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"Probably a little lady like you would not want to be called Doctor": Female Normal School Instructors in Canada, ca. 1925–1950

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ABSTRACT
Despite the rising number of published studies exploring the experiences of women as teachers, grade school administrators, and faculty and students of higher education institutions, few studies investigate the history of female normal school instructors. We have begun to address this gap as part of a large-scale, SSHRC-funded study examining the history of teacher education across Canada. In this paper, we present the lives and contributions of four female normal school instructors whose experiences illuminate themes we uncovered by employing Rebecca Coulter's ideas arising from her examination of Donalda Dickie's "power of practice" — themes including: developing practice with intentionality; doing through practice: reaching down, up, and out; and gender constraints circulating in early- to mid-twentieth century Canada.

RÉSUMÉ
Malgré le nombre croissant d'études publiées sur l'expérience des femmes enseignantes, administratrices d'écoles primaires, professeures et étudiantes dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieur, peu d'études se penchent sur l'histoire des instructrices des écoles normales. Nous avons commencé à combler cette lacune dans le cadre d'une vaste étude financée par le CRSH sur l'histoire de la formation des enseignantes et des enseignants au Canada. Dans cet article, nous présentons la vie et les contributions de quatre instructrices d'écoles normales dont l'expérience éclaire des thèmes que nous avons mis au jour en utilisant les idées de Rebecca Coulter issues de son analyse du « pouvoir de la pratique » de Donalda Dickie, notamment : le développement intentionnel de la pratique; l'action par la pratique; l'extension à tous les niveaux; et les contraintes liées au genre qui circulaient au Canada du début et du milieu du XX^{e} siècle.

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"Feminist historians have erred in ignoring teaching and other women's professions in thinking about changes leading to changes in consciousness and liberation struggles.… If one looks at notable women, one can certainly find women whose own lives gave the lie to the notion of teaching as a restricted sphere."[1]

Twelve years after feminist historian Geraldine Jonçich Clifford wrote these words, Christine Ogren indicated the "need for more research devoted to teacher education, exploring the link between the history of women's education and that of women as teachers."[2] However, despite the rise in the numbers of published studies since 1988 exploring the experiences of women as teachers, grade school administrators, and as students of higher education institutions, few studies investigate the history of female normal school instructors. We have begun to address this gap as part of our project that examines the history of teacher education across Canada. In this article, we examine the lives and contributions of four notable women normal school instructors.

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Until the 1960s, historians of education tended to ignore or downplay the contributions of Canadian women to education in favour of one "objective, unified, and overarching history"[3] of alleged social progress enacted by men—despite the fact that teaching has long been considered "women's work."[4] When historians retrieved women educators from exile in the late 1970s, their lives as teachers were largely portrayed in negative ways, focusing more on hardship caused by lack of resources and poor pay, than on teachers' autonomy and self-fulfillment. Theorizing about the experiences of women educators thus focused on notions of oppression within the patriarchy.

By the late 1980s, feminist historians were challenging the gloomy interpretation of women educators as being subordinate to the men with whom they worked. Theorists put to rest the idea of a universal portrayal of women teachers' experiences and began focusing more closely on the details of individual teachers' experiences. Increasing acceptance of oral history as a viable research method helped to move theorists toward a more complex understanding of women's lives as "contradictory, heterogeneous, and fragmented."[5] Researchers have increasingly acknowledged the extent to which women teachers actively negotiated the constraints that circumscribed their lives.[6] In the words of British historian Martin Lawn, "the definition and practice of teachers' work changes according to local demand, national priorities, the historical period and not least, the teacher's own view, made in response to these factors."[7]

Also working from a British context, Alison Oram noted that women teachers were not only women and teachers; they were also ordinary people fulfilling multiple roles. Women's subjectivities are not static but rather are "continuously created … as different roles are adopted in the family and at work."[8] Indeed, although women teachers were subject to the patriarchal hierarchies inherent in public school systems, they also had to abide by other non-gendered hierarchies based on experience and status. During the early twentieth century, significant social change produced multiple

shifting discourses that circumscribed the lives of women teachers. Women, Kathleen Casey has argued, have the right to frame their own subjectivities both through the dominant discourses of their time and through their own "counter memories."[9]

Theorizing about women teachers has been grounded in the growing historical scholarship about women in general and professional women more specifically. Although this scholarship has included the experiences of women professors and other academic leaders (such as deans), the main focus has been on women in leadership in the latter part of the twentieth century.[10] Theories of women educators have not tended to reflect the lives of women who taught in normal schools and teachers' colleges across Canada from the early to the mid-twentieth century due to the paucity of research about this group. This is unfortunate given that the first half of the twentieth century was a time of extraordinary social change in which "school folk" who rose up from the teaching ranks controlled the preparation of teachers. Given the scarcity of these kinds of studies, we focus this article on an investigation into ways in which female normal school instructors exercised leadership in education despite the gendered norms circulating in early to mid-twentieth century Canada.

Our case study examination in this article of four "lady leaders" who worked in four different regions of Canada demonstrates that, in general, they employed informal and subtle, rather than formal or overt, approaches to exercising agency in contributing as leaders in education and in their communities.

