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Taking care of each other since 1911

On police brutality

Justice for Gladys Tolley

PAGES 12, 13 & 14

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3 NEWS

- #NoDAPL demonstration
- SSMU GA fails to reach quorum
- Palestine and Feminist Paradigms
- Queer issues on campus
- Joint Board & Senate meeting
- Protesting for Palestine
- Surveillance vs. press freedom
- Million Mask March

8 COMMENTARY

- Religion in the modern world
- Editorial and community thoughts
on the Trump presidency

10 PHOTO ESSAY

- Photo essay on the #NoDAPL rally

12 FEATURES

- Justice for Gladys Tolley

15 SCI+TECH

- Possibility of a three parent baby

16 CULTURE

- The highs and lows of RBMA
- On Don Giovanni, and violence against women
- Comedy scene in Montreal is way too white

19 EDITORIAL

- Critically examining Remembrance Day

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Demonstrators stand in solidarity with Standing Rock Sioux Nation

Several withdraw their accounts with TD Bank, Royal Bank of Canada

NORA MCCREADY & XAVIER RICHER VIS
The McGill Daily

On Monday, November 7, protesters gathered in Victoria Square to stand in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in their fight to protest the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL).

The Dakota Access Pipeline, which would transport over half a million barrels of oil nearly 2,000 kilometres across the U.S. Midwest every day, was approved for construction earlier last summer without consulting the Standing Rock Sioux Nation. Many have come forward saying the pipeline's construction threatens the Missouri River, an essential source of fresh water for the nation.

"The DAPL is slated to cross Lakota Treaty Territory at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation," reads the event's Facebook page. "For months, the Standing Rock Sioux have been leading a protest against the construction of the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline. They have been joined by thousands in what has been described as the biggest gathering of Indigenous movements in the U.S. in a hundred years."

Since the protests began, many human rights violations have been recorded and protesters have repeatedly been targeted by police.

Solidarity with Standing Rock

Among those who spoke at the rally was Kenneth Deer, who, on the event's Facebook page, is described as "a journalist and educator from Kahnawake, known for his involvement in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

"The brutality of the police force out there is unforgivable," Deer said to the crowd. "There is no need for peaceful protesters who are defending the water and defending their land and their territory, defending their treaty rights, to be tear-gassed, to have rubber bullets being fired at them or bean bag rounds."

"All of these activities and actions are absolutely unnecessary," he continued. "Everybody has a right [to] peaceful protest. All of you here [in Victoria Square] are exercising your right to peaceful protest."

"The environmental impact statement issued by the company itself confirmed that over three



A speaker at the protest.

hundred and eighty [Indigenous] sites would be potentially destroyed by the pipeline project," said Deer, stressing the the large scale destruction that the pipeline will cause to the land of the Sioux Nation.

Louellyn White, an associate professor of First People Studies in Concordia's School of Community and Public Affairs, also spoke, highlighting the issues of sovereignty with regards to Indigenous lands.

"The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 that delineated the boundaries for the great Sioux Nation [...] was repeatedly aggregated [...] and that land has been greatly diminished," said Louellyn White, an associate professor of First People Studies in Concordia's School of Community and Public Affairs, reminding demonstrators that Standing Rock is yet another battle in a long and painful war between Indigenous people and colonial governments.

The provisions of that treaty said, "In exchange for use of your land, we will protect you from white settlers and we will provide annuities, education, [and] food – none of that happened," she added. White also reminded the crowd that the land the protestors at Standing Rock are defending is

unceded territory, and it is just a small fraction of the territory that the Sioux people once claimed as their own.

Professor White also invoked an old divination of the Lakota people: "You may have heard of the black snake prophecy of the Lakota people. 'A black snake will come to the territory and will poison the land and will poison the air, it will poison the people.' How do you defeat that black snake? You defeat that black snake by cutting off its head."

Banks complicit in oppression

Professor White concluded her address by referencing the end goal of the protest: to put pressure on Canadian banks that are partially responsible for funding the DAPL and other pipelines across the United States and Canada. She implied that these banks were the head of the "black snake" and in order to defeat the DAPL, individuals have to divest from institutions that support human rights and environmental violations.

Protesters subsequently marched from Victoria Square along Rue Saint-Antoine Ouest and made their first stop in front of the Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec, which has shares in the Dakota Access Pipeline.

The protesters then marched west on Viger Ouest, then north on St-Alexandre and west again on René-Lévesque to the Montreal headquarters of the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), where the march ended.

Protesters prepared to enter bank locations in the area, including RBC, TD Bank, and Scotiabank, where they would divest, withdrawing from their bank accounts.

The large group broke into three smaller groups (for the three banks), but those outside RBC grew angry and confused very quickly when they came face-to-face with police officers unwilling to allow them access to the building, despite possessing RBC bank cards. Officers eventually agreed to let people in, but only one person at a time.

Divesting from pipelines

The first person to be let in was a young woman named Kara. After the teller told her RBC would not be divesting from the DAPL, she withdrew all her money from the bank.

"I walked in," said Kara in French in an interview with The Daily, "and I [...] said 'I don't want to continue [being part of] a bank that [...] invests in pipelines, with money that I give to RBC.' Why would I invest in that? [...] A woman said 'fine, whatever, please

INORI ROY | The McGill Daily

wait in line to talk to someone at the counter."

White was the second person to enter the bank.

"They let me in and they escorted me into the RBC branch [...] there was quite a number of people just standing around [...] they seemed to be really on the defensive and concerned," she told The Daily in an interview.

She voiced her concerns with the branch and the moral implications of continuing to bank with RBC. "As an individual, I have accounts with RBC, and RBC has been contributing to the big oil industry," she told RBC managers. "I cannot support that, therefore I'm divesting from RBC, and I know you don't have a lot of power yourself to do anything, but I want to take my money out of RBC because I can't support that."

When asked if the individuals she encountered within the branch demonstrated any remorse for having lost her business, Professor White responded, "No, and I don't think you're gonna get that [...] even at the management level they're probably oblivious to the investments that RBC makes with these oil companies. I don't think they're really aware of it, but hopefully through these actions they'll become more aware."

No quorum at GA

GA becomes a consultative forum

ELLEN COOLS
The McGill Daily

On Monday, November 7, around 25 students gathered for the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) Fall 2016 General Assembly (GA). For the results of a GA to be binding, a minimum of a hundred students must attend. Since the meeting failed to meet quorum, it became a "consultative forum," meaning that, while students still voted on motions, these votes were not binding.

SSMU statement regarding 'Women titleholders of the land'

SSMU Indigenous Affairs Coordinator Christian Queqish discussed SSMU's recent statement in favour of striking the "Motion Regarding Support for the Kahtihon'tia:kwenio ('Women titleholders of the land') from the agenda. SSMU had previously released a statement regarding the motion, the latter having originally been brought to the Winter 2016 GA.

According to SSMU's statement, the motion "called for the SSMU to support a Notice of Seizure delivered to McGill University on September 12, 2015, by a group presenting themselves as representatives of the Kahnawá:ke Mohawk community." The notice called on the University to "immediately stop trespassing on traditional Indigenous territory." However, the motion was tabled at the Winter GA because of inadequate Indigenous consultation.

The land seizure was delivered without any consultation of Indigenous students or members of the Kahnawá:ke community, Queqish explained.

According to the statement, "the motion presented at the Winter General Assembly is misrepresentative of local Indigenous perspectives and stems from selective consultation with activists operating in isolation from traditional governance systems. [...] The 'Women Titleholders' are not official representatives of Kahnawá:ke, nor do they have the support of the Kahnawá:ke Longhouses or many Indigenous students on-campus." In fact, according to Queqish, the movers only consulted with one Indigenous student after the motion was tabled.

The Indigenous student, after providing their personal contact information to the movers, was "subsequently harassed [...] with repeated emails, Facebook messages, and phone calls," said Queqish.

"Non-Indigenous students need to realize that Indigenous issues are complex, and our perspectives are diverse and nuanced," Queqish continued. "To only interact with one Indigenous person and no others [is] a misrepresentation."

"As students, we should hold ourselves to a higher standard with respect to engaging with Indigenous individuals and commu-



SSMU Fall 2016 GA.

ELLEN COOLS | The McGill Daily

nities, and respect their decisions when they choose not to speak with us," Queqish concluded.

Other motions

A motion ratifying SSMU Board of Directors (BoD) appointments passed with no discussion. SSMU President Ben Ger explained that SSMU's constitution requires BoD appointments to be ratified by the GA, but it's mostly procedural.

"As students, we should hold ourselves to a higher standard with respect to engaging with Indigenous individuals and communities."

—Christian Queqish
Indigenous Affairs
Commissioner

A "Motion regarding Global Access to Medicines Policy" was next on the agenda. It was moved by the McGill Students' Chapter of Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM).

One member of UAEM-McGill gave a brief explanation of the motion, saying that UAEM "is trying to get McGill University to adopt a patent policy which will allow different innovations or drugs [...] tested at the University [to be] more accessible to people in developing countries." According to the motion, 65 other universities have adopted a similar policy.

"This motion is asking SSMU to help [our] club get McGill University to adopt this motion in its policies," the mover clarified.

SSMU VP University Affairs Erin Sobat asked how the movers planned to move forward and if

they would join him in meeting with the Vice Principal (Research and Innovation)'s office. The movers clarified they would ask SSMU senators to put the motion in front of their constituencies and are also following up on other options. The motion then passed.

The next item on the agenda was the motion regarding SSMU support for cost-free birth control coverage, moved by McGill Students for the New Democratic Party (NDP-McGill). According to the motion, "non-Quebec McGill students currently do not receive full reimbursement for prescription birth control under the SSMU's group health insurance."

The motion called for SSMU to support cost-free access to prescription birth control and for the SSMU Health and Dental Review Committee to review SSMU's health insurance plan and negotiate with the insurance provider to ensure free prescription birth control to SSMU members.

U1 student and member of NDP McGill, Julian Bonellostauch, presented the motion. "We feel that because birth control is the most effective form of contraception we should increase access to this," he said.

Sobat proposed a friendly amendment to "add another clause that would also mandate the SSMU to advocate changes to the international plan," as the international student health plan is separate from the SSMU health plan. Since the amendment was friendly, it was automatically added to the motion, which passed.

Finally, students passed a motion regarding the appointment of the auditor for the fiscal year of 2016-2017. This ensures that the same auditor for the 2015-2016 year is hired for this academic year.

What's next?

After the motions were heard, the SSMU executive team reported on their work so far this semester.

Because the GA did not reach quorum, the motions ratifying the BoD and appointing the auditor will go to online ratification, while other motions will go to the SSMU Legislative Council.

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The indivisibility of justice

“Palestine and Feminist Paradigms” lecture critiques feminist canon

NIYOUSHA BASTANI
The McGill Daily

On Thursday, November 10, approximately eighty people gathered in Morrice Hall 017 for a lecture by Rabab Abdulhadi, professor of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University (SFSU).

Abdulhadi's lecture, “Revising the Narrative, Critiquing the Canon: Palestine and Feminist Paradigms,” challenged the homogenization and dehumanization of Arab men and women in the women's studies canon. Her lecture also contested feminist paradigms that subscribe to the colonial mission of “saving brown women from brown men” and fail to acknowledge the agency and voice of Palestinian women.

Abdulhadi began her talk by discussing instances when Palestinian women's voices and agency were overlooked or misunderstood by women who have more power. For example, she spoke about a self-avowed feminist fashion house that staged a photo shoot for its summer catalogue in front of the Israeli-West Bank Separation wall in 2004, with the supposed aim of

jarring the Israeli state with this image of suffering and despair. Abdulhadi shared a story wherein a chief executive of the company, an Israeli woman, is asked by Umm Muhammad, a Palestinian woman passing by, to join her at a sit-in and call for the wall to be torn down, instead of using the Palestinian's suffering as a backdrop for her photoshoot. The Israeli woman disregards this invite and says of Umm Muhammad, “She's too full of hurt, she cannot listen.”

Abdulhadi challenged the audience to question which of these women would be acknowledged as a feminist in the mainstream women studies canon – the “self-avowed feminist” or “the woman who invites those who colonized her land and her life to join her sit in.”

“Sisterhood is neither powerful, nor global, if it is not on the basis of principled solidarity,” Abdulhadi said, emphasizing multiple times that what matters in any social justice movement is “the indivisibility of justice,” making issues of gender equality, queer rights and the liberation of Palestine part of the same project.

Abdulhadi also spoke optimistically in her lecture about an increasing show of solidarity from Jewish communities for the Palestinian liberation movement. She explained that, historically, Zionism has always been “a contested narrative” in Jewish communities around the world.

“Sisterhood is neither powerful, nor global, if it is not on the basis of principled solidarity.”

—Rabab Abdulhadi
Professor of Ethnic Studies at SFSU

“The Zionist settler-colonial project in Palestine, which claims to speak for the Jews, actually does not,” she said, “and increasingly today, more and more Jews are coming out and saying, ‘not in my name.’”

