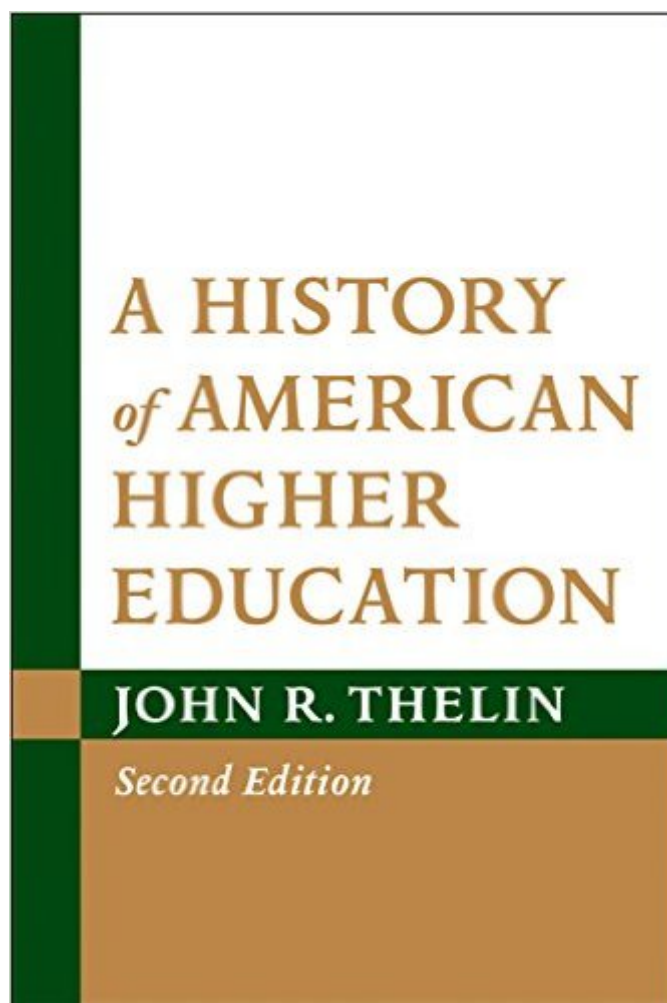


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# A History Of American Higher Education



## Synopsis

Colleges and universities are among the most cherished and controversial institutions in the United States. In this updated edition of *A History of American Higher Education*, John R. Thelin offers welcome perspective on the triumphs and crises of this highly influential sector in American life. Thelin's work has distinguished itself as the most wide-ranging and engaging account of the origins and evolution of America's institutions of higher learning. This edition brings the discussion of perennial hot-button issues such as big-time sports programs up to date and addresses such current areas of contention as the changing role of governing boards and the financial challenges posed by the economic downturn.

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## Customer Reviews

"A History of American Higher Education" is a nice introduction into the topic of college history. However, it is most definitely not definitive. Any reader would benefit from consulting other texts (which I will list at the end of this review). The book does focus heavily on the ivy league schools; but, for good reason because much of the early developing history of higher education happens at

these schools (since they were the first schools). This was one of the texts for a class I took and over the course of the course we (as a class) had some questions and were confused about some parts of the book so we emailed Thelin and he promptly answered our questions. If you are interested in the history of higher education then I recommend the following texts to be read in conjunction with each other because none of the following are stand-alone and definitive texts in the subject matter. "American College and University: A History" by Frederick Rudolph "American Higher Education" by Christopher Lucas "Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present" by Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz And, for a well-researched look into the history of admissions at three ivy league schools (Harvard, Yale, and Princeton) I recommend "The Chosen" by Jerome Karabel. Finally, if you are interested in the history of co-operative living I highly recommend the following historical account about the University of Kansas: "Making Do and Getting Through" by Fred McElhenie (it is locally published for the University of Kansas by Oread Books).

Author presents a rather shameful account of higher education in the 21st century. He claims there is no academic poverty because universities are rich. Author describes deterioration in professors' status as 'whining.' The word 'adjunct' does not appear in the index. Perhaps part of this is due to the fact that the book was written before the 2008 economic collapse. In short, book already dated.

This book is awful. It comes across clearly that the author has some kind of problem and he is here to weave it through this entire text. According to this book, the entire history of american higher education is a massive conspiracy against everyone who wasn't able to be part of the very first college ever opened. He makes default situations into specific agendas, calls names, and belittles the people who built these institutions through his insinuations. In fact nothing is really explained, just stated, and he is rarely honest or fair in his accounts or assessments. Also, he uses an annoying phrase all the time "on balance". I don't even know what that means, except maybe he just can't bring himself to say "to be fair...".

First thought, you need to know your past before you can understand the present and change the future... This book was used in my Master's of Higher Education (Student Affairs). We used it in our history of higher education in America. The book is on the dry side (just details and data) which sometimes makes it hard to sit and read for long periods. The history starts from the very beginning stages of America. It's interesting to see how we shaped our system from a multitude of other

cultures. I have since used this book as a reference for other classes. The book is not only a great introduction to American Higher Education history, but a great reference book as well.

The book adds a few interesting and new insights to the history of higher education canon. Despite the author's status as a full-time professor, the writing style is clear and concise. Also, the author should receive praise for making history relevant in contemporary policy debates and dispelling several myths about the history of higher education. On the other hand, this book mainly covers the history of ivy league institutions and the 30 or so national selective public and private universities. Maybe the quest for a comprehensive history of higher education -- one that truly covers all colleges and all students -- is elusive and perhaps impossible, but I remain hopeful someone will someday pull it off. Bottom line: a pretty decent introduction to the history of higher education.

A reasonably thorough survey, macro and micro, of issues in contemporary higher education by a slate of highly qualified scholars. A very good overview and introduction.

Great book!

Great book for understanding how higher education was founded in america

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