

Chapter 5. The Great Canadian Adventure, the New Social History, and Beginning to Study Literacy, 1970–1975

Newcomers to Canada, Toronto, and the University of Toronto, Vicki and I arrived in the city in late August 1975. With our belongings in the small rental van, including bookcases and a pole lamp liberated from Northwestern residence halls and the New York City rocking chair, we rented an apartment and found furniture quickly. Having no car, we located within walking distance of the University of Toronto's prominent, central city location, also on the excellent subway and bus lines.

We were fortunate. A landlord had a tenement, railway flat-style, second-floor, one-bedroom apartment with room for my study above a Mac's Milk convenience store and a men's clothing shop on Bloor Street, the city's major east-west thoroughfare. A short walk from the U of T, in 1970 it was an affordable \$120 a month. We rented four rooms of furniture for \$10 per month with an option to buy for \$100 after one year. A new Canadian kitten we named Hamilton (after the Ontario industrial city that I began to study) joined us later in the year.

Not long after arrival, I took a bus to Niagara Falls, New York, and a taxi to the American Friendship Bridge. I walked across the bridge to apply for the legal status of Landed Immigrant. In Canada, this status does not have the stigma of the U.S. Resident Alien designation. I also gained free health care in Ontario (OHIP or Ontario Health Insurance Program, a policy of the incumbent Progressive Conservative Party) among other benefits. Vicki applied from within the country.

As I prepared to begin my first seminar in 19th-century British history, a social psychology seminar as a foundation for anticipated further research on British anti-socialism, and an independent study in modern European history, I fretted over whether I should wear a tie or blue jeans and carry a briefcase or wear a backpack. I quickly withdrew from the narrowly focused psychology seminar, the professor of which had no interest in reaching out to other disciplines.

Vicki tediously negotiated with the admissions office of the university about her standing at the U of T after two full years at an American university. The problem was that Ontario required grade 13 for college-bound students, a vestige of late-blooming, Canadian progressive education. She finally found a responsible staff person who granted her credit for grade 13 for her first-year classes at Northwestern and credit for a first year at Toronto for her second year.

This left her with two years to complete a general bachelor's degree. Thinking increasingly about a teaching certificate and at least a first career in teaching, she switched her major from anthropology to geography—a major subject in Canadian schools as in Great Britain, unlike American. She found a part-time job as a Kelly Girl temporary bank teller, trained to substitute at any of Canada's five

national banking systems and assigned to banks all over the city. A long-term assignment was at a bank located between our apartment and the U of T. She held this job for the next three years.

Thus began our first year in Toronto, city and university. My eager but reserved enthusiasm rapidly declined. My efforts to begin a constructive, tutorial relationship with my anticipated advisor, the 20th-century British historian, failed. I found him intellectually and personally unresponsive. I later learned that he was hard of hearing in one ear but did not admit it or take corrective steps. I also learned that I was the 11th student who attempted to work under his supervision. Only one completed his degree. I was not to be the second.

At the same time, the seminar on Victorian history proved disappointing. As was too often the case in Toronto's history department, professors crammed seminars around crowded tables in their offices. To say that this class was uncomfortable physically as well as pedagogically is an understatement.

Author of one exceedingly long book, an interminable, day-by-day chronicle of the Aberdeen Coalition government of 1852–1854, the senior professor was not current with the exciting new social, political, cultural, or economic histories to which I had been introduced at Northwestern. He was an unskilled seminar leader. I recall one student regularly falling asleep until the back of his head hit the wall behind his chair, when he would jarringly but briefly awaken.

As a new student with both typical anxieties and deeply rooted self-doubts, I sought this professor's counsel. Dismissing my concern about the missing scholarly references in the course syllabus, he assured me that, based on my oral participation, I was doing fine. All I needed to do was go to the library, read one book each day for the next two years, and take my qualifying doctoral exams. That was not the explanation or the reassurance that I needed. But it was, and remains, a troubling element of faculty-student relationships.

Fortunately, I became quite friendly with one of the several Americans in the class. Originally from New Jersey and a former graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bob had been drafted, inducted into the U.S. Army, and then deserted to Toronto. Bob and his wife Dena, a high school teacher and later a graduate student, Vicki, and I quickly become close friends. Bob was a year ahead of me in the program. We remained good friends for decades. As a university press editor, he later published one of my books and prompted me to start two book series in interdisciplinary social history.

One day in November, over lunch in the old library's eating area, I shared my dissatisfaction and self-doubts. I admitted to developing depression. Bob said to me, "you should meet the young guy up the street." I did. That meeting fundamentally changed the course of my life.

My first efforts to find psychiatric treatment for depression also came in Toronto while I was in graduate school. The group therapy sessions were unsuccessful, but the doctor prescribed a low dose of Vivactil, which I took for many years as a maintenance-level antidepressant.

The “young guy” was Michael B. Katz, a historian of American education and society. A 1966 graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Katz held a joint appointment in history of education and history at the University of Toronto. He was located in the Department of History and Philosophy of Education in the shining, new but unaesthetic Ontario Institute for Studies in Education’s (OISE) 12-story building on the northern edge of campus on Bloor Street. I made an appointment to meet with him the next week.

Vicki and I met together with the 32-year-old associate professor in his eighth-floor office. Recently tenured, he published the landmark, revisionist history of early 19th-century Massachusetts common school reform, *The Irony of Early School Reform* (1968). That book transformed the history of education in the States. He then initiated Canadian history’s first quantitative social history project focused on the industrial city of Hamilton, Ontario, in the 19th century (see Katz, 1975).

With a little assistance and support from Vicki, I explained my predicament. Michael listened closely. At the end of my presentation, he picked up his office phone and called the head of graduate admissions for OISE and asked if I could transfer from history to history of education with my Woodrow Wilson fellowship. The immediate response was “yes.”

I successfully completed my first semester in British and European history courses and looked toward a new professional beginning. Katz’s history of social structure seminar was undoubtedly the most consequential course I ever took. We read and in some cases I reread the modern classics: Peter Laslett’s *The World We Have Lost* (1965/1984); Lawrence Stone’s *The Crisis of the Aristocracy* (1965) and his seminal articles in *Past & Present*, such as “Literacy and Education in England, 1640–1900” (1969); Charles Tilly’s *The Vendée* (1964); in European history, E. A. Wrigley’s *Population and History* (1969) and *Nineteenth-Century Society* (1972); in colonial American history, John Demos’ *A Little Commonwealth* (1970), Kenneth A. Lockridge’s *A New England Town the First One Hundred Years* (1970), and Philip J. Greven Jr.’s *Four Generations* (1970); and in 19th-century American history, Stephan Thernstrom’s *Poverty and Progress* (1964) and others. This was among the most active periods in modern historiography.

Katz was an exceptional seminar leader, alternating his own introductions, student presentations, constructive critical questioning, opportunities for rethinking and restatement, and interchange among the group. After my disappointing and frustrating first term, the seminar was challenging, exhilarating, and both personally and intellectually fulfilling. Collegial relationships that began in that class continue to this day across Canadian, Australian, and American borders.

Friendships from a second-year seminar and one from a final-year graduate seminar that I taught also continue. Those connections were central to my graduate education and own career over more than 50 years. Katz along with Natalie Zemon Davis and Jill Ker Conway did not so much teach us but show us through their example and their intellectual but collegially humane expectations

(for more on relationships like these, see my “The Power of Models and Examples in Education and Higher Education,” 2023e).

