


EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Trends in the History of Medieval and Early Modern Education in *HEQ*

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This issue of the *History of Education Quarterly* (*HEQ*) focuses on education in medieval and early modern Europe (c. 1100–1750), a period that has received limited attention in the journal. Within this chronological and geographical scope, our five authors examine diverse topics that shed light on the roots of modern educational traditions and structures. For example: What was the form and function of the medieval academic and daily calendar, which schools and universities generally follow today? What educational opportunities were available to girls and women inside, and especially outside, the medieval and early modern classroom? How should we account for private tutoring, domestic training, self-instruction, peer-based pedagogy, and other opportunities? In reconstructing the educational past (and present), should we focus on those Natalie Zemon Davis has termed “women worthies” for whom we have more abundant sources, or should we explore women (and men) at all social levels, even if they have left us fewer records? Lastly, how has the Catholic Church approached the education of young people from the sixteenth century to the present?

Exploring such questions offers an opportunity to better understand those who provided and received instruction at all levels in the premodern era. The importance of this subfield is even more evident in light of the steady decline in the number of such studies within *HEQ* and across the history of education field.

During the sixty years of its existence (1960–2020), *HEQ* has published forty-six articles about medieval and early modern Europe.¹ This subset constitutes 4.8 percent

¹My analysis of *History of Education Quarterly*'s output on medieval and early modern education was conducted in November 2020. Initially, I used the filters provided by Cambridge University Press (CUP) at *HEQ*'s website, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/history-of-education-quarterly>, searching for keywords related to theme (e.g., “medieval,” “Renaissance,” “early modern,” and “Middle Ages”), geography (e.g., England, Italy, France), and chronology (e.g., from “seventeenth century” back to “tenth century”). In addition to about three dozen articles, that search produced a number of false positives, such as a study of Renaissance Middle School in Montclair, New Jersey. The incomplete nature of these results was made abundantly clear when my own *HEQ* article about Jesuit education in sixteenth-century Italy did not appear in my results. In order to cast a wider net, I utilized the Exe Libris database managed by the UK History of Education Society's online bibliography, <http://projects.exeter.ac.uk/hoebibliography/advanced.php>. This well-designed database offers different search parameters (albeit with a British-influenced focus) and produced an additional dozen articles about medieval and early modern education. Among my final group of forty-six research articles, I have included five from the 1960s that were really short essays

of the total articles *HEQ* published and is broadly commensurate with the rate at which similar articles have been published across this subfield.² Of these forty-six articles, one-third (fourteen) have analyzed medieval Europe (500–1500) and two-thirds (thirty-two) have examined early modern Europe (1500–1750). Such ratios are again broadly consistent with the field, with *HEQ* publishing a bit more on the Middle Ages and a bit less on the 1500–1750 period. The takeaway here is that articles about Europe during this 650-year span represent a small proportion of the total studies in *HEQ*. Reviews of books have been equally sparse. *HEQ* has published approximately 2,400 book reviews, of which fewer than a hundred deal with medieval and early modern Europe.³

This pattern of minimal coverage of the premodern world extends also to ancient societies, the non-Western world, and early US history. Just six articles have appeared in *HEQ* about the ancient world, including three on Greece and one each on Rome, Mesopotamia, and China.⁴ One article on sixteenth-century colonial Mexico, and another on (late medieval) Sung China, were the only ones to explore the non-Western world between 1100 and 1750.⁵ Still prior to 1750, *HEQ* published a

of three to five pages with minimal citations, but which do address medieval and early modern education in substantive ways. My numbers do not always sum because some categories overlap.

Searches in other databases for medieval and early modern articles printed in *HEQ* were largely unsuccessful: America: History and Life excluded most articles about Europe (as befits its focus on North America); Historical Abstracts only indexes articles from the fifteenth century to the present.

