



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
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## **FACULTY OF EDUCATION THESIS EXAMINATION**

# **Dale Martelli**

**For the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Empathetic and Transformative Engagement in Historical  
Understanding: A Design-Based Exploration of an Analytical-  
Hermeneutic Approach to Teaching History in the Classroom**

Thursday, December 15, 2022  
SFU Burnaby  
Room 8620.1, Education Building/via Zoom  
at 10:00 AM

### **Examining Committee**

Chair:	Dr. Cary Campbell Simon Fraser University
Senior Supervisor:	Dr. Kevin O'Neill
Supervisor:	Dr. Mark Leier
Supervisor:	Dr. Nicolas Fillion
Internal Examiner:	Dr. Stephen Smith
External Examiner:	Dr. Scott Metzger, Associate Professor Penn State University

Contact Faculty of Education, Graduate Studies for information [www.sfu.ca/education/gs](http://www.sfu.ca/education/gs)

## **Abstract**

The recent revision to the social studies curriculum in British Columbia is built around Seixas's and Morton's "Big Six" historical thinking concepts. The Big Six, however, omit some significant pedagogical objectives valued by teachers, including that of helping students to care about the past. This dissertation presents the Historical Process Constructs (HPCs), a hermeneutic teaching tool designed by the author in his practice as a secondary history teacher. The HPCs are designed to guide students in historical interpretation while keeping their pre-judgments in play, and to promote empathetic and transformative judgements in interpreting traces of the past. The philosophical and historiographical underpinnings of the HPCs are discussed, and it is situated in relation to select current literature on the teaching and learning of history.

A design-based research study is then presented which examines 162 students' work with the HPCs in the context of a document-based inquiry carried out in 8 Vancouver-area history classrooms with four volunteer teachers. A variety of student data, including pre-surveys, responses to the questions that compose the HPCs themselves, and post-interviews with a small number of participating students, were analyzed inductively as part of a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods research design. The empirical portion of the study provides suggestive evidence that the HPCs may help students gain a deeper understanding of the complex nature of historical interpretation, and may prompt empathy and transformative engagement in the interpretation of historical traces. Importantly, the qualitative data analyses produced as part of the study provide the basis upon which assessment instruments can be developed that would support stronger causal claims about the value of the HPCs as a teaching tool.

**Keywords:** historical interpretation; analytical hermeneutics; Paul Ricoeur; historical thinking concepts; Design Based Research; empathetic and transformative engagement

## **Education**

**PhD, Faculty of Education Educational Theory and Practice Program, Simon Fraser University** (Defense: 15 December 2022)

Thesis title: Empathetic and Transformative Engagement in Historical Understanding: A design-based exploration of an analytical-hermeneutic approach to teaching history in the classroom

This dissertation explores the philosophical and historiographical context, the nature, and practice of teaching history, and the efficacy of an intervention tool “historical process constructs (HPCs)” in the secondary school classroom.

**Supervisory Committee:** Dr. D. Kevin O’Neill (Senior Supervisor, Faculty of Education), Dr. Mark Leier (Department of History), and Dr. Nic Fillion (Department of Philosophy).

**Master of Arts, Middle East History, Simon Fraser University, 1990**

Thesis Title: Rural Rebels and Urban Nationalists in Syria and Palestine, 1920-1939: the Rebellions of Sultan al-Atrash and Shaykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam

This work explored the nature of popular revolution in the Mashriq/المشرق, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, using a comparative case study approach based on the 1925 Syrian Revolution and 1936 Palestinian Revolution. Primary sources included the Permanent Mandates Commission reports for the League of Nations, local newspapers, and the Tegart (papers of Sir Charles Tegart (1881-1946) relating to British policy in Palestine, internal security, the reorganization of the Palestine Police, construction of border defenses and police work in general, 1937-39.

**Senior Supervisor:** Dr. W. Cleveland

**Graduate Certificate, Yad Yashem International School of Holocaust Studies, Jerusalem, 2009**

**Bachelor of Arts, History & Philosophy, Simon Fraser University, 1986.**

**Professional Development Program, Simon Fraser University, 1981**

## **Honours**

- 2015 Honourable Mention, Cmolik Prize for the Enhancement of Public Education in BC, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University
- 2013 Finalist, Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education. Citizenship and Immigration Canada.
- 2011 Recipient, Meyer & Gita Kron & Ruth Kron Sigal Award for Excellence in Holocaust Education, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

## **Scholarships/Fellowships**

S.F.U Graduate Fellowship	Fall 2018	\$6500
S.F.U Graduate Fellowship	Fall 2013	\$3125

## **Professional & Research Contributions**

Dr. Christine Paget (DPhil, University of Oxford) and I are editors-in-chief of a fledgling peer-reviewed academic journal named “**Detours Social Science Education Research**”. We published our first issue in October 2020, hosted a conference in February 2021 based on this issue: <http://www.detoursjournal.org/index.php/detours/index>. Our second issue was published in October 2021.

