

THE LINK

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THE LABOUR ISSUE

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“HOW CAN WE REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF AGING ON MEMORY?”

SCIENCE COLLEGE

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

BY
MAJID FOTUHI

Your brain makes you who you are. Your personality, your joys, your memories, and your plans for the future all arise because of activity among the more than 100 billion cells in your brain. The excitement you feel when you kiss someone you love originates from the firing activity of certain brain cells. In addition, even the warm feeling you experience when you remember that moment comes from the interaction in the memory parts of the brain.

With aging, brain parts for seeing, hearing, walking, and emotions continue to work well; but the memory parts seem to slow down. “Senior moments” of memory lapses brings on the fear that Alzheimer’s disease may be around the corner. However, new research has shed light on exactly how the memory parts of the brain function and shattered many of the myths surrounding Alzheimer’s disease. The new findings of many neuroscientists around the world all point to the exciting conclusion that we can keep our brain young by growing new cells and enhancing the blood flow to our brain. In this exciting lecture, Dr. Fotuhi provides a summary on the new developments in the field of memory research, neuroplasticity, and Alzheimer’s disease. He will discuss the outline of his 12-week “brain fitness programme” which one can use to expand one’s brain capacity and keep memories sharp.

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EDITORIAL: THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING AND COMPENSATING ALL FORMS OF LABOUR

Labour shapes us.

In and out of the workplace, it seeps into our waking hours, and as university students, it's usually unfairly compensated.

The stress of creating a sustainable life for ourselves is never ending. To keep up with the demands of our fields in a competitive environment, we check our various inboxes as often as we breathe. We can't afford to miss an opportunity, a shift, a message from our professor, or in our case, a story.

When considering labour, it's important to look at its ramifications—work is only part of the equation. You might picture an office or a blue collar job when thinking about what work is—and you'd be partially right. The ways our workloads affect us are complex and varied, and a big portion of it is daily, constant, and affects people unevenly.

Women, for example, are expected to gravitate towards or take on bigger portions of domestic and care work. On top of the domestic tasks women are expected to maintain, such as cleaning, cooking, child and elderly care, the mental charge associated with them is draining—keeping track of what's in the fridge, planning meals, remembering birthdays.

This labour is unequally distributed,

and generally not compensated. This affects professional fields where women are the majority as well, especially when it comes to unpaid internships, as a disproportionate amount of internships in care fields are not paid.

This problem of unpaid internships affects students across fields. We're often expected to take on unpaid internships, which put students in an irreconcilable position, having to work for free to graduate or advance their career. The uncompensated work is a burden, and we advocate for interns to be considered workers under the Labour Code, and to receive the same protections as them.

We usually take whatever offer we can get, regardless of the harm it causes us, but we're better off working collectively instead—by mobilizing or participating in strikes.

When we critique the working conditions of our internships, we're frequently met with people who claim our concerns reflect an unwillingness to work or take advantage of a good opportunity. This simply is not the truth.

We need to be able to sustain ourselves through the work we do. And we definitely don't want to be placed in unpaid positions that require us to take on extra jobs, to the point where we become so

burnt out that we come to despise work that initially brought us joy.

We don't just want to survive, but thrive.

But we couldn't write about labour without addressing the realities that affect us here at *The Link*. While our time here is meaningful, our compensation does not represent the volume of work we, or our contributors, do. It would be hypocritical and paradoxical of us not to acknowledge the situation our masthead is in, and our shortcomings regarding the compensation of contributor work. *The Link's* masthead are contractually considered volunteers, not employees—we receive a small monthly honorarium for the hours we put in. We are not considered workers, which allows our work to be underpaid and that of our contributors, also considered volunteers, to be unpaid.

At the end of the day, we're an advocacy publication that aims to cover marginalized populations. These are often the ones whose work is most grossly exploited, and people composing *The Link*, whether they are member of masthead or contributor, are affected by these issues as well.

Workers deserve better, regardless of what they do. ☐

Laval to Host Immigration Detention Centre in 2021

New Federal Budget Prioritizes Apprehension and Deportation of Irregular Border Crossers, While CAQ Continues to Push for Immigration Crackdown in Quebec

DAVID EARLES



GRAPHIC
BREEA KOBERNICK



W

hile the world reacted in horror to the Trump administration's widespread use of detention and child separations as a deterrent to asylum seekers on its southern border last year, Canada has been quietly employing similar practices for quite some time.

While a new legislation tabled by the Coalition Avenir Québec government could put many migrants and asylum seekers in a furthered state of legal precarity here in Quebec, there is a new migrant detention facility scheduled to be opened in 2021. The facility is being constructed in Laval by the Canada Border Services Agency.

The cavernous lobby of the Guy-Favreau complex on René-Lévesque Blvd. is familiar to anyone who has had to navigate the complicated, costly, and often opaque Canadian immigration process. In the Service Canada offices located there, posters of smiling, helpful faces loom over migrant hopefuls as they wait in line to submit their forms and documentation.

This is the national identity that Canada wants to project to the world: We are multicultural, inclusive, and tolerant—a tapestry of the intertwined experiences of our ancestors, who fled forgotten hardships and prejudices now somewhat extinguished by the passage of time.

We tend to consider ourselves a little kinder, gentler, and more sensible than our southern neighbors. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said to CNN in 2016, “The fact is, Canadians understand that immigration, that people fleeing for their lives, that people wanting to build

a better life for themselves and their kids is what created Canada.”

Every year thousands of migrants end up indefinitely incarcerated within a network of detention facilities and prisons strewn across the country, often after having been detained without criminal charges or a trial. Some have remained incarcerated in a state of legal limbo for years on end.

During the 2016–2017 fiscal year, 6,251 migrants in Canada were detained and spent a total of 131,617 days in detention, according to CBSA statistics. These numbers are not an anomaly. Nearly 36,000 people have been detained between 2012 and 2017. At least 16 migrants have died in detention in Canada since the year 2000.

Child separation and the detention of minors, though not as widespread as in the U.S., are not unheard of.

According to 2017 CBSA statistics, the most recent ones available, 66 minors were detained in a currently existing detention centre running out of Laval. 31 minors were also housed there, meaning they had no grounds for detention but remained with parents to prevent family separations.

“In the exceptional cases where a minor’s parent [or] legal guardian may be subject to detention, the CBSA will work with the parent or legal guardian and child welfare authorities to assess [the] best interests of the child and the best way forward,” said CBSA spokesperson Jayden Robertson.

This often forces parents to either subject their child to incarceration at their side, or to surrender them to foster care.

Take the case of Glory Anawa, brought to light by the *CBC*, who was attempting to claim refugee status in Canada on the grounds that she was fleeing forced female circumcision in her home village in Cameroon. When she arrived, a few months pregnant, at Toronto’s Pearson International Airport in 2013, her claim was denied and she was put in detention.

Her son, Alpha Anawa, came into the world at a detention centre. Alpha’s first

words were “radio check,” the phrase used by their guards to signal a shift change in the centre in which they were forced to live. Anawa remained there for nearly three years before being deported back to Cameroon.

Stories like that of her and her son are not unusual. Last year in Canada, an average of 333 people sat in detention every day.

Within the past few years, there have been a series of detainee hunger strikes and detainee deaths—along with pressure from support networks outside the centres—that forced the then-incoming Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Ralph Goodale to address the state of the migrant detention system in 2016.

“In my first few months as minister responsible for CBSA, I have certainly heard the concerns about immigration detention, and I’ve studied those concerns with great care,” Goodale told the *CBC*. “The government is anxious to address the weaknesses that exist and to do better.”

In response to deteriorating conditions and overcrowding in detention facilities, the Liberal government launched the National Immigration Detention Framework. The NIDF’s goals are, “To create a better, fairer immigration detention system that supports the humane and dignified treatment of individuals while protecting public safety” through greater transparency and improved “risk assessment” of detainees.

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act states migrants to Canada should only be detained after all alternatives to detention have been explored and when grounds for detention exist, primarily if the person poses a flight risk or is a danger to the public.

\$138 million in federal funding over a period of five years was earmarked to meet NIDF objectives. The money will go towards improvements to immigration holding centres and the increased implementation of “alternatives to detention” technologies, including the use of electronic monitors and biometric

voice-recognition check-in systems.

But the majority of the budget is going to the construction of two new dedicated detention centres, one of which is currently under construction in Laval.

Sam Hoffman is a spokesperson for Ni Frontières, Ni Prisons, an organization dedicated to halting the construction of the new Laval centre. The group has started targeting the companies involved in the construction process, in an attempt to dissuade them from participating.

“If my grandparents had come to this country with these kinds of policies in place, they would have been hunted down by the CBSA, thrown into a migrant prison, and then deported back to Europe to probably die at the hands of anti-Semitism.”

— Raúl

They started with the Montreal-based architectural firm Lemay, who have won over \$5 million in contracts to design the Laval facility, along with the Quebec City based architecture Group A.

“Lemay is profiting off of putting migrants into prison by designing a new migrant prison for the federal government,” said Hoffman.

The blueprints for the Laval site mention that, “The general design principle is to use long life cycle materials in interesting ways, to bring a human scale to

Lemay is the architecture firm responsible for designing the detention center.

PHOTO DAVID EARLES



otherwise unforgiving environments.”

“Heavy timber or engineering wood will be used throughout in order to showcase a warm and homey feeling.”

Since people in detention centres aren’t charged under the criminal code, but on immigration grounds, Robertson mentioned the new centre is not a prison.

“It is a facility built to accommodate individuals whose risk level necessitates

CBSA surveillance, in order to ensure the agency is able to effectively carry out its mandate.”

But critics like Hoffman feel the facility’s designs betray the underlying character of the NIDF budget, which he characterized as an expensive, disingenuous redirection which achieves only incremental change while attempting to divert public attention away from the

larger issue of migrant detention itself.

“It doesn’t matter how nice you make a prison. Migrant detention just shouldn’t be happening,” said Hoffman.

“The gov-

ernment is hoping that it can succeed in masking this violence, both of the prison itself, but also of the deportation process that it is subjecting these people to.”

Lemay declined to comment on their role in the project based on conditions set by what Lemay Spokesperson Annie Gagnier described as “their contractual agreement with their client.”

“The design of the CBSA immigration holding centres were undertaken in a manner that ensures Canada’s alignment with international obligations and standards for immigration detention,” said Robertson. “It is premised on the basis that immigration detention is administrative in nature and not punitive.”

But whether a deportee is placed in an administrative or punitive holding cell before being ejected from Canada, Hoffman pointed out that migration is often driven by uncontrollable circumstances like war, poverty and persecution. Migrants deported to their countries of origin can return to the difficult or dangerous circumstances that drove them to leave in the first place.

“If my grandparents had come to this country with these kinds of policies in

place, they would have been hunted down by the CBSA, thrown into a migrant prison, and then deported back to Europe to probably die at the hands of anti-Semitism,” said Hoffman. “The fact that this is happening today and no-one seems to think that it’s a problem is atrocious.”

Raúl came to Canada from Cuba. A pseudonym has been granted to protect him and his family from persecution.

“I’m here in Canada under a refugee protection claim,” Raúl told *The Link*. “I’ve been here for a year and a half. It’s kind of hard, honestly, because I have no idea how my future is going to be.”

The last major battle of the Cuban Revolution was fought in 1958 in Santa Clara, Raúl’s home town. The revolution, in its infancy, strived to improve the quality of life for Cuba’s poorest through land redistribution and a wave of progressive social reforms.

But after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Cuba entered what Fidel Castro dubbed a “Special Period in a Time of Peace.” During that period, Cuba was suddenly deprived of crucial economic aid from the U.S.S.R. and plunged into grave economic crisis characterized by scarcity, fuel shortages, and starvation, which lasted for years and marred the psyche of an entire generation.

“At that time I was a teenager,” Raúl said. “My parents had a really hard time feeding us. One of my brothers suffered from malnutrition. There’s a lot of things that aren’t nice to talk about, but this was my experience. It was a bad time.”

While the economic situation in Cuba has marginally improved since then, most Cubans, who survive on rations and an average wage of \$25 USD a month, still struggle to get by.

“The main problem is food,” Raúl said.

Long-standing U.S.-led sanctions have also exacerbated Cuba’s economic woes, pushing the island nation to the brink of collapse. The recent crisis in Venezuela, a key economic partner of Cuba, has threatened to further destabilize the Cuban economy, which depends

“I’ve been here for a year and a half. It’s kind of hard, honestly, because I have no idea how my future is going to be.”

— Raúl



GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR EXAMS!



Good luck with your exams and final projects.

After the exams, enjoy the summer break.

If you are graduating, I look forward to seeing you at spring convocation.

Alan Shepard

President

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heavily on economic assistance from the oil-rich nation.

Raúl said his situation is further complicated by the repressive nature of the Cuban political system and its utilization of state employment as leverage to force compliance to authoritarian censorship laws and practices.

"I used to have a band," Raúl explained, "We wrote some lyrics about problems in society and with the government, and obviously that is not allowed. The first problem I had was that I lost my job. Nobody told me it was for this reason, but I know it was. I was then informed by the government that my mother, who is a lawyer and works for them, could have problems at her job too. This is normal in Cuba."

Today, Raúl is living in Quebec and has applied for permanent residency. So far, he said he has no news regarding the outcome of his case.

But the recent announcement of new legislation which could cause his application to be thrown out has caused Raúl to worry about his future here. That new legislation is Bill 9, the CAQ's proposed

amendment to the Quebec Immigration Act.

The bill, tabled on Feb. 7, calls for sweeping changes to provincial immigration policy. Immigrants would undergo a mandatory test to prove that their values align with the province's and demonstrate their proficiency in French. The bill also states that any application submitted through the Regular Skilled Worker Program prior to Aug. 2, 2018 will be voided.

The bill also stipulates that the roughly 18,000 applicants still awaiting a resolution of their cases, will subsequently be reimbursed for their application fees, at a total cost of \$19 million to the province.

These applicants would then have to re-apply for their Quebec selection certificate under new, more restrictive criteria, through a new system which Quebec's Immigration Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette described as the "Tinder of immigration" likening it to the popular dating app.

"After all of this happening, it's a big concern that's always in my mind," Raúl told *The Link*. "If you try to leave

Cuba, they know. You leave everything behind. If I have to go back, I go back to a country where I have nothing."

Raúl is not alone in his concern. The application purge would apply not only to the 18,000 main applicants, but their families as well, ultimately affecting over 50,000 people currently awaiting processing.

While Legault proposed slashing immigration levels by 20 per cent, he recently clarified, "We'd take more French people, and Europeans as well," while speaking to *Le Devoir* during a visit to France earlier this year.

"We do not want to keep too many people who do not accept our language [and] our values," Legault later added in an interview with *Radio-Canada*.

Bill 9 has been critiqued as being nationalist and exclusive, granting the party praise by far-right anti-immigrant group La Meute, whom CAQ leader François Legault has tried to distance himself from. The CAQ's immigration policies have also won acceptance by France's left front national leader Marine Le Pen.

