



The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914 (Themes in Canadian History)

Paul Axelrod

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Between 1800 and 1914, Canadian society and its school systems were forged, populated, expanded and reformed. *The Promise of Schooling* explores the links between social and educational change in this complex and dynamic period. It raises and seeks to answer a number of questions: How extensive was schooling in the early nineteenth century? What lay behind the campaign to extend publicly funded education? What went on inside the Canadian classroom? How did schools address the needs of Native students, blacks, and the children of immigrants? What cultural and social roles did universities serve by the beginning of the twentieth century? And how were schools affected by the economic and social pressures arising from the Industrial Revolution?

The book contends that educational authorities built and reformed schools in ways that were not always consistent with their idealistic visions. Economic constraints, political expediency, and the agendas of ordinary citizens all influenced the life of the Canadian school in an era marked by dramatic social change.

Drawing from an abundant scholarly literature published over the last two decades, this study seeks to expose readers to the richness of the field of educational history. Written for a broad audience, it also hopes, by providing historical context, to stimulate informed discussion about educational issues.

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