Katz required each student to complete a seminar project using the census, tax rolls, and city directory database that he was carefully building for his Hamilton (Ontario) Project (later renamed Canadian Social History Project). Reflecting the early days of the “new” quantitative social, demographic, family, and urban history, students transferred the data from primary sources in print or microfilm to handwritten forms and then to 80-column IBM punch cards. A mechanical card sorter aided data analysis. Over the next few years, we shifted to computer analysis of batches of cards with their information transferred to magnetic tape (for more on this type of research being conducted at the time, see Thernstrom and Sennett, 1969, and Tilly and Landes, 1971).

My earlier interests and experiences, new historical currents, and sociopolitical currents surrounding widespread criticisms of schooling and its relationship to inequality fortuitously collided. Having read Lawrence Stone’s (1969) immediately classic *Past and Present* article “Literacy and Education in England, 1640–1900” and a lesser-known but more rigorous study by Roger Schofield (1968) of Laslett and Wrigley’s Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, “The Measurement of Literacy in Pre-Industrial England,” I decided to do a pilot study of literacy in 19th-century Canada (and North America) based on the evidence of an unusual question about literacy and writing on the 1861 Census of Canada. In 1971, I had no idea that, literally and transformatively, my life with literacy was beginning.

Among other findings, I demonstrated that the census data were reliable and inseparably related to the history of education, social structure, ethnicity, race, age, and gender, as well as immigration and socio-economic development. Not only was it a pioneering seminar paper, but it also led directly to my master’s thesis (Graff, 1971b) and in turn my first three scholarly articles by the completion of my third year as a graduate student: “Notes on Methods for Studying Literacy From the Manuscript Census” (1971a), “Approaches in the Historical Study of Literacy” (1972a), and “Towards a Meaning of Literacy” (1972b).

While I was immersing myself in historical literacy studies in a relatively narrow framework, with Katz’ advice I also studied the history of education in Ontario and pursued a reading course with another faculty member in the history of European education—encountering Philippe Ariès’ (1962) *Centuries of Childhood* on the history of childhood, and Stone on families and literacy, especially his *Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (1977), among other important works.

At the same time, Vicki also broke new ground in her studies and our consequential mutual relationships. Among the most significant and long-lasting impacts was her enrollment in 1970–1971 in the first course offered in Canada on the history of women. The instructors for the two-semester course were pioneering, early modern French cultural historian Natalie Zemon Davis and Australian-born historian of American women Jill Ker Conway. Both became our

lifelong friends. Jill later became the first female president of all-women Smith College, and Natalie held Princeton University's most prominent chair in European history (for more on these relationships, see my "The Power of Models and Examples in Education and Higher Education," 2023e).

By all accounts, including Vicki's, this was one of the great undergraduate courses of modern history. Unlike most team teaching, both instructors attended and participated in every class meeting, with one commenting, responding, or raising questions about the other's lecture. Both instructors joined interested students for a brown bag lunch after class. The teaching assistants became notable scholars of women's history in their own right. Vicki explored the medieval and early modern witch trials in England and Europe for her first term paper.

I also studied with Natalie and Jill. Natalie published a landmark essay on literacy and oral reading in early modern French popular culture in her collection *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (1975). We consulted with each other about our research projects while I was a second- and third-year doctoral student and she was a tenured professor. She was welcoming, supportive, and helpful. Until her death in September 2023 at 94 years old when she was still writing history books, she retained her friendship and interest in my writing and Vicki's and my lives. I took a formal seminar with Jill on 19th- and 20th-century American intellectual and cultural history. That led to friendship with both Vicki and me until her death.

Vicki and I developed social relationships and close faculty-student friendships with these professors and their spouses. In my first term as Katz's advisee, he asked me to babysit his young children several times when he and his new, second wife Edda went out. We also socialized with Michael and Edda over the years. During our final travels in Canada, just before moving to Dallas, Texas, in late summer 1975, we visited his family when they spent several months exchanging houses with a colleague at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

We invited Jill and her husband John, a former Harvard professor called back to Canada to accept a distinguished chair at the new York University in north Toronto, to a cheese fondue dinner served on a tablecloth spread over the living room floor of our Bloor Street West apartment. In 1972, John sincerely consulted us about whether he should, or could, call students by their first names instead of Mr. and Miss. We also saw Natalie and her mathematician, political-activist husband Chandler socially and at campus events.

Jill often took me to lunch at either a Kensington Market kosher deli where we ate chopped liver on bagels or at U of T's musty faculty club. We both preferred the former. She also served on my dissertation committee and wrote fellowship and job recommendation letters.

We long continued our friendships with both couples. We visited Natalie in Berkeley, where she moved from Toronto in the mid-1970s to teach at the University of California at Berkeley. We stayed in touch as she accepted an endowed chair at Princeton and through her retirement and move back to Toronto to live full-time with Chandler. He was long barred from the United States after he was

fired by the University of Michigan, imprisoned, and then exiled. This followed accusations of communism by Joe McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee in the 1950s.

We visited Jill and John at their country cottage in western Massachusetts while Jill served as the first female president of the historic, all-women's Smith College. We remained in contact with her after John's death and her move to Boston and MIT in the later 1980s until her death a few years ago.

Another defining moment of the first year in Toronto was my Pittsburgh draft board's order for me to appear for a physical examination prior to a call for enlistment in the armed forces. My parents consulted an attorney. With the assistance of a longtime family friend and M.D., I appeared for the examination carrying a back brace—I long had back problems—and physicians' letters about my back and my flat feet. This was the knowledgeable, fortunate, middle-class approach to avoiding the draft. I failed the physical, leading to celebrations in Pittsburgh and Toronto among my family, peers, and friends.

During summer 1971, Michael Katz employed both Vicki and me as research assistants for his Canadian social history project. Vicki coded data, and I read contemporary newspapers recording names and their contexts to compile a database for computer analysis. She also continued her work as a bank teller and was one of the first tellers trained in new, online banking technology employing mainframe computers, she reminds me. We enjoyed our first summer in Toronto with its many outdoor and indoor attractions and musical venues.

~ ~ ~

More dramatic, or melodramatic, were the consequences of our decision to marry in Toronto at the end of July—a story for the ages, and the aged. We aimed for ecumenical neutrality. We asked a fellow graduate student, an Anglican priest, to perform a secular service in the chapel at historic Hart House, the University of Toronto's equivalent of a student union. Derwyn gladly accepted. We reserved the chapel and gained permission to cover the cross at its front with a plain, velvet cloth. We ordered a modest arrangement of flowers. Vicki found an original, peasant-style, designer gown with empire waist, puffed sleeves, and eyelet lace for \$45—the most she'd ever spent on a dress—and I purchased a brown suit.

All was on schedule until my father unexpectedly telephoned three weeks out and announced, "I'm not coming unless you have a rabbi."

This out-of-the-blue threat completely threw us. Most Jewish rabbis will not conduct a mixed marriage without the non-Jewish partner formally converting. We did not agree with that, and, regardless, it was much too late to begin that process. Scrambling, we searched for a Reform rabbi in Ontario, upstate New York, northern Pennsylvania, and eastern Michigan. None were available.

Finally, a friend of a friend led us to Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, the elderly rabbi of a large Reform synagogue in Toronto. Feinberg was in California visiting his son, but his secretary made tentative arrangements including an interview upon

his return. The son, an M.D. in San Francisco, found a growth on his father's leg. He removed it and sent the Rabbi home to Toronto for a skin graft.

Feinberg interviewed us in his Mount Sinai Hospital room. We learned that he was renowned. Originally an American radio crooner in the 1930s, he was long known as Toronto's "Red Rabbi." He was the first theologian in Canada to bring Martin Luther King, Jr., to his pulpit in the 1960s. More recently, he traveled to Hanoi with Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, and other anti-war activists to meet Ho Chi Minh—the Marxist-Leninist prime minister and then president of North Vietnam. He proudly displayed the cane that Ho presented him.