“I thought [Abdulhadi's] recognition of anti-Zionist Jewish voices in her talk was really important,” said Anna Ty, a U3 Anthropology and Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist studies student who attended the lecture, in an interview with The Daily.

For Abdulhadi, critiquing hegemonic narratives is essential to academic work. In an interview with The Daily, she explained that activists in academia who are “speaking truth to power” are doing their job.

However, because of her scholarship and activism, Abdulhadi has been the target of fear tactics and attacks by Zionist groups, like Canary Mission and Campus Watch, for several years. Canary Mission and Campus Watch are websites that profile and personally target activists working for justice in Palestine.

Posters featuring cartoon portraits of Abdulhadi were posted around the SFSU campus earlier this year, targeting her with defamatory charges.

“They want to scare us out of business,” Abdulhadi told The Daily, describing the coordinated at-

tacks of such groups as “cyberbullying” and “incitement of violence.”

“Justice for Palestine is not just a project for the Palestinians,” she told the audience. “Justice for Palestine is a project for everybody who seeks justice.”

A U3 economics student in attendance, who wished to remain anonymous, told The Daily that this was what they found to be the most interesting part of the lecture. “The thing that stood out to me the most was her idea [of] how you can't really separate the different issues within the anti-colonial struggle,” the student said.

Abdulhadi concluded her lecture on this note as well, by explaining that Israel's settler-colonial project implicates not just Israelis and Palestinians, but rather “every single person who lives anywhere in the world whose [government's] policies are making it possible for Israel to continue oppressing Palestinians, to continue stealing land.”

“Everybody is invested in either being part of the problem, or in being part of the solution. And that goes for every struggle, not just for Palestine,” Abdulhadi concluded.

Forum discusses queer issues on campus

Future still holds potential for improvement

RAHMA WIRYOMARTONO
The McGill Daily

On Monday, November 7, the Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity (JBSCE) Subcommittee on Queer People hosted a forum in Thomson House basement to discuss the intersectional issues facing the LGBTQ community on campus, the current policies that affect the LGBTQ community, the ways in which these policies can be improved, and the resources available. Approximately 12 people were in attendance, a lower turnout than what was expected.

Divided into two parts, the forum heavily focused on integrated group discussion. The first part involved brainstorming about the issues that affect the LGBTQ community on campus. Recurring topics included the lack of centralized community, visibility of queer issues, diversity in curricula, and gender neutral washrooms on campus.

The issue of “deadnaming,” the act of referring to a transgender person's birth name instead of their chosen name, was also identified as an institutional problem that McGill's Information Technology (IT) Services imposes by not using preferred names on official transcripts and email addresses.

The second part of the forum discussed the initiatives that are being taken and can be taken to tackle the outlined issues, serve the diversity of the LGBTQ community, and foster solidarity and allyship on campus.

Measures that were discussed include those presently being undertaken at McGill, such as mandatory equity-based workshops and training for staff, faculty, and students. These include projects like the Safer Spaces workshops offered to all staff, faculty, and graduate students, and Rez Project, a mandatory peer-facilitated workshop for first-year undergraduates living in residence that focuses on sexuality, consent, and race.

The forum was facilitated by Lynn Kozak, the Chair of the JBSCE Subcommittee on Queer People.

Speaking of the importance of workshops and training, Kozak said in an email to The Daily that “so much discrimination comes out of ignorance rather than malice. Training can help people see that their words and actions might be hurting others, even unintentionally.”

Tynan Jarrett, the Equity Educational Advisor (LGBTQ) of the Social Equity and Diversity Education (SEDE) office, who was present at the forum, concurred.

“Workshops strive to provide not only awareness, but also skills and tools needed to support the creation of equitable and inclusive living, learning and working spaces here at McGill,” Jarrett told The Daily in an email.

“They offer an opportunity for staff and faculty to engage around important issues that are impacting marginalized and underrepresented students, staff and faculty at McGill,” Jarrett added.

“SEDE's role is to provide education and advising on equity-related topics to the entire McGill community, with a specific focus on staff and faculty,” Jarrett continued. “We help units apply an equity lens to their policies and practices, and we work with individual faculty members to help them integrate equity material and equitable practices into their curriculum and pedagogy.”

Kozak, who is also an Associate Professor in the Department of History and Classical Studies, elaborated on the lack of diversity in courses at McGill.

“There are many professors who are not necessarily inclusive within their curriculum, or teaching something that they might put forward as an inclusive and diversity based

course, but that really isn't,” she said at the forum. “There are certainly problems with this in my own department, in history, in certain ways that history and sexuality is taught, in the way that Indigenous studies are taught.”

“So much discrimination comes out of ignorance rather than malice. Training can help people see that their words and actions might be hurting others.”

—Lynn Kozak
JBSCE Subcommittee on Queer People Chair

This lack of diversity is most likely symptomatic of a greater issue: the lack of engagement at McGill

with issues that affect the LGBTQ community. The forum highlighted that McGill's engagement with these issues should not only extend to the classroom, but into other campus spaces as well, such as libraries.

Michael David Miller, the Liaison Librarian for French Literature, Economics and LGBTQ+ Studies at the Humanities and Social Sciences Library, said in an email to The Daily that “librarians and staff of the library must continually accentuate the library as an inclusive place where everyone of all origins, genders, and sexualities are welcome to participate [...] in conversations surrounding challenges facing LGBTQ+ communities in Quebec and abroad.”

“[Libraries can] build inclusive and diverse collections that represent the linguistic, cultural, gender and sexual diversity of our campus,” Miller elaborated.

Speaking about student engagement and allyship, Kozak told The Daily, “Community engagement around queer issues is crucial, first just because it's so important for us to have a community, to get to share our experiences on campus with other people who might better understand us, and then to work together to improve those experiences overall at McGill.”

Joint Board-Senate Meeting

AMUSE welcomes senators and governors to talk about negotiations

XAVIER RICHER VIS
The McGill Daily

On Wednesday, November 10, McGill's Board of Governors (BoG) and Senate met for its annual Joint Board-Senate Meeting (JBSM) at the University's Faculty Club on McTavish Street. The meeting's topic was "McGill's sustainability plans and initiatives," and featured presentations from three McGill professors.

"Our [sustainability mission] at McGill has three components: teaching/learning, research and service to society," said Principal Suzanne Fortier in her introductory remarks, "and so for us, it is very important to offer on our campus, and in a variety of fields, not just environmental sciences, [the chance] to learn about sustainability, to teach about sustainability, and also to empower our students to bring that in their activities, not only while they're at McGill, but after they leave our university."

The presenters at the meeting were part of the McGill team that spoke at the last Annual Meeting of the New Champions of the World Economic Forum in

Tianjin, China. All three presentations focused on accessibility in each of their scientific subfields.

"Global agriculture is now being shaped by globalization," said Graham MacDonald, an assistant professor in the department of Geography, whose talk focused on sustainable approaches in worldwide agricultural systems.

"This is the century of urbanization: by 2050, seventy per cent of wealth – nine billion people – will live in cities. Cities form a vast global network, connected by flows of people, energy, goods, and information," said Andrew Gonzalez, Director of the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Sciences. "The challenge of this century is to make cities sustainable."

"[In our research], we calculated boundaries for nine different earth systems, and together, those boundaries are defined by a safe operating space for humanity," said Elena Bennett, a professor in the Natural Resource Sciences department at McGill, in reference to the different 'spheres' of Earth, such as atmosphere, biosphere, and geosphere, and humans' effects on these spheres.

She focused largely on the intersection between humans' social sys-

tems and sustainability. "If [humans] stay inside those boundaries, those critical systems are most likely to stay in the safer state," she said.

"Esoteric nonsense"

While the night's conversations may have revolved around McGill's role in sustainability initiatives, no mention was made about McGill's investments in fossil fuels, a subject that has caused controversy on campus in the past. Last year, the BoG's Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) released a report which claimed that climate change did not cause "grave social injury," and therefore divestment from fossil fuels was unwarranted.

For the first time last month, the BoG prematurely adjourned a meeting so they would not have to listen to members of Divest McGill who showed up to shed light on the recent open forums on sustainability.

Once again, the Board seemed unwilling to actively discuss environmental sustainability. Speaking to The Daily, one of the evening's participants, who chose to remain anonymous out of fear of repercussions, said that a member of his

table called the whole discussion of the night "esoteric nonsense," refusing to acknowledge McGill's role in issues of sustainability.

AMUSE at the JBSM

Prior to the start of the JBSM, senators and governors were welcomed by members of the Association of McGill University Support Employees (AMUSE) at the Faculty Club's entrance.

AMUSE, 85 per cent of whose membership consists of student employees on campus, has been working since May to negotiate its second collective agreement with the University. The union commenced a five-day strike on October 28, when they felt that the administration was not willing to compromise. On November 10, the union re-initiated bargaining discussions with the University.

"I just came out of a bargaining session," said Heather Holdsworth, a member of AMUSE and its bargaining team in negotiations with the administration, "and we're hoping to increase pressure and awareness among upper administration and power holders at McGill to support and push for our bargaining priorities."

Having listened to AMUSE members, McGill doesn't seem to have come anywhere near their demands in recent negotiations.

"We're hoping to increase pressure and awareness among upper administration and power holders at McGill."

—Heather Holdsworth
AMUSE member

"We know that the Joint Board Senate meeting is a space [where] people can advocate on our behalf and push HR [Human Resources] to widen their mandate in order for them to meet some of our bargaining priorities," she concluded.

Artists 4 Israel installation sees protests

Protesters take issue with resemblance of art installation to Apartheid Wall

MARINA CUPIDO
The McGill Daily

On Wednesday, November 9, an Artists 4 Israel event on Lower Field of campus organized by Chabad McGill attracted protesters who denounced what they perceived to be the event's insensitive concept and erasure of Palestinian voices.

In an event which has subsequently been removed from Facebook, members of the organization Artists 4 Israel erected a temporary wall on Lower Field, decorated it with Canadian and Israeli flags, and the word 'peace' in Hebrew and English, and invited passers-by to add their own graffiti to the installation.

They also displayed banners listing statements about Israel, and distributed free refreshments and t-shirts. Initially, Palestinian people, along with any Palestinian flags or symbols, were entirely absent from the event.

Soon however, the installation began to attract opposition. A small crowd of protesters gathered on Lower Field, carrying banners and placards which denounced Israel's ongoing violence against Palestinian people, and appropriation of Palestinian land. The demonstrators spread out in a line, standing in front of the Artists 4 Israel installation.

Speaking to The Daily at the protest, George Ghabrial, a member of

McGill Students in Solidarity with Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), explained what prompted him and other students to protest the event.

"Me and a couple friends were [at] the Y [intersection], we were all going to class, and we saw this structure [...] and then we saw an Israeli flag. [...] We went up to some of these student organizers, asked them what was going on, they said it was an event called 'Artists 4 Israel,'" he explained.

"So SPHR [...] said that we should do something – there's no representation of Palestine, there's no mention of Palestine, there's no [...] mention of the occupation," he continued. "It's an implicitly political event that does not make explicit the occupation of Palestine. [...] So we went and got our banners [...] and came down to Lower Field."

"On the surface, it's supposed to be apolitical," Ghabrial explained. "I don't know very much about Chabad as an organization, but I'd say that the event is very normalizing about the occupation. [...] And there's a very strong connotation about who the antagonizers to peace are."

A member of Artists 4 Israel spoke with The Daily about the intended purpose of the event.

"Artists 4 Israel was brought here by Chabad, Stand With Us, Size Doesn't Matter and AETT and [...] Hasbara Fellowships, in order to paint a mural about peace and coexistence, and try to bridge all the [...] diverse

cultures that are here together, and of course express their pride in their own Jewish heritage and sense of Israel with that larger culture of the campus."

When asked about the response to the protest, he said: "Instead of their protest [...] they've all been offered the opportunity to spray-paint with us and to have shirts made, the same way the entire student body has been allowed. That they chose to separate themselves and segregate themselves from an event that's supposed to be about inclusiveness [...] I think speaks for itself as to what their true intentions are. We would have loved them to be part of it."

In a comment sent to The Daily by email, however, Julie, a member of Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) McGill said that she had been present at the protest for more than an hour, and had never been invited to write on the installation.

The protesters partly took issue with the statements about Israel on display beside the art installation, which portrayed the nation as a place of tolerance and equality. One section, in particular, alleged that non-Jewish Israelis "enjoy equal rights and freedoms." In fact, Israel has drawn criticism from minority voices internally, and from the international community for the systemic discrimination that many non-Jewish citizens face.

However, event organizer, Eva Chorna, objected to this characterization, saying, "To have that [state-



Protestors on the field. KHATIRA MAHDAVI | The McGill Daily

ment] on the board I think is very representative of the essence that is Israel, because if there is one country that understands what it's like to be a refugee, I think it's Israel."

"Israel isn't a perfect society," she continued, "as no society is, but there are so many instances where they try to be inclusive towards the Palestinians, towards the Israeli Arabs in society, towards all the different religions."

