

TFA, and this book does not disappoint in its appeal to anyone who is interested in the teacher preparation debate. Most importantly, this work reminds us that no one system has a monopoly on teacher preparation, and as times change, so too must the access to and modes of teacher preparation—whether one decides to teach for America, or just teach at all.

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Ellen Schrecker. *The Lost Promise: American Universities in the 1960s*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. 621pp.

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“My biggest challenge has been shaping all this into a coherent whole,” Ellen Schrecker admits (p. 8). “All this” includes 130 interviews, several dozen archival collections, many histories of individual schools, and an avalanche of articles and books on the tumultuous late 1960s. Her research is prodigious—there are 131 pages of endnotes—and the scope of the analysis extends beyond the 1960s as Schrecker explores the aftermath of that contentious decade.

Her “shaping” highlights campus protests at a handful of large universities. The longest entries in the index feature Berkeley, Buffalo, City College of New York, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Michigan, San Francisco State, Stanford, Wisconsin, and Yale. Opposition to the Vietnam War is the heart of the story, with six chapters devoted to familiar topics: “teach-ins” to debate US escalation in 1965-66, challenges to new military deferment policies, arrests for draft resistance, exposure of war-related research, criticism of ROTC (Reserve Officers’ Training Corps), and protests against napalm manufacturer Dow Chemical.

The freshest pages on those flash points spotlight school faculty. Schrecker not only shows the wide range of opinion (including apathy and indifference) but also follows moderates shifting to the left and liberals moving to the right. Those alignments often turned on how adroitly administrators and trustees reacted. Nothing in the early 1960s had prepared them. At that time, the occasional unrest—protests against testing nuclear bombs, taking loyalty oaths, and barring Communists from campus—was relatively brief, nonviolent, and never mobilized the dissenters to seize buildings or threaten the faculty. The improvisational response to demonstrations in the late 1960s is thus not surprising. The turbulence was “unprecedented, disorienting, and scary” (p. 340). There were few regulations or policy precedents for punishing or pardoning the disruptive.

Equally jarring was the novelty of students making demands. Both the substance of the agendas and their combative style jolted anyone accustomed to respectful deference and calm discussion (*irrational* was a favorite word to disparage the radicals). Middle-aged faculty often felt unfairly assailed as repressive—as one Yale professor, Alvin Kernan, recalled in his *In Plato's Cave* (1999), we “had always been reasonable critics of establishment views, advocates of good sense and the search for real truth . . . in short, on the side of the angels” by encouraging “bright and ambitious people to make their way up in the world through education.”¹

Kernan felt defensive because Vietnam was not the only major grievance lodged against the university. He and other moderates resented the sweeping indictments of racism, authoritarian governance, and irrelevant scholarship. At the same time, less divisive goals—abolish dress codes and parietal hours—were remarkably widespread and quickly addressed. Personal liberty also drove the successful campaigns for pass/fail options, student-initiated courses, fewer required classes, and credit for off-campus projects. “A far greater degree of autonomy” was the enduring legacy of the 1960s, as sociologists Gerald Grant and David Riesman concluded in *The Perpetual Dream* (1978).²

On the more controversial proposals, changes took hold by adopting bits and pieces of root-and-branch reform. Black Studies programs, minority recruitment, tenured women, faculty senates, and student course evaluations made the university considerably more diverse and somewhat more democratic. As for relevant scholarship, Schrecker devotes three chapters to radical faculty and their new “caucuses” in many disciplines. She reports more individual success stories—prominent scholars well respected by less radical colleagues—than institutional or even departmental transformations. Radical visions of fundamental political change underpinned by socialist ideology rarely excited the much larger ranks of liberal faculty content with small victories—the new social history, for instance—and satisfied by gradual reform of higher education and American society.

With so much up for grabs in the late 1960s, it is startling to see how little changed in the classrooms. Schrecker briefly mentions a few experimental colleges and progressive options elsewhere; her meager coverage of teaching reflects the relative unimportance at that time of pedagogical creativity. Big lecture classes rarely incited protests. Teaching assistants did not get more training. The new Doctor of Arts for faculty uninterested in lifetime research never rivaled the traditional PhD. There was a larger curriculum, to be sure, but how that fare was served only changed if the individual instructors felt, on their own, an urge to innovate. Aside from several dozen truly unusual campuses, students usually accepted traditional teaching methods as long as they earned a marketable credential and had a good time.

Having a good time included new recreational choices, especially illegal drugs, premarital sex, and rock music. The cultural revolution of the 1960s is not a major theme of this book, but it was the backdrop of the activism Schrecker foregrounds. To capture fully what it felt like to be a student in the late 1960s requires discussion

¹Alvin Kernan, *In Plato's Cave* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 164.

²Gerald Grant and David Riesman, *The Perpetual Dream: Reform and Experiment in the American College* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 189.

of the many ways the young defined pleasure and fun, including conservatives who preferred sports and fraternities rather than wearing bell-bottom jeans or trying LSD. And in addition to more social history, *The Lost Promise* could have explored what happened in professional schools. Protests in colleges of education? MBA programs? Medical schools? Law schools beyond Yale? (Laura Kalman's excellent 2006 *Yale Law School and the Sixties* described substantial dissent over race, governance, teaching methods, and courses.)

A full defense of Schrecker's title would also take more space. The post-World War II "promise"—higher education deserves to expand rapidly because it offers upward mobility at a reasonable cost—faded quickly after the 1960s, she claims. To make the case that higher education faltered—and to connect that decline with the late 1960s—would take several chapters. As she acknowledged during a Roosevelt House panel discussion on December 17, 2021, "the real title of the book is *A Political History of American Higher Education during the Long 1960s*." Her epilogue is too brief to clinch the case that public confidence and policy support plunged, permanently, as a result of a few stormy years.

Whatever the need to say more, Schrecker packs a great deal of important information in this well-written book. Instructors of survey courses will find it essential preparation for their week on the 1960s—this book will jog the memory and fill gaps. For graduate seminars, faculty could assign *The Lost Promise* along with John Thelin's shorter but broader *Going to College in the Sixties* (2018) and, for a case study, Donald Alexander Downs's *Cornell '69* (2014). Rather than quarrel about which one is best, the instructor can remind the seminar that one legacy of the 1960s is greater tolerance.

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Cristina Viviana Groeger. *The Education Trap: Schools and the Remaking Inequality in Boston*

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The Education Trap addresses familiar questions that historians of education have been asking for a long time. How has educational access affected economic and social equality? And, specifically, how have educational institutions provided social mobility for women, African Americans, White ethnic immigrants, and working-class people? Given the enduring presence of these questions in the field, you might doubt that the