest, particularly among historians of North America and Europe. These issues can be expected to be subjects of increasing interest in historical studies of higher education in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. In the areas of comparative and transnational histories concerning higher education, much has yet to be achieved.

While historians of the first half of the twentieth century were more interested in writing about universities than other aspects of educational history, this began to change in the decades that followed. During the second half of the twentieth century, historical literature on multiple aspects of education proliferated, including studies on the development of national education systems in different areas of the world. Emerging from the rise of nationalism, these school systems promoted the state's interests through citizenship education and the teaching of the nation's history. Beginning in Prussia in the late eighteenth century and spreading across Europe and North America in succeeding decades, the notion of using education to promote the nation-state spread globally through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In Latin America, as in other areas of the world, school reformers sought to expand primary and secondary schooling and spread literacy to promote loyalty to the government and create a more productive society. These efforts, which saw their beginnings during the

colonial period, gained force after independence. Historians have examined these endeavors, such as the role demanded of schooling in building strong nation-states, and the varied responses to those initiatives. More has yet to be done, on topics previously researched as well as ones less studied, such as gender issues in education and their relationship to the larger society.

As with Latin America, histories of education systems in the Middle East point to the inculcation of nationalism as a driving force for the spread of schooling. During the first half of the twentieth century, and extending into the second half, formal education was used to promote anti-imperialistic sentiments as well as loyalty to national leadership. Extant studies on these and other issues indicate that Middle East educational history is a growing field of research that is expected to broaden and deepen in the future. The same can be said about studies on Australia, New Zealand, North America, Europe, and Asia, where historians are expected to continue producing in-depth examinations on a wide variety of educational topics, including school systems.

In contrast, historical research on education within the large continent of Africa has been relatively minimal. There, newly independent governments beginning in the 1950s expanded colonial-government schools into national education systems. Financial limitations and lack of sufficient capacity brought challenges to efforts to provide quality mass primary education, particularly in rural areas, and difficulties in developing appropriate vocational education at the secondary level. Historians have questioned earlier views of African peoples as passive recipients of Western influences, instead positing them as actively engaged in using schools to meet their political, economic, and social agendas. Yet much awaits researchers interested in filling gaps in understanding African education during the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods.

While education in the modern era was framed largely in terms of the nation-state, the historical study of its problems and patterns of development has crossed borders, traversed continents, and spanned the globe. There is a long history of historical inquiry, commentary, and analysis of this type. Much of it was initially inspired by curiosity about the development of national education systems elsewhere or even particular schools or districts known for innovation or success of one sort or another. Missions to study models of education in leading countries, such as Germany or the United States, became fairly commonplace during the late nineteenth century. Before long this sort of work acquired a scholarly flavor, giving rise to the academic field of comparative education, which featured a strong historical component for much of its formative period. Comparative education eventually would foster sustained sociological inquiry into international patterns of educational development, with important theoretical and methodological implications for historians to consider.

As inquiry into education in other nations and places has held continual interest among historians, the increase in the worldwide movement of people and ideas and the upsurge in global interconnections in production, commerce, and communication contributed to a powerful challenge to the conceptual dominance of “nation” as the preeminent framework for study. The 1990s witnessed a breakthrough among historians, and to a somewhat lesser degree among educational historians, to embrace the notion of transnationalism and the need to rethink assumptions and reconsider conventional understandings. There was a push to reassess transcultural and transnational issues, to examine in new ways the social forces that transcend nation-states.⁸

A major stumbling block has been methodological. Such studies require extensive archival work in more than one nation and a facility with more than one language. Oftentimes these challenges can be surmounted by close collaborative work of two or more historians, resulting in book projects that go beyond edited collections of single-authored chapters. Two areas that have much potential for promising work are diasporic studies and colonial and postcolonial histories.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, European and American colonial powers established schools, colleges, and other educational institutions for a variety of purposes, assisted in many respects by religious authorities interested in teaching subject populations about the advantages of the traditions of their particular faiths. These efforts often displaced or altered indigenous educational activities and institutions, resulting in social and cultural changes that afforded greater power and prestige to colonial authorities. Western models of education became associated with progress, a tendency abetted by ethnocentric attitudes and discriminatory policy agendas that favored indigenous elites and Western nationals. These proclivities were clearly reflected in the early literature describing education in colonial settings during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁹

In the post-World War II era, liberation struggles shifted the political dynamics of Western influence in former colonies and altered the ways that historians and other scholars viewed the development of education in those parts of the world. Many limitations of the colonial regimes were acknowledged and described by Western and indigenous scholars alike, as so-called developing nations undertook ambitious investments in primary and secondary schooling to equip their citizens for a global future. These efforts did not realize uniform levels of success, however, and the eventual failure of many “emerging” nations to achieve political stability and sustained economic growth contributed to the development of postcolonial studies to reconsider their histories in a new light. Historical writing conducted in this vein considered the impact of colonial regimes upon indigenous institutions and practices, often posing alternative visions of social and political development to illustrate what had been lost. Such studies implicitly or explicitly rejected the proposition that Western models of economic development represented a predictable path to social and political improvement. And education often has been taken to be an important consideration in these debates.¹⁰

The postcolonial perspective has been challenged in some respects by sociologists who adopted a very different perspective on educational development in the 1970s and beyond. So-called neo-institutionalists argued that the growth of modern schools was spurred by status competition and popular beliefs that formal education was the key to a better future. They also maintained that it was linked to the rise of the nation-state and the necessity of training citizens to be loyal and responsible members of a national polity. Studies of enrollment expansion suggested that schooling became a global institutional phenomenon following World War II, and its development was largely independent of economic or political differences among nations. Reflecting the influence of neo-Weberian sociologist Randall Collins, the scholars John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, and their students and colleagues conducted a wide range of studies examining the international growth of educational institutions in different historical contexts. They also exerted a telling influence on many historians, especially in the United States, where studies of school reform and institutional behavior came into prominence during the 1990s. The neo-institutionalist perspective was also widely criticized by other historians, especially those who believed that it overlooked important

dimensions of educational inequality, along with struggles to overcome social problems through education in a wide variety of settings. It continues to be a point of controversy.¹¹

At the same time that sociologists offered new historical perspectives with which to consider education in comparative and transnational frames, economists continued to study it from the standpoint of human capital formation. This too was largely a product of the post-World War II era and was especially influential during the 1960s and 1970s, although it experienced a revival after 1990. At the center of this renewed interest stood the research of economic historian Claudia Goldin and her frequent coauthor, Lawrence Katz. Beginning with a series of articles in the 1990s, this line of work culminated in *The Race between Education and Technology*, published in 2008. Goldin and Katz argued that the growth of public education in the United States, particularly at the secondary level, had provided the skilled and knowledgeable workforce that made the nation's technological advances possible. While focused on the United States, the study was at least implicitly comparative insofar as American educational and economic development was contrasted with that of other countries. Other economic historians subsequently have examined schooling in other settings. Like the neo-institutionalists, Goldin and Katz used history to formulate a more general theory about education as a factor in social and economic development. Unlike the sociologists, however, they argued that schooling contributed directly to human capital formation and greater prosperity, at the same time implying that financial gain (a wage premium for schooling) provided an incentive for many Americans to seek higher educational attainment.¹²

For the most part, educational historians were spectators to the debates among social scientists over how to view the development of education internationally in the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. This did not mean, however, that they refrained from critiquing these viewpoints. As a rule they found the aggregate statistical analyses employed in each of these camps to be somewhat ahistorical, especially in their failure to consider the particular social and cultural conditions that affected educational institutions and the people who utilized them. It was one thing to observe that education grew rapidly in the United States and other countries, but another to say why. Where sociologists and economists offered theoretical propositions about such questions, even if supported with quantitative evidence, historians constructed stories from the standpoint of participants and witnesses. The result often was a more complex and variegated account of educational change, eschewing generalization in favor of meticulous accounting of local circumstances. This too contributed to comparative analysis, but in a manner that remained attentive to particular facets of local culture, political conditions, and additional factors that affected the development of schools and other educative institutions.¹³

Since the 1970s greater attention has been devoted to this sort of comparative history of education, fostered in part by the influence of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE). Its annual meetings, held in different cities around the world, have brought hundreds of scholars together from a range of countries, and its journal, *Paedagogica Historica*, offers special issues on conference themes that permit comparative perspectives on a variety of issues. In this regard it has served both as a trend-setting forum and a source of reflection on new directions in the larger field of historical research on education.¹⁴

In this spirit, a number of books were published that reflect this approach, examining the growth of education in different periods and parts of the world, comparing the experiences

of institution-builders in various national settings. These were collections of essays that began with a range of countries and localities, offering at least the promise of a comparative perspective. Much work remains to be done, however, before a more analytically robust and comprehensively conceived comparative and transnational body of research and writing can emerge from the field. Forming teams of historians with a variety of specializations and methodological skills may well be one way for realizing the promise of such historical work in education. This, of course, would require the commitment of substantial resources to undertake projects organized on such a scale. Since most funding agencies traditionally associated with education and its history have a national or local orientation, it is difficult to imagine how such ventures might be organized and sustained. Consequently, it remains a problem to be addressed in the future.¹⁵

A CHANGING FIELD OF STUDY

As education is a global phenomenon, extending back in time to the earliest stages of humankind, so the potential parameters of the history of education as an academic field are indeed quite wide. With respect to institutional history, formal education has largely developed in conjunction with religious or governmental authorities in particular locales, often with distinctive cultural or social factors at play. This was the focus of early histories of education, often from a local or national perspective. The revisionist historians of the 1960s and 1970s, moreover, were generally interested in institutional questions as well, albeit with a leftist perspective. This resulted in a complex, multidimensional historical record, which has continued to develop since the mid-twentieth century.