² I estimated 60 years x 4 issues per year x 4 articles per issue = 960 articles; 46/960 = 4.8 percent. On broader publication trends in the history of education, see Mark Freeman and Alice Kirke, “Review of Periodical Literature on the History of Education Published in 2016,” *History of Education (UK)* 46, no. 6 (2017), 826–53; see also William Richardson, “British Historiography of Education in International Context at the Turn of the Century, 1996–2006,” *History of Education (UK)* 36, no. 4–5 (2007), 569–93. Both articles rely upon the Exe Libris database (cited in note 1), which surveys the content of fifty-five English-language journals, including *History of Education (UK)*, *Paedagogica Historica*, *HEQ*, and *History of Education Review*. As Freeman and Kirke note, the Exe Libris database relies primarily upon journals published in the UK. See especially table 1 (p. 828), “Chronological distribution of articles included in the Exe Libris database, 1960–2016,” where 5.2 percent of articles focused on medieval and early modern topics (my calculation, based upon the data in that table).

³ The Exe Libris database does not include book reviews, so my estimate here is based upon the CUP database alone. I estimated 60 years x 4 issues per year x 10 reviews per issue = 2,400 reviews. Using the search methods described in note 1 produced seventy book reviews on medieval and early modern Europe; 70/2,400 = 2.9 percent. Given that I missed about 20 percent of relevant research articles, and would expect a similar result with book reviews, my estimate of seventy is probably on the low side.

⁴ Freeman and Kirke suggest that “the ancient and medieval worlds are often the province of philosophers of education rather than historians.” See Freeman and Kirke, “Review of Periodical Literature,” 833. The six *HEQ* articles: Edward J. Power, “Plato’s Academy: A Halting Step Toward Higher Learning,” *HEQ* 4, no. 3 (Sept. 1964), 155–66; Edward J. Power, “Class Size and Pedagogy in Isocrates’ School,” *HEQ* 6, no. 4 (Winter 1966), 22–32; Robert R. Wellman, “Socrates and Alcibiades: The Alcibiades Major,” *HEQ* 6, no. 4 (Winter 1966), 3–21; A. J. Papalas, “Herodes Atticus: An Essay on Education in the Antonine Age,” *HEQ* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1981), 171–88; Christopher J. Lucas, “The Scribal Tablet-House in Ancient Mesopotamia,” *HEQ* 19, no. 3 (Autumn 1979), 305–32; and William S. Wong, “The *Hsüeh Chi*, An Old Chinese Document on Education,” *HEQ* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1976), 187–93.

⁵ Juan Estarellas, “The College of Tlatelolco and the Problem of Higher Education for Indians in 16th-Century Mexico,” *HEQ* 2, no. 4 (Dec. 1962), 234–43; and Yuan Zheng, “Local Government Schools in Sung China: A Reassessment,” *HEQ* 34, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 193–213.

more robust twenty-two articles dealing with seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century US history. More than half of those US-focused articles examine New England, with a handful on Virginia and the mid-Atlantic states, and one on Louisiana.⁶ Ivy League universities, schoolteachers, and Native American instruction were the favored topics for US-centric articles, some of which included substantial references to early modern European precedents or influence.⁷ Research articles about the Enlightenment and the later eighteenth century constituted about another twenty contributions. Given that such topics extend beyond the confines of late medieval and early modern Europe, I did not include these articles in my analysis.

Table 1. Geographic distribution of articles about medieval and early modern Europe in *HEQ*, 1960–2020

Country	Number of articles
England	18
Europe	15
Russia	5
Germany	3
France	2
Holland	2
Italy	1
Spain	1

As noted in [table 1](#), the geographical focus of the forty-six research articles shows a distinct preference for England, with 40 percent of articles (eighteen) examining late medieval, Tudor-Stuart, or seventeenth-century education. University-level instruction, apprentices, childhood, and medical education were the top subject areas.⁸

⁶N. Ray Hiner, “The Cry of Sodom Enquired Into: Educational Analysis in Seventeenth-Century New England,” *HEQ* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1973), 3–22; Jon Teaford, “The Transformation of Massachusetts Education, 1670–1780,” *HEQ* 10, no. 3 (Autumn 1970), 287–307; Antonio T. Bly, “In Pursuit of Letters: A History of the Bray Schools for Enslaved Children in Colonial Virginia,” *HEQ* 51, no. 4 (Nov. 2011), 429–59; and Clark Robenstine, “French Colonial Policy and the Education of Women and Minorities: Louisiana in the Early Eighteenth Century,” *HEQ* 32, no. 2 (Summer 1992), 193–211.

