

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



What's new with THEN/HiER?

* **Three THEN/HiER Executive Board Members** presented papers at the "School vs. Memory?" conference in Prague, October 10 and 11:

Jocelyn Létourneau *Start from Memory to Get Over It: A Pragmatic Approach to Teaching History to Kids.*

Stéphane Lévesque with Jean-Philippe Croteau *French-Canadians, National Identity and Historical Consciousness: Learning from the Views of Franco-Ontarians.*

Peter Seixas *History Meets Life: Historical Consciousness in the School History Classroom*, keynote address for the Conflict: Education session.

* **Several THEN/HiER Executive Board Members** presented at the Canadian History of Education (CHEA) conference, which took place from October 23 to 26 in Saskatoon:

Penney Clark *Visual Metaphors: Curriculum in Action in BC and Educational Publishing in British Columbia: A Case Study of Nationalism and Regionalism.*

Amy von Heyking *Schooling as "Risky" Business: An Examination of Changing Discourse Regarding the Vulnerability of Children in School Policy and Regulations.*

THEN/HiER also had a session on the recently published *Becoming a History Teacher* (University of Toronto Press, 2014), part of our book series. The session included **Penney**

Clark, Ruth Sandwell, Alan Sears, and Amy von Heyking. A good time was had by all at the subsequent book launch!

Heather McGregor, Anglophone Graduate Student Coordinator, presented *Elders as Educators and Experts for Nunavut Schools: A Brief History*, and with Wyn Millar, *Whether and Whither? The Territories in the History of Canadian Education.*

THEN/HiER member Theodore Christou, Queen's University, received the CHEA Founders' Prize for English Language Book for *Progressive Education: Revisioning and Reframing Ontario's Public Schools, 1919-1942* (University of Toronto Press, 2012).

The next biennial conference will take place in Waterloo, Ontario in October of 2016.

* **Stéphane Lévesque**, Director of the Virtual History Lab at the University of Ottawa, is pleased to announce that a new free curriculum resource titled *The Life of European Jews in Hitler's Time*, which promotes historical thinking inquiry, has been developed in collaboration with the Azrieli Foundation and is available on The Virtual Historian website.



NEW DIRECTIONS
IN ASSESSING
HISTORICAL THINKING

Edited by Kadriye Ercikan and Peter Seixas

THEN/HiER Book Series

We are very excited about the imminent publication of the fourth title in the THEN/HiER book series, *New Directions in Assessing Historical Thinking* (Routledge), edited by Kadriye Ercikan and Peter Seixas, which should be available in early 2015. The collection includes contributions from leading international history education researchers and assessment experts.

Approaching the Past - Vancouver

October 23 was an evening of presentations and discussion about the history of Main Street and the importance of the Brewery Creek area in Vancouver, with talks by Elizabeth Walker, author of *Street Names of Vancouver*, and Bruce MacDonald, author of *Vancouver: A Visual History*. The event took place at the Cascade Room in the heart of Mount Pleasant. Thanks to the local Red Truck Brewery for donating refreshments to the event!

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Penney Clark, University of British Columbia

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Catherine Duquette, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi
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Stéphane Lévesque, University of Ottawa

Ruth Sandwell, OISE/University of Toronto
Alan Sears, University of New Brunswick
Peter Seixas, University of British Columbia
Amy von Heyking, University of Lethbridge

What's new with our partners?

* **The Canadian Museums Association (CMA)** offers annual awards to recognize excellence within the museum sector:

- Awards of Outstanding Achievement (in six categories)
- Award of Distinguished Service
- Fellows of the CMA
- Barbara A. Tyler Award in Museum Leadership
- Dr. Shirley L. Thomson Young Curators Award

The following awards are presented in partnership with other organizations:

- The International Council of Museums (ICOM) Canada's International Achievement Award
- Museum Volunteer Award, in collaboration with the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums (CFFM)

The deadline for nominations for all awards is November 15.

* **Canada's History** has posted an interview it conducted with James Dashuk, author of *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*, which won the Sir John A. Macdonald Prize of the Canadian Historical Association (CHA), also a THEN/HiER partner. The prize is awarded annually to the best scholarly book in Canadian history.

* **The Montréal Holocaust Memorial Centre (MHMC)** is offering a workshop on November 4 for pre- and in-service teachers using one of the MHMC tools entitled *Exploring the Evidence: The Holocaust, Cambodian Genocide, and Canadian Intervention in Cambodia*. Teachers will have the opportunity to use this educational tool specifically designed to encourage students to think about genocide, human rights and challenges related to the intervention throughout the history of the Holocaust and the Cambodian genocide. For those unable to attend, a teachers' guide and student materials are available on the Centre's website.

Graduate Student Committees

This month the Anglophone Graduate Student Committee collaborated with our francophone colleagues to submit a panel proposal to the 2015 annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association (CHA) in Ottawa. We hope to feature our interdisciplinary graduate research in a bilingual presentation addressing the question: "Why should history education research matter to historians?" Wish us luck! I also attended a lecture at the Vancouver Institute on the 50th anniversary of the underwater archeology division of Parks Canada, which was of course capped by the incredible discovery of the *HMS Erebus*. Marc-André Bernier was an engaging speaker, sharing many great stories from the past, and about the recent Franklin investigation.

