

*Our monthly e-Bulletin provides quick updates on activities of THEN/HiER and its partners.*



## What's new with THEN/HiER?

\* **The Many Faces of History Teacher Education Symposium.** THEN/HiER held a symposium in Calgary on April 28 and 29, organized by Executive Board members Ruth Sandwell and Amy von Heyking. The symposium began with a reception at the Glenbow Museum with featured speaker Brenda Trofanenko, Canada Research Chair in Education at Acadia University. Participants spent the next two days discussing an edited book, which will include chapters on teacher disciplinary preparation, pre-service education, and ongoing professional development.

\* **Viviane Gosselin, Executive Board Member, and Curator of Contemporary Issues at the Museum of Vancouver,** is pleased to announce an exhibition she co-curated with Naveen Girn, Bhangra.me!, at the MOV. The exhibition, produced in collaboration with the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration Society (VIBCS), runs from May 5 through October 23, 2011. The history of Bhangra and its role in shaping a South Asian Canadian identity in Vancouver is explored through oral histories, personal artifacts, costumes, instruments, posters, pictures, and movies. Visit the MOV website for more information. Please also check out the bhangra.me website, where you can upload your "bhangra memories" and locate them on a map of greater Vancouver.



\* **Mary Chaktsiris, member of THEN/HiER's Graduate Student Committee,** has posted a new podcast on our website. In *Warrior Nation vs. Peaceable Kingdom*, Dr. Ian McKay discusses the increasing militarization of history in Canada, and the role of education and teachers within the transition from understanding Canada as a peaceful kingdom to a warrior nation.



Mary Chaktsiris

\* **New Partners!** THEN/HiER is pleased to welcome five new partners: Alberta Teachers' Association Social Studies Council, Association québécoise pour l'enseignement en univers social (AQEUS), Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN), Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, and Société des professeurs d'histoire du Québec (SPHQ). We look forward to working with these organizations in the coming years to improve the teaching and learning of history in Canada in both official languages.

\* **Visiting Doctoral Student Program.** THEN/HiER has chosen three doctoral students for this year's Visiting Doctoral Student Program, which allows students to interact on a daily basis with other students and faculty members in programs at other Canadian universities. The students are:

**Marie-Hélène Brunet,** Université de Montréal, who is examining ways in which secondary school students in Québec interpret struggles for gender equality, as they are represented in Québec history textbooks. She will be working with Dr. Penney Clark at the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness, UBC.

**Samantha Cutrara,** York University, who is conducting research on the relationship between students' ethnic identities and their construction of narratives of Canadian history. She will be working with Dr. Carla Peck at the University of Alberta.

**Kate Zankowicz,** OISE/University of Toronto, who is exploring the history of tactile education in Toronto museums and exhibitions in terms of how particular knowledges and ways of learning have been legitimized over others, and how particular narratives of the past are privileged within gallery display modes. She will be working with Dr. Brenda Trofanenko at Acadia University.

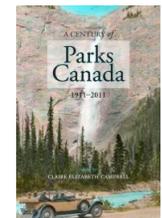
## What's new with our partners?

\* **Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness.** A set of 12" x 17" posters illustrating the six historical thinking concepts developed through the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking project of the CSHC is now available for purchase for a nominal charge of \$5 per set, plus shipping and handling. The posters have received great reviews by classroom teachers and other educators. Order yours today!



There are still openings for the *Benchmarks of Historical Thinking Summer Institute*, which will take place this summer at UBC from July 4-9, in the comfortable surroundings of St. John's College. Currently there are registrants from across Canada, as well as the United States and Europe. The key objective is to explore the notion of historical thinking for the classroom (and museums and historic sites), through themes of immigration, aboriginality, and cultural exchange. The Institute is appropriate for graduate students, as well as teachers not involved in graduate study (you can register either way). Tuition can also be paid with UBC tuition vouchers earned through supervising student teachers. Inexpensive rooms are available at St. John's College for those travelling from outside the Lower Mainland. Click here for a day-by-day schedule, full course description, and registration procedures. The deadline to register is June 3. It will be an intellectually stimulating and professionally rewarding week.

\* **Parks Canada** celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 19<sup>th</sup>. A podcast about the publication *A Century of Parks Canada* with Claire Campbell, and two of the contributing authors, George Colpitts and Gwynn Langemann, has been posted by the Network in Canadian History and Environment (NiCHE). Listen here.



\* **Ojibwe Cultural Foundation.** The OCF has published a very informative article titled "Socio-cultural history of Ninaatigwaaboo: Maple Water" in its May Newsletter. Read the article.