Bill 9 has faced significant push-back, both in Quebec and in Ottawa. An injunction filed by the Association québécoise des avocats et avocates en droit de l'immigration has ensured the application purge will stay on hold until the bill has cleared the review process in the National Assembly and is signed into law.

The federal government shut down the tests and conditions proposed by Bill 9, saying it overstepped Quebec's jurisdiction within the federal immigration system.

Meanwhile, the 2019 federal budget, tabled by the Liberals on March 19, has allocated an additional \$1.18 billion to be spent over the next five years to expedite the apprehension, processing, detention, and deportation of irregular asylum seekers arriving from the U.S., whose numbers spiked in 2018 in response to the Trump administration.

For the time being, Raúl tries to stay positive. "If I get denied again, it's back to Cuba I guess. Then I try to save money, go back and try to survive as best I can." □

Bill 9

• Calls for sweeping changes to provincial immigration policy

GRAPHIC
BREEA KOBERNICK

• 18,000 applicants still awaiting a resolution of their case, some since 2005

• Mandatory "values test"

• French-language proficiency conditions

• Expanded "francization" measures

• Any application submitted through the Regular Skilled Worker Program prior to Aug. 2, 2018 will be voided

• The "Tinder of Immigration" - Quebec's Immigration Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette

• Application fees, at a cost of \$19 million to the province.

Pipe Dream: Canada's Love of Oil

Our Nation's Oil, From Alberta to Saudi Arabia

SKYE LEGAULT

Pipelines have been running through our nation's lands dating back to the 1950s, when this method of transportation was developed to carry oil and natural gas to Eastern Canada and the U.S., eventually being carried North.

The pipelines originate in Alberta, running in all directions: west to British Columbia, north towards the Northwest Territories, south to Texas, and east up until Quebec, with a pipeline even running between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There are more than 840,000 km of pipelines criss-crossing the country.

These lines are not without controversy, as production within the Canadian tar sands generate greenhouse gases. While oil and gas are a valuable part to Canadian economy, the nation competes with Saudi Arabia, who ships their oil to Eastern Canada.

Environmental concern isn't the only dispute: pipelines run through Indigenous lands, not all of which have been

granted approval. Canadian law states that First Nations must be consulted about pipeline projects. Under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted to allow Indigenous groups access to the right of consent towards resource development projects that go through their land. However, as long as the government has attempted a sincere consultation, project can legally proceed even without Indigenous approval.

The most recent debate on pipelines has resurrected due to tensions recently exemplified within the Wet'suwet'en nation, as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police forcibly removed of activists preventing TransCanada Coastal GasLink from being constructed on their land.

And that's just part of the tensions surrounding pipeline construction.

The federal government announced it had purchased the existing Trans Mountain pipeline, built in 1953, and its expansion project for \$4.5 billion last

September. The price of the expansion itself is estimated to be about \$7.4 billion. The project, which would expand the capacity to transfer oil from Alberta to BC, has gained criticism from both politicians and environmentalists.

"There are concerns by Indigenous communities and environmentalists that the pipeline poses threats," Saint-Lazare Councillor Brian Trainor told *The Link*. "Due to the possibility of a spill on route overland and at sea with the threat to marine life, in particular whales, of the increased tanker traffic."

Forty-three First Nations signed agreements signalling their support for the Trans Mountain expansion project. However, the six First Nations of Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Coldwater Indian Band, The Stó:lō Collective, Squamish Nation, Upper Nicola Band, and Stk'emlupsemc Secwepemc of the Secwepemc Nation, are leading challenges against the project in court, which could have a major impact on the future of the expansion.

"If any of the First Nations are suc-

cessful, the whole underlying approval goes away,” Eugene Kung with West Coast Environmental Law told *Huffington Post*. “Canada is assuming that risk.”

The Trans Mountain pipeline, bought in 2005 by Kinder Morgan Inc., covers 1,150 km from Strathcona County near Edmonton, Alberta to Burnaby, BC.

The planned expansion would build a second pipeline alongside the existing one and would increase the transportation of oil from 300,000 to 890,000 barrels per day. Further, it would increase the traffic off of BC’s coast from approximately five to 35 tankers a month.

“Shipping is the most efficient type of transportation and plays a significant

role in Canadian and global trade,” said Fadi Harb, a Concordia professor in the economics department. “However, it has some negative externalities and it creates environmental pollution.”

Under pressure from the Alberta government and the oil industry, the federal government purchased the existing Kinder Morgan pipeline. Trainor said it became obvious that Kinder Morgan had decided not to proceed with the required investment given economic uncertainty due to legal delays and dropping world oil prices.

“In terms of construction and making way for a new pipeline, in all aspects, this was the least impactful way in environmental terms of solving the problem of not having a way of getting [Canada’s] resources to new markets,” said Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs Peter Schiefke. “This is important because we are losing anywhere from \$7 to \$15 billion a year, because the U.S. is buying our oil at a reduced cost—because they know we have no choice.”

“Not only did the Liberals spend \$4.5 billion of taxpayers’ money buying a pipeline that a private company wanted to build without a single tax dollar, but they failed in the negotiations, spending a billion more than the Independent Parliamentary Budget Officer [Yves Giroux] had estimated,” said Luc Berthold, Mégantic-Érable MP for the Conservative Party.

“The Liberals have no plan for expansion, and each year of delay increases the costs by hundreds of millions of dollars.”

Shortly thereafter, the federal Court of Appeal ruled that further consultations with First Nations would be necessary and the National Energy Board will have to review the effects of more tankers off the BC coast before the expansion project can continue. Trainor said these consultations are currently ongoing but the Liberal government is under extreme pressure from Albertans and the oil industry to advance the

project as soon as possible. As it stands, the conclusion of these consultations doesn’t have a deadline.

“Indigenous consultations are inextricably intertwined with review of marine impacts—orcas have important cultural significance,” said Keith Stewart, senior energy strategist with Greenpeace Canada to the *Vancouver Sun*. “So charging ahead on this before sorting out the Indigenous consultation piece seems like a mistake.”

“From an economic perspective, there are always benefits and costs associated with a pipeline project, and one needs to study how efficient would the pipeline project be in enhancing Canada’s economy,” Harb said.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, it’s estimated the pipeline project would create the equivalent of 15,000 construction jobs, not to mention the equivalent of 37,000 jobs per year of operations in direct, indirect and induced jobs in Alberta and BC. An increase in the taxes collected could also be used for public services such as health care and education.

Last Spring, Alberta Premier Rachel Notley called the pipeline expansion “a major step forward for all Canadians.” She said the pipeline is a financially feasible and will generate profits. She conceded that governments may be held accountable if there is a spill, however, Notley said spills are not occurring as often.

But critics say The Trans Mountain pipeline will raise the amount of tankers in BC waters, increasing the chances that one of them will hit something and cause a spill of fuel into the ocean.

A major oil pipeline leak in 2011 was caused by the rupture of the Plains Midstream Canada Rainbow pipeline. It resulted in 28,000 barrels of oil spilling in northern Alberta, and was reported as the biggest spill in the province in 35 years. Some of the oil had seeped into the wetlands nearby. But in 2016 there were fewer than 100 spills larger than seven tonnes reported, compared to 3,000 in 1974.

“More than 100,000 people in the energy sector have already lost their

“One of the obvious reasons for opposing pipelines is the threat they pose to drinking water. If this pipeline spills at the Outaouais river, this could make water undrinkable for millions in the province of Quebec, since the St. Laurent river provides a key source.”

— Vincent Duhamel

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION
ELISA BARBIER

jobs, and thousands more are unaware when construction will begin,” said Berthold. “Every day the construction is delayed further undermines Canada’s reputation as a stable and predictable place to invest—that is why the majority of Canadians believe that failing to build pipelines is a national crisis.”

“The federal government has to represent every province and territory, and if any sector is struggling, our job is to ensure that we’re doing everything we can to get the most out of that sector and provide jobs for those people,” said Schiefke.

According to Schiefke, this is especially the case for Calgary, as the city currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country.

In 2016, British Columbia said it didn’t support the Trans Mountain pipeline, in part out of concerns about the lack of information provided by Kinder Morgan Energy Partners for their proposed spill prevention and clean-up program. Kinder Morgan has increasingly been using the pipeline to transport diluted bitumen from the tar sands, which is much more corrosive than regular oil. Bitumen is a thick tar-like mix of hydrocarbons that is toxic and very difficult to clean up if there was a spill.

“One of the obvious reasons for opposing pipelines is the threat they pose to drinking water,” said Vincent Duhamel from Climate Justice Montreal. “If this pipeline spills at the Outaouais river, this could make water undrink-

able for millions in the province of Quebec, since the St. Laurent [river] provides a key source.”

“I think pipeline expansion is digging a deeper hole in terms of our reliance on fossil fuels,” said Emily Carson-Apstein, external coordinator of Sustainable Concordia. “This is super harmful to vulnerable communities in Canada, like Indigenous communities on the West Coast and people around the world who can’t afford to escape the effects of climate change.”

The crude oil pipeline Enbridge Line 9 provides oil to Montreal’s Suncor Refinery from Sarnia, Ontario. It’s processing on average 24,300 barrels of diluted bitumen a day. The TransCanada Corp. canceled its Energy East Pipeline and Eastern Mainline projects, after being subject to increased regulations and facing opposition from environmental groups.

SAUDI OIL AND CANADIAN PIPELINES’ IMPACTS ON INDIGENOUS LAND

Canada not only receives its oil from the Alberta tar sands, but also from Saudi Arabia. “Alberta crude extraction is a relatively recent phenomenon and Canada has been importing Middle Eastern oil for a very long time,” said Syed Ahsan, a Concordia professor emeritus in the economics department.

Saudi Arabia’s oil reserves are the second largest in the world. According to the National Energy Board, Canada

has approximately 80,000 barrels of oil imported from the kingdom every day and we pay them about \$2 billion a year, versus the \$3.8 million barrels of oil produced by Canada per day.

The situation is a matter of money. Acquiring Saudi’s oil through affordable transportation and having it refined in New Brunswick is cheaper than the complex and expensive process of extracting the oil from Alberta’s tar sands and refining it.

Only certain refineries can turn Alberta bitumen into gasoline, which are mainly located in Alberta and BC. The greenhouse gas emissions for extracting and processing oil sand are larger than for regular crude oil, and contribute to global warming. The oil is then moved to the Burnaby Terminal—a distribution point for crude oil to local terminals.

The Irving refinery in St. John, New Brunswick receives 40 per cent of its crude oil from Saudi Arabia. However, in light of the fractured diplomatic relations between the two countries, some economists say Canada could easily replace the Saudi Arabian crude oil with its own if the kingdom stops selling it.

Ahsan explained why this hasn’t happened. “The heavy crude can only be economically extracted at a certain price floor, possibly close to \$50 USD [per] barrel, while Middle Eastern oil has a much lower threshold for profitable extraction.”

Indigenous nations are particularly

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS
ELISA BARBIER



affected by the pipelines threatening their land. The Wet'suwet'en is the most recent nation to publicly oppose pipelines and face attacks from the RCMP. The nation called for a stop on the Coastal GasLink pipeline project because the RCMP enforced a court injunction for access through the Unist'ot'en camp, about 15 minutes from the worksite.

"We review major projects proposed on Wet'suwet'en territories," Mike Ridsdale, environmental assessment coordinator for the Office of the Wet'suwet'en.

"We monitor the province and make the proponents know of the hereditary decisions on the lands where there is proposed works," said Ridsdale. "Currently, we are working with lawyers to stop Coastal GasLink pipeline due to their cultural genocide of our historical evidence on the land."

The Oceans Protection Plan, a \$1.5 billion federal policy unveiled by the current Liberal government in 2016, attempts to address environmental consequences brought on by oil transportation and potential spills. It includes provisions to protect chinook salmon, fund new research on water contaminants, and plans to reduce noise from the thousands of vessels that travel near the whales each year.

"When we took office, only one per cent of our coastline was protected, after 152 years of existence as a country," said Schiefke. "We vowed that by the end of our first term we would bring that up to 10 per cent. So far we are at 8.7 per cent."

Apstein fears the environmental impact of these pipelines. "The Canadian economy runs on fossil fuels right now and we don't have a lot of time to find a different way to run the country, because this just isn't going to cut it."

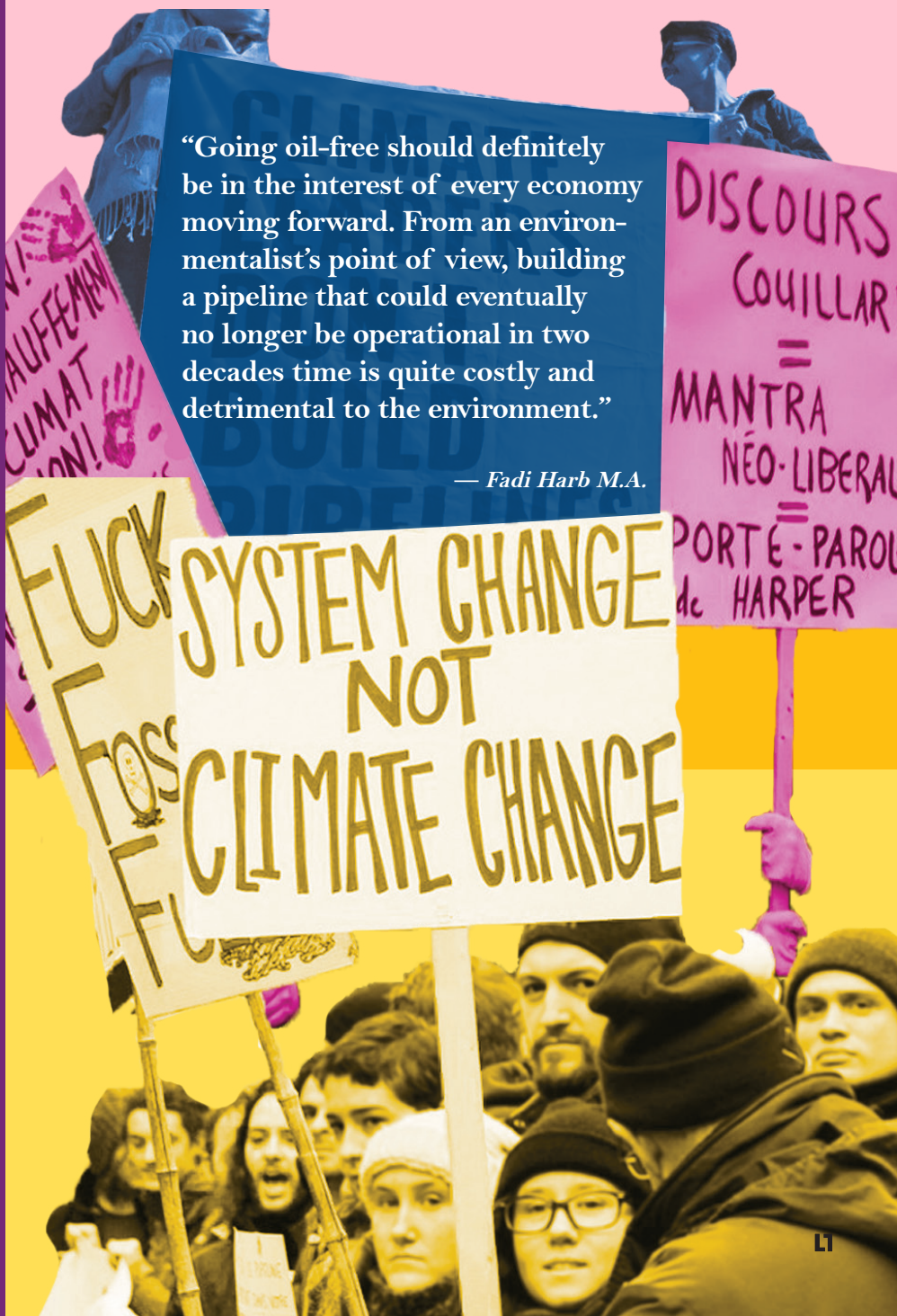
"Going oil-free should definitely be in the interest of every economy moving forward," said Harb. "From an environmentalist's point of view, building a pipeline that could eventually no longer be operational in two decades' time is quite costly and detrimental to the environment."

