

CHARGES IN ABDI CASE STILL “A LONG WAY FROM JUSTICE”

Sarah Nixon

On March 6, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) laid charges against Constable Daniel Montsion following a seven-month investigation into his involvement in the death of Abdirahman Abdi. The SIU, a provincial police watchdog unit responsible for investigating cases of death, serious injury or sexual assault involving members of the police force, concluded that Const. Montsion should be charged with manslaughter, aggravated assault and assault with a weapon. Const. Montsion, who had been assigned to desk duty since the incident on July 24, 2016, was suspended from work with pay and awaits a March 29, 2017 court date.

Abdi, a Somali-Canadian

with mental health issues, died in hospital after an altercation with Ottawa police on the morning of July 24, 2016. After reportedly groping a woman at a Bridgehead coffee shop on Wellington Street, Abdi fled from police toward his Hilda Street apartment complex, where officers arrived and proceeded to restrain him. Eyewitnesses reported that Abdi was pepper-sprayed, punched and beaten with a baton during the altercation.

Surveillance video of the incident has not been released to the public, but Heather Badenoch, a communications consultant, is among a small group of individuals who have reviewed the footage. Badenoch described what transpires in the video to the CBC. Badenoch said the footage shows Abdi was lying still, face down on

the pavement in front of the building, when Const. Montsion “punches him in the head very violently, twice, and we never see Abdi move again.” When paramedics arrived on the scene, they found Abdi showing no vital signs. They attempted to revive him and transported him to hospital in critical condition. He was pronounced dead at 3:17 p.m. the following afternoon.

The SIU’s announcement of the charges to be laid against Const. Montsion was received with some reservations by the Justice for Abdirahman Coalition. The Coalition was formed in the wake of Abdi’s death by a group of diverse community members determined to advocate on his behalf for genuine change to Ottawa’s policing and law enforcement institutions.

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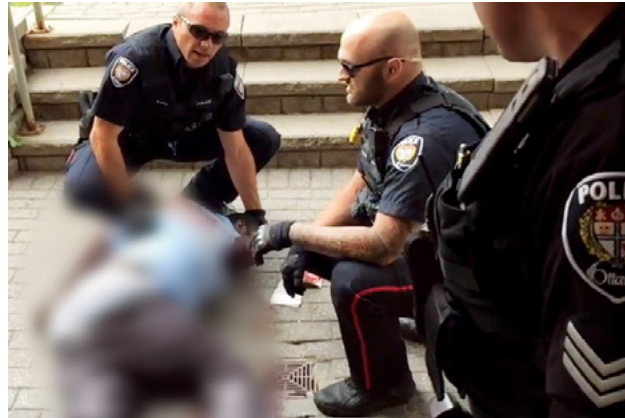


Photo: YouTube

“That Abdi died at the hands of police in Ottawa is somewhat of an anomaly. That police routinely use force against racialized groups, the mentally ill, and the homeless is not an anomaly.”

Craig McFarlane, Professor of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University

RATIFICATION VOTE UNDERWAY

Tentative Deal reached between CUPE 4600 and Carleton University

Andy Crosby

Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Contract Instructors (CIs) at Carleton University are voting whether or not to ratify proposed collective agreements on March 20–22.

CUPE 4600, the union representing the workers, reached a tentative deal with the University as picket lines were set up on campus shortly after 6 a.m. on March 6.

The picket line only lasted one hour while bargaining teams took the necessary time to review

Carleton’s offer following a marathon 22-hour negotiation session.

“It seems clear that the administration realized sometime during that night that they may have been successfully exhausting the bargaining teams but there was a whole other crew of people who were preparing to take negotiations to the street if the bargaining teams didn’t get a decent offer,” according to Kevin Partridge, President of CUPE 4600.

“The employer should have known well before that time that our members were mobilized and the

strike committee, mobilization committee and both bargaining committees all made it clear that our local was organized, mobilized and ready to rumble,” he told the *Leveller* via email.

Partridge attributes the mobilization efforts of both bargaining units as crucial to getting Carleton to offer more at the bargaining table. Over 800 members had signed up for picket duty.

CUPE 4600 was in a legal strike position at 12:00 a.m. on March 6 and was prepared to walk out, with Carleton’s administration seemingly holding out un-

til the last minute.

Janne Cleveland, Contract Instructor with the English department, described the method employed by Carleton senior administration as “a common labour tactic,” on CKCU 93.1 FM’s Roots Radio program on March 14.

Employed as a CI at Carleton since 2002, Cleveland has experienced many rounds of negotiations.

“Typically, yes, it does go to the eleventh hour and beyond and what that produces is a climate and an environment of anxiety [on campus],” she said. “It doesn’t really bode well for good relations for anybody.”

Cleveland believes that moving forward, CUPE 4600 will be in a better position to negotiate in future bargaining rounds as, “we have never gone on strike before and this sets a precedent,” she said.

CUPE 4600 hosted two special membership meetings on March 15 and 16 where members were presented with the terms of the deal.

Neither Cleveland nor Partridge would disclose the exact details of the deal. However, Partridge hinted at the inclusion of language that would benefit those who experience sexual or gender-based violence on campus in

relation to the recently approved Sexual Violence Policy.

In addition, CIs may soon have access to multi-term agreements that give them increased job security and TAs could have continued protection from tuition fee increases while they are both students and working as TAs at Carleton.

“Both groups are being presented with the possibility of wage increases that are amongst the best in the sector at this point in time,” said Partridge.

“Having seen this over a number of years, this is one of the strongest agreements that I have ever seen CUPE manage to get,” said Cleveland. “I suspect that, in fact, the vote will ratify the agreement.”

Ratification voting is underway as the current issue of the *Leveller* hits newsstands.

“As the results of the ratification vote come in this week, we have an opportunity going forward for both sides to come together in future negotiations in a less adversarial way that would benefit all of us who work and learn, and really promote a sense of community at Carleton University,” Cleveland told the *Leveller* via email.

Be sure to check leveller.ca for updates.



Photo: CUPE 4600



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Lev·el·ler
noun

1 Historical: During the English Civil War (c. 1649), one who favoured the abolition of all rank and privilege. Originally an insult, but later embraced by radical anti-Royalists.

2 One who tells the truth, as in “I’m going to level with you.”

3 An instrument that knocks down things that are standing up or digs up things that are buried or hidden.

The *Leveller* is a publication covering campus and off-campus news, current events, and culture in Ottawa and elsewhere. It is intended to provide readers with a lively portrait of their university and community and of the events that give it meaning. It is also intended to be a forum for provocative editorializing and lively debate on issues of concern to students, staff, and faculty as well as Ottawa residents.

The *Leveller* leans left, meaning that it challenges power and privilege and sides with people over private property. It is also democratic, meaning that it favours open discussion over silencing and secrecy. Within these very general boundaries, The *Leveller* is primarily interested in being interesting, in saying something worth saying and worth reading about. It doesn’t mind getting a few things wrong if it gets that part right.

The *Leveller* has a very small staff, and is mainly the work of a small group of volunteers. To become a more permanent enterprise and a more truly democratic and representative paper, it will require more volunteers to write, edit, and produce it, to take pictures, and to dig up stories.

The *Leveller* needs you. It needs you to read it, talk about it, discuss it with your friends, agree with it, disagree with it, write a letter, write a story (or send in a story idea), join in the producing of it, or just denounce it. Ultimately it needs you—or someone like you—to edit it, to guide it towards maturity, to give it financial security and someplace warm and safe to live.

The *Leveller* is an ambitious little rag. It wants to be simultaneously irreverent and important, to demand responsibility from others while it shakes it off itself, to be a fun-house mirror we can laugh at ourselves in and a map we can use to find ourselves and our city. It wants to be your coolest, most in-the-know friend and your social conscience at the same time. It has its work cut out for it.

The *Leveller* is published every month or so. It is free.

The *Leveller* and its editors have no phone or office, but can be contacted with letters of love or hate at

editors.the.leveller@gmail.com

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EDITORIAL

SUBVERT CANADA 150

As the *Leveller* winds down our ninth production cycle, the Canadian government and citizens alike prepare for a summer of Canada 150 celebrations. Throughout this past year, we have touched on the problems associated with these nationalistic festivities, chief among them being Canada’s colonial past and the problems that history poses for the present.

As the City of Ottawa de-velops into an intoxicated sea of red and white, we should call it for what it is: a celebration of whitewashing, of colonial erasure. It is not a celebration that merely serves to forget history but one of denial and one that rewrites the cultural genocide, land theft and elimination of Indigenous nations and populations subjected to 500 years of colonization.

“Because it’s 2015.”
After the Liberal Party’s 2015 federal election victory, Justin Trudeau famously declared the triumph of feminism and that Canada hitherto had reached a new height of gender parity, realized through Canada’s first gender-balanced Cabinet. Of course, this gesture towards equality is hollow when compared with the underlying sexism and patriarchy that permeate Canadian society.

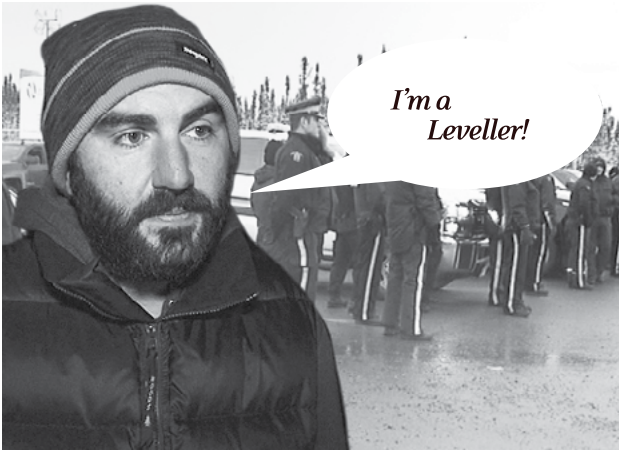
When grandstanding politicians look in our eyes and tell us that they are feminists or that Canada has no history of colonialism or that we have embarked on a nation-to-nation relationship renewal, we must be wary and challenge the underlying assumptions that mark the colonial present.

“Because it’s 2017.”
In 2017, Canadian politicians continue to say the darnedest things.

Conservative senator Lynn Beyak, in a March 7 speech,

attempted to rewrite history by saying that Canadians didn’t quite grasp the full picture of the infamous residential school system, which produced an “abundance of good,” including successfully converting Indigenous children to Christianity.

Beyak said that the “horrible mistakes” that were made were “overshadowed” and that “nobody meant to hurt anybody.”



Perhaps it is no surprise that Beyak, a member of the Senate committee on Aboriginal Peoples, was nominated by Stephen Harper in 2013. In 2009, Harper publicly denied that Canada had a history of colonialism.

Beyak continued, “I speak partly for the record but mostly in memory of the kindly and well-intentioned men and women and their descendants — perhaps some of us here in this chamber — whose remarkable works, good deeds and historical tales in the residential schools go unacknowledged for the most part.”

These preposterous statements are in line with Beyak’s critical views on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which found that the residential school system was responsible for the deaths of at least 6,000 Indigenous children.

At least 150,000 First Na-

tions, Métis and Inuit youth were forcibly removed from their families and communities to attend the schools over several decades, with the last school closing in 1996. However, Indigenous children continue to be removed in large numbers without the consent of their families through the child welfare system in a 21st Century equivalent of the residential school system and the 60s Scoop.

eller amongst the “honest and ethical journalists who wrote and the intelligent well-informed citizens who are not intimidated by voices who seek to stifle debate.”

A further look into Beyak sheds light on her colonial views towards Indigenous peoples.

Beyak has called for an audit of all money “flowing in and out of reservations,” perpetuating harmful stereotypes regarding corruption on reserves and myths surrounding millionaire chiefs. Read Pam Palmater’s “The Myth of the Crooked Indian” on how to further confront and debunk stereotypes levied at those that settler society is attempting to delegitimize and erase.

How to respond to statements made by the likes of Beyak in 2017?

Perhaps we should stop thinking in terms of, “Because it’s 2017” or “It’s the 21st Century!” because there is a widespread, concerted effort to assert the dominant cultural views of Canadian benevolence, whiteness masked as multiculturalism, and peace, order and good government, at the expense of realizing and embracing not only the soiled past, but that we are actually in the midst of this legacy. It is ongoing. It is here, now. Canada 150 is representative of that. Canada 150 celebrations are part and parcel of the ongoing genocide that has the ultimate aim of eliminating Indigenous nationhood. Only through the continued oppression of Indigenous peoples and suppression of Indigenous assertions of self-determination can Canada continue to thrive and prosper as a result of the ongoing theft of Indigenous land and resources.

This is not only about history, it is about the present.

The Leveller NEEDS

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Whether you’re looking to add your accent to our voice of dissent or if you’re interested in learning what it takes to get a grassroots media project up off the ground, contact editors.the.leveller@gmail.com to find out how you can get involved.

The *Leveller* is experimenting with paying our contributors, recognizing that your time is valuable and without you, the *Leveller* would cease to print.

