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Russell K. Cooper Award Recognizes Excellence in Public Programming

Russell K. Cooper Public Programming Award presented June 15, 2019 at Tyndale University College and Seminary

The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the Russell K. Cooper Award to Daniel Panneton and the Toronto Ward Museum for “Not Just Numbers: Representation in the Canadian Census.” The Russell K. Cooper Award recognizes a programming initiative that has brought greater public awareness to an aspect of Ontario’s history.

The Not Just Numbers program uses a broad array of primary sources collected from several repositories through original research to engage participants in a critical discussion about representation and power in the historical record. The program advocated for the value of critical historical research skills and aimed to exposed participants to primary resources that they may not have otherwise known. The Toronto Ward Museum’s founder, Gracia Dyer Jalea, notes, “While confronting preconceived biases can be uncomfortable, the exercise is meant to challenge stereotypes and to highlight what the census is unable to properly capture.”



Daniel Panneton (left) accepts the Russell K. Cooper Award on behalf of himself (as creator and program lead) and the Toronto Ward Museum, which funded and facilitated the program. Secretary of the OHS Board of Directors, Allan Macdonnell (right), presented the award on behalf of the OHS Honours and Awards Committee.

Not Just Numbers was developed in collaboration with community and organizational partners and is characterized by the diverse stories it tells. Program events and activities were held by Daniel Panneton throughout the province and around the country at locations including The Global Centre for Pluralism, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, and the Kingston Frontenac Libraries, among others. This program was successful in securing partnerships with twenty heritage, community, and advocacy organizations, such as the Ontario Black History Society, the Ontario Jewish Archives, and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

In 2018, with the support of special funding, Not Just Numbers designed an Educator’s Edition. This additional element will allow teachers to use the Not Just Numbers program in their classrooms. As one letter of support notes, “[The education component] launches in 2019, and will be adapted for use in ESL classrooms, so that our history may be brought to all Ontario residents, new and old”. The OHS Honours and Awards Committee is pleased to present the Russell K. Cooper Award to Daniel Panneton and The Toronto Ward Museum.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a not-for-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario’s history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learn more about the OHS’s Honours and Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit <https://ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/honours-awards/> or contact the Society’s offices by telephone or e-mail.

-The Ontario Historical Society-

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