⁷Richard G. Durnin, “The Role of the Presidents in the American Colleges of the Colonial Period,” *HEQ* 1, no. 2 (June 1961), 23–31; Sheldon S. Cohen, “The Yale College Journal of Benjamin Trumbull,” *HEQ* 8, no. 3 (Autumn 1968), 375–85; Kathryn McDaniel Moore, “The Dilemma of Corporal Punishment at Harvard College,” *HEQ* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1974), 335–46; David C. Humphrey, “Colonial Colleges and English Dissenting Academies: A Study in Transatlantic Culture,” *HEQ* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1972), 184–97; Jo Anne Preston, “‘He Lives as a Master’: Seventeenth-Century Masculinity, Gendered Teaching, and Careers of New England Schoolmasters,” *HEQ* 43, no. 3 (May 2003), 350–71; E. Jennifer Monaghan, “‘She Loved to Read in Good Books’: Literacy and the Indians of Martha’s Vineyard, 1643–1725,” *HEQ* 30, no. 4 (Winter 1990), 493–521; and Amy J. Schutt, “‘What Will Become of Our Young People?’: Goals for Indian Children in Moravian Missions,” *HEQ* 38, no. 3 (Autumn 1998), 268–86.

⁸Barbara Hutchinson, “Robert Grosseteste: The Role of Education in the Reform of Thirteenth-Century English Society,” *HEQ* 5, no. 1 (March 1965), 26–39; Joel Rosenthal, “The Universities and the Medieval English Nobility,” *HEQ* 9, no. 4 (Winter 1969), 415–37; John R. Shinnors, “University Study Licenses and Clerical Education in the Diocese of Norwich, 1325–35,” *HEQ* 28, no. 3 (Autumn 1988), 387–410; Steven R. Smith, “The Ideal and Reality: Apprentice-Master Relationships in Seventeenth-Century

Review essays disproportionately favored England too, with more than half describing Puritan education, Oxford philosophy, or English universities.⁹ This preference for Anglophone topics is reflected in our current issue as well; while Sarah Lynch, Megan Hall, and Mariah Spencer each draw on examples from other countries, especially France, the bulk of their research centers on England. Pan-European topics, such as a study of scientific knowledge across the seventeenth century or analysis of ambition and careers in medieval universities, constitute nearly another one-third of articles (fifteen).¹⁰ Somewhat surprisingly, Russia was the focus of five research articles on the Middle Ages and early modern period.¹¹ Three articles within one decade (1979–1988) examined German Reformation schools.¹² Other individual countries in Western Europe (e.g., Italy, France, Holland, and Spain) had only one or two articles each, a surprisingly low number, but perhaps comprehensible if scholars in those countries prefer to publish in their own languages.¹³ With the exception of articles linking England and New England, transnational and comparative topics have remained relatively rare in the pages of *HEQ*.¹⁴

London,” *HEQ* 21, no. 4 (Winter 1981), 449–59; Celeste Chamberland, “From Apprentice to Master: Social Disciplining and Surgical Education in Early Modern London, 1570–1640,” *HEQ* 53, no. 1 (Feb. 2013), 21–44; Ayers Bagley, “Seventeenth-Century Childhood Education: Reflections from *Venus and Adonis*,” *HEQ* 5, no. 4 (Dec. 1965), 224–34; C. John Sommerville, “Breaking the Icon: The First Real Children in English Books,” *HEQ* 21, no. 1 (Spring 1981), 51–75; and James L. Axtell, “Education and Status in Stuart England: The London Physician,” *HEQ* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1970), 141–59.