However, protesters also took issue with the concept of the installation.

"The board itself resembles the Apartheid Wall that runs in the West Bank and restricts access to medical resources and water supplies of Palestinians that live there,"

said Julie in her email to The Daily. "The idea of graffiti-ing the 'canvas' mocks and appropriates the forms of Palestinian resistance that appear on the Apartheid Wall."

"Furthermore, the 'graffiti' displayed the word peace next to the Israeli flag alongside the Canadian flag as well as the McGill Martlet, which completely disregards the settler-colonial history tied to all three of these," she continued.

She added that she "was asked to move multiple times." She was also "asked to leave because they claimed this art (that resembled the Apartheid Wall with flags of Israel, Canada, and the McGill martlet) was not political."

Million Mask March

Wide variety of views and ideologies expressed at Anonymous protest

MARINA CUPIDO
The McGill Daily

On the evening of Saturday, November 5, roughly two hundred people gathered in Victoria Square for Montreal's Million Mask March. Ostensibly organized by the decentralized global hacktivist group Anonymous, the annual march has taken place in cities around the world since 2013.

Its date coincides with Guy Fawkes Day, and protesters typically wear the stylized Guy Fawkes mask, which has become an emblem of Anonymous since the 2006 film *V for Vendetta* associated the mask with political protest in the public consciousness.

Gathered around a statue of Queen Victoria, the base of which had been covered in banners and placards for the occasion, those attending the protest chatted and chanted the occasional slogan. Half a dozen police officers watched from across a street, but did not intervene.

A wide array of political ideologies and causes were represented, with placards denouncing rape culture, the Dakota Access Pipeline, state surveillance, colonialism in Palestine, censorship, and capitalism, to name a few.

Many of the protestors who spoke to The Daily did not express affiliation with any specific political ideology, but rather expressed gener-

alized frustration with aspects of society which they perceived as unjust or corrupt. Most protesters seemed to fall on the left of the political spectrum, though with varying degrees of radicalism and detailed analysis.

One demonstrator, however, declared support for the right-wing nationalist regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, and expressed profoundly anti-Semitic views in a brief interview with The Daily.

This disparity of beliefs and political orientations is seemingly a function of Anonymous's decentralized structure – the hacktivist collective has no hierarchy of leadership and no well-defined ideology, beyond a broad opposition to censorship.

Individuals identifying with the group have launched cyberattacks against a slew of targets, from the governments of the United States and Israel, to Daesh (also known as ISIS), to video game companies, to financial corporations like Visa and MasterCard, to Quebec nationalism, to the Westboro Baptist Church.

Speaking to The Daily, a protester who identified himself only as Francis addressed the drawbacks of such a broad and decentralized movement.

"Some groups, probably on the right, could try and get a piece of the cake," he admitted in French. "Obviously everyone knows who those people are, everyone knows they're not legitimate, and they're not the

real ones – if I can say that. The real ones are always for rights, [...] but it's true that there are right-wing groups that often do really serious things under the mask of Anonymous. And obviously people who are in the know understand that it's not us, the comrades, who do that."

When asked what issues Anonymous addresses that are the most important to him personally, Francis, replied "human rights, [...] the media that lies to us, [...] the police services of many cities – especially Montreal – but especially poverty, in my opinion."

What could Anonymous do to effect change on these issues, as opposed to legal action through mainstream political channels? According to Francis, the value of their work lies largely in raising awareness among the general population.

"Raising awareness, and if ever there's no visibility, doing concrete actions [...] but it's mostly informing people," he said. "For example, if there was an organisation known for causing poverty, [...] Anonymous might attack their servers, and crash their site, which [...] would make people aware of the subject."

The message of the Million Mask March, he said, was to tell the world "we're here, we'll always be here, and we don't forget."

The crowd gathered in Square Victoria, in addition to its diversity of political opinions and causes,



LUCIE COUDERC | The McGill Daily

comprised a variety of ages, ethnicities, and genders.

Speaking to The Daily, Flavie and Charlotte said they were frustrated by the prevailing climate of conservatism at their private high school, and had decided to attend the march out of a strong sense that Canadian society is profoundly flawed, and that "it's not by doing nothing that these things will change."

After some brief speeches, the protesters watched a video tribute to the late Jean Léger, a local anti-pipeline activist who recently committed suicide. Following this, they took to the streets, chanting various slogans from the classic – "Whose streets? Our streets!" – to the eclectic – "Killuminati!" and "Fuck the New World Order!"

The protest wound through the streets of the financial district, the lower Plateau, and Old Port, stopping at sites deemed emblematic of state violence and corruption: the Palais de Justice, the United States consulate, and the headquarters of the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM).

Police officers on bicycles remained just ahead of the crowd, with several police vehicles following it, but no substantive confrontation occurred between protesters and law enforcement. The event ended peacefully outside the Palais de Justice, with organizers urging people to meet on November 5, 2017, for the next Million Mask March.

Panel discusses surveillance of the press

Panelists worry about future of journalism with Trump as president-elect

RYAN CANON
The McGill Daily

How deep does the abuse of police surveillance run, how can reporters protect themselves and their sources, and what does the future hold for the freedom of the press?

These questions were at the forefront of a panel called "L'affaire Lagacé: A Free Press in The Surveillance State," on Thursday, November 10, in response to the recent revelations that the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) had been using wiretaps on journalists.

These revelations came about after *La Presse* broke the story that the SPVM had been spying on one of their reporters, Patrick Lagacé. This quickly became a much larger scandal when it was revealed that warrants for journalists from other media outlets had also been issued.

Panelists at the event included former *BBC* reporter and executive director of the Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec (FPJQ) Caroline Locher, Mark Ban-

tey, a partner at the Gowling WLG law firm, Fabien Gélinas, a professor of Law at McGill, and Yann Pineau, the senior director of Continuous Improvement at *La Presse*.

The panel was moderated by Andrew Potter, former journalist and director of The McGill Institute for the Study of Canada (MISC).

"I clued in when Lucinda Chodan, editor of the Montreal Gazette, along with Eric Trotter of *La Presse* and a couple other journalists, published an open letter basically calling this an outrage," Potter told The Daily. "That was when I realized this was a problem I needed to pay attention to and I thought 'somebody needs to do something' and then I thought 'hey wait, I have an institute whose job it is to convene these sort of things.'"

During the event, Locher said, "I have reported on many countries that do not have freedom of the press, countries you would call a police state, and what we saw here is in many ways close to a police state."

In response to the wiretapping, the province of Quebec has

launched a public inquiry, headed by a commission of experts on law and journalism. The panelists believe this will bring to light many of the answers needed to proceed.

"It is hard for us to make a judgement of the investigations without all of the facts," Gélinas said to the room. "We don't know what the police had put forward to the judges, and [the] provisions of the law under which the warrants were issued. There were multiple warrants issued by different judges, meaning there is reason to believe the judges did not know the depth of the situation."

However, some attendees of the event were skeptical that the commission would bring about substantial change. Sharon Polsky, an attendee and president of the AMINA Corporation – which specializes in privacy and data protection, offered a more "realistic outlook," in her words.

"Having grown up in Montreal, it is the current issue with police surveillance under questionable circumstances that leads me to believe that things have not changed much

[since I moved to Toronto]," she said. "It has always been, in my experience, [...] a vibrant city, but one where corruption exists and is deeply entrenched in every aspect of life here. I must wonder what positive outcome – what real change – might happen from a commission. They ask questions, there are inquiries, but nothing comes of it."

Panel members also shared concerns about the future of journalism, and the potential negative ramifications of the 2016 U.S. presidential election on the profession.

"In the past year, we've seen a presidential candidate that has attacked directly journalism, journalists, and media, and this is something that has never been seen before in the history of presidential elections," said Locher. "He has threatened to sue journalists, put into question whether the laws that protect free press are even founded and good, and this person today [will be] the president of the United States."

"It's problematic because Donald Trump is the first presidential

candidate to outright declare war on the media," Potter added. "Going to war against the media rhetorically is a long standing political practice, John Diefenbaker who was Prime Minister back in the 1950s and 60s famously said 'everyone is against me except for the people.'"

"However, it's one thing to believe that the media has a bias against you, versus inciting violence against reporters," he said.

The panelists found that the threat of police surveillance and infringement on freedom of the press continue to be important issues today, although many thought those days were over.

"We are in this business because we believe that somehow there is right and wrong, and somehow we can make things right by reporting on things that matter to society," Pineau told the crowd. "We may be a bit naive, but we like to believe people do the best they can no matter what job they have, and we never would have thought that the police would be doing this to us."

In defense of faith

Speaking in favour of religion in an increasingly atheistic society

ANGELO MANALOTO
Commentary Writer

In a column for the *New York Times* in 2014, Ross Douthat, American author and blogger, describes the millennial generation as one “less likely – by a striking margin – to say that one’s fellow human beings can be trusted.” He pointed out that, in this increasingly individualistic age, the world has become a place where social institutions like marriage are likely to be postponed, and ideologies such as patriotism are likely to be abandoned. But perhaps the most salient of these apparent millennial trends is the rejection of religion. Of all the “-isms” in circulation, atheism – or rather what it has become – is the one our generation has apparently most enthusiastically embraced.

In recent years, atheism has evolved into what is now commonly referred to as “New Atheism.” Championed by academics including Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Daniel Dennett, as well as polemical journalists such as the late Christopher Hitchens, New Atheism advocates not only that religion should not be believed, but that we would be far better off without it. Whereas conventional atheism is characterized merely as a state of unbelief of the monotheistic gods attributed to a lack of evidence, New Atheism takes it a step further and relishes this lack of scientific evidence.

A common point often made by proponents of New Atheism is that if God is real, there is no discernible indication of him being merciful, much less benevolent. New Atheists cite, for example, the case of the some 29,000 children, under the age of five, that die every year from preventable diseases like pneumonia and malaria. They would argue that any God that allows children to suffer and die, as well as subject their parents to unimaginable misery, either is unable to do anything about it or can’t be bothered to – in which case God would be either impotent or evil.

New Atheism then goes on to claim that religion is one of, if not the most, widespread causes of intolerance, censorship, and bigotry in society today. This refers to the abject treatment of marginalised peoples, which is often conducted under the pretense of claiming to do ‘God’s work.’ Historical arguments bringing up the Salem witch trials or the Spanish Inquisition, are joined by contemporary fear-mongering about the threat of ‘terrorism,’ to rationalise this argument. Although there have been times when religion has been used to justify violence, this does not seem to make the arguments of

New Atheism any more convincing. This is because atrocities are founded on ideas – and ideas, religious or not, can always be bent and manipulated for political accommodation. Religion itself doesn’t kill people – people do, and would more than likely use some other rationale to justify it if religion did not exist.

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A recurring theme in many of these arguments is that religion, both on moral and socio-political grounds, has no place in the 21st century. In this way, New Atheism is not so much an atheistic movement as it is a staunch, anti-theistic one. I believe the notion that society must strive to make religion a thing of the past is not just an overstatement – but very wrong indeed. For all New Atheism’s arguments that seem to appeal to

a common humanism, they fail to provide any convincing argument to eradicate such a central part of the lives of many people.

The fact of the matter is that religion offers something that a completely secularist society, as envisaged by the New Atheists, cannot. This is because there are a great many things that atheism, much to its discontent, fails to address. Hypothetically, if religion were to be entirely purged from society, fundamental questions shared by most, if not all, people would go unanswered and neglected. Questions of the divine, of moral standards, and of peace. While secularism and atheism do have many truths to argue for, their voices remain extremely quiet on matters that are profoundly important to many people – matters like death, suffering, reconciliation, and forgiveness. Religion has to an extent attempted to provide answers for these questions and where it cannot provide answers, it at least provides comfort and consolation to those looking for something to believe in. Depriving the world of that doesn’t seem all that alluring to me. So, while one might disagree with the origins and teachings of a religion, denying its importance and utility is a very bold claim to make, and one that I believe is misguided.

Noam Chomsky, I believe, put it rather well in an interview with physicist and renowned atheist Lawrence Krauss, where he made the case that it is not our concern to tell other people what to believe.

He gives an anecdote alluding to a Peruvian immigrant whom he knows, who has prayer groups every evening, visits homes for the sick to pray with them, and does in fact find meaning and happiness in her religion. Despite his own beliefs, it is not for him, he says rather humorously, to give her a lesson on epistemology. It is this point that eludes many of the New Atheists, and is telling of their self-contradiction. Just as they oppose religious extremists that enjoin their followers into believing in a certain dogma, are they not – in their own aim of eradicating religion as a social institution – doing the same thing? Divine or otherwise, it is the right of an individual to choose what he or she believes, and the New Atheist objection only serves as a betrayal of freedom, a principle they would probably consider secular.