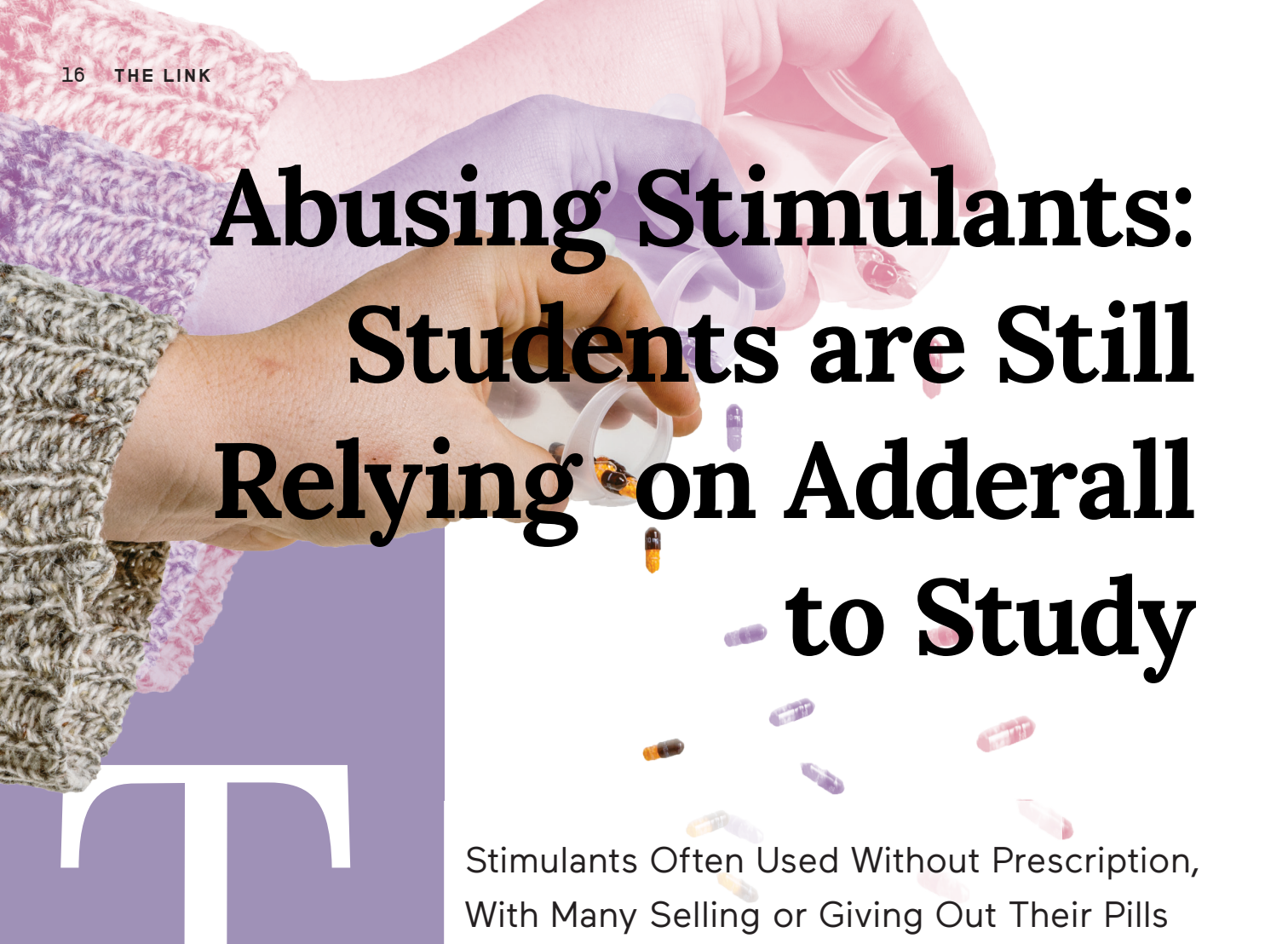
Schiefke said he believes an environmental and economical balance is needed. "It's about being realistic about our economic needs, and then doing the hard work necessary to innovate and look for ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other sectors by using revenues to invest in green technology," said Schiefke.

With the upcoming federal election later this year, the pressure to decide on the fate of the Trans Mountain Pipeline may come into the forefront of Canadian concern. If the project goes according to plan, the added construction is expected to take about 30 months, which means the pipeline could be operational in 2022. □

"Going oil-free should definitely be in the interest of every economy moving forward. From an environmentalist's point of view, building a pipeline that could eventually no longer be operational in two decades time is quite costly and detrimental to the environment."

— Fadi Harb M.A.





Abusing Stimulants: Students are Still Relying on Adderall to Study

Stimulants Often Used Without Prescription,
With Many Selling or Giving Out Their Pills

ROWAN KENNEDY @ROWANKENNEDY8

The first time Cora Miller* took what she calls the “get-ahead drug” she was studying with a friend in a Grey Nuns reading room—they thought it would be fun. At the time, she was taking a philosophy course and had to write a paper that night. She was lost, wondering, “What the fuck is going on,” then she took Adderall and thought, “It all makes sense now!”

To protect the identities of those who use and distribute stimulants illegally, *The Link* has granted anonymity to allow students to speak on record. The names used are pseudonyms.

Miller said the experience reminded her of a scene in the movie *A Beautiful Mind*. “John Nash [played by Russell

Crowe] is seeing the codes and symbols and he’s underlining everything,” said Miller. “That’s what I felt my first time doing Adderall.”

That was three years ago. During a phone interview with *The Link*, she said that when she does Adderall now, “I sometimes wish I [still] felt like that.”

For those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or narcolepsy, drugs like Adderall and Ritalin help stimulate the central nervous system. ADHD drugs enhance the brain’s ability to signal for the release of dopamine, a key regulator of motivation and cognition. As prescription stimulants, they’re classified as Schedule III drugs in the Canadian Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. The act regulates the

production, sale and possession of drugs that are dangerous when misused. Substances are categorized based on “harm to public health or safety.” Possession is legal when prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner.

Miller, a third-year political science student at Concordia, said she uses Adderall or Vyvanse once every two weeks, unprescribed.

Of Miller’s closest friends, she said half abuse Adderall for academic purposes.

Drugs for ADHD can be separated into three categories: amphetamine-based stimulants, methylphenidate-based stimulants, and non-stimulants. Adderall, Vyvanse and Dexedrine are amphetamine-based. Ritalin, Biphentin

and Concerta are methylphenidate-based stimulants.

Non-stimulant ADHD drugs, like Strattera or Intuniv, according to the NCAA, are not as effective in treating ADHD symptoms, but the Canadian Pediatric Society asserts that they have a low potential for abuse.

In the U.S., a comprehensive analysis of over 20 studies was conducted in 2015. It described misuse of stimulants as a “prevalent and growing problem.” It estimated stimulant misuse by college students to be at a rate of 17 per cent.

In Canada, in the 2013 National College Health Assessment, 3.7 per cent of more than 33,000 postsecondary students from across Canada reported illicit use of stimulants. A 2018 survey conducted by a doctoral student at Dalhousie University reported similar outcomes: 6.8 per cent used stimulants, and about 80 per cent of those who didn’t have a prescription. 88 per cent of the misusers specified that they used non-prescribed stimulants to help with studying.

In Quebec, in 2017, stimulants for ADHD were prescribed at three times the rate of any other province. Recently, 45 physicians in the province signed an open letter claiming that stimulants are over-prescribed to children, adolescents and young adults. The letter states that from 2006 to 2015 in Quebec, prescriptions for patients between the ages 18 to 25 jumped from 0.4 per cent to 3.2 per cent.

Michel Perron, CEO of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, told the CTV that most students get the drug from someone they know who has a prescription.

“It’s all about who you know,” said Miller. “I have friends [with ADHD] who are willing to give me some of their Adderall when they don’t need it.”

She said her friends will sell it to her for \$5 a pill, while her dealer sells for \$10 a pill.

Daniel Grey* found himself on the other side of this interaction, giving Concerta to his friends for free.

Grey is a prescribed user of Concerta (a brand name stimulant similar to Ritalin) at

Carleton University. Grey talked about his experience with attention deficit disorder. He was prescribed Concerta and has taken it “on-and-off” since his diagnosis three years ago.

He said he takes one 36-milligram pill per day, and he has been using the prescribed dose for three months. He said, “I kind of feel like I don’t need it,” and admits that he’s scared to be reliant on the drug.

Grey lives in residence and says he’s given it away. “All of my friends know I have Concerta,” said Grey. He said he’s found that one or two of his friends will ask if he has any pills to spare during exam time.

A 2012 study concluded that “MAS [a brand name for Adderall] has no more than small effects on cognition in healthy young adults [who do not have ADHD], although users may perceive the drug as enhancing their cognition.” In separate trials where patients received either Adderall, a placebo, or nothing at all, they nevertheless performed the same.

Miller said, “Adderall doesn’t make me smarter, it just makes me focused.”

In users who do not have ADHD, stimulants like Adderall and Ritalin provide

a boost in focus and energy, decrease appetite, and induce feelings of euphoria.

In a Facebook post on Spotted Concordia, an anonymous student wrote, “Yesterday morning at 7 a.m. I popped four pills of Adderall to study and haven’t slept or eaten since. Any recommendations to make me pass out?”

Repeated abuse of stimulants may lead to side effects such as mood changes, increased blood pressure, aggression, anxiety and heart palpitations.

A 2008 study on rats showed that stimulants may change the genetic makeup of the brain: after eight months of methylphenidate (Ritalin) treatment, rats had diminished ability in their dopamine receptors. The Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse identifies paranoia and hostility as long term effects of abusing stimulants.

In 2015, Health Canada warned that all stimulants used to treat ADHD may be linked to increased suicidal thoughts and behaviours. *ABC News* and *The New York Times* have reported on how the suicides of Kyle Craig, 2010, in Nashville and Richard Fee, 2011, in Virginia were linked to ADHD medicine.

The Richard Scott Fee Foundation was established after his suicide to raise

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS ELISA BARBIER
AND PAULINA DOMÍNGUEZ



In December, 2018, 45 physicians in the province signed an open letter claiming that **stimulants are overprescribed to children.**



INFOGRAPHICS
BREEA KOBERNICK
AND ELISA BARBIER

awareness about the misdiagnosis of ADHD and the dangers that come with stimulant abuse.

Miller thinks it is overlooked that Adderall has serious effects on your health and that it needs to be treated more seriously as an addictive substance. In the days following Miller doing stimulants, she has to remind herself that she can't use Adderall for everything.

"It's easy to fall into that trap if you're not careful," she said.

Miller uses Adderall or Vyvanse to study, finish papers and do readings. She said, "It's as simple as I'm doing work and I don't think about little things like, 'I need to check Instagram,' or 'I need to text my mom.'"

Miller said she uses stimulants because she procrastinates, doesn't manage her time well, and her work tends to pile up at the last minute.

She says on Adderall she's less anxious about due dates. "I abuse it—I know it's a problem, I'm not proud of it."

Sylvia Kairouz, head of the Lifestyle and Addiction Research Lab at Concordia and associate professor in the psychology department, said it's just part of student culture to experiment with substances.

Kairouz refers to overmedicalization as

In Quebec, in 2017, stimulants for ADHD were prescribed at **three times** the rate of any other province.



a potential factor in the abuse of stimulants. "It's very clear that ease of access to a substance is just one more incentive to consume."

Kairouz said when dealing with the issue of stimulant abuse, we need to reevaluate the promotion of "performance and success culture."

"I don't think people realize how damaging it is to always be told that you need to be the next Elon Musk" said Miller. "This whole culture. You think it's positive, but it's really damaging. You think everybody

is having productive days."

"I feel like a failure because I didn't wake up at 4 a.m. and get all my work done—I feel like shit," Miller recalled breaking down over the phone with her mom telling her, "It's impossible to be the best that you can be every single day."

Risks associated with long term stimulant use include psychosis, and some accounts of suicidal thoughts in children have been reported.

While the number of children diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed

stimulants has increased, physicians in Quebec have only just started bringing their concerns to light. Sociologists like Kairouz believe there is a link between success culture and abuse of stimulants.

Kairouz said, "Periods of high stress [in academics] can lead students to turn to substances."

"That's why we need more and more support systems for students who abuse drugs."

In March, the Concordia Student Union published "Addictions Peer Support Programs on University Campuses," a report addressing Concordia's lack of resources for recovering addicts. With suggestions from the Taskforce for Students in Recovery, made up of people "touched by addiction," the union announced the implementation of peer support systems on campus.

CSU Student Life Coordinator Michèle Sandiford said peer support groups will counter the long wait times for mental

health support at the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities. "There are institutional barriers in accessing treatment, things like long wait times will discourage students from seeking out help."

"[The peer support system] gives students the opportunity to get in right away, and start their journey of recovery," she continued.

The report defines addiction as repeated involvement and reliance on a substance or activity "because that activity may be pleasurable." Sandiford conceded that this definition may be narrow, as it does not encompass stimulant abuse. Kairouz says stimulant abuse is complicated because students often don't use them for pleasure, and rather for academics.

Sandiford said, "People have a preconceived notion of what addiction may look like." She understands that some people may abuse drugs while not seeking plea-

sure, and thinks it may make it harder for stimulant addicts to seek support.

"We understand that it is not comprehensive and people dealing with addiction may need a multi-pronged approach," said Sandiford.

As a recovering addict, Sandiford said, "Peer support has been critical in my recovery. It allowed me to build strong support groups and have accountability to people who care about my wellbeing."

Sandiford confirmed that a space has been found for the groups to meet. Students struggling with addiction could have these resources as soon as April, but Sandiford says it may be more feasible to stretch the launch until September.

