

Michael B. Katz, 1939-2014

Michael B. Katz, 75, a founder of computer-based research for the study of Canada, passed away after battling cancer on August 23 in Philadelphia where he was the Walter H. Annenberg Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. Katz made his major contributions to Canada during the first chapter of his illustrious career when he became one of the recruits to the new Ontario Institute for Studies in Education that opened at the University of Toronto in 1966. With a joint appointment in the University's Department of History, Katz established innovative teaching and research initiatives that not only produced major re-interpretations of 19th century Canada but also graduated numerous students who themselves became internationally recognized in their fields. This chapter of Katz's career concluded at York University where he continued his path-breaking scholarship of nineteenth-century Canada until joining Penn in 1978.

At the heart of Katz's contributions to the study of Canada was a conviction that major societal changes result from the decisions and behavior of the 'anonymous' as much as from those in positions of power and authority. Katz felt passionately that the lives and experiences of those dismissed as historically anonymous must be recovered and analysed on their own terms if any period or historical process were to be appropriately understood. But how to do so? Archives were filled with official records and personal papers that documented the thoughts and actions of politicians, religious leaders and others in positions of official power but only fragmentary evidence about the lives of the poor, disadvantaged ethno-cultural minorities, and women and children.

Katz addressed this challenge by building research teams of scholars and graduate students to create computer drawn from manuscript census enumerations, property records and

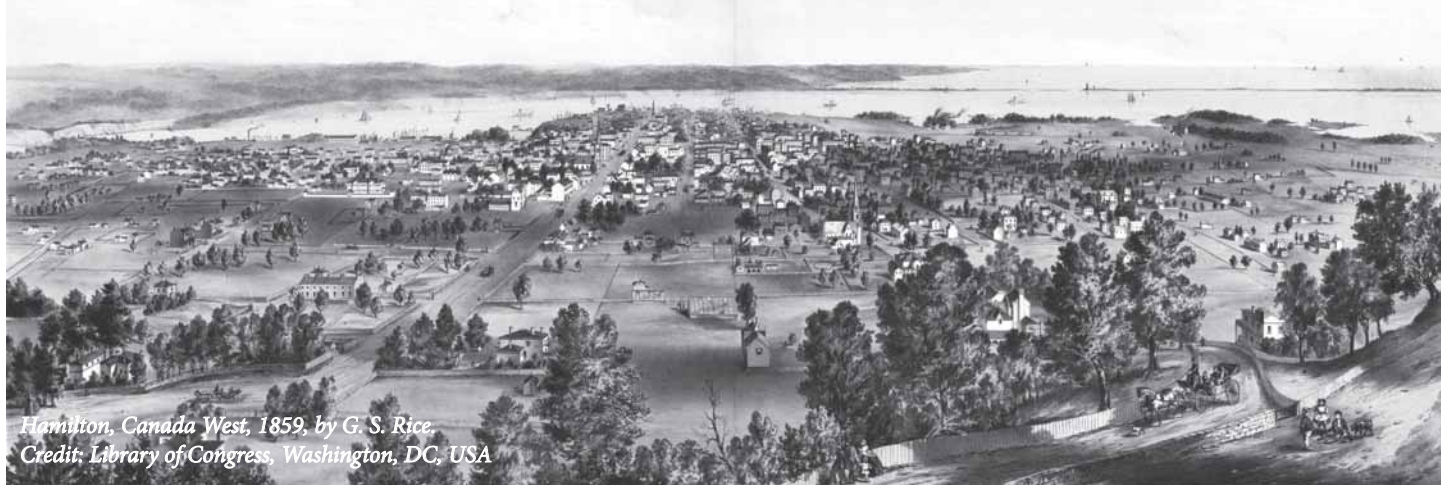
educational documents including school attendance records. The focus of his attention was the ways in which commercialization, industrialization and urbanization transformed the experience of growing up during the nineteenth century especially the emergence of mass schooling for those between the ages of seven and twelve. After estimating that Toronto was too large for comprehensive data analysis, Katz decided to use nearby Hamilton as a case study of urban growth in the 1850s. The project found that commercialization rather than industrialization explained major social and cultural changes for children and families in the growing city. Moreover, Katz documented how the overall growth of Hamilton was accompanied by rapid population turnover and considerable social structural stability. This insight brought together Katz's initial historical research on early school reform with his growing interest in social class and family structure.

Housed and primarily financed at OISE, The Hamilton Project became one of the first 'labs' for collective computer-based research in the social sciences and humanities. Among the many innovations was development of direct-entry data capture in which microfilm readers for historical documents were positioned right next to mainframe terminal keyboards.

