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Vennum states, rather obtusely, that the Ojibway migrated into the western Great Lakes wild rice area. Elsewhere, however, he gives the impression that the Ojibway were indigenous and *the* "People of the Wild Rice." They were neither. The Menominee of Wisconsin were both.

Vennum's glossary is problematic also. Although Ojibway is primarily a verb-based language, the glossary contains questionable accurate nonverb forms of words.

We have pointed out a number of weaknesses in this book, but we wish to make it clear that we believe the strengths of this book far outweigh its weaknesses. It is an extremely important and valuable resource, and we strongly recommend it.

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A History of Indian Education. By Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder. Billings: Eastern Montana College, 1989. 158 pages. \$6.00 Paper.

The history of American Indian education has captured the attention of scholars from several disciplines, whose recent works enhance the expanding literature on the subject. Indeed, the topic is worthy of study. At any given historical moment, Indian education policy and practice reflect the prevailing social, political, economic, and cultural contexts of Indian-white relations. Consequently, scholars have approached the study of Indian education from a number of disciplinary perspectives, offering fresh insights into the general history of Indian-white contact.

John Reyhner and Jeanne Eder are among the more recent scholars to explore the subject. In *A History of Indian Education*, they tackle a monumental, nearly impossible task: to examine almost four centuries of Indian education history—in 158 pages, no less. Spanning the period from 1492 to 1989 in nine chapters, the book explores Indian education in the context of changing Euro-American policies and attitudes toward Native Americans. The authors also attempt to give presence and voice to the Indian participants, describing with too little substance and detail "the resistance and cooperation that the Indians exhibited in reaction to these [educational] efforts" (p. 1). The authors reach the

familiar and unimpressive conclusion that the history of Indian education is characterized by "attempts at quick assimilation [that] have, in fact, often led to failure" (p. 1). Considering this critical summary, then, what significant contribution do Reyhner and Eder make to the growing body of literature on Indian education history? A brief foray into other scholarship on the subject may help to answer this question.

The work of Margaret Connell Szasz, the most accomplished of Indian education scholars, illustrates how the historical study of this topic can be examined with scholarly competence and originality. In 1974 Szasz published her landmark *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination since 1928* (1974, 1976). Based on unprecedented examination of archival material and other written records, as well as on oral history (a fresh approach and perspective, for the time), Szasz's book explored a half-century of native education within the context of changing federal Indian policy. Unfortunately, the work did not adequately capture the Indian voice. Szasz portrayed Indian students and their communities as passive victims subject to the whims of government policy. "Pupils became the first victims," she commented, "of 'either/or' policy of assimilation" (p. 10).

Apparently influenced by the expanding body of ethnohistorical literature, Szasz recently produced an even more impressive historical study, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (1988). Again grounded in scrupulous research, her work focused on a manageable historical period during which Indian perspectives are not preserved in the written record. Nevertheless, Szasz successfully gives life to native participants in colonial education. Consequently, this work represents a natural progression in both its historical dimension and its scholarly perspective. It offers exemplary scholarship, a substantive treatment of the subject matter, an accurate portrayal of the Indian people as participants in history, and an original contribution to the literature.

Szasz's work also demonstrates that the study of Indian education has indeed evolved since Martha Elizabeth Layman's *A History of Indian Education in the United States* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1942), which serves as a principal source for Reyhner and Eder's text. Perhaps the authors erred in relying so heavily on Layman's example, rather than building on the work of more recent scholars such as Szasz. For this and

other reasons, *A History of Indian Education* fails on many accounts to equal the integrity of current scholarship.

The very nature of the authors' mammoth scholarly undertaking—bold and admirable though it may have been—has inherent difficulties that condemn such a venture to failure. First, the sheer breadth of the historical period, given the constraints of text length, would preclude more than a shallow, cursory treatment of any specific era in Indian education. Second, placing the subject matter in the context of prevailing Indian policy requires a thorough discussion of missionary and government policies, as well as a clear, in-depth analysis of their impacts on Indian education. Finally, the attempt to portray Indians in an active role, essential as this perspective is, dictates even more inclusive historical sources and analysis. *A History of Indian Education* suffers from all these difficulties.

Reyhner and Eder fail, for example, to offer more than a superficial, elementary treatment of their general topic. In fact, they do not consider any historical period or any particular aspect of Indian education in substantive depth. They ignore such important topics as higher education, and they treat central figures like John Collier with only fleeting references, trivializing their major roles and impacts in native education.

Further, the authors' discussion of Indian education history lacks focus. It meanders from topic to topic, from era to era, and even, in some cases, from sentence to sentence without clear connections and transitions. Consequently, the work lacks cohesion and continuity. In the first chapter alone, such diverse aspects of Indian education as purpose, curriculum, pedagogy, and governance—set within a framework of prevailing Indian policy—receive only cursory, fragmented treatment. This flaw is compounded by the almost total lack of summary and analysis, which might have linked the varied topics and given coherence to the work in general.

Finally, although the authors take advantage of the relatively new ethnohistorical perspectives, they are unsuccessful in capturing the Indians' presence or giving dignity to their role. In fact, the authors use terminology that reinforces ethnocentric, stereotypical characterizations found in earlier historical literature. Discussing Indian converts and their role during the colonial period, for example, the authors explain without elaboration that "the

new religion did not stop all Indians from drinking, but it helped control the scourge" (p. 16). In another example, they use "hostile tribes" (p. 38) to characterize the Indian participants in the Peace Commission of 1867. In addition, the authors unquestioningly accept the whites' definition of educational success. Citing Cora M. Folsom's 1893 report on Hampton Institute's Indian alumni, Reyhner and Eder refer to "successful students" as those who became teachers, school employees, missionaries or catechists, and Indian agency employees. "The poor and bad had either resumed traditional tribal ways, 'gone back to the blanket,' and/or taken to drinking and other vices" (p. 72). The authors failed to consider that "going back to the blanket" may have been a successful coping strategy and educational outcome among peoples clearly struggling to preserve their cultural integrity.

Complicating the deficiencies in content and analysis are the poor technical quality and writing style of Reyhner and Eder's work. Obviously, these features resulted from the lack of peer review and the absence of the firm editorial hand usually associated with credible academic presses. The writing style is mundane and un compelling. Awkward sentence composition, choppy sentences, incoherent paragraphs, the overuse of passive voice, and numerous punctuation errors detract from the stylistic and technical quality of the writing. Consequently, the reader's overall assessment of the authors' scholarship is diminished.

A History of Indian Education, however, in spite of its flaws, does suggest a perennial and important lesson for scholars of Indian education history. Research should build on (not replicate) current historical studies. Following Szasz's example, for instance, a focus on a shorter historical era, bringing to bear new analytical perspectives and incorporating previously unexplored written and oral sources, could lead to significant scholarship. Had Reyhner and Eder based their efforts on such advances—if, for example, they had focused on their apparent interest in Indian education pedagogy—they would have had the makings of a rich contribution to the history of American Indian education.

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