Students who think they may be struggling with addiction can speak with a bilingual, trained counselor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free everywhere in Quebec: 1-800-265-2626 and in the Montreal area: 514-527-2626. □

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Art Souterrain Festival: Taking Art Out of the Box and Into the Streets

The Organization Creating Galleries in the Underground City

NANOR FROUNDJIAN

During the past 11 years in March, the Art Souterrain festival has transformed the cold and commercial buildings of the underground city into an art-filled trail where people come together to explore the unknown.

Art Souterrain is an arts organization that launched its' first exhibit in the winter of 2009. It began as a one night event but then grew to become a full length festival, celebrating contemporary art.

The first edition of the festival fea-

tured almost as many artworks as you'd expect by their eleventh edition. Aided by a group of art student volunteers, CEO and founder Frédéric Loury was able to bring to life his vision of an artful night.

The first show was an experiment. It spanned across Palais des congrès, the World Trade Center, Cité Internationale, Place des Arts, and Complexe Desjardins. Over the years, Place Victoria, 1000 de la Gauchetière, Gare Centrale, Place Bonaventure, and Édifice Jacques-Parizeau, among other places, were added to the list of underground exhibition sites.

"Sometimes, you could be less interested because it's not easy visually, but

you just spend 30 seconds and see the object and the artwork and read the label, you'll change your mind because it's written for the larger public. It's not written for specialists," Loury explained.

Most importantly, Art Souterrain's vision is to make art familiar. Art is not reserved for an elitist group. It should be for everyone. "It's a long process to change the mind of the people and also, to help the visual arts community," he said.

By establishing a connection between the public, non-profit organizations, galleries and artists, Art Souterrain hopes to make visual arts commonplace in the underground city where thousands walk everyday.



"Musée de carton," by Francisco De La Barra was one of the artworks exhibited ornating the Palais des congrès.

PHOTO LÉNA SELTZER

"If we could have four, five huge events a year, people would be maybe more comfortable to come, to discuss, to play, to consume artwork," said Loury.

Let's face it, although most of us enjoy seeing art and learning about it, we don't *really* enjoy going to museums, buying a ticket, and walking around from one silent room to another. But what if the very streets you walk every day became the museums and galleries, showcasing artwork along your daily pedestrian path?

This year, Art Souterrain is making its mark in Montreal's cultural landscape for the eleventh time.

Since launching, its primary goal has been to expose regular Montrealers to

contemporary visual art. And what better way to do that than by creating a pathway through some of Montreal's busiest and most well known buildings?

The festival has grown year after year in Montreal, where visitors follow a trail of artworks and installations in the underground city. The three-week long edition of the multimedia festival presents the trails' navigation through 54 free activities.

For the first time this year, there will be a guided jogging tour hosted in collaboration with a coach. Other days, visitors will have the opportunity to meet the artists or chat with the media-tors of the event, who will explain the

artworks from different perspectives. Loury said he strives to make the festival more attractive through the events and activities "without an aesthetic proposal," to present the artwork in the most authentic way possible.

Walking through the underground city, visitors will encounter a black and white short film playing in an open booth at the World Trade Center, a number of photo series along the walls leading to metro stations, art installations, and sculptures. The artworks are seamlessly integrated into the walkways, almost as though they had been there all along.

While this makes the exhibit feel like a part of the scenery, it also makes it hard at times to spot the artwork. The downtown-wide exhibition is dispersed through the length of several metro stations, which can be confusing to navigate, especially to those unfamiliar with Montreal's underground maze.

In the festival's galleries, viewers will not only get to see photography on the walls, they will also get to flip through print media and listen to audio pieces.

Loury had a simple goal: he wanted to reach people who were not familiar with art history or contemporary art, instead of making it exclusionary and limited to museum-goers or art-lovers.

The organization's mandate to make art accessible aims to unite the city through creativity.

"In these activities you can meet a young migrant or old people who never go to the galleries, or a student," he said. He hopes to create dialogue among Montrealers.

Art Souterrain receives municipal, provincial, and federal funds to maintain the organization. Sixty per cent is governmentally funded and the rest is privately funded and sponsored. Loury explained the organization also plans projects to bring "new monnaie" to the festival. For instance, they organize exhibitions in private companies and host an event called "Vitrine sur l'Art" as a means to attract new faces and push their message forward.

"We use vacant stores and we use the

window displays to set the artworks and if we're doing a profit, we put it towards the festival," he said.

While new exhibition locations are added to the festival's course, Louri said about half of the buildings have remained constant.

The biggest difference is the satellite trail—independent locations—like the VAV Gallery, Arsenal, Espacio México, Maison de la Culture Pointe-aux-Trembles, and Ubisoft Space.

The most challenging aspect of the planning process is the unpredictability of the buildings' response to the organization's, proposal since their approval is

never guaranteed. Usually, works need to be adapted to their allocated space.

One of the key components to attracting a large audience is the theme.

"The first link we are building with the public, it's the subject. So every year, we are choosing a society subject; last year it was about labour, this year it's about propaganda, disinformation, fake news," said Louri.

Art Souterrain devotes approximately two years to planning each festival. Choosing the annual theme requires extensive research.

"It could be a choice [that] is influenced from the media, lectures, writing,

"Sometimes, you could be less interested because it's not easy visually, but you just spend 30 seconds and see the object and the artwork and read the label, you'll change your mind because it's written for the large public. It's not written for specialists."

— Frédéric Louri



Art Souterrain offered a 6 km parcours through 8 buildings.

PHOTO LÉNA SELTZER

reading, meetings,” Loury explained. After picking the theme, which can take up to six months, a team of three or four curators are invited to participate in the selection process. There are three separate processes for the eventual selection of artworks.

This year, Loury welcomed Maude Arsenault, Martin Le Chevallier and Joyce Yahouda to put forth their own interpretations of the theme “Le Vrai du Faux.”

Another set of people to pick out the artwork is a team of three researchers, including Loury himself. They begin their hunt by going to art fairs, exhibitions, or even by surfing the web.

“It’s a fantastic way to identify artists that I would like to work with, and also I read a lot,” Loury said. His team only kept 40 out of the 150 artists they contacted following their research.

This year’s edition features the work of 64 artists—34 from Quebec, 28 international and two from the rest of Canada.

This year’s theme pushes artists to question themselves about the sea of information around them, particularly on social media, and stresses the importance of identifying valuable and authentic information.

Dominique Pétrin, an artist specializing in screen printing, exhibited her four

pieces in Espace Ubi soft. She believes that, in the age of social media, lines between fiction and reality are blurred, making it hard to distinguish one from the other.

“My work always plays with what is representation, what is fiction and what is reality. For example, I do a lot of fake 3D, trompe l’oeil, mise en abyme,” she said, referring to her colorful and detailed frames which create optical illusions.

Pétrin described the elements in her artworks as, “Data or information so I overlapped layers and layers of information that create a fabric, which I associated with a social fabric, building a profile with different motifs.”



HydroFlora: Hydroponics and Basketballs as Hanging Planters

The Organization Promoting Sustainable Practices Through Urban Agriculture and Education

AYSHA WHITE

Perhaps you've already noticed it walking past Concordia's 4th Space: the bright white cubes and shocks of green composing HydroFlora's hydroponics display.

HydroFlora is a working group of the Concordia Food Coalition. It's owned by a group of social entrepreneurs and former students who say their business model is based on the desire to give back by promoting sustainable practices through education and community building.

HydroFlora is a multi-faceted enterprise. The 4th Space display, near the corner of Maisonneuve Blvd. W and Mackay St., is far from their only presence on campus. Maybe you've noticed their pop up stand at Concordia's farmer's market.

Or maybe you bought plants from them at their Valentine's Day sale, or more recently at the semi-annual

greenhouse sale. Maybe you attended one of their workshops on hydroponics.

They are a visiting project based out of Concordia's greenhouse, located on the thirteenth floor of the Hall building.

WATERING AN IDEA

HydroFlora planted its first roots in 2015 when Dominique Smith's friend introduced him to the greenhouse. Though he'd been at Concordia for four years, it was the first time he'd ever been up there, and Smith liked what he saw.

Smith noticed there were plants suspended in the air, soilless, which was his first encounter with hydroponics.

As he got more involved at the greenhouse and began taking care of the plants, he felt as though he'd found his calling. He even said his grades starting slipping because he was so focused his newfound passion.

"I didn't care about urban planning anymore, I knew what I wanted to do," said Smith. "I just had to finish my



HydroFlora has had a hydroponics display in the 4th Space since 2018.

PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER

degree.”

With some help from individuals at the City Farm School and greenhouse, he registered Concordia’s first hydroponics club. But Smith wanted to go further to legitimize the organization, leading to HydroFlora becoming a working group of the Concordia Food Coalition.

The other co-founders, Marian Thomas, Jerry Chen, and Clifford Pape, all bring unique and vital skill sets to the organization, making HydroFlora a successful marriage of left and right brain thinking.

Thomas is responsible for the innovative hydroponic system designs, while Chen has a Master’s degree in plant physiology, making him a “plant doctor,” and Pape is in charge of the creative direction.

In October 2016, Chen and Smith decided to collaborate on an idea: giving a hydroponics workshop.

Thomas approached Smith one day saying, “Yo, I can build crazy thing..”

And he really could.

By 2017, HydroFlora had fully developed its educational arm and had plenty of practice giving workshops on hydroponics, sustainable practices, and urban agriculture to high schools, CEGEPs, and inside the greenhouse itself.

2017 is also when Pape joined the three other co-founders, completing the team’s expertise.

“We were very scientific and we hosted a lot of workshops but we lacked any sense of what we were,” explained Smith.

Pape is responsible for what would become one of the brands signatures: the concrete sneaker planters. His abilities are self taught.

Pape messed around in the comfort of his apartment teaching himself how to work with concrete. The creation of the concrete planters necessitated a move towards further integration with the greenhouse, Smith explained, by helping them ease the transportation of their product.

HYDROPONICS: AN EXPLAINER

Hydroponics are a subset of farming in urban agriculture. Hydroponic systems



are usually spatially efficient, making them ideal urban farming technology.

Smith noted that they've done a lot of experimentation with various agricultural systems, learning through trial and error about what works and what doesn't.

"Every farm, every crop is different, you build it differently," said Smith.

"Hydroponics is basically having a plant suspended in some kind of soil-less medium as water passes through it. Some systems have water that sprays the roots through a mister, and that's called aeroponics," explained Smith.

He observed that many people are familiar with the concept, since it's often used to grow weed, but many aren't

aware of its other uses.

HydroFlora offers consulting services and can create hydroponic installations inside a restaurant, for example. Those systems might not grow food, but they could improve a space's air quality.

HydroFlora also sells plants ranging from \$5 to \$100, housed in concrete planters and distinctive terrariums, often accessorized with tiny reproductions of popular sneaker designs like the Nike Airforce 1's.

"I'm assuming that most people who do plants are a bit older and don't necessarily make concrete sneaker pots," said Pape.

They have partnered with the Seguin Foundation to address the issue of deforestation in Haiti. The purchase of a HydroFlora plant could result in a tree being planted there.

"We have a few different aspects to what we do. We have the cool creative stuff and the serious humanitarian side. They both work hand in hand with each other. The creative stuff, we try to find in popular culture to adapt to what we do and make our approach to plants interesting and different from what others are doing," said Pape.



HydroFlora finds inventive ways to hang their plants like the Pothos (top) or the Spider plant (bottom).

PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER



Smith and Pape explained that HydroFlora has faced some criticism for referencing clearly corporate symbols in its products and working with Nike, who have been accused of labour violations.

“At HydroFlora we’ve always thought that if you’re going to do something humanitarian that’s good, but it has to work and it has to be consistent,” said Smith. “It’s one thing to attack capitalism but within capitalism, if you have a project it has to work within the system. For us it’s just the smart thing to do, pulling people in through things they already like.”

INTERNIG AT HYDROFLORA

Lauren Fitzgerald’s pathway to becoming an intern at HydroFlora began when she found herself sitting in the greenhouse, wondering how she could finesse spending more time there.

This led the urban planning student on an internet search, eventually leading her to HydroFlora.

During her first semester she started attending their Sunday sessions, which

sometimes include informal lessons relating to plants, open to the public, “A great resource if you’re willing to show up and learn,” she said.

Fitzgerald kept returning even though there weren’t any open internships at the time. “The reason why I started coming consistently was because of how welcoming it was,” said Fitzgerald. She said she began her formal internship during her second term.

Fitzgerald said that HydroFlora’s owners welcome people’s proposals and ideas. Fitzgerald’s idea to use sensors to check the pH balance, temperatures, and water pressure inside the hydroponics system, (increasing efficiency) is now being executed in HydroFlora’s 4th Space display by other members of the team.

“I decided it would be necessary as HydroFlora experiences tons of clogging of the tubes and using sensors allows the team to do less manual checking,” explained Fitzgerald.

She noted that the environment is positive and collaborative. The owners

emphasise doing things you’re passionate about, understanding that it’s more likely to lead to a job well done said Fitzgerald.

MAKE CHARITY COOL AGAIN

HydroFlora offers a wide range of concrete planters, terrariums, and ones that are uber-trendy, metallic, and geometrically shaped. They also have hanging planters made from old basketballs.

Pape mentioned that many people ask about the significance of using runners.

The idea behind it is to use sneaker culture, which he explained has become popular in the mainstream in recent years, to help sell their products and sustain their charitable goals.

“It’s a way of bridging the gap. People who are sustainable don’t necessarily understand the aesthetic world and vice versa. People do things because of ease of access, that’s why people are wasteful,” said Smith.

HydroFlora had a stand at the most recent SneakerCon in Toronto.

“I don’t want to characterize all sneaker heads as being individualis-

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tic because there's a big community approach behind that subculture, but there's a lot of them that don't know about the humanitarian aspect behind what we do," said Pape.

It's a chance to explain that they're contributing to the Haiti mission, "Now you have a nice thing sitting inside your apartment, but more importantly you're helping with something bigger."

"I used to kill my plants," admitted Pape with a sheepish smile. "I was the sneaker head who came in and thought 'Hey this is something cool we can mesh together,' and ever since, it worked."

THE HAITI PROJECT

HydroFlora's project in Haiti, launched in 2018, is an important aspect of the organization.

"I thought me being from Haiti, it's the poorest country in the western hemisphere, and it's not that far from here. We could use the technical expertise to do positive work," said Pape.

According to Pape, two of the most pressing issues in Haiti are deforestation and a loss of arable land and heart disease. He noted that the latter is the

number one killer in a country with an insecure food supply.

Haiti's forests were brutalized during colonial times for plantations, meaning that there are been little to no roots left in the ground, leading to soil erosion. When it rains, this leads to the good nutrients being washed away, because there are not enough roots to ground the nutrients in the soil.

Shallow rooted crops do not hold nutrients the same way, explained Smith.

By promoting urban agriculture and creating opportunities for education they are hoping to address the aforementioned issues.

