

classrooms, and how, historians need to consult pertinent primary sources such as provincial examinations (often based directly on the prescribed textbook in the earlier years of this period), teacher daybooks, and teacher and student memoirs and oral histories.² Finally, I am unclear regarding the precise relevance of the subtitle, *The Crown of Education*, other than as a reference to Britishness.

Several other minor points warrant mention. Throughout the book, *Davies* is given as the surname for William Davis, Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario. Ontario is referred to as the “second most populous territory” (p. 4), but it is the most populous province in Canada. René Lévesque—journalist, Parti Québécois leader, and Premier of Quebec—is identified as a scholar (p. 10).

Constructing National Identity in Canadian and Australian Classrooms is a comprehensive account, buttressed by a solid array of primary sources, of two educational jurisdictions and how the curriculum and textbooks in each demonstrate a move away from Britishness to a new reality dominated by diversity created by immigration from countries other than the United Kingdom.

PENNEY CLARK
University of British Columbia

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Edward Janak. *A Brief History of Schooling in the United States: From Pre-Colonial Times to the Present*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. 109 pp.

Edward Janak describes his book *A Brief History of Schooling in the United States* as a means to explore the “civil religion” of education. Janak explains his framing of school around civil religion as “a shared set of values, rituals, symbols, and experiences. In short, just as the *New England Primer* used schools to teach catechismal religion, *A Brief History of Schooling in the United States* examines the civil religion” (p. vi). Published as part of the Palgrave Pivot series *The Cultural*

²Penney Clark and Amy von Heyking, “Back to School? Historians and the View from the Classroom,” *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2018), 24–41.

and Social Foundations of Education, and checking in at 109 pages, the book is a concise history of education from the pre-European era through the Every Student Succeeds Act. The book is divided into six chapters, using a chronological organizational scheme that will be familiar to most educational historians. Chapters focus on the common school, progressive, and neoliberal periods, among others.

Janak consistently structures each chapter in similar ways. Each chapter section is headed with a question for readers to consider. For instance, in his chapter on the early revolutionary and early national periods, Janak asks readers to consider “Who were the educational founding fathers?” and “What were the sources and purposes of schooling?” This problem-posing approach would work nicely to engage readers who have read little educational history. Janak also provides the reader with lists of key figures and terms at the beginning of each chapter. Keywords in his chapter on the progressive period include *project methods*, *Smith-Hughes Act*, and *Francis W. Parker*. Janak rightly acknowledges that placing key terms and figures at the start of each chapter is a way to help entice novice educational historians to explore those areas they find most intriguing. He writes, “People can choose what they want to follow up on, particularly in today’s cyberliterate wiki society” (p. vi). Helpfully, Janak also provides a more comprehensive word list at the beginning of the book.

In four of the six chapters, Janak begins by asking about that time period’s “philosophical roots.” In some instances, those connections between theory and practice are plainly clear. For instance, in his chapter on progressivism, Janak closely connects Jean-Jacques Rousseau to John Dewey’s approach to how children learn. Including both figures in the “Philosophical Roots” section clearly connects a grounding theory to how it was later enacted. In others, additional explanation would be helpful, particularly given the book’s acknowledged neophyte audience. In the “Philosophical Roots” portion of chapter six, Janak lays out three grounding theories: neoliberalism, existentialism, and postmodernism, although he does not explicitly connect them to schooling. Later, Janak goes on to discuss the late twentieth-century increase in school choice, including charter schools, school vouchers, and districts of choice. Readers, particularly if they have little background knowledge of the field, might fail to make the connection between, say, neoliberalism and charter schools, especially since they are discussed at different points in the chapter. Making that connection more explicit would help the novice educational historian more clearly see the connection between theory and practice. Still, in the hands of a competent educator, those connections can become clearer when discussing the book.

Perhaps surprisingly, *A Brief History of Schooling in the United States* eschews footnotes in favor of a “Going Old School” section at the end of each chapter. These sections, a combination of primary and secondary sources, provide the reader with a sense of direction for possible future study. Janak briefly provides an overview of each work and, for some, explains their importance to the field. This lack of footnotes may seem surprising at first to those well versed in the field, and may take some time to get accustomed to. That said, the lack of footnotes may also allow the reader to focus more on the material, and one could argue that limiting footnotes makes for a more pleasant, aesthetic reading experience. At other points, though, Janak includes information or makes claims that could be strengthened with sources. Table 4.1, “Messianic schooling in the United States,” brings up five different “social ills” and the “school-based solution” for each (p. 59). Such framing helpfully explains the growing significance of schooling at the time, though making the table’s origin clear would also help those beginner readers interested in the topic.

A Brief History of Schooling in the United States can be a valuable resource for those students who require a guided introduction to the field. Janak’s goal here is not to revolutionize but to provide a useful entry point, with resources provided for students to explore emerging interests. The book would work well in college introductory courses and even in advanced high school history classes. Mentioning the latter is not meant here as a slight, but a compliment.

JACOB HARDESTY
Rockford University

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Claudia Rueda. *Students of Revolution: Youth, Protest, and Coalition Building in Somoza-Era Nicaragua*. University of Texas Press, 2019. 304 pp.

In April 2018, the Sandinista government of Daniel Ortega faced a series of student protests against the reform of Nicaragua’s Social Security Institute. A coalition of university students, peasant organizations, trade unions, businessmen, and the Catholic Church took to the streets against the Ortega government. They succeeded in repealing the reforms, but at the same time met with repression and jail. Two