⁹Ronald D. Cohen, “Puritan Education in Seventeenth-Century England and New England,” *HEQ* 13, no. 3 (Fall 1973), 301–8; William J. Courtenay, “Recent Work on Fourteenth-Century Oxford Thought,” *HEQ* 25, no. 1–2 (Summer 1985), 227–32; Gordon Leff, “The Medieval University,” *HEQ* 10, no. 4 (Winter 1970), 492–95; and Rosemary O’Day, “Education in Early Modern England,” *HEQ* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1976), 101–6. Review essays are not counted as research articles.

¹⁰Charles Schmitt, “Scientific Knowledge in the Seventeenth Century,” *HEQ* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1975), 475–82; and Stephen C. Ferruolo, “‘Quid dant artes nisi luctum?’: Learning, Ambition, and Careers in the Medieval University,” *HEQ* 28, no. 1 (Spring 1988), 1–22 are representative of these pan-European topics.

¹¹William K. Medlin, “Cultural Crisis in Orthodox Rus’ in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries as a Problem in Education and Social Change,” *HEQ* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1969), 28–45; Max J. Okenfuss, “Technical Training in Russia Under Peter the Great,” *HEQ* 13, no. 4 (Winter 1973), 325–45; Max J. Okenfuss, “V. O. Kliuchevskii on Childhood and Education in Early Modern Russia,” *HEQ* 17, no. 4 (Winter 1977), 417–47; E. D. Dneprov, Eve Levin, and Ben Eklof, “‘Relentlessly Running in Place’: The Historiography of Schools and Pedagogical Thought in Medieval Russia (Some Conclusions, Thoughts, and Perspectives),” *HEQ* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 537–51; and Boris N. Mironov, “The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries,” *HEQ* 31, no. 2 (Summer 1991), 229–52.

¹²Lowell Green, “The Education of Women in the Reformation,” *HEQ* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1979), 93–116; Christopher R. Friedrichs, “Whose House of Learning?: Some Thoughts on German Schools in Post-Reformation Germany,” *HEQ* 22, no. 3 (Fall 1982), 371–77; and Gerald Strauss, “The Social Function of Schools in the Lutheran Reformation in Germany,” *HEQ* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1988), 191–206.

¹³Antonio Viñao Frago, “The History of Literacy in Spain: Evolution, Traits, and Questions,” *HEQ* 30, no. 4 (Winter 1990), 573–99; Christopher Carlsmith, “Struggling Toward Success: Jesuit Education in Italy, 1540–1600,” *HEQ* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2002), 215–46; Carolyn C. Lougee, “*Noblesse*, Domesticity, and Social Reform: The Education of Girls by Fénelon and Saint-Cyr,” *HEQ* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1974), 87–114; and J. Dekker, “A Republic of Educators: Educational Messages in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting,” *HEQ* 36, no. 2 (Summer 1996), 155–82.

¹⁴Freeman and Kirke observe that the percentage of comparative and international articles doubled from 5.5 percent in the 1960s and 1970s to 10–16 percent during the 1980s and later. See Freeman and Kirke,

Table 2. Chronological distribution of articles about medieval and early modern Europe in *HEQ*, 1960–2020

Years	Number of articles
1960–1969	16
1970–1979	12
1980–1989	11
1990–1999	5
2000–2009	1
2010–2019	1
2020 (one year only)	0

In terms of chronology, the most prominent result is the high concentration of premodern articles from the 1960s through the 1980s, and the dramatic drop-off from the 1990s through 2020. Even if we include a few articles from the 1960s that were more like short essays rather than the full-length articles of later years, table 2 shows the striking decline of medieval and early modern topics in the journal, with the last one published in 2013. Indeed, the three research articles in this issue will have surpassed the journal's output of the previous two decades.

