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R. D. Gidney and W. P. J. Millar — *Inventing Secondary Education: The Rise of the High School in Nineteenth Century Ontario*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. Pp. x, 411.

As someone who profited from the visit of Bob Gidney, Winn Millar, and Catherine Gidney to Monash University in 1986 (p. xi), I enjoyed reading this closely textured account of secondary education in Ontario. In challenging ''the conviction that nineteenth-century school systems were primarily fashioned at the centre by a handful of influential policy makers and that the immediate clientele of the schools had relatively little to say in the matter'', the authors ''focus on the interaction between centre and locality, and ... stress the role played in policy making by many actors'', demonstrating that ''Ryerson's attempt to reform the grammar schools succeeded only where his policies ... did not conflict with the interests and wishes of local people'' (p. 315).

The authors ''chart the transition from traditional to modern institutions ... in Ontario between the 1840s and the 188Os'' (p. 7), warning that, in writing about education before the 1860s, the language and structures of the present provide misleading anachronisms. They examine the creation of the modern secondary school, also accounting for ''some at least of the origins of the tripartite organization so characteristic of modern education systems'' (p. 7). The argument is carefully developed and documented for Ontario and, both in general similarities and specific differences, it is significant for those studying similar developments elsewhere.

They ask:

> How does one explain the organization of education in early Upper Canada other than by ''the conventional elementary-secondary dichotomy''?
> Why was ''a linked, sequential, second stage of a tripartite system'' introduced?
> Why were Upper Canadian secondary schools in the public sector?
> Why did they become coeducational and comprehensive?

They examine the senior classes of the common schools and the Upper Canadian grammar schools which became the late-nineteenth-century public secondary schools of the respectable middle classes, ''people who could afford the opportunity costs and other expenses of keeping their children in school for a few years longer than the majority of Upper Canadians'' (p. 9). The work is enriched by data drawn from their intensive study of five southwestern Ontario grammar schools in Brantford, Sarnia, Simcoe, Stratford, and Strathroy.

In outlining the patterns of educational provision in Upper Canada, the authors argue that other assumptions were more important for the structuring of education than any elementary-secondary dichotomy. Common or preparatory schools were distinguished from the discretionary sector providing superior education by the different kind, rather than the stage or level, of education each provided. Higher education trained the minds of boys through the classical studies of a liberal education. Girls followed the accomplishments curriculum, ''a gender variant of a liberal education'' (p. 17). This sex-related variation equipping girls and boys for their separate spheres as adults, along with the perceived moral danger of coeducation, required sexual segregation in schools.

Schools were also segregated on the basis of perceived social class. As ''extensions of, and subordinate to, families'' (p. 23), they ''actually mimicked the character of the family itself'' (p. 26). Indeed, in the nineteenth century ''schooling, divorced from its ties to family values and characteristics, was viewed with suspicion'' (p. 26), while ''in the provision of collegiate and preparatory education, the state was the interloper on ground historically occupied by the churches, and it was the credibility and competence of the state that had yet to be established'' (p. 31).

The authors suggest that supply may have generated, rather than depended on, demand for the provision of school places by denominations needing an educated clergy and a faithful laity, by civic leaders in competition with their neighbours, and by private schools providing a livelihood for individuals or a salary supplement for clergymen. Government-funded grammar schools in district towns and grant-aided common schools arose early because government needed people with the skills, values, and beliefs required to maintain the institutions of civil society. Some common school teachers occasionally taught higher branches of education to a few pupils. The authors suggest that, because the mid-nineteenth-century supply of school places exceeded demand, the viability of private and proprietary schools was weakened by competition from grant-aided grammar schools.

Rather than drawing on ''the heavy hand of bureaucratization, oppression, and social control'' (p. 357) to explain the introduction of grading in schools, they see this, especially in urban schools, as a response to increasing numbers, leading to the division of ''large groups of children into smaller units based on age, attainments or some combination of both and assigning each group to one teacher'' (p. 57).

The authors examine the failure of voluntarism, the transition to public education, and the development of the grammar schools from 1807 to 1866, in which they challenge the view that the act of 1853 was ''a symbolic turning point in the development of secondary education in Ontario'' in favour of the act of 1865, ''legislation that has never received the recognition it deserves'' (p. 94). They then turn to the grammar school world of 1855 to 1870 and examine teachers, pupils, and pedagogy from the scattered and fragmentary sources available, ''recalcitrant or ambiguous'' (p. 121) though these may be, to try to ''illuminate why some young people were sent to a particular kind of school'' (p. 129).

Glimpses such as that of ''the school at Welland'' through the inspector's eyes — ''grown up lads, distinguished rather by a certain rude heartiness than by any special refinement of manner'' and ''rough little cubs, who however are not dis-

respectful'' — enrich the statistical analysis as do the detailed footnotes (pp. 373–376). The authors conclude that, while the social composition of the grammar schools was irretrievably middle-class, their ethnic and religious backgrounds were broadly based and did not exclude the poor.

In the 1860s and 1870s the future of the grammar school was central to educational policy. In the struggle between the local and central authorities, Ryerson failed to establish ''the primacy of the common school'' and ''the differentiation of superior education by curriculum and gender'' (p. 213). The grammar school became a high school and the common school a public school, soon reduced to an elementary feeder to the high school. The high school curriculum was reshaped, integrating girls into a curriculum intended for boys by adapting them to the existing curriculum rather than *vice versa* (pp. 248–249). In the following decade the high school's upper boundaries were determined through the development of a combined school-leaving and matriculation standard, administered by the Department of Education and set by representatives from the department and the universities of Ontario.

In assessing high school education in the 1880s, the authors note that ''[m]eritocratic ideas demanded both wide access and vigorous selectivity'' (p. 268), but that ''[f]or girls, access to the new secondary schools was, at best, a mixed blessing'' (p. 294). The penultimate chapter examines the changes and continuities between grammar schools in the 1860s and high schools in the 1880s.

This highly sophisticated, closely argued, carefully documented account of the invention of secondary education is the product of a close working partnership evoking admiration, even envy, from many historians. Because it is based on such a wealth of detailed local research it is not easy reading, but it is certainly rewarding.

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Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton, eds. — *Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the 19th-Century Maritimes*. Fredericton, N.B.: Acadiensis Press, 1994. Pp. 250.

Historical scholarship in Canada tends to be regional in focus. Nowhere is this more obvious than in women's history and gender studies. While most regions now boast a respectable bibliography of works on women's history, the Maritime Provinces (though not Newfoundland) have inspired scarcely any books and relatively few articles in the field. *Separate Spheres* is therefore a landmark in the history of Maritime Canada and, happily, well worth the wait. Tightly focused on the problematic notion of separate spheres for women (private) and men (public) which gained wide currency in the Western world in the nineteenth century, the ten articles in this anthology display the theoretical sophistication that scholars have come to expect in the field of women's history and serve as a starting point for further research not only on Maritime women but on the region generally.