We had a most pleasant conversation. Rabbi Feinberg agreed to perform a nondenominational ceremony on Saturday evening, July 31, 1971. The location, however, was undetermined, pending his time of release from the hospital. A few days in advance, the Rabbi's assistant informed us that we were one of three couples he would marry in his hospital room that weekend. We canceled the priest, chapel, flowers, and handful of nonfamily friend, classmate, and professor guests.

Meanwhile, my mother surreptitiously met with Feinberg, seeking additional consolation for her misgivings about her son's impending marriage to a non-Jew. We learned years later that she had also consulted her Pittsburgh rabbi. All this despite her immediate affection for Vicki. Sectarianism runs deep on all sides.

Vicki's parents, younger sister, and sister-in-law traveled from Des Moines, Iowa (her brother was on a U.S. naval ship in the Mediterranean), along with my parents, 10-year-old brother, and grandmother from Pittsburgh. Our families gathered in the hospital's 10th-floor waiting room just after 7:00 p.m. My brother sneaked into the facility between my father and me, because he was too young for visiting. Due to limits on the number of visitors, we slipped into the rabbi's room in ones and twos.

By 7:30, we were all assembled. My family was happy, having had their way. Vicki's parents looked as if they were at a funeral, wondering why they hadn't made their own demands. My brother and Vicki's teenage sister, who were the ring bearers on either side of the hospital bed, were happy.

At the appointed hour with the minute hand on the clock ascending according to Jewish tradition, Feinberg telephoned the hospital operators and requested them to "hold my calls." He performed a brief, nondenominational ceremony that emphasized the historical and theological bonds between Judaism and Christianity. Presenting us with both a Province of Ontario legal certificate and his own document decorated like an illuminated manuscript, he declared us married.

Leaning over his bed from opposite sides, we embraced and kissed. We adjourned to the vicinity of Hart House where each of our fathers snapped poorly focused photos, one set overexposed, the other underexposed. The evening ended with dinner in the private dining room of our favorite Scandinavian restaurant with close friends Bob and Dena joining the families.

With the wedding night itself unremarkable, Gary slept on the living room sofa of our apartment. Lacking both time and money, our honeymoon consisted

of daily tickets to the Canadian Open tennis tournament in Toronto. Vicki joined me in the stadium after work at the bank each day for about two weeks. Most memorably, the English Canadian audience loudly booed the singing of the French language version of the national anthem at the peak of English versus French cultural and political conflict.

Given the lack of a large ceremony or parties and the neutral location, gifts were few. My father provided our rings, bringing us a selection from his jewelry store from which to choose. My mother gave Vicki a strand of cultured pearls to wear with her wedding dress. Noteworthy, reflecting the times, were the gifts of two waterbeds. We sold them because the floors in our tenement apartment could not support the weight. Upon advertising, they sold immediately.

We lived in Toronto during what many residents and observers then and later consider the city's golden age. The city achieved North American, indeed worldwide recognition as a thriving, vibrant, and growing city. It became a desirable place to live and a tourist attraction. As a metropolitan area, it gained attention for its lakefront location, multi-borough city and suburban government structure, and striking, new, double-tower city hall (see, for one introduction, Doucet and Doucet, 2022).

For young students with limited resources, Toronto was an affordable playground. Living on fellowships, scholarships, research assistantships, part-time work, and a small monthly check from my family, we were comfortable. Weekly groceries—including one meal of rib-eye steak plus hamburgers, hot dogs, spaghetti, and macaroni and cheese—cost \$9.00. We served fellow students and favorite professors cheese fondue or baked lasagna.

Within walking distance west on Bloor Street was a cluster of eastern European, Greek, Indian, and French restaurants, anchored by the famous Honest Ed's Warehouse semi-discount store. Dinner at our favorite Hungarian spot cost \$2.50 each for a delicious plate of noodles. Hungarian "Bull's Blood" (Egri Bikaver) red wine was little more than \$1-2 per bottle. A birthday or anniversary splurge at one of the French restaurants ran about \$25 with cocktails and wine. For Vicki's U of T graduation, for example, we dined memorably at L'Aubergine.

Slightly farther away to the south and east was the iconic, historical Kensington Market, another favorite. On the edge of Greek, Italian, and Asian neighborhoods, this was originally an eastern European settlement area. It was home to delis, cheese shops, and butcher shops where one could purchase a live chicken and have it slaughtered to take home to cook. We did not do that.

A good walk beyond that took us to the Art Gallery of Ontario or downtown. To the east was the university. Walking farther took us to the Bloor and Yonge Street area, with bars, restaurants, many stores, and movie theatres south on Yonge Street. That was a Saturday afternoon jaunt.

A bit northeast was Yorkville, a centrally located, somewhat upscale and hip shopping, dining, entertainment, and residential area. We enjoyed eating, drinking, window-shopping, and visiting the lovely home of fellow OISE-Katz graduate

student and dear friend Alison Prentice, her physicist husband, and their two young sons. Alison became a founder of the field of Canadian women's history.

We co-authored a volume called *Children and Schools in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (1979) for the pioneering school curriculum project called Canada's Visual History of the National Museum of Civilization (then called National Museum of Man). This was my first formal foray into public history. Sadly, Alison died in 2021 after a battle with cancer.

Toronto had lovely parks and an excellent, inexpensive, clean, and safe public subway, bus, and streetcar system. There were unfortunately also occasional, but increasing, racist outbursts directed at Black West Indian and sometimes East Indian immigrants or citizens, as well as young hockey players tripping over their sticks going to and from games.

We easily walked to Queen's Park just beyond the U of T campus for a stroll past the historic provincial parliament or a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum of history and archaeology. We could also take the streetcar and then a short ferry ride to Toronto Island. A longer subway and bus ride led west to lovely High Park and the small but charming zoo where I first fell in love with West Highland cattle (or "shaggy sheep cows"). On our first trip to Scotland in 1974, I met the natives.

Even as students, we could afford to attend the excellent Toronto Symphony and the ballet as well as occasional jazz and popular music clubs and concerts. More cosmopolitan than almost all U.S. cities, foreign films were readily available. At the university, visiting lecturers were common.

At home on Bloor Street, Hamilton, our rescued cat, frolicked with squirrels in the parking lot behind our building (one of whom scratched on the back door one day to ask if Hamilton could come out to play. He did). That is, when he wasn't tearing open freezer paper and devouring a defrosting raw steak. That episode left him uncomfortable for days. The sweet kitten sometimes sat beside my portable electric typewriter as I wrote papers, allowing the carriage to advance precariously close to his head. He loved to snuggle with his humans and also left teeth impressions on the corners of book pages and scratch marks on the spines of 33 rpm vinyl records.

Living as noncitizens, we were less engaged in politics than I had been in Evanston and Chicago. In part, this reflected my disillusionment with party politics after 1968 and my captivating encounter with the new histories. Canadian friends and colleagues participated in the growing, left-liberal, New Democratic Party (NDP). Even as landed immigrants, we benefitted from the social welfare programs of the ruling Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. The political, academic, and place intersected inseparably.

In my graduate education, the role of social theory in historical interpretation and what would later be called the "history wars" over interpretation, methods, and sources took the place of personal activism. This was an intense period of intellectual conflict over modes of interpretation and theoretical presumptions. Grounds of controversy were often confused along lines of stereotypical false distinctions

oversimplified into right, center, and various “lefts,” also known as conservative, liberal, and different versions of Marxism. There was much side shifting.