Following the 1970s, new dimensions were added to this rather familiar narrative, as historians began devoting more attention to groups and individuals who experienced exclusion and marginalization in educational systems. While this may not have been labeled a revisionist turn in quite the same fashion as the radicals of earlier years, it ultimately was no less transformational. Following trends in the larger field of historical research and writing, historians of education have subtly shifted much of their attention from focusing on schools and other educational institutions to the experiences of children, youth, and adults who spent considerable portions of their lives in them. In many respects it represented a newly sensitized sociocultural turn in scholarly interests.

In studies of race, ethnicity, and sociocultural diversity, the African diaspora has long been a particular topic of interest to American historians of education, but also became a focal point for scholars in Brazil, Great Britain, and other parts of the world where people of African descent are found in significant numbers. In the United States, educational histories on Latinos have been growing, but much has yet to be done on Asian American educational histories. A field yet in its infancy is one centered on the educational histories of indigenous peoples. Scholars writing in the twentieth century discussed indigenous education during the colonial period in, for example, Latin America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and North America. For the precolonial period, there has been a proliferation of works on indigenous peoples globally, but studies focused explicitly on their educational histories have been rather sparse. Since the twenty-first century, historians have sought to fill the void by widening their evidentiary sources to include, for instance, ceremonial practices,

chants, legends, physical structures, and archaeological finds in order to piece together precolonial ways of teaching and learning.¹⁶

Also since the twenty-first century, historians of gender issues in education have been expanding their area of study. They have been filling lacunae created by studies dominated by the masculine perspective. They have inquired into underexamined subjects such as LGBTQ issues and have critiqued long-studied ones such as progressive education, thereby transforming the understanding of the educational past. Moreover scholars examining the educational histories of peoples who were un- or underrepresented in the literature have recognized the importance of moving beyond artificial boundaries created by works focused on single, discrete categories. They have understood the complexities of people's lives, which have been forged at the intersections of gender, race/ethnicity, and class. Studies employing the concept of intersectionality in educational history have laid the groundwork for a promising area of scholarship, yet to be fully developed.¹⁷

A number of topics continue to be of interest to educational historians, who have expanded and deepened their inquiries, often in newer ways. For example, after the history of childhood became a subject of heightened interest with the publication of Ariès's path-breaking study, the topic generated a considerable number of works. Research focused on the ways in which the shift from agriculture to manufacturing, and the subsequent move from child labor to compulsory schooling, affected children in different parts of the world. Particularly since the late twentieth century, historians have delved more deeply into issues of race, class, and gender as they affect children and youths. They have also inquired into the ways in which the environment—such as war, technology, consumerism, and globalization—impinge on and interact with youths.

One aspect of the environment—urbanization—became a subject of interest to historians seeking to understand the evolution and problems of city schools and school systems. In the second half of the twentieth century, this inquiry, undertaken primarily in the United States, eventually moved to other parts of the world as urbanization grew into a worldwide phenomenon, with urban blight a matter of serious concern. Since the late twentieth century, historical research on urban education has moved in fresh directions and approaches, with policy implications, as scholars attend to the roles of class, race, gender, language, and/or religion in schooling, while others argue that schools were not only products of urbanization but also creators of urban life. An area of inquiry yet to be fully examined is urban education's counterpart—rural education—and the change from rural to urban schooling.

Schools worldwide employed educators, of course, subjects of continual interest to historians. Since the 1970s, scholars have used both quantitative and qualitative sources to analyze school organizational structures and the actions and experiences of teachers and administrators. Particularly since the late twentieth century, historians have examined the interplay of race, class, religion, culture, and/or gender in the school building and school system within the context of the feminization of teaching.

But schools and school systems—formal schooling—have not been the only type of education of interest to historians. Since Bailyn's call in 1960 to look beyond schools for instances of the educative process, and particularly after Lawrence Cremin restated the call a decade later, historians have been more open to examining education that occurred beyond the schoolhouse door. But publications were few and far between until the early twenty-first century.

Since then, historians have investigated instances of nonformal education in, for example, clubs, apprenticeships, and job-related workshops and seminars. They have also explored instances of informal education, unorganized or unplanned, occurring in daily life and resulting in incidental learning that were at times as meaningful as, if not more so than, school learning. In this regard, they have responded to the challenge of sparse documentation. In delving into the education of indigenous peoples during precolonial times, for example, scholars have turned to chants, rituals, ceremonies, and other nontraditional historical sources. Researching other instances of informal education has required the necessity of analyzing the educative role of, for example, newspapers, magazines, television, games, the internet, social media, and the like. At the same time, a challenge has been that of addressing questions of whether and what kind of learning took place, questions for which oral histories, letters, and personal journals serve as valuable sources.

Other important issues await historical attention. One is the history of disability in education, which eventually culminated in the creation of so-called special education and disability studies as fields of education policy, research, and practice. Historians have devoted relatively little attention to this question, even though it has a long history. A similar point could be made about the history of assessment, and standardized testing in particular. These facets of educational systems have had an enormous impact on educational policy and the work of educators around the world. The history of educational thought, once a mainstay of the field, was largely neglected after 1970, with the exception of scholarship on progressive education.¹⁸ While each of these topics is in need of additional scholarly attention, there doubtless will be others as the theory and practice of education continues to evolve.

CONCLUSION

The history of education is an old and reputable field of study and one that has undergone considerable change. It is hardly a unique academic domain in that respect, although the factors that have contributed to its development have reflected the larger fields of scholarship and debate that influence educational practitioners. Professionally situated both within education as a distinctive arena of teaching, research, and writing and history as a disciplinary realm, historians of education have strived to address a variety of audiences. Academically isolated from the larger historical profession for many decades, they have achieved considerable scholarly recognition for their work since the 1960s. This was due to both a higher level of interest in education as a topic among academic historians and a growing range of interest among historians based in schools, colleges, and faculties of education around the world, not to mention conferences and journals to support and feature their work.

In addition to gaining scholarly legitimacy, historians of education have continued to be relevant to the larger field of educational research that they have traditionally served. In particular, they have addressed an array of topics that have proven quite critical both to educational practice and the social and political lives of societies around the world. In the wake of global social change, questions of cultural diversity, social harmony, and economic inequality have grown ever more important, and education systems are implicated to one degree or another in all of them. Given this, it seems likely that the field of historical research and writing on educational topics will continue to be important, both as a means of reflecting

on such issues and for aiding in the articulation of answers to the dilemmas they pose, offering valuable contributions both to educational research and historical scholarship.

NOTES

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PART I

INTERPRETIVE
FRAMES IN
EDUCATIONAL
HISTORY

CHAPTER 1

CONSENSUS AND REVISIONISM IN EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

GARY McCULLOCH

THE basic principle of revisionism is that an understanding of the past, although it may be widely shared and agreed upon, may still be challenged and effectively revised. Revisionism in this broad sense may be applied both to a general explanation of human history and to specific past events and trends. Over the past century and more, modern historical scholarship has developed techniques for informing and legitimizing revisionist accounts, and thus establishing the basis for historical revisionism. A critical awareness of historical ethics and methodology and of historiographical interpretations is a fundamental condition for the idea and practice of historical revisionism. The modern predilection of historical scholarship to encourage revisionist approaches has been followed with particular enthusiasm in the case of the history of education. This has been encouraged especially due to a growing dissatisfaction with the precepts and practices of a “traditional” historiography. It has tended to place a premium on historical explorations of the relationship between education and society. At the same time, consensus has been punctured by frequently heated debates over the nature and extent of social differences and conflicts, as well as over the scope of a history of education that is not confined to the development of modern schooling. These arguments have been influenced by the American and European literature but have differed in their detail and trajectory in different national and local contexts around the world. In the twenty-first century, historical revisionism continues to play an important part in refreshing the history of education and in questioning received accounts, a significant contribution that shows little sign of abating.

