

**Tawfik, Myra, Professor, University of Windsor, Faculty of Law (Canada) “Encouraging Literacy and Learning: The ‘Learner’ at the Origins of Copyright Law in Canada”**

In pre-confederation Canada, copyright was tied to education policy and therefore to the ‘learner’. Raising literacy levels and encouraging learning were at the heart of stated legislative policy. Indeed, access to affordable didactic books remained an integral part of Canadian copyright policy throughout the 19th century. This paper will provide a critical assessment of the law’s impact on ‘learners’ as the first copyright ‘users’. It will study this question from a multidisciplinary perspective, tying my research to the scholarship of book history in relation to the impact of copyright on readers and the reading public. The records demonstrate that copyright law was only ever an imperfect means to this greater public policy end. Can the historical record offer any insights upon which to critically assess current domestic and international copyright laws and practices in relation to user rights and the interests of the ‘learner’?