Among historians, the major rightward movement of colleagues Eugene Genovese and Christopher Lasch grabbed attention. This became a formative part of my education. Antonio Gramsci and Karl Marx—in historical context—were profound influences, often through leading scholars such as E. P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Barrington Moore, along with historical materialist anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, and literary theorists.

Vicki and I and our fellow expatriates followed the anti-war movement, the Watergate scandal, and Nixon’s threatened impeachment and resignation. We cast our first votes in a presidential election at the U.S. Consulate under a portrait of Richard Nixon in November 1972. We unhesitatingly voted against him.

~~~

Year two of the Canadian adventure was equally gripping and fulfilling. For Vicki, it was the second and final year of undergraduate studies as a geography major, preparing for her one-year College of Education B.Ed. teacher training program. A course in philosophy of language enthralled her. We became friendly with her Portuguese-born professor and his girlfriend. At one point, he confessed that he wanted “to sleep with both of us.” We declined.

Vicki also learned a great deal from a team-taught, interdisciplinary course on “community.” A historian, a sociologist, a political scientist, and an urban studies professor joined in this lecture and discussion course that featured the instructors responding to and debating each other’s presentations. The students were involved actively.

Combining the required projects for that course along with two geography classes, the centerpiece of Vicki’s school year was a series of three interrelated original research projects on Toronto’s historic Kensington Market district. She conducted two field studies of its store distributions, ethnic relationships, trade areas, and functional interactions, interviewing residents, shop owners, and visitors. Vicki gained permission to conduct extensive research on the district’s history and changing population and submit the paper for two courses.

Borrowing sources and methods (without computers) from Katz’s Hamilton Project, she examined city directories, historic maps, and other records. Assisted by historians, geographers, and sociologists, she practiced the “new social history” that Michael was developing and I was learning. The result was a unique undergraduate project and an impressive set of papers, which all earned “A” grades. Regrettably, we did not think to publish them.

My studies and Katz’s advising led in several interrelated directions at once. Financial support shifted from the Woodrow Wilson fellowship to OISE/University of Toronto funding, Hamilton Project research assistantships, and then a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) dissertation fellowship for urban studies.

My first task for the fall term was completion of my master's thesis on literacy and social structure in mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Hamilton. Katz kindly read the first complete draft handwritten on yellow legal pages, the one and only time I asked a professor to do that. Because the field was novel and limited, Katz mailed copies of the final version to Lawrence Stone at Princeton and Roger Schofield at Cambridge University. Stone responded to Katz briefly and peremptorily.

In contrast, Schofield wrote a long, handwritten letter directly to me, blending praise and thoughts about future directions. Not surprisingly, it was Schofield with whom I met when we visited Cambridge in 1974. We became colleagues and good friends, staying briefly in each other's homes in London and Dallas, respectively, until his premature death in the mid-2010s.

I also prepared two articles based on my master's thesis for the *Urban History Review* (1972a) and *History of Education Quarterly* (1972b). In fall semester I registered for Michael's signature seminar on the history of American education, the subject of his dissertation and landmark first book, *The Irony of Early School Reform* (1968), and the primary reason for Toronto's hiring him in two departments. Well taught, it was not only the grounding in the field that I needed for my research and degree, but more importantly it was also a thorough introduction to the intertwined roles of social theory, ideology, ongoing revision of historical interpretations, sources and methods, and interpretation.

Educational history was in a period of transformation with the impact of the new social history and quantitative methods—and the concurrent, powerful revelations of contemporary critics and new school reformers. Key contributors included Paul Goodman (1960, 1964), Jonathan Kozol (1967), Paulo Freire (1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1973), and documentary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman with *High School* (1968). Scholars' and social critics' writings intertwined unusually closely and productively.

Katz was a founder of what was called "revisionism" in American educational history and history more generally. It was sometimes extremely divisive, leading to outrageous attacks especially by Columbia Teachers College historian Lawrence Cremin's students like Diane Ravitch. Always promoting her own books, Ravitch (1978) took every opportunity to "revise" the "revisionists," violating scholarly standards in the process. Katz responded in "An Apology for American Educational History" (1979), later expanding on this response in Chapter Five of his book *Reconstructing American Education* (1987).

Other Cremin students also contributed to the divisiveness in unscholarly ways, negatively affecting both the developing field and young scholars. Other historians took sides for quite different reasons, some of them more overtly political or ideological than historiographical. I was soon attacked for being either or both Katz's student or a "second generation revisionist" in one of the confused, awkward formulations.

Katz's history of education seminar gave me another opportunity to conduct an experiment in social historical research. Introduced in several courses to the

emerging field of family and children's and youth's history and the sociology of the life cycle, I studied the early life course of children and adolescents in Boston in 1860, using the U.S. manuscript census. Influenced by pioneering social psychologists like Erik H. Erikson (1950, 1968), Kenneth Keniston (1965, 1968, 1971), and Glen H. Elder, Jr. (1974/1999, 2003), social critics Goodman (1960, 1964) and Kozol (1967), and the emerging context-shaped "life course" conceptualization, as well as historical studies, I estimated stages of childhood and adolescent development and dependency in a seminar paper published later that year as "Patterns of Dependency and Child Development in the Mid-Nineteenth Century City" (1973b).

This was my fourth article as a graduate student. Although I did not know it then, it prefigured my volume *Conflicting Paths: Growing Up in America* (1995a); decades of teaching the history of growing up to undergraduate and graduate students across disciplines; and public work with television, radio, museums, and historical societies.

In accord with the best of historical revisionism or reinterpretation—ignored by its ideological critics—Katz taught us that history could and should be part of social criticism and crafting sounder, more equitable policies. History is an applied and theoretical discipline. That does not compromise its integrity or objectivity, as long as it is carefully researched, fact-based, and objectively interpreted. To assert otherwise advances false, often distorted dichotomies (for more on this, see Katz, 1987, and my *Undisciplining Knowledge*, 2015a).

Given the transformations in historical practice and Katz's central position, my doctoral orientation was another sign of the times and the place. Michael taught us that basic scholarship, strong conclusions, and what we later called "applied knowledge," or public and applied history, were consistent, not contradictory. Advocacy and objectivity are not opposed. He made clear in seminars, workshops, project meetings, over lunch or dinner, even in conversations in the sauna after our squash games that the crucial factor lay in always doing one's homework: complete research, thorough analysis, clear interpretation and argument, all as part of application. And, too often ignored, understanding the argument and evidence of those whom you engage critically (for more on these ideas, see my "The Best Scholarship Is Political but With No Ideological Stamp," 2022u, and "Lessons for Becoming a Public Scholar," 2023h). With respect to Michael's historical writing, this stance defined his "revisionism," first in American educational history, then urban social history and history of families, followed by the history of poverty, social policy, and social institutions.

Katz's history of social structure and history of U.S. education courses provided a firm foundation that continues to guide me. History of American education, with both its historical and contemporary readings, took me several steps closer to my dissertation and my academic future. Together, they established an early draft of my historical research, interpretation, and pedagogical practices. They previewed my selection of major topics for more than 45 active years and in general terms throughout the continuation of my life. Following Katz's tutelage, I was prepared

to make major contributions to a sizable number of fields of study that cross disciplinary, topical, chronological, methodological, and interpretive grounds.

Briefly put, these fields are the history of literacy and the field of literacy studies; the history of children, youth, women, and families; the history of cities; theory and method in the humanities and the social sciences; and interdisciplinarity. It is no simplification or exaggeration that all these interests had their makings in my first years of graduate school and my relocation from British history to Katz and the new social, comparative, and quantitative histories, with developed interests in U.S., Canadian, and European history in the modern era.

Together the then new histories create a critical conceptualization and application of historical research and teaching to better understand both past and present and their inextricable interconnections. They aim at a fuller, more accurate, and more convincing set of interpretations that recognize the centrality of contradictions. And finally, new and better questions.

Each of these broad topics led to at least one of my major books, in some areas several of them; many articles, lectures, and conference sessions; and lecture courses and seminars, undergraduate and graduate. With literacy, my intersecting fields of interest contributed to the construction of innovative programs across disciplines and other demarcations. They led to cross appointments, course cross-listings, and working with graduate thesis and dissertation students in different departments and colleges. They led to three cities—Dallas, San Antonio, Columbus—three vastly different public universities, and three distinct experiences. Critically, they are interconnected and inseparable from the four forces of this life history: the personal, the political, the academic, and place—cities and universities.

~ ~ ~

I also audited a research seminar in European social and demographic history taught by the pioneering historian Edward Shorter, who soon published an influential but controversial history of the family in Europe (1975). Although I chose not to do a research project, the class broadened my methodological and comparative understanding.

Shorter studied at Harvard with the leading historical sociologist Charles Tilly, author of *The Vendée* (1964) about peasants during the French Revolution and *As History Meets Sociology* (1981) and co-editor with David Landes of the fundamental *History as Social Science* (1971). Tilly and Shorter co-edited the landmark Academic Press book series *Studies in Social Discontinuity* in which the book from my 1975 dissertation *The Literacy Myth* was published (1979c). From our first meeting in a University of Toronto men's room in 1974 while Chuck was presenting a series of seminars, he proved a faithful guide, linking me to a generation of his own University of Michigan history and sociology students. Some of them, led by Mary Jo Maynes and Leslie Moch, remain colleagues and friends to this day. Many of those contacts were forged at the early meetings of the SSHA in the mid- to late-1970s.

At Katz's suggestion, I also completed a reading course with a philosophy professor who grounded me in the philosophy of history. Providing me with a lasting education that few practicing historians have, I recall that this philosopher took pride in the fact he had read 10 entire works of history as the basis for his dissertation. That was an unusual number even for a philosopher of history.

My required course work concluded with a seminar on Ontario history by pioneering Canadian historian Maurice Careless, at Katz's and fellow student-colleague Alison Prentice's suggestion. I had researched and published on the history of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ontario but lacked a comprehensive foundation. Careless' seminar provided that. It also gave me an opportunity to explore literacy in rural Ontario. That seminar paper was published as "Literacy and Social Structure in Elgin County, Canada West" (1973a).

Careless was an exceptional Canadian historian. Although well into his career, he was rare among his colleagues. Not only an outstanding scholar, he was also supportive, not threatened or falsely nationalistic in the face of new historical methods. Unlike his peers, he understood that the new histories were not "American imperialism" but reached Canada more directly from the Sixieme Section of the Sorbonne in Paris (to Montreal and Quebec) and the Cambridge Group in Great Britain than from the United States.

Also, unlike other Canadianists in the Toronto department, he saw Katz and his students, like me, Alison, and Susan Houston, as colleagues rather than aliens. (see Chad Gaffield, 2020). For the next three years and after, Maurice encouraged and supported me intellectually and personally. Periodically taking me to lunch at the faculty club, he advised me on dissertation research and job possibilities, wrote letters of recommendation, confirmed my credentials as a historian of Canada, and served on my dissertation committee.