The Haiti project has multiple arms and one of them is a partnership with the research center GHESKIO, which has an elementary school on its campus. They worked to put together an urban farm, including an aquaponics system and vertical garden towers that provide the cafeteria with fresh produce and fish.

Pape stressed that they do not consider themselves saviours of Haiti, but they are people who hoped to put their

knowledge into positive use.

The project is ongoing and there is a phase two plan in action said Pape. Several Haitian schools and one university have since reached out, interested in the educational aspect of partnering with HydroFlora.

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY: THE GREENHOUSE PARTY

On April 12, HydroFlora will host a party in the greenhouse in conjunction with Nourish McGill.

It touches on their goal of connecting the sustainable community and the general public. Smith observed that many parties promoting those themes don't happen in actually sustainable spaces such as the greenhouse, making the issues feel more real.

He said that it's the only greenhouse open to the public in downtown Montreal and wants it to be a beneficial space for the whole community, not just Concordia.

"It's where that lady got her plant, it's where you took that class and got your tan, it's where you hang out every Sunday. It can't be this exclusive box in the sky and I feel like that's kind of what's happened, so if we can make it more attainable, then that space itself can grow and get more funding," Smith said. □



PHOTO ELISA BARBIER

The (Insanely Busy) Life of a Student-Athlete

What It's Like to Be a Varsity Athlete, as Told
by Stingers Football's Noah Domingue

We often see Stingers athletes working on the field, but how often do we see or hear about them working in the classroom? Or at their day-job? The life of a student athlete is a busy one, often punctuated by long days and tight schedules.

For Stingers offensive lineman Noah Domingue, this has been his way of living for the last three years. Domingue started out with the Stingers football team in 2016–2017 and has been juggling football and academics ever since.

The six-foot-three business administration major says the off-season is much less stressful, and for obvious reasons.

“During the in-season, we have to pick classes in the morning, because we have practice at night and meetings at 3 p.m., so that really puts us in a time crunch, because you have those classes that are only at a certain time,” said Domingue.

However, the off-season is still no walk in the park.

It's a Thursday morning in mid-March and head coach Brad Collinson has given the team the weekend off, noticing fatigue setting in as the winter semester comes to a head. His players have been instructed not to work out or train, but not until after a mandatory 6 a.m. team run.

Domingue was up bright and early, ready to hit the track—but not before showing some love to Snoopy, the enthusiastic goldenoodle puppy he got at the start of training camp.

“[Having a puppy] has added a sense of responsibility to my life alongside academics and athletics,” he said.

On a day without a morning run, Domingue's day typically starts around 8 a.m. Get up, feed Snoopy and let him out, and then get on with the day. Without games and in-season practices, he's free to schedule workouts that fit his schedule, and time outside of classes and workouts is used for studying or prepping meals for the week.

While some of his teammates work part-time jobs during the school year to pay for academic and living expenses, Domingue works enough throughout the summer with a commercial moving company to afford to live without working during the school year.

This may sound like the best-case scenario, but there's still sacrifices to be made. Working full-time during the summer puts a strain on his training schedule with the team. Workouts are scheduled ahead of time and not flexible like during the winter. Having a job with no set schedule makes it difficult to predict when he may be available to train.

After the team run, Domingue met

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Domingue hangs out with fellow team members in the Stingers football locker room.

PHOTOS
SARAH BOUMEDDA



with an academic advisor at Concordia's downtown campus about potentially switching his major. Around 11:30 a.m., he finally headed home to cook breakfast and start on any school work left to be done, and review material he learned over the course of the week. Usually this takes him to about 4 p.m., and then it's time to meal prep, and on any other Thursday he'd usually lift at 5 p.m.

Sounds pretty relaxed, right? But during the fall semester when football season is in full swing, and with midterm season looming, things get more complicated.

"I go to school, I go to study hall. Come home, eat, and then I'm back at the [Loyola sports] complex for 2:45 p.m. so I can be at the meeting for 3 p.m.," he said. "Before the meeting you've got to get taped. Ankles, wrists, whatever you need to get done."



Practices run from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., and then there's only a few hours left in the day, then players have to eat and study.

"You've got to make a choice, either make something quick and study or make something a bit bigger and lose a little bit of time studying," he said. And then there's sleep, you can't forget about sleep—especially on nights before those 6:30 a.m. team runs.

Time management is a major part of Domingue's life, and the life of any student athlete. There's lots that needs to get done, and only so many hours in a day. Schedules during the season need to be meticulously planned. Domingue keeps a Google calendar updated with all team workouts, classes and tutorials, study hall sessions, and practices during the season.

Having such a packed schedule can sometimes lead to school getting in the way of football, and vice versa.

"I've failed a class," said Domingue. "Managerial accounting, so obviously I have to re-do it. And during the summer I have to take a summer course because [failing that class] was my own fault. My GPA was fine, but because I didn't get credits for that course I'm a class short credit-wise for U Sports, so I have to

take that summer class to make it up.”

U Sports requires players take a minimum of 18 credits per academic year, and that they maintain a 2.0 GPA to remain eligible.

Collinson wants his players to strive for more than just the bare minimum, requiring players to maintain a 2.5 GPA. Players who fail to do so must attend study hall sessions the following semester, ensuring they put extra time into their studies.

For student-athletes who have trouble keeping up with their classes, the athletics department offers resources to keep them on track. Most classes have tutorials, and it's fairly easy to get Stingers varsity academic coordinator Craig Beemer to put a tutor on the department's payroll if a player is willing to look for one, said Domingue.


“If you go up to coach [Collinson] and say ‘I have a problem with this,’ I can guarantee you that man knows someone here at Loyola who can help you,” said Domingue. “It's just whether you want to help yourself and go do that or not.”

Regardless, being on the go all the time can be stressful and draining. Playing a sport like football, and in a position like Domingue's, only adds to that. The reality of an offensive lineman is constantly putting your body on the line, and repeatedly going head-to-head with someone on a weekly, and sometimes daily, basis.

“Constant head hits definitely affect the brain differently than the regular student, and obviously our stresses and the regular students' stresses are completely different,” Domingue said. “It's just something that needs to be discussed more.”

With all the research that's been done in the last few years on chronic traumatic encephalopathy, it's hard not to be at least a little bit afraid of putting your brain on the line time and time again. CTE is a brain condition resulting from repeated hits to the





“Sports in general, for me it was a way to go to school. For me, I went to high school and my dad ran a welding business and I would have stayed home and took over the family business eventually. Because I had football it was a way for me to go to university and get a university degree.”

— Noah Domingue

During the offseason, Domingue trains several times a week at Concordia's varsity gym.

PHOTO SARAH BOUMEDDA



PHOTO
SARAH BOUMEDDA

head that cause problems with thinking and memory, personality changes, and behavioral changes including aggression and depression.

For Domingue though, football allows him to help other athletes down the line. He's been participating in concussion research at Concordia, allowing researchers to attach electrodes to the inside lining of his helmet in order to track brain activity after a hit.

"Yeah, I feel like a test dummy, but at the same time it's like the people before me were a test dummy, they made it better for me now," he said. "So I'm making it better with whatever my numbers give."

Domingue knows that CTE can only be definitely diagnosed after the person passes away, and football holds too special a place in his heart for him to quit over worries of what may happen in the future.

"I've never suffered anything where I've been like 'Okay, I need to re-think whether football is really worth it at this point'," he said. "I'm grateful for that that."

He said that football has given him so much, and changed who he is as a person. With the way medicine is advancing, Domingue doesn't think that parents

should worry about putting their kids into football, or any sport, because the rewards can often outweigh the risks in the long run.

"Sports in general, for me, [were] a way to go to school. For me, I went to high school and my dad ran a welding business and I would have stayed home and took over the family business eventually. Because I had [football], it was a way for me to go to university and get a university degree."

For many student-athletes, the goal is less so to be a student and more to be an athlete. Plenty come through the football program and do the bare minimum to stay eligible because they know that they wouldn't be at Concordia without football, said Domingue.

That's not him though. Growing up with a father who was a business owner, Domingue has dreams of opening his own business.

"I've always, in my head, wanted to open up my own training facility for athletes," he said.

That doesn't mean a professional career is off the table, though. Domingue is technically a fourth year player in terms of eligibility, after spending time at a military college in New Mexico prior

to attending Concordia. The problem is, he never actually played for that team, spending the whole season on the bench.

Domingue is in the process of proving to U Sports that he didn't play, trying

to obtain documentation from his former school to gain back that year of eligibility and go into next season as a fourth year player rather than a senior.

If he does manage to get reclassified, he'll be eligible to participate in Canadian Football League recruiting events such as the combine and the East-West Bowl, like teammates Maurice Simba and Matt Halbgewachs did last off-season.

A professional playing career could even help him in his future business endeavours.

"If [parents] hear about it being run by an ex-professional player, they will run to that camp with cash in-hand," he said. "So for me it's more like the business side. It can open up a lot of doors business-wise."

If things don't work out, it's no skin off his back—Domingue is happy to move on and start his career in business after graduation.

"[If I can't get reclassified] then I still have one year of football left and then I still have a degree left to finish, and then after that I'll figure out where life takes me, basically," he laughed. □

Here for a Good Time, Not a Long Time

Hugo Roy's Impact on the Stingers Hockey Team
Earned Him an American Hockey League Deal

DUSTIN KAGAN-FLEMING
@DUSTINKFLEMING



COURTESY SAFIA AHMAD

I

t may have only been one season, but it was one to remember.

The Concordia Stingers' top line centre is moving on after a dominant rookie season. Hugo Roy recently signed a 3 year contract with the Milwaukee Admirals, the American Hockey

League affiliate of the NHL's Nashville Predators.

"It feels great. I'm excited. It was my goal coming to Concordia. I knew that I would have the opportunity to play a lot. It was my goal to get a pro contract. Mission accomplished," said Roy.

Instead of speaking at the team's exit meetings and going over what to improve on ahead of next season as expected, Roy and Stingers head coach Marc-André Élement texted each other end of season messages. From his plane headed for Milwaukee, Roy thanked his coach for the confidence, encouragement, and guidance he had received over the course of the season that had ended just three days earlier.

Élement told his now former player that he would always be there for him and to call anytime if he had any questions. Regardless of the fact that he was losing arguably his best centreman—hockey's most important position—he was just happy to see Roy starting his professional career in the AHL.

"I'm really happy for him. It's going to hurt us on the ice for sure, but that's what you want. You want your guys to graduate and play pro. He's one of a kind, a special player and we were fortunate enough to have him for one year at least," said Élement.

In early 2018, Roy was finishing up his junior career with the Sherbrooke Phoe-

nix of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. It wasn't a particularly remarkable career outside of a strong 30 goal season, two years before he joined the Concordia Stingers.

He signed with the Stingers, a team filled with strong centres, including league MVP Anthony Beauregard. Roy was expected to come in and be an impact player, but at least be surrounded by a roster of experienced and offensive talent that had just brought the Stingers to nationals.

But then Beauregard got a pro contract and left at the end of the 2017-2018 season. Rookie all-star Massimo Carozza, who played both centre and wing, left for a contract with a European team. Reliable veteran centre Raphaël Lafontaine graduated. William Gignac, a young fast centre, left the program as well.

This left a hole in the top centre position despite the presence of now second year centre Jean-Philippe Beaulieu and the addition of recruits Chase Harwell and Zachary Zorn.

From the first time he got into game action in the preseason, Roy was expected to step up, playing between graduating captain Philippe Hudon and top winger Philippe Sanche. He was on the top power play and penalty kill units, but said the pressure was never stressed him out. Instead, it excited Roy for the season and challenge ahead of him.

"I was confident and open to a new environment. I was happy to go on my own and reach a new step," said Roy.

He had reason to feel confident. In his first preseason game, a 4-1 win, he scored twice and added an assist as well.

That strong start of the season and general success didn't surprise a former teammate of Roy's.

Stingers defenceman Carl Neill was Roy's captain in Sherbrooke, and helped recruit his old friend to Concordia when his time in junior was done. The captain's C even passed from Neill to Roy when the former left Sherbrooke.

"It's crazy to see. When he first came into Sherbrooke, he wasn't an impact player. You could see the potential [though]. He was a good skater and worked hard," said Neill.

The young centre was an impact player from start to finish this time around. The jump from major junior to U Sports didn't seem to bother him as the increased speed, physicality, and age of players seemed to fit his game, if anything.

He said playing with older players that know what it means to act like a professional and fight for a contract was something he took advantage of, taking in as much as he could from his linemates.

Sanche said he liked how Roy would consistently, and vocally, be analyzing plays and opponents during games. Sanche, Roy, and Hudon spent time discussing everything they saw on the ice.

"We'd talk a lot on the bench after plays. He's just so fun to play with. He's fast, he works hard. He's always getting open so it's easy for [us] to give him the puck," said Sanche.

Roy certainly had the puck plenty and took advantage of it, scoring 19 goals and 26 points in 28 games. He was fifth in overall goal scoring in Ontario University Athletics and tied for first in powerplay goals. Looking at it nationally, he tied for seventh in goals scored.

For all the success he had on the ice and strategy talk with his teammates, he's pretty quiet away from the game.

"He's a low-key guy, he's not a big talker," said Élement. "He does what he has to do."

The coach may as well have been describing his centre's playstyle.

Roy's game was an extremely productive one, but never flashy. Efficiency is the best word to describe it. There was never wasted energy in Roy's play or the need to rush and catch up to plays that he missed.

Defensively, he gave Concordia's

opponents little to work with, playing a true 200 foot game. With his high-end speed and extra gear of acceleration, he never needed to cheat offensively or leave defensive assignments to jump into a rush on offense. He was a master of, as coach Élement loves to say, “handling all the little details.”

If there is one part of Roy’s game that fans will remember, it’s his shot—the powerful, deceptive shot, with a dangerously quick release. Along with his defensive game, it’s the thing that teammates bring up first. He used it plenty

“I’m really happy for him. It’s going to hurt us on the ice for sure, but that’s what you want. You want your guys to graduate and play pro. He’s one of a kind, a special player and we were fortunate enough to have him for one year at least.”

— Marc-André Élement

this past season, perhaps most memorably for the game winning goal against McGill to secure a Corey Cup victory against the team’s crosstown rivals with a blistering one-timer.

While it was strong from the start, Roy’s game developed over his year at Concordia. He said playing in a league of 25-year-olds, and succeeding, after five years of going up against younger

players, is a confidence booster. He described himself as a much smarter player by the end of his season under Élement.

“It helped me a lot. Learning every day, especially from [Hudon]. He was a pro in everything on and off the ice. He helped me a lot,” said Roy. “Also my last year in the [QMJHL], I didn’t have as good of a season as I wanted so it was good for me to come and get some confidence. I think I’m ready for the next level now.”

While the Stingers head coach also believes Roy is ready for that next level, calling him “close to the NHL,” even he was surprised when the newest Milwaukee Admiral called to tell him his good news.

