

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



## What's new with THEN/HiER?



\* **Jan Haskings-Winner** participated in a panel with other history teachers in the TVO program *The Agenda with Steve Paikin: Teaching History in Ontario*. Panel members discussed whether today's students care about history, the current state of history education and their craft of explaining the past.

\* **Viviane Gosselin** has published "Civic Museography, Porous Narratives and the Choir Effect: *Sex Talk in the City* at the Museum of Vancouver" in the first issue of *THEMA*, a free online bilingual journal of the Musées de la civilisation in Québec City. This issue's theme is *Knowledge Sharing and Exchange in Times of Cultural Democracy*.



## THEN/HiER Publication Prize

THEN/HiER's annual publication prize recognizes Canadian scholarship and is awarded for a landmark publication in history education in either English or French. Books, articles, and chapters published and dissertations completed in 2013 are eligible for the 2014 prize. Nominations may be made by publishers, journal editors, or individuals. The deadline for this year's nominations is June 30. More details and application instructions.

## Blog Contest

The winners of our *Blog Contest* have now been chosen. First prize went to Cynthia Wallace-Casey for her article *Keeping it Real*, which discusses the debate about changing the name of the Canadian Museum of Civilization to the Canadian Museum of History. Second prize winner Mary Chaktsiris wrote *Renewed History Wars: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Commemoration in Canada*, which addresses the issue of commemoration in Canadian history education. Congratulations to both!

You can access other contest entries, and more than 300 blog posts dating back to 2011, by clicking on **Blog** on our website's homepage or through the **Projects** tab in the main menu.

## New Teaching Resource



We have recently added a link on our website to a new teaching resource for teaching world history, *Travels of the Lute: A Digital Humanities Resource for Teaching and Learning World History*. Contributors to the project come from different academic backgrounds and musical traditions, but they share an interest in creating resources that will help teachers and students at the high school, college, and university levels teach and learn world history more effectively.

## Approaching the Past

**Toronto** - On April 30, the ATP event at the Market Gallery featured photographer Nir Bareket who spoke about his exhibit *My Eyes Have Seen: Celebrating 50 Years of Photography*, which documents the history of the City of Toronto. The exhibit features part of a larger collection housed at the Toronto Archives and the Ontario Jewish Archives. Bareket spoke about himself as a historical artifact, the problematic nature of photographic evidence and the love he has for the topics he photographed.

**Vancouver** - *Policing in Aboriginal and Chinese Communities* took place on May 8 at the UBC Learning Exchange with special guests from the Vancouver Police Department: Inspector Mario Giardini, Diversity and Aboriginal Policing Section, and Wes Fung, Neighbourhood Police Officer, Chinese Community Policing Centre. Those in attendance participated in an informal discussion of the history of and issues in policing in these two Vancouver communities.



## What's new with our partners?

\* **The Association for Canadian Studies (ACS)** in collaboration with the University of Prince Edward Island and the PEI Social Studies Teachers' Association will be holding a national conference on teaching and communicating the history of Canada titled *(Re)Making Confederation: (Re)Imagining Canada*, November 21-22, 2014 in Charlottetown, PEI. The conference will examine effective methods to engage students in Canadian history and social studies and address current issues regarding the relevance of history in our daily lives. In conjunction with the conference, *The Guardians of Confederation*, a project of the Canadian Studies Programme at UPEI, is holding a video contest for students across Canada to discuss the question: "If you have the opportunity to form a new version of Canada, what would it look like?" Winners will be invited to attend a conference of young Canadian leaders during the ACS/UPEI/PEI-SSTA conference. The contest deadline is June 30.



\* **The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC<sup>2</sup>)** offers resources and sample lesson plans to bring multiple perspectives to the teaching of Canadian history in relation to the experiences of three communities: Ukrainian Canadians, Chinese Canadians and South Asian Canadians. Learn more about *Pivotal Voices*.

\* **The Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN)** has published a three-part series titled *Open Content and Open Image Sharing: A Guide For Museums*. Part One, *What is Open Content?*, provides an introduction to the topic; Part Two, *Culture Snackers*, talks about the issue of unauthorized use of online images and steps to prevent it; and Part Three, *How to Provide Open Content*, explores ways for museums to incorporate open content into their activities.



Image taken from Sharing Creative Works slideshow by Alex Roberts, Rebecca Rojer, & John Phillips ([http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Sharing\\_Creative\\_Works\\_15](http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Sharing_Creative_Works_15))

\* **The British Columbia Historical Federation (BCHF)** is holding its Annual Conference in partnership with the Surrey Historical Society on June 6 and 7 in Cloverdale, BC. The conference includes lectures and a book fair featuring publications by authors of BC history, genealogical groups and historical societies. There is also an optional trip to the Historic Stewart Farm and ride on the Interurban Railway. More information and to register.