~~~

The final pillar of my graduate "training" was less formal: the regular, informal seminars of Katz's Hamilton and then Canadian Social History Project. This experience instilled in me a lifelong commitment to interdisciplinarity inseparably combined with collaboration and collegiality across ranks and ages. I practiced this in various ways throughout my career (see Graff, 2022l, 2022o, 2023e).

We met every other week in the project's work room, around a table tennis table at which a few of us played vigorously at lunch time—especially Canadian historical urban geographer Michael Doucet, Australian geography teacher turned graduate history student Ian Davey, and me. With the net down, the table tripled as a lunch table and seminar table. In retirement, we three, and a few others, remain close colleagues and friends.

Katz led a stable core of students, faculty, and staff. We included Ian Winchester, a younger philosophy professor with a strong interest in historical methods; project assistant John Tiller, an American draft dodger; historical geography student Doucet; history of education student Davey; me; for shorter periods

Bruce Tucker and Mark Stern from U of T history department and Haley Baman from history of education; and often York University urban historian Peter Knights, who brought his cans of carbonated soda in padded mailing envelopes to keep them cold. From time to time, we had more distant visitors including Ken Lockridge from Michigan and Egil Johansson from Sweden. Katz's fellow urban historians and close friends, author of *Town into City* (1972) Michael H. Frisch from the University at Buffalo and Ted Hershberg (1981) of the University of Pennsylvania's Philadelphia Social History Project also visited.

Often Katz presented a draft of a new working paper. That was his method for working through the voluminous database step by step. The drafts varied in completeness and polish but were always thought provoking. Occasionally, we graduate students presented our work. I paraphrase Katz's remark in the Acknowledgments to his 1975 *The People of Hamilton, Canada West* that the project meetings were the best seminars that any of us had attended in a long time.

