



## **CHC EPISODE 11: RELATION AND BELONGING**

April 20, 2015 - [Society for the History of Children and Youth](#)  
Interview with Mona Gleason is available [online](#)

*CHILDHOOD: History and Critique (CHC)* is a series of interviews, commentary, and happenings in historical studies of childhood by Dr. Patrick J. Ryan, Kings University College at Western University, Canada.

This June 24-26, between 230 and 250 delegates will meet at the University of British Columbia for the [8<sup>th</sup> biennial conference](#) of the Society for the History of Children and Youth. I discussed the conference with [Mona Gleason](#), incoming President of the Society, who chaired the Organizing Committee (which included her UBC colleagues [Tamara Meyers](#) and [Leslie Paris](#)).



When Mona reflected the call for sessions organized around the theme of belonging and relationships, she explained that the University rests on [Point Grey](#) – unceded, ancestral lands of the Musqueam people. British Columbia (despite what its name announces to the neighbouring U.S. state – Washington) is a place where the negotiation of sovereignty – between diverse peoples and with the land itself – is ongoing. Settlement is not settled in Canada. This produces a way of being in “relationship” that troubles fixed, imperial, uniform notions of nationalism. The conference organizers hoped to call forth historical work that explores the ways children and youth have confronted and helped fashion such a world: global, multi-cultural, liminal, unstable, transnational.

The three-day conference will offer about 60 sessions vetted by a committee of [Marcia Chatelain](#)

([Georgetown University](#)), [Shurlee Swain](#) (Australian Catholic University), [Judith Lind](#) (Linköping University), [David Pomfret](#), (University of Hong Kong), and [Ishita Pande](#) (Queen’s University). As I looked over [Preliminary-Program-SHCY-2015-March-24-201512.pdf](#), and considered Mona’s explanation of the conference theme, I saw its initial impact. While we will have plenty of topical variety, words like migration, colonialism, empire, transnational, global, citizenship, becoming, mobilization, representation, relation, memory, negotiation, identity, reciprocity, and performance fill the titles. The keynote lecturer – [Karen Dubinsky](#) – is well-situated to address these terms and concepts. She is author and editor of numerous books, including the 2010 [Babies without Borders: Adoption and Migration Across the Americas](#) (Univ. of Toronto) and the collection with Adele Perry and Henry Yu [Within and Without the Nation: Transnational Canadian History](#) (Univ. of Toronto, 2015).

In addition to the academic content of the sessions, Mona, Tamara, and Leslie thought about other ways the conference might help build relationships between scholars. Of course, we will have 1/2-hour coffee breaks between sessions, an evening reception on Wednesday, the Society business meeting during lunch on Thursday, and a conference Banquet on Thursday night. But, a couple of new events will appear too. Following the Banquet, we’ll have a dance — that — ought to be entertaining. There will also be a “join SHCY” luncheon on Friday where Jim Marten will provide an update on the *Journal for the History of Childhood and Youth*.

Friday’s luncheon responds to one of the Society’s ongoing challenges – maintaining membership. It confronts all scholarly organizations. Our ability to run the journal, hold conferences, provide prizes for excellent work, collaborate with other organizations,



and assist graduate students rests upon attracting dues-paying members. I asked Mona about other things she would like to put on the Society's agenda as she begins her tenure as President. She named three: inviting/developing new leaders, establishing policies around endorsements, and creating a guide for conference planning. You can listen to our conversation above.

As I write this report in a still-frozen Ontario March, with the coldest February on record chattering in my bones, I admit that some of my plans for SHCY-2015



Beyond the campus, [metropolitan Vancouver](#) offers numerous opportunities for [hiking](#), [biking](#), [kayaking](#), and other adventures. You might even come across [urban bald eagles](#) if you take a stroll through beautiful [Stanley Park](#), which boasts 400-hectares of rainforest, beaches, waterfront vistas, and more.

Downtown is a short 20-minute drive or 40-minute [bus-ride](#) from campus. It offers a variety of excellent [restaurants](#), including the [Bluewater Cafe + Raw Bar](#) (Seafood), [Chef Tony Seafood](#) (Chinese), [My Shanti](#) (Indian), [Mr. Red Cafe](#) (Vietnamese), [Absinthe Bistro](#) (French), and [Ask for Luigi](#) (Italian). On your way downtown, you might visit [Granville Island](#) – an industrial site revamped for tourism – offering a farmer's market, craft vendors, shops, galleries, and other entertainments.

are decidedly unprofessional. How pleasant will the temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest be? From afar the UBC campus seems to be surrounded by lush parks, misty trails, sandy beaches, and (moving) water. Perhaps I'll take a walk through the [Nitobe Memorial Gardens](#) on campus. The UBC [Bike Kitchen](#) rents bicycles, but runners might want to scout-out [courses](#) along nearby [Jericho Beach](#) or take a jog through [Pacific Spirit Regional Park](#). Mona recommended visiting the University's renowned [Museum of Anthropology](#).

Make your plans, extend your stay if you can, and consider becoming part of the *Society*.

**Mona Gleason** is President-Elect of SHCY and the host for the 2015 conference at the University of British Columbia. She is the author and/or editor of seven books, including *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 1999); *Small Matters: Canadian Children in Sickness and Health, 1900-1940* (McGill-Queens University Press, 2013).



**Patrick J. Ryan** is Associate Professor at Kings University College at Western University – Canada with appointments in the Childhood and Social Institutions Program and the Department of History. He is a co-founder of H-Childhood (est. 1998) and author of *Master-Servant Childhood: a history of the idea of childhood in Medieval English Culture* (Palgrave, 2013).

