

**Innovation Funding Project Report and Student Stipend Report**  
**Christopher Helland**

**Project Title: *Religion in the Media: An International Comparison***

***Religion in an Ordinary Day***

**1. Project Goals, Rationale, Methods**

On September 17, 2013; September 17, 2014; and, September 17, 2015, the research team collected 23 newspapers (69 now in total). The newspapers were chosen to represent national, regional, and local representation in each country.

|  | National paper           | Regional/local papers   | Free paper  |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|
| <b>UK team</b><br>Manchester<br>(Kim Knott, Elizabeth Poole,<br>Jasjit Singh)  | <i>The Times</i>         | <i>Manchester Evening News</i>  | <i>UK Metro</i>   |
| <b>Canada team</b><br>Montreal<br>(Christopher Helland, David<br>Michels, Lori Beaman,<br>Heather Shipley, Solange<br>Lefebvre, Haley Farar) | <i>The Globe Mail</i>    | <i>La Presse; The Gazette;<br/>Calgary Herald; Le<br/>Droit; Ottawa Citizen;<br/>The Chronicle Herald;<br/>The Gazette; The<br/>Vancouver Sun</i> | <i>Halifax Metro;<br/>Montreal<br/>Metro;<br/>Ottawa<br/>Metro; Capital<br/>Xtra;</i> |
| <b>Australia team</b><br>Melbourne<br>(Anna Halafoff, Peter<br>Horsfield, Enqi Wong)   | <i>The Australian</i>    | <i>The Herald Sun; The<br/>Age</i>  | <i>MX</i>   |
| <b>Finland team</b><br>Turku<br>(Teemu Taira, Jere Kyyrö)  | <i>Helsingin Sanomat</i> | <i>Turun Sanomat</i>  | <i>Metro</i>  |

Team members reviewed newspapers for any form of religious activity. This included news

stories, editorials and comments, reader responses, reviews, obituaries, advertisements, images, classified ads and public notices. Each item was coded and briefly summarized by the team member.

Summary sheets and newspapers were sent to Dalhousie University in Halifax. Each identified article was scanned, turned into a searchable PDF file and uploaded onto “Dal Space” based upon the country of origin and the newspaper. In 2013 there was a total of 412 articles, in 2014 there have been 486. Originally this material had been uploaded to “IslanDora” however Dalhousie University was only using this searchable database for a trial period and did not renew their usage license. At that point all files were moved to “Dal Space” and will now be stored there indefinitely. Dal Space uses a Dublin core for its meta data schema, this required a modification of the coding framework that was being used for the project.

A larger coding framework was developed for classifying the articles that was compatible with the Dublin core metadata tagging system. This new coding framework is being applied to the uploaded articles and allows for the data base to be searched by team members. Files can also be copied and downloaded for individual use. The current coding frame is listed on the following pages.

## **2. Researchers and Students Involved**

### **Canada**

Christopher Helland, David Michels, Lori Beaman, Heather Shipley, Solange Lefebvre

### **Australia**

Anna Halafoff, Peter Horsfield, Enqi Wong

### **United Kingdom**

Kim Knott, Elizabeth Poole, Jasjit Singh

### **Finland Team**

Teemu Taira, Jere Kyyrö

### **Students Involved in Canada**

**(Research Assistantships)** Shannon Ramsey (MA Sociology), Ashley Doyle (MA Sociology), and Haley Farrar (MA Sociology).



### 3. Provisional Findings and Outputs

With two years of data collected we are beginning to do quantitative and qualitative analysis of the material. Each country is working independently at this time, examining and analyzing the material for trends and patterns at the national, regional, and local level. After the third year of data is collected, coded, scanned, and uploaded to the database, we will begin a transnational comparison of different forms of religious representation.

An edited volume will be developed based upon this research project. The first section of the book will examine each nation and the context of their papers, trends in representation, and analysis. Each team will write collaboratively for their country section. This section will also examine methodological issues, the structure of the data collection, the coding framework and its context, and limitations of the study. The second section of the book will examine key thematic issues that arose when we examined conventional, common, and secular/sacred representations of religion. So far, these issues include conflict and security, gender and sexuality, alternative and minority religions, education, and law and criminality. The thematic issues will be written by various team members and will be discussed further after the last set of data is collected.

### 4. Budget

The \$10,000 funding given to this project in 2013 has been used to hire research assistants to assist with the scanning, coding, and uploading of the articles submitted by the different teams. Students hired at Dalhousie University were Shannon Ramsey (MA Sociology), Ashley Doyle (MA Sociology), and Haley Farrar (MA Sociology).

| <b>Breakdown of Expenses</b> |        |      |       |         |
|------------------------------|--------|------|-------|---------|
| <b>Student Funding*</b>      |        |      |       |         |
|                              | Amount | Name | Dates | Project |
| Student Stipends             |        |      |       |         |

|   |        |                |         |  |
|---|--------|----------------|---------|--|
| Student Assistantship                                       | 1000   | Ashley Doyle   | 2013-15 |  |
|   | 2000   | Shannon Ramsey | 2013    |  |
|   | 5800   | Haley Farrar   | 2013-15 |  |
| <b>Research Funding</b>                                     |        |                |         |  |
|   | Amount | Project        | Dates   | Specifics**  |
| Funding for Research Costs                                  |        |                |         |  |
| Funding for Research Travel                                 |        |                |         |  |
| Funding for Administrative/Supply Costs Related to Research | 200    |                |         | Purchasing of all copies of newspapers in Halifax (2 copies of each) |

CODING FRAMEWORK

Australia  
 Canada  
 Finland  
 United Kingdom

National Paper  
 Regional  
 Local

Section (e.g. A, B, C, Living, Classified)

Page #

Title/Key words (e.g. "PM Resigns")

Domestic

International

Mixed

Front Page

News

Features

Editorial

Opinion

News In Brief

Advertisement

Public Reader Responses

Obituary

Review

Sports

Cartoons

Images

Main Issue

Passing Reference

**Conventional Religion**

a. Roman Catholicism

b. Protestantism

c. Councils of Churches

d. Religion General

e. Other Christian Churches and Groups

f. Church History

g. New Religious Movements

h. Islam

j. Hinduism

k. Buddhism

l. Sikhism

- m. Judaism
- n. Other World Religions
- o. Mixed
- p. Other

**Common Religion**

- a. Magic
- b. Witchcraft
- c. Chance
- d. Signs
- e. Ghosts
- f. Spiritualism and Spirit Possession
- g. Psychic Powers
- h. Luck
- i. Superstitions
- j. Gambling
- k. Fortune Telling Techniques
- l. Fate and Destiny
- m. Other Supernatural Beings
- n. The Unexplained
- o. Folk Religion
- p. Folk Practices
- q. Mythology
- r. Gypsies
- s. New Age
- t. Mixed
- u. Other

**Secular/Sacred**

- a. Secularism, religion and secular
- b. Atheism
- c. Humanism
- d. Religion and Science
- e. Liberalism
- f. Spirituality
- g. Religion-like
- h. Mixed



i. Other