Reading Log 7, Bryce Hickerty, T00242104

I found the many readings for this week each very interesting in the wide variety of topics that each reading focused on. Helen’s reading *The Gaelic Folk Songs of Canada* was very interesting to read, and although the translations were themselves beautiful, I wonder if the translations lose some meaning conveyed differently in the originals1. I enjoyed Triston’s articles discussing the history of women’s athletics, and was fascinated to read about the ‘Golden Age’ of women’s athletics, when all-rounder female athletes would hold records in many different sports2. I wonder if this ‘Golden Age’ in which individual athletes excelled in more than one sport is a reflection of these athletes’ individual skill, or the nature of women’s roles and as athletes during this time in Canada, as well as the demands of living in Canada. That is, should we consider the success of the 1928 Canadian female Olympians as being a product of the determination and dedication of those athletes as well as the demanding conditions of Canadian living3? And was the moral climate which both reflected and was generated by these expectations of female athletes in Canada also a determinant factor in the success of these athletes during this era? The readings for Megan’s presentation I found interesting in that both papers approach the issue of anglicizing Canada through promoting English learning while discouraging other language use. Gidney and Millar’s article “How to Teach English to Immigrant Children: Canadian Pedagogical Theory and Practice, 1910–1960” I found interesting when contrasted with Wilcox’s article “’To meet more perfectly the wants of our people here:’ The Christian Brothers and the Process of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925.” What I found most interesting about these two articles is that while they both address the issue of the practice of teaching English in Canada4, Gidney and Millar’s article generally talks about the methods employed in teaching English5, while Wilcox’s article deals more about the moral implications of subjecting children to these teaching programs, and the influence of religious competition in Canadian language programs6. I found the readings for Kristina’s presentation particularly relevant to my own research, Kechnie’s article “Rural Women’s Role in the “Great National Work of Home Building” addressed the issue of the belief and perception of ‘separate spheres,’7 and Soule’s 1907 article “The Value of Agricultural Training. *The O.A.C. Review*” pointed to the ideation of the agrarian past, both issues relevant to morality, and both ideological concepts which are quite obviously the product of a particular place, time, and moral climate8. The readings for Kaitlyn’s presentation I also found to be particularly relevant to my own research as they discuss the issue of changing expectations for women in regard to perceived feminine ideals. For instance, Davidson’s article "A Woman's Right to Charm and Beauty: Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps” discusses the barriers which opposed Canadian women in the armed forces, and shows how women’s participation was highly gendered9.

In my own research, I looked at Ruth Sandwell’s “To the Past: History Education, Public Memory, & Citizenship in Canada.” This book focuses on the evolving concept of collective memory, and proposes that through probing this concept we may possibly better understand our past and present selves. Sandwell explores how these concepts are constructed and how questions of identity, meaning, community, and nation, play a role in shaping our interpretations of reality and our ideas of morality10. This book is important to my own research as it stresses the role of public consciousness in shaping private thought. In this manner, this book is relevant to A. May’s memoir as it highlights the importance of public consciousness as a basis for morality and memory.

Endnotes

1. Faser, Alexander, “The Gaelic Folk Songs of Canada,” *From the Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada,* Toronto: J. Hope & Sons: (1903).
2. McDonald, David “The Golden Age of Women and Sport in Canada”, *Canadian Women’s Studies,* 15, 4, (1995). 13.<cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/download/9355/8472>
3. Ibid.
4. Wilcox, Michael, “ ‘To meet more perfectly the wants of our people here:’ The Christian Brothers and the Process of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925,” CCHA, *Historical Studies,* 79, (2013) 77.
5. Gidney, Catherine. "Dating and Gating: The Moral Regulation of Men and Women at Victoria and University Colleges, University of Toronto, 1920-60." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 41, 2 (2007): 107.
6. Wilcox, Michael, “ ‘To meet more perfectly the wants of our people here:’ The Christian Brothers and the Process of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925,” CCHA, *Historical Studies,* 79, (2013) 77.
7. Kechnie, M. (n.d.). Rural Women’s Role in the “Great National Work of Home Building.” Canadian Women’s Studies, 20(2)
8. Soule, A. M. (1907). The Value of Agricultural Training. *The O.A.C. Review*, 19, 5, 210.
9. Davidson, Tina, "’A Woman`s Right to Charm and Beauty:’ Maintaining the Feminine ideal in the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Atlantis: *Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice / Études Critiques Sur Le Genre, La Culture, Et La Justice,* 26, 1 (2001): 53.
10. Sandwell, Ruth W., ed., *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory, & Citizenship in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006)

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R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, “How to Teach English to Immigrant Children: Canadian Pedagogical Theory and Practice, 1910–1960,” *Historical Studies in Education,* 26, 2, (2014).

