

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



What's new with THEN/HiER?

* **New Podcasts on THEN/HiER website!** We have two new podcasts on our website: one of Paula Waatainen on CKNW talking about the Canadian Letters and Images Project, for which she helped develop a teacher's guide through our Large Projects Grants program (see below); and one of members of Canadians and Their Past's discussing the project.

Small Projects Grants



The Jewish Museum and Archives of British Columbia has now completed the Online Jewish Western Bulletin Digitization and Access Project, which entailed digitizing 3,520 issues of the *Jewish Western Bulletin* and its precursor publications dating from 1923 to 2004. THEN/HiER funds were used in the education component of the project during which a series of workshops and lesson plans on using the materials was developed. Read other project reports.

Large Projects Grants

The two Large Projects Grants projects that were awarded last year have been completed. One is a Teacher's Guide to accompany the Canadian Letters and Images Project website which contains primary documents (letters, photographs, official papers) of Canadians involved in pre-1914 conflicts, World Wars I and II, and the Korean War. For the other project, *Telling the Stories of the Nikkei: A Partnership Between Schools, Educators, Universities, Museums, Arts Organizations, and the Nikkei of New Denver*, students developed documentary films about the WWII Japanese internment in New Denver, BC.



Visiting Doctoral Student Program

Reports of the three Visiting Doctoral Students funded this year through THEN/HiER are now available on our website:

- Marie-Hélène Brunet, Université de Montréal, with Dr. Penney Clark, Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy, University of British Columbia, *Examining Ways in which Secondary School Students in Québec Interpret Struggles for Gender Equality, as They are Represented in Québec History Textbooks.*
- Samantha Cutrara, York University, with Dr. Carla Peck, Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta, *The Relationship between Students' Ethnic Identities and Their Construction of Narratives of Canadian History.*
- Kate Zankowicz, OISE/University of Toronto, with Dr. Brenda Trofanenko, School of Education, Acadia University, *The History of Tactile Education in Toronto Museums and Exhibitions.*

Funding Opportunities

Visiting Doctoral Student Program and Bursaries for the Historical Thinking Project Summer Institute

THEN/HiER's Visiting Doctoral Student Program provides an opportunity for up to three doctoral students enrolled in a Canadian university to visit a Faculty of Education or History Department in another Canadian university for a two week period. Bursaries for the Historical Thinking Project Summer Institute, which will take place next year in Toronto, will cover airfare for ten institute participants for up to \$750. The deadline for applications for both funding programs is March 5, 2012.

What's new with our partners?

* **The Canadian Historical Association (CHA)** promotes and recognizes excellence in historical research through a series of prizes. The deadline for 2012 nominations is December 31, 2011. Winners will be announced at the CHA Annual Meeting on May 29, 2012 in Waterloo.

* **Parks Canada** celebrated its 100th year in 2011.

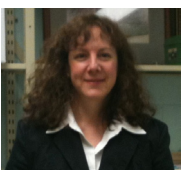
The Parks Canada Annual Review, 2011 Centennial Edition, is now available.



* **Canada's History National History Forum 2011.** This forum will take place at Library and Archives Canada on December 11, 2011, and includes a presentation by THEN/HiER executive board member Kevin Kee. His talk will focus on history gaming and how new digital technologies are changing how we interact with the past and each other.

Graduate Student Committees

The Anglophone Graduate Student Committee is pleased with the outcome of the Halifax *Imagining Gateways* conference, and also had a table at the recent Ontario History and Social Sciences Teachers' Association (OHASSTA) conference in Toronto where hundreds of teachers stopped by to pick up materials. We have now moved on to new projects for 2012 which include developing a graduate student event on National Heritage Day based on Cynthia Wallace-Casey's Let's Talk History sessions, and a book club designed to expose graduate students and educators to new books in history education. Book club participants will read books on history education and post items on our blog related to the concepts presented as well as comment on the books' strengths and weaknesses. In addition, four committee members - Rose Fine-Meyer, Samantha Cutrara, Laurence Abbott, and Cynthia Wallace-Casey - have submitted a proposal for the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) conference titled "What Ought to Predominate in History Education? Perceptions, Challenges, and Possibilities to Make the Past Present in Classrooms." This panel will offer four different perspectives on teaching and learning history. Visit our blog to see a series of posts on Remembrance Day as well as a summary of our *Imagining Gateways* conference. We also welcome Heather McGregor as a new committee member. A doctoral student at UBC, Heather's research is on the history of education in Nunavut. If you are interested in writing for our blog or just making contact please email Samantha Cutrara or Rose Fine-Meyer.