## Graduate Student Committees

This past month the Anglophone Graduate Student Committee's *Teaching the Past* blog focused on gender history in honour of The Berkshire Conference on the History of Women which took place in Toronto from May 22 to 25. Guest blogs from conference participants include *Rural Women and Early Photography* by Jacqueline McIsaac, and *Jodey Nurse's Reflections on Historical Practice*. I also wrote an article titled *Deconstructing Museums at the Berks*. Scott Pollock contemplated the "unfinished transformation" of inclusive history in terms of gender, while Heather McGregor made readers aware of a Nunavut-based truth and reconciliation commission. In addition, Nathan Moes discussed what chess has to do with history teaching. Plans for next year's *Approaching the Past* series in Toronto are also underway, with prospects of exciting new community partnerships. Stay tuned for all the details this fall! Have a wonderful summer! Contact Kate Zankowicz.



Kate Zankowicz

The Francophone Graduate Student Committee is growing again! We are pleased to welcome new member Philippe Denis, doctoral student in museology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). Please have a look at his profile to learn about his unique university career. He will without a doubt be a great asset to our network. On the blog *Enseigner l'histoire*, you will find some very interesting new articles. First, Marc-André Lauzon demonstrates how he applies the concept of historical consciousness in his teaching practice; this is the text that he submitted for the Governor General's Award in history teaching. Chantal Rivard talks about using monuments in history class, and finally Frédéric Yelle offers a critical review of Robert Martineau's latest work on history teaching. Congratulations to Frédéric for getting a bursary to attend the Historical Thinking Summer Institute that will take place this year in Vancouver! Contact Marie-Hélène Brunet.



Marie-Hélène Brunet

## Research Snapshots

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

**Samantha Cutrara, PhD**  
Senior Coordinator, Educational Programming and Exhibitions  
Archives of Ontario



### Meaningful Learning in History

*"Miss, can I say that the perspectives of being home during World War I were both downtrodden and nostalgic?"*

*I paused. I was just about to walk away. This student had just asked me the definition of 'downtrodden' and by the way he stared past me, seemed detached, nodded absently; by the way he had his head down during my presentation, by the way he reluctantly moved to his group, by the way he resisted getting the supplies from the activity, I thought he wasn't paying attention. I thought he was going to spend the whole work period slowly working his way through one of the many letters I provided and not be bothered to complete the task. I thought he was a lost cause.*

*But then, from what I saw as fog, from what I interpreted as disinterest, from what I judged as a waste, I realized I was wrong. I saw that he was not only paying attention, I saw he had been thinking. I saw that he had been making connections. I saw that he had been interpreting what he read with what he knew and created an insightful, and touching, thesis statement about what he thought home was like for a World War I soldier and his family back home. I saw that he learned and I saw that he was able to make meaningful connections.*

I have been a history educator for 15 years, with a research focus for 10 of those years, and my interest has always been on students and whether they are learning history worthy of their time and respect. My work is about creating opportunities for students to learn meaningfully with and about historical narratives. Through both my research and practice, I am interested in making students and their meaningful learning the focus of conversation about history education and insisting that their voices set the tone for what can happen in the classroom today and in the future.

I define meaningful learning in history as learning that has significance to students' lives now and in the future, both inside and outside of school, and with interpretations of the past that align with their own sense of familial or community history in and for the wider world. During my dissertation research (York University, 2012) I found that students have a desire to learn history meaningfully but their past experiences have often limited the opportunities for them to learn to their full potential. During my research I saw that even those teachers who wanted to provide meaningful learning opportunities for their students often pigeon-holed students in "curricular roles" that treated students as rote learners instead of engaged thinkers, thus limiting the opportunities for meaningful engagement with history.

As other researchers before me, I echo the findings that history education needs to be facilitated by active, involved, and collaborative instruction that values students' contributions at the very core of the process. Led by educators interested in providing "critical care" to their students, this instruction must feature students' negotiation of meaning with historical content in a patient and supportive class environment. I have found that, more than content or instruction, meaningful learning with historical narratives is based on a relational interaction between teacher, student, and their learning, and that teachers are the driving force in creating a classroom community in which this can take place.

The implications of this research indicate that instead of solely focusing on content or instruction, history education research has to attend to the ways that teaching and learning are personal interactions that have an influence on how students (and teachers) come to know themselves, each other, their present, and their past. Too great a focus can be paid on better content or instruction, when attention needs to be paid to ways to support teachers in coming to know and teach for the students in their classes.



Since finishing my dissertation, I have had the privilege of applying these practices and principles to an education strategy for a province-wide organization focused on preserving and presenting the past. In this role I not only run programmes for students in both elementary and secondary schools, but also workshops for teachers and teacher candidates on how to apply principles of student-led inquiry in their history class. With every workshop and every student I work with, these learnings are once again practiced and refined and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to continue this work and make it relevant to classroom practice.

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