

public schools has identified systemic inequalities of outcome based on class, race, ethnicity, and mother tongue. To the consternation of their community, Portuguese students have registered particularly adverse outcomes related to streaming, graduation rates, and post-secondary school attendance. What steps Clinton took to ameliorate their educational prospects, is of interest, though beyond the architecture of this superb book.

Robert Vipond declares at the outset that this was not a book he had any intention of writing. It flowed neither from his previous work, nor from any robust current of his academic discipline. Instead, the project found him. The result is a most thoughtful, engaging school history—full of empirical, analytical, and theoretical insight into how a school should be in a diverse, divided city and world.

Myer Siemiatycki
Ryerson University

David Wright

SickKids: The History of the Hospital for Sick Children

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016. 480 pp.

David Wright's excellent history of the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto provides the first comprehensive account of the hospital since its founding over 140 years ago. The wait has been worthwhile as this is a well-informed, skillfully written history. Wright sees the hospital "as a prism, reflecting diverse social practices and cultural preoccupations of the time period and society in which it operated" (367). He places the unique history of the hospital into the context of developments in science, pediatric medicine, and surgery, changing ideas in child psychology, and the many advances in health care in the twentieth century and beyond. Throughout the book, Wright emphasises the significance of changing patterns of hospital financing within Canada, the hospital's relationship with generations of Torontonians, and, more recently, its global reach. With an abundance of archival sources, Wright had a difficult task selecting his material. In my view, he has made excellent choices. There is no shortage of inspiring stories and accounts of outsize personalities, but neither does the author shy away from less happy and sometimes shocking events that occurred at the hospital.

Early chapters focus on the group of middle-class women, led by the pious but intrepid Elizabeth McMaster, who founded the hospital in 1875 but, as the enterprise grew, ceded control to a male board of trustees. The long-time chairman of the board, newspaper magnate John Ross Robertson, more or less bank-rolled the hospital and wielded great power in subsequent years. Robertson's drive, foresight (and money) certainly enabled the Hospital for Sick Children to become a leading pediatric institution. The story of McMaster and her Ladies Committee has a less happy ending. Wright fully explores the difficult relationship that developed between McMaster and

Robertson after she became lady superintendent and which, no doubt, led to her early resignation. He lacks the space to continue the story of the Ladies Committee who, in 1899, tired of Robertson's lack of sympathy with their ideas, withdrew their support from the hospital and set up The Home for Incurable Children (now Holland Bloorview Rehabilitation Hospital).

By the turn of the twentieth century, the story moves to the purpose-built College Street hospital and to developments in orthopedic surgery that were significant in allowing the hospital to be seen as a curative institution. Attention is paid to the development of nursing as a profession at this time. The figure of Alan Brown, chief of medicine, 1921–51, looms large during his long tenure. Revered, but not particularly well-liked, Brown's ideas on child rearing may have been controversial but he undoubtedly contributed to improved child welfare in the city, to reduced infant mortality on the wards, and to pediatrics as an academic discipline. (He also supported the research that produced the famous Pablum and Sun Wheat Biscuits). Wright's account of the milk pasteurization plant, set up at the hospital in 1909, and strongly supported by Brown and Robertson, illustrates the foresight of these two major figures and the strong links between the hospital and the burgeoning public health movement. During his tenure, Brown would have been unhappy to see parents on the wards. Of particular interest to me is Wright's handling of the historic exclusion of parents from access to their children in the hospital (and to the country branch at Thistleton). He devotes a chapter to "Visiting Hours" (167) and provides an even-handed account of the changes that occurred as the hospital gradually moved to "a newer family-friendly model of institutional care" (188).

In the second half of the book there is an early focus on medical advances such as the antibiotic revolution, pioneering cardiac surgery (Dr. Bill Mustard), and care of premature infants. The author describes the many changes with regard to hospital insurance, hospital funding, and the move to universal health care; also, how appeals to the public for money have changed and evolved over time. Student nurses, the backbone of nursing staff until the late 1960s, are given voice in a chapter that describes student life in the 1950s and 1960s hospital, the close bonds formed, and the difficulties of caring for sick children with little experience and limited support. This chapter also covers the changes to nursing education that led, in the early 1970s, to the closing of hospital-based nursing schools throughout Ontario and thus to the closing of the eighty-year-old school at the hospital. Though a controversial event, the placing of nursing education within educational institutions was a move endorsed by nursing leaders who wished nurses to be better prepared academically and scientifically.

In the more recent history of the hospital, two very public, unflattering events are covered in detail, namely, the early 1980s unexplained infant deaths and the Dr. Nancy Olivieri controversy of the 1990s. In both instances, Wright provides significant background information and, to me, a fair analysis of the events and their place in the wider history of health care. But the book is, overall, an account of the remarkable progress made in the care of sick children in the past 140 years and to the not insignificant part played by the Hospital for Sick Children in that story. The book

is highly recommended to historians interested in hospital, childcare, and pediatric medical/surgical history, and to the general interested reader.

Judith Young

Independent scholar