

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

What's new with THEN/HiER?

**CONTESTING CANADA'S FUTURE
L'AVENIR DU CANADA: DÉBATS
ET CONTESTATIONS**



* **Penney Clark, Jocelyn Létourneau, Stéphane Lévesque, and Ruth Sandwell** presented at the conference *Contesting Canada's Future*, which took place at Trent University on May 21 and 22. Their panel, titled "Dialogue Across Chasms: History and History Education in Canada," included the following presentations, respectively:

- History Education in Canada: It's Complicated ...
- Take Youth Out of Mythhistories: A Pragmatic Approach to Historical Education in Canada
- History in the Schools: Views from Prospective Teachers Across Canada
- History as an Academic Subject in Universities

Raphaël Gani, THEN/HiER member, served as panel discussant. Other THEN/HiER members also presented papers at the conference:

- Consolidation, Bureaucracy and the Public Schools: The Triumph of the Modern Bureaucratic Education State, 1920-1993 (**Paul Bennett**, Saint Mary's)
- Unsettling Canada's Schooling History: Settler Colonialism, Capitalism and the Rise of State Schooling in British Columbia, 1849-1925 (**Sean Carleton**, Trent)
- Debating History, Heritage and Commemoration: The Ontario Curriculum's Turn to Historical Thinking (**Theodore Christou**, Queen's)
- Was the Promise of Canadian Studies Fulfilled? Examining the Inclusion of Diverse Voices in History Course Studies in Ontario Schools, 1970s-1990s (**Rose Fine-Meyer**, OISE/UofT)
- Wendat, Schooling and the Creation of the Canadas: Social and Political Networks at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century (**Thomas Peace**, Huron University College)
- Teaching in Museums for a Difficult Future: Canadian Nature as Pedagogical Object at the Royal Ontario Museum (**Kate Zankowicz**, Independent Scholar)

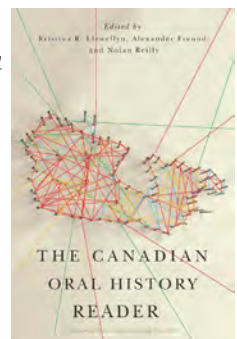
* **Kristina Llewellyn, THEN/HiER member**, is pleased to announce that *The Canadian Oral History Reader*, which she co-edited with Alexander Freund and Nolan Reilly, is now available. THEN/HiER contributed to the book's publication through its Small Projects Grants program. McGill-Queen's University Press is offering a discount for online orders.

Historical Thinking Summer Institute Bursaries

THEN/HiER will provide bursaries to the following Historical Thinking Summer Institute participants:

- Carles Anguera Cerarols, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
- Dan Bowyer, Peel District School Board, Ontario
- Julie Couture, Anne Frank House, Amsterdam
- Tom De Paepe, Ghent University, Belgium
- Alim Fakirani, Ismaili Tariqua and Religious Education Board, Montréal
- Luis Filipe, Toronto District School Board, Ontario
- Stefania Gargioni, University of Oxford, UK
- Margaret Hoogeveen, Independent Educational Consultant, Toronto
- Brydie Huffman, Juno Beach Centre Association, Burlington, Ontario
- Tori McNish, Musée Héritage Museum, Alberta
- Jennifer Young, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York

The institute will take place in Vancouver from July 6 to 11.



Feature Blog

This month *Teaching the Past* covered a wide range of topics. A particularly interesting piece is part two of Chris Pedersen's blog series, *A gap between the present and the past? Historical distance and history education*. It offers an interesting discussion of the concept of historical distance and its implications for the study of history.



Vimy Ridge Memorial WWI Mother Canada overlooks the Somme, closer By Cbone (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

What's new with our partners?

* **The Museums Association of Saskatchewan (MAS)** has co-published a report with Heritage Saskatchewan titled *The Ecomuseum Concept: A Saskatchewan Perspective on 'Museums Without Walls'*, which explains the concept of ecomuseum and shows how communities can enrich their living heritage.



* **The British Columbia Social Studies Teachers' Association (BCSSTA)**

has announced the theme and keynote speaker for its 2015 conference in Vancouver, which will be sponsored in part by **Canada's History**, another THEN/HiER partner. The theme is *Living in a Conflicted World*, and the keynote will be delivered by Dr. Samantha Nutt, a medical doctor and a founder of the renowned international humanitarian organization War Child. Workshop proposals are now being accepted and exhibitor registration is open.



* **The Institute for World History** has links to several teaching resources on its website related to teaching world history for humanities and social sciences teachers and post-secondary instructors. Key resources include *World History for Us All*, *Bridging World History*, *World History Matters*, and *World History Connected*. Links to new resources will be added on a regular basis.



Graduate Student Committees



Scott Pollock

This month was a hectic one for many Anglophone Graduate Student Committee members. Aside from preparing for the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) and Canadian Historical Association (CHA) annual conferences, several members will be attending THEN/HiER's symposium on June 4 and 5 in Ottawa. *Finding Franklin: New Approaches to Teaching Canadian History* will bring together historians, teachers, teacher educators and other researchers to discuss the latest addition to the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History website, *The Franklin Mystery: Life and Death in the Arctic*, as well as new curriculum units being developed by the Nunavut Department of Education on the Franklin mystery. These exciting (and timely) new resources are sure to be of interest to members of the THEN/HiER community. Contact Scott Pollock.