Theoretical Framework

Among the few studies of women normal school educators who worked between 1900 and 1950, we found Rebecca Priegert Coulter's scholarship on Donalda Dickie to be particularly useful in framing our own thinking about the women we studied. Coulter posits that Donalda Dickie's contributions to education as an educational leader unfolded even though she was "excluded from positions of formal authority."[11] Dickie serves as an example to demonstrate how women in the past exercised agency or "got things done" as leaders, while regularly "denied recognition as leaders." Coulter argues that Dickie was a leader who "got things done" by applying several strategies. She "exercis[ed] power of practice," which entailed teaching both pre-service and in-service teachers and writing articles, textbooks, and teaching methodology books, and developing curriculum. She worked "down" in the trenches with the network of female teachers she taught and collaborated with, while also working "up" with the primarily male-dominated administrative structures of schools and government. She conducted her practice with intentionality. That is, her practice was based on purposefully taking action to make the world a better place in the name of humanism and social reform.[12]

Based on Coulter's set of ideas arising from her examination of Dickie's "power of practice," we cluster our argument that our subjects demonstrated informal and subtle agency around four themes: developing practice with intentionality; doing through practice: reaching down, up, and out; and pushing back against gender constraints circulating in early- to mid-twentieth-century Canada. Before moving to our

examination of those themes, we provide a rationale for why we selected each woman for close study and describe our sources for this research.

Henrietta Anderson (Victoria Normal School) (b. 1885–d. 1968)
The eldest of the educators we studied, Henrietta Anderson is representative of women with a dash of pioneering spirit. When she was in her thirties, she immigrated to Canada and took up a principal's position in a school on Vancouver Island. Of the three different schools at which she taught in the 1920s, she was the first female principal at each. Like many, if not most, of her female counterparts, she had a long career as a teacher and instructor of specific subjects, and she was required to abide by conditions that differed from those experienced by her male counterparts. However, she also held post-secondary degrees[13] and became a leader in education locally, regionally, nationally, and even internationally. We can trace her career through newspaper reports, yearbooks, and archival documents.

Rae Chittick (Calgary Normal School) (b. 1898–d. 1992)
The decision to focus on Rae Chittick in this instance was influenced by three factors. First, Chittick's career on the Prairies is overshadowed by the most famous female Prairie normal school instructor, Donalda Dickie, whose life and career have been acknowledged and explored by other historians. Second, Chittick's accomplishments were recognized by academic, professional, and public service communities during her lifetime, but these accomplishments have not yet been examined by historians. Third, and while letters or diaries written by Chittick have not yet been unearthed, a wide range of other source materials related to or constructed by Rae Chittick are available. These include Calgary Normal School yearbooks, Alberta Department of Education annual reports, the Doucette fonds in the University of Calgary Archives and Special Collections, and the Rae McIntyre Chittick fonds at McGill University Archives.

Grace Morgan (North Bay Normal School) (b. ca. 1890–d. ca. 1968)
Grace Morgan is not a familiar name in the educational history of Ontario. Because her life was that of consistent practice rather than significant events, no secondary material has ever discussed her contributions. Nevertheless, we chose Morgan because she represents a generally unrecognized group who offered a new vision for Ontario education during the early part of the twentieth century: the university-educated, independent, professional woman. We tell her story through census, university, and government documents. Morgan's career trajectory shows the trailblazing journey she took, completing a university degree at a time when few women did so and spending a lifetime promoting the importance of a university education for women.

Marguerite Michaud (New Brunswick Normal School) (b. 1903–d. 1982)
Marguerite Michaud is celebrated in eastern Canada as a ground-breaking educator of the twentieth century. However, her name is not widely known outside Canada's

Maritime provinces. Most scholarship about her is written for a French audience. Philippe Volpé also attributes the lack of knowledge about Michaud's accomplishments to two factors: the gendered construction of the historical discipline, and the few studies of feminism and historiographic production before the introduction of Acadian studies at the Université de Moncton in the late 1960s.[14] Michaud has, however, left a trove of publications, research, correspondence, and other documentation, much of which is housed at the Centre d'études acadiennes Anselme Chiasson, Université de Moncton. These sources allow us to witness how, as a leader in formal and informal ways, she straddled the realms of academic, professional, and personal life to lift the Acadian population of eastern Canada to a place of hope and optimism.

These four female normal school educators exercised leadership through the power of practice. Many of the details in the lives of Anderson, Chittick, Michaud, and Morgan may have been different, but together, like the more well-known Donalda Dickie, they also "got things done."

Developing Practice with Intentionality

Chittick

Rae Chittick lived through the influenza pandemic of 1918, the Great Depression, the Second World War, decolonization, and the Cold War. These events impacted her post-secondary education pathway and her career as a female teacher educator and nurse educator. In 1916, at the age of eighteen, Chittick graduated with a first class teaching certificate from Calgary Normal School. However, her experience during the 1918 influenza pandemic shaped her decision to become a nurse instead of a teacher. She graduated from the Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing in 1922. After serving as a nurse with the Victoria Order of Nurses in Saanich, British Columbia, and as a public health nurse in Saskatchewan, Chittick decided to take up a position as an instructor at the Regina Normal School in approximately 1925. She then joined the Calgary Normal School in 1926, offering instruction in health education for student teachers. While serving as a teacher educator at the Calgary Normal School, and then as an associate professor in education at the University of Alberta (Calgary branch) between 1926 and 1953, Chittick purposely continued her post-secondary studies to enrich her understandings of both teacher education and nurse education. She earned a bachelor of science in public health nursing from Columbia University in 1931, a master of education from Stanford University in 1942, and a masters degree in public health from Harvard University in 1951.[15]

Chittick's own words also provide a clear illustration of the intentionality of her practice. She believed that "health is the most essential thing in life," and her approach to education was based on her convictions regarding how and why children and adults, teachers and nurses, learned.[16] Chittick held that teachers needed to be "keen, alert, enthusiastic" and that teacher-education programs should help student teachers "realize the value and importance of health teaching." She argued that rigidity and rote memorization should not characterize education, believing that children (and adults) should be "encouraged to think, to discuss, to evaluate, and to find out

things for themselves."[17] Given that practice with intentionality has been described here as "purposefully taking action to make the world a better place," Rae Chittick made clear through her educational and career choices, and through her own words, that she deliberately engaged in practices aimed at improving critical thinking skills and health understandings to enhance society.

