

THE McGill Daily

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Erratum:

On page 6-7 of Issue 4, published last week on September 25, 2023, the *Daily* misspelled the name of Professor Celeste Pedri-Spade, Associate Provost of Indigenous Initiatives. The *Daily* regrets this error and would like to apologize to Professor Pedri-Spade as well as anyone else affected by this error.



AGA &

Call for Candidates

All members of the Daily Publications Society (DPS), publisher of The McGill Daily and Le Délit, are cordially invited to its **Annual General Assembly:**

Wednesday, October 4th @ 6:00 pm

**McGill University Centre,
3480 Rue McTavish, Room 107**

The general assembly will elect the DPS Board of Directors for the 2023-2024 year.

DPS Directors meet at least once a month to discuss the management of both Le Délit and The McGill Daily and get to vote on important decisions related to the DPS's activities.

The annual financial statements and the report of the public accountant are available at the office of the DPS and any member may, on request, obtain a copy free of charge.

Questions?

Send email to: chair@dailypublications.org



editorial board

3480 McTavish St, Room 107
Montreal, QC, H3A 0E7
phone 514.398.6790
fax 514.398.8318
mcgilldaily.com

The McGill Daily is located on
unceded Kanien'kehá:ka territory.

coordinating editor
Olivia Shan

managing editor
Catey Fifield

news editors
Emma Bainbridge
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Lisa Matmati

le délit
Léonard Smith
rec@delitfrancais.com

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DAILY PUBLICATIONS SOCIETY
SOCIÉTÉ DES PUBLICATIONS DU DAILY

3480 McTavish St, Room 107
Montreal, QC H3A 0E7
phone 514.398.690
fax 514.398.8318

advertising & general manager
Boris Shedov

administrative assistant/sales
Letty Matteo

graphical technical support
Alyx Postovskiy



The State of Special Needs Education in Canada

The COVID-19 pandemic was not kind to Canada's education systems. As university students, each one of us has had personal experience with the hasty scramble to keep schools open, or at least operational, in the midst of a global health crisis. Now, almost three years since the start of the pandemic, we continue to face its ripple effects in virtually every aspect of our academic lives. If the pandemic has been this devastating to Canadian institutions as well-known and as well-funded as McGill University, how have special needs education programs across Canada been affected?

According to a 2023 report from Observatoire des tout-petits, an organization focused on the welfare of children aged one to five, young students in Quebec who have a developmental disorder or disability are not receiving adequate medical and academic services. This systemic failure becomes all the more alarming when we take into account the promises of programs such as Agir tôt, a 2019 initiative developed by the Quebec government that aimed to treat and diagnose developmental delays in pre-kindergarten children. Social Services Minister Lionel Carment, a former pediatric neurologist, explained that prior to this program, special needs children in Quebec typically only received diagnoses and treatment after enrolling in school: "Before Agir tôt there were just no services for [kids] zero to five."

However, according to parents and special education activists like Sharon McCarry, Agir tôt being the first and only program to fill this neglected area of research did not ensure its success. McCarry told CBC that Agir tôt caters mainly to children with language delays and does not adequately support those on the autism spectrum or with other developmental delays. McCarry claimed: "It's not working fast enough or well enough. It's an absolute failure to parents."

The pandemic has only exacerbated existing barriers to special needs services for young students. Long wait times and high price points routinely deter parents and children from getting the resources they need. McCarry spoke to CBC about her own experience as the parent of a child on the autism spectrum, stating: "[If] you have to go privately [...] the cost of getting a diagnosis is now inflated to around \$3,000 to \$3,200, and you can be on a waiting list for well over a year, even in private clinics."

Even if children do obtain a diagnosis, according to the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS), they are unlikely to receive the resources they need in school – even less so in the years following the pandemic. MSSS found that between 2020 and 2021, 21.3 per cent of children five and younger who "presented a significant developmental delay had not received services through programs for physical disability, intellectual disability, or autism spectrum disorder within the prescribed time frame." The report from Observatoire claims that the number of children deprived of these special

needs services is likely much higher, as the MSSS statistic only includes those who have received an official diagnosis.

One of the major contributing factors to the decline of Quebec's special education services in the past years was the government's decision to reassign both professionals and volunteers working in special needs programs to "sectors more extensively affected by the pandemic." Labour shortages, budget cuts, and high staff turnover rates were extremely disruptive to special needs organizations across Canada, and many of them have yet to fully recover.

Just this past June, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB), the largest school board in Ottawa, made headlines when it threatened to cut its special needs summer learning program as a response to estimated budget cuts for the 2023–24 school year. Parents and children have relied on this program, which provides 17 days of tailored instruction to disabled students, for over ten years. Although the summer learning program was eventually saved, the days leading up to the OCDSB's final decision caused considerable stress for parents. Margaret Sambol, one of the many parents who lobbied trustees at a board meeting in June, expressed her distress at having to fight for her seven-year-old son's status in the summer program: "It's sad to have to be advocating for something that I think should be a no-brainer."

Unfortunately, other special needs programs in Canada have not been so lucky. This current school year will see a \$47 million decrease in funding for special needs students under the Calgary Board of Education (CBE). This decision was made despite the most recent data from Alberta Education, which found that the number of students with learning and physical disabilities enrolled under the CBE had increased by over 10,000 from 2016 to 2019 alone. Brad Grundy, the chief financial officer for the CBE, is just one among many school board trustees across Canada who, in the face of pandemic-era budget cuts, have targeted special education programs first.

It is unconscionable that the burden of both obtaining and maintaining special needs services has fallen on this country's most vulnerable students and their parents. Canada must do more to prioritize the wellbeing of children with disabilities, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19. If you know a parent or child looking for special needs resources in Montreal, the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) offers both self-contained programs and specialized services, information about which can be found on the board's website. L'Accompagnateur offers similar resources in French. You can also reach out to local non-profit organizations like the early learning centre for children with autism founded by Sharon McCarry, La Fondation Place Coco. Additionally, if you are able to, consider volunteering with services like the Montreal Centre for Learning Disabilities to help combat ongoing labour shortages.

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SCI+TECH	scitech@mcgilldaily.com	WEB + SOCIAL MEDIA	@mcgilldaily
SPORTS	sports@mcgilldaily.com	MULTIMEDIA	multimedia@mcgilldaily.com

New Anti-Trans Policy in Saskatchewan

Legal challenge taken to ensure the safety of LGBTQ+ students

Lisa Matmati
News Contributor
cw: *transphobia*

On August 22, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe and Education Minister Dustin Duncan introduced a new policy impacting the LGBTQ+ community, particularly students of the community. This policy, which has been shaped as a ‘parental rights’ policy, ultimately requires teachers to ask for parental consent when a student under 16 asks to use different pronouns or a different name within the school environment.