\$50 - Investigative pieces / Feature spread
\$25 - Most others - campus, news, magazine, culture, comics
\$15 - Columns
\$10 - Comment/Opinion

To facilitate paying our contributors, the *Leveller* has created an Investigative Journalism Fund, so that we can sustain this payment model as well as fund larger investigative research projects, or perhaps even add a journalist to the payroll someday...

Contact operations.the.leveller@gmail.com to contribute any amount.

The *Leveller* acknowledges that Ottawa is on unceded Algonquin territory.

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ABDI
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Farhia Ahmed, spokesperson for the group, wrote in an email to the *Leveller* that the Coalition “welcomes the decision by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to lay charges against Constable Daniel Montsion,” but stressed that the charges are only one important step. “We are a long way from justice,” she wrote. Ahmed explained that the SIU has laid only 20 culpable homicide charges since its creation in 1990, 11 of which were manslaughter charges. “There has only been one conviction,” she wrote, while two cases remain before the courts. In a statement released by the Coalition on March 7, they explain that “Abdirahman was not armed and had no violent or criminal history. More importantly, he posed no threat to the officer who took his life.”

Craig McFarlane of the law and legal studies department at Carleton University also expressed reservations about the announced charges. “Const. Montsion’s attorney, Michael Edelson, is a very good lawyer who has had incredible success at protecting his law en-

forcement clients from severe repercussions,” McFarlane wrote in an email to the *Leveller*. McFarlane speculated that “the Crown will have a very difficult case to prosecute despite the ample video evidence,” and went on to state that “incidents like the absolutely unnecessary beating death of Abdi will continue until police forces and police officers face severe professional and criminal consequences for their acts.”

“That Abdi died at the hands of police in Ottawa is somewhat of an anomaly. That police routinely use force against racialized groups, the mentally ill and the homeless is not an anomaly,” McFarlane wrote.

However, President of the Ottawa Police Association Matt Skof shared an opposing view in an interview conducted by the CBC shortly after the incident in July. “To suggest that race was an issue in this, it’s inappropriate,” Skof said, also referring to Abdi as “assaultive in behaviour” during the altercation that led to his death.

Montsion failed to attend his bail hearing on the afternoon his charges were announced. Instead, he re-

ported to the Elgin Street police station and was later released from the Kanata OPP station by the senior officer on duty at the time. A representative for the Ministry of the Attorney General justified the action in an interview with the CBC, citing a Criminal Code statute that gives discretion to the officer-in-charge to decide who can be released from holding prior to a bail hearing. However, Montsion’s release and his failure to appear in court caused public concern, with accusations being raised that Montsion is receiving special treatment because he is a police officer.

Controversy in relation to Abdi’s death has also arisen in recent days as a result of Const. Montsion’s use of Oakley brand “Standard Issue Assault Gloves.” Oakley sells a line of gloves designed for use by military and law enforcement professionals. The gloves range from lightweight designs made in part of leather and suede to the heavier duty model worn by Const. Montsion, which are equipped with thick carbon to cover the knuckles of the wearer. Oakley describes this particular product as a “military protective glove” on their

website, while a company representative described the carbon plating as “a pair of brass knuckles on a glove” to the CBC. A user review of the gloves displayed on the Oakley site boasts that they “are great for their intended use — assaults,” while another user noted “[k]nuckles are very well protected while punching just about anything.”

The CBC also reported that a source within the Ottawa Police Service identified Montsion’s wearing of the gloves as “central” to the SIU’s assault with a weapon charge. Within the OPS, various units receive these assault gloves to wear on the job. Montsion’s unit, the Direct Action Response Team, was one such unit. Spokesperson for the Toronto police, Meghan Gray, told CBC News that its members have been using similar reinforced gloves for 20 years, and that they are meant to protect officers when they encounter hazards like “broken glass, jagged metal/wood from door frames, locks, hinges” and so on. However, Gray explained that although gloves are never supplied for the purpose of increasing an officer’s ability to deploy force on

another person, police have the discretion to determine the necessary degree of force in a given situation. Gray told the CBC she “simply can’t speculate on how the gloves factor into every incident.”

As a result, concern has been raised about the lack of training for police on the appropriate use of these reinforced gloves. The Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the entity responsible for approving weapons carried by police in the province, has stated that gloves qualify as protective equipment rather than weapons and therefore do not warrant review.

Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau has ordered an audit of the gloves to determine all members who own them throughout the police force, including those who received the gloves from their units and those who purchased them directly from Oakley. The audit is to be completed by March 22.

In the meantime, the Justice for Abdirahman Coalition will continue its advocacy work, which has been ongoing since August. In that time, the Coalition

has established a dialogue with the OPS, and met directly with Bordeleau to address a set of issues within the police force and provide recommendations for their resolution. The Coalition also played a key role in reversing the decision against implementing body camera technology for Ottawa police officers, with a pilot project now set to begin in the near future. The Coalition met with the Ottawa Police Service Board in January to recommend that an independent third party audit of the OPS’ diversity and equity practices be conducted. These are only a few highlights of the many accomplishments made by the Coalition in the past seven months. As Ahmed wrote to the *Leveller*, “the death of Abdirahman must not be in vain. Abdirahman represented the most vulnerable in our community and his violent death should spur us to do more to address the real issues around systemic racism and the lack of support for mental health.”

Anyone who wants to support the Justice for Abdirahman Coalition can start by visiting their website: www.justiceforabdirahman.ca.

WE’LL BE BACK

The Leveller is off for the Summer but stay tuned for the Volume 10 launch in September, but just because we’re not around doesn’t mean the levelling stops here.

Get out there and get involved this summer. You’re all welcome to get involved with us too! Get in touch with us at operations.the.leveller@gmail.com. If you miss us don’t forget to check out our website at

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Employment Opportunity: Managing Editor – The Leveller Editorial Board

The Governing Board of the *Leveller*, a newspaper serving the Ottawa/Gatineau region, is seeking candidates for the part-time contract position of Managing Editor of the Editorial Board. The *Leveller* focuses on engaging its readers in critical debates on issues of local, national and global importance.

The successful candidate will work an average of 25-30 hours per month at \$15 per hour for six months over the Fall and Winter academic terms – September, October, November, January, February, and March – while the newspaper is in print. The Managing Editor will be responsible to the *Leveller’s* Governing Board and will work collaboratively with the Editorial Board, Operations Manager, and Production Manager. More specifically, the Managing Editor will coordinate the Editorial Board, solicit pitches and organize articles, maintain excellent communication with contributors, and coordinate the production weekend before each publishing date. The Managing Editor is required to attend each production weekend in full for all six issues of the upcoming Volume. Working in close collaboration with the Editorial Board, the Managing Editor should act as a recruiter, guide, and mentor for *Leveller* writers, while conscious of the long-term sustainability of the Editorial Board and newspaper as a whole. A detailed job description and task list can be provided upon request.

Interested candidates should have excellent editing skills, experience working with a media publication and non-profit board, experience working collaboratively with others, and possess a strong commitment to social justice. Candidates should also possess exceptional time management, organizational, and communications skills.

Interested candidates are asked to submit the following:

- [a resume and cover letter outlining their relevant experiences](#)
- [a brief statement on power and privilege and how it relates to media production](#)
- [a writing sample](#)

Application packages should be sent to operations.the.leveller@gmail.com by **Wednesday, May 31** as one file in pdf form. References may be contacted upon request.

The *Leveller* is an equal opportunity employer and is strongly committed to fostering diversity within its community as a source of excellence, cultural enrichment, and social strength. We welcome those who would contribute to the further diversification of our community including but not limited to women, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples, and persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity.

ALGONQUINS OF BARRIERE LAKE EMBODY REFUSAL OF SETTLER-COLONIAL EXTRACTION

Trycia Bazinet

In order to protect both the environment and Indigenous ways of life, land defence and water protection camps of all sizes are organizing across Turtle Island. While Standing Rock has made headlines in recent months, there are camps closer to home that are embroiled in struggles no less important. One of these camps can be found in La Vérendrye Park (300 kilometres north of Ottawa) and is led by the Algonquins of Barriere Lake. Here they are contending with a mining claim, stretching over 80 square kilometres, which is held by the mineral exploration company Copper One Inc.

Even though the Algonquins of Barriere Lake live on unceded territories, the community has a Trilateral Agreement (signed with Canada and Québec in 1991) and a supplementary bilateral agreement with Québec (1998), which means they have a say in extraction projects that take place in their territory. Yet, their sovereignty is still being challenged.

In 2016, the mining moratorium — in place since 2011 and retroactively suspending numerous mining permits, including ones held by Copper One — was lifted by the Québec Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources without consultation or consent from the community. During the fall of 2016, Copper One trespassed onto the territory of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake to conduct exploration activities.

According to Ugo

Lapointe of MiningWatch Canada, a group dedicated to reinforcing the need for safe and responsible mining practices in Canada, this kind of trespassing is permissible due to Québec's "free entry" mining system.

The "free entry" mining system is essentially a modernized version of the gold rush where, broadly speaking, anyone with a credit card and internet access can buy a mining claim. The basic premise behind the system is that the federal government claims ownership rights of subsurface minerals and can then lease these rights to any entity who holds a prospecting licence, having been obtained by paying a small fee to a provincial or territorial government.

Once "free entry" is granted, exploration work including drilling can be conducted.

With this in mind, the Algonquins of Barriere Lake are looking to broaden their support base in order to successfully resist these attacks on Anishinaabe lands and rights. At a March 11 fundraiser in Ottawa, community elder Michel Thusky equated mining exploration activities on Algonquin territory as a "massacre against their culture."

Unfortunately, Anishinaabe people are no strangers to this and to other kinds of violence.

To date, Québec has denied Copper One's request for a permit to further explore the land in question. Copper One, however,

has initiated legal action against the Québec government. The first hearing took place on Feb. 24.

At the aforementioned fundraiser, Norman Matchewan, Councilor of the Barriere Lake Algonquins, speculated that it is "not expected that Quebec will put up a fight [against the corporation]."

Therefore, the community is in need of funding to pursue legal action. Since Québec's Mining Act does not even recognize the presence of First Nations people, it has been called "unconstitutional" by the Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador. This means they may have to take legal action against Québec's Mining Act.

Carleton's Graduate Students' Association (GSA) has recently passed a motion to support the ongoing struggles of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake. In line with their land acknowledgment, the GSA recognizes that supporting communities who oppose extraction on their territory is a tangible, material way in which universities can demonstrate solidarity with Indigenous peoples. The GSA has promised to issue a statement of support as well as a donation to the camp.

Community members and supporters have been invited to participate in a human rights delegation to Barriere Lake on March 22. Participants from various local human rights campaigns, such as Justice For Abdirahman and the Ontario Committee for

Human Rights in the Philippines, have been sought out by Barriere Lake residents. The delegation will be hosted by residents, who will cook a traditional lunch and provide a tour of the community.

The community is seeking short-term and long-term support for their campaign against Copper One and to compel the Québec government to maintain the suspension of Copper One's mining claims as well as extending the suspension to all mining claims on Barriere

Lake's territories.

On Feb. 16, Québec Solidaire's Manon Massé, member of the National Assembly of Quebec, submitted a petition containing over 2,000 signatures in support of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake. The petition calls on "the Québec Minister of Energy and Natural Resources to completely ban all mining activity (staking, exploration, development) within the 1991 Trilateral Agreement Territory of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake (La Vérendrye Wildlife Re-

serve Region)."

A press release issued by the community on the same day expressed gratitude towards Massé and other supporters. "We would like to see everyone working together towards reconciliation with First Nations rights and interests, including the right to self-determination and implementing our own vision for developing and caring for the land," said Chief Casey Ratt. "It's the only way to ensure a viable future for our community and our culture."

"We would like to see everyone working together towards reconciliation with First Nations rights and interests, including the right to self-determination and implementing our own vision for developing and caring for the land."

-Chief Casey Ratt

We 
The Leveller



CAMPUS

NUMBERS DON'T LIE

MedLife takes a look at refugee health in Canada

Ash Abraham Coutu

When approaching a discussion surrounding the crisis in Syria, it can be helpful to strike a balance between logic and emotion. MedLife, a University of Ottawa campus based club, did just that with their MedTalk conference, which examined the numbers and costs associated with refugee health.

UOttawa epidemiology professor Raywat Deonandan dispelled several commonly held misconceptions about refugee resettlement in a presentation, in which he mentioned that only four per cent of refugees have been settled in North America. Forty-eight per cent of refugees are found in Asia and twenty-nine

per cent have been resettled throughout Africa.

Deonandan also described healthcare costs for refugees, which on average are only one-tenth of a Canadian's healthcare costs. He noted that refugees pay taxes, yet "their taxes do not give them the same choice or breadth of services as other taxpayers."

Biomedical science student and organizer of the MedLife event, Israa Dawod, was floored by the information laid out in Deonandan's presentation. Dawod told the *Leveller* that, "I knew we weren't taking in as many people as we could but I was blown away by all of those numbers. Without these numbers, we would go on assuming that what we hear

in the media is correct and it's not." Dawod added, "I think we have an obligation in a privileged society such as ours to take in refugees. I do a lot of refugee work and most of them are children."