From 2012-2018, I worked as a consultant and writer on the Social Studies Curriculum Writing teams for the B.C. Ministry of Education. Helped re-design the K-10 provincial curriculum, creating a local, regional, and world cyclic movement of Indigenous content. I was the primary writer for Philosophy 12, Economics Theory 12 (requested that Macroeconomics and Microeconomics be moved to Applied Design and Technology), Comparative Cultures 12, and Law Theory 12.

## **Papers**

O'Neill, D. K., Guloy, S., MacKellar, F. M., Martelli, D. R. (2022). Development and validation of a practical classroom assessment of students' beliefs about differing historical accounts. *Historical Encounters*, 9(1), 58-77. <https://doi.org/10.52289/hej9.104>

Fillion, N., Martelli, D. (2017) *Overview of Critical Thinking and the BC K-12 Curriculum Revisions: Implications for Post-Secondary Teaching and Learning*. Simon Fraser University Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Faculty of Education Position Paper.

O'Neill, K., Guloy, S., MacKellar, F., Martelli, D., (2017). *Development and Field Testing of a Formative Assessment of Metahistorical Conceptions*. Manuscript submitted for Publication: *Theory and Research in Social Education*.

Martelli, D. (2016). *History teaching and literacy: A design-based research historical case study proposal. Proceedings of the 2016 STORIES Conference: i2i – Inquiry to Impact*, 55-61.

Paget, C., Malmberg, L-E., & Martelli, D. (2016). *Brazilian National Assessment Data and Educational Policy: An empirical illustration. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 23(1), 98–125.

### **Conferences/Paper Presentations/Workshops**

- 2022                      Conference Chair, “*Teaching for Inquiry: Philosophy, Pedagogy and Praxis*”, BCSSTA Provincial Conference (in partnership with Simon Fraser University, Capilano University, and The University of the Fraser Valley, 21 October 2022.
- 2021                      BCSSTA February Conference Committee Chair, “Detours and Open Spaces”
- 2020                      BCSSTA Provincial Conference Committee Chair
- 2019                      Lavallee, Spirit & Martelli, Dale. ***The 60s Scoop*** (with Facing History and Ourselves). Workshop: BCSSTA PSA Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary.
- Martelli, Dale. ***The Ethics Bowl and Collaborative Learning Challenges***. Workshop: BCSSTA PSA Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary.
- Fillion, Nicolas, Martelli, Dale. ***“Critical thinking in the new BC K-12 curriculum: challenges and opportunities”***. Presentation: Canadian Philosophical Association (CPA) & the Canadian Philosophy of Education Society (CPES). Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences 2019, University of British Columbia.
- Martelli, Dale, Fillion, Nicolas. (4 May 2019) ***“A Mechanism of Meaning: One Interpretation Instrument for Classroom Historical Inquiry and Implications for Critical Thinking”***. Presentation: 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual UBC-IOP Conference (“Investigating Our Practices), University of British Columbia.
- Keynote Panelist, (15 February 2019). ***Teaching Labour History: Making Connections Conference***. BCSSTA, BC Labour Heritage Centre, & SFU Labour Studies Program.