Numerous human rights groups condemn this policy and highlight its harmful character towards LGBTQ+ students who are gender-diverse, trans or non-binary. Indeed, teachers who do not obtain parental consent are prohibited from using the student’s preferred name and pronouns. As a result, gender-diverse students will be subject to outing, misgendering and deadnaming. This will have direct effects on these students’ mental health and participates in fostering an unsafe environment for them at school.

Human rights groups argue that, for LGBTQ+ students, this policy makes the ability to question their gender identity complicated as various students are not out about their gender identification at home. If home is not a comfortable place for them, school can be an environment where they feel safe and affirm their gender identity more freely. This new policy in Saskatchewan undermines the ability to feel safe at school, which is why many organizations have come forth and condemned the policy.

In Saskatchewan, legal measures are being launched by UR Pride, an organization that supports and promotes the rights of the LGBTQ+ community. Within these legal measures, UR Pride is being represented by LBGT+ advocacy group Egale Canada, and the McCarthy Tétrault LLP law firm, who are planning on filing a lawsuit at the Court of King’s Bench. The Daily was able to speak to Bennet Jensen, the Director of Legal at Egale. Jensen gave us an insight on what Egale is challenging within these legal measures. He spoke to the unconstitutionality of this anti-trans policy in regards to the Canadian Charter



Genevieve Quinn | Photos Editor

of Rights and Freedoms, particularly Sections 7 and 15 of the Charter. Jensen put forth the fact that the policy violates the ‘security of the person’ clause of Section 7. This policy fosters an unsafe environment for gender-diverse and trans students, which jeopardizes the safeguards that Section 7 normally enables. Additionally, the policy is said to violate Section 15 of the Charter due to its discriminatory nature. Indeed, this policy only targets trans and gender-diverse students who wish to go by another name or pronoun at school. Other students that wish to use a nickname (i.e., Rob instead of Robert) or who go by an anglicized version of their name at school, do not need parental consent. Hence, this singles out gender-diverse students, constituting a form of discrimination.

For now, Egale has demanded a court injunction. In other words, the organization wants the court to halt the policy until there is a trial. They are waiting to hear back on the injunction request and also have some court hearings planned for November.

The Daily was also able to speak with Harini Sivalingam, the Director of the Equality Program at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA),

an intervenor in these legal measures. Sivalingam said that the CCLA is intervening to highlight, amongst other ideas, “that the messaging that this is an issue of parents rights is really a false dichotomy that pits parents rights against students rights.” She emphasized the idea that through this policy, the government is “dictating when, where and whether a student comes out to their parents,” meaning students either have to come out to their parents, or deal with the psychological stress associated with deadnaming and misgendering.

“Identity has a social dimension,” she said. This is a main part in the distress this policy causes: “If the identity that you feel internally is not reciprocated externally, through your peers and through your social settings, it can cause significant harm to oneself.” This constitutes a cognitive dissonance that could lead to intense gender dysphoria, anxiety and more. Sivalingam also noted that the implementation of this policy is part of a bigger issue and that there is an “alarming trend that we are seeing right across the country.” Effectively, this policy in Saskatchewan appears not long after changes

made to legislation 713 in New Brunswick, which forbids teachers to use a student’s preferred name or pronoun without parental consent, if they are under 16. There have also been rumors of other provinces that might want to “test the waters” regarding anti-trans policies like these. However, Sivalingam did highlight the numerous counter-protests to these policies that still leave hope. She said that the CCLA sees a shining light in that “most people in Canada believe in the Charter and believe in equality of all people.”

Abe Berglas from Queer McGill provided insight on gender-diversity within the educational environment. They mention that this policy displays a “misunderstanding that if a kid is allowed to experiment with their gender, they will turn trans.” Berglas added that this is a “false logic that has implications at every age level,” and “it shows that fundamentally, these people don’t believe in transness.” This policy thus undermines the fact that “being able to control your name and your pronouns is a very empowering experience” for trans people, and that the ability to experiment with one’s gender identity in a place that is safe should be valued.

“The messaging that this is an issue of parents rights is really a false dichotomy that pits parents rights against students rights.”

– Harini Sivalingam

Ultimately, advocates say that this new policy in Saskatchewan has important implications for the LGBTQ+ community and puts them, especially students of the community, in a vulnerable position. For now, trans and gender-diverse students will be subject to the consequences this policy entails, mentally and physically. Nonetheless, many counter-protests have been started against policies like these and legal measures put forth by Egale continue to play out in court.

Zelensky's First Visit to Canada Since Russian Invasion

Canada reaffirms its support of Ukraine as Zelensky meets with Prime Minister

Sena Ho
News Contributor

On September 22, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky arrived in Ottawa after previously appearing at the White House before U.S. President Joe Biden and other Washington lawmakers. This is the first time Zelensky has visited Canada since the onset of the Ukraine-Russia conflict in February 2022. He aims to discuss continued support for the Ukrainian war effort with several Western countries who have been helping Ukraine financially and humanitarily.

The Ukrainian President appeared in Ottawa to speak in front of Parliament, and to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. In his address, Zelensky thanked them for their collective efforts throughout the war thus far, especially in terms of offering military support and financial backing. Since the outset of the conflict, Canada has provided Ukraine with different forms of assistance, including providing a safe haven for fleeing Ukrainian refugees, which Zelensky reiterated before parliamentarians and dignitaries. His travels have been a part of a "campaign," per se, to communicate with the world on Ukraine's struggles. Throughout this campaign, the President has continually emphasized that "It is genocide, what Russian occupiers are doing to Ukraine," and that "It is not just about an ordinary conflict. It is about saving lives of millions of people."

Canada's readiness to support Ukraine through this crisis can be seen in their allocation of nearly \$9 billion for varying resources, spanning from humanitarian causes, financial aid, and military forces. Indeed, following Zelensky's speech, Trudeau gave a confident remark, stating, "I have made it clear that our government will stand with you for as long as it takes." He reinforced this intention by announcing an additional \$650 million over the course of three years, including 50 armored vehicles to the \$500 million aid package that was revealed this past summer which would provide Ukraine with 35 high-resolution drone cameras as well as construction for a new repair facility in Poland, hoping to assist in Ukraine's Leopard attacks.

