and see how the complex and evolving MNAS ideology fits into broader historical accounts of the emergence of a consumer society. Did MNAS amplify certain elements of that social regime and suppress others? Did it make that new way of life better or worse? Without posing these questions, this narrative, so comprehensive in many ways, feels a bit incomplete.

The book is also open to some minor stylistic criticism. The wealth of detail is sometimes disorienting, and more explicit signposting of the turning points in the argument would have been helpful. Also, what seem to be very interesting primary sources are too often paraphrased with only minimal quotation. It would have been nice to see more of the verbal texture of Smith’s thinking, or Bailey’s.

Despite these concerns, for the depth of its sourcing, the comprehensiveness of its contextualization, and the thoroughness of its description of all aspects of the MNAS network, Developing Visual Arts Education in the United States should become an essential work in the history of American arts education.

JESSE RABER
Independent Scholar

doi: 10.1017/heq.2019.23


In his book Race and Education in New Orleans: Creating the Segregated City, 1764–1960, Walter C. Stern, assistant professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, uncovers the role public schools played in creating and maintaining racial stratification throughout New Orleans from the colonial era to the 1960s, and demonstrates that they did so long before “white flight” as we currently understand it “took root” (p. 7). In doing so, Race and Education in New Orleans “challenges the dominant periodization and characterization of metropolitan transformation” (p. 9) as it interrogates white rationales and tactics to exclude black students from the city’s public schools as well as various black communities’ responses to those threats of repudiation. One of this work’s true strengths is Stern’s
attention to setting up and explaining the racial and political contexts of antebellum New Orleans so that readers both familiar and unfamiliar with the Crescent City can have a deeper understanding of how the pre–Civil War era extended its long reach into the city’s segregated 1960s public school system. Stern accomplishes this ever so subtly as he explains various aspects of New Orleans history that eventually weave themselves into the tapestry of the civil rights–era city. For example, he takes the time to explain that whites and blacks initially lived in close proximity during the French colonial period due to the geographical necessity that required they all seek the “highest, driest land available” (p. 5). Later, when he demonstrates the creation of racial separation, readers then have a contextual understanding of the measured intentionality behind that stratification. He does this again when he explains the conception of race in New Orleans—Creole, white Creole, and black Creole—which was initially problematic for the new United States, and then later describes how race and ethnicity became the foundations of orchestrating neighborhoods after the Louisiana Purchase and the arrival of American, Irish, and German populations.

Stern begins his book on the morning of November 14, 1960, as first grader Ruby Bridges awakens and prepares to desegregate a New Orleans public elementary school. Readers may be familiar with Bridges’s attempts to enter William Frantz Elementary School as well as efforts by Gail Etienne, Tessie Prevost, and Leona Tate—also first graders—to enter McDonogh 19 Elementary School during the fall of 1960 in New Orleans; however, they will likely be less familiar with Marie Justine Sirni, an eighteenth-century education pioneer whom Stern employs as a way to explore the city’s political economy of race and education two centuries before the famed 1960 endeavors. Sirni, a black woman born in 1757 in western Africa, was kidnapped from her family at the age of seven, enslaved until 1804, when she was about forty-seven years old, and became prominent for educational efforts through her school for free blacks in nineteenth-century New Orleans. Stern utilizes the life of Sirni, who later became Marie Justine Sirni Couvent, as his foundation in reconstructing the central role education played in strengthening and disrupting “the prevailing racial order” during the antebellum era and the period’s understanding of “race, citizenship, and community development” (pp. 3–4).

Throughout the book, Stern demonstrates the ways blacks and whites viewed the roles of public schools as schools developed within the city, as the city itself was evolving from an early eighteenth-century French outpost. For example, during the colonial era, white businesspeople who started public schools ultimately thought they could utilize a strong public school system to change the city’s transient
reputation by promoting urban growth, economic development, and fixed black-white relations; blacks, however, believed they could utilize public schools to expand a social vision that would disrupt fixed and stratified ideas on race (p. 15). Since wealthy white New Orleanians rarely sent their children to public schools, the school system left middle- and working-class whites duking it out with blacks as the two groups found themselves pitted against each other. Stern demonstrates the various ways whites manipulated the state over time to hinder black education in the hopes of advancing their own opportunities. In the aftermath of a hurricane, for example, whites took over the land where a black institution once stood. In other cases, whites fought to prevent black schools within close proximity to white neighborhoods or schools. As he offers these examples, Stern is also sure to explore black grassroots activists and how blacks created and utilized their own networks of power, however limited, to build and maintain their communities.

Another strength of *Race and Education in New Orleans* is Stern's use of rich sources that introduce readers to the role that New Orleans's public school system played in the development of the overall American educational system. For example, the city's public schools were so strong in 1846 that Horace Mann took notice of them. New Orleans's Catholic schools also contributed to black education and the overall literacy rates of women. The sources also capture different demonstrations of black agency during the antebellum period. For example, financially savvy and politically astute free black women and men often utilized the law to ensure they remained free after the Louisiana Purchase was complete. They also utilized these skills to ensure the survival of their schools. Those robust sources also include notarial and architectural archives as well as map collections that simultaneously allow readers to witness the changing face of New Orleans as they consider additional types of sources that may be available to illuminate their own research.

In the final chapter of *Race and Education in New Orleans*, entitled “An Educational Soweto,” Stern takes a deeper look at the role schools played in the Federal Housing Authority’s development of white suburbs and the creation of segregated schools across the country. In doing so, he circles back to his ultimate goal of emphasizing “the role that public schools played in the evolution of residential segregation long before the New Deal housing policies enabled the federal government to reinforce that practice” (p. 9). By the time Stern concludes his book with the 1960s integration of New Orleans’s public schools in his epilogue, “Crisis and Continuity,” readers have a better understanding of the role schools play in either segregating or unifying a city. They
also have a better understanding of one of the South’s most beloved cities.

Katrina M. Sanders  
The University of Iowa

doi: 10.1017/heq.2019.20


What was it like to attend college in the United States during the 1960s? John R. Thelin’s new book, *Going to College in the Sixties*, attempts to answer that question. According to Thelin, colleges and universities, for the most part, did not experience as much antiwar, pro–civil rights student protests as is commonly believed. Most colleges were also not hotbeds for New Left activism or hippie culture. Most students also didn’t experiment with drugs or follow Timothy Leary’s call to “turn on, tune in, drop out.” In fact, Thelin argues that college students in the 1960s, like their administrators, were fairly conservative, and he encourages the reader to understand that “publicity over campus unrest in the 1960s often subjected higher education to a case of mistaken identity” (p. 3). According to Thelin, popular culture has largely judged the rule of a typical collegiate experience in the 1960s by the exception of student activism. His point is well taken.

In order to cover an entire decade of student experience, Thelin impressively draws upon oral histories, national and local newspapers, campus publications, student memoirs, and institutional archives. Rather than organizing the narrative chronologically, each chapter is devoted to a segment of the student experience or a component of higher education’s structure. For example, chapter five examines what students did outside of the classroom once they arrived on campus. Chapter six describes the effect that television broadcasts, big-time football bowl games, and student boosterism had on the growth of college athletics programs.

The other chapters are more explanatory than revealing. Chapter one is an introduction to Thelin’s thesis and a short historiographical analysis of the 1960s in higher education. Here, the author introduces his critique of the romanticization of certain aspects of student life in