HISTORICAL REVISIONISM

The fictional character Winston Smith in the English novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, by George Orwell, is undoubtedly the ultimate revisionist. Smith works in the Records Department of the Ministry of Truth, where his role is to erase any evidence of the past that would be

inconvenient to the present requirements of the regime and to fabricate evidence that would support the current orthodoxy. For example, he rewrites the text of speeches and changes the original figures in output forecasts by making them agree with later ones. This process is completed systematically to achieve a revised version of the past. The newspaper *The Times*, widely regarded in the United Kingdom as the newspaper of record, would undergo "continuous alteration," so that "as soon as all the corrections which happened to be necessary in any particular number of *The Times* had been assembled and collated, that number would be reprinted, the original copy destroyed, and the corrected copy placed on the files in its stead." This process is also applied to books, periodicals, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, films, sound-tracks, cartoons, photographs, and indeed, "to every kind of literature or documentation which might conceivably hold any political or ideological significance." In this way, Orwell suggests, "Day by day and almost minute by minute the past was brought up to date. . . . All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as was necessary." These were acts of forgery, but Smith regards them as "merely the substitution of one piece of nonsense for another." Nothing about the past could be proved or disproved: "It might very well be that literally every word in the history books, even the things that one accepted without question, was pure fantasy. For all he knew there might never have been any such law as the *jus primae noctis*, or any such creature as a capitalist, or any such garment as a top hat."¹

This is a particularly graphic example of revisionism, and it is a fictional case, but still it serves to make a point. There were many cases in the twentieth century of the past being revised for political purposes. In the Soviet Union, Leon Trotsky was removed from photographs that showed his leading role in the Revolution and literally airbrushed from history. Some have denied that the Holocaust of the Jews in the Second World War ever really happened, ignoring available historical evidence that it did. In some countries, school history textbooks have appeared to owe more to current political orthodoxy than to historical accuracy. Such instances amply demonstrate that revisionism can amount to tampering with the past with no respect for historical truth or evidence. It may be based on falsification, invention, or expunging of events or individuals.²

Historical scholarship has developed in such a way as to provide many opportunities for revisionism, but also a number of safeguards against unethical and immoral revisionist practices. The modern historical profession has inculcated practices that permit vigorous debate but within a broad set of considerations that effectively set the limits for challenging previously agreed interpretations of the past. Among these, for example, is respect for available evidence, basing historical judgments on a rigorous analysis of documents or other data relating to a particular historical problem or period. This is also an ethical issue in terms of ensuring the probity of the evidence that is used. A further aspect is an awareness of the historical context being examined, to relate any reinterpretation to the specific period being assessed. Moreover a revision of previous views requires an understanding of historiographical trends and debates. It is a grounding in such key issues that tends to shape and condition the nature of historical revisionism, or what the historian Edward Hallett Carr described as "an unending dialogue between the present and the past." It was Carr who most clearly demonstrated how historians, themselves a part of society, modify and revise their view of the past as their angle on it changes.³

This overall trend has itself stemmed from a general shift in notions of history from the end of the nineteenth century. Although, as Fritz Stern once remarked, most historians

seem reluctant to articulate their views of history, over time their approaches have tended to adapt to their contemporary social, political, and economic contexts and have reflected broader intellectual currents. In the nineteenth century, as the modern academic discipline of history became established, historians generally emphasized a scientific rationale for their work, concentrating on the development of nation-states and their political systems, based on detailed scrutiny of available archival documentary sources. By the early twentieth century, a historical profession had emerged, with national historical associations to represent and support it, for example, in the United States (1889) and the United Kingdom (1904), and with key journals such as the *Historische Zeitschrift* (1859), the *Review Historique* (1876), the *English Historical Review* (1886), and the *American Historical Review* (1895). Specialization also increased, leading to different groups of historians concerned with specific and emerging issues in politics, society, and economics.

During the twentieth century, a succession of challenges arose against once-dominant orthodoxies in history that amounted to an all-encompassing wave of historical revisionism. As Jim Obelkivich points out, "The demand for a new history always begins in dissatisfaction with the old." Empiricist and positivist schools of thought, led by historians such as Leopold von Ranke and Thomas Babington Macaulay, had highlighted the importance of high politics and great individuals but increasingly came under critical scrutiny. A widespread tendency to present the past in terms of gradual progress and improvement, dubbed the Whig interpretation of history by Herbert Butterfield in the 1930s, gave way to accounts that questioned the extent and nature of such progress. Marxist interpretations offered new prominence for explanations of historical change framed around social class conflict, from Charles A. Beard in the USA in the early twentieth century to Edward Thompson and the "new" social history of the working class that was heralded in England in the 1960s. In France, the Annales School, named after the journal *Annales* (1929), pioneered another version of historical revisionism. This placed a new emphasis on the history of mentalities, a "total history" embracing the social sciences, which was intended by its leaders Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, and Fernand Braudel to transcend the previously dominant focus on personalities and events.⁴

From the 1960s onward, an ever wider range of social scientific theories and debates underpinned reinterpretations of many different dimensions of the past, leading to an upsurge of historical revisionism that appeared to resemble a "new history." For example, in 1990 Eric Foner, on behalf of the American Historical Association, celebrated the rise of "the new American history." According to Foner, in the course of the past twenty years, American history had been "remade." He argued, "Inspired initially by the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s—which shattered the 'consensus' vision that had dominated historical writing—and influenced by new methods borrowed from other disciplines, American historians redefined the very nature of historical study." Thus, he concluded, "the study of American history today looks far different than it did a generation ago." At the same time, he added, the diversity of the "new histories" also tended to fragment historical scholarship at least to some extent and to impede the attempt to create a coherent or integrated new vision of the historical experience.⁵

The extent and influence of historical revisionism during the twentieth century might be open to exaggeration. One leading British social historian, Arthur Marwick, observed approvingly in 1970 that the large majority of practicing historians "continued to deal exclusively with constitutional and political matters, continued to put the patient accumulation

of facts above sweeping interpretation, the use of documents above the use of tools borrowed from other disciplines.” Another British historian, David Cannadine, has also expressed some skepticism as to the claims to novelty declared by advocates of a “new” history: “Many of them make assertions concerning the novelty or importance of their own type of history which are at best over-stated, at worst incorrect; and we should assess their claims and manifestos about history with that same sort of critical acumen, contextual scrutiny and long-term perspective that we bring to bear on other forms of evidence from and about the past.”⁶ Nevertheless a general emphasis on challenging received orthodoxies was widely followed, and nowhere was this trend more evident than in the history of education.

REVISIONISM AND THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

The classic example of historical revisionism in the history of education occurred in the United States between the 1950s and 1970s. In the early twentieth century, the history of education tended to be practiced most often as part of a course for students preparing to be teachers rather than in university history departments. Sol Cohen observes that at the turn of the century, the special subject of educational history suffered from enormous internal problems of staffing, teaching load, and books. Indeed few schools or departments of education had trained historians on their faculty, while faculty members who taught history of education could not devote themselves solely to the subject. This situation had the effect in many cases of isolating educational history from contemporary historiographical trends, while it magnified the aspects of traditional history that were becoming unfashionable. The history of education as presented by historians such as Ellwood Cubberley in the 1920s and 1930s fostered a large amount of work that portrayed the educational past unproblematically as a story of continual improvement and refinement, led by a partnership between the education profession and a benign nation-state. Other historians of education after the Second World War saw the purpose of history of education as being to serve the cause of social reconstructionism.⁷ Such frameworks of interpretation were decisively challenged, first in the 1950s by a new initiative to reevaluate the role of education in American history, and then in the 1960s and 1970s by a more radical historical critique.

During the 1950s the Ford Foundation’s Fund for the Advancement of Education sponsored the development of the Committee on the Role of Education in American History. Under the auspices of the Fund, a conference of historians and others was held in December 1954 to propose new research topics, expanded by the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. to the proposition that education was the sum of the intellectual, emotional, and other influences that had combined to create the American character. This broadened the scope of the history of education well beyond modern systems of schooling to the roles of agencies such as the family, churches, libraries, youth organizations, adult associations, opinion formers, and occupations. The committee argued that such research should form part of the broad social, political, and intellectual concerns of American historians, as opposed to the narrow and isolated group of historians of education who worked in university education departments.

The manifesto for this new, avowedly revisionist history of education was *Education in the Forming of American Society*, published in 1960 by a historian of early modern America based at Harvard University, Bernard Bailyn. This work reflected and further stimulated a fundamental shift in what the history of American education was supposed to be about. Bailyn pointed out that despite the large number of books and articles on various aspects of education, the role of education in American history remained obscure. In Bailyn's view, the history of education needed to become much more concerned with exploring the relationships between education and society in various historical situations, that is, both with the influences of education on society and the reciprocal influences of society upon education, since, as he put it, "education not only reflects and adjusts to society; once formed, it turns back upon it and acts upon it." At the same time, Bailyn also called for a widening of the scope and definition of "education" in the history of education: it should be concerned rather less with the rise of modern schooling and much more with educational processes as they have occurred in many different kinds of institutions and milieux, pervading individual lives and collective social experiences. Topics and problems in a "new" history of education would not be restricted to schools, teachers, and formal instruction, but would concern nothing less than the "process and content of cultural transfer." Bailyn hoped that education itself might be reappraised "not only as a formal pedagogy but as the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across the generations." This kind of approach was subsequently developed in particular by Lawrence Cremin, who argued for a much more expansive notion of the history of education that took account of the rise of the mass media of communications and the organization of a growing number of private, quasi-public, and public agencies associated with education in a broad sense.⁸

There was some resistance to and criticism of this new line of historical thinking. For example, one member of the old school, William W. Brickman, complained that the revisionists lacked "humility" in their destruction of earlier orthodoxies. These "revisionist friends," he protested, were unaware of aspects of the history of education, "because they came lately to the subject and they have not spent enough time studying it." In broad terms, however, this revisionist approach became the basis of a general consensus that the history of education should be about the historical relationship between education and society. Thus, for example, John E. Talbott, writing in 1971, affirmed that new approaches to the history of education differed from the old primarily in the attention now being given to the interplay between education and society. Sol Cohen was no less enthusiastic about the new history: "The past decade has witnessed a surge of writing in the history of American education, broadly conceived, closely attuned with the fields of social and intellectual history, imaginative and mature in its use of the tools and apparatus of historical scholarship." Cohen argued that there was now no sharp divide between university history departments and education departments, since the new historians of education, whether they were on school of education faculties or history faculties, had abandoned writing about the public school as though it was unequivocally progressive and historically inevitable. On this view, the prime purpose of the history of education was not to instill professional pride but to analyze institutional adaptation to social change and to emphasize the relationship of pedagogical ideas and practices to social, economic, and political contexts. He conceded that this new work was continuing to explore traditional fields and subjects, but insisted that these were being taken in novel directions because, he argued, the questions being asked

and the methods employed to explore them were quite different from those of the past. By 1980 Jurgen Herbst could celebrate revisionism as “the cutting edge of our historiography,” improving the standing of the history of education both in history and in education.⁹

