

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

## What's new with THEN/HiER?

\* **David Scott, THEN/HiER Graduate Student Committee Member, and doctoral candidate at the University of Calgary**, has recently returned from a research trip to the Universidade Federal de São Carlos in Brazil, funded through a bursary from the SSHRC Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement. He worked under the supervision of Dr. Petronilha Gonçalves e Silva, a leading international scholar in the area of ethno-racial relations. The intent was to gain insights into how curricular initiatives in Brazil recognize and address perspectives and histories of African-Brazilians, and how this might be applied to K-12 social studies teaching in Alberta in terms of issues for Aboriginal peoples in that province. During his stay David gave several lectures on scholarly developments in North America related to teaching history from the perspectives of groups who have been traditionally marginalized in schools.



David Scott with Dr. Petronilha Gonçalves e Silva



### **THEN/HiER Publication Award**

Congratulations to Vincent Boutonnet, professor at the Université du Québec en Outaouais, who was awarded the 2014 prize for his dissertation, *Les ressources didactiques : typologie d'usages en lien avec la méthode historique et l'intervention éducative d'enseignants d'histoire au secondaire*, which he completed at the Université de Montréal, 2013 (Marc-André Éthier, supervisor). Boutonnet's work provides a comprehensive account of teachers' perceptions and uses of textbooks in the teaching of history. The study is an essential contribution to our understanding of history education in the context of Québec curricular reform.



### **Funding Programs**

#### *Upcoming Deadlines*

Through THEN/HiER's Visiting Doctoral Student Program, students are provided funding to engage with students and faculty members in programs at other universities for up to two weeks. The deadline to apply is March 2, 2015.



THEN/HiER is providing bursaries to cover airfare for ten participants to attend the 2015 Historical Thinking Summer Institute, which will take place at the Museum of Vancouver from July 6 to 11. The deadline to apply for a bursary is May 15. More information about the Institute will be available shortly on the Historical Thinking Project website. Registration for the Institute opens on March 1.

### **Feature Blog**

Interested in how to incorporate current art, architecture and design into the larger themes of the social studies curriculum? Want to explore how museums and art galleries can further democratize their collections so that they are more accessible to schools? Check out UBC PhD student Stephanie Anderson Redmond's very popular blog. *The Power of Real-Time Art to Transform the History Curriculum* features public art, political activism, and social studies connections.

## What's new with our partners?



From *Arctic Researches and Life Among the Esquimaux: Being the Narrative of an Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin in the Years 1860, 1861, and 1862* by Charles Francis Hall (1865). New York: Harper and Brothers. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

\* **The Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History (GUMICH)** is pleased to announce that the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University has joined the team to produce its latest mystery on the disappearance of Sir John Franklin's 1845 expedition. *The Franklin Mystery: Life and Death in the Arctic* website will be launched on June 4, 2015 in Ottawa.

\* **The British Columbia Historical Federation (BCHF)** has instituted a new award category to recognize authors of local and community history. The *Community History Award* will be added to its annual historical writing awards in 2015.

\* **The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC<sup>2</sup>)** has posted a free video in its *Critical Discussions* collection which explains with interesting visuals and specific examples how to systematically integrate the skill and content dimensions of curricula to enhance students' understanding and increase their ability to think and learn more effectively. View the video here.



## Graduate Student Committees



Heather McGregor

Happy Holidays to all from the Anglophone Graduate Student Committee! Looking back on 2014, our clever, talented and resourceful graduate students have created a great range of blogs on *Teaching the Past*. Thanks to all those who contributed their ideas, links, and critical questions from history education in schools, universities, research projects, museums, archives, public spaces and more. Professors and instructors: consider how you could utilize and increase awareness of our blogs by encouraging your students to check them out, follow their links, comment on the blogs, or write their own! I encourage everyone to profile your work on the blog (even if you are not a graduate student), so please contact me with your ideas. We look forward to kicking off another year of great contributions in January – stay tuned! Contact Heather McGregor.