I believe religion can be, and often times is, a source of unity. Only within places of worship have I seen people who might otherwise have nothing in common, interact with a form of common humanity. I have seen people create bonds with those outside of their socio-economic circumstances, with whom they might disagree on matters of politics, or whom they may have otherwise never met. Contrast this dynamic with that of our current primary tool for socialization – Facebook – where it is effortless to find and join groups of people that already have the same views and interests as you do. Finding and socializing

with people who are already very much like you has become an easy task. And while it is a great tool for creating human connections, this form of networking is very different from the kind that religion provides. In the churches that the New Atheist despise so much, I have seen people, with nothing in common other than their faith, sit side-by-side with a common aim. I think this phenomenon is worth preserving, rather than eliminating for the sake of what I believe to be a misplaced secular fervor.

My favorite poem in the English language is a poem called “Church Going” by Philip Larkin, which is in many ways the reason I consider myself an agnostic rather than an atheist. It tells the story of a man, whom the reader can only assume is an atheist (as Larkin was), who visits a church where he reflects on what a world without religion would look like. He begins to question whether or not his sojourn was worth it, and for a reason he can’t quite puzzle out, soon acknowledges that it was. As he has many, many times before. At the end of the poem, the man stands in the middle of the church, sobered, as he recognizes that it is because the church is and always has been a place of, and for, serious questions. To treat it as though it is anything but, and as though it is disposable, would be a great ignorance.

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MARINA DJURDJEVIC | The McGill Daily

Regarding the U.S. Election

A sentiment from The Daily's editorial board

This week has been immensely difficult — the election of Donald Trump as the U.S. president has left us devastated. But we must understand and acknowledge that there are some who are hurting more than others. Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC), members of the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, undocumented and documented immigrants, refugees, Muslims, women, and those who exist at the intersections of any number of these identities are especially affected by his rhetoric or policies. Marginalized folks: we see you. We support you.

The extent to which contemporary society is divided on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and class, has now become apparent. However, things have never been alright — the U.S. and Canada have been built on genocide and oppression of Black and Indigenous people, and the lega-

cies of this history are still being felt today. The Trump presidency is only a symptom of deeper, systemic divides.

The U.S. electoral system has been built upon the disenfranchisement of marginalized peoples. Access to the vote has been withheld from Black and Indigenous people for most of U.S. history. Native Americans were allowed the right to vote in 1957 under the Indian Citizenship Act, and, although Black men were able to vote under the 15th Amendment, their ability to do so was not protected until 1965 with the Voting Rights Act (VRA). Just three years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court declared that states no longer need their voting law changes approved by the federal government. As a result, this election has been the first in fifty years during which historically disenfranchised voters — specifically, Black, Indigenous, and racialized voters — have not been legally pro-

tected by the VRA. This election has also seen some Americans essentially lose their access to the vote through the creation of voter ID laws, and “redistricting,” also known as gerrymandering, the process wherein politicians and government officials re-draw the boundaries of voting districts in order to sway the election in favour of a particular candidate or party. These legislative acts make participation in the democratic process inaccessible to marginalized voters, disproportionately affecting BIPOC and working class voters. This election has proven that it is time to reevaluate and dismantle the current electoral system — including the electoral college, a system created to protect the elite from an “interested and overbearing majority,” — in order to create one that allows all people equal access to the fundamental right to vote.

For marginalized people, it's devastating to know that nearly

half of the American population either supports or is apathetic toward the discriminatory and vitriolic rhetoric Trump used to run his campaign. But before the dust could even settle, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was already warmly welcoming President Elect Donald Trump into office. The hypocrisy and spinelessness of the Prime Minister, and of all the self-proclaimed liberals who have chosen to now embrace and work with Trump during his presidency, is on full display. This is not the time for complacency. This is not the time to remain passive in the face of violence and discrimination. This is the chance for those with privilege to protect and uplift marginalized communities. That means providing support — monetary or otherwise — to local Black Lives Matter chapters, Indigenous groups, worker's unions, Muslim community organizations, LGBTQ support organizations, reproductive rights

groups, immigrant or refugee aid groups, or any other sort of community collective created to support marginalized individuals. Now is the time for us to rise up against the increasing hatred and oppression of a divided society. Now is the time to use our privilege to protect the rights of marginalized people, and to do the work that may not be safe for others. This means white people, straight people, cis people, rich people — support those forced to exist on the margins of society. Do not allow complacency and comfort to guide you through this increasingly difficult time. Listen to marginalized people, support them, do not let them continue to bear the weight of hateful rhetoric any longer. The time of assuming that everything is alright is over. The system doesn't work, and it needs to be dismantled and reinvented in a form which empowers us all.

—The McGill Daily editorial board

Letters to the editor

Responses to the election of Donald Trump as U.S. President

My emotions towards this recent election have been scattered: disbelief followed by cynicism, hopelessness followed by anger, exhaustion followed by drive. I could write endlessly on these feelings, but in truth they do not matter. In the face of tragedy, one promptly realizes that the world does not pause to let us grieve. The sun continues to rise and set and with it consequences take their shape. I have been moved to tears by stories of those who now feel unsafe to exist in what was meant to be their home. My pain, and whatever else I feel, is no excuse to be idle. This is not about me.

When questioned as to why I feel so strongly towards political issues, my answer has always been the same: Politics are not merely about rhetoric or opinion; instead, they are inexplicably tied to the concrete experiences of real people. In my case, as a woman, I cannot evade the forces that oppress me. The Trump presidency, however, I am already removed from. I am in Canada. I am safe. I will admit that for a moment, I was tempted to discuss other things, avoid social media at all costs and simply revel in the fact that this is not about me. Still, I cannot help but feel strongly with those who are affected — unlike myself, they have no choice but to be involved.

“This is not about me” is not a statement of self-absorption but of solidarity. To hold a narcissistic attitude only validates the narcissism of Trump in the same way that he has validated the once subliminal racism of so many Americans. This is no time to settle into complacency or acceptance or apathy. We must move forward. There is work to be done.

—Gwyn Peters

I am scared. As an American I am scared. As an Arab I am scared. As a queer person I am scared. As a woman I am scared. I am scared of the American people. A Trump presidency is not what I wanted by a longshot, but what is even more upsetting is that masses of people believe in his ideologies. They believe that my father, an immigrant escaping a civil war, should not have been able to come to America because of the country he was fleeing. They believe that he should not have had a right to education, to work, most of all to live. They believe, or rather don't believe, in my identity and the validity of my sexual orientation. They believe that my reproductive rights are theirs to control.

What scares me most is that 66 per cent of white women voted for Trump while 93 per cent of black women voted for Hillary. As a visibly white woman with many white female friends, none of who are Trump supporters, this appalled me. This screamed to me that solidarity is not enough. It is time that white women step up and demand justice and representation for the voices that cannot be heard. This does not just mean interjecting when someone says a racial slur. This means educating and informing other white women about the problems in our society, why it is on us to call for action and make things change.

I have taken the past few days to mourn, but I have accepted the results and am now ready for action. Whatever racist, sexist, homophobic calls Trump makes, I am ready to fight. I am ready to show him that he cannot and will not silence our voices and he will give us the respect we demand and deserve.

—Hana E. Geadah

Shame, anger, disappointment, embarrassment. These are feelings that many Americans have expressed in the wake of this shocking election. Despite being a Canadian who has never stepped foot across the border, I feel these emotions just as strongly as many Americans. I may not have had the opportunity to vote for what is right, but I do have an ongoing responsibility to counter the racist, sexist, homophobic, and generally appalling rhetoric that has spread throughout the world. All people have a role in setting the tone of this conversation, and yet as Canadians we treated ourselves as both immune from the consequences and exempt from the responsibility of this dangerous dialogue, which has reached a new low with this election.

Instead of using our voices to recognize and appreciate the value of women, we used it to tell jokes about pantsuits. Instead of demanding that our Prime Minister use his power to mobilize voters and critically examine our own shortcomings, we clapped like seals when our newly elected “hero” fed us lies of an already achieved standard of multiculturalism and acceptance. Rather than looking at how we can help marginalized peoples receive better access to opportunities, we looked at America and (mistakenly) said “at least we aren't as bad as them.” Instead of using the unfathomable power of social media to spread messages of solidarity, we used it to share memes that devalued the lives of people who will be affected by the painfully tangible consequences of this setback for generations.

In the days following this historic election, there is much say about how Americans failed their country, or perhaps how the system

failed Americans, but not nearly enough conversation surrounding how Canadians failed Americans. It's time that Canadians stopped ridiculing our neighbours to the South and instead started supporting them during this difficult time.

—Catharina O'Donnell

I personally think that most of the blame for the US election result belongs to the strategic choices of the American elites. The elites took care of the education of their own cast, but did not care about the masses who could not afford to pay for their own education. Thus, 67 per cent of whites without a higher education degree ended up voting for Donald Trump. Historically, a fair level of education and a small or reasonable income gap between the rich and the poor are considered as the pillars of any democratic system. These two pillars are being undercut in the States for quite some time.

I don't know if the supposed migration from the U.S. to Canada on political grounds will be for real, but I hope that the platform Donald Trump has succeeded on never makes its way north. Canada should prioritize education for all, diversity as an everyday practice, and a common vision for the country that provide rights to all. Canada still struggles with the persistence of institutional racism and discrimination; I hope that now, the majority of Canadians from all walks of life can acknowledge that immigration brings wealth and resources to this nation. On these grounds, Americans that may chose to immigrate to Canada for political reasons should be equally welcome.

—Constantinos Yanniris

#NoDAPL solidarity rally: Rally, march and action against banks takes

PHOTOS BY INORI ROY
The McGill Daily

Since the beginning of this year, Indigenous land and water defenders have been protesting the building of Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), which is routed to cross the territory of the Standing Rock Sioux. Building the pipeline on Native land would violate treaty rights, alongside adding to the devastation of the environment due to extraction of fossil fuels. During the protests over the last several months, Native people and allies have been subject to violence by the American government and local police forces. Despite this, they continue to fight for the preservation and rights of the land.

On November 7, hundreds took to the streets of downtown Montreal in solidarity with the #NoDAPL movement. The rally began at Square Victoria, and marched to TD Bank, RBC, and Scotiabank to protest the banks' investment in the DAPL. The protest was led by local Indigenous activists, fighting for treaty rights and justice.



Activists fly flags of the Kahnawake Warrior Society and the Haudenosaunee confederacy.



Ojibwa activist Timothy Armstrong speaks at the rally.

“What I want to talk about really are the human rights violations taking place in Standing Rock. The brutality of the police force out there in Standing Rock it's unforgivable. There is no need for peaceful protestors who are just defending the water and defending their land and their territory, defending their treaty rights, to be teargassed, to have rubber bullets fired at them[...] All of these activities and actions are absolutely unnecessary. Everybody has a right to peaceful protest – all of you here are exercising the right to peaceful protest. There's no need for you to be shot at with bullets [...] In North Dakota, it seems to be the norm. We're going back to the days of 'Cowboys and Indians,' in North Dakota, where the police forces are just playing Cowboys, and just shooting 'Indians.' They're not using real bullets right now – they might want to, they can't – but they're still absolutely violating the human rights of the people in Standing Rock.

There are three banks in Canada that are invested in this pipeline. Banks should not be funding human rights violations. TD Bank should be told, and so should the Royal Bank of Canada, and so should Scotiabank, they should be told – they should not be spending our money so that the pipelines and the cooperative police forces can violate the human rights of the Sioux people.

—Kenneth Deer

Journalist and educator from Kahnawake

“It's just so unfortunate that Standing Rock was not covered in the media until only recently. And I think what happened was, the reason that it was not covered, was that so many damn people went down there. If it had stayed as a small number, the big oil companies probably would've loved to say “Oh, they're just this little fringe group down there,” and they would've liked to dismiss it that way – but that's not what happened [...] when I went down there in September, it was at 5,000, but it went up as high as 8,000 people down there. That's equal to the population of Standing Rock itself. So this is all about numbers. And there are other numbers. 24: [the number of] banks that are funding the energy transfer partners. Shame!...

When you go down [to Standing Rock], it's an amazing place to be. I could not believe the feeling of camaraderie, the feeling of being welcome. It's like you left your house and you've just come back at the end of the day. The feeling of welcome. And it did not matter, the colour of your skin. This is not about skin colour at all. When Mother Jones criticised the 1.5 million people who checked in, saying, “Oh, it's not significant,” – yes, it is significant. It shows that this whole thing is actually more of a movement, than a fringe group of people. There's strength in numbers. There's total strength in numbers. The numbers down there aren't as high as they used to be, but those people need our support. They need us to show that we have their backs.”