Canada does not only have a propensity to give back in such dire crises, but it has also expressed an eagerness to respond on behalf of its growing Ukrainian population. Around 1.4 million people in Canada are of Ukrainian descent, comprising about four per cent of the country's population and making it the country with the second largest Ukrainian expatriate population, behind Russia. In the past year, around 166,000 Ukrainians have found home on Canadian soil with help from the special visa program, alongside 800,000 individuals that have already been granted an emergency visa. As mentioned by Zelensky during his speech, Canada's support for Ukraine dates back to 1983, since the first monument dedicated to the victims of the Holodomor was constructed in the city of Edmonton, indicating the respect and high regard the two countries have held for each other.

Zelensky thanked them for their collective efforts throughout the war thus far, especially in terms of offering military support and financial backing.

Amid the rising apprehensions for continued support displayed by the American Republican Party, Zelensky expressed immense gratitude for the actions of Canada. McGill Professor Daniel Béland spoke up about his perspective on the relations between Ukraine and Canada, stating that "Considering the reluctance of many Republicans in the U.S. Congress to further support Ukraine and the tensions between Ukraine and some of its key allies like Poland, Canada



Olivia Shan | Coordinating Editor

is seen as a reliable supporter of Ukraine so Zelensky will be in friendly territory during his visit to Canada." Although matters regarding Ukraine have been a major cause for political divide in the U.S., after speaking with Biden and several other American diplomats, the White House decided that it will soon make its decision whether to send Ukraine Army Tactical Missile Systems. The Ukrainian President's trip to the States also gave him a chance to speak with many of the world's leaders at the United Nations in New York City, urging them once more to help Ukraine fend off Russian forces.

Turmoil on this issue did not surface in Canada as Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre asserted how the country will continue to stand with Ukraine. After meeting with Zelensky outside the House of Commons chamber, Poilievre announced in a media statement, that "Canada should continue to help Ukrainians win their freedom, welcome Ukrainian refugees and finally begin to approve natural gas

exports to break European dependence on Russia and turn dollars for dictators like Putin into paycheques for our people." Ultimately there exists an inherent disposition to uphold democratic values that exist behind Canada's eager decision to assist Ukraine. Trudeau stated how, "We stand here absolutely united in our defense of democracy and our condemnation of (Russian President) Vladimir Putin's unprovoked, unjustified and unconscionable invasion of Ukraine." It is representative to the world that the forces

of democracy exist beyond country borders, and that defending it is one of the many core ideals in global organized aid.

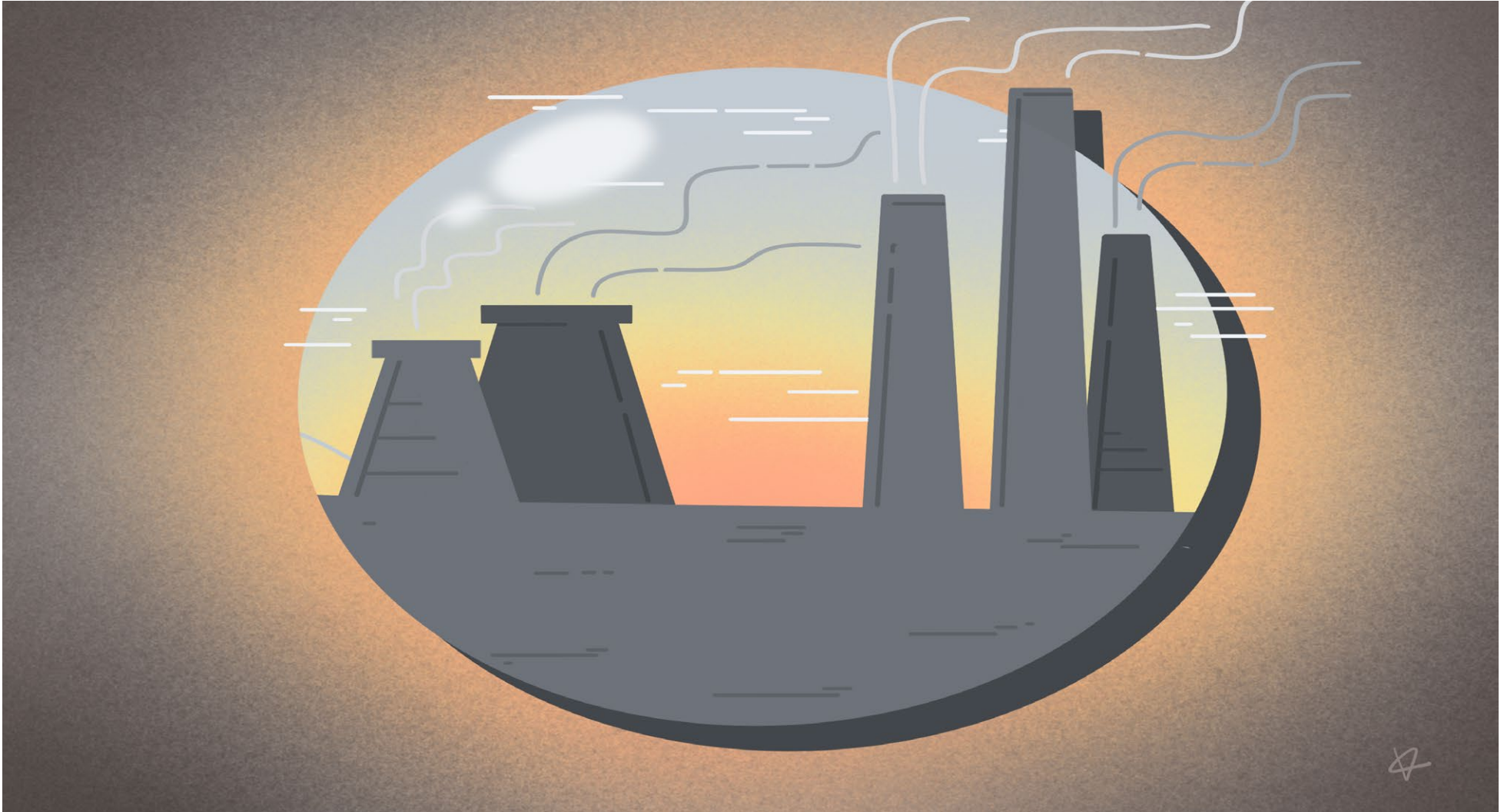
Following his recent appearance in Ottawa, Zelensky is now heading to Toronto, where he will be making a more public visit to meet with businesspeople and appear before Ukrainian-Canadians as well as other supporters of Ukraine at a rally in Fort York.

We stand here absolutely united in our defense of democracy and our condemnation of Vladimir Putin's unprovoked, unjustified and unconscionable invasion of Ukraine.