The project group presented an informal model that I later adapted for use with Dallas history, the more formal Dallas Social History Group, and a children's studies program at KERA TV, all in Dallas; interdisciplinary and cross-division literacy studies at UT-San Antonio; Teen Chicago at the Chicago Historical Society (now Museum of Chicago History); and in fullest development, Literacy-Studies@OSU at Ohio State University beginning in 2004. I continue to use the model informally with colleague/friends across disciplines around the world and with Ohio State University undergraduates in what we humorously call "Harvey U" (for more on "Harvey U," see Graff, 2022aa).

~~~

Vicki received her Bachelor of Arts degree at the end of spring 1972. Toronto's ceremony depended heavily on British traditions: She literally knelt on a velvet cushion at the feet of the Governor General, who tapped her shoulder with a sabre. I watched with flowers to present to her.

In addition to my research assistantship with the Hamilton Project and Vicki's work at banks, summer 1972 included a brief vacation at a tennis camp and a driving tour around the lovely lakes of eastern Ontario in a rental car. Our landlord reluctantly informed us that we had to vacate and relocate by the end of the summer because his daughter needed a place to live. A few weeks' search located a one-bedroom apartment set just below ground level about a mile north on Bathurst Street in a medium-sized, older building with a central courtyard. Across the way from my classmate Michael Doucet's and his wife Natalie's apartment, it was quieter than Bloor St. with shops but not restaurants close by. Mike became a major figure in urban historical geography and a faculty association leader at Ryerson University in Toronto. Hamilton the cat approved; he had safer spaces to play. It was a positive trade-off (except for a voyeur masturbating on our windows) and start to year three of the Canadian Adventure.

Vicki progressed through classes and practice teaching, acquiring her Bachelor of Education degree and certification in elementary grades and high school geography. In the spring of 1973, Branksome Hall, the elite, private school for girls, hired her. Although only a beginning full-time teacher, she had the credentials to be appointed head of history and geography.

~ ~ ~

Largely forgotten today, the late 1950s and 1960s witnessed a rediscovery of the “crises of literacy.” This stood out among the failures of schooling especially but not only for members of underrepresented racial groups, poor people, inner-city and rural residents, immigrants, females, and members of different linguistic groups. Paul Goodman (1960, 1964), John Holt (1964, 1967), Jonathan Kozol (1967), and others published landmark works that were partly ethnographic and observational and partly liberal to left social criticism.

As usual, outside of English departments and especially writing programs, reading attracted far more attention than writing as educators and social scientists took reading as the key indicator of literacy. With rare exceptions, rhetoric and writing instructors seldom inquired into reading or accessing meaning as opposed to expressing meaning. This is one of many strains among the literacy myths.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an endless series of “new literacy myths” proliferates. I have lists of hundreds of proclaimed “literacies” including financial, racial, and media. Most are forms of marketing. None stand independently as actual literacy. These steps backward fill the chronological and intellectual gap between recognition of the power of the “literacy myth,” the impact of the New Literacy Studies that formed in the 1970s–1990s, and the more recent proliferation of “many literacies.”

~ ~ ~

Inseparable from debates about inequality, discrimination, and expanding civil rights on one hand and the recurring “reading wars” about early instruction (phonics versus phonetics in various formulations), educational ethnographies, and new interests of linguists with its field in periodic ferment on the other hand, more scholars explored and exposed the inseparable intersections of reading *and* writing in their social *and* historical contexts. Those central dialectical relationships were only slowly institutionalized. International educational criticism and activism by Paulo Freire (1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1973) and others from Brazil to Cuba and the Cuban national literacy campaign powerfully added to the mix. First-, second-, and third-world ethnographies exploring learning, language, and social psychology in contexts of daily life began to spread (see Arnone and Graff, 1987/2008, and Graff, *Searching for Literacy*, 2022e).

Progressive-to-left literacy critics and the pioneers of what became known and partly institutionalized as cultural studies propelled new attention to what Richard Hoggart called “the uses of literacy” in his classic 1957 book of that name. This accompanied Raymond Williams’ 1958 landmark *Culture and Society* among



his many related works. In the late 1960s and 1970s, these interpretations were influential across disciplines including history, anthropology, and literature.

Increasingly, texts *and* their readers and writers were conceptualized as interactive elements. No one “variable” was independently determinative. Perhaps most importantly, *literacy by itself* was less often seen as independently transformative irrespective of other life and contextual circumstances. Historians like E. P. Thompson (1964, 1967) brought this eye- and mind-opening new theoretical and empirical approach to audiences across the world and across disciplines. The power of some degree of literacy within collective cultures balanced the limits of literacy by itself. With this understanding, many negative representations of slaves, women, immigrants, and young persons began to change. In economics—whose modern conceptions of “investment in human capital” prized and priced literacy and education highly—Italian economic historian Carlo M. Cipolla raised modest doubts in *Literacy and Development in the West* (1969).

At the same time, in opposing major works in communications under the shadow of proliferating “new media,” popularized, often slogan-based, universalistic, and relatively data-free generalizations about the independently transformative power of individual access and uses of reading and writing across media, especially print, overflowed. This was central to the burgeoning field of communication studies. It reinforced the elitist and classist views that inflated expectations of the direct consequences of reading and writing central to certain influential literary approaches to antiquity through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment.

Ironically, the “Toronto School” of communication theory promulgated these views widely, prompted by Harold A. Innis and Marshall McLuhan, based at the University of Toronto. Innis’ more scholarly 1951 *The Bias of Communication* was a serious study compared to his younger colleague McLuhan’s uncritically repeated, caricatured best sellers, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* in 1962 and *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* in 1964. The gendering was no accident.

At the same time, classicist Eric A. Havelock’s *Preface to Plato* (1963) and early modern philosophy scholar Walter J. Ong’s *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958) further emphasized academically appealing (and self-promoting) exaggerations of the necessarily independent determinative power of print and individual access to text. Arithmetic misrepresentations of the presumed impact of multiple typographic printing after Gutenberg pushed this further. Elizabeth L. Eisenstein’s paeons to printing began to appear in journal articles.

Multi-volume praise-songs to print followed in the 1970s and 1980s. For example, sustained documented criticism from different perspectives by Anthony T. Grafton (“The Importance of Being Printed,” 1980) or me (*The Legacies of Literacy*, 1987b) made little impression against the history and humanities mythmaking of Eisenstein’s 1979/1980 *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. Eisenstein’s inattention to both reading and writing and lack of direct evidence of printing specifically as “an agent of change” were powerful. Human agency and human

difference played little role in her analysis. Eisenstein's "printing myth" supplemented "the literacy myth." Human uses of reading and writing attract insufficient attention.

Long-standing elitist traditions amplified these elements into grand endorsements of "literary canons" and "great books" curricula. Surprisingly few classroom teachers or literary critics asked about how students actually read and make meaning (for more on this topic, see, for example, my "Myths Shape the Continuing 'Crisis of the Humanities,'" 2022s, "The Inseparability of 'Historical Myths' and 'Permanent Crises' in the Humanities," 2022b, and "Opinion: The Persistent 'Reading Myth' and the 'Crisis of the Humanities,'" 2023d).

What I named "the literacy myth" at end of the 1970s was amplified for decades by well-known Cambridge anthropologist Jack Goody (1968) and Toronto educational psychologist David R. Olson (1994), who later followed McLuhan as head of what was named the McLuhan Center at the U of T, and their students and colleagues. Quick to make sweeping transhistorical assertions, neither Goody nor Olson did historical research nor followed an emerging two generations of reorienting research and interpretations.

For whatever reasons, Olson had no interest in discussing literacy, its study, or its interpretation with me, a doctoral student two floors down in the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education building. Nor did McLuhan's center down the street. Similarly, Goody and his associates did not exchange views with Roger Schofield, Peter Laslett, Anthony Wrigley, nor their students like David Cressy and Rab Houston at Cambridge University. As I first learned at Northwestern and would see in each of my university appointments, interdisciplinarity is always bounded (I discuss this at length in *The Literacy Myth*, 1979c, several of the essays in *Literacy Myths, Legacies, and Lessons*, 2011/2023c, *Searching for Literacy*, 2022e, and *Undisciplining Knowledge*, 2015a).

For me, the multiple elements of what is sometimes called "dissertating" twisted and turned in a challenging intellectual context. My dissertation research, drafting, submitting chapters first to Katz, rapidly receiving constructive criticism, and then revision occupied center stage for the next few years. When I prepared my first drafts and sent them to Katz at Princeton, where he was a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study writing *The People of Hamilton* (1975), he cautioned me, "not so hot off the typewriter." Taking several deep breaths, I listened to him. That was another chapter in my life with literacy.

As I progressed with analysis, writing, and revision, I continued to publish articles that developed data not fully exploited in my dissertation. These papers derived from the comparative research and the database I compiled on the cities of Kingston and London in addition to Hamilton: an original exploration of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century manuscript gaol (jail) registers that provided information on inmate literacy to test past and present presumptions of a direct relationship tying illiteracy to criminality. I also examined a manuscript on employment pay registers from the eastern Ontario lumber industry. (See my "Crime and Punishment in

the Nineteenth Century” (1977a), “Towards a Meaning of Literacy” (1975), “Literacy in History” (1975a), and “Respected and Profitable Labour” (1976b).

Each of these subprojects explored larger questions in the theoretical and empirical literature with new empirical quantitative and qualitative evidence. Neither Katz nor my other committee members presumed that any one primary source including quantitative data stood alone. I divided my time—by direction and design—between coding data and the computer center, university library, and both Province of Ottawa and National Archives in Toronto and Ottawa, respectively. I also explored records in Hamilton and Kingston, Ontario.

In general terms, my dissertation “Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth-Century City” (1975b) was an unprecedented, multi-dimensional set of investigations into literacy’s social, economic, cultural, and political relationships in the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with an urban base. From many sources and perspectives, some quantitative, others more traditional, I reinterpreted the role of literacy in lives, work, social and geographic mobility, family, growing up, schools, criminality, economic development, and communities. While the quantitative data were primarily Canadian, my evidentiary and interpretive base included the United States and England, cross-border, and trans-Atlantic dimensions.

Among many arguments, I maintained that largely self-reported indicators of literacy (compared to other recent studies that made assumptions about literacy based on ability to sign one’s name) seldom had a simple and direct association with social origins; social, economic, and occupational standing; crime and punishment; children’s schooling; age and gender; or indicators of cultural participation. My contexts crossed sociocultural, quantitative and qualitative, humanities and social sciences, and history and theory boundaries. This was interdisciplinarity in the arts and sciences in the 1970s (for more on this approach, see my *Undisciplining Knowledge*, 2015a, and “Literacy Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies: Reflections on History and Theory,” 2012).

Encapsulated in the title to the book version of my dissertation, *The Literacy Myth* (1979c) represented a sustained critique and reinterpretation of normative, ahistorical, and universalist approaches to literacy in actual lives as lived. My new understanding of the past continues to directly inform comprehension and actions in the present and future. Those are among the reasons that the articles coming from my dissertation research and later books have been influential (for reviews of the current state of the field, see my “The New Literacy Studies and the Resurgent Literacy Myth,” 2022c, “*The Literacy Myth at Thirty*,” 2010a, *Literacy Myths, Legacies, and Lessons*, 2011/2023c, *Searching for Literacy*, 2022e, “The Shock of the ‘New’ Histories,” 2001/2005, and with John Duffy, “Literacy Myths,” 2008).

As my dissertation progressed, I also wrote about the strengths and limitations of the manuscript census as a basis for historical research and understanding in “What the 1861 Census Can Tell Us About Literacy” (1975c). Along the path of my dissertation, summer 1973 provided another adventure and set of exceptional

learning experiences. I attended the second year of the Newberry Library summer institute in social, demographic, and family history in Chicago, with fellowship support from the Spencer and Mellon Foundations. An outgrowth of Richard Jensen's Family and Community History Center, the institute provided unusual tutelage in new historical methods for advanced graduate students and younger professors. Colonial demographic and family historian Daniel Scott Smith joined his University of Chicago at Illinois colleague in teaching the course.

I was more prepared and my research farther along than many others in the program. For me, the greatest benefits lay in conversations with Jensen and especially Smith and in making the acquaintance of fellow social historians. Several of them became long-lasting friends, from Kathryn (Kitty) Sklar, then at Michigan, to Judith Smith, a student in American studies at Brown, later a professor at Boston University and Boston College. At the end of three weeks, we were each awarded a certificate. My career-long relationship with the Newberry Library commenced.

Although I had only completed three years of graduate studies, I accepted an invitation to teach a summer seminar on the history of American education in the Graduate School of Education at Northwestern University. Vicki flew to meet me as I moved from the near north side of Chicago to our old stomping grounds in Evanston. I substituted for Northwestern's historian of education Robert Church while he spent that summer away from campus. Our cat, Hamilton, was scheduled to accompany Vicki. But as a Canadian-born nationalist, he ran away instead. In fact, he absconded in retaliation for being neutered.

The summer seminar was a positive experience. I had not taught since I was an unofficial teaching assistant as a Northwestern undergraduate. The course went very well. The students were diverse, able, and interested. Some became our summer friends. Equally importantly, we delighted in returning to Evanston and Chicago and took advantage of the opportunities for food, music, and the arts.

Driving a rental car back to Toronto in August, we stopped to visit Ken Lockridge in Ann Arbor, Michigan. I had developed a friendship with him originating in our respective research on the history of literacy. He was completing an important book, *Literacy in Colonial New England* (1974). For some time, he joined my models and examples.

~ ~ ~

We returned to Toronto for the 1973–1974 academic year. I resumed my research with the support of the CMHC urban studies fellowship. Working hard, I completed the greater part of my basic primary and secondary research.

Vicki began to practice her secondary school teaching skills. She particularly enjoyed field trips with her students to observe the geographic formations of the Niagara escarpment. For variety, we sometimes chaperoned school dances, shaking our heads at the young prep and military school dates of Branksome Hall's students.

More often, we socialized with our cohort of graduate students and their partners. We dined in or out together, drinking inexpensive Hungarian and Yugoslavian wines (and boycotting Canadian and New York vintages); attended film screenings, concerts, and with our Australian classmate a tennis tournament featuring Rod Laver; and played “Dictionary” with exceptionally intelligent people. We’ve never laughed as hard as we did during those evenings.

A coed group of students and a young professor played squash one morning each week, followed by a collectively prepared brunch. A small group of graduate students played highly competitive but joking tennis: a big-serving Canadian Chad Gaffield, Australian Ian Davey, and me. Both Chad and Ian went on to notable careers in Canada and Australia, respectively. Chad headed the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and held a Canada research chair at the University of Ottawa, while Ian led the education faculty and served as a leader at the University of South Australia in Adelaide.