—Timothy Armstrong

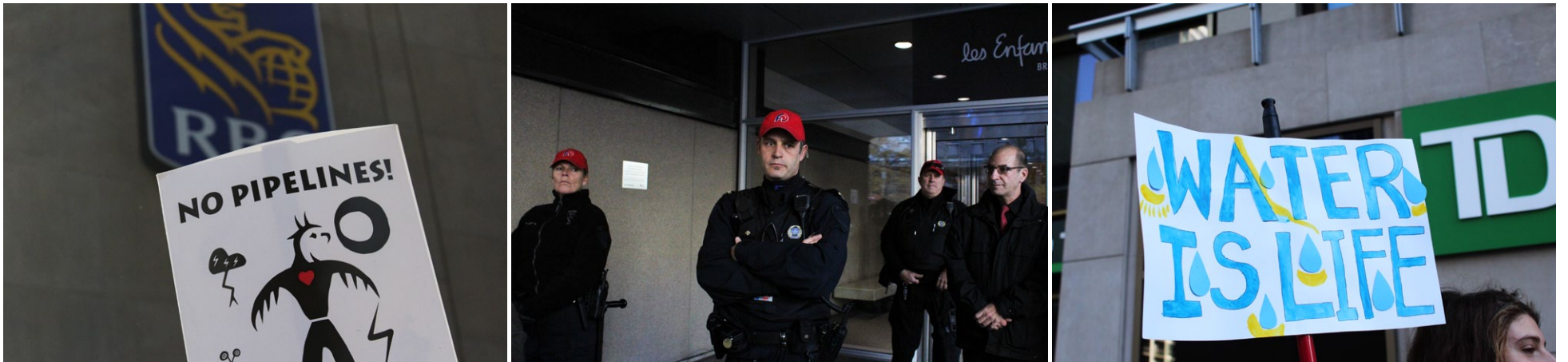
Ojibwa radio host with Kahnawake radio station K103



The rally gathers around drummers from.

We stand with Standing Rock

place in Tiotia:ke, the island of “Montreal”



Protestors gathered in front of RBC and TD to protest investment in the Dakota Access Pipeline.

“I’ve had friends at Standing Rock, friends who were there when the dogs came, and it’s really frustrating, and it’s really devastating, and it’s really emotional [...] In this struggle, what’s often forgotten is that sovereignty – the sovereign status of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, and the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. So we must not lose sight of that. That’s what this movement is about, and that sovereign status has been ignored for centuries by government, by individuals, by states, including the lack of [...] nation to nation consultation regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline. It was the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851 that delineated the boundaries for the great Sioux nation. That treaty was repeatedly abrogated, it was broken, and that land has been greatly diminished. The provisions of that treaty said, “In exchange for use of your land, we will protect you from white settlers, and we will provide annuities, education, food – none of that happened. That land was further and further diminished. So what people are protecting today, is that unceded territory. They never willingly relinquished their rights to that land....”

I also want to say that none of this is new to Indigenous peoples, who have been fighting for centuries against outright genocide, colonialism, at the hands of those who want to marginalise and oppress, and those who want to wipe us off the face of the Earth in the name of progress, capitalism, greed. But we’re still here [...] we are still here because of the Indigenous knowledges and laws that we have, that instruct us on how to live in harmony with the earth, and those instructions acknowledge that we are connected to all living things. And it goes far beyond that stereotypical Hollywood portrayal of Indigenous people as the first environmentalists, as one with the Earth, that we can talk to animals, it’s much more [...] it’s a sophisticated epistemological process that has been passed down for generations and generations through oral tradition. From our ancestors, who learned, who observed, and knew how to interact with the environment. So, you have to believe Indigenous peoples when we say we know what we’re talking about.”

—Louellyn White
Assistant professor of First Peoples’ studies at Concordia University



Protestors march on TD, Scotiabank, and RBC.



As media began to arrive at the scene of the protest, allies stood in solidarity with the Indigenous land and water protectors.



Gladys smiling. Photo courtesy of Bridget.

Tears from up above

Bridget Tolley's search for justice

Written by Max Binks-Collier

Content warning: police violence, anti-Indigenous slurs

On the night of October 5, 2001, Gladys Tolley was struck and killed by a Sûreté du Québec cruiser near Maniwaki, Quebec. Part of Bridget Tolley, her daughter, also died when she heard the news. Bridget went looking for answers about what happened, but only found more questions to ask. A year later, she discovered that the police had terminated the investigation into her mother's death without informing her. She took arranging a second investigation into her own hands. Those hands balled into fists that knocked on the doors of cagey police. Those hands clutched telephones as she spoke to politicians and grasped signs bearing Gladys' face as she spoke at vigils. The fingers of those hands also massaged her temples as she slumped over her table and wondered how much longer it would take before a second investigation was ordered.

It's been fifteen years so far.

PART ONE: SUGAR MOUNTAIN

Gladys Tolley was born in 1940 in Maniwaki, Quebec, a town an hour and a half drive north of Ottawa. She grew up on the nearby Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg reserve, though attended school in Maniwaki until she dropped out to support five younger siblings. Nothing came easy on the reserve. "Everybody's just trying to live day by day," Bridget explained. Gladys and her mother, Agnes Cayer, worked as chambermaids in a hotel. Some might have resented having to drop out of school, but "that was one of her things that she really liked to do, clean the rooms at the hotel," Bridget recalled.

She liked the forests of Kitigan Zibi even more. There she watched animals, hunted, and fished. The

spaces between her toes filled with hot sand as she walked down the shore of Cayer's Lake, named after Agnes, then waded past rocks slimy with algae before she dived into the water. Gladys' grandchildren and great-grandchildren still swim there today.

Gladys grew into a woman who radiated gentle happiness. Smiling, Bridget said, "everyone gets mad now and then, but she didn't have a cross bone in her body [...]. She was a really, really happy, soft-spoken woman." In the photo of Gladys that Bridget shows at rallies, Gladys beams with high eyebrows and a smile that bunches the cheeks beside her large, round nose. In a photo of a 1996 family reunion, Gladys sits with a laid-back grin, her arm around her mother's shoulders.

Gladys married John Tolley and gave birth to Bridget and her siblings. She took her children on rides through the forests of Kitigan Zibi.

Then she couldn't.

When John and Gladys divorced, John wouldn't let Gladys visit the children. "We didn't really get to grow up with her, but she was always there. She would come and visit us every chance she got, even if it was for five minutes when my dad wasn't there," Bridget laughed. "So those were really good memories of her."

But not all of Bridget's memories are good. When she was eleven, John Tolley "shot himself in the heart, and he died instantly too." The children then lived with their grandmother, assisted by social workers.

As the children grew into teenagers and adults, Bridget and her siblings visited their mother, who they often found listening to Conway Twitty's crooning and the spunky songs of Loretta Lynn. Her children introduced her to Neil Young. Especially "Sugar Mountain":

*"Oh, to live on Sugar Mountain
With the barkers and the coloured balloons,
You can't be twenty on Sugar Mountain*

*Though you're thinking that you're leaving there too soon,
You're leaving there too soon..."*

They played it so often that Gladys joked her children were the Sugar Mountain gang. It became one of her favourite songs.

She turned to the Sugar Mountain gang when she lost three family members in two years. In 1998

and 1999, Agnes, Gladys' husband Xavier, and Gladys' sister, Della, died. Della's death in a car accident reminded Gladys of her brother Wallingford, who was hit by a drunk driver when he was only sixteen, and Camille, another brother who died in a car accident in 1983. Gladys was lonely, and on October 5, 2001, she went to visit Bridget's sister at her house on the other side of Highway 105.

At around 11:30 p.m., Gladys stepped from her daughter's house and into the rain to return home, curlers still in her hair. She began crossing Highway 105, and then was hit by the Sûreté du Québec cruiser.

PART TWO: DIGGING

When Bridget learned her mother had died, she wanted



Five generations of the Tolley family. Gladys sits in the middle row, with her arm around her mother, Agnes Cayer. Bridget Tolley stands behind Gladys. Photo courtesy of Bridget.

to speak to the police who had been at the scene of the collision. “They all didn’t want to meet with me because they said I was too upset and too mad [...] but I would have met with them,” she explains. “They didn’t want to give me no information.” Bridget learned, however, that an investigation was under way.

She was awaiting its outcome when the phone rang one day in November 2002.

She answered the phone.

A reporter from *Le Droit* had a question for her.

“Yes?”

How did she feel about the police closing the investigation into her mother’s death, having concluded that the collision had been due to the negligence of a pedestrian?

Shortly after she had spoken to the *Le Droit* reporter and hung up the phone, she picked it back up. “It [the phone call] was what made me start digging. I said, well I wonder why they’re not telling me anything. What are they hiding?”

Her phone was “the way I did my justice [...] ‘cause I did live on the reserve, and was kind of far from the city. Bills were pretty high for me,” she chuckled. One of the calls she made was to the police, requesting police reports. They refused.

“I had to also get a lawyer [...] It took me almost 13 months.”

Finally she received the police report. As she read it, however, her confusion only grew.

Officer Serge Chalifoux had hit Gladys. The officer in charge of the scene was Michel Chalifoux. Not only were both officers from the Sûreté du Québec, a disturbing fact given that the Kitigan Zibi Police Department had jurisdiction and should have taken over the scene – they were also brothers.

In 2001, the policy in Quebec for investigating deaths caused by

police mandated that the Minister of Public Security would appoint a second police force to investigate the police force implicated in the death. The Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) were called, but they arrived eight hours later, after the Sûreté du Québec had removed Gladys’ body and taken the cruiser to a garage. How could the SPVM conduct an impartial investigation if there was no longer a scene to investigate? Instead, they had to rely on the testimonies of Sûreté du Québec officers at the scene – especially that of Michel Chalifoux.

Not only were both officers from the Sûreté du Québec – they were also brothers.

The police reports were also full of misinformation. According to Bridget, Gladys died at 282 Kichi Mikan. The police marked her address as 281 Kichi Mikan. Though the police report said that the family had identified the body, “we weren’t allowed to identify my mother,” Bridget says.

Gladys’ family weren’t the only ones who didn’t see the body.

“The coroner’s never even seen my mother’s body. My mother was killed on the night of October 5th around 11:30 p.m.. Police reports were done February 8th 2002. The coroner [...] he never even seen the body, so he had to wait for the police report before he made his own report, and the coroner only finished his report in June.”

The coroner ruled the death to be the result of alcohol-induced

negligence. “In their report, it’s all about alcohol. They [the police] took pictures of alcohol,” Bridget said, referring to how the police went into Gladys’ house and took pictures of beer bottles on her table. “The coroner said she died because she was intoxicated [...] and not because she got hit by the police car. I can just imagine all the other cases like my mother’s that are very badly done, saying we’re ‘drunken Indians.’ I can just imagine the other Indians.”

The accounts of Serge Chalifoux and the officer in the passenger seat differ as well. Serge Chalifoux said that he thought Gladys was a road sign, but the other officer stated that Gladys was on all fours when she was hit. Gladys was also allegedly in the middle of the road when she was struck. None of this makes sense to Bridget.

“It’s hard for me to believe that she was in the middle of the road and two of them didn’t see her. So one thought she was a sign, another one thought she was a dog or something. And this is at 11:30 at night. [...] It was raining that night, but still, if it’s raining, and if it’s dark, where else would they be looking besides the road? And how come they didn’t see her if she was in the middle of the road? And the car itself [...] is all broken on the right side of the car. [...] So if my mother was in the middle of the road, they had to be way over on the other [left] side of the road to hit her on that side of the car, or else they would’ve hit her on the left side of the car, if she was in the middle of the road.” Bridget took a photo of the police cruiser in the garage as evidence.

Bridget also has other questions:

Why did police not take a statement from Gladys’ neighbour, who was on the scene first?

Why did police reports not include a statement from a police-woman who was on the scene, when other officers’ statements were compiled?

Why did the Sûreté du Québec take control of the scene and not the Kitigan Zibi Police Department?

Only a second, independent investigation can answer these questions. Even if the evidence that Bridget compiled doesn’t prove Chalifoux’s guilt, it demonstrates that the original investigation was so poorly conducted that it should not have been the foundation on which a decision to press charges or proceed to trial was made. Moreover, Quebec failing to commission a second investigation would indicate that the provincial government accepts investigations riddled with contradiction, conflict of interest, and inconsistencies. Would the law enforcement officers that investigated the collision clear a suspect from another similarly inadequate investigation if their suspect wasn’t also a po-

lice officer? If they would, then why the low standard for investigations? If not, then why did they clear Serge Chalifoux?

Quebec nonetheless denied Bridget’s request for a second investigation in 2010.

PART THREE: “IF IT WAS EASY, THEY WOULDN’T CALL IT STRUGGLE”

If you met Bridget and didn’t know what she’d gone through, you’d still get the impression that she was a juggernaut stuck trudging her way through a mire. She has an air of determination as intense as her frustration. In one photo she stands tall, unshakeable, and unfazed beside Justin Trudeau. She looks at people with eyes that are at once friendly, intelligent, and flustered. When she speaks, at vigils and on the phone, her indignation and drive grow until she shouts. But her voice becomes hoarse and her words quiver. Bridget’s determination has come at a price.

“The coroner’s never even seen my mother’s body.”