- Justin Trudeau

Legault Invited to UN Climate Ambition Summit

Many displeased with Premier's current climate commitment



Gemma Holland | News Contributor

Quebec Premier, François Legault, was set to give a speech at the first United Nations Climate Ambition Summit held in New York this past week. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN, invited Legault to attend the UN General Assembly and to participate in the Summit held on Wednesday, September 20. He was invited to present Quebec's efforts in fighting climate change at the Summit and to participate in a discussion with members of the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance. Legault was the only Canadian premier to be invited to the Summit.

The purpose of the summit is to highlight "first mover and doer" leaders within the government, businesses, local authorities, and civil society who have established set actions, policies, and plans to reduce carbon emissions on both a global and local level. In doing so, Guterres hopes to inspire climate justice by demonstrating the feasibility of cutting emissions. Additionally, the Summit aims to accelerate their goal outlined in The Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Legault's 2023 Plan for a Green Economy 2023-2028 Implementation Plan has drawn recent political and international

attention and was the basis of his invitation to the summit. Legault's plan has a nine billion budget and is based upon five main axes: mitigating climate change through a reduction of Quebec's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, building the "economy of tomorrow" by focusing on electrification, adapting to climate change, creating a predictable environment, and accelerating research and development. Other aspects of Legault's initiative include a target of reducing GHG emissions to 37.5 per cent below its 1990 levels by 2030 and aiming to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. Additionally, they hope to have two million electric vehicles on the roads by 2030.

Although Legault did not end up speaking at the Summit, he did give a speech at a meeting held on September 19 for the representatives of the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, a group of governments working to decrease gas and oil production of which Quebec is a member. At this conference, Legault explained his 2030 initiative including Quebec's plan to make green aluminum, green steel, and electric buses using clean energy. He stated Quebec has "the lowest rate in Canada and the lowest in the United States" of greenhouse gas levels per person.

However, not everyone is as pleased with Legault's actions against climate change. The belief among many environmental groups, including Greenpeace Canada and Greenpeace McGill, is that while Quebec has made some important strides, more needs to be done to qualify Legault's invitation to the UN Summit. Greenpeace Canada stated its worry both that the goal of a 37.5 per cent reduction in GHG emissions should be updated to 65 per cent and that based on Quebec's current climate actions, emissions are not "being drastically and rapidly reduced" enough, meaning that "Quebec is not on track to meet its 2030 target". They pointed out that in contrast to Legault's Green Economy Plan, emissions in the transportation sector have seen a rise as of late. Greenpeace McGill echoed this concern that although "Quebec has consistently been a climate leader," that "given Legault's reluctance to develop productive and changemaking climate policy, we don't necessarily consider him to be the best representative of climate interests." The main issue they emphasized is the plans' failure to facilitate system-level changes: "it is not enough to simply hope that innovation will allow us to circumvent issues that

are, at their core, systemic."

Other political and environmental groups in Quebec, including the Parti Québécois, has questioned whether these plans made by Legault are performative. There is also skepticism around the execution of said plans on a local level and in the long run. In terms of Quebec's representation as a

At the UN Summit, many leaders initially invited to deliver speeches were sidelined due to a lack of action in their plans[.]

strong leader in climate change, Greenpeace McGill noted that there are many important leaders and groups working in Quebec who "would be able to better explain the goals and ideas of the local climate movement, such as members of our Indigenous community" than the Quebec government.

As the UN Summit concluded, Guterres stressed their goal to inspire more businesses,

Clement Veysset | The McGill Daily

governments, and leaders to act by highlighting green initiatives at the event in what he called a "Summit of Hope," which was intended to illustrate the feasibility of climate change action by spotlighting green initiatives. The Summit outlined that the next best steps will be aligning local and international policies with possible and science-backed targets to expedite decarbonization and more climate justice actions. The goal of keeping temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius will require the establishment of policies and regulatory architecture to enable this transition. There will be much work that must be done on behalf of the government, financial authorities, and regulators to ensure these actions are being put into practice. At the UN Summit, many leaders who were initially invited to deliver speeches were sidelined due to a lack of action in their plans. This was a means of moral pressure delivered by the UN. Following this, there will be a great deal of pressure on governments, including Legault and the Quebec government to be able to implement his climate change plans, with many international and local leaders watching closely.

Can ChatGPT Make You a Better Writer?

The Quebec Writers' Federation reflects on the threats, challenges, and benefits of artificial intelligence

Ariane Fournier
Culture Staff Writer

It turns out ChatGPT, the artificial intelligence chatbot that has taken the academic world by storm, might not be all evil. Sure, it has the ability to replace human labour in multiple professions, provoke security breaches, and disseminate misinformation, but what if it could enhance your creativity, help you express your thoughts more clearly, and sharpen your writing skills, too?

This very dilemma was raised at the AI and the Future of Writing event, a panel discussion put on by the Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF) on September 21 at the Atwater Library. A packed house listened with rapt attention as moderator Julian Sher led QWF vice-president Crystal Chan, author Sean Michaels, and McGill professor Andrew Piper in a lively reflection on the uses of artificial intelligence in creative writing.

Michaels broke the ice by reminding everyone that there is nothing new about systems like ChatGPT. "Think of auto-complete on your phone, or spell check in Microsoft Word," he told the crowd. The Montreal-based writer went on to tell the story of his introduction to the chatbot in 2019, on a website called Talk to Transformer, and how it led him to write his most recent book, *Do You Remember Being Born?*, a novel about the intersection of AI and poetry.

"I just stumbled onto this space and I started writing some things, and I found myself deeply disquieted, unsettled, and at times a little bit delighted by what it was feeding back to me," he recalls. Once Michaels presented

"But imagine if this thing could be some kind of writing assistant, a sort of personalized interactive bot that could help you be a little more creative, help you figure out how to express your thoughts through writing."

– Professor Andrew Piper



his fiction to the AI, he received new writing in a voice eerily similar to his own. "It had kind of an unsettlingly good – not great – but an unsettlingly good grasp of aspects of my writing style," he shared. The experiment led him to write *Do You Remember Being Born?*, a novel about a 75-year-old poet who moves to California to write a poem with the Silicon Valley Company's new poetry AI. The book, which was published a few weeks ago through Random House Canada, was written by

Michaels with the help of an AI program of his design, making it a great example of how artificial intelligence can be used to supplement creativity.

For Crystal Chan, QWF's vice-president, ChatGPT is not cheeky nor is it creative. "It doesn't just create something out of thin air, it's predicting based on existing content," she explains. She finds that in terms of mysticism and magic, artists and writers are doing unpredictable things with AI, not the other way around. She points to Michaels' achievement and reminds everyone that the idea for the novel came from him: "It is interesting to play around with artificial intelligence to see what it is good at, what it is bad at, but you must factor in some lore of your own, too."