- Leier, M., Martelli, D. (15 February 2019). ***“Making Labour History Work for Students: Experiential Learning, the Work Process, and the Paper Airplane Game”***. Teaching Labour History: Making Connections. Workshop: BCSSTA, BC Labour Heritage Centre, & SFU Labour Studies Program.
- 2018      Fillion, N., Martelli, D. (19 October 2018) ***Integrating Critical Thinking in the classroom: An SFU initiative to support teachers***. Workshop: BCSSTA PSA Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary.
- Gebre, E., Morales, E., Martelli, D., (19 October 2018) ***Data Literacy in Social Studies Education: Engaging Secondary School Students in Learning with and Representing Data***. Workshop: BCSSTA PSA Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary.
- Martelli, D., O'Neill, K., Guloy, S., MacKellar, F., (2018). ***The Pedagogy of Measuring Epistemological Conceptions in History: Students' Thinking While Responding to a Survey***. Symposium paper presentation at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, New York, NY.
- Fillon, N., Martelli, D., ***Overview of Critical Thinking and the BC K-12 Curriculum Revisions: Implications for Post-Secondary Teaching and Learning***. (9 February 2018). Paper presented at Developing Minds: Critical Thinking in Curriculum Transfer Conference, Simon Fraser University.
- 2017      O'Neill, K., Guloy, S., MacKellar, F., Martelli, D., (2017). ***Development and Field Testing of a Formative Assessment of Metahistorical Conceptions***. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Research Association, San Antonio. TX.
- 2016      Martelli, Dale R. (15-16 March 2016), ***Mechanisms of Meaning: Process Constructs and Historical Inquiry in the Classroom***. Poster presented at “STORIES 2016 Annual Conference: Inquiry to Impact, Department of Education. University of Oxford.
- 2014      O'Neill, K., Martelli, D., ***UsingHistoryConcepts.org to formatively assess student's ideas about differing accounts*** (October 2014). Workshop: British Columbia Social Studies Teacher's Association Annual Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary
- 2012      Seixas, P., Poeschek, N., Martelli, D., “Social Studies Curricula Paradigm Shift” British Columbia Social Studies Teacher's Association Annual Conference, Vancouver Technical Secondary

2012 - 2016	Paget, C., Martelli, D., “Assessment Strategies in Social Studies: Bridging Pedagogy, Literature, and Practice”. BCSSTA Workshop. Presented at COTA August professional development conference, Surrey District schools, and for Designs for Learning Secondary Social Studies Courses, Simon Fraser University.
2009 to 2014	Martelli, D., “Human Experimentation & Biochemical Warfare: Dr. Josef Mengele & Dr. Shiro Ishii” Annual International Human Rights Student Symposium.

### **Other Related Professional Activities**

2012-Present	<b>President</b> , British Columbia Social Studies Teacher’s Association <a href="https://bcssta.wordpress.com/">https://bcssta.wordpress.com/</a>
	BCSSTA Representative, Philosophy Articulation Committee
February 2019	Program Associate, Facing History and Ourselves.
15 February 2019	Labour Studies Conference, Conference Organizing Committee
January 2019	Educator, National Film Board Educator Network.
2013-Present	Conference Co-Chair, BCSSTA PSA Conferences
10 April 2014	<b>Panelist</b> , “Insights into the New BC Curriculum”, BCTF Webinar, <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cdanEIKQeM&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cdanEIKQeM&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
2017- Present	Reviewer, Cognition and Instruction Journal
2016	Advisor, National Advisory Team, <b>THINQ</b> 4-6, Authors: Jill Colyer and Jennifer Watt.
2012-2018	Consultant, Social Studies Curriculum, B.C. Ministry of Education
2009	<b>Graduate</b> , Yad Yashem International School of Holocaust Studies Summer Seminar, Jerusalem
2006	<b>Writer</b> , “How have we contributed to Canada?” National Film Board: Across Cultures <a href="http://www3.nfb.ca/ressources_educatives/Collections/ressources_educatives/FondsMemoire_Diversie_Culturelle/NFBUnitGuideTheme2_27juin07_FinalANG.pdf">http://www3.nfb.ca/ressources_educatives/Collections/ressources_educatives/FondsMemoire_Diversie_Culturelle/NFBUnitGuideTheme2_27juin07_FinalANG.pdf</a>
2005	Designer, Flex Humanities District Enrichment Program, Vancouver School District

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| 2003 | Creator, Philosophy 12, Vancouver School District (B.C. Ministry of Education Board Authority Authorized Course)                     |
| 2002 | Member, Canadian Philosophy Association “Philosophy in the School” Project & Provincial Philosophy Articulation Sub-Committee Member |

### **Professional Work History**

I have been a teacher with the Vancouver School Board since 1982. My professional work history has been very diverse and rewarding. At present, I am teaching Literature, Philosophy, Social Studies, and History at Vancouver Technical Secondary. I was a Faculty Associate with Simon Fraser University from 1997 – 1998. As a PhD Candidate, I have been a Tutorial Assistant for a wide variety of History and Education courses, and I have been a Sessional Instructor for two Education courses.

### **Post-Secondary Research and Teaching Positions**

#### **Sessional Instructor**

Education 437 “Ethical Issues in Education”. Spring 2020, Simon Fraser University.

Education 474 “Designs for Learning: Elementary Social Studies”. Summer 2018, Simon Fraser University.