Suelana Taha, who works directly with refugee children, gave a presentation from her perspective as the Newcomer Patient Navigator at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO).

Taha told the *Leveller*, "when the [Syrian] refugees first started coming to CHEO, there were misunderstandings and miscommunications but I've started to see changes." Taha asserts that education has been key in perpetuating the change. She says, "it's about educating

these families so they don't fall through the cracks."

Language barriers and a lack of awareness of available health services often hinders refugee families from accessing healthcare. To tackle this issue, Taha provides culturally sensitive information to staff members. Additionally, Taha makes sure each family has an interpreter. One practical way interpreters assist is by calling families to remind them of their upcoming appointments. As a result, CHEO has seen a decline in their "no show" rates. Taha believes it is important to treat newcomers' health issues right away. She points out, "we have refugee children who are coming in with advanced dental care

"I knew we weren't taking in as many people as we could but I was blown away by all of those numbers. Without these numbers, we would go on assuming that what we hear in the media is correct and it's not." -Israa Dawod

issues and they are in pain. We can prevent more pain and save the hospital more money with admissions. Fix the problem first before it becomes bigger and costs more in the long run."

Although saving money is an advantage, Taha says, "our goal is to make kids better and feel supported." The quicker the children are treated, the faster they are able to integrate into society and begin to live a healthy life. Taha says, "Syrian refugee children are resilient. All children are resilient."



Photo: Suelana Taha

THE GREAT IMITATIO

Liberal Arts and Modern Government of the Self

Adam Strömbergsson-DeNora

The "Crisis of the Humanities" is a largely illusory concept insofar as it relies on the assumption that humanities graduates do not have practical skills. It is, rather, quite the opposite. A successful humanities major will have one of the most practical qualifications imaginable: an implicit understanding of *imitatio*.

Imitation, or *imitatio*, is an underrated social force. It assumes constant, patient replication of linguistic forms and ideas. Typically, these ideas have been, over time, themselves replicated. Imitation thus assumes a knowledge of that which preceded, not only

in literature nor solely in history nor in philosophy; rather, a body of knowledge that Dan Woolf, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, has called "a lake, rather than a river flowing into the present." Woolf is here speaking of Elizabethan England's (1558-1603) view of the past, but the image he presents is also one of the roots of the liberal arts.

With its emphasis on a broad course of study of what has preceded current generations, the liberal arts focus on presenting that lake in its full splendour. It also teaches students to form their own rivers by developing critical thinking and measured expression that is based on strategies

and tactics that have been replicated for hundreds of years. Those skills create citizens: people able to criticize power, but more importantly who are able to show compassion with the humanity of their fellows at home, at work, and at play.

Our modern Canadian world insists that we are independent beings, but that independence might well lead to a loss of citizenship. Our emotions are embraced. Self expression is idealized. Progress is still a watchword. Most importantly, the past is more and more viewed as a useless appendage of our existence. To learn of the past is, at best, utilitarian: it will explain the mistakes of mothers and fathers of yesteryears.

I can recognize this util-

itarian sentiment as I look over the faces of keen and bored youth alike in my introduction to essay writing discussion groups. I grant that the discussion is not quite as entertaining as I might think. The colon is not an exciting topic. It is the systems of language and writing, with their deep roots in human experience, that lend weight to every word and punctuation mark.

Knowing that rich history of language empowers individuals to better communicate. It is, I think, in this spirit that the Department of English at the University of Ottawa offers ENG 1100. As soon as that spirit confronts reality, however, it must stoop to remedial grammar. Somewhere in that important work of helping students with their grammar, I find time to insert a few appeals for my discipline, English literature, and its virtues.

My students are often studying social sciences or physical sciences. These disciplines, through no fault of their own, emphasize critical thinking without critiquing expression. Doing so creates excellent specialists with a depth of knowledge in a single field, a couple at most. Thus can I read a colleague's accepted journal article from these fields only to gasp in horror at clunky style or poor grammar.

Aside from entering a plea for the necessity of grammar classes in first year university, I also plead for those who do not wish to enter the academy. It is fine to specialize, but most will be working in non-academic careers. Students must learn a multiplicity of skills for an ever-changing job market. They must also learn how to craft arguments to convince employers that their skills and


experiences will be relevant.

That job market is, perhaps, too utilitarian. In the Canadian knowledge economy where university-trained workers abound, nearly everyone is replaceable. Efficiency, a value that has encroached into universities over the last century, creates a drive amongst students and professors alike to move quickly and to think quickly.

The irony is that speed in this economic sense is illusory when dealing with human events. Donald Trump, whose presidency in one way founders on this corporate desire to move quickly, is a poster child for this illusion. Closer to home, the previous federal cabinet (41st Parliament) sought to implement its programme through an aggressive legislative agenda, only to find something of a barbarian horde of lawyers waiting to launch *Charter* challenges, thus slowing the implementation of the cabinet's legislation.

There are few, if any, racing boats in the great lake. We have to instead all come to terms with life happening; we must swim in the lake. The grammar and rhetoric course that I teach attempts, in its most idealized form, to imbue students from different walks of life with the beauty of a language and a tradition that comes down to us from the Vikings, Romans, Greeks and more besides. These cultures have, for centuries, reflected upon the vagaries of life and leave to us a rich legacy. This legacy widens our gaze and, it is hoped, connects us not only with the past, but with each other, for we are all swimmers in that lake.

My advice to students in my discussion groups is always a self-interested plea for my discipline, but it is equally borne from a desire to see them succeed as citizens and as professionals: take humanities courses *alongside* your current degrees. With 120 university credits to fulfill, a double major is within your reach and I challenge a social scientist or a physical scientist to find a liberal arts discipline that does not complement theirs.



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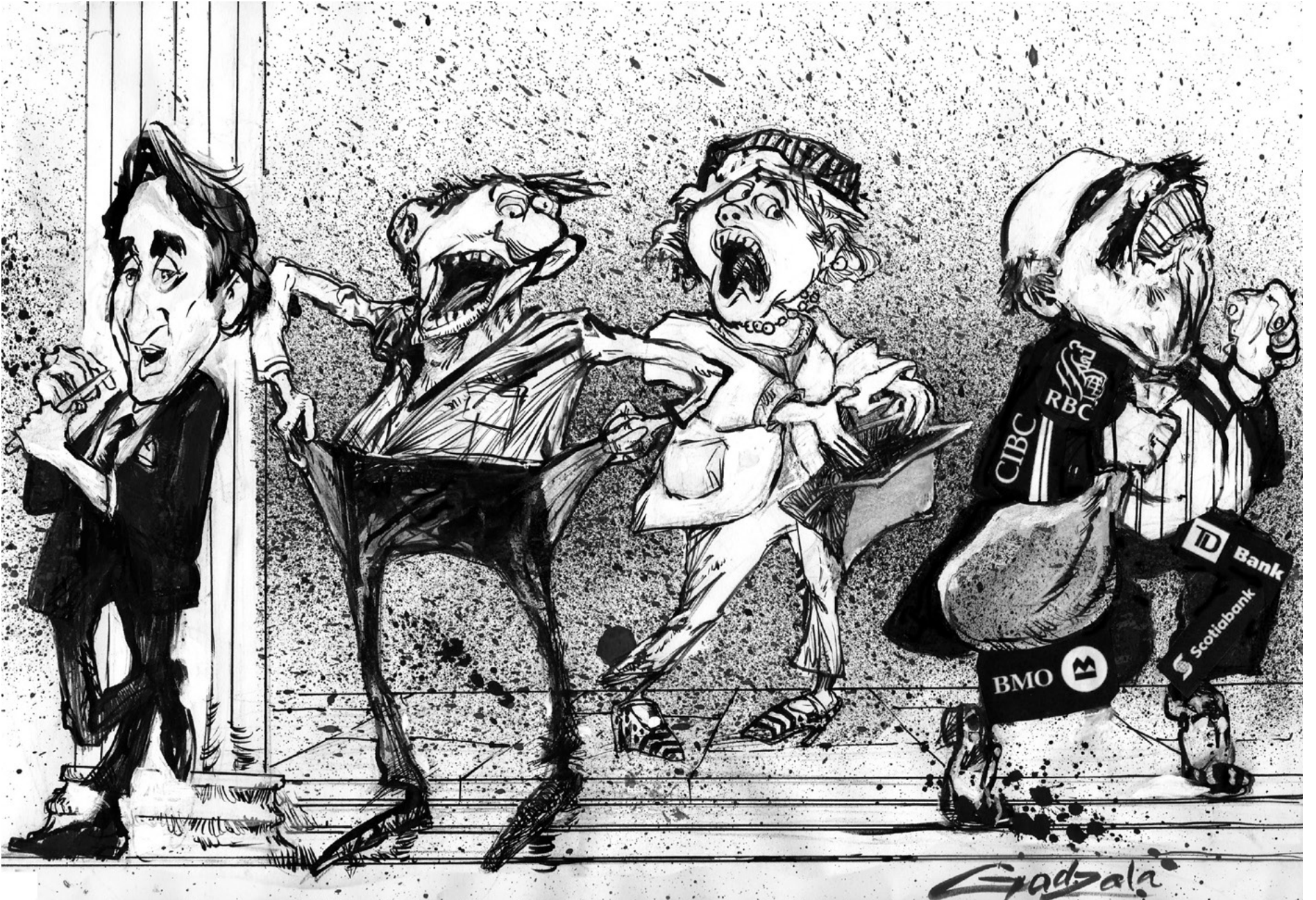
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Désarmer la police



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Francis Dupuis-Déri

Cet article est paru sur [ricochet.media](#) le 14 mars 2017

Quand les sujets du Royaume de France sont débarqués sur les terres de ce qui est aujourd'hui appelé le Québec, ils ont découvert des peuples qui vivaient sans juge, sans police et sans prison. Dans l'Europe de l'époque, il n'y avait pas non plus de police comme on l'entend aujourd'hui (mais il y avait des juges et des prisons). C'est au XIXe siècle, en Grande Bretagne, que la police moderne a fait son apparition, parce que le capitalisme s'y développait plus vite qu'ailleurs, et s'accompagnait d'une arrivée massive de pauvres dans les grandes villes.

Un des pères intellectuels du libéralisme économique, Adam Smith, a expliqué qu'il faut une police quand une société se divise entre riches et pauvres. La police est alors nécessaire pour que les riches puissent dormir en paix, la nuit. Dans notre société marquée par de fortes inégalités, il est donc illusoire de rêver abolir la police, car les politiciens et les riches (ce sont parfois les mêmes) ne le voudraient pas, ne le permettraient pas. Ils savent bien que la police est à leur service, qu'elle les protège.

Cela ne doit pas nous empêcher de rêver d'un monde sans police. En attendant, on peut même exiger qu'elle soit désarmée. Vous ne le savez peut-être pas, mais il y a eu quelques tentatives infructueuses pour lancer un débat à ce sujet au Québec. Qui se souvient du livre de Line Beauchesne et de Yves Dubé, au sous-titre évocateur : *Désarmer la police : un débat qui n'a pas eu lieu* (éditions Méridien, 1993)? Désarmer la police, c'est aussi l'espoir d'Edward Divers, le frère de Tony Divers, abattu en 2016 par des policiers d'Hamilton, alors qu'il était lui aussi en crise. Qui se souci de sa revendication? Aux États-Unis, le site [DisarmThePolice.Com](#) offre des pistes de réflexion intéressantes.

Il ne s'agit pas ici d'espérer lancer un débat à ce sujet, mais uniquement de

faire prendre conscience qu'il est possible de penser à une police désarmée. Or cette prise de conscience n'est pas si facile à provoquer, et il semble y avoir quelques résistances, en particulier du côté de la police. En France, une «parade carnavalesque» du collectif *Désarmons la police* a tout simplement été interdite, en 2016, sous prétexte de crainte pour l'ordre public.

Pourtant, en Norvège, ce sont les policiers qui ont demandé — et obtenu — d'être à nouveau désarmés, après que le gouvernement les ait armés pendant un an suite à l'attentat perpétré par un néo-nazi qui avait tué près de 70 jeunes membres du Parti travailliste. Il y a bien maintenant quelques armes à feu dans des véhicules, par exemple, mais les agents norvégiens n'en triment pas sur eux.

MONTRÉAL N'EST PAS LE FAR WEST

Au fait, à quoi servent les armes à feu de la police, par exemple à Montréal?

Selon le dernier bilan annuel disponible du Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM), celui de l'année 2015, la police a eu recours à ses armes à feux lors d'un événement. Oui, oui : un! Les agents du SPVM ont alors tiré quatre coups de feu, et tué un citoyen (René Galand, 45 ans, armé d'un couteau).

L'année précédente, même scénario : un seul événement pendant toute l'année, quatre coups de feu, un citoyen décédé (Alain Magloire, un sans-abris en crise).

L'année 2013 a été doublement plus intense : la police a ouvert le feu lors de deux événements. Oui : deux. Mais elle a fait feu moins souvent, tirant seulement trois coups, et tuant néanmoins un citoyen (les policiers disent avoir été alertés par des voisins qui craignaient que Robert Hénault, 70 ans, alors en crise, ne représente une menace pour sa propre vie; résultat, la police se présente au domicile, constate qu'il manie un couteau, lui tire

dessus — l'homme meurt de ses blessures quelques jours plus tard).