Andrew Piper, who teaches in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at McGill University, supported Chan's argument. "It's forcing us to rethink how we write, or how we assign writing," he says

of the chatbot. Professor Piper expressed his concern that tools like ChatGPT could eventually replace skills like writing, but thinks the software could potentially be beneficial in the long run. "We know some kids really succeed at writing. Some kids really fail at it. But imagine if this thing could be some kind of writing assistant, a sort of personalized interactive bot that could help you be a little more creative, help you figure out how to express your thoughts through writing. That could be very exciting," he shares.

Although the outcome can be fascinating when put into the hands of highly discerning creative professionals, [the panelists] believe writers must have already honed their hard skills in order to use a chatbot effectively.

Genevieve Quinn | Photos Editor

In the end, all three panelists agreed that using AI to complement your creative process is not without risks. Although the outcome can be fascinating when put into the hands of highly discerning creative professionals, they believe writers must have already honed their hard skills in order to use a chatbot effectively. In other words, ChatGPT cannot turn you into a writer. At least not for now. "Could this tool somehow augment and facilitate learning? We just don't know yet," concluded Professor Piper.

Books Required for My Literature Degree That You Should Actually Read

Highlights from “non-canon” academic reading lists

Islay Fraser
Culture Contributor

Common criticisms of “canon” scholarly reading lists include the following: they are only composed of works from ancient, stuffy men; they include only Euro-centric perspectives; and they completely ignore intersectionality. But I have been lucky. During my undergraduate degree in English and French literature at Mount Allison University, my professors pushed boundaries with their reading lists, including a variety of genders, races, nationalities, and literary periods. We did, of course, read authors from the “canon” – like Henry James, T. S. Eliot, and Albert Camus – but we also read France Daigle, Dionne Brand, and Alison Bechdel.

Here, I have assembled a list of some of the books required for my degree that I genuinely believe everyone would benefit from reading. These books are powerful, thought-provoking, well-written, and more accessible to the general public than the academic “classics” might be.

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

This book was on the reading list for an introductory class to prose literature. Adichie is a Nigerian feminist writer also known for her activism. *Americanah* narrates the challenges Ifemelu, a Nigerian woman, faces living in North America, from places to get her hair done to (in)visibility in a predominantly white society and culture. The characters are complex and deep; their internal emotional conflicts lift off the page to haunt the reader.

I Place You into the Fire by Rebecca Thomas

I read this poetry collection for a spectacular seminar called Local Literature and Diversity. Immediately after finishing it, I rushed to post this review on my Instagram story: “Go read this book right now!!! *I Place You into the Fire* is an amazing poetry collection by Mi’kmaq poet Rebecca Thomas about love, hurt, and accountability. A call to action for settlers!” I could reread this collection for years and get something new out of it every time. It draws attention to the inner workings and issues

These books are powerful, thought-provoking, well-written, and more accessible to the general public.

of colonialism, capitalism, and environmental and social justice through its powerful words.

L’avenir by Catherine Leroux

This novel combines the story of a woman trying to uncover the truth about the tragedy that separated her family and the life of a community of children living in the forest. I loved this novel so much that I wrote this informal review on my Instagram story: “I just finished reading *L’avenir* by Catherine Leroux for one of my French classes. The story is WONDERFUL and the characters are strange and there are so many allusions and the writing is beautiful! My head is exploding because this book exists *heart eye emoji* *crying emoji* Actually crying. READ READ READ!!!” A much more controlled review might say that this is a wonderful and complicated story about unique and intertwined characters. Leroux includes perfectly subtle allusions, and her writing is absolutely beautiful.

Moon of the Crusted Snow by Waubgeshig Rice

This book was an important part of the class Introduction to Canadian Literature, in which the words “Canadian” and “literature” were both challenged by the reading list. Rice, an Anishinaabe author from Wasauksing First Nation, tells the story of an Indigenous community that becomes completely cut off from the rest of the (colonized) world when the power goes out and never comes back on. It is full of Indigenous wisdom and an overwhelming sense of community during a crisis. This novel is a comment on capitalism, but, more importantly, it is about the value of family and community.

The Overstory by Richard Powers

I read this novel for the most amazing seminar called Ecofiction of the Forest. Here is my review on *The StoryGraph*: “I don’t even know how to review this book. I don’t know if I’ll ever fully process it. Just – the incredible world of trees. Activism. The complex and intertwining stories of eight people. Just read it.” I learned so much about trees and forests scientifically as well as symbolically over the course of this class, and



Olivia Shan | Coordinating Editor

The Overstory summarizes much of that knowledge. Fantastically well-written, this story will give you access to the magical world of trees.

Funny Boy by Shyam Selvadurai

This book was one of many that I read for the course Queer Literature in Canada. It is about a Sri Lankan boy coming to terms with his sexuality while experiencing the traumatic and unpredictable events during and leading up to the 1983 Colombo riots. Although Selvadurai is queer and Sri Lankan like his main character, the story is not autobiographical. Besides teaching non-Sri Lankan readers about a life and culture very different from their own, this story is full of emotion, earnestness, and truth that is relatable to a wide range of people. In my opinion, this book’s heart is what earns it its timelessness.

The Dispossessed by Ursula K. Le Guin

I read this novel for the coolest Utopian Literature seminar. Le Guin does incredible world-building for this utopia-in-progress. There is plenty of insight concerning philosophy, physics, and politics, as well as really interesting revolutionary ideas and

perspectives on capitalism and anarchism. We focused a lot on anti-capitalism, decolonization, and the process of creating a utopia in this class, so Le Guin’s book was a perfect fit. As a science-fiction novel, this story allows us to view our world from an outsider’s perspective and learn about the revolution needed to make change.

Honorable Mention: “Gentle Now, Don’t Add to Heartache” by Juliana Spahr

Although not a book, I had to share this poem that I read for

two different classes: Literature from the 1800s to Present and Romantic Ecology. This is most definitely one of my favourite poems of all time. There is a natural arc to its story, and the rhythm flows in harmony with the river it describes. Spahr’s narration of our beginning, our connection with the land, and how some of us have ruptured that connection through capitalism and individualism is absolutely beautiful. You’ll also learn some cool names for flora and fauna!

There is a natural arc to its story, and the rhythm flows in harmony with the river it describes.

Spahr’s narration of our beginning, our connection with the land, and how some of us have ruptured that connection through capitalism and individualism is absolutely beautiful.

