From the nineteenth-century common school movement to contemporary struggles over redistricting neighborhood attendance zones, Americans have sought to build communities around local schools—and sometimes to restrict access to outsiders. This anthology of historical case studies brings together rich narratives on this dynamic and the surrounding contexts of race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability. In particular, the editors’ excellent introduction draws meaningful insights from various scholarly fields and taught me how to think about “communities” with fresh eyes.

—Jack Dougherty, Trinity College

Individually and collectively, the essays in this volume ask readers to think deeply, more critically, more thoughtfully, about the unspoken assumptions and the political implications of our common tendency to conceptualize schools as “communities.” Issues of nostalgia, of inclusion and exclusion, of racial and social and sexual differentiation, are all deftly handled, highlighting new contributions in the history of American education. Well done.

—Michael Fultz, University of Wisconsin-Madison
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Schools as Imagined Communities
The Creation of Identity, Meaning, and Conflict in U.S. History

Edited by
Deirdre Cobb-Roberts
Sherman Dorn
Barbara J. Shircliffe
To students of the history of education in the United States
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