## Graduate Student Committees



Rose Fine-Meyer

The coordinators of the anglophone Graduate Student Committee have been busy finalizing plans for the national conference, and updating blog posts. Our national conference will take place October 27-29 in Halifax. We are partnering with the Nova Scotia Social Studies Teachers' Association for a morning workshop/panel that will bring academic historians and history teachers together, followed by a panel and tour at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in the afternoon. Please check

out our great blog posts this month on *Teaching the Past*. Lindsay Gibson writes on using primary sources more effectively; Laurence Abbott questions to what extent teachers should engage students in thinking about the connection between history learning and the national project; Cynthia Wallace-Casey poses the question: Who is crafting our national identity?; and Mary Chaktsiris websurfs through the archives. You can find us on Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and of course our blog. If you are interested in writing for our blog, tweeting during Congress, or just saying hello, contact Samantha Cutrara or Rose Fine-Meyer.



Samantha Cutrara

This month the francophone Graduate Student Committee has been working hard to bring to life the French language blog *Enseigner l'histoire*. To date more than fourteen articles have been posted on topics as varied as oral history, teaching history through controversial issues, and citizenship education. Teacher Marc-André Lauzon discusses activities he uses to enable students to develop historical empathy, and helps us discover the different stages that led him to his interest in this concept. Marie-Hélène Brunet shares her thoughts on feminism in the classroom, while Julie Ratté takes us on a walking tour of Montreal's Saint-Laurent Blvd. Ariane Bigras presents a new pedagogical tool: the oral history laboratory at Concordia University, and Viateur Karwera discusses the importance of citizenship education. Many more posts are scheduled for this summer, and we hope you will find them of interest! Contact Catherine Duquette.



Catherine Duquette

## Research Snapshots

*This section of our monthly e-Bulletin highlights our members' research projects.*

**Catherine Duquette, Ph.D.**  
Sessional Lecturer, History Education  
Université Laval, Québec



### The Relationship between Historical Thinking and Historical Consciousness

While completing my Master's degree in history, I was confronted for the first time with the possibility of teaching a course in this discipline, which triggered an important question: How does one teach history? How does one teach about "doing history" as I had just learned through my Master's? This line of questioning led me through my doctoral dissertation because it was through searching for answers to these questions that I became interested first in history education and then in the possible relationship between historical thinking and historical consciousness.

My interest was born of the fact that numerous studies have shown that learning history through historical thinking is far from natural for students, a situation which has led researchers on a quest to discover how best to facilitate learning history. A growing interest in historical consciousness as a possible avenue for this has manifested itself in Europe as well as Canada. However, historical consciousness has remained an obscure concept. There are several different conceptions of the nature of historical consciousness as well as its link to historical thinking. Although much of the research on the topic emphasizes the importance of historical consciousness in the process of understanding history, no author clearly defines the relationship between historical consciousness and historical thinking. So it seemed justified for me to further investigate the precise nature of this relationship: in what way does historical consciousness influence the development of historical thinking, and vice versa?

To find an answer to this question, I undertook empirical research with 148 fifth-year secondary students in Québec. In order to elicit their understanding of the relationship in question, I asked the students to follow a research design that included four stages:

1. Through a questionnaire, solve a historical problem in order to have their initial historical consciousness emerge;
2. Through an interview and after working with documents, have a mental debate that puts into question their original interpretation;
3. During the interview, complete an activity that demonstrates their historical thinking;
4. Finally, in order to bring out the elements of their resultant historical consciousness, reinterpret the initial problem based on the previous stage.

The results of this inquiry tend mostly to emphasize the possible existence of two levels of historical consciousness. At the first level, people accept series of accounts that seem coherent to interpret the past, understand the present, and envision the future. At this level, historical consciousness is **non-reflective**. At the second level, the individual becomes aware of one's own subjectivity and the influence of the present on the way in which one thinks about and understands the past. Historical consciousness thus becomes **reflective**.

The results also indicate that there is a close relationship between the development of a reflective historical consciousness and learning historical thinking. An analysis of the participants' historical consciousness allowed the establishment of a four-tiered developmental gradient: primary, immediate, composite, and narrative. Primary and immediate levels represent a non-reflective historical consciousness while composite and narrative levels are closer to a reflective consciousness. An analysis of the interviews also supports the claim that a majority of participants arrived at a higher level of historical consciousness after going through the research process. To explain this improvement, I made a correlation between characteristics of students' historical thinking and the four levels of historical consciousness. Generally, the results obtained indicate that the more developed historical thinking is in an individual, the higher the level of historical consciousness.

This research also suggests that learning the different elements of historical thinking, often referred to as second order concepts, follows a direct progression where mastering certain concepts is necessary for the development of others. These results imply that students' level of historical consciousness in some ways influences their understanding of history. Participants who had a primary or immediate level of historical consciousness tended to view history as a true and unchangeable account of the past, while those at the composite and narrative levels perceived it rather as a critical interpretation of the past.

All things considered, this dissertation will have helped answer some of my questions, but above all, it opens several other avenues of in-depth research that need to be followed!

**\* MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!**