En 2008, un policier a abattu le jeune Freddy Villanueva. La même année, un coup de feu a été tiré accidentellement par un agent, huit autres par un «policier en détresse psychologique». Tout cela n'est pas très rassurant...

Qu'en déduire? Premièrement, avec un effectif d'environ 4500 policiers, un policier du SPVM a moins de 0,08% de «chance» d'utiliser son arme à feu par année (moins que ça, en réalité, car un seul policier a tiré toutes les balles dans la plupart des incidents, ne laissant pas ses collègues partager ses efforts). Environ 99,7% des policiers n'utiliseront donc jamais leur arme pendant toute leur carrière.

Deuxièmement, Montréal n'a rien d'un film de gangsters. La police du SPVM n'est pas prise dans des échanges de coups de feu contre de «vrais» criminels, par exemple des motards criminalisés ou des mafieux qui accueilleraient les policiers par une pluie de balles, comme dans les films. Ces dernières années, les coups de feu tirés par la police ont toujours visé des citoyens en crise qui ne possédaient pas d'arme à feu, et qui représentaient avant tout un danger pour eux-mêmes.

Troisièmement, voilà près de 15 ans qu'un policier a été tué à Montréal par un coup de feu — depuis lors, tous les policiers portent des gilets pare-balle. Dans la même période, la police a tué près de 30 citoyens (voir la liste sur le site de la Coalition contre la répression et les abus policiers).

Désarmer la police l'obligerait donc enfin à revoir ses protocoles d'intervention envers des personnes en situation de crise, sauvant probablement des dizaines de vies au fil des ans.

En attendant, on devrait distribuer des vestes pare-balles aux sans-abris et aux personnes souffrant de troubles de santé mentale. Car les armes à feu de la police de Montréal n'ont d'autre utilité que de mettre leur vie en péril.

Les féministes et le complexe de la demoiselle en détresse



Image: JD Hancock

Suzanne Zaccour

La version complète de cette lettre ouverte a été publiée sur [Ricochet Media](#) le 16 mars 2017.

Comme à chaque année, la semaine de la Journée internationale des droits des femmes a été riche en frustrations. C'est la période de l'année où le pseudo-féminisme et le féminisme «pop» ressortent à la surface pour nous rappeler d'être belles pour la «Journée de la femme», à grand renfort de marketing rose et de paroles creuses.

Le grand classique est bien sûr le panel masculin pour discuter de la «condition de LA femme». Y a-t-il un signe plus clair de la supposée incompétence généralisée des femmes? Elles ont déjà peu de crédibilité en sciences, en politique, en philosophie, parce qu'elles seraient trop subjectives, trop prisonnières de leur expérience de vie en tant que femme. Mais même quand il est question des femmes et du féminisme, on préfère encore donner le micro aux hommes. Ou plutôt, même quand il est question des femmes et du féminisme, les hommes se donnent le droit de nous arracher le micro.

Évidemment, les féministes un peu plus radicales ne peuvent pas voir ces aberrations passer sans s'exclamer que c'est un non-sens. Or, les «bonnes féministes» nous rappellent aussitôt à l'ordre:

«LE FÉMINISME CONCERNE AUSSI LES HOMMES».

Bien sûr que oui! La lutte contre le patriarcat concerne les hommes parce que les hommes sont le patriarcat. Il n'y a pas d'entité désincarnée indépendante des hommes politiques, des violeurs, des harceleurs, qui établirait, sans que les hommes n'y participent, la suprématie masculine. Bien sûr que les hommes sont concernés : il y a autant d'hommes batteurs que de femmes battues, de violeurs que de violées, de pères absents que de mères monoparentales, d'hommes surreprésentés que de femmes sous-représentées, d'hommes surpayés que de femmes sous-payées.

Cependant, ce n'est pas cette réalité indéniable à laquelle on réfère lorsqu'on nous répète ad nauseam que «les hommes aussi sont concernés par le féminisme». Non, ce serait bien trop impoli que d'oser parler de violence masculine. Il n'y a que deux choix lorsqu'on parle de patriarcat : soit on ignore totalement les hommes (la «violence faite aux femmes existe», mais la «violence masculine» est taboue), soit on parle des hommes comme victimes.

«Le féminisme est bon

pour tout le monde» : un mensonge contreproductif

Désolée de l'apprendre à ceux qui vivent encore sur Mars, mais le patriarcat bénéficie aux hommes et se décline en privilèges masculins.

Dire que les hommes sont pénalisés par le patriarcat parce qu'ils sont «enfermés dans des boîtes» et qu'ils ne peuvent pas «exprimer leurs émotions» (un autre mythe pseudo-féministe), c'est comme si je donnais un méchant gros coup de poing dans le visage de quelqu'un-e pour ensuite m'exclamer (et me plaindre) que mes jointures sont irritées. M'apitoyer sur l'infime dommage collatéral de ma violence ne fait pas de moi la victime de la situation.

NOUS N'AVONS PAS BESOIN DE SAUVEURS

Si cela tombe sous le sens que les hommes bénéficient du patriarcat, et sont donc en perpétuel conflit d'intérêt dans la lutte féministe, pourquoi continuons-nous à tout organiser en fonction d'eux? Pour preuve, le temps qu'on passe à débattre du caractère mixte ou non d'un événement féministe X où de toute façon à peine un ou deux hommes daigneront se pointer. C'est que nous centrons notre activisme sur les émotions des hommes pour ne pas les «aliéner» à notre cause.

Nous nous subordonnons aux sentiments fragiles des hommes parce qu'on nous a convaincues qu'on ne pouvait arriver à rien sans les hommes. Et, ironiquement, nous sommes totalement incapables de voir dans ce raisonnement le résultat d'une socialisation sexiste.

Je clarifie l'argument : la raison que l'on invoque dans 95% des cas pour justifier l'inclusion des hommes dans notre combat (je parle ici d'une inclusion au premier plan, où le féminisme devient presque centré sur les hommes, où ils se prennent pour les capitaines) est basée sur une analogie du style «on ne peut arriver nulle part avec seulement la moitié de l'équipage». On a besoin des hommes, parce que 20 bras valent mieux que 10 lorsqu'on rame.

Ce que les féministes sont en train de faire encore et encore, c'est de donner des rames à des hommes qui rament à contre-sens – sans doute dans l'espoir que notre générosité les incite à arrêter de nous mettre des bâtons dans les roues (de nous violer, de nous battre, de mecspliquer, etc.). Je suis loin d'être une experte en navigation, mais ne venez pas essayer de me faire croire que c'est une façon efficace de conduire un bateau!

Il est vrai que les hommes ont le pouvoir, et que

rediriger un peu de ce pouvoir vers l'émancipation des femmes serait fichtrement utile. Or, il ne faut en conclure qu'il faut faire une place aux hommes dans le féminisme, mais plutôt que les hommes doivent donner leur place au féminisme («Men who want to be feminists do not need to be given a space in feminism. They need to take the space they have in society and make it feminist», Kerry Temple).

Car nous ne sommes pas non plus un groupe totalement démuné. Les femmes sont un groupe marginalisé mais pas numériquement minoritaire. Nous avons la force du nombre. Ce n'est pas vrai que nous ne pouvons rien accomplir sans les hommes. Quelle ironie qu'en tant que féministes, on cherche à convaincre d'autres femmes de leur valeur, mais qu'on soit incapables de reconnaître la nôtre! Nous sommes un mouvement qui peut, et penser le contraire est le résultat direct d'une socialisation patriarcale.

Même si on était incapables de réaliser le féminisme sans les hommes, notre approche qui se centre sur le fait de leur plaire resterait fondamentalement défailante. Lorsque des féministes me disent que je suis trop radicale, que j'aliène des hommes à ma cause, que je dois faire plus de place aux hommes, elles sont en train de me dire que je devrais placer ma confiance (et ma vie, et l'avenir de notre société et des femmes qui viendront après moi) dans des hommes qui ne se préoccupent de l'égalité que s'ils ont quelque chose à y gagner. Comment se fait-il qu'elles ne voient pas à quel point c'est louche?

Une dernière fois pour les personnes au fond de la salle : les hommes qui ne soutiennent les femmes que s'ils ont quelque chose à gagner («le sexisme nuit aussi aux hommes») où si celles-ci sont assez gentilles («les radicales aliènent les hommes à la cause») NE. SONT. PAS. NOS. ALLIÉS.

EN FINIR AVEC LE COMPLEXE DE LA DEMOISELLE EN DÉTRESSE

Le patriarcat nous a formées à être des demoiselles en détresses. Prisonnières du donjon, nous préférons attendre le Prince qui nous sauvera s'il nous trouve à son goût plutôt que de nous atteler à défoncer la porte. Et depuis le temps qu'on l'attend dans le château lugubre, nous avons oublié que c'est le Prince qui nous y a enfermées!

Cessons d'attendre des hommes qui profitent du patriarcat qu'ils nous délivrent par bonté d'âme. Soyons exigeantes. Soyons autonomes. Soyons féministes.

Les Sans-Culottes

Les Sans-culottes étaient les révolutionnaires radicaux pendant la Révolution française (vers 1789). Leur nom émanait des pantalons qu'ils portaient au lieu de la culotte courte et des bas, portés par les nobles et les bourgeois.

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PROTECTION AT THE COST A FAIR DEAL?

In June 2016, Canada’s Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness introduced Bill C-23, *Preclearance Act, 2016*, which would give United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) Officers increased powers to search, question and even detain Canadian citizens and permanent residents on Canadian soil. This would imply that those in Canada who are non-residents or are on visas would have an even more tenuous treatment under the proposed legislation. Bill C-23 is worrying for several reasons, of which three grounds are particular causes for concern. Firstly, there is the issue of sovereignty. By subjecting Canadians to interrogation and detention, the USCBP officers are emboldened to extend their extraterritorial powers, thereby weakening Canadian sovereignty. With such powers, the second ground for concern becomes apparent — infringement of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. In addition to increased racial profiling and curbing mobility rights, Canadians may no longer have the right at the border to change their mind about visiting the U.S., if they feel uncomfortable with USCBP procedures. The third concern is that the proposed bill is antithetical to the increased anti-Trump rhetoric in Canada and the House of Commons.

THE CONTEXT

To understand the status quo of Bill C-23, it is important to take note of its precursors and history. Back in late 2015, the U.S. passed *H.R.998 - Preclearance Autho-*

rization Act of 2015, which authorized the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish U.S. Customs and Border Protection preclearance operations in a foreign country. The Ministry of Public Safety, under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s regime established *Beyond the*

Border Action Plan, which, among many things, allowed for preclearance operations on both sides of the border in all modes of transportation. Subsequently, the United States and Canada signed the *Agreement on Land, Rail, Marine, and Air Preclearance*, which was one of the major commitments of the Action Plan. The new agreement created a legal framework that provided a consistent approach to all preclearance activities, regardless of the mode of transportation.

This has paved the way for Bill C-23 to be introduced, which is designed to implement the provisions of the 2015 Agreement. However, if passed, the *Preclearance Act* proves to be dangerous for Canadian travellers and is almost Kafkaesque. The Act is likely to grant preclearance officers broad powers which will likely infringe on Canadians’ sense of liberty and autonomy. The *Preclearance Act*, though presented as an attempt to provide better protection to Canadian travellers, is an unwarranted attempt to push the boundaries of diplomacy, effectively allowing the U.S. to exercise its powers extraterritorially. While the answer to America’s resurgence of protectionism cannot be answered with a similar policy of isolationism, allowing preclearance officers to exercise their powers on Canadian soil contradicts the concept of sovereignty.

FINGERPRINTED, PHOTOGRAPHED, AND QUESTIONED: A COMMON OCCURRENCE AT THE BORDERLANDS

IN RECENT WEEKS, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL REPORTS OF CANADIANS BEING DENIED ENTRY TO THE U.S. AT VARIOUS BORDER CROSSINGS.

FADWA
ALAQUI

YASSINE
ABER

MANPREET
KOONER

WOMEN'S
MARCHERS DENIED

In early February, Fadwa Alaoui, a Moroccan-born Canadian citizen who is Muslim and wears a hijab, was denied entry to the U.S. after border guards questioned her about her faith. She was fingerprinted, photographed and questioned over four hours before being turned away after her phone was searched and she was interrogated about videos of Muslim prayers. “You’re not allowed to go to the United States because we found videos on your phone that are against us,” she was told. She was questioned further: “Do you practice? Which mosque do you go to? What is the name of the imam? How often do you go to the mosque? What kind of discussions do you hear in the mosque? Does the imam talk to you directly?” Alaoui told the CBC.

On Feb. 9, 19-year old Yassine Aber, a Canadian with Moroccan roots was denied entry at a Quebec-U.S. border crossing. The University of Sherbrooke student was questioned after border agents searched his phone and found a Facebook photo where Aber was tagged along with Samir Halilovic, a fellow student suspected of leaving Canada in 2014 to fight with ISIS. Aber and his track team were held for five hours. After being fingerprinted and questioned about Islam and the mosque he attended, he was denied access under the auspice of not having valid documents, despite possessing a valid passport.

