<u>Innovation Funding Project Report and Student Stipend Report</u>
Pamela Klassen

Project Title: *Digital Dissemination of Spiritual Invention of a Nation: Media and Missionaries on Indian Land"*

1.   Project Goals

The goal of this project was to develop the tools and content to disseminate the results of my SSHRC-funded research project in a digital format in order to reach a broader audience than conventional scholarly modes of publication. My book project, "Spiritual Invention of a Nation", analyzes one aspect of early twentieth-century attempts to negotiate religious diversity in Canada by focusing on missionary-First Nations interactions. I specifically focus on the religiously diverse traditions of storytelling that shaped the colonizing processes that created Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book argues that stories, and their specific forms of mediation (via paper, totem poles, photographs, etc.), were at the heart of missionary-Indigenous interaction. Overall, I argue that at a time when these missionary histories are taking on new significance through government-sponsored processes of apology, truth, and reconciliation, greater awareness of the past significance of diverse story-telling traditions is of great importance. The support of the Religion and Diversity Project for research assistance with digital dissemination has enabled me develop innovative, creative methods for bringing this historical reflection on one of the earliest forms of "religious diversity" in Canada to wider audiences.

2.   Researchers and Students Involved

I am leading a team of three students, two M.A. students, Judith Brunton and Kaleigh McLelland, and a senior undergraduate, Hannah Wilkinson, as we navigate the (new-to-us) terrain of digital storytelling. In Spring 2014, a new "digital initiatives" librarian was hired at the U of T library, and we are now working closely with her to format my large number of archival sources within the digital "Collections" system at U of T. Placing these sources in Collections will allow us to use the Omeka platform to make digital maps, timelines, and other forms of digital storytelling.

3. Rationale

While *Spiritual Invention of a Nation* will be published as a book, and articles drawn from this research are already published or in press, bringing a "digital humanities" approach to this research is particularly important and innovative for two reasons. First, this research project provides important training for graduate students (and for me) in new digital research and dissemination tools. Second, this digital platform creates a version of the book's argument and sources accessible to a broader audience, prompting wider reflection on how religious difference has shaped understandings of the Canadian nation since its beginnings.

4. Methods

This project works with methods of the digital humanities, in which digital preservation and coding of archival records through the open-source platform of Islandora allows for high-quality and accountable digital cataloguing of sources, that can then be turned into easily accessible digital maps and digital storytelling.

I am developing a website that will supplement the book by providing access to some of the archival texts, photographs, and maps that I used in my research (with appropriate permissions from all Archives). I requested funding for two aspects of the dissemination: 1) an audio documentary providing a 30-minute version of the book's argument; 2) a digitally interactive map of Du Vernet's journey incorporating images, recorded stories, and other markers of the places and people he visited in northern Ontario and northwestern British Columbia. These forms of digital storytelling will allow me to disseminate my research in an accessible manner that could have classroom applications.

5. Ethics, permissions

Under the Collections system, I am required to secure permissions from Archives for preserving my sources in this U of T-based digital archive. I am at the beginning of this process now, but this will take considerable time, as my sources are from 6 different Archives, of varying sizes and staffing capacities.

6. Summary of Activities

Since beginning the project, I have come to realize that digital dissemination of scholarly work entails a steep learning curve that is both exciting and very time-consuming. At the moment, the bulk of the work we are doing is related to moving the relevant sources into Collections, so

that we can then make use of them in the Omeka web publishing platform. Other aspects of the work include the following:

- We are currently in the process recording and editing a podcast of a diary from one of the missionaries in my study. The diary traces his voyage from Toronto to the Rainy River Ojibwe of Northern Ontario. This podcast will be broadcast-ready and available on the website. We are also developing a visual companion to the podcast, that includes maps, archival photographs, and documents.

- I had also planned to develop a digitally interactive map of Du Vernet's journey incorporating images, recorded stories, and other markers of the places and people he visited in northern Ontario and northwestern British Columbia. This aspect of the project is considerably more labour intensive than I had thought, and will require the assistance of a U of T software developer from the library. I will apply for further funding for this part of the project.

7.   Provisional Findings

Digital storytelling and digital mapping are increasingly important as both methods and dissemination tools for historical and religious studies research. Telling stories about indigenous-missionary relations in this format has prompted me to use sources differently, and to think more intentionally about the effectiveness of my scholarly analyses and framing when trying to communicate with audiences in the classroom and outside of the academy. Digital dissemination is also very time-consuming, both in terms of the labour involved and of the education and training that it requires. But the time and effort are worth it, as this process challenges scholarly conventions for how we organize and think with our sources, and enables us to turn our research into more accessible, yet still intellectually complex, arguments.

8.   Outputs

By August 31:

- Approximately 2/3 of my archival sources will be coded and uploaded to Collections.
- My research team will have a working knowledge of Omeka as a tool for digital mapping, timelines, and digital storytelling, and will be prepared to use our Collections sources in concert with Omeka.
- The audio podcast based on Du Vernet's diary to Rainy River will be complete.
- The process for securing permissions for archival materials to be held on Collections will be underway.

9. Finances

Budget and Student Information				
Breakdown of Expenses				
Student Funding				
	Amount	Name	Dates	Project
Student Research Stipends (These are not related to the Innovation Fund grant).				
	3250	Helen Mo, Ph.D. Year 1 Supervisor: Pamela Klassen	Sept 1 2013 – April 30 2014	Religious Diversity and Practices of Citizenship among Chinese-Canadian Evangelicals
	3250	Marisa Franz, Ph.D. Year 1 Supervisor: Pamela Klassen	Sept 1 2013 – April 30 2014	Religious diversity and state regulation in Eurasian contexts
Research Funding				
	Amount	Project	Dates	Specifics
Funding for Research	10000	Digital Dissemination	Sept 2013	

Costs		Project: Spiritual Invention of a Nation	– Aug. 2014	
Expenses				
Student Research Assistance Funding	717.29		Sept 2013 – March 2104	Hannah Wilkinson: (this pay was supplemented by work- study)
	1196.40		Sept 2013 – March 2104	Judith Brunton (this pay was supplemented by work-study)
	2640		June 2014 – August 2014	Judith Brunton (estimated cost)
	2640		June 2014 – August 2014	Kaleigh McLelland (estimated cost)
Funding for Administrative/Supply Costs Related to Research	750		July 2014	Audio engineer
Permissions	1000		July – August 2014	Permissions for maps, photographs, archival documents
Total	8943.69			
Remaining in budget, carried forward to next year	1056.31			