

distinctions between children and denied families the choice of school, teacher and course of study, the latter often illustrating popular bias against higher education for girls.

It is the systematization of education as a way of life that comes into focus against the now normal practices of schooling, those accepted as the expected routines of a complex and legitimate bureaucracy. Explaining absence from school, being subject to expectations of dress and behaviour are still resisted. Going beyond the administrative structure, Curtis describes the discourse and regulations that channeled specific social practices into normalized activities.

Resistance to these norms took several forms: school burnings, revenge against cruel and de-meaning teachers, and legal action. One can hardly speak of a province-wide organized resistance to schooling; even on the local level, strategic and collective actions were few. But this is not the essential point. Parents resisted schooling partly because they needed child labour for their agrarian survival, but many also refused to send their children because the control of behaviour, the teaching of different social roles and the potentially different determination of occupational goals were out of the hands of the family. Such authority comes under scrutiny, but Curtis permits it also to portray the need for cultural security at the level of the majority of the population.

Throughout the book, he makes a case for a form of repressive tolerance by the Education Office with regard to some of these local resistances. Ryerson was willing to allow local determination of the severity of punishment against pupils in exchange, implicitly, for the smoother running of the system as a whole.

The chapter on teacher training demonstrates how the occupation became increasingly defined and professionalized as central authority became more entrenched. While many teachers were obliged to board-around to obtain food and a place to sleep, the systematization of cash payment allowed them to abandon this mode of living. They understood, as did Ryerson, that they "could not 'civilize' and 'humanize' a population to which they were socially subordinated, or with which they lived on conditions of moral equality" (224). Teachers learned the importance and mechanisms of these tasks in the Normal School, a "total institution" in which every aspect of life — from religious worship to conversation — was centrally regulated. As Curtis points out, it was this form of subordination as a route to moral authority and relative autonomy that gave teachers such direct power over their students and provoked much of the resistance.

Since the mid-1970's, a significant and large body of work has provided an historical narrative of educational development in Ontario. But we are in need of a shift in emphasis, which Bruce Curtis has begun. *Building the Educational State* contains a wealth of anecdotes from the correspondence which many readers will find amusing, provocative or infuriating. These bring to life the other side of Ryerson's system. The interested social historian, however, will want to follow Curtis' suggestive leads that break the narrative history and reveal a more intense pursuit of the experience of time, space and the discourse of schooling — the conditions for the making of selves — in the last century.

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Natalie Zemon Davis — *Fiction in the Archives. Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987. Pp. ix, 215.

In an essay which appeared in *Past and Present* (n° 85, November 1979, pp. 3-24) several years ago, Lawrence Stone called for a restoration of narrative as a historical genre. In *Fiction in the Archives*, Davis has, in a way, attempted to heed the appeal of her colleagues. In so doing, she has produced a gleaming jewel of a book which throws a fascinating light on the legal, social and literary history of the sixteenth century.

First delivered at the Henry Camp Lectures at Stanford University in 1986, this text is, in the first place, a series of tales worth the telling. Drawn from royal letters of pardon and remission found in the *Archives Nationales*, the best of these supplications have a quality of plot, drama and character comparable to the sixteenth-century *novella*. Indeed, it is one of Davis' purpose to examine the relationship between the tale of literary fiction and the tale of pardon. So Davis is provided with the opportunity to recall the stories of poor Thomas Manny, ploughman of Sens and cuckold husband of Claudine Guyart; of the violent Seigneur Charles de Villelume of the Bourbonnais; and of the abused housewife, Boone Goberde of Arnay-sous-Vitteaux of Burgundy as well as a score of other characters from all ranks of French society.

Davis offers us these stories to be enjoyed in the same direct and immediate way as we take pleasure in the *contes* of Marguerite of Navarre and those of Noël DU Fail. She also undertakes to analyze these pardon tales as a kind of "fiction" or creation which she proceeds to read, decipher and decode. In order to do so, Davis brings into play her awareness of modern literary criticism, including semiotics, structuralism, deconstruction and the close reading of text. At the same time, she brings to bear her admirable sense of sixteenth-century literary genre and legal procedure to place the letter of remission into its full context. At this level, Davis offers the reader an exercise in explication of text of the most sophisticated kind.

It is worthwhile to note that, of late, we have been offered at least two other examples of history written under the influence of the new literary theory. On the one hand, there is Le Roy Ladurie's somewhat fanciful structuralist account of the folk literature of Languedoc in *Love, Death, and Money in the Pays d'Oc* (1982). On the other hand, we have been confronted with Lynn Hunt's *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (1984) in which the social reality of the French Revolution is altogether swallowed by discourse theory. Contrary to Le Roy Ladurie and Hunt, Davis achieves a fine balance between the study of text and the historical reality which lies behind it. For in the final analysis, she chooses to study the royal letters of remission "because they are one of the best sources of relatively uninterrupted narrative from the lips of the lower orders... in sixteenth-century France" (5).