Morgan

Grace Morgan distinguished herself early at university in English and humanities, was accepted into Victoria College at the University of Toronto, and graduated with a bachelor of arts in modern languages and history in 1914. During her studies, she embraced her position as a full member of the academic community on campus, greatly affecting her outlook throughout the rest of her life. She showed an early penchant for committee work and acted as a representative on the 1912 fall term of the class executive for the college.[18] By her graduating year, she was the vice-president of the Women's Literary Society executive. She was an "enthusiastic" member of the YWCA, an avid debater, and part of the university drama society's 1914 production of the play *She Stoops to Conquer*.[19] (It was mentioned that in her portrayal of the character Kate, she "showed considerable histrionic talent."[20]) She returned to the University of Toronto starting around 1918 (perhaps as part of the Ontario College of Education to gain her high school teaching degree) and sat as a representative on the Women Students' Administrative Council. It was here that she seems to have become more adamant in pushing for rights and respect for female academics. That year the council (whose purpose was "to control all issues in connection with the women students of the whole University") fought for and won a change in control of the women's section of *The Varsity* (the university's student newspaper), with the creation of the women's editor and managing editor positions.[21]

Throughout her life, Morgan's activities arose from two main motivations. The first was that all students should become literate and beyond this be exposed to literature that would help them think and live. Her second drive was to bring support to fellow women who had entered and completed university. She wished to raise their status through the creation of Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) clubs that helped them network. At first, this academic community seems to have been created for single women, which apparently included most women who obtained a university education. In essence, it was a support group for women who needed it. However, as times changed in the 1950s, it seems that her second support group, in North York, was created for married women. The goal here appears to have been not for the moment, but an intention to keep an academic flame alive in women who had doused it for the good of family care. In this way her practice impacted women not just as a group, but also individually.

Michaud

Marguerite Michaud was born in Bouctouche, New Brunswick, the daughter of a storekeeper, and the eldest of eleven children. Despite these humble beginnings, she distinguished herself as a scholar early in life, attending the local elementary school

in Bouctouche and the secondary school at Saint Mary's Academy in Chatham, New Brunswick. The 1920s was a busy decade for Michaud. She earned a bachelor of arts from Saint Francis Xavier University and so became the first Acadian woman who was not a woman religious (a nun, or other member of a female religious order) to earn a baccalaureate degree. In quick succession, she qualified for her grammar school teaching licence by examination and taught in schools close to her hometown. She enrolled at Saint Francis Xavier once more, for a master of arts degree, and attended the Sorbonne in Paris on a scholarship where she earned a teacher of French abroad diploma. She taught in Kent County schools for most of the rest of the decade. Then, in 1929, Michaud moved to New York City for post-graduate studies at Columbia University. There followed a period of teaching at the Provincial Normal School in Fredericton. After that, she travelled to Quebec, and in 1947, earned a PhD in history from the Université de Montréal. Her thesis was a historical case study of Bouctouche and the ways the town underwent reconstruction in the years after the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755. It was eventually published in 1955.[22] Michaud followed her first doctorate with an attempt at a second one, this time in education. She intended to analyze the system of French education in New Brunswick but had to abandon her studies due to a lack of funds.[23]

Michaud was consistent in her expression of why she engaged in the work she did. Early in her tenure as an instructor at the Fredericton Normal School, she wrote to a friend that she had returned to New Brunswick to further the fight for French rights.[24] The through line of her education over the years supports this intention. Her qualifications were such that they could not be ignored when she applied for positions first at the normal school and later at the Fredericton Teachers, College. Even when she was making ends meet between stints as an instructor at the normal school, Michaud chose paid work that adhered to her ambitions, taking on work that brought her into direct contact with all echelons of the French population in New Brunswick.[25] Her steadfast goal to improve the quality of education for French children never wavered in spite of the many barriers she encountered, and, through the combination of practice with intentionality, she succeeded.

Anderson

Henrietta Anderson was Scottish, born in Aberdeen where her father was the principal of the university. As a young girl, she expressed a strong desire to teach, although at first she lacked the understanding that good marks in school would be important in achieving that goal.[26] She was educated at the Church of Scotland Training College and Aberdeen University. There is some evidence to suggest that she taught in Whitechapel, an area of east London, United Kingdom, known in the late nineteenth century for its poverty and social ailments.[27] Anderson furthered her education after emigrating to Canada. She received a bachelor of arts from Queen's University in 1925, followed by studies at the University of Washington that resulted in a master of arts degree in 1929. While teaching at Lonsdale School and Queen Mary School in North Vancouver, BC, she completed a PhD, also at the University of Washington. Her thesis was entitled "Supervision of Rural Schools in British Columbia: A Review

of the Present System and a Plan of Reorganization, 1931."[28]

Throughout her career, Anderson insisted that the fundamental responsibility of all citizens was to contribute positively to society. In keeping with this guiding principle, she founded the Victoria Silver Threads Society, an organization whose mandate was to enhance the well-being of individuals aged fifty-five and above. In addition, Anderson advocated for the needs of rural teachers and schools, whose problems ranged from high staff turnover and low salaries to impoverished facilities and equipment. Anderson was an undying supporter of vocational education, believing that "all labour well done is dignified." An inspirational speaker, Anderson once told the Victoria Business and Professional Women's Club that only women could establish world peace: "If we are seeking equality, we must produce equality. Let us stand by each other and be all for women and for all women.… World peace can only be achieved by women."[29] Through all of these activities and her commitment to education, Henrietta Anderson intentionally acted to improve society.