Sandwell, Ruth W., ed., *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory, & Citizenship in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006)

Soule, A. M. (1907). The Value of Agricultural Training. *The O.A.C. Review*, 19, 5, 209–212.

Wilcox, Michael, “ ‘To meet more perfectly the wants of our people here:’ The Christian Brothers and the Process of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925,” CCHA, *Historical Studies,* 79, (2013) 57-78.

Reading Log 8, Bryce Hickerty, T00242104

I found Curthoys’ article particularly interesting in its exploration of the meaning behind past and present actions such as participation in these ‘freedom rides,’ and I found it interesting the implied conception of the continuation of these freedom ride reunions, novels, books, and documentaries and other means of remembering and historicizing the rides act as a means of reinforcing the original intentions of these journeys themselves. That is¸ suggests Curthoy, attention to these freedom rides “[S]ymbolize(s) a more generalized recognition of the importance of racial equality and respect, and the power and necessity of political action to achieve it” 1. Curthoy also argues that through autobiographical work, historians “Interrogate the value of their own memory for historical purposes (and) encourage(s) … a deeper consideration of questions of perspective and the value of oral history 2 That is, by conducting autobiographical work, Curthoy argues that historians are able to more deeply understand the value of oral history.

I found Acton and Potter’s article very interesting in its discussion of societal expectations regarding men and women’s roles during World War II. I found it of particular interest that during this period the contributions of women to the war effort were measured in comparison to the contributions of men, and that due to men’s contribution being considered far greater, women were expected to simply bear with the emotional strain that accompanies war. That is, when it came to ailments such as ‘shell shock’, female nurses who worked with injured soldiers were expected to be somehow immune to the horrors of war. Because of this construction, argue Acton and Potter, cases of nervous breakdown among nurses were remarkably few. What I found interesting about this revelation is the implied conclusion that the social construction of what was expected of medical professionals during this time influenced the incidence of nervous breakdown3. This revelation is relevant to my own research because it speaks to the suggestibility of people and the importance of thought in influencing susceptibility to mental ailments such as nervous breakdown, ‘shell shock’ or Post-traumatic stress disorder. If the prevalence of these disorders can be influenced simply by altering one’s attitude, is this not further evidence that a person’s worldview and moral inclinations are essential in determining their ability to thrive and live a healthy life. For instance, the playful and happy tone with which A. May writes much of her memoir, I believe, reflects her overall positive take on her own life. That is, because A. May is positive, she is also resilient, and because of this has been successful in academics and her career. Perhaps it is also a result of A. May’s resilience that she has enjoyed such a long life, and outlived other family members. As well, I believe that A. May’s positive outlook and resilient approach to life could also be perceived as a major influence in her very writing of her memoir! And so, I interpret the results of this article as further indication that worldview and morality are crucial factors in shaping one’s worldview and determining one’s success in any pursuit.

In my own research, I looked at Mariana Valverde’s “The Age of Light, Soap, & Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925.*”* This book is important to my research as it provides a specific look at the effects of 19th century industrialization and in the breakdown of the Master-Apprentice system. It explores how the shift to factory work due to various technological innovations compelled the formation of new concepts of morality such as the `separate spheres` ideology. It also looks at how these concepts have continually developed. This book is also important to my research as it analyses the importance of these technological, economic, and social developments in shaping memory, and has implications for A. May’s memoir in its analysis of how these factors shape understandings of morality4.

Endnotes

1. Curthoys, A., “Memory, History, and *Ego-Histoire*: Narrating and Re-enacting the Australian Freedom Ride,” *Historical Reflections*, 38, 2 (2012): 41.
2. Ibid, 31.
3. Acton, C. and Potter, J., “‘These frightful sights would work havoc with one’s brain’: Subjective Experience, Trauma, and Resilience in First World War Writings by Medical Personnel,” *Literature and Medicine,* 30, 1 (2012): 64.
4. Valverde, Mariana, *The Age of Light, Soap, & Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, (2008).

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