The decline in articles represented in table 2 might be attributed in part to the launch of the journal *History of Education* (UK) in 1972, which likely absorbed some of the articles about English education and universities that *HEQ* had previously published. In their review of the periodical literature, Mark Freeman and Alice Kirke offer several explanations for the declining presence of medieval and early modern studies more recently, including the focus on twentieth-century history in annual conferences and in journal articles, and the lack of medieval history in course offerings at education departments in Britain.¹⁵ For *HEQ*, the absence of articles about premodern subjects in the last thirty years has been compensated by a substantial increase in studies of race and ethnicity, women and gender, and social class.¹⁶ Furthermore, Lawrence Cremin's 1965 exhortation to study education in a much broader sense—and not just in schools and universities—has prompted scholars to consider other groups, such as churches, youth associations, and military organizations; while doubtless benefiting the field, it has hampered medieval and early

"Review of Periodical Literature," 829–31, and table 2, 830. But this must be for modern topics; a search for keywords "international" and "comparative" within the medieval and early modern time periods at Exe Libris yielded zero results. Yet articles that compare England and New England certainly exist. See Cohen, "Puritan Education in Seventeenth-Century England and New England"; Humphrey, "Colonial Colleges and English Dissenting Academies"; and Michael V. Belok, "The Courtesy Tradition and Early Schoolbooks," *HEQ* 8, no. 3 (Fall 1968), 306–18.

¹⁵Freeman and Kirke, "Review of Periodical Literature," 829, 833.

¹⁶Freeman and Kirke note that "the vast bulk of work under this heading [of race and ethnicity] was concerned with American education and usually published in US-based journals"; their examples are drawn largely from *HEQ*. See Freeman and Kirke, "Review of Periodical Literature," 843.

modern scholars, whose source base is more limited and whose focus has traditionally been on educational institutions.¹⁷

Developments in Medieval and Early Modern History of Education

During the past sixty years, the subfield of medieval and early modern education has certainly participated in the broader changes influencing the historical profession, such as the emphasis on social history, the rise of computer-aided analysis, or the expansion of a global lens. The history of childhood has been a fertile area for medieval and early modern historians like Nicholas Orme and Barbara Hanawalt, as they and many others have responded critically to the provocative thesis of Philippe Ariès.¹⁸ On the other hand, medieval and early modern historians of education have largely resisted incorporating new theoretical paradigms (e.g., Michel Foucault, postcolonialism, the linguistic turn), even as those approaches have found favor in Renaissance literary studies. The integration of race or class as an analytical lens is less evident in this subfield than in the modern history of education. On the other hand, gender has come to play a more central role, as we see in two of our three research articles in this issue. By and large, medieval and early modern historians of education continue to study “classic” topics: schools and universities, students and teachers, texts and literacy.¹⁹

One oft-debated topic within this subfield has been the question of periodization—more specifically, the extent to which historians should accept or modify the paradigm of a distinctive break between the medieval and early modern world. Medievalists and proponents of continuity point to the many ways in which educational traditions remained static well into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: for example, the prevalence of Latin in scientific and university discourse, and the consistent appearance of the written word even as printing technology converted from manuscript to mechanical. Renaissance scholars and advocates of change

¹⁷Freeman and Kirke make this point about a broader scope in “Review of Periodical Literature,” 834; they cite Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965); and Gary McCulloch, *The Struggle for the History of Education* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

¹⁸Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Trans. Robert Baldick. (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); Barbara Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); see also Margaret King, “Concepts of Childhood: What We Know and Where We Might Go.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 60/2 (Summer 2007): 371–407.

¹⁹For example, Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Sarah B. Lynch, *Elementary and Grammar Education in Late Medieval France: Lyon, 1285–1530* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017); David Sheffler, *Schools and Schooling in Late Medieval Germany: Regensburg, 1250–1500* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2008); Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran Cruz, *The Growth of English Schooling, 1340–1548: Learning, Literacy, and Laicization in Pre-Reformation York Diocese* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Richard L. Kagan, *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

emphasize the “educational revolution” of humanism in schools, the upheaval in literacy prompted by the Reformation, and the transformation of astronomy and anatomy by the Scientific Revolution.

Related to the question of periodization is that of nomenclature; for example, is the term *Renaissance* still operative, with its intimation of progress, or should it be replaced with the more generic and fluid *early modern*? The latter has found favor in literary studies and history of science, but differing opinions remain in history, music, and the visual arts; historians of education seem to use both terms.²⁰ Our authors by and large elide this issue of periodization in their work here, focusing instead on issues like gender, community, language, and religion; nonetheless, it lurks within each contribution. Juxtaposing two research articles about the medieval world with one about the seventeenth century, as we have done in this issue, offers an opportunity for readers to compare a topic (e.g., women’s education) across different periods and to assess whether there was dramatic difference or broad continuity between 1100 and 1750.