Breaking the Cycle: Confronting Healthcare Disparities for Indigenous Peoples in Canada

It's time to bridge the inequalities

Jade-Allegra Galli
Commentary Contributor

The Commentary section encourages rebuttals from the student community on articles published in this section.

Content warning: anti-Indigenous racism

The government of Canada has worked over the years to achieve reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through a restored engagement between nations, governments, the Inuit, and the Crown, stemming from an underlying basic acknowledgment of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership as the cornerstone for revolutionary change. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIP) provides a framework for the Government of Canada's implementation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was created after UN Special Rapporteur Jose Martinez Cobo released a study about the systemic discrimination of Indigenous peoples worldwide. It affirms the UNDRIP's status as an international human rights act with applicability in Canadian law, which is especially significant with the increasing number of Indigenous peoples in Canada. According to the 2016 census results from Statistics Canada, 13,100 Indigenous people were living in the Montreal agglomeration and 34,745 in the greater Montreal metropolitan area, a statistic that grew to a total of 46,085 Indigenous identities in 2021 according to the census. This makes for a very large increase solely in the Montreal metropolitan area, with additional significant growth of 1.9 per cent per year, totaling 8 per cent, of the Indigenous population in Canada from 2016 to 2021.

Health is a basic human right, and yet there are unacceptable disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples across Canada. A long-lasting legacy of colonialism and institutional racism means they are more likely to endure persistent poverty, impediments to housing, education, and food insecurities, all of which contribute to chronic illnesses and other health issues. They encounter racism when seeking healthcare, a lack of cultural safety, and a lack of

This legislation, while aimed at reforming the healthcare system, has been widely criticized for failing to recognize the existence of systemic racism within the province, particularly within the medical field.

resources dedicated to Indigenous health. A relevant example is the death of an Atikamekw woman, Joyce Echaquan, in a hospital in Quebec back in September 28, 2020. Prior to her passing, Echaquan captured a Facebook Live video in which she experienced racist harassment from medical staff. Echaquan's passing, according to coroner Gehane Kamel, is another instance of the institutionalized hatred leveled at Indigenous people in Quebec. Following Echaquan's passing, a petition was started to acknowledge the racism against Indigenous peoples in governmental institutions in Quebec. In an address to the House of Commons, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged that institutional racism had a part in Echaquan's passing, calling this "the worst form of racism" and "systemic racism." Despite these reports and long apologies, the Indigenous community in Canada claims that there hasn't been enough done to combat prejudice in healthcare. Joyce Echaquan's case, according to Mary Jane McCallum, a professor at the University of Winnipeg and the holder of the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People, History and Archives, "does not tell us anything new." "Our health system was built on racial segregation,"



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McCallum says. "White supremacy and colonialism is in the fabric of our being – it is the air we breathe and the water we drink in Canada."

The introduction of Bill 32, created to "establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network" in Quebec, has further exacerbated these long-lasting issues, contributing to growing dissatisfaction within a variety of organizations, including the College of Physicians and Indigenous communities. This legislation, while aimed at reforming the healthcare system, has been widely criticized for failing to recognize the existence of systemic racism within the province, particularly within the medical field. Its inability to address the deeply entrenched biases and discriminatory practices has not only perpetuated disparities in healthcare access and quality but has also ignited a fervent response from Indigenous communities who demand recognition, justice, and equity in healthcare provisions. In this context, the complex interplay between Indigenous societies, healthcare, and the shortcomings of Bill 32 underscores the urgent need for comprehensive reform and a deeper acknowledgment of historical and ongoing inequities.

On the morning of Wednesday

13, 2023, the Joyce's Principle Office walked out of the meeting to review Bill 32. The organization's leader declared that she was prouder of Quebecers than of their government, claiming that the majority of Quebecers are aware that systemic racism exists in the health care system and that the bill's First Nations engagement was insufficient. "Cultural safety cannot be achieved in a health and social services network[...]without recognition of the obvious. The network as it has been designed contains policies, programs, and services that discriminate against Indigenous realities," said Jennifer Petiquay-Dufresne, the executive director of the Joyce Principle Office. Among the bill's critics is Dr.

Vollant, an Innu surgeon at Notre-Dame Hospital who also spoke at the committee on Wednesday and made the claim that the right for cultural safety in health care patients is urgent and would like to see the acknowledgment of systemic racism in Bill 32, which should have been drafted by First Nations in the first place.

After countless years of racism and tragic incidents within the Indigenous community in the healthcare system, it is time for the Government to take serious measures and recognize the problem at its root, as the platitudes that have taken place so far are not nearly enough to guarantee a safe future for Indigenous communities in Canada.

"Cultural safety cannot be achieved in a health and social services network[...]without recognition of the obvious. The network as it has been designed contains policies, programs, and services that discriminate against Indigenous realities."

The Case for Rationalism Regarding Nuclear Energy

An opinion on nuclear energy versus fossil fuels

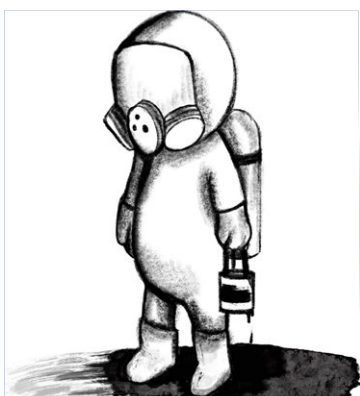
Jude Archer
Commentary Contributor

We have all heard the term carbon footprint before. In fact, I would guess you haven't just heard it, but even had it verbally inscribed on your brain on every Earth Day in elementary school. You're told to wear a sweater instead of turning up the heat, to turn off the lights when you leave a room, to eat less meat, among other little inconveniences. We all know that some small deprivations of comfort here and there are not going to turn the tide of global warming. Unless you want to go and live like Ted Kaczynski, the reality is that there isn't that much you can do to directly reduce carbon emissions. So why is so much of the blame thrown onto the consumer? Why do we even use the term "carbon footprint" if the foot in question is effectively being pressed into the ground by external factors? The answer is simple.

The concept rose to popularity in the early 2000s after BP, the second-largest privately owned oil company on the planet, released its "carbon footprint calculator." The company had hired the PR firm Ogilvy & Mather to improve its public image. In what I would call one of the most successful public relations campaigns in modern history, they were able to shift the blame away from multi-billion dollar corporations and onto consumers like you and me. Today, the term is one that no one blinks at.

This is a powerful lesson in the power of public relations, particularly when it comes to climate law. Contrary to BP's propaganda, global warming can be stopped only legislatively, so public understanding of the issues is fundamental to progress. To make sure that happens, being logical in our approach to climate issues is paramount. Unfortunately, this is often more an ideal than a reality. One of the most glaring oversights of this kind is public opinion regarding nuclear power.