Education 433 “Philosophical Issues in Curriculum Development”, Fall 2015, Simon Fraser University

#### **Research Assistant**

- Overview of Critical Thinking and the BC K-12 Curriculum Revisions: Implications for Post-Secondary Teaching and Learning, Supervisor: Dr. Nic Fillion.
- Historical Account Differences (HAD) Teacher Survey, Supervisor: Dr. Kevin O’Neill, Simon Fraser University, 2016 – present.
- TOESL Research Study, Supervisor, Dr. Sepidah Fotovatian, 2017.
- Program Goals Writing Team, CTI-Philosophy of Ed Final Goal Proposal, Supervisor: Dr. Robin Brayne, Simon Fraser University, 2013
- A History of the Middle East, Text Indexing, Supervisor: Dr. William Cleveland, Simon Fraser University, 1987.



### **Tutorial Assistant/Marker (Simon Fraser University)**

- Education 437, Fall 2020, Fall 2017, 2018, Spring and Summer 2019
- Education 326, Summer 2015, 2014, and Spring 2017
- History 338 & Education 230/Fall 2016
- Education 471, Spring 2016 & Summer 2017
- History 339, Summer 2015/Fall 2014,

**Faculty Associate**, Simon Fraser University Professional Development Program Inner City Module 1997-1998

### **Secondary and Elementary Teaching Positions**

**1998 – Present: Vancouver Technical Secondary School**

<https://martellisocialsciences.weebly.com/>

#### **Positions:**

- Teacher
- Social Studies Department Head
- Flex Humanities Program Coordinator
  - Courses taught: History 12, Philosophy 12, Economics 12, Social Studies 8 - 11, Social Justice 12, Classical Studies 8, 9, & 10 (Flex Humanities Mini-school)
  - Designed Philosophy 12 curriculum for school and district
  - Developed Anti-Semitism Studies 8- 12
  - Created the Grade 12 Honours Liberal Arts Warrant Program
  - Overhauled Flex Humanities Mini School, creating a program that integrates Philosophy, World Literature, History, Fine Arts, Film and Media Studies, and Integrated Arts and Technology from grades 8 – 12.

The program provides a supportive, stimulating, and challenging environment for self-motivated learners. Students are encouraged to develop their intellect by emphasizing critical thinking skills, analytical writing, cooperative learning, and open format projects. The program has been designed to meet the needs of above average ability students who are interested in working with other self-motivated students.

**Other Activities:** Model United Nations Student Club, Integrated Social Issues throughout my courses based on community social policy initiatives, History 12 Provincial Exam Marker, Finance Committee Chair 1999-2003, V.S.T.A Working and Learning Representative 1998-2000, Coached Basketball, Track and Field, & Cross-Country Teams

**1995–1997**

#### **Teacher, Hasting Elementary School**

Grade 7. Designed and Implemented Outdoor Education Programs & integrated Science and Social Studies cross grade projects, VESTA Senior Staff Representative

**1992-1995**

**Teacher/Department Head, Eastside Alternative Program** Grades 9 & 10 Science, Mathematics & Physical Education. Designed Career & Community Education Program

**1987-1992**

**Teacher, Waverley Elementary School**, K-7 Mathematics, Science, P.E., and Computer Science  
Designed and Implemented Outdoor Education Programs & Restructured Intermediate Language Arts and Mathematics Programs. Coached Basketball, Cross-Country, & Track and Field. VESTA Professional Development District Chair, Joint Funds Rep, Local Rep/Executive Committee, Staff Rep & Staff Rep Trainer, Grievance Rep, School Accreditation Rep, & Committee 3 Rep

**Administrative Experience**

**1998-2003** Summer School Vice-Principal and Principal,  
Vancouver Technical Secondary School

**1994 & 1995** Summer School Vice-Principal, Gladstone, and Magee Summer School

**1990-1992** Summer School Principal, Tecumseh Elementary Summer School

**Related Professional Experience**

**1986-1987** Tutorial Assistant, History Department: Canadian and Middle East History, Simon Fraser University

**1984, 1985-1986** Project Manager, Katimavik Youth Program

**1985** CUSO Teacher, Kpaki Secondary School, Niger State Ministry of Education, Nigeria

**1982** Teacher, Sher'ut La'am Program, Bet Shemesh, Israel

**References**

Dr. Kevin O'Neill, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University  
[koneill@sfu.ca](mailto:koneill@sfu.ca)

Dr. Mark Leier, Department of History, Simon Fraser University  
[leier@sfu.ca](mailto:leier@sfu.ca)

Dr. Nic Fillion, Department of Philosophy, Simon Fraser University  
[nfillion@sfu.ca](mailto:nfillion@sfu.ca)