Don't miss our bilingual panel in Ottawa in a few days! Six students from THEN/HiER's Anglophone and Francophone Graduate Student Committees will be coming to Ottawa to talk about their research projects at the CHA Annual Conference on June 3 at 10:15 am. We will address the question: *Why should history education research matter to historians?*

Don't miss this event, which will be facilitated by the University of Ottawa's Stéphane Lévesque. More details about the event are on our website, Facebook and Twitter. Please join us! A few of our partners in Québec are developing interesting themes for their upcoming fall conferences. For example, the Société des professeurs d'histoire du Québec (SPHQ) will hold its conference in Orford on October 22 and 23 on the theme of the 75th anniversary of women's right to vote in Québec. Check our website regularly for more information and to keep abreast of various opportunities to present the results of your research. Contact Marie-Hélène Brunet.



Marie-Hélène Brunet

Research Snapshots

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

**Linda Levstik, Professor
Social Studies/Humanities Education
University of Kentucky**



Objects as Evidence

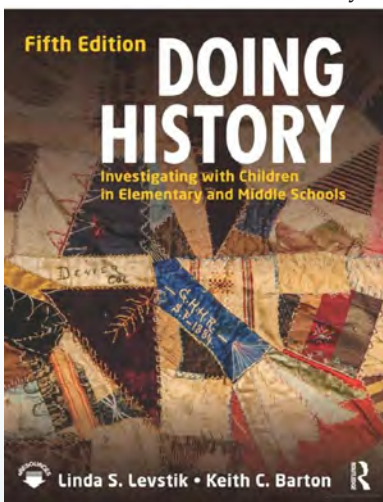
Recently, two seventh graders described school history as “15 topics and they are the same things every year.” In their experience, history “never [included] what happened with the poor, or even the medium ... average person.” A pilot inquiry into the experiences of people living in an historic “working poor” neighborhood changed all that and allowed my colleague, archaeologist Gwynn Henderson, and I to investigate the impact of archaeological inquiry on students’ thinking about historical and contemporary civic agency.

Our study rests upon the same premise as my earlier work, that an important measure of a democratic society lies in the degree to which its members exercise individual and collective agency in informed, intelligent, and humane ways. I see historical inquiry as crucial preparation for such personal and civic agency, but only to the extent it engages students in examining the breadth of what it has meant to be human and humane (or inhumane) across time and place. As a result, I am interested in exploring ways to move beyond what Ayers, in his book *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: The Civil War in the Heart of America, 1859-1864* (Norton and Co., 2004), identifies as “history for comfort,” to a history curriculum that investigates the historical roots of democratic dilemmas and examines differential agency in responding to these dilemmas. At present, I see far too little of this happening in test-stressed schools.

It could be otherwise.

In some classrooms it *is* otherwise and in some of these, archaeology offers a template for inquiry into the lives of otherwise marginalized people. My recent work with Gwynn Henderson provides a case in point. As part of piloting *Investigating Shelter: Shotgun House*, a supplementary science and social studies curriculum unit, we examined some of the ways in which archaeological and more traditional documentary sources might support students’ understanding of differential agency. Fifth, sixth and seventh grade students, primarily from rural communities with low socioeconomic status, investigated the dismantling of Davis Bottom in Lexington, Kentucky, the first integrated neighborhood in a nearby city. Prior to demolition of the neighborhood, archaeologists retrieved as much evidence of the community’s past as they could. Archaeological data on buildings and infrastructure, oral histories from surviving community members and public records including census data and Sanborn maps provided glimpses of a complicated history that combined issues of race, class, urban development and human agency.

Where our previous research focused on how archaeological study might inform students’ thinking about the *deep past* – the time prior to written records – this study explored the historical significance of a relatively contemporary (1930 to present) community. We were interested in students’ attention to individual and collective agency as they identified ways in which the built environment suggested how residents adapted to and were influenced by harsh economic and social conditions. Students identified elements of their own lives and issues in their own communities similar to those they examined in Davis Bottom. Some students told us that they understood life in Davis Bottom because they, too, knew what it was like to “make do” in the face of economic limitations. Others expressed admiration for a community that appeared remarkably well integrated, at least as evidenced by cross-comparisons among maps, census records and the built environment.



In exploring an archaeological approach to studying the past, we capitalized on a resource that surrounds students on a daily basis. Archaeological study called attention to the extraordinary variety of ordinary lives and included students’ own experiences in the panoply of history. Perhaps most importantly, an emphasis on human/object entanglement invited attention to a powerful interplay of intelligence, innovation and agency, influencing how events transpired as well as how they reverberated (and reverberate) in the present. As one of the seventh graders explained, the people in Davis Bottom had an important resource, the “biggest thing,” their ability to build an integrated community in the dark shadow of a segregated city.

*** MORE TO COME NEXT MONTH!**