Doing through Practice: Reaching Down, Up, and Out

Like Donalda Dickie, Michaud, Morgan, Chittick, and Anderson got things done by exercising power of practice. This entailed reaching down to the trenches as instructors of pre-service and in-service teachers (and nurses), writing textbooks and teaching methodology books and articles, developing curriculum, offering support for extra-curricular activities, and mentorship. At the same time, despite the gendered constraints they experienced, these female educational leaders also reached up into the primarily male-dominated administrative structures of schools and government.

Reaching Down

Morgan, Chittick, Anderson, and Michaud exemplified dedication to their profession, contributing significantly to teaching, writing, curriculum development, and student mentorship. Their professional practice in various educational fields as well as their involvement in extracurricular activities left lasting impacts on pre-service teachers and consequently on the education systems in which those new teachers eventually worked.

Morgan

For twenty-eight years (1928–1950), Grace Morgan seems to have been utterly dedicated to maintaining her status as "master," a designation given to full-time, high-status positions rather than the more precarious lower-status instructors. Rather than teaching one subject area, as most masters did, she taught in three separate curriculum areas at North Bay Normal School. She taught all physical education classes until 1933 and the history course on a fairly regular basis until 1934. When the new social studies curriculum was introduced, she taught this from 1944 to 1950. However, it appears that her primary passion was English, which she taught consistently throughout her career at North Bay. During the Great Depression and until

after the Second World War, the English curriculum was siloed into a proliferation of special foci. Morgan taught most of these: reading (1931–50); spelling (1932; 1935–37; 1942–44); composition (1938–39; 1942–50); grammar (1942–50); and speech (1942–50). However, she was especially remembered in the Normal School yearbooks, 1924 to 1950, for her attachment to the course on literature, which she taught consistently over these years. It was in this classroom that Morgan seems to have reached her potential for wit, dramatic gestures, and acting abilities. To peals of laughter, she would rattle off any number of educational quips: "Some people are ear-minded, some are eye-minded; when I am reading *King Lear*, I see some students watching me, and some watching their books. Which would you rather do, class?"[30]

Due to her attachment to literature, and an especial affinity for great works, she was called upon yearly to organize any event remotely related to drama or dramatic recitation. This included annual plays, tableaux, "at-homes" (where scenes from Shakespeare were enacted), and with the help of the music instructor, Mr. Gatenby, an occasional operetta. Each year, the two were also placed in charge of the program for closing exercises. Due to her position as physical education master in the 1920s, she led the organized sports for various events (Halloween, the winter festival, and so on) and was made the honorary president of the Girls' Athletic Association. Throughout her earlier years at North Bay Normal School, Morgan also acted as a "practice teacher," roaming the town and countryside mentoring and assessing students as they performed their teaching placements in the field.[31] And, as the first female master, she was bestowed the position of "Dean of Women" where "she gave much valuable advice to the girls, but she was also fond of 'her boys'."[32] Through these meaningful actions throughout her career, her influence transcended a mere transmission of information within a rigid, structured environment. Instead, Morgan reached down to help generations of student teachers see the holistic nature of the teaching professions.

Michaud

Margaret Michaud taught French and English at the Provincial Normal School of New Brunswick and wrote textbooks, histories, and translations. The initial period of her employment at New Brunswick's Provincial Normal School (1940–46) offered multiple opportunities to engage with teachers in training and teachers in the field. She taught a course titled "Beginning French for English Children" in addition to three periods per week of French to francophones, French lessons for English-speaking students, and English lessons for French-speaking students. Within a year, the director of education appointed her to a new position as extension worker. This position was created to address the high rates of illiteracy in New Brunswick. Michaud was tasked with visiting schools across the province to meet with teachers and children, with the goal of improving reading in the primary grades.

Michaud's second stint at the New Brunswick Provincial Normal School, starting in 1953, was far more secure than her first. Over the course of fourteen years, Michaud wrote textbooks, including *La vie canadienne,* published by Éditions Nelson du Canada, and histories such as *Le musée de la cathédrale de Moncton.* She produced

a translation of Longfellow's *Evangeline* and adapted *Cours de langue française pour les écoles acadiennes: grammaire*, which was prescribed for use in New Brunswick schools.

While her normal school work did not preclude contact with anglophones, Michaud's personal ambition was to improve conditions in education for New Brunswick's francophone children. Her work with pre- and in-service teachers provided her the opportunity to come into direct contact with those in the system who would influence young minds. Her writing would also benefit those young minds, especially since as recently as her own youth, the availability of French-language textbooks had been severely limited. Michaud was at the forefront of a shift in attitudes which led to the improvement of educational opportunities for francophones in the province.