Beneath the surface of this new consensus there arose vigorous and often fierce debates over the nature of the historical relationship between education and society. Disputes grew around the character of schooling in modern societies. According to a self-styled “radical revisionist” school of thought, led by Michael Katz, Clarence Karier, and other historians, modern systems of schooling had developed on the basis of social class differences as devices of social control, designed to maintain existing social and economic structures. Katz aimed to dispel what he described as a “cloud of sentiment” that seemed to surround educational reform: “Popular education, according to the myth, started in a passionate blaze of humanitarian zeal; but most large urban school systems have been cold, rigid, and somewhat sterile bureaucracies.” By piercing the “vapor of piety,” the motives and interests behind the extension of popular education could be exposed for what they really were, “the attempt of a coalition of the social leaders, status-anxious parents, and status-hungry educators to impose educational innovations, each for their own reasons, upon a reluctant community.”¹⁰

Many other historians of the revisionist persuasion were not entirely convinced by this radical critique, powerful and persuasive though it often was in helping to explain the historical causes of contemporary problems in American schools, and argued that the past was neither as bleak nor as simple as the radical revisionists presented it to be. David Tyack, for example, criticized both the “inspirational” tradition of Cubberley and the hostility to public education demonstrated by Katz and others: “I endorse neither the euphoric glorification of public education as represented in the traditional literature nor the current fashion of berating public school people and regarding the common school as a failure.” The conservative historian Diane Ravitch soon sought to “revise the revisionists” while endorsing the earlier work of Bailyn and Cremin. Thus the spread of revisionist thinking did not entirely lead to a new consensus, apart, that is, from the common emphasis on the relationship between education and society. Indeed the controversy between radical educational historians and others in the USA vividly reflected the ongoing social and political conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s. By the late 1980s, Katz could fairly claim that because of the work of historians such as himself, “a simple narrative of the triumph of benevolence and democracy can no longer be offered seriously by any scholar even marginally aware of recent writing in the field.” On the other hand, he complained that a new form of politically based critique had arisen that he described as “revisionist-bashing.” The debate could now be recast once again, he argued, by building on the insights of the radical revisionists and retaining a critical “cutting edge.”¹¹

As the initial enthusiasm and controversy that surrounded revisionism in the 1960s and 1970s subsided, some historians have proposed the development of a “postrevisionist” phase in the history of education. William Reese and John Rury characterize postrevisionism as an eclectic approach, broad and diverse in its range, although they also suggest that it represents “a new narrative frame of analysis for the history of American education, transcending both the institutionalist progressive standpoint of the generation that Bailyn had critiqued, and the class dominion and social control perspective of the radical revisionists.” At the same time, they commented, this marked “a new maturity in the field, a willingness to embrace the complexity of education as a social and political process of change, entailing

struggle but also growth and the hope of progress.” In order to illustrate this, they assembled a number of contributions to different historical topics, including colonial and antebellum education, black schooling, teachers, the education of girls and women, children, higher education, the curriculum, urban and suburban education, and federal education policy.¹²

At the same time, there has arisen what might be termed a radical postrevisionist set of writing. Unlike the earlier radical revisionists, this new generation of historical critics tended to be radical not in terms of their politics but rather drawing on postmodernist arguments to challenge historical orthodoxy in terms of methodology and theory. For example, Cohen promoted discussion of a “new cultural history of education” that was strongly influenced by the ideas of the French philosopher Michel Foucault. This was followed by further work in this vein that emphasized the historical construction of patterns of knowledge. Thomas Popkewitz was opposed to the usual dependence of historians on archival sources, claiming that this was the basis of “dust bowl empiricism” in American history of education, and focused instead on what he calls “styles of reason,” “challenging the representations of the subject as the origin of historical phenomena and problematizing the relations of space and time.”¹³

Overall, then, the case of the United States neatly exemplifies the contribution of historical revisionism to the historiography of education. A surge of revisionist writing in the 1960s and 1970s forged a new literature in this field of study. There was a measure of consensus on which this was based, in particular a strong negative reaction against the traditional histories and an emphasis on the relationship between education and the wider society. On the other hand, it was accompanied by vigorous and often heated debates over the nature of this relationship rather than a broader agreement.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Similar debates were played out in many other countries, although with different kinds of emphasis depending on particular local and national circumstances. In some countries historical revisionism in education began earlier than in the United States, and in others later, while the extent and nature of consensus was also variable. In England, for example, a trend toward historical revisionism began to develop in the 1940s, while in Australia and New Zealand it was not evident until the 1970s and 1980s.

The traditional historiography of education in England strongly favored textbooks on the progress of the national education system such as those produced by John Adamson in the interwar years. There was an implicit Whiggish theme of gradual social progress that was accentuated in the work of George Lowndes. This aimed to trace the beneficial changes wrought as a result of the development of public education in the early decades of the twentieth century, which together amounted to what Lowndes described as a “silent social revolution.” Peter Gordon and Richard Szreter have also noted that the history of education tended to emphasize individual thinkers and writers, was excessively concerned with educational legislation, and focused particularly on elite institutions such as the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the independent or “public” schools.¹⁴

Fred Clarke, director of the Institute of Education London, was a significant harbinger of a revisionist approach to the history of education in the English context, especially through

his short work *Education and Social Change: An English Interpretation*. He called for “a history of English education in its full cultural and social setting” that would highlight the social differences and inequalities represented in the education system. In the postwar years this was taken up particularly by sociologists such as Olive Banks and Raymond Williams, who, like Clarke himself, regarded a historical analysis as a key accompaniment to sociological understanding.¹⁵

It was Brian Simon, however, who did the most to realize Clarke’s vision of a detailed historical account that would document the relationship between education and social change. Simon did so from a Marxist perspective that emphasized social class conflict as the prime explanatory factor in the history of education in England. He identified in this context “a new function for the educational historian, that of unravelling the social and historical influences which have played so potent a part in shaping both the schools and what is taught inside them; and, most important, of distinguishing genuine educational theory from the rationalisation which seeks to explain away rather than elucidate.” According to Simon, it was this that would enable the history of education to assume a new role “as a vital contribution to social history—rather than a flat record of acts and ordinances, punctuated by accounts of the theories of great educators who entertained ideas ‘in advance of their time.’” This conviction underpinned Simon’s own work, including his four-volume history of education from 1780 to 1990, which overturned the previous liberal progressive orthodoxy and soon became the standard account.¹⁶

There was broad agreement with the assertion expressed by the British social historian Asa Briggs in 1972 that the history of education should be approached as “part of the wider study of the history of society, social history broadly interpreted with the politics, the economics and, it is necessary to add, the religion put in.” There was a general consensus around Simon’s revisionism in the English context, with its emphasis on social difference and conflict. Nevertheless there continued to be disagreement about the nature of such social tensions which also involved further attempts to provide new, overarching interpretations. Peter Musgrave expressed an anxiety that dependence on social class as an analytical concept would undermine potential connections with other theoretical models. For example, Simon’s work hardly mentioned gender inequality as a source of social conflict, a lacuna to which a number of feminist historians had drawn attention by the 1980s and 1990s. June Purvis observed, for example, that histories of education continued to emphasize the policies and experiences of men and boys rather than those of women and girls. Further research on gender differences, ethnic identity, religion, biography, and other themes did much to supersede a preoccupation with social class, with a recognition of a wide range of ways in which education has helped to maintain social antagonisms.¹⁷

Similar arguments around revisionism developed in other countries, in some cases later than in the United States and England but often with broadly the same issues involved. Across Europe, although playing itself out in different ways according to variations in the social and national contexts involved, there was evidence of a general reinterpretation of the traditional histories of education, in favor of a more critical social history. The leading Europe-based journal in the history of education, *Paedagogica Historica*, itself was transformed in the 1990s from a fortress of liberal-progressive history of education to an outlet of international, self-styled vanguard literature. This new historiography was in some ways similar to that which had developed in the United States but tended to be more theoretical and less interested in schooling on the margins of society.¹⁸

In Canada revisionist debates began to be prominent in the 1970s. In Australia, too, a new interest arose in the social history of education, with further emphasis by the 1980s and 1990s on the education of girls and women in the writings of historians such as Alison Mackinnon, Pavla Miller, and Marjorie Theobald. Much of this revisionist work in the Australian context tended to highlight the close connections between social class and gender, with Ian Davey and Bob Bessant also to the fore. In India attempts were made in the 1990s to recast interpretations of the history of education in the spirit of the "new history" that had already spread in the West. Here too there is continued contestation as scholars such as Parimala Rao are now challenging an established historiography that emphasizes imperialist, anti-imperialistic, postmodern, and nationalist ideas with a preference for a more narrative and chronological approach that also includes the voices of the poor, women, untouchables, and the lower orders. In Brazil also, historiographical surveys from the 1980s onward led to fresh approaches to the field and new and vigorous debates.¹⁹