—Bridget Tolley

When I interviewed her, Bridget started speaking about trying to arrange a second investigation by mentioning the unexpected ways in which Gladys’ death changed her life. When Bridget was in ninth grade, she dropped out of school and started drinking to escape from the pain of her father’s suicide. “After [...] they said that my mother died because she was a ‘drunken Indian,’ I quit drinking. The death of my dad got me drinking, and the death of my mom made me stop drinking. [...] So if anything happens to me they can’t say I’m a drunken Indian woman.”

She also got up early in the morning and worked on her mother’s case until late at night. She sifted through reports, made phone calls, and met people non-

stop for close to a year before realizing that she needed to slow down or she risked burn-out. “And I didn’t waste my time too. I went straight to the top. [...] I didn’t mess around.” She has written to Members of Parliament. She didn’t just stand with Justin Trudeau; she spoke to him. She is also in touch with a lawyer from the Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

This hasn’t made her struggle easier. If anything, the number of influential people who have heard her story might only make her lack of success even more painful. Sometimes when she speaks, it sounds as if the weight of the past fifteen years is squeezing against her lungs. “Every day is a struggle. Every day to get up is a struggle. You know, I never thought justice would be political. You know, that didn’t cross my mind when I started this,” she says, her words strained between her quick, upset breaths. Even after a decade and a half, her mother’s death still causes her “raw pain.” But “nobody’s going to stop me. So many have tried to stop me already,” she said, her voice breaking as she held back tears. “And it hasn’t worked. I’m not going to stop [...] What happened to my mother is real, and true, and it’s wrong.”

She worries constantly that her struggle won’t result in anything, and that people don’t even need to try to stop her. “It feels like I’m still in the same place that I was fifteen years ago.” When she feels hopeless, however, she remembers something that her friend Matt told her: “If it was easy, they wouldn’t call it struggle.”

“You know, I never thought justice would be political.”

—Bridget Tolley

Friends such as Matt are like a new family. Bridget lost a mother, but gained many sisters by joining Sisters in Spirit, a campaign led by the Native Women’s Association of Canada. They gathered infor-



The police cruiser that struck Gladys. Photo courtesy of Bridget.

mation on violence against Indigenous women until the Harper government cut their funding in 2010. “This is one thing the government was trying to do – is silence us again by not funding the Sisters in Spirit,” Bridget said. “I thought that they were making us disappear again.”

Bridget refused to disappear. She co-founded Families of Sisters in Spirit, a grassroots organization that undertakes much of the same work that Sisters in Spirit did, and that draws on many of the same networks. “It makes all this worthwhile, seeing the families come together and supporting each other. [...] It gives you the strength to keep going. [...] I need to have that at least one percent hope to keep going.”

“After [...] they said that my mother died because she was a ‘drunken Indian,’ I quit drinking.”

—Bridget Tolley

Bridget formed another family when she met people recovering from losses similar to her own in 2010 at the Forum Against Police Violence and Impunity. Several family members of people killed by police expressed a desire to unite. Out of death, Justice for the Victims of Police Killings was born. Finally she had met people who understood the sensation of “begging and begging and begging, and even though they hear us, they don’t hear us.”

Few things explain this feeling of being both heard and not heard better than the newly opened Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes.

PART FOUR: “EVEN THOUGH THEY HEAR US, THEY DON’T HEAR US”

According to the “Historique” section of the Bureau’s website, the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes arose after much public criticism of the practice that allowed police officers to investigate serious incidents implicating other police officers. The public drew attention to the potential for conflicts of interest, lack of transparency, and the absence of impartiality and objectivity.

Then, according to the website, “the government of Quebec heard the population.”

In 2012, politicians suggested modifying the “Loi sur la police” to create the Bureau, which would investigate police officers whose actions had resulted in death, “serious injury,” or were linked to illegal activities. After three and a half years of legislative wrangling and administrative organizing, the Bureau opened on June 27, 2016.

It states that its values are impartiality, rigour, and independence, and asserts in the “Mandat et Pouvoirs” section of its website that “the Bureau of Independent Investigations maintains a relationship without any link of dependence to the government of Quebec in its activities, and is not subordinate to the State or any police force in Quebec.” This statement is reassuring, until we learn that the Bureau cannot initiate investigations. Only the Minister of Public Security can prompt a Bureau investigation. The Minister initiates an investigation based on a report that the chief of the implicated police force writes after an event resulting in death or serious injury. A Montreal-based civil rights organization called Ligue des droits et libertés has expressed concerns about the chiefs being the ones who initiate the process of a potential investigation. In a document entitled

“Entrée en fonction du BEI: des lacunes importantes subsistent!” they state, “Now, that implies, except when the event has resulted in someone’s death, that this chief will be the one evaluating if the nature of the injury requires a BEI investigation to take place.” The Bureau cannot even press charges. It must submit reports to the Directeur des Poursuites Criminelles et Pénales, the office of provincial prosecutors, who decide whether or not they will prosecute. Can the Bureau really be “not subordinate to the State or any police force in Quebec” when it cannot press charges, or act without authorization from the government, when the government itself is informed by reports from the implicated police forces?

This statement is reassuring, until we learn that the Bureau cannot initiate investigations.

The Bureau’s independence becomes more uncertain when one considers who it’s composed of. A selection committee consisting of Bureau director Madeleine Giauque, a representative of the Minister of Public Security, and the director of the National Police School of Quebec sifted through the applications of people wanting to work for the Bureau. Even if the committee genuinely had the independence of the Bureau as its top priority, the fact that those who handpicked the future investigators were representatives of the police training school and Ministry of Public Security, excluding Giauque, already skewed the selection. It indicated that those who’d be selected would conform to an evaluative framework that prioritised the procedures, ethos, and values of the government and the police – the organizations that the Bureau is meant to be independent from. Consequently, those chosen might not have sufficient critical distance from the organizations that they’d be investigating. There’s no evidence that the committee was some sort of cabal intentionally engineering a team of investigators who would perform great cover-ups, but without representatives from civil rights organizations or coalitions against police brutality, the selection process was skewed. As such, 14 of the 18 investigators have been police employees. Nine investigators and the three supervisors have been police officers.

Furthermore, the Bureau states that an investigator cannot take the role of principal investigator among an investigative team if said investigator was once employed at the police force under investigation.

Does this imply that regular investigators can investigate the police departments where they were employed? When I called the Bureau to ask, they refused an interview.

Other organizations like Montreal Noir have criticized the Bureau for being predominantly white, and for having no Indigenous members. It claims that the Bureau “does not represent the communities most affected by police brutality; those of us who are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, trans, and otherwise marginalized.”

I asked Bridget Tolley if she would be satisfied if the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes led a second investigation into her mother’s death?

“Absolutely not!” she replied. “It’s police investigating police – this is the big problem.” Bridget wants a civilian committee of investigators. Giauque has claimed that the Bureau needs ex-police because the investigations are very “advanced.” “I have a grade nine education and I did this alone,” Bridget said in response. “It doesn’t take a genius to figure this out.”

PART FIVE: THE VIGIL

Justice for Victims of Police Killings hosted a vigil outside of the Fraternité des policiers et policières de Montréal on October 22. The large building of beige brick and glass walls covered in “Libre Nègo” stickers was surrounded by a few dozen people. A row of police officers stood at the top of the building’s granite steps, at the bottom of which were Bridget and Julie Matson, another co-founder of Justice for Victims of Police Killing. The sound of their quiet conversation mixed in with the French hip-hop playing from speakers covered in a blue, crinkly tarp. In front of the speakers were framed photographs of victims of police killings. Through the raindrop-covered glass of the frame, Gladys Tolley beamed at the sombre crowd.

“It’s police investigating police – this is the big problem.”

—Bridget Tolley

Bridget was holding a large poster of that photo, and a braid of sweetgrass. Her eyes glimmered, but, unlike Gladys, she was sombre as she and the other organizers moved in front of the granite steps. Jaggi Singh, a local organizer, introduced the speakers to the crowd. Soon he passed the microphone to Bridget. Singh manoeuvred around her, stepping onto the second of the five granite steps so that he was behind her, and tilted a black umbrella over Bridget. Her face was glum.

“Hello. *Bonjour*. Thank you for coming out today on this rainy day,” she began.

Steering out at the crowd, Bridget paused and Julie Matson put a white mittened hand around Bridget’s shoulder as one of the police officers tapped Singh’s shoulder. When Singh didn’t respond, the officer tapped his shoulder again. Then the officer stepped down and leaned toward Singh, perhaps whispering something.

“We’re here today to honour our loved ones who were killed by police,” Bridget continued.

The officer nudged Singh who stood still, staring ahead with tense resolution in his eyes and tight-set lips. The officer flashed an exasperated smile to a partner on his left, then pushed Singh, and this time his body rocked forward, and his fingers tightened around the steel railing beside him. A third officer stepped toward Singh.

“I think this rain is appropriate for today,” Bridget said. The officer smirked with amusement and annoyance before returning to the top step. Singh held the umbrella with that same determined half-frown. Bridget fixed the crowd with her weary but stony eyes. “Cause I feel it’s tears from up above, happy tears because we’re here, and sad tears because our cases are not being done right.”

This story used the following sources: “Rapport Annuel,” by the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes; “Tenue d’une enquête indépendante” in the “Loi sur la police”; “Règlement sur le déroulement des enquêtes du Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes,” in *Gazette officielle du Québec*; “Règlement sur la procédure de sélection et sur la formation des enquêteurs du Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes,” in the “Loi sur la police”; “Tripartite Police Agreement” between Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg band council, Quebec, and Canada; the website of the Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes; Ligue des droits et libertés, “Entrée en fonction du BEI : des lacunes importantes subsistent!”; Interviews with Bridget Tolley; “Histoires troublantes sur la surveillance des enquêtes policières” in *La Presse*; “Le Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes clame sa transparence,” in *Journal de Montréal*; “La directrice du Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes se veut rassurante,” in *Radio-Canada*; “Police Killings in Canada: Anatomy of a Crisis,” in *Ricochet*; “Bridget Tolley’s search for justice for her mother,” in *Rabble*; “Police Impunity,” in the *McGill Daily*; “Journey for Justice: Story of Gladys Tolley” by Native Women’s Association; “Interview with Bridget Tolley” by Black Coffee Poet; “Montréal Noir et les familles de personnes tuées par la police rejettent le Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes,” on the website of Collectif Opposé à la Brutalité Policière.



Bridget stands beside Justin Trudeau. Photo courtesy of Yahoo News Canada.

It takes three to tango

A new method of conception

HELOISE CHAPUIS
Sci+Tech Writer

The union of an ovule, the female gamete, and a sperm, the male gamete, has been thought to be the only way to conceive children – until now. This union can directly involve a person with sperm and another with an ovule, or, in the case of In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), the gametes can be combined in a laboratory setting to be later implanted in the uterus after fertilization. However, in late 2015, the necessity of this union was questioned, as reported in *New Scientist*, with the birth of the first “three parents baby.” In this unusual scenario, DNA from a donor’s egg was mixed with the mother’s egg and father’s sperm to produce an embryo whose cell nuclei contained DNA from all three. But why did these parents need a donor?

The child’s mother was affected by Leigh syndrome, a neuro-metabolic disorder targeting the central nervous system (CNS). The CNS is composed of the brain and spinal cord which are responsible for analyzing every signal received by any part of the body. Electric signals are relayed from one end to the other via nervous cells called neurons, composed of dendrites, a cell body and an axon. Neurons then connect with each other forming a network throughout the body. Symptoms associated with Leigh syndrome generally appear at a very young age; some of the most notable are loss of motor skills, seizures as well as respiratory and kidney failure. The disease originates from a mutation of the MT-ATP6 gene contained in the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), which is responsible for the production of Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) which provides the energy needed for our metabolism. If two nucleotides in the sequence of the MT-ATP6 gene are replaced, the sequence is modified and the normal production of ATP can no longer happen. Let’s explore a little further the role of mitochondria in order to understand why a mutation in their DNA could be detrimental.

MtDNA contains 37 genes. A mutation to any of these genes would compromise the efficiency of the organelle, which can be fatal. Unfortunately, mutations of mtDNA are not as rare as we might think. Some research suggests that Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases may result from mutations of mtDNA, as well as Leigh syndrome. The genes contained

in a fetal mtDNA come from the mtDNA contained in their mother’s egg passed on during the first three weeks of embryonal development, a phenomenon known as the “mitochondrial genetic bottleneck” occurs.

