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BOOK REVIEWS

Harold S. Wechsler and Steven J. Diner. Unwelcome Guests: A History of Access to American Higher Education

Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2019. 225 pp.

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Race has been a factor in college admissions since the beginning of higher education in this country. *Unwelcome Guests: A History of Access to American Higher Education*, by the late Harold S. Wechsler and Steven J. Diner, is a well-written, timely, and comprehensive history of non-WASP students' experiences in American higher education. This five-chapter book focuses on people of various racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds who have faced challenges in obtaining a college education. The first and most extensive discussion focuses on African Americans. Enslaved and formerly enslaved Blacks were barred by law and custom from obtaining entrance into White higher education institutions in the South until after the 1950s. However, sporadically, formerly enslaved persons outside the South could attend college during the antebellum era and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the North, Black men could attend institutions such as Bowdoin, Middlebury, Amherst, and the University of Vermont beginning in the 1820s. They graduated from a few Ivy League colleges later—from Yale in 1857 and Harvard in 1870. Abolitionist colleges such as Oberlin, Berea, New York Central College, Knox, Wheaton, and Grinnell opened their doors to Black students before the Civil War. In addition, Black women could attend Oberlin, Berea, and New York Central. However, New York Central College closed because of a lack of funds. Berea had to cease admitting Black students owing to a hostile Kentucky state legislature that forbade integrated schools in 1904 (through the passage of the Day Law). Yet, Black students did attend a sprinkling of colleges throughout the North and Midwest in limited numbers throughout Ohio and Illinois. From its opening in 1844, Olivet College in Michigan admitted Black students, and Beloit College in Wisconsin admitted a few Black students. However, except for schools like Oberlin, which consistently admitted Black students, most of these other colleges only admitted them occasionally. For example, eighty-six years passed before another Black student graduated from Bowdoin after John Russwurm graduated in 1826.

Historically Black colleges and universities, or HBCUs, were established before and after the Civil War. However, the book focuses primarily on the experiences and

challenges of non-WASP students in predominantly White institutions. These institutions were outside of the South due to strict segregation laws. However, the University of South Carolina appointed Black trustees, faculty, and admitted Black students during Reconstruction. This was short-lived and ended in 1877, when Democrats took control of the state.

The authors point out that prominent Catholic universities such as Georgetown and Notre Dame refused to admit Black students until well after World War II. When Black scholar W.E.B. DuBois asked these colleges in 1910 why they did not admit Black students, an administrator at St. Vincent's College in Pennsylvania responded that they didn't "think it wise" (p. 33). There were some outliers, however. Catholic University admitted Black students into its Social Science and Philosophy schools when they opened in 1895. Fordham Law School admitted two Black students in the 1920s. Loyola in Chicago admitted Black students in the 1930s, and Creighton University in Omaha enrolled Black students after World War I.

Wechsler and Diner also discuss the difficulties and experiences of Black men in US military academies. Technically, the US Naval Academy and the US Military Academy (West Point) did not have racial restrictions. However, in both academies, Black students faced harassment and isolation. Some dropped out for various reasons, and some were expelled for low grades. The first Black student to graduate from West Point was Henry O. Flipper in 1877. While a student, he was harassed by a racist commander and court-martialed and dishonorably discharged. Although a hearing deemed Flipper's treatment racially motivated, the decision to discharge him was not reversed. In 1999, President Bill Clinton posthumously pardoned Flipper.

By the turn of the century, a study indicated that seventy-three White colleges reported having Black graduates, but only seven had more than ten Black graduates. Black colleges were in their infancy, with the struggle for secondary education still challenging for Blacks in the South. Subsequent chapters cover their push for entrance into predominantly White institutions.

Chapters two and three on Ethnic Minorities and Streetcar College are welcome additions to the discussion on groups other than Blacks who experienced racial and religious bias in admission to and treatment in White institutions. Weschler and Diner provide data on White European immigrants' educational treatment and accomplishments. They cite the findings of a 1908 study of nationalities, races, and ethnicities in seventy-seven colleges. Of these colleges, 80 percent were near cities where immigrant groups resided in significant numbers. The study indicated that first- and second-generation Americans made up one-third of the student population and that immigrant children attended college in far fewer numbers than native-born children. Most of the students' fathers were from Northern and Western Europe except for the Jewish students. Most of the first- and second-generation American students who represented one-third of the college population were middle class, or at least not so poor that their family couldn't spare a child from earning a living instead of attending college. Some colleges, like tuition-free Cooper Union and what became City College in New York, attracted immigrant students. However, by 1927, 98 percent of students surveyed in fifty-five colleges nationwide were native-born. In addition, 88 percent of the fathers of these students were also born in the United States. The study concluded, "It is the fathers and mothers who were born in the Anglo-Saxon countries who are sending their sons and daughters to our colleges and universities" (p. 41).