Another particularly interesting case worthy of detailed examination is that of New Zealand, which did not begin to move toward revisionist approaches until the 1980s. In this context the dominant work in the first half of the century was that of Arthur Butchers, although there were others who followed this basic approach well into the 1970s and 1980s. Butchers's writings in the 1920s and 1930s provided a comprehensive history of education in New Zealand at a time when little was available for students of education apart from British histories and accounts of European educational ideas. There is little that could be classed as critical analysis of the social and political significance of modern schooling in Butchers's work. A similar outlook to that of Butchers was adopted by Ian Cumming, the leading historian of education in New Zealand after the Second World War. Cumming's centenary history of the Education Board in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, became a highly influential reference, while his key work, *History of State Education in New Zealand*, written jointly with his son Alan, was published as late as 1978.²⁰

Very little of the debate that characterized the history of education in the USA was reflected in New Zealand until the 1980s, explained in part by the study of all New Zealand history being "still at an immature stage of development, and full of major gaps." Even in 1984 one leading historian of education, David McKenzie, could still comment that the conventional wisdom in New Zealand educational history still owed much to the ideology laid down in Butchers's pioneering works. It was not until 1987 that a set of essays in the history of education was published that could be described as revisionist in its approach. This delay was attributed to two main factors: the isolation of New Zealand history of education, both geographically in relation to other countries and also in relation to history and the social sciences within New Zealand, and the enduring strength of New Zealand's social and political "myth" of egalitarianism. Stimulated also by new research in social history and sociology in New Zealand itself, writing in the history of education now began to exhibit greater interest in critical inquiry.

One key exponent of the new history of education in New Zealand was Roy Shuker. He was earlier than most in arguing for a "revisionist perspective" to be adopted, and in particular in engaging with the insights already well developed in the United States. Shuker himself was strongly in favor of a more explicitly theoretical approach that took its cue from the American debate of the 1960s and 1970s. As he noted, "The work of the revisionist historians of American education suggests possibilities for a similar reappraisal of the history of New Zealand education." His particular preference, moreover, was to follow the line of the

“radical revisionists” in emphasizing the social class inequalities reproduced in the state system of schooling as representing the establishment of a configuration of social, political, and economic interests from the late nineteenth century onward. In stark contrast with the orthodox narrative of gradual progress toward social equality, Shuker insisted that schools had been based on a differentiated pattern of provision and served to reproduce existing class, gender, and ethnic structures.²¹

Again as elsewhere, the onset of revisionism did not lead to a full consensus but rather to vigorous debates. In the 1990s a new generation of historians of education found fresh insights that were based in political and social criticism but also recognized complexity and nuance. One major text, for example, analyzed the political debates that had pervaded schooling in New Zealand throughout its history in a way that incorporated theoretical concepts while utilizing “a genuinely historical approach to the writing of education history.” The debate engendered in the late 1980s had a long-term influence on the field as the dominance of Butchers and Cumming receded into the past and a broad range of critical insights came to the fore. Yet the underlying resilience of more traditional approaches remained strong, and they did not disappear despite the efforts of a more critical school of thought.²²

While stressing that revisionist history developed in different ways depending on local and national circumstances, it is also possible to discern a trend toward internationalization based on Western international journals, international conferences and seminars, and computerized networks. One such revisionist perspective in the early twenty-first century, naturally enough, is that of a “transnational” approach to the history of education, that is, going across national borders to examine educational and social phenomena that transcend the single nation-state.²³ Here too there is potential for controversy to undermine consensus, with further debate likely over the relative importance of national and transnational factors and the tensions between them.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In these different national contexts, we see a new emphasis in the history of education on the relationship between education and social change, broadly influenced by historical revisionist approaches emanating from the USA and Europe, although taking different paths and developing at their own pace and at different times. In each case, while a general consensus emerged about priorities for the field, fresh debates arose around particular issues of interpretation and approach that were often unresolved.

An element of consensus was no doubt to be expected in a relatively small subdiscipline of history. Consensus was the major part of the history of education during its early development and survived to play a part even when revisionism became dominant. As with history more generally, historical revisionism became a key motif for the history of education. It was probably more active as a theme in the history of education than it was in other areas of history because of a deep and continuing dissatisfaction with its early foundational texts. These could be revised and rerevised because of their liberalism, their male-centeredness, their empiricism, their focus on schools, and their limited local and national range. There was always cause for complaint, always an itch to scratch away at, never a time to gaze at the record with contentment or to say “Enough.” In this basic discontent reside future revisions and debates.

Yet with all their diverse motivations, it is fair to say that historians of education have by and large remained true to the tenets of historical revisionism rather than straying into the wilder excesses that revisionism can engender. Its practitioners have paid due attention to evidence just as they have respected historiographical trends. It remains fundamentally an ethical pursuit even if it has been the subject of underlying struggles. It has not yet produced a Winston Smith nor created a Ministry of Truth, and we do not seem likely to scrape our history clean.

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3. Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 1987), quote on p. 30.
4. Jim Obelkevich, "New Developments in History in the 1950s and 1960s," *Contemporary British History* 14, no. 4 (2000): 125–142. For an overview of changes in approaches to history, see Fritz Stern, introduction to *The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present*, ed. Fritz Stern (London: Macmillan, 1956), 11–32; Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988). The classic critique of Whig history is Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931; repr. London: Pelican, 1973). Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians* (New York: Knopf, 1968) explores the Marxist interpretations of Beard and others; Edward Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1963) is a key example of the new social history of the 1960s. Overviews of the Annales School include Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School 1929–89* (London: Polity Press, 1990); Francois Dosse, *New History in France: The Triumph of the Annales* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Andre Burguiere, *The Annales School: An Intellectual History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).
5. Eric Foner, introduction to *The New American History*, ed. Eric Foner (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), vii, x. See also James McPherson, "Revisionist Historians," *Perspectives on History*, September 1, 2003, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2003/revisionist-historians>.
6. Arthur Marwick, *The Nature of History* (Macmillan: London, 1970), 87; David Cannadine, *Making History Now and Then: Discoveries, Controversies and Explorations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). See also Geoffrey Elton, *The Practice of History* (London: Fontana, 1967); Quentin Skinner, "Sir Geoffrey Elton and the Practice of History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997): 301–315.
7. Sol Cohen, "The History of the History of American Education, 1900–1976: The Uses of the Past," *Harvard Educational Review* 46, no. 3 (1976): 298–330. For example, see Lawrence Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: An Essay on the Historiography of American Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965); Gary McCulloch and William Richardson, *Historical Research in Educational Settings* (Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press, 2000), 37; Sol Cohen, "Traditions of American Education," *Historical Studies in Education* 12, nos. 1–2 (2000): 169–181.
8. Richard Storr, "The Role of Education in American History: A Memorandum for the Committee Advising the Fund for the Advancement of Education in Regard to This Subject," *Harvard*

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 11. David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 9; Michael Katz, *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 136, 137, 159. See also Diane Ravitch, *The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools* (New York: Basic Books, 1978); Ira Shor, *Culture Wars: School and Society in the Conservative Restoration, 1964–1984* (London: RKP, 1986).
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 13. See Thomas Popkewitz, "Styles of Reason: Historicism, Historicizing, and the History of Education," in *Rethinking the History of Education: Transnational Perspectives on Its Questions, Methods, and Knowledge*, ed. Thomas Popkewitz (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 14. See also Sol Cohen, *Challenging Orthodoxies: Toward a New Cultural History of Education* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999); Thomas Popkewitz, Barry Franklin, and Miguel Pereyra, eds., *Cultural History and Education: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Schooling* (London: Routledge, 2001).
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CHAPTER 2

THE URBAN HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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SCHOOLING in urban settings has long drawn the attention of historians of education, especially in the United States.¹ There, the fields of history of education and urban history grew up alongside one another, if not always together. Both had existed previously but gained new energy in the 1960s in significant part because of the contemporary concern for cities, and city schools, as sites of crisis. In the United States, the social consequences of deindustrialization and metropolitan segregation became points of popular and academic concern in these years as well. Over the next two decades, urban historians dug deeper into the many and broad origins of the urban crisis, tracing a raft of federal and local policies that combined with market dynamics and social preferences to draw resources away from city centers and into white suburbs. Meanwhile city school systems, only a few decades earlier the most resourced and institutionally elaborate in the nation, served socially and economically isolated children and families while their budgets dwindled. It was in this milieu that historians of education turned increasingly to the study of schools in cities.

In other parts of the twentieth-century world, however, urban education and the writing of its history proceeded on a quite different path. The United Kingdom reached “urbanization”—meaning that the majority of its residents live in cities—in the mid-nineteenth century (fully a half-century before the United States), but U.K. scholarship showed little focus on cities until the 1990s. On other regions and in other continents, urbanization proceeded more slowly and drew less concerted attention from historians of education (at least as is visible in works published in English from the vantage point of a U.S. university). It was only in the early twenty-first century that the majority of the global population lived in cities. As of 1910, when the U.S. became urbanized and primary schooling for white people without disabilities was near universal, fully 50 percent of the world’s population lived in Brazil, Russia, India, and China, where rates of participation in schooling remained strikingly low. Only one in ten Indian children between ages five and fourteen were in school. Although significant variation existed within nations and between them, across the twentieth century city residents were relatively more likely to have access to formal educational structures than their rural counterparts. Agrarian economies disincentivized investment in

education, while increasing commercial and later industrial economies centered in cities created demand for skills that schools could help provide. By no means was educational access widespread, especially for the urban working classes, but urban economic and at times political factors enabled more investment in schooling. In China the rural-urban educational gap remains a key focus of scholars, while comparisons between rural and urban settings motivate work in Latin America as well.²

In scholarship on the developing world, much of the history of education has focused on cities by default, as the locations where, for example, elite groups created educational institutions for their children and did or did not support broader access to schooling. Yet the specific urbanism of these locations drew less attention. In previously chiefly agricultural nations that underwent both industrial urbanization and crucial phases of postcolonial and/or postdictatorship state-building, as in Latin America, questions of state-building and democratic citizenship, often examined at the national scale, predominated. In scholarship on India, for example, investigations into the processes of colonial and postcolonial education have framed educational inquiry more than has the urban *per se*.

