



Report for HerstoriesCafe Small Projects Grant 2012-2013

The past year has been a productive one for HerstoriesCafe. The Small Projects Grant from THEN/HIER has allowed us to re-brand ourselves online, and our new website is more navigable and educator-friendly. Expanding our online presence has also allowed us to connect with other communities who are looking to start HerstoriesCafe initiatives in their own locales. By making our organization more technologically accessible, HerstoriesCafe resources now enhance the delivery of historically conscious curricula. This Small Project Grant facilitated three major developments:

A) We are now providing online access to our talks in 'bite-sized chunks' that are designed for classroom use. Our nineteen talks that have taken place since 2010 have all been enhanced with teacher resources. This includes visuals, text and appropriate online links. These materials directly address the history curriculum in Ontario and historical thinking concepts, as outlined by the Ministry of Education. History teachers, students and community members will be able to access this enhanced material long after the talks are over. Much of the Teacher Resources section has also been translated into French.

B) We've provided a step-by-step model for communities who are interested in starting their own HerstoriesCafe (online under Share).

C) We've gotten history and museum studies graduate students involved in the development of our online presence and in the development of historical thinking-based curriculum resources for classrooms. This has resulted in relationships with graduate students who attend our talks, discussions about our website with participants, and design 'swag', such as the HerstoriesCafe bookmarks.

The online presence has benefited enormously from this re-design process. We've gone from a blogspot to a fully fledged website with connections, resources and conversation spaces that educators and other community members are using. We've also benefited from the use of a projector and a camera, necessary technological tools for a mobile speaker series like HerstoriesCafe. This has allowed us to be able to ensure that we have the technological support we need when we need it.

The French translations of many of our talks were also facilitated by the Small Projects Grant. Although we have yet to see what kinds of fruitful connections with francophone educators that this will produce, we hope to expand HerstoriesCafe to francophone communities in Ontario and beyond. In recognition of the fact that francophone teachers attend our talks, we hope that these resources will be shared with other Histoire teachers across the country.

We would like to thank THEN/HiER for making our online expansion possible. The response to our website has been extremely positive, and has resulted in many plans for future talks. We have speakers planned for monthly talks well into 2014, which will provide multiple opportunities for people to share their knowledge about the histories of Toronto. Educators come away having been introduced to new narratives and access to new online resource materials. Teachers and professors have brought their students who have used these talks as a springboard for further historical research. The talks have introduced a broad range of people from different communities to each other: they have had a chance to network, which has been extremely positive. We now have 300 followers on Twitter and over 400 people on our email list. We deeply appreciate all THEN/HiER has done to support an increased awareness of women's history in Toronto.