MSSTA (Manitoba Social Sciences Teachers' Association) MTS PD Day- "***Un)Settling History: Teaching and Thinking Historically in the Age of "Neutrality"***

On Friday October 23rd, MSSTA held our annual MTS PD event at Chief Peguis Middle School in Winnipeg. Over 200 educators from across the province took part in over 50 concurrent sessions delivered by teachers, non-profit organizations and experts on a variety of topics related to teaching all levels of Social Sciences courses. Additionally, over 40 organizations, including SSENC, provided displays to help educators engage and support students in the Social Sciences.

MSSTA's Fall 2026 PD Day was dedicated to the theme of "Teaching and Thinking Historically in the Age of "Neutrality". History can no longer be treated as a passive survey of the past; it is an active and often uncomfortable practice for questioning the present. Our conference invited educators to examine how histories are constructed, whose perspectives are centred, and how claims of neutrality shape what becomes knowable, teachable, and contestable in the history classroom.

This conference called upon educators to unsettle inherited narratives by engaging students in the disciplinary work of history through explicit engagement with historical thinking concepts. Participants were also challenged to critically examine dominant settler-colonial narratives and instead centre Indigenous perspectives while considering how historical accounts are shaped, challenged, and revised rather than simply received. Central to the conference was the idea that history education is a rigorous, inquiry-driven practice that asks students to grapple with complexity, disagreement, and uncertainty. Critical inquiries and classroom practices were shared that position students as active historical thinkers so they may use the past to better understand the present and navigate an increasingly complex and uncertain future with care, responsibility, and purpose.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Carla Peck from the University of Alberta, and director of the Thinking Historically for Canada's Future project. In her address, Dr. Peck drew from her new book (that was written in collaboration with Dr. Alan Sears), "Rescuing Reason: How History Education Can Help Save Democracy". She argued that public education has become to narrowly focused on utilitarian aims – such as financial literacy and job preparation – at the expense of the humanities, especially history, and that this shift has undermined the cultivation of well-rounded citizens equipped for meaningful participation in civic life. She proposed that a renewed emphasis on history education, taught with depth and rigour, can foster civic reason, empathy, and a shared sense of civic truth.


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