Élement had expected Roy to be around for more than a season to work on his degree,

but, unfortunately for coaches, that’s the way of university hockey.

There is no ill will between Roy and his ex-coach or teammates now though. When the contract comes up, they always describe it as a deal one has to take if offered. The AHL is just a step below the NHL. It comes with a chance for advancement, solid pay, and very high level hockey. It’s the league many U Sports hockey players dream of.

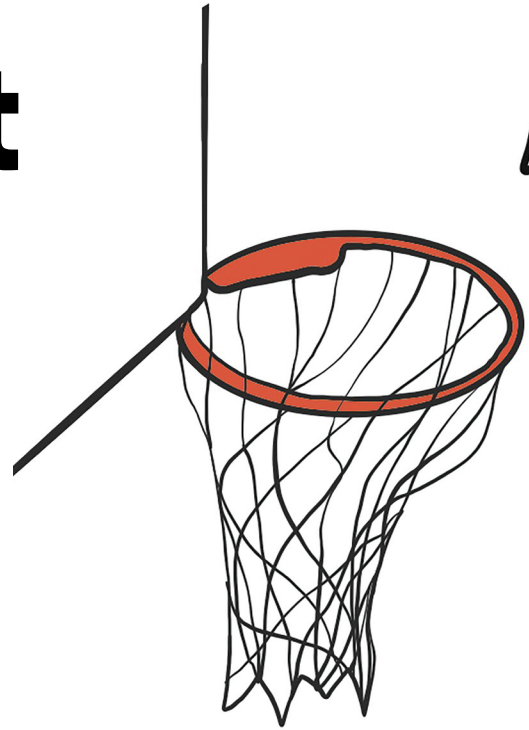
That’s where Roy has found himself now. A year of impressive, efficient, dominant hockey earned him a spot in a league of top tier talent, a shot at a full-time professional position, and a chance to continue his dream.

Not a bad finish to his first, and only, U Sports season. 

COURTESY DAREN ZOMERMAN



A Glance At Canadian & American Scholarship Systems



WALA AMARA
@WALAAMARA

Why Does Canadian Talent Always End Up Down South?

After a remarkable year of Canadian basketball, there's no doubt that Canadian talent is more present than ever.

Some of the best prospects in NCAA basketball hail from Canada. Duke University's R.J. Barrett, Arizona State's Luguentz Dort, and Syracuse University's Quincy Guerrier, to name a few.

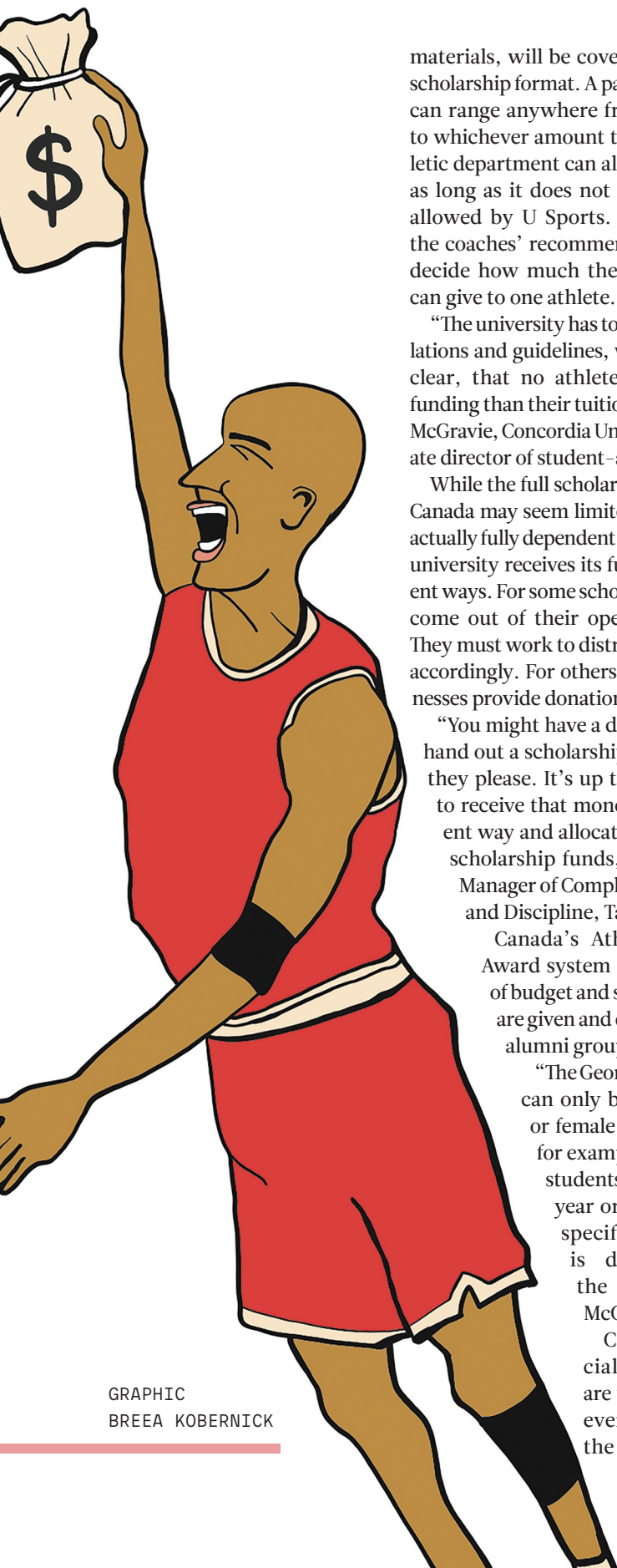
This emergence brings up a question. Why does Canadian talent always move down south?

Canada's national governing body for university sports, U Sports, offers a wide range of scholarship options for

student-athletes. Despite that, Canadians routinely choose to commit to the American NCAA.

One of the roles of U Sports is to deal with the rules and regulations on what universities can give out in terms of scholarships. They decide how many scholarships they can grant per university, per team, and per athlete.

While schools like Concordia can supervise their own scholarship allocations, U Sports remains on top as the head of any decision. Scholarships can be offered both in full and partial formats. The full scholarship format in the Canadian system in most cases grants students their tuition fees in full. So, anything billed by the university itself like tuition, and the cost of course



GRAPHIC
BREEA KOBERNICK

materials, will be covered under a full scholarship format. A partial scholarship can range anywhere from zero dollars to whichever amount the school's athletic department can allow reconciling, as long as it does not surpass the cap allowed by U Sports. The school and the coaches' recommendations help to decide how much the administration can give to one athlete.

"The university has to follow the regulations and guidelines, which are pretty clear, that no athlete receives more funding than their tuition," said Graeme McGravie, Concordia University's associate director of student-athlete services.

While the full scholarship structure in Canada may seem limited for some, it is actually fully dependent on funding. Each university receives its funding in different ways. For some schools, scholarships come out of their operating budgets. They must work to distribute the money accordingly. For others, alumni or businesses provide donations.

"You might have a donor that would hand out a scholarship and name it as they please. It's up to the university to receive that money in any different way and allocate it to their own scholarship funds," said U Sports Manager of Compliance, Eligibility and Discipline, Tara Hahto.

Canada's Athletic Financial Award system is a conjunction of budget and scholarships that are given and donated through alumni groups.

"The Georgian scholarship can only be given to male or female hockey players, for example, some are for students on their second year or in programs of specific study. This is determined by the donor," added McGravie.

Canadian financial scholarships are the same almost everywhere, with the funding being

primarily directed towards tuition fees.

"I mean, it's one less expense that you have to worry about compared to the average student," said Montreal native and former Regina University Cougar Brian Ofori, who now plays professional Division II basketball in Spain.

"It's an education, minus the expense," he added.

U Sports characterizes eligibility in two ways. Either the student-athlete receives full funding after a full U Sports year or they have to complete 18 credits in an academic year. Students must always maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA.

For first-year students entering university, Hahto, said maintaining a minimum grade average of 80 per cent is necessary if they want to qualify for a scholarship.

Preserving a good academic standing is an important rule when it comes to eligibility in the Canadian university system. The students also get five years' worth of playing time which allows them to play more while being at school.

It is no longer an uncommon situation for athletes to ask coaches what they have to offer them in terms of scholarships when recruiting in Canada.

McGravie explained that student-athletes now look at different universities and look at whether they can be enticed by the school.

"The coach is always advised to look at what type of scholarships are available," he said. Student-athletes have a portal they can visit to consult the different types of scholarships available.

The academic system in Canada puts an emphasis on education while playing a sport. Scholarships can seem limited for some but receiving a free education that can prepare student-athletes for the future is a good deal, acknowledging the reality of limited opportunity on the professional athletic level.

The NCAA system, on the other hand, is quite different. A full scholarship in college in the United States means full coverage of tuition fees, room and board, which includes their housing fees, meals, and course-related books. These are called inclusive scholarships.



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To be eligible for a scholarship at a Division I school in the NCAA, the student must have a minimum SAT and ACT score.

Some schools go with the minimum NCAA requirements, but others require more from student-athletes.

“For Ivy League schools, their standards are much higher than the minimum required in the NCAA,” said Villanova Wildcats assistant coach Kyle Neptune.

In spite of the fact that the NCAA schools offer full scholarships, these are not given to everybody on the roster.

Neptune explained that Villanova does not use all of its scholarship cap budget.

Also, the partial scholarship format that exists in Canada doesn’t exist in the NCAA.

“In basketball Division I, you’re either on a scholarship or you’re not,” added Neptune.

The average attendance of a regular season Villanova game is almost 12,000 fans on average if they play at the school’s gym.

Their other home games are played at the Wells Fargo Arena in Philadelphia, home of the NBA’s Philadelphia 76ers. There they can get anywhere between 15,000 and 20,000 fans per game.

The average attendance at Concordia University per basketball game on a good night would be around 300 people.

Attendance not only generates additional revenue, but broadcasting deals are also a critical factor. Most big teams in the NCAA have a deal with television stations .

This is a luxury that Canadian teams don’t necessarily have, save

for the Université de Montréal Carabins football team or the Université de Laval Rouge et Or, who have broadcasting deals with TVA Sports.

This reality allows for understanding the reason behind Canadian talent joining the big stage. What athletes fail to acknowledge sometimes is that going down south doesn’t mean that they will become prominent superstars. The demographics of the United States make it hard for everyone to stand out. The superstar of one city in Canada can go join a team at an American school and lose their prominence.

Hahto said that athletic scholarships have been an emerging topic in the last few years.

She explained that the U Sports rules are debated quite regularly.

“I don’t think you’ll see a change next week, but it’s not outside the realm of possibilities,” she explained.

Concordia’s McGravie also spoke about the Fondation de l’athlète d’excellence du Québec, an organization that grants private scholarships set up in conjunction with the RSEQ.

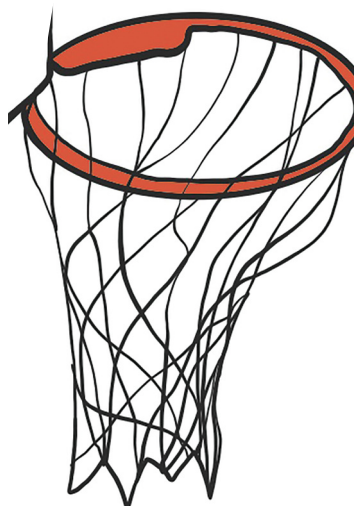
“They have been trying for last 25 years to keep student-athletes in

Quebec, if we find out that there is a student-athlete then we can encourage them to apply to get some money,” said McGravie.

Programs like this are a push to keep homegrown talent up North and show that there are opportunities to shine right at home. □

**“It’s an
education,
minus the
expense.”**

— **Brian Ofori**



Don't @ Me: I'm Sick of Seeing The Office Quotes in Dating Apps

"You Miss 100% of The Shots You Don't Take. —Wayne Gretzky" —Michael Scott"
—Everyone on Tinder

MAGGIE MORRIS

I have a bone to pick with a large percentage of men on dating apps. Using references to *The Office* in your dating profile is about as unoriginal and unfunny as a way of trying to pick up women gets.

Now, don't misunderstand me. *The Office* makes the list of my top 10 favourite things ever. A marvel of humour, it created and inspired a new genre of situational comedy in television. Thanks to it, we got other wonderful mockumentary-style shows like *Parks and Recreation* and *Modern Family*. I appreciate and love *The Office* for all that it is.

It's just, that doesn't mean that I want to be the "Pam to your Jim," and I certainly don't want to be the "Angela to your Dwight."

I've only been on dating apps for a few months, and frankly—as one does—I have already gotten into the habit of deleting my accounts. I can only speak for my own experience in my search of a nice straight man (update: it hasn't gone super well). I've been told by friends that this phenomenon exists among the dating profiles of all genders and sexual orientations—don't worry, straight guys, this one isn't all your fault.

The trend couldn't be ignored on Tinder, especially. Whether it was a casual mention of bingeing habits, a not-so-subtle reference to a specific episode or joke from the show, or just an outright declaration of their obsession for it, I saw so many references to *The Office* on guys' profiles that I started to wonder if it was some kind of unwritten rule that they must mention it. It's not unlike the unwritten rule that they must include their height in their bios (or else girls might have to ask them once they're already talking and getting to know each other!).

All of this to say, I know that online dating isn't easy. Guys, I know you think it's easier for women than it is for you, and, honestly, that's probably true to some degree, but believe me, that doesn't mean we have it easy.

In the past two months, I've been ghosted and unmatched by many. I've been berated on Facebook Messenger by a guy I unmatched who went to the



trouble of finding me just to tell me how much of a bad person I am for doing so, and—I couldn't make this up if I tried—showed up to a date to find an already drunk Irish man. He was exclusively drinking Guinness and Jameson, like a walking, talking meme.

So, odds are you're better than the competition. Just don't use references to a show beloved by many as a crutch for your personality. Be original, and more importantly, be yourself. Mrs. Right is out there somewhere, and she's just probably on a date with some loser and wishing she had never agreed to meet at a bar in his neighbourhood. [L]

The Long and Interconnected History of Quebec's Student Movements

A People's History of
Canada Column

ERIKA MORRIS

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION
ELISA BARBIER

When we hear the words “student strikes,” we immediately think of red felt squares, streets flooded with protesters, smashed cop cars, and the unforgiving police officers of the 2012 general unlimited strike.

But, the student movement in Quebec started long before then.

In 1946 in Grenoble, France, The Charter of Grenoble—or Charter of Student Syndicalism—was written, and became the foundation for student unions. A similar charter was adopted by the Association générale des étudiants de l’Université de Montréal in 1961.

At the beginning of the 1960s, students had the choice between anglophone universities (McGill University, and Sir George Williams University, as well as Bishop’s University in Sherbrooke), or

francophone ones, nominally Catholic faith universities (Université de Sherbrooke, Université de Montréal, or Quebec City’s Université Laval).