While this type of innovation now seems quaint in our era of Big Data, it was intensely controversial during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some researchers disparaged Katz and his students were for their quantification of History and their efforts to conceptualize and measure change in 'scientific' ways associated with the study of particles rather than people. By the mid-1970s,



Photo: University of Pennsylvania



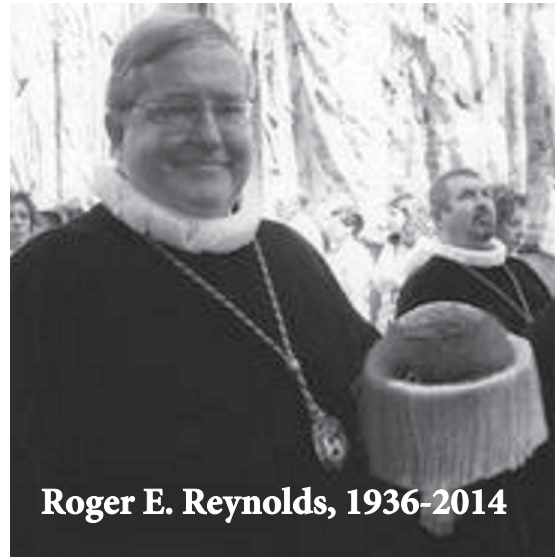
Hamilton, Canada West, 1859, by G. S. Rice.
Credit: Library of Congress, Washington, DC, USA

however, Katz was increasingly recognized as a major scholar whose work on Hamilton was helping put Canada on the map of international scholarship. Along the way, Katz became deeply committed to Canada and he reached out to other like-minded researchers including those in Quebec such as Jacques Henripin, Hubert Charbonneau and Louise Dechêne who were developing new strategies for analyzing population change in the St Lawrence Valley. His living room in Toronto witnessed informal research discussions that participants vividly remember for their stimulating, rigorous and inspiring exchanges about the latest theoretical, methodological or interpretive contribution to historical debate.

One indication of the growing importance of Katz's work on Hamilton was his winning in 1978 of the Albert B. Corey prize awarded biennially by The Canadian Historical Association and the American Historical Association 'for the best book on Canadian-American relations or on the history of both countries.' Even though *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a mid-nineteenth century city*, published by Harvard University Press in 1975, focused exclusively on evidence from one Canadian urban centre, the prize committee emphasized that Katz had significantly enhanced historical understanding of major transformations that transcended the border. Building on this approach, Katz continued to focus on Hamilton's growth in a larger continental context in *The Social Organization of Early Industrial Capitalism* written with his former students Michael B. Doucet and Mark J. Stern and published by Harvard University Press in 1982.

While Katz turned exclusively to the experience of the United States in his subsequent work at Penn, his years in Canada proved to be formative in his continued development as an engaged scholar deeply committed to informed public policy. In turn, Katz inspired a generation of colleagues and graduate students in Canada to similarly embrace the challenge of learning from history to enhance everyday life especially for disadvantaged children and families. Over the years, Katz regularly visited Canada both for family reasons and for university visits where he considered his meetings with graduate students and emerging scholars as major highlights. Beyond his profound intellectual legacy, Katz's will be remembered in Canada for his generosity, his commitment to social justice and his stubborn belief in the potential for historical understanding to help make a better future.

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The specialist of dark-ages ecclesiastical history in the early medieval period, Roger Reynolds, passed away on September 24. He was part of the Department of History of Carleton University between 1968 and 1977, where his former colleagues remember how he travelled all over Europe, especially the Balkans and Italy, to visit important sites of worship for material on services, theology and administration, entertained a remarkable network of correspondents, and helped establish the University's scholarly reputation as a whole, as well as the department's national reputation for MA studies in medieval history in particular. He prepared and rehearsed his lectures with the same assiduousness and enthusiasm, and helped develop survey courses which guaranteed enrolments for a long time. Upon his arrival in Ottawa from Harvard, he became a regular visitor of the reading room of St. Paul's University whose holdings he held in high esteem. Reynolds was recruited for a position at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies of the University of Toronto, where he revived the program in the history of liturgy and taught about worship, ceremony and canon law. It is from this institution, where he spent the rest of his career, surrounded by researchers working on closely related subjects, that he prepared most of his publications, from a large project of critical publication of liturgical manuscripts, *Monumenta liturgica beneventana*, to countless articles, books, exhibitions and reviews, listed in 2004 in the book edited by former students: Kathleen G. Cushing and Richard F. Gyug, *Ritual, Text, and Law* (Ashgate). His colleagues of Toronto praise his contribution to the prestige of their Institute, and his lasting contributions to scholarship.

Dominique Marshall, Chair, Department of History, Carleton University, with the help of John Bellamy, Carter Elwood, David Farr, Peter Fitzgerald and the remembrance of the Pontifical Institute