Anderson

Henrietta Anderson was not only an experienced teacher but also proved to be a very accomplished one. In 1932, she was the first teacher to become president of the British Columbia Parent-Teacher Federation and the first winner of the Ferguson Memorial Award for her "outstanding contribution to the field of teaching."[33] In 1934, Anderson was appointed to the staff at Victoria's normal school by order-in-council. Although she taught academic English and psychology, Anderson was also responsible for supervision and observation of students' practica.[34] Former students fondly remembered her as being energetic, enthusiastic, quick-witted, and inspirational. One student recalled Anderson as "a spry, tiny woman whose advice to each graduate was 'not to marry the first pebble on the beach.'"[35] This same student noted that another of Anderson's gifts to her students was her insistence that they plan their lessons carefully, in a detailed daybook, and on precision in every way. Henrietta Anderson also mentored student teachers in her role as supervisor of practica, and she served as the literary advisor for students working on the Victoria Normal School yearbook, *Anecho*.[36] Through her years of service as a teacher educator Henrietta Anderson reached down to influence both pre-service and in-service teachers, inspiring them to become careful observers and precise planners.

Chittick

Rae Chittick believed that the "goal of education is not the acquisition of appropriate information, but the development of one's speculative power, the sharpening of one's critical acumen and the advancement of one's ability to make ideas and assumptions fit together [because this] is the basis of thinking and the springboard for further learning."[37] In an article published in 1929, Chittick provides specific details about what she got done through her practice in preparing new teachers to engage in the "great campaign of health education for the youth of the country."[38] Chittick advised that student teachers should learn to see the importance of health by first undergoing a physical examination of their own, in hopes "that each student, in going to her school, will feel the same responsibility for her pupils."[39] Chittick then shared ideas about content and methods of teaching health. She also provided ideas about how to design health-focused resources for use in school classrooms. To promote the idea

of good nutrition, Chittick suggested that fairy tales could be a good resource. An example she used was "Puss-in-Boots [who] cured the Princess of a dreadful illness by giving her fresh milk and eggs every day." Chittick engaged student teachers in project-based learning where they would work together to gather pictures that could be used "for language lessons in health," or work together "in the writing of original health stories and plays [which could be] carried out in co-operation with the Art and English departments."[40] Chittick also wrote a book dealing with methods of health education in Canada. *Health for Canadians* was a combination of student text (for grade 10) and a teaching method book.[41]

In her role as nurse educator, Chittick reached down to the trenches in her advocacy for nurse training *outside* of hospitals. In-hospital training emphasized nursing service, technical skills, and following orders.[42] She argued that university-educated nurses would be intellectually curious and critical thinkers. Chittick claimed these ways of thinking were needed so that each nurse would understand the "close relationship between patterns of culture and sickness … [and develop] a greater knowledge of the biological and social sciences so that she may have insight into the manifold urges and drives of life itself and an understanding of the kind of society in which she lives."[43]

In reaching down over her twenty-seven-year career as a teacher educator, Chittick encouraged hundreds of pre-service teachers to employ creative approaches to health education in grade schools. As an advocate and practitioner of nurse education in universities, Chittick had a significant impact on nursing education in Canada and around the world.

Reaching Up and Reaching Out

Morgan, Chittick, Anderson, and Michaud reached up into and sometimes penetrated the largely male-dominated administrative structures of schools, universities, and government. At the same time, these educators reached out to stakeholders, including parents, other women, and professional associations, to encourage social and educational reform in areas of interest connected to their passions.

Michaud

As central as Marguerite Michaud's work with pre-service and in-service teachers was, starting in 1941, in her capacity as an extension worker, she also worked closely with school inspectors and leaders in the community to organize evening classes for adults. Her hiring as extension worker was announced with great fanfare, stressing that she was "admirably fitted in personal characteristics and education, to give leadership both in French and English in New Brunswick."[44] During her time away from the normal school, Michaud reached out to the francophone community by becoming editor of the new women's page in the francophone newspaper *L'Évangéline* and was appointed corresponding member of Acadia at the Institute of History of French America. She taught French at the Campbellton High School and summer school courses in Saint John.[45] Once she became vice-principal of the normal school in

1961, Michaud had contact with teachers in training and educational leaders, contributing to the development of the education system. The records of her correspondence reveal personal relationships with many influential French-Canadian academics, such as Anselme Chiasson, Clément Cormier, and Lionel Groulx.[46]

Michaud was a well-educated teacher of teachers, and as such, she had the opportunity to expand her influence beyond a single classroom. Thus, she was also able to maintain a broad awareness of the state of French education in New Brunswick and to use her power and practice to improve a system that had been broken since the introduction of common schooling in the province.[47]

Anderson

While Henrietta Anderson was patronized by the Victoria Normal School principal and even her colleagues and students with comments about her status as a "little lady" rather than as an individual with an earned PhD,[48] she did reach up into the grade school hierarchy, becoming a principal in a North Vancouver school during the 1920s. By the start of the next decade, she had completed both her master's thesis, which compared high school students' intelligence quotient (IQ) with school completion and dropping out rates, and her doctoral dissertation, "Supervision of Rural Schools in British Columbia: A Review of the Present System and a Plan of Reorganization."[49] Through her studies, Anderson was able to reach up and out to share that she found no relationship between IQ and high school completion and dropout rates, and she also shared ideas about how to reorganize the oversight of rural schools. Anderson reached up again, penetrating the male-dominated administrative structure of the Victoria Normal School when she became the vice-principal of the normal school between 1944 and 1946.

By reaching up and out, Henrietta Anderson was a role model who demonstrated that female educators had the capacity to make a difference and to get things done.

