

impressionnante) fort prometteur, surtout s'il parvient à mieux structurer et à mieux condenser sa pensée dans un prochain livre.

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J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*. University of Toronto Press, 1996. Pp. 582.

A description of school reunions held at Algoma University College (the former site of the Shingwauk residential school) leads us directly into contemporary political arguments about the institutionalization of Aboriginal children by church and state—abuse and healing, victims and survivors, apologies and reconciliation, assimilation and cultural genocide, harm and legal and political redress for harms suffered. Miller's introduction sets the scene for diverse historical voices on (or better, contested histories of) native residential schools. He offers a comprehensive, detailed, and disturbing account of an assault on children and communities in the name of education, understood in the contexts of colonization and missionization. Emphasizing contentious relations between Native people, government, and church, Miller posits that the distinct strategies, aspirations, and powers of these interest groups explain what each hoped to achieve, and what each experienced, in the sad story of residential schooling.

Miller begins with the reasons each interest group advanced for founding residential schools: the missionaries' impulse for conversion, the government's assumptions of progress and assimilation, and Aboriginal communities' desire for the literacy and technical knowledge they needed to make a living in new ways. The 'official' history contained in archival documents and writings of church and state agents from the 1620s through to the 1980s is counterbalanced by oral histories from former students and staff, and by the political narratives of contemporary Aboriginal leaders. Miller sets individual experiences in the context of racist, classist, and patriarchal ideologies, and daily school life in the context of church and government bureaucratic practices.

Confederation is seen as the turning point in government-native relations, after which Aboriginal leaders could no longer negotiate the terms of schooling. Punitive government fiscal policies led to underfunded schools, insufficient health care, poor food, and a harsh school environment ruled by overburdened and undertrained staff. The school policies of 1883 "pandered to the prejudices of missionaries and bureaucrats," failing to consider either the needs of the children or the aspirations of their parents. Miller finds that the Canadian government and parents were disillusioned with residential schools as early as the 1890s. Rather than providing a meaningful and positive Native education, government officials sought only to reduce fiscal obligations. Aboriginal education remained a low priority for government and citizens alike. Any increased pressure on the tax base—for example, war or economic depression—could excuse children living and learning in hardship if not deprivation.

Miller argues that differences in the social theories of missionary congregations account for the survival of residential schools until the 1970s. Whereas most Protestant groups and the government favoured day schools by the mid-twentieth century, Anglican and Catholic bishops continued to lobby for residential schooling, the latter vehemently opposing the integration of Aboriginal Catholic children into the public system.

Given the broader colonialist assault on Aboriginal peoples, cultures, and languages, it is extremely difficult to isolate the specific impact of residential schools. Only a tiny minority of Inuit and Indian children ever attended the schools. But Miller provides ample evidence of more than a century of negative and frequently brutal treatment. Nor will he allow us to limit blame to a few perverse and brutal individuals either ignored or shielded by authorities. He holds the government responsible for gross indifference to children and their communities, and all Canadian citizens accountable. Our collective indifference to the plight of Aboriginal children under State and Church care earns us a share of shame and moral responsibility.

Thousands of Aboriginal people have now launched legal action seeking redress for sexual and physical abuses, for cultural and language losses, and for widespread social dysfunction linked to post-traumatic "residential school syndrome." *Shingwauk's Vision* provides the historic foundation for understanding the effects of coercive colonial practices. Its impressive breadth and attention to historic detail, and its wealth of diverse recollections and assessments, make it an essential text.

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Pavla Miller, *Transformations of Patriarchy in the West, 1500–1900*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998. Pp. 397.

Covering four centuries in Europe and North America, this ambitious book chronicles political and social change in the West, from world-shaking revolutions of the eighteenth century through immense contemporary changes in family life and the very concepts of male and female. The glue that holds all this together is the notion of patriarchy and its transformation, a concept Miller has utilized in much of her previous writing over the last decade (sometimes with Ian Davey, whose inspiration she acknowledges). She is particularly interested in how the patriarchal social order sought to instill self-government or self-mastery into subject populations through the efforts of various social reformers. The main institution called upon to carry out this important process of state-building was the public school or, as Miller prefers, "state school systems." She contends that this institution played a primary role in creating, transforming, and reproducing gendered institutions, social structures, populations, and relations of production.

Readers of Bruce Curtis' *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836–1871* (London, 1988) will be familiar with this line of argument, although