Even where historians have given cities and their schools extensive examination, core matters have not yet been settled—much as U.K. historian David Reeder noted in 1977. What was urban education, he asked? How should historians think about the relationship between cities and schools? Were city schools “a mirror that reflects social tensions” stemming from other, broader forces, in the city or beyond, or “a specific set of problems,” both distinct from and “integral” to understanding the modern city?³ In the nearly four decades since Reeder characterized this historical problem, these questions remain without a firm answer—even more so when cities beyond the U.S. and U.K. come into view.

In popular usage in the U.S., “urban education” at present has an amorphous, and often obscuring, meaning. In the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries “urban” represented a particular combination of density, scale, and social diversity, often around an industrial economy. Today demography at times has trumped geography, with “urban” used to characterize students of color whether located in an industrial core or in a suburban or even exurban landscape. Given the tight association, particularly in the latter half of the twentieth century, between the terms “urban” and “crisis” in the U.S., “urban education” also has stood in for the educational consequences of economic decline and accompanying or reinforcing public disinvestment or systemic disarray. In the U.S. context, where cities did undergo a striking transformation, an emphasis on crisis may be appropriate. Yet we need to investigate the constructive as well as limiting consequences of a focus on crisis for understanding schools and cities historically.

Historians of education outside of the United States see and interpret a broader array of urban landscapes. In other parts of the developed as well as the developing world, cities located wealth and privilege, poverty and neglect, largely on a pattern that reverses the U.S. model. There, poor and newcomer communities rim the metropolitan edge, while wealth remains largely concentrated in the city center. This is the pattern of the French *banlieu*, which has more in common with the Nigerian or Brazilian dynamics of self-built slums and *favelas* than with the U.S. model of affluent suburbanization.

Some scholars have responded to the diversity of the urban form globally and to the increasing dispersal of poverty, racial and class segregation, and poor infrastructure in the U.S. by gathering ever more under the label “urban.” Equating the urban with social and economic problems “not fundamentally about geography,” as do George Noblit and William Pink, may have the benefit of inclusivity and may help in the ways that the idea of “crisis”

did in U.S. scholarship: by drawing attention through a dramatic simplification. Yet it obscures as well. By removing geography—physical, social, political, and economic—from the conversation, the idea of the urban can lose its analytical power and specificity. Taking stock of the development of the history of urban education and noting promising trends that approach the varied and changing urban landscape with analytical rigor can help toward an idea of the “urban” and of “urban education” that clarifies more than it encumbers.

To consider how urban education has operated as an interpretive frame in the history of education, one route is to examine the countries with the most developed and extensive historical literature on urban education published in English: the United States and the United Kingdom. “Urban education” has operated there as a key organizing concept in approaching both social and economic histories of education, but there remain key questions about schooling that have received less attention in connection with the urban. Scholarly work on other locales comes in for discussion here, where it complements or challenges the dominant strains of thought in work on the U.S. and U.K. David Reeder’s enduring questions about what, precisely, is the history of urban education will also be engaged.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPROACHES TO THE CITY AND ITS SCHOOLS

Four key themes emerge in a survey of work on the history of urban education in English. First, even as much work on both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has emphasized urban education, cities appeared chiefly as context for the development of schooling. Urban conditions—especially deriving from industrial production—spurred demand for particular educational forms. Still, the question of how schools might have interacted with the city, or may even have contributed to the making of the city, received much less attention. Second, as apparent in comparison with accounts of the history of urban education from Europe as well as countries in Latin America and elsewhere, the U.S. historiography of urban education has overwhelmingly emphasized the industrial city, often on the Chicago School’s concentric zone model. Third, despite the strong attention to urban education in the history of education in the U.S., scholarly attention to education in urban contexts remains incomplete. Historians have devoted extensive attention to the making of educational bureaucracies, to problems of state control, and more broadly to matters of political economy, particularly in the twentieth century. By contrast, several major themes in the history of education have not been engaged fully in, or in relationship to, the city. And fourth, the idea of the city as the prime site of educational innovation has been challenged, or at least qualified, by new works that emphasize the importance of educational developments in rural settings or at national rather than local scale.

THE CITY AS CONTEXT FOR SCHOOLING

U.S. historians of education have made city settings their chief focus, particularly in works on the twentieth century. Collectively they examine the nineteenth- and early

twentieth-century city as a site for educational innovation, often out of the force of necessity. Cities were bursting at the seams with new immigrant and migrant communities, and schools appeared to be crucial mechanisms for managing urban scale, urban diversity, and the needs of an urban, industrial economy. David Tyack's 1974 *The One Best System* offered the most powerful and enduring view, locating in the urban industrial crucible the forces that crafted the dominant modes of educational practice and organization in the twentieth-century United States.

For Tyack, and for many writing after him, the story of urban innovation petered out in the decades after World War II, and the narrative of crisis took hold as the chief depiction of urban education. If urban schools had appeared more sophisticated, more resourced, more fully elaborated than their suburban or rural counterparts in the first half of the twentieth century, by the second half of the century the balance had shifted. The site of innovation became the site of crisis, and scholars often defined urban schooling as the troubled product of the crumbling city.

Although this view of American cities and schools was responsive to major shifts in urban form, it offered a largely one-dimensional view of city and school interaction. It holds that cities contain and condition schooling. Schools face social and political struggles generated by the urban (typically industrial) form. Despite their great collective value in describing how institutions function and how urban communities struggled over schooling, these works are much less likely to explore how schools may have shaped the city.

This pattern may flow in part from a view of history of urban education that is at times surprisingly disengaged from the specifics of urban forms, the built and human geography of the city. Some of the major works of the 1960s and 1970s on nineteenth-century history of education paid intricate attention—if with competing results—to the geography of small cities and the connections between geography, schooling, and class formation and hierarchy. Yet subsequent work paid more attention to broad ideas of social structure and inequality, with relatively less attention to education in connection with the spatial form of the city.

Reluctance to think about education as a force in the making of the city also may stem in part from relationships between the fields of history of education and urban history. Situated often within colleges of education, historians of education long worked within the relatively narrow boundaries of institutional histories. They answered questions that mattered to their colleagues in education, but only sometimes located their work within related historical fields. Historians of cities and historians of city schools often participated in separate networks of knowledge production, moving in parallel but rarely in conjunction. Important shifts in scholarship in urban history in the 1980s and 1990s, for example, did not immediately find engagement by historians of education.

The terms of debate for much of U.S. urban history of education, set out in works like Tyack's *The One Best System*, predated the crucial urban historical scholarship of the 1980s by such scholars as Kenneth Jackson and Arnold Hirsch. Tyack's work was completed at a time when city growth, and city decline, appeared to be nearly inexorable processes of urban economic and social development. Works like Jackson's and Hirsch's, and later Thomas Sugrue's *Origins of the Urban Crisis*, emphasized the structural forces and policy choices that made the twentieth-century U.S. city, especially in its post-World War II form. This scholarship rendered the city a place that, rather than developing ecologically, was a deeply and intentionally human, political construction. There was not an immediate response to these key works by historians of education, nor was there an embrace by urban historians of matters of schooling.

In the United Kingdom, with a historiography less focused on ethnic or racial divisions but with significant concern for class formation, several lines of scholarship developed that demonstrated thinking about how schools helped shape the city. William Marsden's research led the way, examining the reciprocities between urban growth and educational change even while working within an ecological framework. Marsden understood status hierarchies in schools as reproducing and interacting with lines of class segregation in London, a process he attributed to the "ecological forces" that had shaped the residential landscape extending into and reinforced by schooling as well. Marsden's approach is evident in scholarship on England and Scotland and other European settings, as well as on Australia, that highlights the role of the school in helping to construct the urban landscape via the formation of neighborhoods, the demarcation of state institutions, or the architectural choices made in schools and educational spaces—moving toward a more interactive view of city and school.⁴

One step in moving beyond views of the city as context in the history of education in U.S. scholarship came in a 1997 survey of historical and social science work on urban education. John Rury and Jeffrey Mirel emphasized a transition between ecological views of the city and the new urban sociology that focused on the policy choices and interests that led to urban development and change. Rury and Mirel called, then, for more historical work in the latter vein, particularly work that appreciated the spatial organization of the city as, in Henri Lefebvre's terms, a landscape that was produced and not simply evolving of its own accord.⁵

Scholarship emerging over the past decade has taken up a more spatially focused view of the history of urban education. A first wave of work in the U.S. placed heavy emphasis on white Americans' reactions to efforts to end racial segregation in schools, which became another motive for suburban out-migration of white and middle-class and wealthy residents. Schools became factors in the making of the city, largely by provoking angry resistance and departure.⁶ Later works in this vein more explicitly considered how city decline and suburban growth were interconnected within education and helped indicate the value of a more metropolitan, rather than only central city, perspective on urban education. Gradually this work has moved from an emphasis on "race relations" as a social matter to appreciating how racism and white supremacy operate at the core of the political and economic terrain of schooling and the city.