Chittick

The clearest evidence of Rae Chittick reaching up is in her work as a nurse educator. She was an active member of professional nursing associations, becoming president of the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses in 1940. Almost simultaneously, she moved through executive positions in the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) to become president of this organization in 1946, serving until 1948. She was known as "the very energetic and able president of the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses [who is] regarded as an authority on health teaching."[50] In 1953, Chittick shifted her career focus from health education to nursing education when she became director of the School for Graduate Nurses at McGill. In this role she was able to implement ideas about nursing education for which she had long advocated, that is, bringing liberal arts courses into the education of nurses with the goal of enhancing the training nurses received in hospital settings through nurturing critical thinking. While serving as director at McGill, Chittick spearheaded the implementation of the Bachelor of Science (Nursing) program, introduced in 1957, and the Master of Science (Applied) in Nursing in 1961. Following her retirement from McGill in 1963, Chittick worked

with the World Health Organization (WHO) to establish nursing schools in Ghana and in the West Indies.

It is clear that in reaching out to professional nursing colleagues through the nursing associations, Chittick garnered respect and acknowledgment of her wisdom and expertise, which led to her ability to reach up and penetrate the administrative structures of the university. In her service as the first director of the first McGill university nursing program, Chittick impacted approaches to nursing education nationally and globally.

Morgan

Proud of her academic accomplishments, Grace Morgan seems to have been greatly affected by her time at university. Although there is no record of her involvement in the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) when it was first established in 1919, she certainly seems to have been in Toronto at the time. Perhaps her connection to the university was strengthened when she returned to studies again in the late 1920s to obtain a bachelor of paedagogy. Regardless, in 1941, along with two other female North Bay Normal School staff, Morgan organized a meeting in her sitting room establishing the first North Bay chapter of the CFUW, which exists to this day. In 1946, Morgan went on an exchange to the Toronto Normal School for the year. Fearful that she might not return, her students at North Bay Normal established a "Miss Grace Morgan Bursary" in her honour dedicated to elementary "normalites" who were residents of Ontario and demonstrated financial need. The bursary is still given at convocation by the North Bay Normal School's successor institute, Nipissing University.[51] Morgan did return to the North Bay Normal School after her year in Toronto, taught for an additional four years, and then retired in 1950. Once retired, Morgan moved to North York, where she formed another CFUW branch in the 1950s. This branch was primarily for women who had earned their degrees but were stay-at-home mothers. She stayed active with the CFUW and with her past students until her death in the late 1960s.[52] In doing so, she reached out and helped guide the next cohort of university women to play more active roles in the academy and have pride in their degrees and experience. In so doing, she influenced subsequent generations who wished to gain degrees and put them to use after graduation.

Gender Constraints

Marguerite Michaud, Grace Morgan, Rae Chittick, and Henrietta Anderson should not be considered helpless victims of the patriarchal structures built into the educational systems in which they worked. They had agency and demonstrated autonomy in their actions. However, we would be remiss to ignore the fact that they also faced contradictions and constraints shaped by the gendered social norms of early- to mid-twentieth-century Canada. Despite their qualifications and determination to make the world a better place, these women faced obstacles that challenged all professional women during the period under consideration.

While all four women held advanced qualifications and graduate degrees, their career pathways in normal schools and beyond were at times circumscribed by gender expectations. Nevertheless, the circumstances of these four are more fluid and complex than we might expect, given that initially, most female Normal School instructors of the first half of the twentieth century were confined to teaching subjects such as kindergarten, domestic science, art, music, health, and calisthenics, while male instructors taught the more formal academic subjects such mathematics, history, and science.

Chittick

As a normal school instructor, Rae Chittick was assigned to teach health, a subject typically designated for female instructors. This suggests that Chittick's career choices in teaching and nursing were influenced by societal expectations that viewed these professions as extensions of women's domestic roles.[53] At the same time, we know that Chittick's experiences with the 1918 influenza pandemic also affected her career choices by helping to shape her commitments to supporting health education.[54]

Chittick never held a formal leadership position as a teacher educator. However, in the "all-female" world of nursing education, she became the first director of the School for Graduate Nurses at McGill, in 1953. Chittick also held more formalized leadership positions outside of the education hierarchy, in nursing associations. She became president of the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses in 1940 and president of the Canadian Nurses Association from 1946 to 1948, where she was known as "the very energetic and able president… [who is] regarded as an authority on health teaching."[55] It could be argued that this trajectory, with its focus on the "feminine" topic of nursing care, was primarily shaped by gendered social norms. That argument ignores Chittick's knowledge, expertise, stamina, and agency. The trajectory of her career was propelled not just by the restrictions placed upon her as a female, but also by her strengths as a leader and her interest in social issues.

Morgan

Grace Morgan earned a high school principal's certificate in 1921, when only a small fraction of women held such qualifications. She was unable to secure a position as a high school principal, however, and she never held an administrative position at an Ontario normal school either. However, Morgan did break a seventy-six-year-old glass ceiling.[56] In Ontario, gender constraints were obvious in the original hiring practices of normal school teachers, where, prior to Morgan, all women hired at the normal school fell under the instructor category. Further demonstrating her desire for independence as a senior educator and citizen, the 1931 census indicated that Morgan, at this time forty-one years old and single, was considered the head of her household (no one else was registered in the home), a brick-veneer single dwelling just down the street from the normal school.[57] At the North Bay Normal School, Morgan was assigned to teach a wide variety of subjects, including physical education. She also taught English, and over time, she solidified her duties in the latter subject, especially in literature. The appointment of Morgan as the province's first

female teaching master in 1923 challenged the notion that "women's work," even in the professions, should be slotted into lower status positions. For the next two generations women were still relegated to teaching "women's subjects" (such as English, home economics, the arts, etc.), but the position of "master" was no longer off limits.