The degree of conviction with which the supplicant told his story played a large part in determining the outcome of the appeal for clemency. Hence, Davis examines the story telling capacity of the notaries, lawyers and supplicants who concocted these documents. She demonstrates the influence of humanism and the satires of the *Basoches* on the tale telling of the men-of-law. Of even greater weight was the ordinary supplicant's talent for spinning a yarn, learned at the *veillée*, tavern or confessional.

Having established the context in which these pardon tales were manufactured, Davis proceeds to cull them for their social-historical content. With the patience of the ethnographer, she records and explains the complex details of the sixteenth-century French society and culture. This kind of thickly descriptive narrative works best for Davis in her chapter on homicidal women. Choosing her examples with care, Davis composes some wonderfully inciteful passages on female anger, infanticide, property disputes and supertime violence. Supplication, Davis informs us, came more easily to women than to men, as it was an accustomed role for them.

In this work, Davis is as preoccupied with the social as ever. But her social-historical concern is, here, married to an equal and welcome preoccupation with the politics of the early modern state. As she notes, the remission plea was designed to appeal to the ears of the King and his magistrates above all. It was concocted with them in mind and it is their presence which looms over the social existence of the supplicants. It is the state which is involved in the process of "civilizing" these social creatures, and it is its courts which provide the occasion for the inter-mixing of elite and popular culture.

As for the relationship between literature and law, both the pardon tales and the *novella* were forced to submit themselves to the magistrates or censors of the state. Supplication was likewise common to both literature and law. Finally, both *novella* and pardon tale contained mixtures of fact and fiction, though in unequal measure.

Fiction in the Archives itself is a most artful book. It is a carefully cut and beautifully polished gem which, while introducing us further to the detail of French Renaissance society, allows us to observe at work the consciousness of one of the most creative historians of our times.

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Bruce S. Elliott — *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988. Pp. xvii, 371.

The "new approach" heralded in the subtitle of this book is indeed new and valuable. Bruce S. Elliott has combined the techniques of the "Leicester School" of English local history and quantified immigration history to produce an unparalleled picture of a group of immigrants to Canada. His subjects are 775 families of Irish Protestants who migrated from Northern Tipperary between 1818 and 1855. With meticulous research, Elliott moves beyond the aggregate to explore the movements of individual migrants. Here, real people weave in and out of the statistics.

Genealogy is at the heart of the analysis. Elliott reinforces recent arguments about the importance of family in the nineteenth century. The usual process was one of "chain migration". People migrated to areas where their kin or friends were already settled, creating a number of Tipperary colonies, the largest of which were near Ottawa and London. Once he has settled his immigrants, Elliott turns to a close analysis of land-holding and inheritance strategies. The provisions made for widows and the dowries of daughters are discussed in greater detail than we have seen for any other group of Canadians. He finds, in contrast to the speculation of some previous historians such as David Gagan, that "ultimogeniture" was preferred to "primogeniture", that is, farmers passed their estates to their youngest sons, not their eldest. Elliott is very convincing in his treatment of family economic strategies and gives ample ground to believe that his findings about the Tipperary migrants can be generalized to other Ontario farmers.

The book is a methodological and research *tour de force*. However, it suffers from some of the languors found in other quantified studies, and adds to them some of the problems of genealogy. This is not a book that one devours in a single sitting. The first half, in particular, is hard slogging; the reader has constantly to think — this is important, it is good for me — to keep soldiering through. There is much more on the genealogical roots of Tipperary Protestants than most readers are likely to need or want; Dr. Elliott seems to have been reluctant to waste any of his meticulous research and he jams in every loving detail. The pace picks up somewhat with the migration, but we are still treated to an excess of detail on every topic. Worse, some of that detail is repeated several times. Elliott's topical organization works to clarify his analysis, but it encourages repetition. We hear on pages 87, 183 and 294 about Margaret Clarke's pregnancy and her husband George's cute misspelling that the family "staid at Montreal" because of the pregnancy. Frederic William Richardson's provisions for his sons turn up on pages 196-7 and 215-16, and we hear that his rocky homestead looked like "a fortress" on pages 197 and 216. One's head begins to fill with echoes.

As with other scholars before him, Elliott finds that his quantitative research can take him only so far. One result is that, on some of the more interesting questions, he ends with unsupported speculations. He finds, for example, that his families were more likely eventually to become urban in the London district than their compatriots in the Ottawa Valley. Why?

That the tendency of the Tipperary Irish to move into towns and cities was greater in the London area than it was in the Ottawa valley probably related more to local differences in terms of land availability, quality, price and demand than it did to inclination (181).