It is clean, reliable, and is not



dependent on still-emerging technology. Nuclear power offers us the clearest path to sustainability today. If we actually wanted to reduce emissions, we should be scaling up nuclear power. Instead, we have seen the opposite. Germany has been scaling back its reliance on nuclear power for a while, and this year they closed the last of their plants. What has the result been? Reliance on Russian natural gas imports. Since the conflict in Ukraine has put a stop to those imports, Germany has been forced to go back to burning coal, the most harmful fossil fuel, just to keep the power on. This is not an isolated issue. Nuclear power plants everywhere are being closed and the construction of others is frequently prevented. The United States has seen 12 reactors close since 2013; just one has opened and it was less than two months ago. In fact, the recent additions of two reactors to Georgia's Plant Vogtle are the first new ones to be approved in the US in the past three decades. Much of continental Europe, including Denmark, Switzerland, and Italy, have phased out or have plans to phase out nuclear power altogether. As a result, nuclear power accounts for less and less of the world's energy production.

Anti-nuclear groups claim that phasing out nuclear power is a necessary step in expanding the use of renewable energy. A German official cited it as a primary reason for their quashing of nuclear energy to CNN. But where is that slack really being picked up? The unsurprising answer is fossil fuels. Since 1995, global nuclear power generation has decreased by seven percent to about eleven per cent of the world's power. During that time, wind and solar construction has increased by just under four percent, not nearly enough to make up the difference. If we take a look at countries that have replaced nuclear power, we rarely find renewables filling its shoes. Japan, which got twenty-nine per cent of its power from nuclear energy prior to Fukushima, now gets just three per cent. Consequently, their reliance on coal and natural gas has increased greatly, now accounting for thirty-two and forty-two per cent of power generation respectively. Meanwhile, Germany now draws thirty per cent of its power from coal, although they hope to phase it out by 2038. As for plant closures in the United States, major plants in Florida and California were replaced with natural gas generation. In Wisconsin, the closures were compensated primarily by coal. If

eliminating nuclear power seems only to give way to less clean energy, why is it still so common? Two reasons: special interests and emotions.

Starting with the former, I should make it clear that there is no coalition of fossil fuel giants funding a covert anti-nuclear PR campaign (as far as we know, at least). Save for a \$200,000 dollar donation to Friends of the Earth, an anti-nuclear group, by Robert O. Anderson, a petroleum executive, in the 1970s, the battle has more been one of lobbying. Pretty much all energy sectors receive federal subsidies, but there's only so much to go around. Through the magic of lobbying, the fossil fuel industry, with groups like the American Petroleum Institute, has managed to secure tens of billions of dollars in annual subsidies from the US government and inflated the danger of nuclear power to lawmakers. While the six billion dollars in aid to struggling nuclear plants approved last year is a step in the right direction, it simply is not enough. Cost represents the biggest real barrier to nuclear power. It is incredibly expensive to build a

"Through the magic of lobbying, the fossil fuel industry, with groups like the American Petroleum Institute, has managed to secure tens of billions of dollars in annual subsidies from the US government and inflated the danger of nuclear power."



Olivia Shan | Coordinating Editor

reactor, meaning that substantial government assistance is a must.

Probably the single most mentioned reason for getting rid of nuclear power is the risk it poses to those nearby. Since Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, and Fukushima, there has been a degree of panichysteria surrounding any discussion of safety with respect to nuclear power plants. Germany had already been gradually scaling down its nuclear generation, but after Fukushima in 2011, things greatly accelerated and there was a clear policy shift for then-chancellor Angela Merkel, who had previously been pro-nuclear. These fears are understandable. When we hear the horror stories of meltdowns (or watch incredibly graphic HBO series about them), it is easy to feel repulsed by the construction of new plants. However, if we take a step back and actually look at the numbers, we get a very different picture.

Nuclear power, by the ratio of power generated to deaths caused, is among the safest of any power source. In fact, those three major meltdowns I just mentioned resulted in just 32 deaths; 31 of those were from Chernobyl. For reference, wind turbine accidents have claimed 78 lives since the 1970s. Note that there has been controversy regarding the death toll of Chernobyl due to the Soviet Union's deliberate lack of transparency regarding the incident. The UN estimates that up to 4,000 additional casualties may eventually be attributed to the disaster due to radiation poisoning. Additionally, the surrounding area has been rendered uninhabitable for 20,000 years. These are naturally alarming statistics, but

if we consider that fossil fuels result in an estimated 8.7 million deaths each year from pollution, we get a little perspective. Further, Chernobyl was an isolated incident resulting from, yes, a nuclear plant, but also poor maintenance, poor safety standards, and blunderous handling. Nothing like it has ever come close to happening again. In the more than a quarter of a century that has since passed, the only meltdown we have seen resulted from a natural disaster of immense scale and resulted in only a single death.

It is understandable to have a reaction to the historical calamities caused by nuclear power, but that does not make it acceptable to make policy decisions that will affect millions of people based on emotional rather than rational reactions. Even if we want to view nuclear power as a purely transitional technology as we move towards a totally renewable future, we must acknowledge its importance in the present when, as much as we do not want to believe it, renewable energy technology is not capable of sustaining us. Right now, every plant closure just means more burning coal and more blackened lungs. If we are willing to identify global warming as the preeminent threat to our society that it is, we should look to realistic solutions, not just the ones that sound nice. Our climate discourse should be shaped by ideas that address the reality and logistics of our situation, not idealism and big oil's talking points.

