

NiCHE Selection Committee,

## **Graduate Student Workshop: Reaching a Popular Audience**

### **Summary of Proposed Project**

Academics are not journalists. The former work in a world of footnotes, where prudence and accuracy is priority; the latter have learned nothing beats a good *hook*, a snappy title and two sentence paragraphs. Unfortunately for the academic world, most people prefer to read the work of journalists. While we can't change the literary tastes of the general public, we can teach graduate students how to get their message to a wider audience. By learning the difference between a query and a press release, and learning how to create both, students acquire life-long skills needed to be ambassadors for their field. Research that would otherwise be limited to an academic publication may now find its way into Canadian newspapers and magazines.

We propose a one-day workshop in Vancouver (spring 2010), that teaches graduate students of environmental history or historical geography to sell an article about their research to a popular periodical. Modelled on the London 2009 workshop, "*Publishing for a Popular Audience*," the workshop will introduce elementary journalism concepts such as brainstorming ideas, finding a suitable publication, writing a query and submitting it to a relevant editor. We have approached potential guest speakers in the Vancouver area who have been receptive to becoming involved, including a magazine and newspaper editor.

Ideally some of the articles drafted by participants would be commissioned and published. Students would be encouraged to learn from each other, critique the work of their peers and network with other new scholars. We hope to include participants from the B.C. lower mainland, Vancouver Island, as well as reserve two or three spots for students located in Alberta or Northern B.C. Given the distance between universities in Western Canada and the intensive one-day schedule for the workshop, we hope to provide travel grants to out of town participants. For those living outside the Greater Vancouver Area, we hope to offer one night accommodation and for those further afield, airfare. This would allow a few students from Alberta or Northern British Columbia to attend and to spread this new

skillset across wider tracts of Canada. Given the cost to NiCHE, participants from Alberta or Northern B.C. would have to be registered as NiCHE members and be studying an environmental history or historical geography topic. Participation would be limited to a small group of 10 to 20 graduate students from Western Canada. We would encourage members of the “New Scholars” committee to attend, where possible and promote the event through “Active History”. Dr. Evenden has expressed interest in advertising the workshop as part of the Nature / History Society lecture and workshop series. Drs. Chenier and French, graduate chairs of history at Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia, have written notes of support, attached at the end of the proposal.

This project fits with NiCHE's mandate to disseminate research, picks up on ideas circulated at the Canadian History & Environment Summer School in Ottawa, incorporates graduate student participation and involves working with the “New Scholars” group. The theme ties in with the “Year of Living Publicly” outlined in the 2009 NiCHE call for projects. The project will be hosted online as part of Sean's “Knowledge Mobilization” project, part of the Digital Infrastructure. We plan to archive the event online in a similar fashion to Bill Turkel's “Hacking as a Way of Knowing” workshop and through the “Nature's Past” podcast. Adam and Sean will both be resident in Vancouver, which will help limit expenses. This workshop would teach a generation of researchers how to be life-long contributors to popular media, expanding the visibility of the field in the future.

After the workshop, participants would be encouraged to join an online group that would pledge to submit ideas to editors for consideration at set intervals, twice per year. This online group would also include participants who took part in the London 2009 writing workshop and would be a source of encouragement as well as a place where members could receive feedback on their work.

## Proposed Workshop Format

9:00-9:30	Arrival and Registration
9:30-10:30	Guest Panel: Editor / Freelancer / Journalism Prof.
10:30-10:45	Coffee Break
10:45-11:45	Sean / Adam: Benefits of writing to a wider audience
11:45-1	Lunch Break
1:00-2:30	Workshop: Drafting Queries / Op-Eds
2:00-3:30	Workshop: Group Session – Peer Critique
3:45-4:30	Workshop: Finish work, workshop feedback

## Timeline of Activities

### Workshop

*December, 2009*

*January, 2009*

*March, 2009*

*April, 2009*

- Book rooms, catering and speakers at UBC.
- Announce workshop and invite applications.
- Hold Vancouver Workshop at UBC.
- Archive event on NiCHE website.