The Medieval-Modern Connection

This issue’s three articles and accompanying “Policy Dialogue” explore the students, teachers, and educational institutions in a time and place that may be quite foreign to many *HEQ* readers. Nevertheless, a deeper understanding of how education was conceived and delivered in the Middle Ages and Renaissance can strengthen our ability to frame and analyze the roots of modern educational systems, problems, and people. How do these contributions speak to contemporary issues?

Sarah Lynch uses recent theories of socialization to consider various ways in which schools can form different types of community. As our own schools have wrestled with the impact of COVID-19 and the challenges of creating and maintaining a sense of (virtual) community in our towns and schools when we cannot be physically together, Lynch shows us how late medieval people used the school calendar and the construction of the medieval year to strengthen their bonds with each other. The temporal culture of medieval schools, festivals, and villages conveyed meaning and social significance that is not always easy for us to see today.

E Mariah Spencer analyzes the example of one remarkable seventeenth-century Englishwoman to illustrate the myriad ways in which a woman (of privileged background) might be educated—and more importantly, how she might choose to educate herself. Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673) wrote extensively about education, science, philosophy, and gender relations, and had access to some of the leading thinkers of her day, such as Thomas Hobbes, René Descartes, and Pierre Gassendi. Cavendish reflected at length about her own education and repeatedly addressed how women might be better educated. As the US ushers in its first female vice president and reckons with the small number of female executives in business, high tech, or sports, the example of an independent and self-directed woman like Cavendish can be illuminating.

²⁰For a brief overview of the Italian situation, see Paul F. Grendler, “The Italian Renaissance in the Past Seventy Years: Humanism, Social History, and Early Modern in Anglo-American and Italian Scholarship,” in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Allen J. Grieco, Michael Rocke, and Fiorella Giffredi Superbi (Florence, Italy: L. S. Olschki, 2002), 3–23.

Megan Hall takes up the question of how women and girls were educated in England between 1066 and 1540, with an emphasis on literacy and the various settings in which it could be acquired. She notes the multiplicity of languages (French, Latin, Middle English) and the challenge of uncovering the instruction of girls in the middle and lower social ranks. Drawing from bishops' registers, convent records, library inventories, saints' lives, a pair of educational treatises written by an English knight and a French knight, and existing scholarship, she examines the instruction offered in four locales: the home, the nunnery, the elementary school, and the workplace. She concludes that girls and women made substantial progress from the mid-eleventh to the late fifteenth century in terms of education, even if they consistently lagged behind their male counterparts.

In keeping with periods explored in this issue's three research articles, our "Policy Dialogue" between historian Paul Grendler and sociologist Carol Ann MacGregor considers Catholic education past and present. It captures a wide range of historical and policy-oriented perspectives on the topic, from Jesuit-run schools of the sixteenth century to the present-day Cristo Rey Network. Cognizant of the decline in Catholic school enrollment and influence, they consider such questions as: what makes Catholic education distinctive? How have those elements changed or remained the same over time? How has the Catholic Church responded to challenges to its curriculum, pedagogy, and efforts at social justice? In what way(s) does American Catholic education differ from the model pursued in Canada or Europe? Is it possible to assess the success of Catholic education by examining the actions of its alumni? These are large and complex questions, and the goal was not to provide specific data or definite conclusions, but instead to prompt reflection and perhaps inspire future research.

The subfield of medieval and early modern history of education has much to offer those scholars who usually focus on subjects closer to the contemporary world. *HEQ* has long been a place for innovative scholarship and thoughtful consideration of the history of education. The data presented earlier indicates that the attention paid to medieval and early modern education in the pages of *HEQ*, and in journals more generally, has declined significantly in recent decades. It was partly to rectify this lacuna that the editors of *HEQ* decided to devote an issue of the journal to examining this important period and place in the history of education, while still probing for connections between past and present.