Catholic and Jewish students experienced religious bigotry in WASP-dominated colleges. By 1850, the Catholic Church had established forty-two colleges appealing to Catholic ethnic groups—Holy Cross, Boston College, and Fordham University served predominantly Irish students. French Canadian Catholics attended Assumption College in Worchester, Massachusetts. The authors noted that this pattern continued for several generations. Italian Catholics were least likely to attend Catholic elementary and secondary schools and least likely to attend college among White ethnic groups. The authors concluded that it was economics that kept Italian Americans out of college. Their parents reasoned, "Why send my son or daughter to college when they can get a decent-paying unskilled job?"

Jews sent their children to college in the highest percentage. Although Jewish students experienced significant discrimination and quotas in Ivy League and other elite colleges, they attended college in record numbers. For example, in 1940, 80 percent of New York public colleges students were Jewish. By World War II, a study indicated that 87 percent of Jewish children went to college, as compared with 49 percent of Italians, 57 percent of Catholics, and 63 percent of Protestants. The growth in urban commuter campuses increased the opportunities for poor immigrant students. The authors detail the importance of these "streetcar colleges" to these students.

Unwelcome Guests also discusses the history of Hispanic Americans in higher education, primarily Cubans and Mexicans. Unlike Blacks, Hispanics/Latinos were listed as White in the US Census until recently. Cubans started their higher education in this country at Rollins College in Florida, which opened in 1885. However, because Florida was a racially segregated state, it only admitted White upper-class Cubans. Mexican Americans who resided on the West Coast were considered White in some locations. Texas often declared them White and a fraction attended the University of Texas; however, this option was only available to middle-class children. Most did not attend college. A small number attended the University of New Mexico, Mexico State, and Arizona State University. Again, social class determined who attended college.

The authors' discussion of Asian students, primarily Chinese and Japanese, focuses on them first as foreign students sent to the United States by missionaries after 1866. These Chinese students were exempted from the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Gentlemen's Agreement Act for Japanese students. One hundred and twenty Chinese students attended college in New England between 1872 to 1881 to study science and engineering. After World War I, native-born Asian students began applying to and attending college. Most attended college in California, Hawaii, and New York. Like the Cubans, most of these students were middle- and upper-class children. By 1920, there were 1,501 second-generation Japanese students, known as Nisei. Eager to obtain a higher education, both Chinese and Japanese students experienced social, cultural, and economic discrimination.

Chapters four and five elaborate on the discrimination Chinese, Japanese, and Black students experienced in most of these institutions. Black students experienced housing discrimination, being either not allowed to live on campus or segregated if they were. They were barred from certain sports and extracurricular activities and frequently experienced racist professors and hostile students. All groups discussed in the book were not allowed to join White-dominant Greek letter organizations. Blacks, Jewish and Hispanic students formed their own fraternities, sororities, and other social clubs. Asian students also established their own social groups. While the experiences of these

students overwhelmingly came with significant challenges, some found cordiality from faculty and students.

In the late 1940s, the NAACP filed lawsuits over public university segregation. By 1964, the Civil Rights Act outlawed discrimination of students based on race. This resulted in active recruitment efforts primarily focused on attracting Black students historically kept out of most White colleges. This initiative, known as "affirmative action," resulted in an instant backlash from White students. Multiple Supreme Court lawsuits over this issue have been decided since the late 1970s, and new lawsuits are still being decided today. As the authors of this outstanding book have shown, race continues to matter. As they write in the book's conclusion, "Whatever one's view, it is clear that attention to students' race, ethnicity, and religion is deeply rooted in the history of US higher education, and it continues to profoundly shape how minority students experience college" (p. 155).

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Christopher Bonastia. The Battle Nearer to Home: The Persistence of School Segregation in New York City

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Over the past decade, New York City's history of segregated public schooling has received renewed popular attention, owing to a combination of alarming reports on the city's educational inequality and resurgent local organizing to address it. One of many New Yorkers who turned to the past in these years was sociologist and New York City public school parent Christopher Bonastia. An accomplished historian of desegregation, Bonastia began studying his hometown, as he writes in the opening acknowledgments of *The Battle Nearer to Home*, in search of a "nuanced understanding of how New York City education officials historically have addressed—or more often danced around—the issue of integration" (p. x). Having finished his study, he hopes that such an understanding also "prompts readers to think about integration far more broadly than an outdated focus only on 'body mixing'" (p. x). The resulting book offers an effective synthesis of the history of segregation and resistance in New York City between 1954 and 1975 across seven chapters, with two chapters at the end linking this history to the campaigns of the past ten years.

As his opening comments indicate, Bonastia aims both to revisit the history of school segregation in New York City and to reconsider the meaning of educational equality today. To understand the city's persistent segregation, he introduces an analytic framework of "border checkpoints," which were, and are, employed by city educational leaders to "support integration in principle, while limiting it sharply in practice"