

## **Objects Matter: Making Histories in Museums – Museum of Anthropology, UBC** **Kate Zankowicz, THEN/HiER Anglophone Graduate Student Committee Coordinator**

On October 7, 2013, a group of about 70 history educators from museums, universities and classrooms across British Columbia gathered in the Michael Ames Theatre at the Museum of Anthropology at UBC. We had come there to reflect more deeply on what we do as history educators, and to learn more about how histories get ‘made’ in museums. Elder Henry Charles gave us a wonderful welcome to the traditional and unceded territory of the Musqueam Nation. Our first speaker, Terry Point, urged us to remember our teachings. His presentation focused on how to create exhibits with a good heart and an open mind and we learned about culturally sensitive materials, respectful curation, and community consultation. Jennifer Kramer shared her insights about working with communities for various collaborative exhibits and the challenges of multivocality working as a curator at the MOA. Viviane Gosselin spoke about *Sex Talk in the City* at the MOV, a two-year process of community consultation that resulted in an eye-opening exhibition about the history of sexuality in Vancouver. Jill Baird shared her work on educational programs at the MOA, in particular, great teacher resources from *Voices of the Canoe*, a THEN-HiER sponsored web-based project that focuses on canoes as a doorway to understand indigenous ways of knowing. Emily Ooi and Kimberly Baker, both from the Richmond Museum, spoke with us about the Mudflatters Kit and their work to broaden the definition of ‘pioneer’ in non-Eurocentric ways. Maddie Knickerbocker shared her doctoral research about the Sepass Canoe and its historical trajectory, exploring its significant role in the history of relationships between Stó:lō and their neighbours.

It was a very full, rich day, and the break-out sessions in the afternoon helped us create dialogue about what we had absorbed and allowed us to exchange ideas about how we would implement some of the concepts explored in the lectures within our own museum and classroom spaces.

We received much positive feedback from participants who considered it a great privilege to learn from the experiences of our panelists. We all felt encouraged to reflect deeply on our own perspectives and practices as history educators. In this way, we hope that *Objects Matter* contributed to improving history education in museums and schools.