~~~

The summer of 1974 brought another adventure. After contemplating and saving for several years and some hemming and hawing by me about finances and completing my dissertation, we made our first transatlantic trip. It was predominantly but not exclusively for pleasure, the first of many that combined business and pleasure. We embarked for six weeks to England, Wales, and Scotland. A first and final week in London bookended four weeks on the road in a rental car.

Ever since my first sparks of interest in British history as a teenager, I longed for this trip. We went with a lengthy wish list ranging from historical and cultural sights to many lesser-known recommendations of friends and colleagues. The *Blue Guide* along with *England on \$5 and \$10 A Day* were our primers. The six weeks exceeded our expectations.

We spent our first and last weeks in the small, moderately priced, and comfortable The George Hotel in Bloomsbury within walking distance of the British Museum, the University of London, and Georgian terraced, gently curving streets with welcoming restaurants and bars. Many young adults roamed the area. We were 24- and 25-year-old kids in a candy shop, lapping up famous and lesser-known sites in and around the city.

Along with almost all the museums and parks, trekking to Highgate Cemetery to pay homage to the tomb of Karl Marx was among my first imperatives. The previous week, we learned, vandals had knocked down the iconic, upper torso sculptural monument from his grave. We boated on the Thames and bused to Windsor Castle. Happily, my undergraduate advisor, Lacey Smith, was serving as assistant to the cultural attaché at the U.S. Embassy. We had lunch with Lacey and his family in the garden of his lovely rental house.

We then picked up a rental car at Heathrow Airport for a four-week exploration of southwestern, central, northern, and northeastern England, eastern Wales, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and the Scottish Highlands and islands. The locals

with whom we spoke considered us absolutely crazy Americans for driving so much. As the sole driver at that time, I gradually mastered navigating “the wrong way on the road” and steering from the right-hand seat. Vicki guided me with road maps and signage. We searched out inexpensive hotels, bed and breakfasts, and rooms to rent, on occasion paying extra for a bath or gas heating. It was an adventure and sometimes a comedy.

As tourists and scholar-in-becoming, we first explored Oxford and Cambridge. In Cambridge, Roger Schofield led us to his personal favorite sights, including the Clare College library where he showed us Sir Isaac Newton’s handwritten notes in an early printed book. At Oxford, we dined at the famous The Swan on the river. I briefly and awkwardly punted on the river.

Heading west toward Land’s End, we toured Devon’s and Cornwall’s towns, cathedrals, and countryside. We began our checklist of seeing 18 of the 21 Church of England Cathedrals. We delighted in Devon clotted cream. From there, we journeyed to eastern Wales and a hike through Snowdonia National Park, then to the historic midlands for more walks and touring the locations of classic 19th-century novels. Ever the historian plus one, we sampled the cities where much of the early Industrial Revolution took place and the lovely border country. The cities and industrialization ranked high among my historical interests.