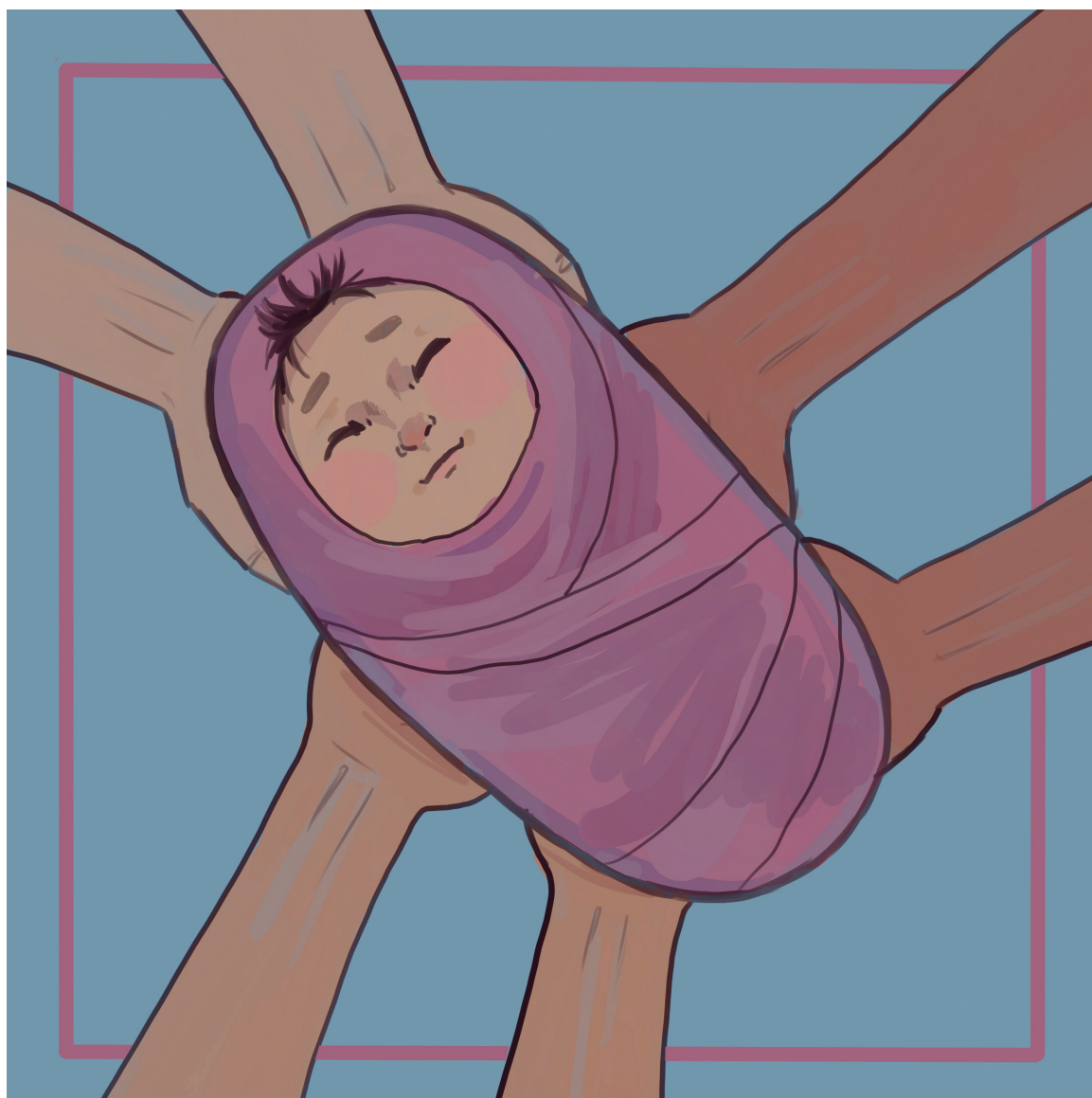
The distribution of mtDNA to the eggs during meiosis

Women start producing eggs by meiosis very early in their life, and when the diploid mother cell (germ cell) divides, it distributes different parts of the mtDNA contained in its mitochondria to the four daughter haploid cells (the eggs). Hence, the eggs could have inherited either a large portion of the mutated mtDNA or practically none. However, the mechanisms appear to have evolved to keep the mutated mtDNA from being passed on from the mother to the child. But in the case of the mutations being transmitted, the descendant will have very poor chances of survival. We cannot guarantee that some of the mutated mtDNA, the amount of mutations determining the severity of the defect that will be caused, will not be passed on to the child. This is where the donor comes in.

The donor is extremely important, as it is their egg that will be fertilized by the father’s sperm, even though the genes contained within the nucleus will be the mother’s.

So that’s why we need a donor

The DNA from the mother’s nucleus is used as a replacement for the donor’s DNA. This way, the baby will not be inheriting the mitochondrial defect, but will be conserving most of the mother’s genes. The procedure executed is called spindle nuclear transfer and consists of removing the nucleus from the mother’s egg, and inserting it in the donor’s egg containing only ‘healthy’ mitochondria. The spindle apparatus of a cell is a network of microtubules, or fibers, responsible for separating each pair



MARINA DJURDJEVIC | The McGill Daily

of chromosomes during mitosis. After doctors insert the mother’s chromosomes attached to a spindle into the donor’s egg, the latter contains the healthy mitochondria and the mother’s DNA. The egg is then fertilized by the father’s sperm, creating a zygote, the first cell of what will later become a human being. This zygote will divide by mitosis, which means that it will replicate the genetic information it holds in its nucleus in order to have it twice, so it can create a new cell containing the same genes. The rest is identical to any typical gestation. The donor is extremely important, as it is their egg that will be fertilized by the father’s sperm, even though the genes contained within the nucleus will be the mother’s. Although there were some concerns surrounding this procedure, the nuclear transfer was done at New Hope Fertility Center in New York City by John Zhang, and the healthy egg was fertilized in Mexico.

A first for spindle nuclear transfer

Another technique enabling couples in which the woman is affected by mitochondrial diseases to have healthy children is called pronuclear transfer. The only dif-

ference between pronuclear and spindle nuclear transfer is that both eggs are fertilized by the father’s sperms, and the mother’s nucleus is inserted into the donor’s egg after fertilization, however this operation implies the destruction of an embryo. However, the parents did not agree with pronuclear transfer for religious reasons, therefore, the five embryos that were created had to be generated using spindle nuclear transfer, and only one developed without mitochondria related disorder such as Leigh syndrome.

Furthermore, pronuclear transfer has already been performed in the US in the 1990’s on a hundred eggs, but the practice was banned by the Food and Drug Administration, because two embryos developed genetic defects. However, it has recently been accepted in the U.K., which has granted scientists permission to deepen their research of treatments aiming to avoid the transmission of mitochondrial disorders. The U.S has not authorized pronuclear transfer nor spindle nuclear transfer, so the doctors accomplished the transfer in Mexico. Despite spindle nuclear transfer not being legally accepted, Zhang re-

vealed to the *New Scientist* that no laws were broken during the conduct of the technique since it is not mentioned anywhere that it is prohibited. The procedure was absolutely ethical, says Sian Harding in an interview with the *New Scientist*, who evaluated the moral side of the process according to U.K. law. Indeed, they prevented the destruction of an embryo and saved the baby’s life, as he could have died of the syndrome inherited from his mother, which was ultimately the main goal.

After testing the baby’s mitochondria, the doctors discovered that less than one per cent of its DNA had undergone the mutation responsible for Leigh Syndrome. The child has for the moment shown no signs of the disease, but he will nonetheless be monitored in order to be sure that none of the mutated genes of the mother’s mtDNA were passed on. The success and details of the operation were announced at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine’s Scientific Congress on October 29 in Salt Lake City. Firm conclusions cannot be made as of yet, but a new option for parents wishing to conceive has been added to their potential list of choices.

The Costco of electronic music

Highlights from a month of Red Bull Music Academy



RBMA artists and their craft.

LUCAS SNAIJE | Photographer

LUCAS SNAIJE
Culture Writer

The announcement that RBMA would be held in Montreal this fall left music fans both excited and apprehensive. RBMA, a self-defined global music institution, has delivered 18 years of concerts, workshops, art shows, and parties in over sixty countries, featuring some of the biggest names in the music industry. Along with high expectations about the event, some were rightfully worried that this grand-scale institution would corporatize the electronic music scene.

The Red Bull Music Academy (RBMA) experience made October in Montreal feel like an extended trip to Costco. The festival was an exciting, yet overwhelming retrospective of everything you could imagine – and it was all happening at once. With a bottomless budget and an endless calendar of events, RBMA showcased local artists and international icons on a global scale. For more than a month, RBMA delivered a continuous stream of interesting sound and sight experiences that, after the dust had settled, left some in awe and others in dismay.

In a month, Red Bull converted the Phi Centre into multiple deluxe studio spaces, and rented spaces such as the Olympic Pool, the Planetarium, and an enormous warehouse in Griffintown. They also turned legendary Stereo's after-hours room into a regular club and hosted events in numerous other extravagant grand-scale spaces across Montreal. Given this, it makes sense that some would see

the festival as a way to use electronic music for the commercial benefit of such a large company.

The festival was an exciting, yet overwhelming retrospective of everything you could imagine.

However, our critique should not be totalizing considering RBMA's effort to highlight local artists, as well as Black, Indigenous, and musicians of colour. During the past few weeks, Marshall Allen, student of Sun Ra, talked extensively about his late teacher, the jazz pioneer who took many Black musicians under his wing and was explicit in his anti-racist and anti-colonialist stance. Inuit throat-singer Tanya Tagaq spoke about decolonization through music and the importance of anti-colonial politics to her artistic practice. Other highlights included appearances by Sampha, Kaytranada, and DJ Stingray – which barely scratch the surface of the extensive guest list. The Academy's participants were given a platform to showcase their fresh sounds to new audiences, get international visibility, and jam out in the studio with well-known musicians.

RBMA's close collaborations with Montreal organizers like Mutek or Never Apart served to subvert the institutionalization of the Academy and recognize local

heroes. Moreover, many events were free, and those that weren't rarely exceeded \$15.00. The intervention of local organizers was noticeable, even significant, as it helped curate a culturally specific aesthetic experience. This showed an attempt to understand the city's cultural pillars, and to export a high-budget transnational prototype. The marketing strategies trickled through the sound bytes, but the beams shone on mostly very high quality, well thought-out shows.

The intervention of local organizers was noticeable, even significant, as it helped curate a culturally specific aesthetic experience.

The opening show on September 24, an after-hours party held in the Mile-Ex venue Espace Reunion, kicked off the festival with a bang. The innovative use of space and well crafted visuals foreshadowed the event's skillful organizing and attention to detail. It was great to see several amazing women and femme artists that night – a welcome subversion of the male-dominated electronic music scene. Aurora Halal played a mesmerizing

live set and Rose tore the main room apart.

"Drone Activity in Progress," the September 30 evening event, was one of the most notable. For a few hours, it delivered Canada's finest noise manipulators at a huge Griffintown warehouse. The corridors were lit by strobe lights as large industrial ventilators turned slowly to the sound of analog frequencies. Local electronic and ambient artist Kara-Lis Coverdale played a shimmering set of melodic, warm sounds. Her dreamy textures were abruptly cut short by a frenetic, highly experimental and dissonant set by Venetian Snare, the drum and bass artist based in Winnipeg. Though his music was loud, chaotic, and hard to swallow, his understanding of sound and space was unquestionable. His intensity retrograded perfectly with the highly anticipated, Vancouver-born ambient drone master Tim Hecker, who finished the night with melodic ambient cuts mostly drawn from his most recent album *Love Streams* and classic record *Virgins*.

"Dans les Abysses," the October 23 concert that took place in the Olympic pool, provoked an unprecedented wave of critique. Out of a queue of approximately 1500 people, only around three hundred were able to participate in the surreal, hyped-up experience of floating in an Olympic pool while listening to Detroit electro. Bathing in the warm water under the towering brutalism of the pool's architecture, while watching artists perform on concrete diving platforms was an entirely

unique experience. However, the show did not entirely live up to its expectations. Though the performances were amazing, and once again Red Bull offered a singular event – it was to the detriment of most people. Eager to attend a highly glamorized, free and pioneering event after queuing for hours in the cold, hundreds were disappointed when told that they couldn't get in.

RBMA delivered a continuous stream of interesting sound, sight, and experiences that, after the dust had settled, left some in awe and others in dismay.

Overall, RBMA was an exciting and fleeting addition to Montreal's nightlife, demanding its participants to consume copious amounts of caffeine to keep up. Though some events could have been better organized, the festival brought great artists to new venues, introduced their music to audiences that may not have been aware of Montreal's diverse range of talent, and encouraged public participation through free events.

Opera, you can do better

Jordan de Souza on *Don Giovanni*, dismisses critique about misogyny

CARLY GORDON
The McGill Daily

Content warning: discussions of sexual violence and assault, rape culture

At only 28, Jordan de Souza may seem an unlikely superstar in the genre of opera, an art form widely perceived as belonging to an older generation. Nonetheless, he is one of Canada's most acclaimed young maestros. The McGill alum, now based in Berlin, joins Opera de Montreal this season to conduct Mozart's iconic – and controversial – *Don Giovanni*. The 18th century opera tells the story of a young and arrogant nobleman and includes accounts of sexual violence. The Daily had the opportunity to sit down with de Souza, who, despite bringing up interesting points about opera as a contemporary art form, shows a lack of understanding about *Don Giovanni's* complicity in condoning violence against women.