I also attended several events sponsored by the UBC Polar Club and Green College Arctic-Wise speakers series on the history of sovereignty issues in Arctic Canada, as well as how to mobilize research from UBC to northern audiences - perhaps using a model like THEN/HiER's website! Lastly, I attended the CHEA conference in Saskatoon - it was great to see many of you there, and hear about your recent research. Contact Heather McGregor.



Heather McGregor



Geneviève Goulet, Marc-André Lauzon and Frédéric Yelle at AQEUS

In addition to participating in the Association québécoise pour l'enseignement en univers social (AQEUS) and the Société des professeurs d'histoire du Québec (SPHQ) conferences this past month, the Francophone Graduate Student Committee has posted several articles on our blog *Enseigner l'histoire*. Geneviève Goulet muses about possible links between the intellectual operations proposed in the Québec history curriculum and historical thinking concepts. Catherine Déry talks about her participation in the Historical Thinking Summer Institute and its impact on how she views history in terms of her teaching. She also connects this to the activity that Frédéric Yelle spoke about in his last blog. Philippe Denis has initiated a two-part series on Montréal cemeteries: what can they teach us about our history? In my article, I recommend rediscovering historical fiction through the novels of Jean-Pierre Charland. Finally, Marc-André Lauzon talks about a draft Quebec and Canadian history curriculum presented by the Ministère de l'éducation, du loisir et du sport (MELS) at the AQEUS conference. Happy reading!

Contact Marie-Hélène Brunet.



Marie-Hélène Brunet

Research Snapshots

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

Stuart Foster, Professor
History in Education, Institute of Education
University of London



History Education in England: National Programs, National Impact?

As a teacher, teacher-educator and researcher, I have been involved in history education for more than 30 years. I have written a few books, published articles, presented at international conferences and taught in universities in the USA and England. I consider myself very lucky to have had the opportunity to devote much of my working life to something I care passionately about. Most importantly, I feel privileged to have worked with and learned from so many outstanding colleagues nationally and internationally.

In truth, however, I have never been sure that anything I have ever said or written has had any positive impact on the field. I've often wondered if I've made any difference at all! In recent years, however, I have been very fortunate to lead two large-scale national history programs aimed at teachers and learners in schools across England. Armed with significant budgets and staffed by experienced and very able colleagues, these two programs have the potential to make important contributions to how young people encounter and learn from history.

The first, established in 2008 and originally named the Holocaust Education Development Program (HEDP), was granted "centre status" in 2012 by the University of London and is now the Institute of Education's Centre for Holocaust Education. Since inception it has received almost \$10 million US in funding and now employs 14 full-time staff. A vital aspect of our work is that it is informed by the latest scholarship and ongoing research into teaching and learning. Accordingly, based on the responses of more than 2,000 teachers, we published a landmark study into the state of Holocaust education in England, *Teaching About the Holocaust in English Secondary Schools: An Empirical Study of National Trends, Perspectives and Practice* (2009), which provided the stimulus to develop a high-quality, high impact teacher development program for teachers across the country to specifically address some of the issues and challenges identified. More than 4,000 teachers from every secondary state school in England have now benefitted from our education programs through courses which range from one-day professional development seminars to participation in an in-depth MA module, *The Holocaust in the Curriculum*. The Centre has also developed an extensive network of "Beacon Schools" to ensure that a meaningful and reciprocal relationship between research, scholarship and practice is sustained and ongoing. Next year, based on the responses of 8,000 teenagers, we will produce a groundbreaking study -- the world's largest ever -- of students' knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust, which will undoubtedly help to shape and improve how it is taught and learned about.

The second program I lead as executive director provides the opportunity for a minimum of two students and one teacher from the more than 4,000 state funded secondary schools in England to visit the battlefields on the Western Front in France and Belgium between 2014 and 2019. The \$8.5 million US *First World War Battlefield Tours Programme* is key to the Government's plans to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. Understandably, the centerpiece of the program is the 4-day, 3-night visit to France and Belgium. It is, however, important to emphasize that for three reasons we see the program as more than an opportunity to offer a standard school trip.

First, we believe it offers an authentic and exciting opportunity to think critically about the most effective and meaningful use of historic sites by teachers. Secondly, it is underpinned by the obligation that participating schools carry out a genuine historical enquiry that requires teachers and pupils to engage in extensive pre-tour preparation supported by online professional development modules developed by our team. Accordingly, teachers and pupils have, for example, focused on finding out more about the war's impact on individual soldiers, family members, or communities. This pre-tour research allows students to visit sites with a clear focus and provides them with a deeper and more informed understanding of the war, its conduct, consequences and significance. Furthermore, using these support materials and other resources, some schools have engaged in broader enquiries that, for example, look to understand the contribution of troops from the Empire and Commonwealth. Thirdly, we recognize that as the tour is a feature of a government-inspired commemoration, it forms part of the fabric of cultural politics, historical consciousness and collective memory. Although popular and academic debates and controversies over how the war should be remembered and understood currently abound, we believe that our program should not shy away from them. Rather, we encourage schools to engage in them, explore divergent historical interpretations and critically examine the evidence upon which certain claims about the past are made.



Students at Canadian War Memorial, Vimy Ridge

Although each program has a different focus, they share important features. Above all, they demand that young people do not see the past as something dead and gone and totally irrelevant to their lives. Rather, it requires active enquiry, critical engagement and thoughtful evaluation. Whether or not these programs will ultimately have an impact on how young people encounter and understand the past will be for others to judge. To date, however, the signs are encouraging.

*** MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!**