Recognizing that schools work in multiple ways to define urban space, new studies of U.S. cities ranging from Hartford, Connecticut, and Flint, Michigan, to Raleigh, North Carolina, not only traced expressions of individual or group preference around schooling but also documented how actors in the metropolitan landscape, from real estate developers and philanthropists to urban planners and educators, conceptualized schools at the center of metropolitan development and helped construct race- and class-segregated neighborhoods and jurisdictions. Marta Gutman's examination of Oakland, California, shows how women shaped the built environment, including schools, to serve children.⁷ Careful attention to schools and spatial dimensions of the metropolis helps to avoid sweeping pronouncements regarding class reproduction or social control while still documenting important interactions among schooling, racism, and unequal development.

Ideas of the city (and of the rural context) have also been shaped in and by education. Preferences for urban, or for rural, spaces find expression in school practices—such as primary grades field trips—or in national debates over the appropriate space for university campuses or high school locations. Some educational practices linked school curricula to

students' experiences and understandings of their urban locales or, going further, imagined "anarchic" education practices that freed students from the physical confines of the school and learning at large in the urban context. In Argentina the nineteenth-century city was considered the bastion of civilization's positive forces and potential for the making of citizenship, in keeping with ideas of urbanity emerging in European contexts as well. Yet by the later twentieth century the city took up a negative connotation, as the site of problems of decline or barbarism.⁸

Some urban historians are also newly attentive to interactions between education and markets for labor. One strand of this work appreciates the importance of employment within education, as an at times contested resource in an urban or metropolitan economy. Another returns to some of the core questions of the 1960s revisionist debates to ask how, in metropolitan space, the school curriculum has been a mechanism for promoting economic growth through the conscious production of students as future workers.⁹

David Reeder's 1977 questions about the field of history of urban education juxtaposed two views of cities and schools: of schools as important windows into city dynamics or of schools as separate and important features of the city landscape. New work in history of urban education increasingly values both of these views while exploring a third as well: how schools can be forces in the making of the city, at once shaped by and helping to shape the urban context. Such a focus does not displace attention from such crucial matters as the impact of resources and power in politics and the economy that continue to shape cities and their schools, nor does it choose one side or the other in debates between economic drivers and political drivers in the expansion of education. Instead it encourages scholars to consider how schools have been implicated within these processes.

THE PRIMACY OF THE INDUSTRIAL CITY

Whether taken as context or viewed in interaction with schools, the paradigmatic city in most history of education research in the U.S. and the U.K. is the industrial city. History of education in the U.S. emerged in an era when a singular version of the urban form dominated both popular and scholarly imaginations. In the U.S. scholars believed the industrial city had a particular geography, as famously depicted in the concentric zone model of the Chicago School, spreading outward from a manufacturing and commercial core to residential areas of increasing privilege and wealth. Cities on this model dominated the important case study research of the 1970s through the 1990s. Thinking about the industrial city made sense for historians of education working in a materialist tradition and seeking to trace how the economic order and schooling interacted. Inculcating industrial discipline and balancing the various effects of industrial capitalism motivated many advocates of education. Similarly, industrial work offered influential paradigms for the organization of school systems.

Surveys of the developing world also cast industrialization as a key prompt to the advancement of mass schooling. Yet recent work on Norway by the scholar Ida Bull helps challenge this pattern by tracing the roots of Norway's early (eighteenth-century) shift to mass educational provision in cities not to the Industrial Revolution but to the development of a mercantile economy. This economy, and the class diversity it produced in urban spaces, generated a particularly urban embrace of mass education. The broader implication of Bull's

work—that urban economic processes that predate industrialization helped foster investment in schooling—finds reinforcement as well in research on India and China, where schooling developed earlier in coastal, mercantile cities as well as in industrializing spaces. Andy Green makes an even broader critique of the primacy of the industrial in stories of the expansion of schooling. He suggests that it was not economic pressures—industrial or otherwise—that fed the expansion of mass schooling in the U.S. and in Europe, but rather state-building processes.¹⁰

U.S. scholars have pushed beyond the industrial model in work on higher education. Margaret O'Mara has examined the efforts of higher education and municipalities together to create economic growth through scientific innovation and knowledge production. Recent studies from Cambridge to Chicago and New York draw attention to universities' impact on the spatial organization of the city, at times furthering urban renewal projects (or at times opposing them) depending on whether projects would help create or protect favorable campus environments. Universities proved powerful actors in making the postwar city.¹¹

Recent projects that highlight the role of schooling in shaping metropolitan space have focused on cities that take on polycentric or postindustrial forms. These works have shifted to an explicitly metropolitan rather than solely urban frame of reference, understanding cities in relationship to expanding and often privileged suburbs. Yet this work has not fully interrogated schooling in the context of postindustrial urbanism. Scholarship on European contexts can offer important examples for U.S. scholars writing new histories of suburban spaces that, by the turn of the twenty-first century, faced poverty, disinvestment, and inadequate infrastructure and became home to broad racial and cultural diversity. Such spatial configurations come to the fore in a study of Madrid's working-class suburbs in the Franco period. Targeted by the Catholic Church and state for "urbanization," which meant spatial rationalization, class segregation, and deterrence of working-class organizing, these suburbs became a locus of church-run educational programs and hubs of working-class activism that Manuel Castells called "schools of citizenship."¹² Whether by shifting to a metropolitan frame of reference or by examining suburban educational history, these projects consider how schooling interacts with multiple geographic and economic forms of the city.

CITIZENSHIP, CULTURE, RELIGION, AND LEARNING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Urban sites have remained the chief location for examining the political economy of education in the U.S. and the U.K. Yet cities have been less deeply examined with a focus on other crucial aspects of education: its relationship to citizenship, culture, and religion, as well as in nonschool or noninstitutional settings.

As many historians in locations around the world have demonstrated, citizenship—and particularly the making of citizens for new and developing republics—was a major motivation for the mass expansion of public education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although in some settings cities were thought to encourage traits of citizenship, urban industrial poverty and the anonymity of life in diverse and dense cities often seemed threats

to the shaping of a citizenry. In twentieth-century China, associations among education, urbanism, and elitism proved an impediment in the expansion of education beyond the city. Many historians approached urban spaces as sites of particular demands and challenges for schooling but have been less likely to consider how schools, the specific urban context, and ideas of citizenship at times constructed one another together.

Work on highly local democratic governance of schooling in New York City in the 1960s and 1970s demonstrates both the potential of and the turn away from this attention to urban space and citizenship. Ira Katznelson's 1982 *City Trenches*, focused on community politics more broadly but with engagement with education-specific struggles, consciously locates ideas of citizenship in the relationship between working-class identity formation and the geography of the city. Subsequent work on decentralized school governance emphasizes racial and ethnic fissures while attending much less to the spatial form.¹³

A few examples of recent scholarship in the U.S. context show engagement with education, citizenship, and the particular urban context. Historians long treated African American residents in northern U.S. cities in the early nineteenth century as if they existed outside of larger narratives of growing educational provision linked to citizenship. As Hilary Moss has shown, however, debates over education were deeply implicated in contests over the boundaries of citizenship. If schooling was important for the ways it produced citizens—a status denied black residents—then exclusion from citizenship and exclusion from schooling reinforced one another. Moss's attention to differing urban cases helps point out city particularities—like Baltimore's demand for skilled black labor—that helped broaden opportunities for schooling. Moss also observes that the particular shape of dense urban economies, as in Baltimore, created multiple avenues, beyond schooling, by which black residents could gain education. These modes of education could not themselves produce citizenship, but they helped establish even stronger claims for both learning and political status. In the 1930s and 1940s, New York City educator Leonard Covello's Benjamin Franklin High School engaged students in community research projects that helped galvanize local support and official commitment to new housing construction in the area. Covello's work was influenced by the broader movement for "community schools" in the early twentieth century, motivated at once by John Dewey's ideas of schooling and citizenship and a desire to intentionally make schools sites of community bonds.¹⁴

Another indicator of the value of considering citizenship and education together with city space comes in histories of black activism in the urban U.S. As Donna Murch shows in her study of Black Panther activism in Oakland, California, urban community colleges functioned not only as formal educational institutions but also as hubs of activist energy enacting new visions of citizenship. Porous boundaries between the campus and activist networks in the broader community helped sustain an organizing base for the Black Panthers. Although often framed as studies of activism rather than under the broader rubric of citizenship, other examples of student organizing are similarly evocative of how students use urban spaces to achieve their civic goals. The richness of these examples should prompt historians to consider more fully how education and new visions of citizenship were articulated and realized in urban contexts.¹⁵

Many important works in the history of education in the U.S. place schools at the center of conflict over culture and religion—sparked by or manifest in debates over what languages students and teachers speak, what textbooks they use with what portrayal of what culture, or what lessons about ideology, morality, or religion schools offer, implicitly or

explicitly. This is a rich strain of history of education, but it is one in which the urban is relatively less represented or more often understood as context rather than as a subject of inquiry and particular interaction with schooling. Recent work on schooling and the concept of race and struggles over bilingual education, for example, engage some of the nation's largest school systems but often leave unanswered the question of how the stories they tell might be different because of the particular political, social, and economic configurations of the city. New work on culture and religion offers more nuanced views than earlier interpretations that saw elites imposing economic, political, and cultural conformity on working-class and immigrant communities. Yet despite this, recent works tend to retain a relatively static view of the city as backdrop. Immigrant communities arrive in the U.S. and become "Americanized" via schooling; extra-institutional modes of education, like the foreign-language press, aid in the process of acculturation, as Jeffrey Mirel shows. Similarly, an exploration into colonial education as a venue for cultural and linguistic negotiation examines an urban colony, Hong Kong, but does not query the place of the urban in the story. How the city works in this process and how, perchance, that process helped shape the city get less attention in this body of work.¹⁶

Pathbreaking works in U.S. urban history offer lines of inquiry that educational historians have not yet tapped but may prove valuable in exploring more interactive views among urban space, citizenship, and culture. George Chauncey's *Gay New York* links cultural history to highly specific attention to the urban landscape, including in the spaces, interactions, and relationships it enables for queer people.¹⁷ What would a history of education be that follows Chauncey's careful attention to the urban form and its interactions with the making of sexuality and culture?