On March 5, Montreal-born Manpreet Kooner was denied access at a Quebec-Vermont border crossing. She was fingerprinted, photographed and questioned over six hours and ultimately denied entry. Although having a valid passport, border guards told her she was an immigrant without a valid U.S. visa. Her two white friends were not questioned. “I know you might feel like you’re being Trumped,” Kooner was told by the border guard.

In the lead-up to the March 8 Women’s March on Washington, numerous Canadians traveling to the protest were denied entry. Again: fingerprinted, photographed, questioned and denied. One of the denied, Joe Kroese, alleged he was refused entry because he wanted to attend a “potentially violent rally.” Another, Joseph Decunha, was asked if he was anti- or pro-Trump and then asked why he disapproved of Trump, if he had ever visited the Middle East and if he believed in violence.

EXPANSIVE POWERS V. ANTI-TRUMP RHETORIC

Diplomacy must have its limits and Bill C-23 presents the prospect of a heavily gratuitous expansion of USCBP’s power. This has also come at a time when anti-Trump rhetoric has been increasing, not only in the House of Commons but also among Canadian civil society. It is not news to us that the new U.S. administration under Donald Trump has rationalized its draconian immigration policies by way of fearmongering, othering and externalizing America’s symptomatic deficiencies and deep sense of insecurity. By ordering tougher security measures at the border and banning people from six Muslim-majority nations from entering the United States — as well as banning refugees from all countries

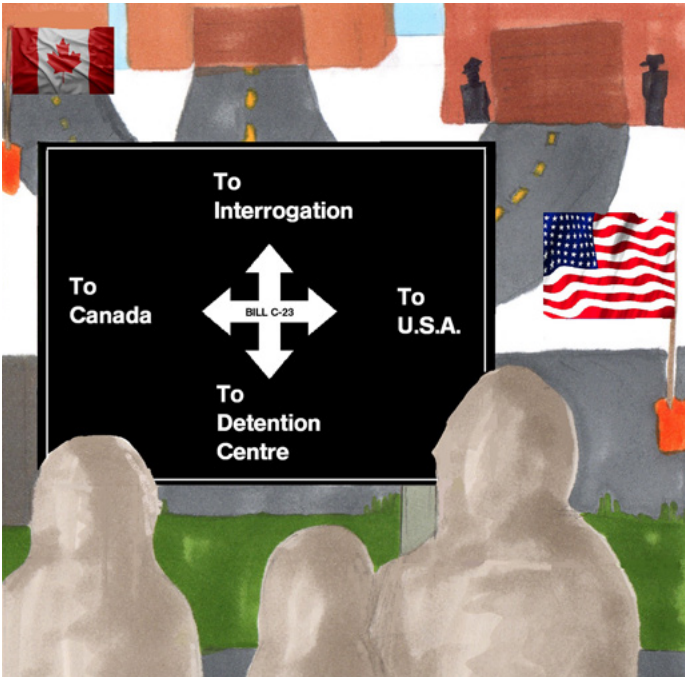


Illustration: Naheen Ahmed



THE OF SOVEREIGNTY

BY JAY
RAMASUBRAMANYAM

— Trump’s America has normalized and legitimized the racial profiling of those trying to enter the country. Such policies are bound to impact the conduct of preclearance officers; power works in ways that the recipient is incapable of predicting. The arbitrariness with which officers are likely to employ their newly granted broad powers provides the perfect recipe for them to violate the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, though they are liable to comply with Canadian law. While the *Preclearance Act*, if passed, will provide Canadian Border Services Agency similar powers in the U.S., Canada’s ability to exercise these powers remains to be seen.

Preclearance in and of itself assumes that every single traveller is presumed to be a threat. While arguments on security versus liberty have been prevalent since 9/11, there is a renewed sense of fear and insecurity coupled with right-wing populism that has provided even greater catalyst for enacting radical policies, which includes increased scrutiny at the border. The most troubling aspect of Bill C-23 continues to be the ability for the U.S. to be able to operate with that same sense of legitimacy on Canadian soil. The Liberal government has failed to take into account the extreme climate of uncertainty that many Canadians have already faced at the border following the discriminatory policies and executive orders of the Trump administration. While preclearance has been happening even prior to such powers being granted to U.S. authorities, the Canadian government’s response to this has been rather ambiguous. The question remains as to why Canada needs to give American agents more powers on Canadian soil, especially in light of how Canadians are being treated at the border. If passed, this legislation is likely to open a Pandora’s box of capricious and abusive treatment by USCBP.

THE TRIAL

Trudeau has continually argued that expanded preclearance will allow for smoother movement of goods and services and will enable easier access to the United States. However, the act of being scrutinized by USCBP officers to make an assessment on whether a traveler is entitled to enter the U.S. while still on Canadian soil can be related to the parable in Franz Kafka’s novel, *The Trial*. More specifically, if the issue of a traveller wishing

to enter the U.S. was to be viewed through the lens of the man who waits before the law and seeks permission from a door-keeper to enter, it is poignantly similar. As a result, the state imposes a judgment and examination on a Canadian traveler; the application of norms that is likely to protect Canadians in Canada is therefore suspended until the “extraterritorial sovereign” decides on the legality of those who wish to enter. Canada’s cooperation reinforces the idea that such systems work as means of control and not as much as means of protection as Trudeau claims. The Bill inhibits the criminal liability of American officers acting in the course of their inspection duties and leaves most other prosecutorial decisions with the U.S..

The Bill has been myopic. Bill C-23 has fallen short of addressing Canadians’ concerns about being interrogated, detained and rejected at the border based on an arbitrary and ethnocentric assessment of race, religion, travel history or birthplace. Draconian policies across the border may not be entirely to blame. To comply with and legitimize such policies by attempting to enact legislation that will likely reinforce the power of the policies down south, however, is likely to infringe on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The days of free movement across borders are gone and Canadians will no longer be able to seek protection from searches, seizures of their personal effects or detention. At this stage, the sole succor to this dilemma seems to be the debates being undertaken at the legislative level that have, at least temporarily, put the brakes on this bill. The final result of this waits to be seen.



TRANSCENDING IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA

Espoir Manirambona

Africa’s struggle for national liberation continues on. While overt, European-style imperialism has faded away, there’s a more covert, secretive form still haunting the region. This type of imperialism is harder to pin down and challenge. However, the contradictions created by relative political autonomy and economic dependence might lead Africans to question just how independent these so-called independent states with black leaders are.

Kwame Nkrumah wrote in *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* that, while countries in the 1960s and 1970s were able to regain some political power from Western imperialists, they remained subject to these same powers. The foundation for this theory lies in African balkanization (redrawing of the map into small nation-states), black imperialist proxies and capitalism that leads to economic dependence, impoverishment and subjugation to global predatory lenders and speculators.

Nkrumah led Ghana from 1957 to 1966 after which he was overthrown in a military coup. He was a socialist committed to serving his people and ensuring that resources went to those in need. Prior to this, Ghana was known as the Gold Coast, a colony of Britain that was primarily used to extract gold and other resources. Ultimately, this exploitation became intolerable for the Africans who revolted and gained “independence.” Nkrumah and the Convention People’s Party realized the limits of political independence without economic liberation. While Africans now controlled the state, the imperialists had retained a number of

ways to continue to control the country. For example, imperialists had de-industrialized much of Africa and forced African peoples to export raw materials to the metropole, North America and beyond. Various colonial techniques and maneuvers served to disconnect African peoples from their subsistence economies, forcing them to buy imports from the imperialist centers to meet their needs.

THE CONTEMPORARY IMPERIALISTS

The imperialists have still shown themselves as being willing to use barbaric military force when necessary. The United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) is an illegal military operation that is being used to conduct regime change for the purpose of attempting to control the continent’s destiny, such as when both AFRICOM and NATO attacked Libya and murdered its leader Muammar Gaddafi.

While organizations such as AFRICOM do pose a challenge to African independence, we are witnessing a New Multipolar Order: the re-emergence of multiple power centres. Africa’s children are uniting, just as Bob Marley had urged them to do. This process is at times slow and challenging, but there are signs that Africans want to accelerate the process of integration. The African Union (AU) has established political and economic integration as a top priority. The AU website highlights the organization’s commitment to forge a path “Towards a Peaceful and Prosperous & Integrated Africa.”

While the Union is not perfect, there is a force within the continent committed to peace and development. On a recent trip

to Africa last fall, I saw first hand this beautiful, rising pan-Africanism. Everyone I spoke to demonstrated a love of the continent as a whole. The cities were filled with optimistic references to “Africa rising,” “Afrique émergente.” The music I listened and danced to was filled with pan-African sentiments pointing to a growing continent-wide African consciousness.

THE “COLOUR-LINE”

W. E. B. Du Bois famously stated “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the colour-line — the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.” This continues to be a challenge in the 21st century. The world is now multipolar with the rise of China, Russia, Iran, the progressive pivot of parts of Latin America and many other regions. Many countries are choosing to drop the dollar for international transactions. While U.S. hegemony is in decline, its military-industrial complex still poses a threat to global peace. Western imperialism, the product of capitalist development, has always been tied to white supremacy. The imperial centres, European and American, stole resources and people from Africa and other parts of the world. Through capitalism, these resources were concentrated within a few families, with some benefits trickling down to the white working class of the world.

The globalization of production and the free movement of goods and capital has created resentment among white workers in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. The contradictions between workers and capitalism are intensifying. Fascist sections of the ruling elite are using white nationalism to channel

their anger away from capitalism to create scapegoats — namely Muslims, Mexicans, immigrants and other groups that can be blamed for the loss of wages and jobs.



Despite this globalizing trend, there is a growing criticalness of capitalism and the wars fought in its name.

THE GEOPOLITICAL SHIFT

The system’s prospects are further impacted by the rise of an anti-imperialist alliance of countries including Iran, Syria, China, Russia, many Latin American nations and more. This geopolitical shift is creating a window of opportunity for Africa. African nations were previously dependent on Western-controlled financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. They can now choose alternative sources of investment from this anti-imperialist alliance. The continent is developing a strong bond with China and others through win-win agreements founded on mutual respect and benefit. China’s “One Belt One Road” infrastructure plans have created opportunities for African nations, particularly the ones in East Africa along the proposed

“New Silk Road” initiative to connect Eurasia to Africa through transportation highways, rail lines and more.

That being said, if Africans value independence above all

debt, corruption and an over-reliance on exports. There is a struggle taking place in that country. The peasants and workers are rising up. The Chinese capitalist class is looking for markets and investment opportunities abroad.

Capitalists have historically been notorious for looking out for their own self-interest and using military force to protect their investments. If the balance of forces tilts further in their favour in China, Africans need to reconsider their relationship to this country. If China can continue to democratize the economy, then the China-Africa relationship will flourish on a foundation of inclusive development.

WILL TO INDEPENDENCE

Africa is rising. It is building new ways of living and thriving. Africans are uniting; they are becoming more conscious, serving other groups impacted by imperialism (Indigenous, Palestinian and others), while remaining independent and anti-imperialist. It is also necessary to democratize the African economy and transcend capitalism, markets, money, exploitation, fear and materialism. Canadians can help through leaving NATO, ending the support of oppressive Canadian mining companies and joining the Non-Aligned Movement against imperialism. The choice is ours: democracy or neocolonialism. Many Africans, like myself, are choosing the former, marking the beginning of a more hopeful and enlightening period for the continent.

Image: tomorrowspaper.wordpress.com

else, we cannot replace one imperialist with another. While China’s contributions to Africa are undeniable, the country is still dealing with its own capitalist contradictions. While the Communist Party leadership states its desire for socialist development, since the early 1990s, the People’s Republic of China has been embracing a form of state-led capitalism. Millions have been lifted out of poverty but millions more remain exploited by private as well as state enterprises. China has more billionaires than the U.S., extreme inequality, financial bubbles, large amounts of

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

The Day of the Woman, Past, Present and Future

Jacqueline Atkinson

Each year, March 8 marks the global celebration of International Women’s Day (IWD). According to the official IWD website, the annual commemoration is intended to celebrate “the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.” Furthermore, the day signifies a “call to action for accelerating gender parity.” While women’s rights have evolved a great deal, there is still much work to be done both within and outside of Canada, which is why this day remains of utmost importance for improving the lives of women and truly realizing gender equality.

The first steps towards advancing Canadian women’s rights began in Ontario in 1884 when the *Married Women’s Property Act* was implemented to give married women the same legal rights to property as men. This

included the ability to enter legal agreements and to purchase property. Between 1916 and 1917, the right of white women to participate in provincial elections was extended in most provinces, excluding Quebec and the Northwest Territories until 1940 and 1951, respectively. A most monumental year was seen in 1918 when white women received federal suffrage. However, one of Canada’s greatest advancements in gender equality came in 1929 in response to the “Person’s Case” lodged by the Famous Five. This decision officially identified women as persons under the law thus granting women the right to occupy office, and effectively facilitating the first female appointment of Cairine Reay Wilson to the Senate in 1930. IWD pays homage to these incredible achievements, but it also compels us to demand necessary change in the lives of women today.