Rose Fine-Meyer



Samantha Cutrara



Catherine Duquette

The Francophone Graduate Student Committee is celebrating the arrival of winter with new posts on the blog *Enseigner l'histoire*, which is now available on the THEN/HiER website. This month historical thinking is in the spotlight. For example, Viateur Karwera disputes the idea that young students do not have the necessary cognitive capacity to develop historical thinking. Marie-Hélène Brunet talks about her involvement with the Historical Thinking Project. She presents the six historical thinking concepts used in the project as well as their application in learning situations. And I suggest, based on my doctoral research, the possible progression of intellectual operations associated with learning how to think historically. Contact Catherine Duquette.

Research Snapshots

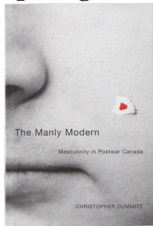
This section of our monthly e-Bulletin highlights our members' research projects.

Christopher Dummitt, Assistant Professor
Department of History, Trent University



Everyday History

This particular spring ritual started several years ago. My university, ever keen to have its researchers spotlighted in the media, put out a press release about an article I published back in 1998 on the history of men and barbecuing. In the article I took this common feature of our everyday life, the preponderance of men doing the barbecuing, and asked some basic but critical questions about how this came to be. The humorous topic with the serious historical spin proved appealing. For a couple of weeks I was drawn out of the quiet academic life and obliged to deal with what seemed to me an inundation (but was probably only a smattering) of calls from radio stations and newspapers. Every spring now I can expect a handful of emails and telephone calls from journalists getting an early jump on summer, arriving sometime after the snow has left but before the first Canada Goose.

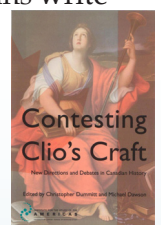


Despite the fact that the research is well over a decade old and my own interests have moved on considerably since that time, I mention it because this research still conveys my basic approach to the writing and teaching of history: start with something we think we know, move backwards, ask open-ended questions, and be prepared to be surprised.

This is the inspiration behind a course I teach at Trent University called *Everyday History*. Each week we take some common feature of our everyday life and look at its complex history. Many lectures begin with a question such as 'Why can't I buy beer at the corner store?' or 'Why is there French on my cereal box?' The historical answers are invariably more elaborate and involved than the students might initially anticipate, involving explorations across centuries, cultural values, national boundaries, political institutions and social practices. The goal is to show how we are always sailing across only the surface of the ocean of history. Not only is our current life a boat supported atop this ocean, but beneath us are the shipwrecks and ancient species of fish that we have forgotten, ideas and practices once common and now seemingly unthinkable.

The book I am currently writing does something similar to a figure who we think we know all too well, former prime minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. When King died in 1950, many commentators asked how it was that he had been so successful and what this said about Canada. This kind of commentary continued for several decades, well into the 1980s, largely because of the revelations about King's eccentric personal life, including his spiritualism, his visits with prostitutes, and his creepy fulsome affection for his mother. Most studies of King have invariably asked how any of these personal details should affect the way we see King as a prime minister. My own study comes to the subject backwards. Instead of trying to figure out if King slept with prostitutes (or had sex at all), I am interested in why so many commentators have found this question so compelling (or irrelevant). In other words, I turn our attention to the commentators who sought to remember King, and the years in which they wrote, the 1950s to the 1980s, to examine what our fascination with King reveals about changing cultural and political values in those decades.

As a side project, but also partly connected to this book, I'm exploring questions about how historians write history. I took this up in my article 'After Inclusiveness' that was published in my co-edited book with Mike Dawson, *Contesting Clio's Craft: New Directions and Debates in Canadian History*. In particular I'm keen to experiment to see how one can write narrative history that still speaks to the kinds of analytical concerns of cultural history. In other words, can we do the same kind of cultural interrogation that is so central to cultural history, but use the mechanisms of the novelist to convey these insights in a more artful form? I took a first stab at this in an article published in the autumn 2010 issue of *Labour/Le Travail* titled 'Harry Ferns, Bernard Ostry and *The Age of Mackenzie King: Liberal Orthodoxy and its Discontents in the 1950s*.' It is a work in progress and, for me at least, it is still an unanswered question.



*** MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!**