

Let's Talk History! **A Dialogue about Doing History**

February 22, 2012
University of New Brunswick, Fredericton



For the second year in a row, students on the University of New Brunswick campus came together to exchange ideas about doing history. This was part of a THEN/HiER Graduate Student Committee initiative, planned for the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton as well as the University of Toronto. In keeping with a presentation format that was piloted last year at UNB, *Let's Talk History!* provided a pragmatic occasion for students to come together in an informal setting, to pause, and to reflect, upon how historians think historically.

As a key part of *Let's Talk History!* at UNB, history graduate students were invited to participate in a dialogue with two consecutive classes of Ted Christou's social studies education courses (ED4620 and ED4623). This involved matching history grad students with Prof. Christou's social studies students, so that the latter could gain first-hand pedagogical content knowledge about history education. The six concepts of [Historical Thinking](#) provided a framework for their discussions.

As each history grad student talked about their research question, method of inquiry, and epistemological lens, it became evident that many factors motivate their thoughts about the past. They spoke of their personal encounters through primary sources; their sense of engagement with those who lived in another time; and how the past frames their perspective on the present.

For their part, the education students probed the historians to identify elements of [Historical Thinking](#) in their research. In so doing, they witnessed first-hand the passion and motivation that historians hold for their research topics.



Rose Fine-Meyer held an event at OISE/University of Toronto on Tuesday February 21 that involved history graduate students from both York University and the University of Toronto and a large history methods class. After brief introductions, participants engaged in discussions about how to integrate the historian's craft into classroom instruction. Both events were very informative as well as educational and gave students an opportunity to network, dialogue, make friends, and share across disciplines. Discussions focused on doing history in archives, communities, and museums and the excitement of encountering original sources. The students found the talks most helpful and extremely insightful.



Let's Talk History! was an excellent example of how the next generation of social studies teachers can learn to integrate the historian's craft into classroom instruction. It was also an opportunity for students to network, dialogue, make friends, and share across disciplines. Given the positive response received by participants in this double event, we hope that we will be able to generate even more participation across Canada next year.