Gender equality quite

simply has yet to be realized in 2017. Women continue to live subordinate to men, which is exemplified in gendered expectations of women in childrearing and in the workplace. Women continue to occupy substantially more precarious employment positions, often finding themselves defined as casual employees lacking access to valuable health care and work protection benefits. Women are continuously objectified and subjected to sexualized dress codes, a practice most commonly experienced in the hospitality industry but similarly experienced in other industries as well. There is little workplace accommodation for family obligations, including breastfeeding and tending to sick children.

The demand for these family accommodations in particular is frequently met with contestations that family matters are not to enter the workplace. However, this criticism is exemplary

of the fact that we refuse to acknowledge child rearing as paid work which contributes to the betterment of our society. This criticism is furthermore representative of favoring a male dominated workforce and of the often incredibly unequal child rearing responsibilities assumed by women. If we claim we truly want change towards gender equality, we must demand increased accommodations for women within the workplace so that women can fully experience financial autonomy.

But it is also important to remember that all women do not share the same experiences which is why IWD also demands us to question how we are using intersectionality to include all women and all experiences in our mandate to advance gender equality. One contentious issue is the inclusion of trans-women in women’s rights circles. Trans-women are criticized as being unable



Photo: internationalwomensday.com

to understand the plight of women who have identified their female gender from birth on the basis that trans-women have enjoyed male privilege for some period of their lives. We ought to use IWD to be conscious that the privileged experience of trans-women is simply different rather than superior. Male privilege may have been reluctantly experienced by these women but they were also not fortunate enough to experience the privilege of expressing their gender identity from birth as other women have.

IWD furthermore forces us to see the incredible disparity of women’s rights that exists between Western countries and the rest of the world, leading us to proclaim the personal is international. We must call upon our world leaders to adopt feminist foreign policies which specifically focus on the experiences of women and girls rather than solely the betterment of the state. With a great deal to reflect upon and a great deal more to improve upon, IWD ignites a fiery passion in us all to continue the fight against sexist oppression throughout the world.

A NUCLEAR DREAM

Reflections on a Tour Through the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone

Crystel Hajjar

It was a cold October morning when I boarded a small bus from Kiev in the direction of Chernobyl, a trip that I'd been planning for a while. Chernobyl, the infamous symbol of nuclear disaster that is now a 30 kilometre exclusion zone, the epicentre being the ill-fated Reactor No. 4.

It was at 1:23 on that fateful April morning in 1986 when an explosion rocked the Soviet Union and the rest of the world as a safety test went wrong and Nuclear Reactor No. 4 exploded. The initial damage and ensuing fallout would result in thousands of deaths and the displacement of over 100,000 more.

When on Sunday, April 27, two days after the explosion, 49,000 people were evacuated from the city of Pripjat alone, the Soviet Union's dream city, they were told to bring some valuables and enough food for three days. Everyone involved sincerely believed they would be back by the end of the year. At the time the accident happened, its magnitude was not understood and the dangers and duration of its effects were highly underestimated. While the authorities acted to avoid immediate dangers, the long term consequences were not really considered at the time.

When I walked into Pripjat on Oct. 27, 2016, it had been over 30 years since the evacuees last saw their homes and embarked on a bus taking them into an unknown world, a journey that we now know will last beyond their lifetime.

"The explosion of reactor No. 4 caused nuclear fallout to spread across most of the northern hemisphere." The geiger counters available at the time could not measure the radiation levels that were being released. Virtually nobody knew what the implications were, nor was there full knowledge of the damages that this disaster could cause. Out of the four nuclear reactors in the area, two remained functional until 2000. In the 14 years that followed, many workers still had access to the sites, less than two weeks at a time, though with very strict safety conditions.

Entering Chernobyl was like entering a different country altogether. The security procedures included scrutiny of our passports and luggage, which felt like a trip back in time. Large roads with no cars, many uninhabited houses, untouched white snow everywhere. Every now and then, geiger counters would go off, a gentle reminder that this is no ordinary city, no ordinary environment. The story of this region is one



Photo: Crystel Hajjar

that is unique and apocalyptic.

When we first entered the 30 kilometre zone, we were in a cluster of villages where farmers lived in individual houses, owned at the time by the Soviet Union. Many of those villages were built to cater to the needs of the cities that were to be centred around the burgeoning nuclear energy business that would come up in the future. Now they are simply old houses that the forest has reclaimed. Many houses were destroyed and buried three meters under the ground as a way to contain the radioactive pollution absorbed by the wooden structure of the buildings.

Much of Chernobyl was forest before 1970. The area

was being developed by the Soviet Union to realize an idealized lifestyle. Even one of the three Soviet radars that used to spy on the U.S. was in the region. Ironically, it is the only one still standing today. Thirty years ago, the information held there could have sparked another world war; now, it is just so much worthless paper disintegrating under the influence of time and weather.

Pripjat, the city closest to the nuclear reactors, a mere three kilometres away, was built in 1970. Its architecture was pretty simple. It was formed of four different districts, each with its own school and clinic. It also had a hospital, a fire station, a hotel, a cinema, two theatres, a restaurant near the

city center, Lenin Square, an amusement centre, a community services centre (a shopping mall) and a supermarket. I mention this because a supermarket was a revolutionary concept in the Soviet Union; there were five in the whole country and one of them was in Pripjat. Ironically, it was expected to open on May 1, had the meltdown not occurred only a few days earlier.

Thanks to nuclear energy, Pripjat was a thriving city with facilities and privileges that were unimaginable in the Soviet era. Districts 5 and 6 were in the process of being built and the plan was to increase the population up to 90,000. It is hard to imagine that dream could ever be realized now.

On that October day, as I walked through the city, it was so peaceful yet so dangerous and so treacherous. I would not even have the time to feel comfortable and safe before my geiger counter would begin to beep, alerting me to the unseen danger that still lingers in the emptiness of the space.

After the accident, Pripjat's buildings were cleaned with abrasive chemicals in order to mitigate the radioactive contamination. As a result, there are spikes and hotspots areas where radiation has accumulated. The abrasive chemicals destroyed the outer layers of the buildings and, over the years, has caused the disintegration of the roofs and walls. Walking through

Pripjat was like no other place I had been to. The city is more desolate than ruins, more lifeless than a city ravaged by war yet everything in it still stands.

Everything looked as though it should still be functioning. Even though there is no electricity, in the light of day, I was still expecting someone to walk out from a building, or children to play in the gym or life to pick up where it had so suddenly left off. Of course, this did not happen and at a certain point, that starts to feel strange. The only life was trees that have grown as high as apartment blocks. They are taking back their habitat. Stray dogs also came around every now and then, wildlife reclaiming its home despite the high radiation levels. Perhaps, it was that unique mixture that made us humans uncomfortable. It was like saying "You messed up once, that's enough! You're no longer welcome here."

The emptiness in Chernobyl is so loud. There is so much to learn, observe and absorb yet there is no life. Other than the group I was with, there was nobody to talk to in Chernobyl; nobody was there to tell the tale. Yet the tale survives in this region that no longer exists even in administrative books. The exclusion zone can be likened to a Soviet time capsule. While the signs of Soviet life have virtually all disappeared, in Chernobyl they persist.



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CANADA 150

It’s not just the good we celebrate...

Sam Hersh

Almost 150 years ago, Canada became an independent nation as a result of a series of lengthy discussions and political conferences. Canada’s founding is, in this way, unlike many other former colonies. It did not come of revolution or sweeping outbursts of nationalism; rather a polite exchange between Canadian and British politicians allowed Canada to exist as a self-governing entity, while remaining in the bosom of the British Empire. Perhaps this is a reason for the oft waning sense of patriotism that Canadians

are perceived to have.

Depending on where you go, complacency can seem to be the norm in Canada. There is a pervading inclination to perceive ourselves as a progressive paradise, full of polite do-gooders, where issues such as oppression and bigotry no longer exist. This is certainly the kind of utopian image the rhetoric surrounding Canada 150 perpetuates.

There is a danger in this whitewashed, nationalistic rhetoric; to embrace it is to erase and ignore all of the ugly, albeit infinitely important, parts of our collective past. Instead of ig-

noring the past, we should confront it head-on and recognize how and why the Canadian national project came to fruition.

As historian Ian Mackay wrote in his seminal work, “The Liberal Order Framework,” Canada is a project of liberal rule. Classical liberalism was (and to some extent still is) the driving force behind Confederation and beyond. The core ideals of classical liberalism — most notably individualism and private property — were central to everyday life and had, for a large part of Canadian history (before Marxist historians notably), engulfed the

national narrative.

It was these liberal ideals that led the fathers of Confederation to be complicit in the cultural genocide and assimilation of Indigenous people across the country, something they would not fully recover from even generations later and which is still ongoing today.

Furthermore, these liberal ideals also led to harsh repression of labour and other collective social movements. These movements were construed as having no place in Canadian society. For William Lyon Mackenzie King, our longest serving Prime Minister, internal labour and class conflict was falsely perceived as a grave threat: “In many particulars, the horrors in international war pale before the possibilities of civil conflicts begotten class hatreds.”

This classical liberalism that shaped early Canada has in the last thirty years morphed into an uncompromising neoliberalism that has led us onto a path of self-destruction. Beginning in the 1980s, with radical shifts in monetary policy and the subsequent Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, our economy has become one that is disproportionately unequal when it comes to average income and heavily reliant on resource extraction, particularly petroleum extraction.

The downsides of this liberal and neoliberal trend are seldom discussed in popular discourse, especially not by our Prime Minister who fully embraces the “do-gooder” motif. He, too, lives by the almighty mantra that: So long as there is growth and as long as the market prosperously serves

the economy, everything is okay. Indigenous people are still suffering under the thumb of a government that does not adequately respect their rights as a nation; climate change is still ravaging our planet and yet our Prime Minister proclaims us to be the the solution to America’s energy concerns; poverty and systemic racism is still a massive problem — just look at those gearing to vote for self-proclaimed “heroine of Canadian values,” Kellie Leitch.

This upcoming year is a big one for Canada but it does not have to be an excess of rampant nationalism. It also can serve as a learning point for many people. We must look forward to a more socially progressive future but to do this it is also necessary to look back to address where it all began.

CHILDREN AND THEIR SENSE OF AGENCY

Lacunae in oversight and need for change

Daniella Bendo

The implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 196 nations over the past 25 years has led to an understanding of children as citizens with fundamental rights. By ratifying the UNCRC in 1991, Canada made a commitment to protect these rights. As a leading country, Canada played a primary role in the 11 years it took to draft the UNCRC from March 1978 to March 1989. By facilitating communication amongst over 40 countries representing diverse religious, ideological, cultural and political values, Canada encouraged ratification of the Convention. Despite these efforts and obligations, a large majority of youth lack basic knowledge of the treaty, al-

though Canada celebrates its 25th year of ratification.

More than 60 countries around the globe have appointed a federal commissioner for children and youth to promote and protect children’s rights. Canada, however, has not. At the provincial and territorial level, the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates serve as the leading advocacy group in this country. The mandates of the provincial and territorial Child and Youth Advocates have evolved primarily to protect and promote children’s rights — only in certain sectors. The Council has set forth to fulfill the following role:

- Work to ensure the rights of children and youth are respected and valued in communities and in government practice, policy and legislation

- Promote the interest of and act as a voice for children who have concerns about provincial-government services
- Engage in public education
- Work to resolve disputes and conduct independent investigations

Recommend improvements of programs for children to the government and/or the legislative assembly

Although the Council works to advocate for many vulnerable children and youth, the Council does not have the capacity to act as a legal counsel, and more importantly does not address issues relating to education. As a result, certain groups of young people — such as Indigenous youth, refugee children and other at-risk youth — ‘fall through the cracks’ at

the national level.

If a federal Commissioner for Canada’s children and youth were to be appointed, the Commissioner would have the power to monitor, assess and report on services provided to children, advocate for the rights of children and young people and raise awareness of and advancing of the UNCRC. In 1979, Landon Pearson, former Canadian Senator (1994-2005), founder of the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood & Children’s Rights at Carleton University and dedicated advocate for children’s rights, wrote a report, *A Commissioner for Canada’s Children*, outlining the potential role of a Children’s Commissioner in Canada.

- Work with federal departments and Parliamentary committees to promote a

higher political priority for children and give greater visibility to children’s issues within government and civil society

- Work to improve public attitudes to children and increase public awareness of children’s rights by developing advocacy programs
- Identify policy issues relevant to children
- Provide advice to federal departments on issues of concern to children
- Ensure that departments and Parliamentarians have access to the best possible research on the impact of proposed policies on children
- Engage children and their natural advocates, especially parents and their family members
- Liaise regularly with the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates, Aboriginal youth serving organizations and other stakeholders; and assist federal departments

to organize consultations with young people and their advocates

The instatement of such a role may even be a good first step to appropriately addressing and eliminating the disproportionately high rate of youth suicide amongst Indigenous communities, such as Attawapiskat in northern Ontario.

