

ON FEELING AND KNOWING: EPISODE 7, PHEROZE UNWALLA

ABOUT THE SERIES

ON FEELING AND KNOWING

Classrooms are to be safe spaces, we're told. Yet educators working within complex realms, where the tensions and discomforts of human experience offer no safe havens, know that deep learning often elicits strong feelings. Created by [Dr. Tara Mayer](#) and presented by the [Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies](#), *On Feeling and Knowing*, is a series of seven recorded conversations with seasoned educators working at the creative frontiers of their disciplines. Their insights reveal what classrooms of higher education were traditionally conceived to be and what they can become. These conversations aren't prescriptions or guidelines, but generous and candid reflections by educators daring to disrupt educational norms, in search of deeper and more diverse pathways to knowledge.

ABOUT PHEROZE UNWALLA

Dr. Pheroze Unwalla is an Assistant Professor of Teaching in the Department of History at the University of British Columbia. He is a historian of Turkey and the modern Middle East whose research and teaching interests include memory, trauma, nationalism and space. Right now, Pheroze is Chair of the new Middle East Studies program at UBC and is developing ground-breaking curriculum in support of these fields.

[More about Pheroze Unwalla](#)

RELATED RESOURCES

Mayer, T., & Unwalla, P. (2018). [Global 1918](#). In P. Tortell, M. Turin, & M. Young (Eds.), *Memory* (pp. 207–216). Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies.

Unwalla, P. (2015). [Nationalism and revolution](#). *Nations and Nationalism*, 21(4), 579–588.

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KEYWORDS & TIMECODES

Interdependence, come-along pedagogy, practice, constructionism, making

Timecode	Content	Related Reference
3:43	Reflection of identity	
8:05	Pain of history	
15:20	The audience	
23:40	Teaching beyond history	
37:10	The narrow vision of history	
47:46	Make them part of the journey	

INTERVIEW-SUMMARY:

Unwalla begins his interview with a reflection on his identity. The culture which surrounds us, shapes us. He elaborates on the pain of history. The discipline deserves communities if it focuses on abstract concepts. Unwalla wonders how lived experiences of history translate into academic work? His publications focus around middle eastern history (Mayer & Unwalla, 2018; Unwalla, 2015). He elaborates how the discipline can live up to the needs of his course audience. For them oppression is a lived experience rather than a theoretical construct. This leads to the notion of teaching beyond history. He encourages to acknowledge emotions to foster critical thinking. This expands the possibilities of the discipline. It accommodates a broader audience. However, Unwalla cautions us about the classroom It stays an intimidating place, even though he invites students to share experiences. The historian recommends small groups and office hours. He appreciates intangible, unmeasurable outcomes of smaller conversations without grading and expectations. Unwalla's vision is to bring joy into the classroom by humanizing the discipline.