Scotland was among the high points of the trip (and future visits) from its highlands to the lowlands. We fell in love with Edinburgh, its Old Town, Castle Mount, and New Town. Our guidebook led us to the zoo with its iconic, 11:00 a.m. parade of penguins (which we returned to see again several decades later). A world-class walking city.

From the city to Loch Ness without sighting a monster. And to the highlands and via ferry to the Hebrides Islands with spectacular scenery, ancient remains, cozy bed and breakfasts, inviting cafes, and outstanding Scotch whiskey. The hills, lakes, and herds of West Highland cattle and sheep walking along and crossing the roads remain vivid in my mind. A final week in London and home.

Vicki began her second year teaching geography at Branksome Hall. I turned toward completing my dissertation and beginning a fraught job search in one of the worst job markets in history (see my “Finding a Permanent Job in the Humanities Has Never Been Easy,” 2023f). OISE had no undergraduate students, so assisting in courses was not an option for job preparation. At their request, I taught the graduate seminar in American educational history in Katz’s absence during my final year. I also continued as the Hamilton Project’s graduate research assistant.

All went well. Among my students was a first-year doctoral candidate named Chad Gaffield, who became a lifelong friend and leading Canadian historian. He sometimes accords me more credit for his success than I might deserve.

More generally, looking over my graduate education and the next years, I also wrote “Introduction to ‘Literacy Studies in Sweden’” (1974), “Counting on the Past: Quantification in History” (1976a), and “Selected Bibliography: Urban, Social, Sociological, Demographic, and Quantitative History” (1976c). As I

completed my dissertation Katz said quietly to me, “You have enough graduate student articles, Harvey.” I am sure he was right.

~~~

There is one further dimension of my graduate training, an aspect that is insufficiently appreciated and remains too rare. These are the substantial extracurricular opportunities and general professional experience that I received. Their breadth and depth reflect the times, the place, the fields, and my advisors and multiple models. Chapter One reflects the culmination of this process.

As a graduate-only department, history and philosophy of education drew less exclusive and formal lines among many (but not all) faculty, students, and staff than most units. The 1960s and 1970s were also a time of greater acceptance and tolerance. At least partial equity within organizations was encouraged more than in most periods before or after.

At the department level, from my first year to my last, I served as a member of its inclusive general assembly. At various times, I sat on departmental committees for admissions and admissions policy, faculty and chair searches, orientation, evaluation, research and development, programs and graduate studies, nominations, and the library. While some of this activity was more pretense and self-congratulatory on the part of the tenured faculty than substance—especially as related to hiring, promotion, and finances—it was a great learning opportunity that was invaluable preparation for my future faculty roles and responsibilities. I also served as a consultant to the Canadian Social History Project from 1973 to 1975.

My professional preparation extended beyond the department and the university. At least as consequential was early involvement in professional societies and their annual meetings. I attended my first American professional meetings at the department’s expense in 1973: convenings of the American Educational Research Association and the History of Education Society. I began my friendship with Paul Mattingly, a historian at New York University (sleeping on his hotel room sofa at the History of Education Society meeting a year later). Our lengthy personal and professional relationship continues.

The 1970s were a pioneering period for student members on committees and boards, which for me included the following:

- Editorial board of OISE-based *Interchange: A Quarterly Review of Education* (1974–1975; corresponding editor, 1975–1976; consulting editor, 1985–present)
- Executive committee of the Canadian Association for American Studies (founding student member, 1972–1975; program committee, 1974)
- Program committee, Division F Historiography, American Educational Research Association (1973)
- Steering and program committees, Canadian Population Studies Group (1974–1976)

Finally, I was encouraged or invited to present my graduate student research and also chair sessions at both student and regular professional meetings. These included the Little Community Conference, primarily for graduate students, at Brandeis University (1972); History of Education Society, Chicago (1973); Canadian Association for American Studies, Ottawa (1974); and Canadian Historical Association, Edmonton (1975). At each event, I made new acquaintances and initiated long-lasting friendships.

Michael Katz's 1974 relocation from the U of T/OISE to York University in north Toronto constituted a minor hiccup for my program but a major obstacle for the future of the Hamilton-Canadian Social History Project. Michael's younger colleague Ian Winchester became my Toronto supervisor of record, but Katz remained my principal advisor in practice. He continued to return my drafts almost immediately.

~~~

The school year of 1974–1975 was not the time to search for academic positions, especially in the humanities and the social sciences. Despite recent myths, the academic “job crisis” is not new. There was a “job crisis” in every decade since World War II. Professorial positions were exceedingly scarce as I completed my degree.

Vicki and I preferred to remain in Canada, but on the one hand, there were almost no positions to which to apply, and, perhaps more powerfully, on the other hand, there were rising currents of Canadian nationalism and negative backlash to the over-hiring of often-mediocre Americans during a period of university expansion in the mid- to late-1960s. I recall one Canadian history department asking Maurice Careless if I knew *any* Canadian history! At least one of my handful of on-site interviews deteriorated into an uninformed debate about social and quantitative history and an ignorant attack on my advisor.

I plugged on, writing, revising, reading job ads for positions in Canada and the United States, applying and applying. In the spring, the just-opening campus of the University of Texas at Dallas asked me if I was interested in applying for a tenure-track cross-appointment in history/humanities and social science. I applied. Not long afterwards, I was invited to an interview, not on campus, but in a hotel room at the Toronto airport. I met with the new dean of arts and humanities. A former nun, the founding faculty dubbed her “the flying dean.” Shortly afterward, she offered me the job.

We hesitated. Not only was our preference to remain in Canada, but Dallas, Texas, and a brand-new branch of a large, public university system gave us pause. We knew little about Dallas beyond its public images, dominated by the 1963 Kennedy assassination and the Cowboys football team. They were not appealing. Too many images turned out to be more accurate than not. In the end, the combination of a tenure-track position, a city rather than a college town, and the self-promotions of a supposedly distinctive, indeed unique, interdisciplinary

university settled the matter. We celebrated, sometimes with friends who brought us funny hats that they thought evoked the Wild West.

In July, our first trip to the West Coast of Canada and the United States, to Vancouver, British Columbia, and San Francisco, California, marked the end of our Canadian adventure. Planning to take a train with viewing cars through the Canadian Rockies, we flew to Calgary only to find the Canadian National Railway running 24 hours late. We shifted to a bus via Banff and Jasper National Parks. We had booked a room in the University of British Columbia (UBC) dorms, empty of students for the summer.

With its lovely downtown, historic neighborhoods, and majestic waterfront, Vancouver was smashing. Coincidentally, the Katz family spent the summer there, exchanging their Toronto house for a house near UBC owned by a friend and colleague. We explored the city and its beaches together.

From Vancouver, we took a ferry to quaint Victoria on beautiful Vancouver Island. From there a flight to San Francisco, another city where we experienced love at first sight. A full five days took us from Golden Gate and Fisherman's Wharf to Haight-Asbury, Muir Woods, Berkeley, and Stanford. We visited Natalie Davis in her new abode in Berkeley. Like Vancouver, this was the first of recurring visits and increasing familiarity.

Returning to Toronto, we prepared to move. We resolved the problem that my dissertation typist had stopped without completing her job by alternating typing the remaining pages between us. All responsible parties approved the final draft and confirmed a date for an October formal defense. Tradition held that summer defenses were inconvenient for the faculty. My U of T business wasn't quite complete.