These matters converge also in the enduring challenge for historians of getting beyond schooling as the sole site of education. Many historians acknowledge that the history of education is much broader than the history of schooling. However, schools have consumed the vast majority of scholarly energy. Historians of African American education, telling stories about learning in communities often formally denied or excluded from educational institutions available to white people, have provided more attention to education in other institutions (like churches and clubs) and outside of institutions (in homes and apprenticeships), yet few have followed Lawrence Cremin's 1988 call to attend carefully to the full range of spaces where education occurs. This absence is particularly significant for urban history of education, given that the density of urban space, as well as the institutions that such density entails, make cities ripe locales for an investigation of learning beyond schooling. Hints of what might be found if this field were to be fully explored appear in works in other fields, as when historians of the civil rights movements notice the pedagogical practice of organizers like Ella Baker working in Depression-era Harlem or scholars of the narcotics trade notice how youth gangs disciplined one another against drug use in the 1950s cities.¹⁸

In a 1992 essay Barbara Finkelstein encourages scholars to think about how the city is an educational entity. Finkelstein identifies a range of topics, from understandings of children to the nature of community, that could better be understood if scholars shifted from considering education (or, more narrowly, schooling) *in* the city to considering how cities themselves educate. This perspective is more likely to be engaged when scholars trace the creation and the potential of the city rather than prioritize crisis and failure. Attention to the city as an educative force is on view in work on twentieth-century Colombian cities, where the city is not only a site of learning, but the making of the city—the modernization process—served to educate.¹⁹

Labeling cities places of crisis makes it easier to perceive problematic developments and harder to notice patterns of constructive organizing, human productivity, or accomplishment. The negative cast of the idea of crisis, part of the deficit model that has inflected U.S. urban scholarship especially on black communities, obscures instances of great creative innovation in urban spaces. The emergence of global hip hop from some of the poorest and most institutionally neglected neighborhoods in the United States is a prime example. Similarly, the deficit model makes it harder to perceive the multiple, even if struggling institutional and noninstitutional contexts in which people, however embattled in the face of ongoing political and economic struggles for survival, manifest a rich admixture of hope and skill, knowledge and power.

CITIES, SCHOOLS, AND THE STATE

The primacy of the urban in U.S. history of education has been especially visible in relationship to questions of institution-building, developing educational bureaucracy, and, in the process, the development of new kinds of state capacity. Tyack's view of the U.S. urban "one best system" exemplifies the dynamic, in which the urban proved the point of creation for models of bureaucracy, governance, and state capacity that later expanded across rural and suburban systems.

Even as cities received relatively less attention as standard-bearers in cases outside the U.S., new forms of state capacity developed out of urban schooling in other Western nations. Kevin Brehony's inquiry into efforts to structure children's play in Victorian England shows that privately initiated reform efforts quickly opened the way for expanded state functions. Also in the U.K., school practices in the early twentieth century such as the making of report cards and educational records about families pioneered governmental practices of surveillance not only in schooling but for the state more generally. Urban school systems have appeared less dominant in cases of highly nationalized education, such as that in France. The French system was long thought to operate with much more power at the central, national level. Yet work focused squarely on the place of cities in French educational development shows that beneath claims to centralization (and the national-state capacity it might seem to have implied) a more haphazard, varied, and privately administered configuration of schooling continued well into the twentieth century. This work shows that the emphasis on centralized French state-run education was overstated, veiling a long history of "local action and diversity" of educational offerings, particularly at the secondary level. This French pattern aligns with scholarship on developing nations in the early and mid-twentieth century as well.²⁰

A key part of the question of state capacity in and through education is the matter of social welfare provision. Historians in the U.S. have asked how schools figure within various forms of social welfare support. U.S. historians of education have recognized the tendency in U.S. social policy since World War II to use education as a substitute for more robust social service provision. The "educationalization" of social problems as David Labaree has titled it, makes schooling or training a shaky substitute for more active intervention into the economy, such as job creation, minimum wage supports, and similar measures.²¹ "Educationalization" is by no means limited to urban contexts, but it gained particular

support from post–World War II U.S. political opposition to social welfare that reflected the racialization of urban poverty in particular. Many Americans held a view of poverty as the product of cultural or individual failing rather than structural circumstances, and therefore one subject to remedies through education. New work on the place of education in relationship to the broader landscape of social welfare provision developing in the early twentieth century identifies cities and their schools as contributing to the making of the “civic welfare state,” with schooling complementing rather than displacing commitments to social welfare.²²

Although this line of investigation continues to develop, other work emerging in the past decade in the U.S. context raises questions about an urban-centric view of education and state formation. Without denying that urban school districts were sites of innovation and bureaucratic elaboration, new scholarship points toward other modes of state-formation at work in rural and state-level governance and in the administration of new policies operating at the national scale. Nancy Beadie documents how rural and small-town settings linked the building of education and the transition to the capitalist marketplace. Tracy Steffes examines state-level efforts to remedy deficiencies in rural schools in the early twentieth century and identifies modes of expansion in state power over education apart from those under way concurrently in cities. Where elite control and managerial authority ruled in the city context, negotiation and incentives for cooperation with state agendas characterized the rural and state dynamic. Looking at the presence of education programs during and after World War II, Christopher Loss sees a strengthened role for the federal state in education through its direct interaction with citizens as soldiers and then students. Loss and Steffes clarify that as education helped further new state capacities, it did so at scales of governance beyond the city alone. Neither popular support for education as a state function nor the negotiation of state power was of necessity urban. In this regard U.S. historiography becomes more aligned with scholarship on European nations, and Latin America as well, that have long emphasized citizenship and the state over urban innovation, or with China, where questions of state capacity find investigation around the development of education in rural settings more than the urban.²³ This new work does not simply point attention away from cities but offers historians the chance to revisit with increasing clarity the question of what is distinct about education in urban spatial, political, economic, and social contexts.

CONCLUSION

When, in 1977, Reeder helped inaugurate the field of history of urban education and critique its early growth, he rightly noted key ambiguities in the basic shape of the field. What constituted urban education? How did historians understand the relationship between schools and cities—in terms of their historical findings and of the historiographic approaches they took? In the decades of robust work that followed—centered heavily, but not exclusively, in the most urbanized countries, like the U.S. and the U.K.—much of this ambiguity continued. Many historians located their investigations in cities but at times seemed to take the city, and its importance for education beyond urban contexts, for granted. They could do so in part because of the power of the idea of urban crisis, first in the U.S. and later in the U.K. and beyond. Who would need to justify studying the most troubled, the most uncertain

spaces in the educational landscape? Yet while the idea of crisis could motivate more investigation, it could not on its own define the field sufficiently. Nor could it ensure that all of the important questions to ask about education in cities have been asked. Important questions about citizenship and culture remained much less fully interrogated as educational problems in urban space.

Since the 1970s, historical scholarship has moved from taking cities as context to beginning to conceptualize schools and cities in interaction with one another. In some cases, this work identifies ways that schools have helped define the urban landscape. In others, it continues to detail and examine the complex demands on and conditions faced by schools working in urban settings. The strongest of this work pays careful attention to the spatial organization of the city. Similar attention to the spatial organization of education and its consequences for political economy, for culture, and for citizenship has been at times applied to areas outside of the historic urban core, either through a metropolitan frame of reference or with a particular focus on suburban or exurban development. This work, rather than being subject to lumping under a generalizing idea of “the urban” because of the presence of diversity, segregation, or poverty, can instead offer useful comparative perspectives on how education has operated and has taken on particular meanings and has had particular impacts in various geographical forms. More specificity, rather than less, is helpful at this time of widely diverse urban forms and demographics. Specificity remains crucial as exciting new work in urban history takes up transnational frames of reference, from the global movement of segregationist practices and logics to the cross-border construction of cities themselves.

With specificity about the urban form can come an even firmer sense of how much the story of urban educational history matters for broader views of history of education. If we can answer how urban space matters for education, and how education matters for urban space, then we can identify more clearly, as Reeder suggested we do, what is “the particular set of problems” that is urban schooling.

NOTES

1. The author thanks Viola Huang for her research assistance.
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