As it stands, the Liberal government appears to be “dragging their feet” when it comes to addressing these crises, according to Jonathan Solomon, Grand Chief of the Mushkegowuk Council. This was part of a public statement he made in response to the suicide deaths of two 12-year-old girls in a northern Ontario community in January 2017.

If children are feeling as though they have so little power that their only solution is to take their own lives, there is a problem, one that this government has a duty to address.



Participez à l’Assemblée générale anuelle!/Attend the Annual General Meeting!

Participez à l’Assemblée générale anuelle!/Attend the Annual General Meeting! Centre Universitaire 215, 5 avril à 16:00/215 University Centre, April 5th at 4:00pm!

Le Groupe de recherche d’intérêt public de l’Ontario (GRIPO) à l’université d’Ottawa a pour mission de rassembler et de construire une communauté dévouée à la justice sociale, économique et environnementale, GRIPO Ottawa s’intéresse aux contributions des étudiantEs et de la communauté universitaire qui visent le changement social. Nous sommes financés par les étudiantEs ce qui signifie que le GRIPO vous appartient. A vous de de vous engager, de proposer un groupe d’action, d’emprunter des ressources, de lancer un projet de recherche, de fabriquer des macarons, de faire des copies, des affiches... et on passe. Le GRIPO se veut un espace et un regroupement accueillant tant pour les nouveaux membres que pour les anciens. Un lieu pour travailler sur des campagnes, d’œuvrer en tant que membre du Conseil d’administration, en tant que bénévole ou en tant qu’individu. Depuis notre fondation, nous avons traité d’enjeux d’intérêt public (droits de scolarité, environnement, justice sociale, guerre et occupation, sexisme, racisme, souveraineté autochtone, etc.) par l’entremise d’événements tels les soirées cinéma, les conférences, les forums et les débats publics, les journées d’échange communautaire, les cafés équitables et les kiosques d’information. Nous avons aussi appuyé le travail de dizaines de groupes d’action sur ces problématiques et bien d’autres à travers les années.

The mandate of OPIRG (Ontario Public Interest Research Group at the University of Ottawa) is to bring together and build upon a broad-based community dedicated to social, economic, and environmental justice. OPIRG- is concerned with the contribution that students, the university and the community can make towards social change. We are students funded which means that OPIRG is yours. Yours to engage with, to start a group through, to borrow resources from, to pitch a research project to, to make buttons, copies, banners with...and the list goes on. OPIRG as a space and as a group is meant to welcome friends new and old, to work on campaigns, to work as a board member, as a volunteer, or as an individual. Since our foundation, we have addressed issues of public concern such as tuition fees, environmental justice, social justice, war and occupation, sexism, racism, Indigenous sovereignty, and more through events like movie nights, guest speakers, forums, debates, clothing swaps, fair trade cafés, and information tables. We have supported the work of dozens of action groups on these and other issues throughout the years. As an organization, we exist to support student initiatives and projects by contributing financial and non-financial resources to their development. Any student or student group is welcome to submit proposals to OPIRG.

Pour plus d’infos’ / find out more at: OPIRG-GRIPO.CA



Government surveillance is in the news again with WikiLeaks' release of an archive detailing CIA hacking methods. What does this mean for you, the ordinary reader who might be interested in having a private on-line life?

First, let's back up a little. NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden's revelations showed the ubiquity of mass online surveillance. But they also showed that certain programs and services were giving security agencies difficulty. These programs implemented encryption in various contexts — for browsing, instant messaging, calling or for computer drives and entire operating systems. In 2013, the NSA internally characterized these privacy tools as a "major threat" to their mission. It also described the effect of chaining them together as "catastrophic" — leading to a "near-total loss/lack of insight to target communications."

The development and popularization of these anti-surveillance tools has continued, and this column will introduce the best of them to *Leveller* readers.

Nothing in the recently released archive shows that these encrypted tools have been compromised, despite an initial tweet from WikiLeaks that spoke of "bypassing" popular encrypted tools like Signal and WhatsApp. While the tweet was initially picked up by many news organizations, a growing consensus has characterized it as "misleading" and "sensationalizing," in the words of Zeynep Tufekci, New York Times contributor and technosociology academic at the University of North Carolina.

In Tufekci's words, "if anything, the CIA documents in the cache *confirm* the strength of encryption technologies."

But the WikiLeaks cache *also* shows a shift in surveillance culture. Having realized that they can no longer reliably intercept communications when they are encrypted, the CIA has shifted to specifically targeting *devices* with malware. This includes smartphones, computers, smart TVs, and even automobile control centers. According to ProtonMail founder Andy Yen, the CIA's practices are probably indicative of what security agencies all over the world are doing.

The leaks show that in order to attack

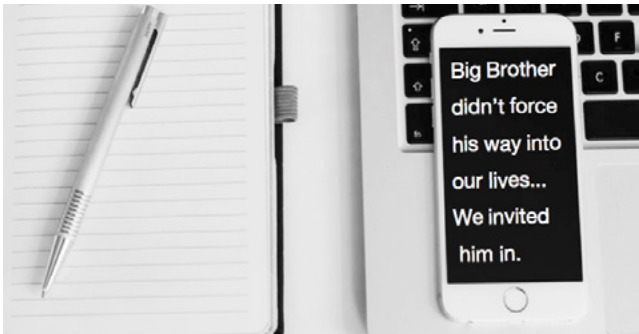


Image: Timothy Blinks

our devices, the CIA has stockpiled and developed a large arsenal of "cyber-weapons," in the words of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. This involves millions of lines of code for viruses, hacking systems, trojans, backdoors, exploits, and other malware. A number of these tools were gleaned from foreign surveillance agencies and criminal hackers. The CIA can use the "digital fingerprint" carried by such tools to cast blame on others for their own hacking.

While compiling these archives, the CIA deliberately stockpiled and hid vulnerabilities in tech companies' products, instead of sharing their knowledge so the vulnerabilities could be patched. This was in spite of promises the Obama administration made to share this information through the Vulnerabilities Equities Process. They also did

this knowing that foreign powers and cyber-criminals could use these vulnerabilities against consumers, instead choosing to maximize their own spying capabilities at the expense of American citizens' security.

The usual purpose of all this malware — and, implicitly, the general thrust in current surveillance — is to hack into our digital devices and get them to eavesdrop on us before encryption can be applied.

How worried should we be?

On some level, the CIA leaks detail fairly terrifying stuff. Samsung Smart TVs can be put into a fake "Power Off" mode where they are actually recording and transmitting audio. There is the possibility that hacking vehicle control systems could permit "nearly undetectable assassinations," according to WikiLeaks. This has revived conspiracy

theories surrounding the death of journalist Michael Hasting.

Still, it seems like these are *targeted* tools, that have to be deliberately and specifically deployed against individuals. We are not talking about automated mass surveillance like in Snowden's NSA revelations. As Ed Johnson-Williams, a privacy advocate at

Open Rights Group, puts it, these "vulnerabilities are expensive to buy or discover. In order to keep their existence secret for as long as possible they are likely to have been used on a targeted basis."

This means that security agencies are probably relatively selective in who they target for this kind of surveillance. Ordinary readers of this column are probably safe from attack. But we need to stand up for the whistleblowers, investigative reporters, and 'disruptive' activists who *are* being targeted.

This being said, I still recommend the use of tools like the Tor browser, Signal voice/messaging app, ProtonMail webmail, or TAILS operating system for those concerned about preserving their privacy online.

The other side of this story is the continued failure of the security establishment to

keep its secrets. Bloomberg news quoted an anonymous NSA official who spoke of an ongoing "crisis in operational security over maintaining confidentiality."

Much like Snowden, the source of the leaks seems to be a security insider who was troubled by the unlicensed surveillance capabilities they observed while performing their job. According to WikiLeaks, the files had "circulated among former U.S. government hackers and contractors in an unauthorized manner, one of whom has provided WikiLeaks with portions of the archive." The source apparently "wishes to initiate a public debate about the security, creation, use, proliferation and democratic control of cyberweapons... [as well as] whether the C.I.A.'s hacking capabilities exceed its mandated powers and the problem of public oversight of the agency." Measures taken in the wake of Snowden to prevent more leaks do not seem to be working, as whistleblowers continue to come forward, obeying their conscience in the face of severe consequences.

WikiLeaks has also withheld the vast majority of the data dump so it can share the information with tech companies, allowing them to fix their vulnerabilities. The hacking practices revealed by WikiLeaks "aren't easily replaced once they are disclosed, and targets can develop defenses against them," according to the same anonymous NSA official.

Meanwhile, a few basic security practices can give a measure of protection from many of these cyber-weapons. Keep all your software up to date, and only open documents, links, and programs from sources you trust. Companies like Android and Apple claim that many of the leaked cyber-weapons have already been invalidated by their most recent software, and that they will quickly fix the rest.

Also, in order to protect yourself from mass surveillance, I still recommend encrypted tools like the Tor browser, Signal messaging/call/video app, ProtonMail webmail, or TAILS operating system — many of which we'll explore in future columns.

WHODUNIT?

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MATCH THESE WORDS OF WISDOM TO THE PUBLIC FIGURE!

1. Steve King, Iowa Republican congressman

2. Ralph Nader, former presidential candidate

3. Seth Rogen, actor, producer, filmmaker

4. Lynn Beyak, Conservative senator

5. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, author

6. McDonald's Restaurant corporate Twitter handle

7. Ben Carson, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

8. Samuel L. Jackson, actor

9. Mick Mulvaney, Director, Office of Management and Budget

10. Matthew Perry, actor

A. "I mean, I'll be fine. I guess. I got a whole other country I can go to. [...] And I do just heavily acknowledge that, as a white dude, I'm not the one who's in real trouble right now."

B. "Beware the danger of what I call Feminism Lite; the idea of conditional female equality. Being a feminist is like being pregnant. You either are or you are not. You either believe in the full equality of men and women, or you do not."

C. "There were other immigrants who came here in the bottom of slave ships, worked even longer, even harder for less. But they too had a dream that one day their sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, great-grandsons, great-granddaughters, might pursue prosperity and happiness in this land."

D. "OK!! Ben Carson....I can't! Immigrants ? In the bottom of SLAVE SHIPS?!! MUTHAFUKKA PLEASE!!!"

E. "Mistakes were made at residential schools — in many instances, horrible mistakes that overshadowed some good things that also happened at those schools.... I speak partly for the record, but mostly in memory of the kindly and well-intentioned men and women and their descendants — perhaps some of us here in this chamber — whose remarkable works, good deeds and historical tales in the residential schools go unacknowledged for the most part."

F. "Wilders understands that culture and demographics are our destiny. We can't restore our civilization with somebody else's babies."

G. "We actually beat up Justin Trudeau. His dad was prime minister, but I don't think that's the reason we beat him up. I think he was the only kid in school we could beat up..."

H. "Regarding the question as to climate change, the President was very straight forward: We are not going to spend money on that anymore. We consider that to be a waste of your money."

I. "Overall this is a budget that reflects corporatism, militarism and racism. The mask is off Donald Trump!"

J. "@realDonaldTrump, You are actually a disgusting excuse for a President... you have tiny hands."

a.) Rogen; b.) Adichie; c.) Carson; d.) Jackson; e.) Beyak; f.) King; g.) Perry; h.) Mulvaney; i.) Nader; j.) McDonald's

VENUS ENVY

ADVISORY:

SEXUAL HEALTH & PLEASURE ALERT



Q:

DEAR VE,

My partner and I have been together for quite a while now and we care for each other deeply. Recently, my partner's libido seems to have taken a nosedive and, while we enjoy being around each other, we don't have sex as frequently as we used to. I'm still a very sexual person and being intimate with my partner is incredibly important. What can we do to ensure that we are both happy in our relationship?

—Sexually Stunted in Sandy Hill

A:

DEAR SEXUALLY STUNTED IN SANDY HILL,

Most long-term couples deal with mismatched sex drives at some point, since it's so rare for anyone to have a sex drive that is constant or stable throughout their entire lives. It can be a super hard situation to deal with and can hit sore spots for people on either side. But know that you're definitely not alone in this.

If you haven't already talked to your partner, this should be your first step! Since this can be a loaded topic, try to approach it in a non-judgemental and curious way. Try and stay away from blame as much as possible, and try to imagine that you're working as a team to find solutions.

There might be a concrete reason that your partner hasn't been in the mood lately. Stress, for instance, is one of the most common desire-killers. Is your

partner in the middle of a super stressful term? Maybe they just can't turn off the stress long enough to turn it on right now. If there's an end-date in sight, your best bet might be to decide that sex is off the table for a limited amount of time and agree on a date when you'll revisit the topic.

If your partner's desire for sex has just changed, you likely want to take a different approach. It might work to redefine what sex means in your relationship. If your partner's no longer into penetration, maybe they would be into getting off together, or making out while you get yourself off? A yes/no/maybe list would be a great tool to help start this discussion, and you'll easily find a ton with a quick Google search.