Another year is ending and 2015 is already at our doorstep. Are you a Master's or doctoral student passionate about history education? Would you like to join a dynamic team with members from all over Canada to share your research and connect with academics throughout the country? Here are five reasons to join the Francophone Graduate Student Committee! Please also consult our blog *Enseigner l'histoire* to find various posts on a multitude of subjects related to history education. This month Catherine Déry has written a review of the recently published *Faire aimer et apprendre l'histoire et la géographie au primaire et au secondaire* (Éditions MultiMondes, 2014) to which several of our members contributed. As this is our final bulletin of 2014, we would like to thank Frédéric Yelle who actively participated on the committee this past year and has decided to concentrate his full-time attention on his studies and his secondary teaching. Happy holidays to all! Contact Marie-Hélène Brunet.



Marie-Hélène Brunet

## Research Snapshots

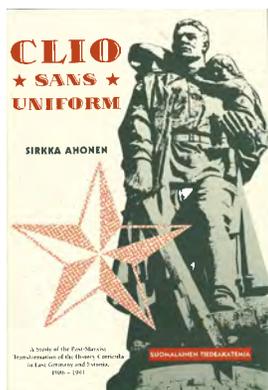
This section of our monthly e-Bulletin highlights our members' research projects.

**Sirkka Ahonen**  
**Professor Emeritus**  
**Faculty of Education, University of Helsinki**



### Where History is Not Bunk

My first experience of a “history war” is from Finland during the Cold War. In 1980, in the yearbook of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, an American colleague analysed Finnish history textbooks, coming to the conclusion that they were “finlandised.” The term “finlandisation” referred to a politically conditioned self-censorship among the Finns, who, as losers in the Second World War, were cautious not to provoke “the bear,” the Soviet Union, by any criticism. The term offended Finns, who regarded “finlandisation” as a justified pragmatic way of protecting Finland. I responded to the Georg Eckert Institute and accused the American colleague of educational gunboat diplomacy.



My second challenge came with the collapse of the Soviet Union around 1990. What would the post-communist societies do with history without the umbrella of Marxist determinism? I went to the Baltic countries, where the old history textbooks had become obsolete overnight, and observed the politics of history education. A quest for “the truth about the past” had been one of the banners of the anti-Soviet demonstrators of the 1980s. “The truth” was now based on the ideology of nation-building. History mattered as much as before, but it was used to legitimise the new regime and denounce the old one. Using Estonian history education as partial evidence, I wrote the book *Clio Sans Uniform: A Study of the Post-Marxist Transformation of the History Curricula in East Germany and Estonia, 1986-1991* (Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1992). Soon, an all-European survey into the historical consciousness of young people, *Youth and History: A Comparative European Survey on Historical Consciousness and Political Attitudes among Adolescents*, edited by Magne Angvik and Bodo von Borries (Körber-Stiftung, 1997), revealed that in Estonia a history war had broke out between ethnic Estonians and ethnic Russians. The latter felt their historical identity renounced by the new regime.

My third opportunity to look at history education in a place where history was not “bunk” but an essential tenet of collective identity was a job I was offered to teach history in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina from 2006 to 2008. I went there with the purpose of having a grassroots experience of the post-conflict use of history. In fact, the experience made me realize that contradictions in history were less a cause than an effect of the tragic war that lasted from 1992 to 1995. Bosnia-Herzegovina was a failed state after the 1995 peace settlement, as the state had no means to persuade the parties in the conflict, namely Muslims, Croats and Serbs, to conduct a healing dialogue about the past. Instead, they indulged in memorialising the mutually conducted wartime atrocities and in fostering historical analogies and mythical amplifications of them. The schools were ethnically segregated, and if not, at a minimum “the national subjects” were taught separately, which meant that history was looked at from idiosyncratic points of view. As the result of an active intervention by the international community, the textbooks were cleansed from explicit hate language, but multiperspectivalism was not applied. The three ethnic communities accused each other of lying about the past.

Concerned for the perpetuation of the conflict by the misuse of history, I compared Bosnia to other post-conflict societies using the examples of the Finnish civil war of 1918 and South-African apartheid from 1960 to 1994. This resulted in the book *Coming to Terms with a Dark Past: How Post-Conflict Societies Deal with History* (Lang, 2012), using the Finnish case to show that time does not suffice to heal wounds, while the South African case proves the benefits of urgent reconciliatory history politics.

My didactical conclusions are that, firstly, classrooms are a vital forum for a healing dialogue about the past; and secondly, vernacular memories and cultural memorialising of the past need to be embraced in history classrooms in order to avoid divisive “double talk” about history.



**Happy Holidays, everyone!**