

Analysis #1

This is an analysis of the article “The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School” written by Ian Davey. In this article, the thesis statement is that the “factors which contributed to poverty and economic insecurity- trade depressions, crop failure, transient work patterns, and seasonal employment - largely determined the regularity of school attendance throughout the province.”¹ I feel that this argument is convincing due to the evidence provided as well as the logic of the statements. The Depression made it quite difficult for people to find jobs and they had to rely on charity to survive.² Kids had to leave school to beg for food and do about anything to keep their family alive. Kids would even resort to stealing money if they could not find clothing or food.³ School becomes less important when one is fighting to survive. Kids were also needed to help out on the farms and if “farmers and working people could not readily discern the immediate advantages of sending their children to school regularly and for sustained periods of time, the type of education offered in the common schools was not likely to improve the situation.”⁴ This article was written to demonstrate the difficult times parents, children, and teachers all had in this time period. I also feel that this article is used to show how useless some curriculum can be, for if skills in farming and trades is needed, focusing only on English and grammar can be more harmful than helpful. This article relates to John Bullen’s article “Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario” as it also talks about how school is not as important in this period because children are needed in family life. This adds to the overall topic of children and education by establishing how difficult education systems were to implement and how many people struggled to be able to allow kids to attend school. When I read this article I wanted to ask why the education would not be altered somewhat to account for the many students helping their families with hands on work. Although English, grammar, math and other subjects are important to know, if kids cannot learn the topics most useful to them, why did they expect them to attend school. I would like to discuss how we

might have been able to help the education system more in this time period as well as if it is more practical today and what can still be added to it.

Analysis #2

This is an analysis of the article “Motherhood and Public Schooling in Victorian Toronto” written by Christopher Clubine. The thesis of this article is that “Toronto parents were active participants who encouraged children to go to school, and that one of the most significant effects of the introduction of compulsory schooling was the ‘restructuring of the family’ and the role of the members.”⁵ Clubine’s primary source of information came from W.C Wilkinson’s diaries as a truant officer for Toronto’s Board of Education. His role was to make sure students were attending class regularly and to contact parents of students who were not attending regularly. Through his experiences he found that most parents tried their best to have their kids attend school but sometimes their necessity for household chores outweighed the needs of education. One girl had been “kept home by her mother to assist in domestic duties”⁶ and another boy had been kept “at home to bring chips as she was out of wood but would send him in the afternoon.”⁷ Many parents would try and bargain to get their kids to school when they could but keep them at home when needed. This article was written to educate people on the motives of the parents and to help us understand why not all children were able to go to school. I find this argument convincing due to the fact that his main source was written from the main person involved in truancy and there is no knowledge on why he would lie in his journals. This article is clearly linked to previously read articles as they are all dealing with the attendance of students around the 1850’s and the reasons for children being unable to attend school. I was surprised by the fact that a lot of the same issues we have today were already present in this time period. Kids were being bullied and made fun of as well parents believed in homeschooling. I would like to discuss the fact that these issues have always been present and if we think they can ever be changed.

Analysis #3

This is an analysis of the article “The Boys in the Nova Scotian Coal Mines: 1873-1923” written by Robert McIntosh. This article was written to show the how school aged children were represented in the mining workforce as well the reasons for having young children in the workforce. The author’s thesis was based around the idea that the reasons for children leaving the mining workforce was majorly affected by a change of social attitudes rather than pay cuts or mining techniques. Although this idea does makes sense, it seems that the changing attitudes were derived from the the Free Schools Act that was implemented in 1864. This started a chain reaction that went from the belief that boys should be the breadwinner of the family to the belief that boys should be educated in schools. It seems that the social attitudes changed from the idea that boys should now be at a different place, and it did not revolve around the idea that mining was too dangerous for boys of these ages. I found this article to be informative and easy to find what the author was arguing for, it just seemed that he did not express that idea fully.

Notes

- ¹ Davey, Ian. "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School." In Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr (Eds.), *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003: 111.
- ² Davey, Ian. "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School." In Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr (Eds.), *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003: 111.
- ³ Davey, Ian. "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School." In Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr (Eds.), *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003: 112.
- ⁴ Davey, Ian. "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School." In Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr (Eds.), *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003: 117.
- ⁵ Clubine, Christopher, "Motherhood and Public Schooling in Victorian Toronto," in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 116.
- ⁶ Clubine, Christopher, "Motherhood and Public Schooling in Victorian Toronto," in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 118.
- ⁷ Clubine, Christopher, "Motherhood and Public Schooling in Victorian Toronto," in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 118.

Work Cited

Clubine, Christopher, "Motherhood and Public Schooling in Victorian Toronto," in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 115-126.

Davey, Ian. "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School." In Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr (Eds.), *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003: 108-121.

McIntosh, Robert. "The Boys in the Nova Scotian Coal Mines: 1873-1923," in Sara Burke and Patrice Milewski (Eds.), *Schooling in Transition: Readings in the Canadian History of Education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012: 126-139.