Between 1963 and 1964, the Commission royale d’enquête sur l’enseignement dans la province de Québec released the rapport Parent, which highlighted systemic problems with education in the problem and urged for reforms. These reforms brought forth the creation of CEGEPs in 1967, a second francophone university in Montreal—Université du Québec à Montréal—the ministry of education, and more.

FIRST STRIKES

Student syndicalism saw its beginnings in 1963 and 1964, with the formation of the Union générale des étudiants du Québec, which fought for free tuition in 1966 and partook in the 1968 student strikes.

In 1968, students grew frustrated after the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec announced on Sept. 4 that they had to turn down 4000 students, due to the influx of francophone students CEGEPs brought.

As CEGEPs began offering free secular education to Quebec residents, education was in high demand.

The same day as the announcement, UGEQ cut communication with the provincial government. By Oct. 15, 15 of the 23 CEGEPs were on strike, and mass protests took place in the province demanding the creation of a new public university, revisions to the loans and bursary programs, and changes to the administration and teaching methods of CEGEPs.

The strikes ended on Dec. 18 1968, resulting in the founding of l’Université du Québec, making higher education more accessible for francophones by opening ten provincially run public universities in Quebec.

In 1974, CEGEPs went on strike on Oct. 9 to remove the Tests d’aptitude

aux études universitaires—standardized testing—which Quebec suspended. In November of the same year, students mobilized for better loan and bursary structures.

Over 30 CEGEPs, some high schools, and university departments joined the movement, totaling 100,000 students on strike. The government announced the Quebec’s loans and bursaries program—and a truce was called.

Student syndicalism took on a new form in 1975, and a coalition by the l’Association nationale des étudiants du Québec was formed.

The truce between students and the government was broken by Rimouski students in 1978, when they went on strike to ask for free education. This was the first offensive strike the province had seen, rather than a defensive one. Students were demanding something from their government, not reacting to one of their decisions.

ANEQ backed them up, and over 100,000 students across the province participated in a general unlimited strike.

UQAM later joined the movement, and the government announced major financial changes to the loans and bursaries program.

In 1986, the provincial government announced tuition hikes, along with cuts to their loans and bursaries program and functioning budgets, prompting CEGEPs and l’Association générale des étudiants de l’Université du Québec à Montréal to hold strike votes.

Five days later, the government announced tuition freezes until 1988, and more reforms to the loans and bursaries program, putting an end to the strikes.

On Oct. 26 1988, negotiations stagnated, and 100,000 CEGEP students announced a three day strike to improve the loans and bursaries program. ANEQ announced they were in favour of a general unlimited strike on Oct. 29, and



about 20 student associations joined, though many CEGEPs opposed.

The movement quickly declined, and the strike ended on Nov. 13.

FAILURES ALONG WITH VICTORIES

Though the movement had seen victories in prior decades, they faced failure in 1990.

1989 saw the formation of the Fondation de la Fédération des étudiants et étudiantes du Québec—which later became the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec. Tuition hikes were announced, going from \$500 to \$1,600—a \$280 annual hike over four years—which the FEEQ opposed.

Only human sciences and art students at UQAM, l'Université du Québec à Rimouski, and 12 CEGEPs were able to get strike mandates, with Université de Montréal joining later.

There were protests and arrests, but students were unable to build resistance.

Over the next four years, student federations took over the syndicalist movement. This led to a more ground-based approach to organizing as individual associations took on mandates independently, though it was also criticized for lacking a united front.

In 1996, hopes for 30 per cent tuition increases were announced at the Sommet sur l'éducation supérieure. The Mouvement pour le droit à l'éducation, which was formed the previous year as ANEQ's successor, proposes an ultimatum: keep CEGEP free, back down on hikes, get rid of the R Score, and reinvest into the loans and bursaries program or face direct action, strikes, and occupations.

After a strong strike turnout, Lucien Bouchard's government hiked tuition, but only for international students, and added some restrictions in the the loans and bursaries program. Tuition fees were frozen until 2007.

2001 saw the birth of l'Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante, which aimed to reclaim the history of past student movements and its combative nature

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

In 2005, Quebec saw its largest student strike yet, and it set the precedent for 2012 and 2015 strikes. The previous year, the government had announced that it would convert \$103 million of bursaries to loans instead.

A general unlimited strike began on Feb. 21 and, at the height of the momentum, around 185,000 students mobilized.

After nearly six weeks of striking, the ministry of education offered to reinvest \$482 million of loans to bursaries over several years, and promised to bring back the full \$103 million by 2006.

The FEUQ signs on to the deal and drops pressure tactics, while ASSE continues to strike until April 14. By mid-March, more than 200,000 students are on strike, pressuring the Liberals to backtrack and restore the full amount.

In 2007 the Bouchard government's freeze on tuition fees expired, and tuition hikes of 30 per cent over five years—a \$500 increase—were announced, with further hikes planned for 2012.

ASSE launched a general strike demanding free tuition, but only a handful of student unions joined and they were unable to reach the quota they decided for a general strike. With internal issues and problems mobilizing students, partly due to unrealistic goals, the hikes went through.

MAPLE SPRING

This finally brings us to the famous 2012 strikes, which lasted for over 100 days and only came to an end when Jean Charest lost in his own riding during the provincial elections.

In March 2011, Finance Minister Raymond Bachand announced Quebec's intention to raise tuition by \$325 a year over five years, beginning in 2012.

The total increase would amount to an additional \$1,625, raising Quebec tuition to \$3,793 in 2017. Though Quebec's tuition fees remained among the lowest in Canada, the increase would have brought the amount of students graduating with debt up to 61 per cent.

Student mobilization began almost immediately, with students pressuring the government to find alternatives to what they called a “funding crisis.”

The Concordia Student Union officially launched a strike campaign on Aug. 21, 2011. Chad Walcott, the VP External at the time, told *The Link* that, “We have to be front and centre in mobilization and organization in this struggle, this is going to be a historic year [...] students can make history and that's a huge deal.”

Some argued the hikes would only



benefit students and change the quality of the education. Upon closer inspection, it seemed the hikes would change how education was funded, by shifting funding from the public sector to the private.

"I'm going to university next year and if the tuition hikes go up I'll be paying \$325 more every semester and won't receive any more service than the students that are currently in university," Lenny Leprince, Director of External Affairs at the Dawson Student Union, told *The Link* in Oct. 2011.

A massive demonstration was planned for Nov. 10, 2011. The

day of the demonstration, 14 students decided to try and occupy McGill. Security tried to stop them, and the protesters claimed that they used excessive force. Over 100 police officers were present, despite McGill saying they only requested four.

Students from Rimouski, Chicoutimi, and more came to Montreal for the protests in front of Jean Charest's office, which remained peaceful.

On Feb. 13, 2012, student groups voted in favour of a walkout. Over the next four months, students flooded the streets, occupied, picketed, and disrupted the peace, while

being met with police repression.

Ten days after the walkout vote, students occupying the Jacques Cartier Bridge were dispersed by police using pepper spray.

In early March, student Francis Grenier suffered a severe eye injury, allegedly because of police stun grenades. At protests afterwards, students wore eye patches along with the red squares in solidarity. A few weeks later, students occupying the Champlain Bridge during rush hour were all fined \$494.

A peaceful protest on March 22 saw over 100,000 protesters,



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION
ELISA BARBIER

showing that the movement was only growing. That same week, students started to target large economic symbols and blocked access to SAQ offices.

In early April, the outside of Minister of Education Line Beauchamp's Montreal office was painted red. Metro systems were shut down after students threw bags of bricks onto the tracks.

Four Quebec cabinet ministers' offices were vandalized, some with Molotov cocktails.

By April 24, street protests were held every night in Montreal, all varying between brief and peaceful or monumental and chaotic. Negotiations between the government and students had begun on April 23, but were suddenly halted two days later by the government, prompting riots.

That night saw eighty-five arrests as protesters smashed the windows of banks and businesses and damaged cars.

The next day, students were denied a place at the negotiation table, as the government did not want "radicals" present.

On April 27, the government revealed a new plan of action: it offered students a slightly slower phase-in period for the hikes, more generous loans and bursaries, and future hikes indexed to inflation to try to get students to resume classes.

On May 4, protests taking place outside a Liberal convention in Victoriaville resulted in another young protester losing an eye due to riot police. Others kicked and beat a police officer.

After more failed negotiations, on May 16 Premier Jean Charest announced his plans for Bill 78 to ensure student's rights to receive education at their school were not being impeded. It involved restrictions on protesting and picketing on university grounds, and that protests of 50 or more people anywhere in Quebec must provide proposed venues and routes to the police prior to protesting.

The same day, masked protesters stormed universities and disrupted classes. Bill 78 passed on May 18, imposing fines on those blocking schools and giving police the right to refuse protest locations.

The opposition called it a "dark day

in Quebec history," saying this law impedes on civil liberties and limits democracy.

Montreal also passed a by-law stating that people could be fined for wearing masks at certain protests.

Protesters in Montreal started bonfires and barricades in the streets, while police were accused of using excessive force.

May 22 marked day 100 of the student strike, and tens of thousands of people participate in a massive march in Montreal, with many protesters deliberately deviating from the announced route.

Solidarity demonstrations were held elsewhere in Canada, like in Calgary, Vancouver, and Toronto, but also internationally with Paris and New York. Labour unions within and outside Quebec continued their support of the strike as well.

When the Liberals called for an election for Sept. 4, it backfired and Charest lost his seat, taking the tuition hikes with him on his way out. Pauline Marois was elected as premiere.

Nadia Hausfather, who wrote a PhD on strikes and their impact on emotions, stressed that holding general assemblies was what stuck in her memory when reflecting about her experiences.

"It's very exciting to have the chance to talk to other students about important issues and then make decisions together about them," she said. "This idea that we have collective decision making lives—not just every four years at the voting polls—but right now."

Hausfather also highlighted the significance of the accreditation act, which gave student unions access to membership fees, making it easier to mobilize, and how without general assemblies and campus activity, there would be no strike mandates.

"FUCK L'AUSTERITÉ!"

The student movement sparked once again in 2015, against Philippe Couillard's government's austerity cuts, with added critiques against Quebec's fossil fuel industry.

Quebec had been seeing major austerity cuts with the previous Parti

Quebecois government, and the Liberal party continued to cut funding for pensions, healthcare, and education.

By October 2014, \$172 million had been cut from the education budget, with more to come. Scholarly expenses were going up by 2.9 per cent, and Concordia was making \$15.7 million cut, which would result in the loss of 180 positions and a \$12 million reduction in yearly operating costs.

September 2014 saw the inception of the Printemps 2015 movement. The coalition was formed after the association for social science students at UQAM voted in favour of a strike mandate.

The goal of P15 was to break away from ASSE's centralized and student-focused approach to build cross-sector solidarity with labour unions and other unaffiliated individuals as the issue affected the entire economic-political sphere.

ASSE jumped on board and passed a motion supporting P15.

Unlike the student movement of 2012, P15 only had six months to mobilize, and with a lack of a central decision-making body, they lacked enough public education. Many didn't understand what austerity or its implications were.

P15 was also unable to slowly escalate tactics or use of direct democracy, which would have reduced student opposition to the movement and facilitated grassroots mobilization.

Despite this, Spring 2015 gained a lot of momentum. At Concordia, 12 associations took up strike mandates.

In March 2015, 38,000 students were on strike. Montreal became the de facto core of the movement, because the movement started at UQAM.

For several weeks, students blocked and disrupt classes and held nightly protests, which were met with severe police repression. Some Concordia students sent clowns into classrooms to disrupt and effectively shut them down.

Students who were present at these protests recall the brutality and excessive force used by the police against protesters. Protests would be deemed illegal minutes after starting, giving

the police the authority to use crowd control tactics such as tear gas, pepper spray, kettling, and using their batons and rubber bullet guns.

May 1, also known as Mayday, saw 35 labour unions and 200 community organizations on strike along with students. It ended with about 100 arrests.

Protesters caused public disruptions, blocking access to buildings, highways, and construction sites, and held large marches. Protesters were met with strong police retaliation, and even tourists and children were effected by the pepper sprayed while exiting restaurants on Ste. Catherine. St.

However, in spite of mass mobilization, May 1 marked the decline of the Spring 2015 movement rather than adding momentum, and failed to change the mind of Couillard's government.

Part of the failure of the P15 movement was its separation from ASSE. Though the goal of creating P15 was to have a decentralized approach to organizing, white francophones at UQAM quickly took over, becoming "phantom executives." These "executives" set up media lines and acted as spokespeople, but because they had no official position

on the movement, they lacked representation and accountability.

Before the first two weeks of striking were over, ASSE had released a statement asking for a "strategic withdrawal" to pick the movement back up in the fall while taking the summer to develop better tactics. The statement was interpreted as being anti-strike by the media, and P15 rejected it entirely—deciding to go full-steam-ahead anyway.

Shortly after, all of ASSE's executive team were fired by vote in a congress with delegates of member associations who held strike mandates. By then, there were no more strikes outside of Montreal.

Regardless, the movement resumed in the fall, though it had shrunk significantly.

In September 2015, Concordia and UQAM students protested the political repression they claimed they faced from both administrations after 25 Concordia students were to undergo tribunal and nine UQAM students faced expulsion for using strike tactics. Thanks to this, Concordia only gave students letters of reprimand.

"There can be picketing activities on campuses," said Marion Miller, one student who was charged. "They get very technical about how you can charge a student if they're disrupting a class' regular activity, but what we always argued is that the law and accreditation of student associations allows students to make democratic choices and binding strike mandates."

On Dec. 18, a large protest was infil-

trated by undercover police, leading to mass violence, and allegations of a police officer pulling a gun on a protester were spread among the demonstrators.

Highlighting major repression, the collapse of ASSE, and lack of solidarity, that day marked the death of the P15 movement.

Though whether or not the 2015 protests were effective is still up for debate, after two years, the government hasre-invested most of the money they had cut back into education.

P15 helped activists explore which tactics were effective, which weren't, and build solidarity and alliances that lasted well beyond the 2015 protests. Miller stressed the importance of students being involved in their respective unions and keeping up tradition of organizing, adding that the student movement is in a rough period of questioning their tactics.

A SECOND OFFENSIVE STRIKE

Finally, this brings us to today.

Last November, about 58,000 students took to the streets demanding an end to unpaid internships. For the first time since 1978, students are demanding something from their government rather than reacting to government's decisions.

In November, a Coalition of Quebec associations involved held a one-week strike as an ultimatum: If all internships weren't paid by winter, they would go on a general unlimited strike.