Michaud

Marguerite Michaud initially found success as a principal in a small local school, a position she won by default as the teacher with the highest qualifications. In this instance the Schools Act was in her favour.[58] She was hired to teach in the New Brunswick Normal School in 1940, breaking the French department's streak of fifty-six years of only male instructors. When the new extension program was established in 1941, above all other educators (male or female) Michaud was the successful candidate for the extension worker position. Nevertheless, a few years later, her application for a school inspector position was rejected by the provincial director of education, who expressed his belief that the job was unsuitable for women.[59] The provincial assistant chief superintendent, a former school inspector himself, defended the decision, declaring aspects of the work unsavoury for women, including difficult travelling conditions and the need to attend sometimes rowdy school meetings.[60]

When she was denied an inspector position, unbeknownst to her (or to the director of education, an anglophone), Morgan had come up against L'Ordre de Jacques Cartier, a secret society of which all male francophone normal school instructors and school inspectors were members.[61] Her exclusion from this group meant that she was not part of the behind-the-scenes strategizing to improve French education in New Brunswick. Even so, later in life she was well-recognized for her achievements. She received the Order of Canada in 1973, and an honorary doctorate from the Université de Moncton in 1974. St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, memorializes her with an annual prize in Canadian studies, and Michaud funded a scholarship in her own name at Fredericton, New Brunswick's St. Thomas University. The sole French public library in Fredericton bears her name, as does the elementary school in her hometown, Bouctouche.[62] Today, Michaud's name is better known than those of her male contemporaries.

Anderson

Henrietta Anderson also broke the mould with respect to male-dominated subject-area instruction. Anderson was responsible for supervision and observation of student-teacher practica, and she also taught academic English and psychology at the Victoria Normal School.[63] She serves as an interesting case in that she held formal leadership positions as both a school principal in North Vancouver[64] and vice-principal of the Victoria Normal School between 1944 and 1946. Indeed, she was the only female administrator at the Victoria Normal School among six administrators appointed between 1915 and 1956.[65] Yet, despite holding these formal leadership positions, it is clear that Anderson suffered the same indignities experienced by other professional women at the time, unjustifiably playing second fiddle to men. Although she was the only instructor on staff to have earned a PhD, Anderson was still called

"Miss" by her colleagues. Vernon Denton, the school's male principal and recipient of an honorary doctorate, was addressed as "Dr." Denton. Not long after Anderson's appointment at the normal school, one of the administrators allegedly informed her that "a little lady like [her] would not want to be called doctor." While this comment may have arisen in part due to her petite physical stature, this was a patronizing remark to which Anderson, no shrinking violet, responded firmly that "doctor" was indeed the correct honorific with which to address her.[66]

Historical studies have indicated that marital status was a significant factor in understanding the gender constraints women in education encountered, but some studies exploring the experiences of teachers point out that the marriage ban (that is, the expectation that female educators would resign if they married, while male educators need not[67]) was not always strictly enforced in Canadian jurisdictions prior to the post-Second World War era.[68]

Whether or not the "marriage ban" was enforced uniformly across the country, we do know that Michaud, Morgan, Chittick, and Anderson remained unmarried throughout their lifetimes. We do not know whether they pursued relationships with men or women. We have some evidence to indicate that Marguerite Michaud was courted by a journalist when she was teaching French at a private Catholic college for women in Brooklyn, but she rejected his proposal in 1937 by leaving for Paris on a study trip.[69] Some sources allege that Henrietta Anderson left her teaching position in London, England, to marry a Canadian she had never met in person, only to learn upon arrival in Canada that her betrothed had chosen to marry another.[70] Even if this allegation were to be substantiated, Henrietta Anderson's commitment to her work as an independent female instructor and scholar is evident. With respect to Grace Morgan and Rae Chittick, the primary sources we have accessed do not illuminate their reasoning with regard to remaining unmarried, so we cannot say with certainty whether Chittick and Morgan courted or were courted.

The sources remain silent as to whether Michaud, Morgan, Chittick, and Anderson intentionally chose to remain unmarried because they wanted to pursue a career. However, we can argue that marital status was a fulcrum for discrimination based on gendered social norms embedded in the patriarchal structures of the education systems in which they worked. Remaining unmarried did allow these women, like the more famous Donalda Dickie, to focus on their careers, which was common among women of their generation who sought professional advancement.

Conclusion

Michaud, Morgan, Chittick, and Anderson did face restrictions shaped by sexist or marginalizing social norms that made working life at the very least uncomfortable for female academics and professionals. Recall, for example, that Michaud was denied a leadership opportunity as a superintendent when the New Brunswick director of education argued that "superintendent was not a woman's job." Morgan's appointment to her normal school position was fraught, despite her university degree and multiple certificates, given that only men had been recognized as masters in Ontario prior to

1923–24. Indeed, as Cecilia Reynolds noted in 1995, female educators' lives were encumbered both within and outside of their places of work by "social-regulative rules" that circumscribed men's and women's places in society.[71]

The lives of Marguerite Michaud, Grace Morgan, Rae Chittick, and Henrietta Anderson were circumscribed by gender prejudice and discrimination, but at the same time, their education, social class, and personal determination facilitated the manifestation in each of them all of the characteristics that defined the life and career of exemplary and better-known Donalda Dickie. Michaud, Morgan, Chittick, and Anderson exercised power of practice. They worked down in the trenches with networks of teachers, up within the male-dominated structures of schools and government, and out to stakeholders. They conducted their practice with intentionality.