"Mozart was 31 when he wrote *Giovanni*," de Souza told The Daily. "I did a piece by Franco Faccio, Hamlet, in Austria; he was 24 when he wrote that [...] This has always been an art form [created] in the hands of young people."

According to de Souza, the notion that opera is the music of an older generation is simply a myth. "I think what we hear so much in the media [...] and what I experience actually working in the business, are two completely different things," he stated. "Take this *Giovanni* we're doing, for example. The whole cast is young Canadians, and all of us have this passion and this kind of adoration of opera and what we can do together through this form."

According to de Souza, young people's attitudes toward opera are shaped by a misunderstanding of the art form. "If I have a lack of understanding of something else, that if I met the right person that I had a chance to chat with, they could kind of open a window to that world, and all of a sudden you find something that resonates with you. And I think music, in such a deep way, is a great demonstration of that," de Souza said.

De Souza himself realized his passion for conducting at a very young age. As a student at a Toronto choir school, de Souza worked as a piano accompanist and church organist; the latter role helped him learn to improvise and think on his feet. "Already as a young guy, I always had this kind of desire to lead musicians," he explained. "I always had a kind of idea of how

I thought music should sound, and how we might go about realizing that together."

Those early musical interests eventually led de Souza to study conducting at McGill, where he encountered what he calls the "esprit" of an arts-loving city and province. The greatest resource de Souza experienced at McGill, however, was its people. He explained, "I think the best thing about my time at McGill was the interactions I had with so many great professors and so many great students that never tried to put us in a box, and they kind of allowed us to find ourselves as musicians and not try to fit us in a mould."

"If I have a lack of understanding of something [and] if I met the right person that I [could] chat with, they [could] open a window to that world [...] I think music [...] is a great demonstration of that."

—Jordan de Souza

Today, in addition to returning to Montreal for a four-show run of *Don Giovanni*, de Souza heads the music staff at the Komische Oper Berlin, which specializes in avant-garde interpretations of operas, and continues to serve as conductor-in-residence for the Toronto-based Tapestry Opera, which focuses on performing new and contemporary operas through close collaboration with living composers. This broad range of sounds and styles, from a 1787 Mozart staple to a Canadian world premiere, poses a stark contrast, which de Souza believes offers a learning experience.

"To then go back and work on a piece like *Don Giovanni* – which, obviously, it's been the same way it is for 250 years – but to come in with that mindset of still trying to find the beats, of trying to see what's behind the notes [...] I think that's the great parallel that I enjoy



TAYLOR MITCHELL | The McGill Daily

[working] with contemporary music and [...] staples of the repertoire like the great Mozart."

For de Souza, this process of "trying to see what's behind the notes" is one that is purely artistic. He focuses solely on the formal elements of the opera and avoids addressing its reception, even when the opera has harmful social implications for marginalized groups.

Don Giovanni has received much criticism for its misogynistic values. Partway through the play, female love interest Donna Anna takes her solo, singing: "with one hand he tried to silence me, and with the other gripped me so tightly that I thought I must succumb." Anna's story may resonate with some survivors of sexual assault. However, in this opera, violence against women is both normalized and romanticized. The narrative focuses instead on Don Giovanni's pursuit of his desires, frames him as almost heroic, and completely dismisses the lack of sexual agency attributed to its female characters.

Some contemporary interpretations of the Mozart classic address this aspect of the story. While *Don Giovanni* has been portrayed as a benign, suave seducer, other productions make it clear that he is a perpetrator of violence against women. De Souza doesn't recognize the latter.

"Giovanni is not an opera about sexual assault," he says, "although

sexual assault is a part of what is the departure point of the opera. To think of *Giovanni* as an immoral piece is to get lost in the details and not to see really what the totality of the message is [...] Giovanni's weapon is also not seduction as much as it is desire, and seduction as a by-product of this desire."

[Jordan de Souza] avoids addressing [the opera's] reception, even when [it] has harmful social implications for marginalized groups.

De Souza's dismissal of the harmful implications of *Don Giovanni*, and the politicization of art as a whole, shows a fundamental misconception of the ways in which systems of oppression function. Even if an artist chooses to focus only on a piece's formal elements, they cannot erase the social context in which it is created,

especially when the piece perpetuates existing violence against disempowered communities.

In an effort to defend both Giovanni's actions and his own directorial decisions, de Souza insists on putting the character's actions "in the culture of the 18th century." However, this does not absolve de Souza of the responsibility to address the opera's harmful aspects in a contemporary context. By dismissing Giovanni's actions based on societal values, de Souza refuses to hold the perpetrator accountable and to recognize that misogyny continues to run rampant today and manifests itself in the form of rape culture.

Though de Souza admits that the opera "puts us in a position [...] to ask the right questions," his passing nod to the controversial nature of *Don Giovanni* is a passive response to serious and rightful critique. Art cannot be untangled from its social context. Ignoring art's participation in politics is itself a political act, as it obscures the role of art in reproducing systems of power. At the same time, art has the potential to reveal injustices and act against them. Even the opera, an art form so steeped in history and seemingly resistant to change, can surely be mobilized to this end.

Opera de Montreal's *Don Giovanni* runs on select dates from November 12 to 19 at Place des Arts.

Racism is not a joke

Montreal Improv show proves necessity of racial diversity



Performers at Triple Threat Thursday.

CAROLINE MACARI
Culture Writer

Triple Threat Thursday, hosted by Montreal Improv, an organization dedicated to promoting the art of improvised theatre, provides a dose of comedic relief from chaotic city life. On the last Thursday of every month, comedy fans are treated to performances by both up-and-coming actors and established improv masters. Though the comics may have great improvisational skill, their lack of representation shows that there's other skills the event still has to master. Members of the Montreal comedy community need to educate themselves and each other and work on creating a safe environment before inviting artists of colour into the community.

Last week's routine followed the Harold format, a performance structure made famous by the comedy sketch *Upright Citizens Brigade* in New York. After asking the audience for a starting word, the comics divide into three groups and presented three distinct scenes based on their interpretation of the chosen word. Despite the initial thematic link, the scenes were largely unrelated, making the format difficult to follow, but still an impressive feat to perform. Despite its rigidity, the Harold structure paradoxically allowed for more artistic expression. Given that the comics had to create three different characters, and reconstruct them throughout the night, their characters turned out fully developed. This opportunity for enriched character development is oftentimes missed when comics are given a simple, isolated prompt. At Montreal Improv, during the show, comics did not follow the Harold structure strictly, but

more as a guideline, allowing room for error and flexibility. Clearly, creativity was their main focus.

The first team, "Small Fry," featuring McGill graduate D.J. Mausner, kicked off the night by asking the audience for a word. The audience settled on "button" and the show began from there. The ensemble's jokes about breakups, the downsides of living with your partner, and awkward relationships with grandparents set the tone for the night. Another team, "Bayside," enacted a satirical take on both agoraphobia and the stereotypes attached to boy bands.

"The main conversation [in the standup scene right now] is inclusivity."

—Jaymie Metivier

Jaymie Metivier, *Triple Threat Thursday's* producer, entered Montreal's comedy community simply by taking comedy classes, and became a producer by advancing through various roles. When asked what makes Montreal's comedy community distinct, he told *The Daily* that in the U.S., the "SNL-style improv" pervades the comedy scene, but Canada embraces the British style of improv, which is "more story driven than material driven. It is about more than simply making people laugh, and a happy halfway point between American and British style."

Though many of the performances were enjoyable, the show was lacking in various aspects. 18 comics performed on Thursday night, and

all of them were white. According to Metivier, this is a problem faced by Montreal's larger comic scene.

"The main conversation going on [right now in the standup comedy community] is inclusivity regarding race, gender, and sexuality. The discussion is pushing [us] in the right direction, and Montreal's artistic community deeply encourages change, which bleeds into comedy," Metivier said. He hopes that people of colour, especially women and femmes of colour, will feel welcomed into the community. This is already starting to happen, exemplified by the Montreal Ladyfest, a newly organized festival celebrating comedy produced by women and femmes, but the lack of racial representation continues to be an ongoing issue.

In Team Bayside's scene, some of the performers pretended to be in a boy band. One member labelled herself "the heartthrob" and designated others as "the cool one, and the ethnic one," continuing, "I guess it's 2016 and we need to be politically correct," implying that representation is not only unimportant but also a nuisance. Luckily, one of her fellow comics was quick to call her out by responding, "you're gonna need a lot of work."

It was an apt response in the moment, but the community itself needs to consciously work on racial inclusivity and representation. Instead of expecting people of colour to voluntarily enter a potentially hostile environment, the work can start with community members not only to educate themselves about anti-racism, but also use their privilege to educate each other.

Montreal Improv hosts free comedy workshops with flexible hours. All workshops can be found at www.montrealimprov.com

Remembering Leonard Cohen

(1934-2016)

First Place

THE SPARROWS

By Leonard Cohen

Catching winter in their carved nostrils
the traitor birds have deserted us,
leaving only the dullest brown sparrows
for spring negotiations.

I told you we were fools
to have them in our games,
but you replied:

They are only wind-up birds
who strut on scarlet feet
so hopelessly far
from our curled fingers.

I had moved to warn you,
but you only adjusted your hair
and ventured:

Their wings are made of glass and gold
and we are fortunate
not to hear them splintering against the sun.

Now the hollow nests
sit like tumors or petrified blossoms
between the wire branches
and you, an innocent scientist,
question me on these brown sparrows:
whether we should plant our yards with breadcrumbs
or mark them with the black persistent crows
whom we hate and stone.

But what shall I tell you of migrations
when in this empty sky
the precise ghosts of departed summer birds
still trace old signs?
or of desperate flights
when the dimmest flutter of a coloured wing
excites all our favourite streets
to delight in imaginary spring?

Leonard Cohen, a singer-songwriter, poet, and novelist who was born and raised in Montreal, passed away on November 7, 2016. During his time as an undergraduate student at McGill, Cohen published the poem "Sparrows" in Issue 38, Volume 44 of *The Daily*, which was printed in 1954. In memory of his literary contributions, we have produced a scanned copy of the poem, published more than sixty years ago.

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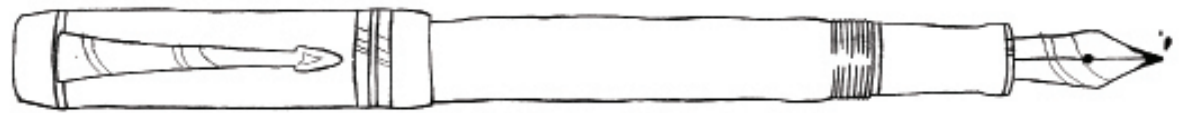
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Lest we forget Canada's continuing imperialism and state violence

Every year since 2009, with the exception of this year due to construction, Remembrance Day ceremonies have been held on McGill campus to commemorate the lives of soldiers lost in war and to honour veterans. In addition to inviting a heavy police presence on campus, these ceremonies include artillery salutes that make use of guns, fighter aircrafts, and cannons. This display of militarism is not only potentially upsetting to students who have experienced war or police violence, it also obscures Canada's imperialist history, including its invasions of other countries and continued occupation of Indigenous land. We need to be critical of Remembrance Day and its ties to Canadian nationalism and pro-military propaganda, and acknowledge that peace in Canada comes at the expense of imperialism and war in other countries.

The dominant narrative holds that the soldiers who died in World War I did so for the sake of freedom and peace. What is often overlooked is that the war was motivated largely by imperial elites' greed for foreign capital. While some voluntarily joined the military, many were forced into battle by social pressure, poverty, and conscription. If the point of Remembrance Day is to honour their sacrifice and condemn war, doing so through a display of militarism is hypocritical. Canada recently became the second largest arms dealer to the Middle East, and the sixth largest in the world, thanks to a 15-billion-dollar deal selling armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia. Canada also continues to support illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Countries such

as Afghanistan and Iraq have been invaded by the Canadian army, facilitated by weapons that were developed at institutions such as and including McGill. Within Canada's borders, police forces continue to target Black, Indigenous, and migrant communities, with increasingly deadly weapons. By making a spectacle out of militarism, Remembrance Day glorifies Canada's ongoing violence against marginalized people at home and abroad.

Some people may observe Remembrance Day to commemorate a family member or a friend who fought in a war. If we are committed to supporting veterans, we should do so through concrete and effective methods that draw attention to the ways in which veterans have been, and still are, neglected and abused by the state. While this day could be personally meaningful, it is necessary to critique the systems of the power that lead to not only the loss of soldiers but also the deaths and displacement of civilians. Remembrance Day is a good opportunity to engage those who believe in the dominant narrative surrounding Canada's involvement in war, specifically that it is "benign" or "out of defense." We need to recognize that it is irresponsible to condemn war and commemorate the deceased while ignoring the present-day violence being enacted by the Canadian state. Meanwhile, Remembrance Day ceremonies need to encompass all victims of war, including civilians, and be treated as a chance to protest Canadian nationalism and state violence.

—The McGill Daily editorial board

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