Otherwise, think about what sex brings you on a deeper level, and try to imagine other ways you could add that to your relationship. If it's touch that makes you feel closer, find ways to get in lots of cuddling, hand-holding or neck massaging. If you like the intimacy of exploring new things together, take up an exciting, new-to-both-of-you hobby that will push you out of your comfort zones a little.

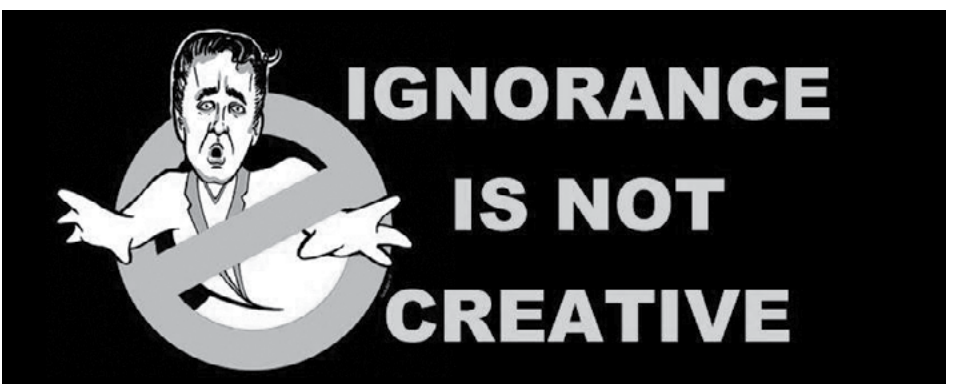
And hopefully this goes without saying, but whatever strategies you come up with, no one should feel pressured into having sex or doing anything they don't feel good about. You both ultimately get to decide whether or not it's a relationship you want to continue in, but you never get to pressure someone to have more sex so that the relationship will keep working for you. For more information about sex drive and relationships, I would definitely recommend Emily Nagoski's excellent book, *Come as You Are*.

SYMMETRY'S OVERRATED



**WE'RE AFFORDED ENDLESS CHOICE
BETWEEN MEANINGLESS OPTIONS.**

LETTERS



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION DOES NOT MEAN FREEDOM FROM CONSEQUENCES

To Marc Mayer and all staff at the National Gallery of Canada,

I may not be much of an artist, but I have always loved spending time at the National Gallery. Being surrounded by art from a vast span of history, created by people from a wealth of experiences from all over the world, has continued to be as transcendent an experience as it was the very first time. I remember being awestruck when I first turned a corner and came into the Garden Court, astonished at the beauty and serenity that surrounded me. That anything could disrupt that peaceful feeling was unimaginable.

It is thus shocking that an institution dedicated to art and funded by the government of Canada — which represents vast numbers of people from groups whom Jordan Peterson has attacked — would even entertain the notion of hosting a talk by a known promoter of hatred and bigotry. Even more shocking is the Gallery's decision to go forward with providing a platform to Peterson.

Someone who opposes Bill C-16, which would protect people from discrimination based on gender; who publicly expresses misogynist and Islamophobic views; and who defends Milo Yiannopoulos has no place speaking at a publicly funded venue. If these are his genuine views, he

opposes large parts of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and had absolutely no place being granted such a platform. If instead these are things he has said in order to provoke a response, then he — like Yiannopoulos, and neo-Nazi Richard Spencer — is enabling harm against marginalized people by providing fuel and justification for hate crimes.

While 'the psychology of creativity' may be a topic unrelated to his views on transgender people, women and Muslims, his research cannot be viewed as a pure intellectual pursuit free of his personal bigotry. Just as art is a personal expression of the artist, research is a product of the researcher's worldview — the creative product will always represent its creator. For the National Gallery to host Peterson is an affront to human rights and to Canadian values.

Though many people claim his right to free speech would have been infringed on if his talk had been cancelled or he was replaced with a different speaker, freedom of expression does not mean freedom from consequences. Were I to publicly threaten the life of a politician, for instance, I could be the subject of a criminal investigation. When Peterson's words indicate disrespect for the lives and human rights of many vast groups of people (the very definition of bigotry), losing the privilege of a speaking engagement seems

a very small price to pay.

Lastly, Peterson is not in fact qualified to speak on the topic of creativity, when he has demonstrated none of his own. Parroting alt-right views based on outdated conceptions of biological determinism and Eurocentric morality shows no innovation. Conforming to the status quo as he does is utter anathema to art, progress, and all forms of creativity.

I am dismayed and profoundly disappointed that the National Gallery chose to show contempt for the human rights of its trans, women and Muslim patrons, among others, by giving a public platform to a person whose expressed views attack our very existence. From the Change.org petition asking for Peterson to be replaced (which attracted international support and signatories) to the protest on the day on Peterson's talk organized by trans people and their families, the Gallery cannot have been ignorant of the very real outrage at the decision to host Peterson's talk.

When children and teenagers must gather in protest for their and their loved ones' rights to exist, as many did on a cold March afternoon, it is a sad indication of the impact just one person's words of hatred and intolerance can have on some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Sincerely,
Mer Weinhold

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CLIPPINGS FROM THE FUTURE

DON'T ASK WHERE WE GET IT FROM



DROWNING IN THE COST OF WATER

The debate concerning water privatization continues in Ontario this year, as Premier Wendy McSplash announces this quarter's drinking water price hike of \$0.54 per litre. With the price of water reaching an all-time high, many families are wondering where they will get their next sip.

Since the Water Wars of 2045-2049, Canadian water supplies have been in hot demand internationally. While there are other forms of water on the market, many consumers are worried about the quality of water derived from rain catchers, desalination plants and so-called "synthetic water."

"With the amount of acid rain we see these days, I worry about the long-term impact on my rain catcher supplies on my children's health," says Bartholomew Baker, a long-term resident of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. "In my grandmother's days, Dartmouth used to be called the City of Lakes! Not a day goes by that I don't wish my ancestors had

just listened to the Water Protectors."

Nova Scotia's groundwater reserves were permanently compromised after an enormous accident involving underground carbon storage, led by Alton Gas, in 2025.

Recent deregulation of public filtration plants and the prevalence of The Water Store across Canada have further deepened the debate on whether for-profit water is in fact helping to both improve the quality of water and its accessibility to those that are left to mostly rely on recycling their own waste water.

Shortages from public sources of non-contaminated fresh water have been cited as the reason for the new price, though some say it's due to the further leasing of public waters to private corporations. Many thought that the government's implementation of heavy tariffs on the export of water would help, but a recent study found that free trade agreements and poorly negotiated fixed prices with

our largest importers have negated that claim.

"People just can't afford to work 10 hours a day to just get by with enough water for the family, not knowing if the price is going to go up again tomorrow," said Ted Jarvis, a father of three who recently opted for Remote Work at his government job in Ottawa to move to Northern Québec. "Lots of people I know are planning on making the move. The Water Store is full of bad water and the subsidized water at the WCBO is now rationed to 3 liters per person in your family, hardly enough to make the long lines worth it."

The Minister of Water, Charles Berdo, said the government has been working closely with water providers to find better ways to supply water to urban areas. When asked why he was caught washing his car when water was in such short supply, he responded, "It's a question of national dignity. You can't have your ministers driving around in dirty cars trying to fix the crisis the Millennial generation left us." Berdo was seen later that evening at a bar on Sparks Street, buying shots of water with cabinet colleague Loretta Lestate.

HOROSCOPES



XL Petite

ARIES (March 21 - April 19) Happiest of birthdays Aries! For your birthday, I urge you to find yourself a local, independent bookstore and spend at least an hour there perusing their wares over a steamy cup of whatever you like best. Treat yourself to the glory of fresh pages and the company of other humans.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20) Nervous about that upcoming thing, Taurus? Remember: Suits are like condoms. You put them on and gain access to places you didn't previously have access to. Also like a condom, a suit dresses up a prick.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 20) Gemini, don't let the past get you down. We all say silly things sometimes, and in a week or two, everyone will forget your gaffe. It's not like you're double-down Senator Beyak, whose ignorance will live in infamy.

CANCER (June 21 - July 22) It's imperative that you watch *I Am Not Your Negro* with all of your friends, Cancer. It will improve the rest of your year, forget about just your month!

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22) World Water Day is upon us, Leo. I say to commemorate it, we replace all the Member of Parliament's water with water taken from random taps all over the country — from coast to coast to coast as they like to say.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22) I told Gemini to forget the past, but I want you to remember your history Virgo. American news is making a darling out of old imaginary Weapons of Mass Destruction Baby Bush on the basis that he is less of a train wreck than Donald Trump. Refuse this nonsense.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22) Libra, karaoke parties are wonderful, but you must remember to ban any and all Oasis codes from the song books. Heed my words, lest Wonderwall or Don't Look Back in Anger contaminate your subconscious. Treat it with the Ace of Spades.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21) You know what they say about immigrants, don't you Scorpio? They Get the Job Done: goo.gl/u5Q51B

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21) Haikuroscope for you Saggi: The grolar bears come, For climate change compels them To feast on your dreams

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19) The UN has finally endorsed the Boycott, Divest, Sanctions campaign against Israeli Apartheid, Capricorn. Hold onto that next time you're confronted on the subject. I wish we could be happier about this, but the motivation for the condemnation is because of how much worse the Netanyahu government has made things for Palestinians.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18) For World Water Day, remember the Water Protectors all across these lands. Free The Falls, Stop Alton Gas, Unis'to'ten blockade, Standing Rock, and so many more. Water is life Aquarius, but it is so much more as well.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20) Looking for a way to fill an extra 5 minutes in that late March tutorial Pisces? The Coup has you covered — "Teacher: stand up! You need to tell us how to flip this system!" goo.gl/AN-JM7W



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LISTINGS

WED MARCH 22

AGM: OPIRG-Carleton. 2203 Dunton Tower. 6pm.

SING: Just Voices weekly environmental choir rehearsals. Bronson Centre 222. 7pm. Every Wed.

FRI MARCCH 24

DISCUSSION: Are You Tired of Stereotypes? Policing in the Black Community. Carleton, 5pm.

SAT MARCH 25

FUNDRAISING CONCERT: For Free the Chaudiere Falls. 100 Bronson Ave. 7pm.

IAW: Versus vs Apartheid. The

Origin Arts & Community Centre. 8pm.

90s PUNK COVER NIGHT #8: Fundraiser for The Door Youth Centre. House of Targ. 9pm.

SUN MARCH 26

MEETING: Ottawa Quakers - Largely silent mtg for worship, 91A Fourth Ave. Newcomers welcome!. 10:30am. Every Sun.

VAGINA MONOLOGUES: Vaginas Against Violence. Minto Centre. 2pm.

MON MARCH 27

RADIO: Femme Fatale. 12pm. Every Monday.

RADIO: Under Where? CHUO 89.1 FM. 4pm. Every Monday.

TUES MARCH 28

THE TAKE-OVER: CKCU 93.1 FM. 11am. Every 2nd Tuesday.

OPIRG CARLETON ROOTS RADIO: CKCU 93.1 FM. 12pm. Every 2nd Tuesday. www.ckcufm.com.

DISCUSSION: Hidden Figures: Women at the forefront of Civil Rights. 2203 Dunton Tower. 6pm.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM: Economic Security. 251 Bank St. 7pm.

TALK: Why Journalism Matters w/ Rosemary Barton. Carleton, 7pm.

WED MARCH 29

DISABILITY & SEXUALITY WORKSHOPS: Planned Parenthood Ottawa. 9am-4:30pm.

BOOK LAUNCH: Welcome to Greater Edendale: Histories of Environment, Health, and Gender in an American City. W/Mark Epprecht. 433 Paterson, Carleton. 3pm.

TALK: Energy Policy and Innovation: Current Steps to Future Impact. 103 Steacie, Carleton, 6pm.

TUES APRIL 4

TALK: Trevor Herriot: Towards a Prairie Atonement. Christ Church Cathedral. 7:30pm.

WED APRIL 5

BOOK CLUB: Go Tell it on the Mountain. Octopus Books. 6pm.

SAT APRIL 8

Let's Talk Land Defence on Campus: 303 Paterson, Carleton. 5pm.

SUN APRIL 9

MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Solidarity Ottawa. 251 Bank St. 11am.

TUES APRIL 11

THE TAKE-OVER: CKCU 93.1 FM. 11am. Every 2nd Tuesday.

OPIRG CARLETON ROOTS

RADIO: CKCU 93.1 FM. 12pm. Every 2nd Tuesday. www.ckcufm.com.

SAT APRIL 15

Indigenous Art Music And Fashion Show 2017: Canadian Museum of History. 7pm.

WED APRIL 19

CLOTHING SWAP: Swap 'Til You Drop {Spring Fling Edition} - AIDS Committee of Ottawa. 6pm.

TUES APRIL 25

BOOK LAUNCH: A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security. 1134 Bank St. 7pm.

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Tuesday March 21st / 9am to 6pm

Wednesday March 22nd / 9am to 9pm

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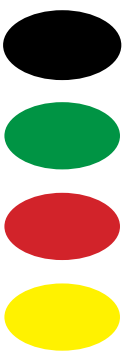
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