

Analysis #1

This is an analysis of “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization”, written by Neil McDonald. I believe that McDonald’s main thesis is that Egerton Ryerson’s used the public education system to influence political socialization in an impractical way. McDonald uses this article to bring to light many points about the education system. He shows that Ryerson believes that the education system should be passive and not think for itself as well as how susceptible the school systems is to outside influences. For me this shows that past situations like this have shaped our current education system. In today’s world teachers and any figures of authority are not allowed to push their political beliefs on you and this seems to stem from the overuse of the political agenda in schools. McDonald provides a basis for why children are used by explaining that “the earlier a person adopts a given set of political orientations, the less likely it is that these orientations will be eroded later in life”¹. Therefore pushing young children to have certain political views will either reinforce these beliefs or question the beliefs their parents taught them. This is insensible for Ryerson to rely on because he truly does not know the outcome that his pushed beliefs will do. McDonald points out three important points that highlight why Ryerson’s methods were illogical. The first is his arrogance towards criticism in the political field.² The second is that his ideas were too pretentious and idealistic.³ Lastly it would have been better to use in a more closed group or setting because he cannot control everyone hearing his ideas.⁴ A primary source used for McDonald’s research is the *Christian Guardian*, which Ryerson had written editorials about his beliefs in politics.⁵ I feel

this argument is reasonably convincing but due to the fact I found it quite wordy and a little disorganized I cannot fully agree with him.

Analysis #2

This is an analysis of “Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852” written by Ian Ross Robertson. Through a readthrough of this article it becomes clear that the author's thesis is “the general reform movement revolved around the land question, and specific proposals were advocated or opposed in large measure because of their perceived bearing on the parties to the land question.”⁶ This article was written to prove that the Free Education Act was made because of land issues and illiteracy and not to the many other ideas people have about why it was put in place. This argument is convincing because it exposes many true and eye opening facts about the land and literacy in Prince Edward Island (PEI) during this time period. Robertson states that “without basic literacy and within their own environment, with leasehold land tenure as the predominant mode of production, many ordinary Islanders in the middle decades of the 19th century were incompetent to manage their own affairs.”⁷ This made it very important to have written contracts between landowners and work settlers.⁸ Unfortunately a great deal of people were not literate and “could not be certain of the nature and contents of the documents they were signing.”⁹ This means that having people educated in areas including literacy could have a beneficial impact on landowners as well as workers. This helps me shed light on Canadian history because I did not know where free education started in Canada or why it started so it is quite fascinating for me to learn the reasons for the free system today. I also find it interesting the changes to why we have free education today because they are

quite different than the past. This makes me want to ask people why free education is beneficial to our current society and if there are different alternatives that may work better for us.

Analysis #3

This is an analysis of the article “Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario” written by John Bullen. Bullen’s thesis states the “the article will describe the various types of work children performed, evaluate the contribution youngsters made to the family or household economy, determine the extent to which economic responsibilities affected a child's opportunities for personal development and social mobility, and judge the reaction working children elicited from middle- and upper-class members of society.”

¹⁰ I believe this article was written to demonstrate how difficult life was in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and to show the effects of child labour. I believe the author has made some very convincing arguments that this, in fact, did happen. Bullen references to sweatshops in his article which are “tiny workplace[s], sometimes attached to a residence, where a predominantly female and child labour force toiled long hours under contract, or subcontract, producing saleable materials for large retail or wholesale outlets.” ¹¹ These sweatshops are where children would spend a great deal of time making clothing and other items for their family to sell. Bullen uses the federal government and The Globe as references for his information as well as quotes from children in this time frame. Bullen also notes the roles of newsboys and their schemes to sell a many newspapers as they can. Kids do not get to enjoy and freedoms that a common day

child would such as play time or imagination. His thesis also says that child labour affects a young person's ability to move social classes which is shown when he says “ children who worked at home or on the street instead of attending school received little compensation in the form of job training”.¹² The implication here is that now if not educated the child cannot find a reasonable paying job when he reaches adulthood. I was quite surprised when reading this article because although I am aware child labour exists and was frequently used in the past, I was not aware to what extent and I did not know that parents would not be able to survive without it. I was under the impression that parents made their children stay home and work because they wanted them too, not because they needed them too.

Notes

¹ McDonald, Neil, “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization,” in

Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 39.

² McDonald, Neil, “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization,” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 53.

³ McDonald, Neil, “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization,” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 53.

⁴ McDonald, Neil, “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization,” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 53.

⁵ McDonald, Neil, “Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization,” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012:

⁶ Robertson, Ian Ross. “Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852.” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 58.

⁷ Robertson, Ian Ross. “Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852.” in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 59.

⁸ Robertson, Ian Ross. "Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852." in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 59.

⁹ Robertson, Ian Ross. "Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852." in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 61.

¹⁰ Bullen, John, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario." *Labour/Le Travail* 18 (Fall 1986): 165.

¹¹ Bullen, John, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario." *Labour/Le Travail* 18 (Fall 1986): 170.

¹² Bullen, John, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario." *Labour/Le Travail* 18 (Fall 1986): 186.

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Robertson, Ian Ross. "Reform, Literacy, and the Lease: The Prince Edward Island Free Education Act of 1852." in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 56-71