

to change how we come to understand the task of teaching and learning Canadian history, not augment the practices and ideas we currently have.

Samantha Cutrara
York University

Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation *recently published a review by Alexandre Lanoix of Stéphane Lévesque and Jean-Philippe Croteau's L'avenir du passé: Identité, mémoire et récits de la jeunesse québécoise et franco-ontarienne (University of Ottawa Press, 2020): https://historicalstudiesineducation.ca/index.php/edu_hse-rhe/article/view/4917. This issue of the journal features the above review by Samantha Cutrara of Stéphane Lévesque and Jean-Philippe Croteau's Beyond History for Historical Consciousness: Students, Narrative, and Memory (University of Toronto Press, 2020). As the publishers state, these two texts are not translations of each other but are two independent texts from a common research base.*

Rie Croll

Shaped by Silence: Stories from the Inmates of the Good Shepherd Laundries and Reformatories

Newfoundland: ISER Books, Memorial University Press, 2019. 288 pp.

Sociologist Rie Croll's *Shaped by Silence* documents the oral histories of five women who were confined to the Good Shepherd Magdalene Laundries (run by the Good Shepherd Sisters, a congregation of the Roman Catholic Church) across Canada, Australia, and Ireland between the 1930s and 1960s. The Magdalene Laundry system originated in France and expanded to Canada, Ireland, Australia, and beyond in the 1840s. These institutions were called laundries because girls and women were put to work laundering or cleaning. They often served as the public laundry. The Good Shepherd laundry aim was to provide perceived immoral women "moral protection" and to reshape women into the "image of pure womanhood" (3). Croll clarifies that, although pregnancy was the primary reason why a woman would be sentenced to the Magdalene laundries, they were not solely for unwed mothers. Croll reveals the nuance of individual oral histories and what led to each woman's incarceration as well as the harmful legacies of the laundries, rather than penning these experiences as the same. For example, one woman was born at the laundry after her mother was sexually assaulted. Others escaped abuse or were presumed unmanageable. These stories convey how patriarchal structures sentenced young women to Good Shepherd laundries as punishment for their perceived immorality.

Croll explains when and why the laundries closed. Between 1945 and the 1970s, Canada and Australia closed laundries amid a “re-examination of powerful structures” and the “usefulness of imprisonment” (9). Croll missed that in Canada, this period is also known as the deinstitutionalization period. Governments and organizations criticized institutional structures after the horrors of concentration camps in World War II. Croll further elaborates that in Ireland, these laundries did not close until the mid-1990s, when sexual abuse survivors brought forward stories of abuse.

The experiences of abuse within these institutions left a legacy of mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional trauma. Women were forced into this exploitative labour, which caused physical harm. One woman came to realize that the harsh chemicals used in the laundry were part of the reason for her health problems later in life. The nuns and clergy perpetuated other harms through sexual assault, isolation, giving power to senior inmates, and verbal abuse. Another woman felt that she lacked spiritual growth as a child, which in turn challenged her growth as an adult. Perhaps most interesting is the women’s resentment for the lack of formal education they received at each institution. These institutions professed moral reform. However, they failed to provide formal education to almost all of the women in Croll’s study. The women all shared that they felt their lack of education contributed to more harm and prevented any success, not to mention embarrassment in explaining the absence of formal education to others after their release. It is unclear why these girls did not receive a formal education; however, Croll speculates that the nuns prescribed labour rather than an educative approach to moral reformation.

Croll’s focus in sharing women’s traumatic experiences at Good Shepherd laundries advocates for the truth about these institutions and for redress for survivors and the legacy of harm they experienced. Some of the women interviewed for this study shared their attempts to gain closure for their time at Good Shepherd laundries through legal pursuits or apologies. There have been a few state apologies and settlements across Canada, Australia, and Ireland. However, there is a lack of accountability in the content of institutional apologies, which is particularly upsetting as women felt their experiences were denied or invalidated. Croll writes that these apologies soften the realities of the laundries and do not take into account the traumatic experiences of the women sentenced there. Further, the Roman Catholic Church has not issued an apology. Despite their best efforts, these women rarely received any recognition of their lives in the Magdalene homes.

Croll’s study provides an important, first-hand account of how the Magdalene Laundry system was detrimental to women. Despite sharing these stories, this study would have benefitted from clarifying the differences amongst geographical locations. It seems that these locations have been chosen based on the women who felt comfortable sharing their experiences. Croll importantly noted that the Good Shepherd Magdalene laundry systems came out of the French Order. There were also wide differences in when and why these institutions closed based on different national contexts. A more detailed analysis of the Good Shepherd laundries globally would have supported a stronger understanding of these laundry systems, especially given there were other denominational and provincial training schools, industrial schools, and

reformatories that housed girls and women for their perceived immoral behaviour in Canada that were not part of the laundry system.

For historians, this study is a reminder that first-person, oral stories matter. Oral historians and historians of childhood and youth would be particularly interested in understanding Croll's focus on the context that placed girls and women in the laundries. For historians of education, this study reflects the value and importance of formal education. The sisters' denial of formal education contributes to larger discussions about the value of formal education as an identity in childhood, not to mention the long-term effects in denying education.

Shaped by Silence: Stories from the Inmates of the Good Shepherd Laundries and Reformatories tells women's first-hand experiences and the long-lasting effects of these harmful institutions. The lack of formal education afforded to young women continued to prevent them acquiring the skills needed upon release. Croll's mission to share these stories serves as an act of remembrance and validation for the experiences of women, especially as they continue to live with the legacies as apologies downplay the abuses that occurred within the walls of the institution.

Mallory Davies
University of Waterloo

Sheila Carr-Stewart, ed.

Knowing the Past, Facing the Future: Indigenous Education in Canada

Vancouver: UBC Press, Purich Books, 2019. 312 pp.

Endorsed by Drs. Margaret Kovach, Jo-ann Archibald, Marie Battiste, and Margaret Wilson on the book's back cover, *Knowing the Past, Facing the Future* makes a significant contribution to the literature on Indigenous education in western Canada, and is not to be missed. Carr-Stewart has curated a collection of 11 chapters that feature diverse perspectives, points of entry, and teachings to apply in Indigenous educational policy and practice. The chapters are well-sequenced and are organized into three effective themes: Part 1: First Promises and Colonial Practices; Part 2: Racism, Trauma, and Survivance; and, Part 3: Truth, Reconciliation, and Decolonization. Readers of *Historical Studies in Education* will be impressed at how the chapters in parts 2 and 3, which are not strictly historical, are well-informed by historical study or context, and, as the title suggests, the threads of the past and the future are present in each contribution.

Several messages reverberate throughout the collection and are particularly well-exemplified by Michael Cottrell and Rosalind Hardie's "Lessons from Saskatchewan" in equitable learning outcomes for Indigenous learners (chapter 9). The first message is that improving Indigenous education is Canada's ongoing debt to those with whom it holds treaties, not an educational "gap" to be closed through tinkering with the status quo. Second, it is suggested more than once that what we might strive