

VISITING DOCTORAL STUDENT GRANT REPORT

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University of Alberta, July 2011 with Dr. Carla Peck

Thanks to the Visiting Doctoral Student Grant I received from THEN/HiER in the spring of 2011, I was fortunate to begin my data analysis with Dr. Carla Peck at the University of Alberta in July 2011. I completed the data collection for my doctoral dissertation in June 2011, which involved three areas of foci across four high school history classrooms in Toronto: teachers, students, and content coverage. Because of Dr. Peck's outstanding research on the relationship between students' ethnic identities and their perception of historical significance, I relished the opportunity to begin thinking about the student data with her. Over the two week period I completed two valuable pieces of work as well as had much appreciated conversation with others in my field.

With Dr. Peck's guidance, the visit allowed me to explore the process of coding with immediate and valuable feedback. With eight of my student transcripts in hand, Dr. Peck walked me through the beginning stages of coding as well as encouraged me to practice refining and defining codes as I went along. With the office that the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta secured



for me, I was able to work full-time on-site and that, complemented by Dr. Peck's open invitation to her office, allowed me to focus and work through any struggles I had in initially making sense of the data. Dr. Peck also provided me with a copy of her own dissertation and resulting academic articles to see the fruition of coding in relation to the themes of history content and student identity. This sharing of resources was extraordinarily valuable for making sense of the themes I was beginning to see and provided guidance for making them clearer as time went on. Furthermore, Dr.

Peck provided me with suggestions for future reading on data analysis and codes that had begun to emerge in my analysis so that the conversation we began in these early stages can continue once I am in the later stages of analysis and reporting.

Another piece of work I was able to complete while working with Dr. Peck was a submission to the upcoming American Educational Research Association (AERA) conference being held in Vancouver. Although I had already planned on submitting a proposal to this conference, I was able to transform what I had previously drafted into something more in line with the requirements of the AERA. Coming from a background in humanities, it is always very valuable to be reminded of 'proper' social science rhetoric. Dr. Peck provided me with examples of her own, previously successful AERA submissions to help guide my use of language and idea development in my own submission. Furthermore, I was also able to have a conversation with Dr. Peck about the review process of the AERA and took up her suggestion to review paper submissions for the history education SIG to further my exposure to the association.



The final valuable aspect of this trip was the connections and conversations I was able to have with other scholars in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta about topics related to the field of history education. I met with Dr. Kent den Heyer, as well as sat in on one of his classes during the first week of my visit, and was able to share some of my preliminary findings from my doctoral research with him. From this, Dr. den Heyer suggested readings and philosophies to think about in relation to my work. I also met with Post-Doctoral Fellow and former Visiting Doctoral Student grant recipient Dr. Ana Laura Pauchulo and we spoke about her experiences completing her dissertation and her current status as a post-doc at the University of Alberta. Finally, I spent some time with fellow THEN/HiER Graduate Committee member Laurence Abbott and we discussed a panel submission for this year's Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) conference in Waterloo, Ontario.

In sum, this grant allowed me to have a much appreciated period of intense study with help from Dr. Peck during the early stages of my data analysis. I also took advantage of Dr. Peck's guidance to submit an even stronger paper proposal to the AERA. Most important, the opportunity to work at another university for two weeks allowed me to meet others interested in similar topics that I am, and allowed me to get to know them on a more personal level than email or a quick introduction at a conference could have achieved.

I want to thank THEN/HiER for their generous grant to visit the University of Alberta and work with Dr. Peck this summer. As a graduate student, this trip would not have been possible without their support and it was an incredibly rewarding experience.

Thank you,

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