In taking up feminist historian Geraldine Jonçich Clifford's challenge to examine teaching and other women's professions to better understand "liberation struggles," we discovered that these female normal school instructors lived in ways that give the "lie to the notion of teaching as a restricted sphere."[72] Marguerite Michaud, Grace Morgan, Rae Chittick, and Henrietta Anderson became important thinkers and leaders in education and in society more broadly. In doing so, they effectively pushed beyond the gendered social norms that bounded their personal and professional lives and, like Dickie, became leaders who exercised power by getting things done.

Notes

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2 Christine A. Ogren, "'A Large Measure of Self-Control and Personal Power': Women Students at State Normal Schools During the Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 28, nos. 3–4 (2000): 212.

3 Rebecca Priegert Coulter and Helen Harper, *History Is Hers: Women Educators in Twentieth Century Ontario* (Detselig, 2005), 16–17. See, for example, Robert S. Patterson, John W. Chalmers, and John W. Friesen, eds., *Profiles of Canadian Educators* (D. C. Heath, 1974). Of all the educators listed as paragons, only two women (Adelaide Hoodless and Marguerite Bourgeoys) are included.

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7 Martin Lawn, "What Is the Teacher's Job? Work and Welfare in Elementary Teaching, 1940–1945," in *Teachers: The Culture and Politics of Work*, ed. Martin Lawn and Gerald Grace (The Falmer Press, 1987), 50. See also Sari K. Biklen, *School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching* (Teachers College Press, 1995).

8 Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics, 1900–39* (Manchester University Press, 1996), 26.

9 Kathleen Casey, "Why Do Progressive Women Activists Leave Teaching? Theory, Methodology and Politics in Life-history Research," in Goodson, *Studying Teachers Lives*, 187–204.
10 Cecilia Reynolds and Beth Young, eds., *Women and Leadership in Canadian Education* (Detselig, 1995); Janice Wallace, Dawn Wallin, Melody Viczko, and Heather Anderson, "The First Female Academics in Programs of Educational Administration in Canada: Riding Waves of Opportunity," *McGill Journal of Education* 49, no. 2 (2014): 437–58; Cecilia Reynolds, "In the Right Place at the Right Time: Rules of Control and Woman's Place in Ontario Schools, 1940–1980," *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue Canadienne de l'éducation* 20, no. 2 (1995): 140.
11 Rebecca Priegert Coulter, "Getting Things Done: Donalda J. Dickie and Leadership Through Practice," *Canadian Journal of Education* 28, no. 4 (2005): 669–99.
12 Rebecca Priegert Coulter, "Getting Things Done: Donalda J. Dickie and Leadership Through Practice," in *Women Teaching, Women Learning: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Elizabeth M. Smyth and Paula Bourne (Inanna Publications, 2006), 24–25.
13 According to our research findings, all four women had earned university degrees, like the majority of other female normal school instructors. Out of the total number of female instructors we have identified so far, about 62 per cent held a bachelors or a masters degree; out of this 62 per cent, about 25 per cent held a masters or doctoral degree, with 75 per cent holding a bachelors degree.
14 Philippe Volpé, "Marguerite Michaud (1903–1982), Historienne des femmes et de l'Acadie," in *Profession historienne? Femmes et pratique de l'histoire au Canada Français, XIXe-XXe siècles*, ed. Louise Bienvenue and François-Olivier Dorais (Presses de l'Université Laval, 2023), 336.
15 Barb Godin, "Women of Interest — Rae Chittick," *The Voice Magazine* 27, no. 19 (May 10, 2019), p. 10; Lynn Kirkwood, "Profile of a Leader: Rae Chittick — A Thoughtful Leader," *Nursing Leadership* 13, no. 2 (May 2000): 20–21.
16 Rae Chittick, "The Teaching of Health in Normal Schools," *Canadian Public Health Journal* 20, no. 4 (1929): 186.
17 Rae Chittick, "Forty Years of Growing," *The Canadian Nurse* 53, no. 1 (January 1957): 29.
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19 University of Toronto, Students' Administrative Council of the University of Toronto, *Torontonensis, 1914*, 84.
20 *Torontonensis, 1914*, 84.
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24 Marguerite Michaud to Clement Cormier, November 16, 1943. Fonds 177.1014, Centre d'études acadiennes Anselme-Chiasson, Université de Moncton, Moncton.
25 Volpé, "Marguerite Michaud (1903–1982), " 342–43.
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27 "Outstanding Educator in BC Dies," *Victoria Daily Times*, July 17, 1968, 13.
28 Storey, "A Woman of Stature," 5.
29 Storey, "A Woman of Stature," 6.
30 *The Twenty-First Annual Yearbook of the North Bay Normal School* (Students of NBNS, 1933), 37.
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39 Chittick, "The Teaching of Health," 187.
40 Chittick, "The Teaching of Health," 190.
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44 Fletcher Peacock, *Annual Report of the Chief Superintendent of New Brunswick, 1940–41* (New Brunswick Department of Education, 1941), 16.
45 Volpé, "Marguerite Michaud (1903–1982)," 343.
46 Volpé, "Marguerite Michaud (1903–1982)," 336.
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66 Anderson measured just under five feet in height. Storey, "A Woman of Stature," 4.

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