## Budget

Guest Speakers: Honoraria & Expenses	\$200 X 3	=	\$600
Food	\$25 X 20	=	\$500
Room / Computer Lab Rental	\$400	=	\$400
Hotel Rooms *	\$150 X 11	=	1650
Air Fare **	\$550 X 3	=	1650
Magazines / Newspapers	\$100	=	\$100
Stationary / Printing / Misc	\$100	=	\$100
	<hr/>		
	Total	=	\$5000

\* Budget estimate based upon 11 out of town participants. Actual number may be lower.

\*\* Based upon WestJet price of \$492 return trip from Calgary – Vancouver, \$533 return trip from Edmonton – Vancouver.

# Adam Crymble

---

EMAIL: [ACRYMBL@UWO.CA](mailto:ACRYMBL@UWO.CA) • [ADAMCRYMBLE.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://ADAMCRYMBLE.BLOGSPOT.COM)

---

## Education:

**University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario**  
M.A., Public History (2007-2008)

**University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario**  
B.A. Honours, History (2002-2007)

**University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario**  
Certificate, Writing (2002-2007)

## Research Grants, Prizes, and Awards:

2007-2008: Western Graduate Research Scholarship  
2003, 2007: Dean's Honour List - UWO  
2002: Western Scholar  
2002: Ontario Scholar

## Employment:

2008 – Present: NiCHE Webmaster, London, ON.  
2006 – 2008: Research Assistant, University of Western Ontario, London, ON.

## Recent Initiatives:

2009: “Writing for a Popular Audience” - Graduate Student Workshop, Co-organized with Jason Young – London, ON.  
2009: NiCHE / EcoKids / UWO Public History collaborative lesson plan project.

## Popular Publications:

Crymble, Adam. “Twittering Your Family History” *Internet Genealogy*. (Apr, 2010) [forthcoming].

Crymble, Adam. “Toolkit: Zotero for Family History Research” *Family Tree Magazine*. (Sept. 2009).

Turkel, William J., Adam Crymble & Alan MacEachern. *The Programming Historian* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). (NiCHE: London, 2009).

Crymble, Adam. *How to Write a Zotero Translator* (Niche: London, 2009).

Crymble, Adam. “Museum London Goes Digital with Some Help from UWO” *Western News*. (Apr. 2008).

Crymble, Adam. “The Volunteer Writer” *Freelance Writing Jobs*, (May 2008).

Crymble, Adam. “Thoughts on Public and Digital History” Research weblog (2007 – present).

# Sean Kheraj

---

EMAIL: SEAN.KHERAJ@UBC.CA • [SEANKHERAJ.WORDPRESS.COM](http://SEANKHERAJ.WORDPRESS.COM)

---

## Education:

**York University, Toronto, Ontario**

Ph.D., History (2003-2008)

**York University, Toronto, Ontario**

M.A., History (2002-2003)

**University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia**

B.A. Honours, History (1998-2002)

## Research Grants, Prizes, and Awards:

### Writing Prizes

2007 Canadian Historical Review Prize for best article of the year

### Major Research Fellowships

2008-2010: SSHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellowship - \$80,500

2004-2007: SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship - \$105,000

2004-05: Ontario Graduate Scholarship (declined) - \$15,000

## Publications:

Kheraj, Sean. *Inventing Stanley Park: An Environmental History*. Vancouver: UBC Press (under contract).

“Improving Nature: Remaking Stanley Park’s Forest, 1888-1931” *BC Studies* (158) 2008: 63-90.

“Restoring Nature: Ecology, Memory, and the Storm History of Vancouver’s Stanley Park” *Canadian Historical Review* 88 (4) 2007: 577-612. (Awarded the 2007 Canadian Historical Review Prize for best article of the year).

## Panels & Seminar Series:

Co-organized (with Professors Tina Loo and Matthew Evenden) seminar and research lecture by Professor Liza Piper on the environmental history of the Canadian north for Nature/History/Society series, University of British Columbia (November 2009)

Co-organized (with Dr. Jocelyn Thorpe) special lecture by Professor Joanna Dean (Carleton University) and seminar series on urban environmental history for Nature/History/Society series, University of British Columbia (April 2009)

## Academic Service:

**Podcast Producer**, Network in Canadian History & Environment, [Nature’s Past](#) (2008-10)

**Website Editor**, Network in Canadian History & Environment, [Notes on Knowledge Mobilisation](#) [<http://niche-canada.org/knowmob>] (2009-2010)

**New Scholars in Canadian History & Environment Advisory Committee**, NICHE (2008-10)