CROSSWORD

Zoe Lister | News Editor

Energy Shift

ACROSS

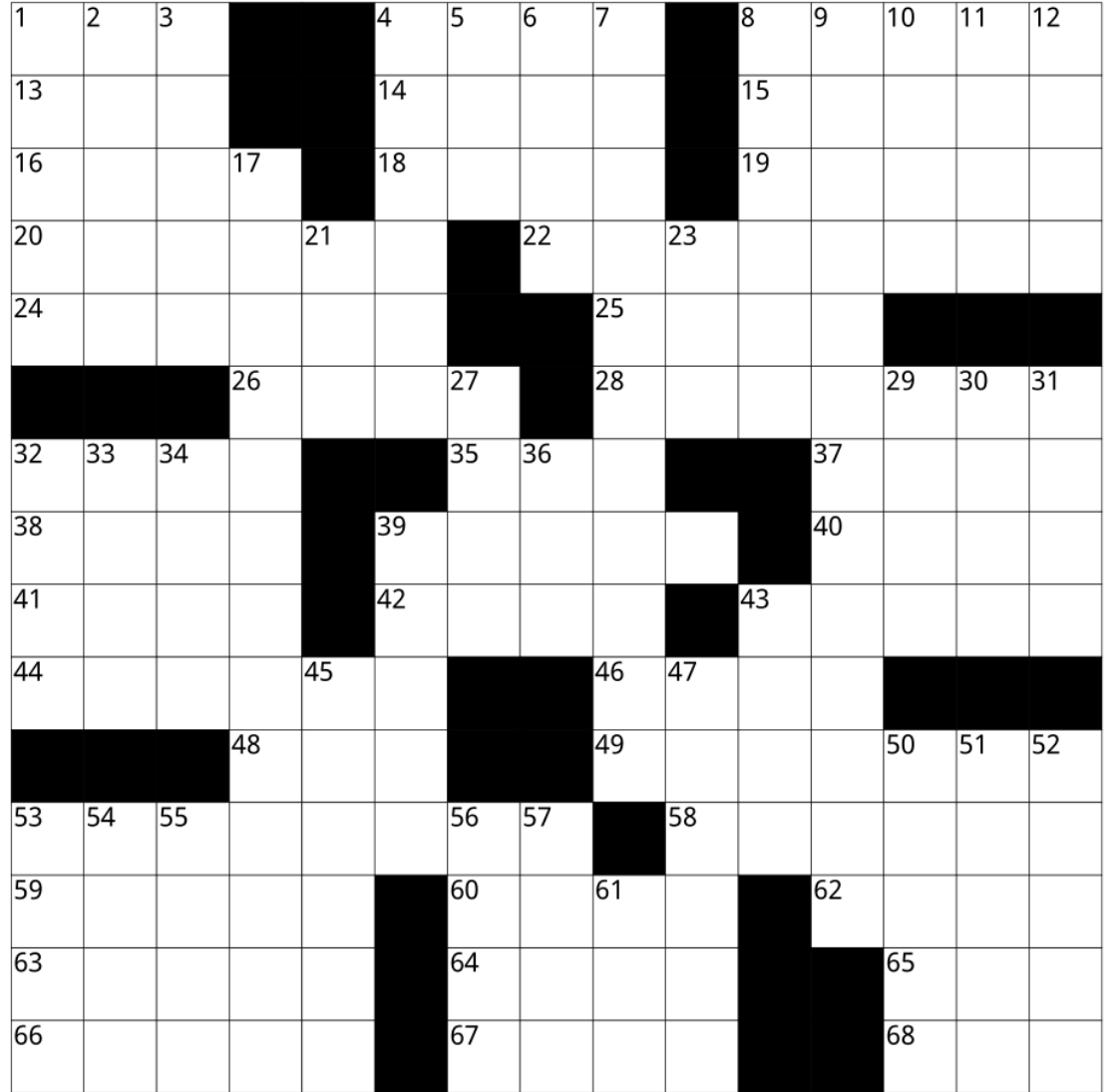
- 1 To the __ degree
- 4 "Yeah, right!"
- 8 Yearned
- 13 Spanish gold
- 14 Puerto __
- 15 Socrates's student
- 16 Tequila cocktail, slangily
- 18 Angers
- 19 Canadien to a Bruin, perhaps
- 20 Inhales, with "down"
- 22 Numbers tossed out
- 24 Titular role in a famous ballet
- 25 Cuba, por ejemplo
- 26 Yellowfin, e.g.
- 28 Final stretch
- 32 "Frozen" sister
- 35 NFL official
- 37 Gutter locale
- 38 Fuzz
- 39 Find repugnant
- 40 Queen of the Nile, informally
- 41 Jacob's first wife
- 42 Mediocre
- 43 Sweet-talk
- 44 Month in a Taylor Swift song title
- 46 Peru's capital
- 48 Opposite of SSW
- 49 Wall fixtures
- 53 Pertaining to atmospheric pressure
- 58 It might have a lot of pull
- 59 Famous climate scientist Kalmus

60 U.S. weather agcy.

- 62 Biblical garden
- 63 __four Sherbrooke
- 64 Double-decker checker
- 65 Hosp. areas
- 66 Drain problems
- 67 Pay to play
- 68 __ v. Wade

DOWN

- 1 Claim on some food packaging
- 2 Bingham of "Baywatch"
- 3 Día divisions
- 4 Out of bed
- 5 Knight title
- 6 Slushy treat
- 7 Those deemed "dumb as a rock", maybe
- 8 Taxing times?
- 9 Existential ecological concern, and this puzzle's theme
- 10 "__ Nagila"
- 11 Coup d'__
- 12 Big name in pineapples
- 17 Fridays for Future activist
- 21 Seasonal sickness, familiarly
- 23 Airport screening org.
- 27 "__ MTL" (Tree care specialists)
- 29 "__ Land"
- 30 At any time
- 31 Math subj.
- 32 Singer Fitzgerald



- 33 In __ of
- 34 Unforeseen problem
- 36 Canadian interjections
- 39 Fall flower
- 43 "Let's go!"
- 45 Some drums
- 47 Glacial period
- 50 Autumn drink
- 51 Month before febrero
- 52 Pick up on
- 53 Panel established in 1988 by The World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, briefly
- 54 Close tightly
- 55 Other, in Oaxaca
- 56 "__ Dinka Doo" (theme song of Jimmy Durante)
- 57 Mint product
- 61 Unwelcome picnic guest

THE MCGILL DAILY IS HIRING!

**DEADLINE
EXTENDED!**

DESIGN & PRODUCTION (1)

The Design editor is responsible for the design, format, and layout of our print newspaper. Experience in InDesign and Photoshop is recommended.

VISUALS (1)

The Visuals editor is responsible for acquiring, and often creating, the art that fills our pages – photographs, digital art, collages, and more!

FEATURES (1)

The Features editor deals in long-form journalism that achieves greater depth than a typical article can. They also publish photojournalism!

CULTURE (1)

The Culture section explores topics like media, music, and visual arts. The editor should prioritize stories, artists, and perspectives that are often overlooked.

SCI-TECH (1)

The Sci-Tech section explores the interplay of science and society. The editor will prepare articles on artificial intelligence, wildlife, pharmaceuticals, and a host of other topics.

VIDEO (1)

The Video editor will assist our Social Media editor in generating video content and other promotional material for social media.

**APPLICATIONS DUE BEFORE MIDNIGHT
ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6.**

All editors are paid a monthly stipend. We are also hiring volunteer staff writers for all sections.

Any questions? Visit our website at mcgilldaily.com or attend our next pitch meeting on **Tuesday, October 3 at 6:00 PM.**