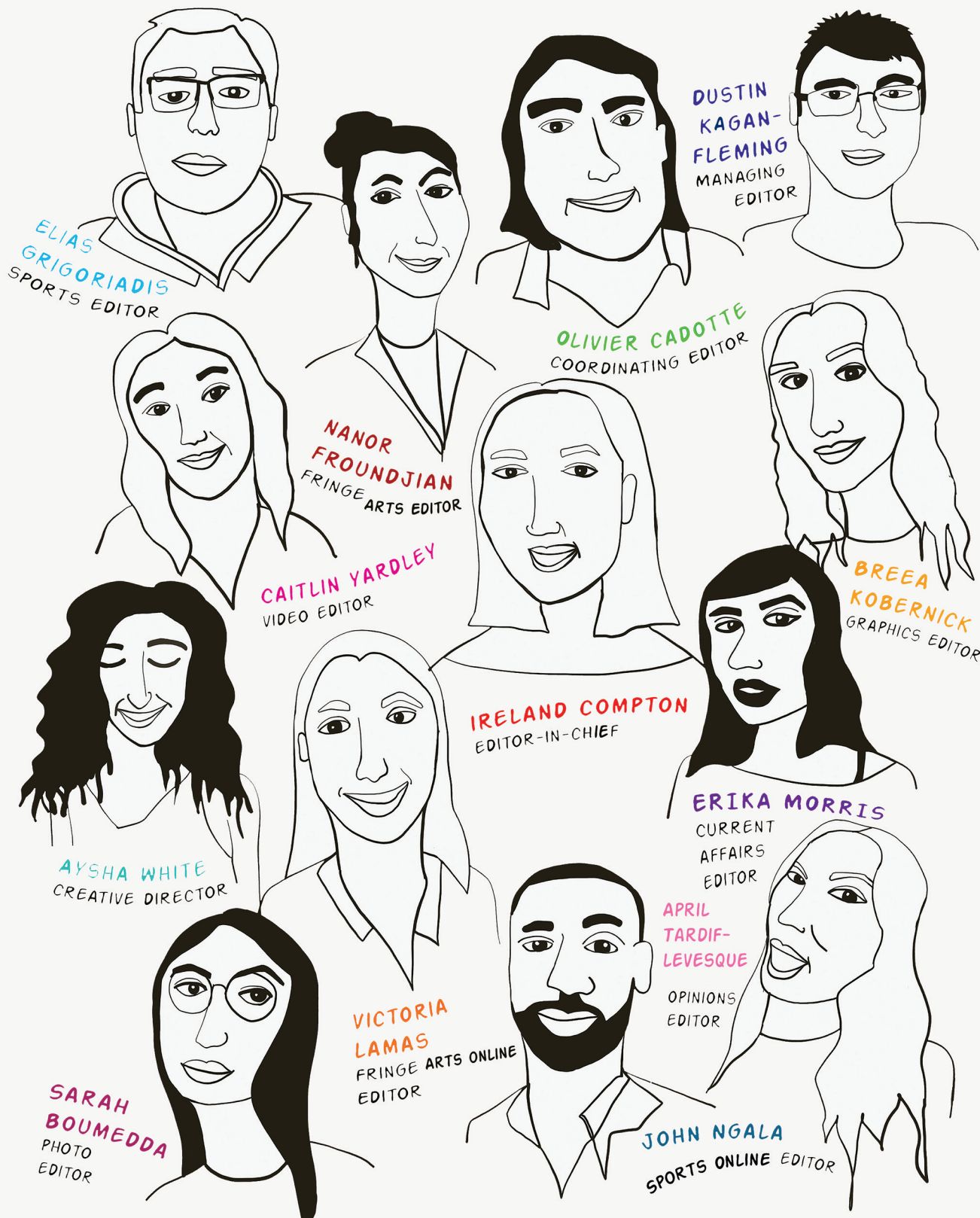
The second wave of the unpaid internship strikes was launched on March 18, with the beginning of their general unlimited strike.

The Link's editor in chief, Miriam Lafontaine and the author of this piece spearheaded the journalism department's strike from March 18 to March 22. □



MEET THE LINK MASTHEAD

VOLUME 40





THE LABOUR ISSUE

Strikes for Unpaid Internships – The Beginning of a Long Battle

The Current Strike Movement Has Been Building Up Since 2016

ANNE-SOPHIE JOBIN

For nearly three years, students all over Quebec have been organizing protests and strikes to pressure the province to provide remuneration for all internships.

Seventy-seven per cent of students do not receive any form of remuneration during their internships, according to Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec and the Union étudiante du Québec, and this issue is primarily found in sectors with a majority of women workers.

During the fall semester, a broad coalition of student associations across the province announced they would kick off an unlimited strike if their demands were not met. In November, about 58,000 students across Quebec held a one-week strike. This winter, consultations were held between students and the ministry of higher education.

In February, the FECQ and UEQ proposed a bill to improve internship conditions in the province. They suggested interns receive, “Rights and working conditions that are clear, predictable, and coherent with the protection normally given to workers.”

This would include being recognized under Quebec’s Labour Code, giving them minimal protection without having to contribute to the Commission des normes, de l’équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail, as well as being protected by workplace incident laws.

They encouraged Higher Education Minister Jean-François Roberge and Labour Minister Jean Boulet to take their work into consideration when the Labour Code is updated again.

“The next budget is a great opportunity for the government, and one that shouldn’t be missed. It must prove its seriousness and remedy the issue of wage inequality that persists between various fields,” said UEQ president Guillaume Lecorps. “Mr. Roberge has all the necessary information to put into place a financial compensation program, particularly for our future nurses, midwives and teachers.”

Roberge said he will be releasing his plan for internship remuneration in response to the strikes at the end of April. With that, the unlimited strike has already begun.

The general unlimited strike kicked off on March 18, with class picket lines and protests organized in cities and cam-

puses across the province. On March 19, approximately 135 students sent an open letter to Roberge and the education ministry. The letter is notably demanding demanding the payment for all hours of internships.

The open letter put forward arguments why internships should be paid, and requested the minister impose actions for things to change, especially for women. Another protest was held by UQAM at Place Émilie-Gamelin the next day.

In the same week, the provincial budget came out. Students had been pushing to see a portion of that budget allocated to paying interns, but in the end, Roberge said no announcements on that would be made until next year’s budget.

Students protested in Montreal on March 21 under the banner “J-F t’es





On Thursday March 7, 2019 students from several universities gathered at UQAM to protest unpaid internships.

PHOTOS
SARAH BOUMEDDA

Past unlimited general strikes like the 2012 Carré Rouge movement actually proved that student strikes are the best way to pressure the government.

mieux d'avoir notre cash," organized with the help of UQAM students.

Laurie O'Neil, a second-year nursing student at CEGEP Garneau in Quebec City, said she has to work 24 hours a week in a hospital. Since she lives with her parents, she said she can get through it, but the problem is that with school and other obligations, she can only work eight hours a week at her other job.

"CEGEP administrators give us the argument that they do not have the money to pay for internships, so internship days would be almost entirely reduced if they were paid. However, during internships, one should not be a CEGEP employee, but an employee of the hospital because we work with their team. In the same way as employees, even if you are a student, you still work hard in the same guideline as those who

are paid in the hospital," she said.

How does this mobilization work? Why would the government care about students skipping classes or protesting in the streets?

It has to do with the impact on the economy, especially in a province where education is as cheap as ours, and where university and CEGEP operating budgets are funded by the provincial government.

"During the electoral campaign, the minister of education said he would examine the issue of unpaid internships, so we are following through on this commitment. The gameplan will be respected, the only scenario excluded at the moment is the status quo," said Francis Bouchard, a press attaché for the Ministry of Education.

Students emphasize that they know this tactic works. Past unlimited gen-

eral strikes like the 2012 Carré Rouge movement actually proved that student strikes are the best way to pressure the government. "In the past, no gain has been made in the student movement without a massive strike movement," states the website for the Quebec-wide coalition against unpaid internships.

In the beginning of February, after a protest held in Quebec City, Roberge said he would be open for discussions and was aware of the situation. "There is a process going on at the ministry right now. The minister is committed to present possible scenarios by the end of April to try to correct the issue of internships," his press attaché said at the time.

On Feb. 19, a consultation was held between the members of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and several student groups and associations. One month prior, Roberge proposed his gameplan concerning the compensation of internships, and his role in this situ-

ation.

"Work on this matter is progressing rapidly at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and I pledge to submit, by the end of April, the possible scenarios," he said in a January press release. He also mentioned that his will is to improve the students' situation.

The recent strike week between March 18 and 22 was not the only protest week. According to Gabrielle-Alexandra Hébert, head of student life for UQAM's education association, many associations held smaller strikes between March 6 and 8.

The afternoon of March 7, a small demonstration of approximately 100 people happened in Montreal, in front of Place Émilie-Gamelin. The event was held under the theme "We break down the open doors," referring to the remarks made by Roberge last November.

"Of course, we recognize young people's right to protest and to express themselves, but I invite them not to break

open doors," said Roberge during that week.

"The organization bought doors for the strike and smashed them symbolically," Hébert shared.

On March 8, a larger demonstration took place for International Women's Day, but some students also protested at the same time for the cause of unpaid internships according to Hébert, since this issue is often present in the public and community sectors, sectors led by women. Hébert added that one group also went at the entrance of the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal with their banners, to pressure the government by reminding them that nursing interns are not paid.

In March, Hébert predicted that things were going to move a lot in the next weeks. "We should expect answers from the government during the week of [March] 18, and if not, we are just going to keep on striking until things change."



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How to Advocate for Yourself as an Intern

And What You Should Know About Where Interns Fit in Quebec's Labour Code

MIRIAM LAFONTAINE
@MIRILAFONTAINE

Many unpaid internships remain legal and interns still can't access to the same protections afforded to workers under Quebec's Labour Code. With a lack of legislation at our disposal, the onus often falls on us to advocate for a little bit of dignity in the workplace.

Even if you do have the support of a department who will advocate to ensure you get the most out of your internships, it's still important to know your options if you end up in a bad situation, and that you have the tools to prevent things from going south in the first place.

But before we get down to the nitty gritty, it's important to know the difference between a legal and illegal internship. While your employer may

call you an intern, that doesn't necessarily mean you fit the legal definition of one.

In Quebec, an internship is considered legal as long as it's part of a university or CEGEP course, a vocational program, or for a not-for-profit with "social or community purposes." In those instances, there's no grounds for you to attempt to claim back wages.

But if your internship falls outside these confines, wage claims on the grounds of "employee misclassification" can be attempted through Quebec's labour watchdog, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail.

To succeed, you'll need to bring forward evidence that shows you were carrying out tasks that ought to have been carried out by an employee instead,



and can only file a claim if you finished the work less than a year ago. You can also make the same claim if you agreed to the work under the title of “volunteer.”

Interns, however, rarely attempt to claim back wages, and since there’s little precedent for them to do so, many don’t know that’s even an option. William Webb from the Canadian Intern Association said that while he’s heard of a handful of interns successfully claiming back wages in other provinces, he’s yet to hear of that ever happening in Quebec.

“There might be the laws on the books, but because interns are so hesitant to go through that process, it might just be that,” he explained.

“It can follow you around when you’re looking for jobs in the future, and if word spreads, could lead to negative rumours being spread about you,” he said about filing for unpaid wages. “You might be informally blacklisted.”

When asked if there’s any precedent to interns successfully claiming back wages under employee misclassification in Quebec, the CNESST wrote that they don’t keep any statistics on complaints made by interns, and so couldn’t answer the question.

But they highlighted that whether your internship is legal or not, you can still contact them if you experienced psychological or sexual harassment, or if your employer took part in “prohibited practices” against you, which includes discrimination or unfair dismissals and reprimands.

Webb said the one-year limitation on making these sorts of claims likely dissuades interns from taking action. If they’re still carrying out the internship, they’ll want to avoid reprisals at all costs, and even if they’ve left, they could still be relying on that employer to give them a reference.

And in hyper-competitive fields, those concerns are valid. “If you give an employer a reason not to hire you, it’s no skin off their back, because they have 20 other people in line to choose from,” Webb continued.

That’s why he recommends collective

“We talk about work in dollars and cents, but do we talk about work in terms of dignity? We don’t and that’s the unfortunate thing. Why should a worker be expected to hang up their dignity and leave it at the door for eight hours a day just to earn some money?”

— *Nasr Ahmed*

action over individual protest.

In 2014, two Bell Canada interns successfully sued the company over unpaid wages, leading to the closure of their unpaid internship program. But intern strikes present a new tactic at students’ disposal.

“Maybe Quebec can be a leader moving forward, in changing its laws,” he said. “Students there are doing some really great stuff in terms of pushing the envelope in ways that student unions in other parts of the country just aren’t.”

But what are your options if those legal internships are also leaving you feeling fucked over?

Nasr Ahmed from the Canadian CWA media union said the best way to avoid abuse and those “never-ending internships” is to set up a contract between you and your employer before it begins. The Labour Code may fail to afford you these rights, but that doesn’t mean you have zero say in what you’re signing up for.

“The only reason this framework is legal in the first place is that you are not supposed to be doing another person’s job, you’re not supposed to be taking work away from somebody,” he said. “You’re essentially supposed to be on the job training, this is supposed to be training that’s similar to training you

received at your vocational school or university.”

By setting up a contract with firm expectations between you and your employer, you can ensure that you’re actually carrying out an internship, rather than doing the same work an employee would do with only course-credit in exchange. You may already be presented with one, and in that instance you’re still free to negotiate the terms therein.

At the very least, you need to make sure you have a contract that stipulates the length of the internship and how many hours you’ll be working throughout that time—though Ahmed said he’s noticed students tend to take whatever is offered to them without attempting to negotiate for something better.

“It’s that feeling of powerlessness that just forces people to take the first offer, take whatever is given to them, and not make a fuss about it,” he said. “It should not be this relationship where one side speaks and the other side accepts it.”

Beyond knowing how long you’ll stay and how many hours you’ll work, your contract can also hash out:

Who your mentor will be, and how often you’ll meet with them

What tasks you’ll carry out and the skills you can expect to learn while there

What departments you’ll be working in

Reimbursements for travel and meals

Who owns the publishing rights to your work (if you’re a media worker, for example)

Whether you’ll get a meeting or job interview to close the internship and discuss how it went.

Webb recommends that you vet your contract at a legal clinic, and many universities, including Concordia, do run free legal clinics through their student

unions.

Getting these agreements on paper shows you're serious about not seeing your boundaries crossed, and with an assertive attitude, it's less likely you'll get pigeonholed into doing tasks you never signed up for in the first place.

In the instance you start getting asked to complete tasks outside of the confines of your contract, you'll have something to reference when you have to say no. If for some reason your employer balks at the idea of signing a contract, you can push to get the agreement in writing via email, which allows you to have something you can point to in a similar manner.

"You're not going to get anything if you don't start with a negotiation, if you don't actually ask for something and demand something," Ahmed stressed.

Without a contract, you'll have less grounds to turn down your employers' demands, but Ahmed also recommends keeping track of the internship posting so you can call out your employer if you find yourself being asked to do things that were never mentioned in the original job post.

He says it's also important to keep a paper-trail on your employer: a copy of the internship posting, a record of all correspondence between you and them, your contracts, licensing and copyright agreements, schedules of your shifts, "everything."

You can use this in a legal defense if things really do go south, if you learn your unpaid internship is illegal and want to build a case to claim back wages, or if

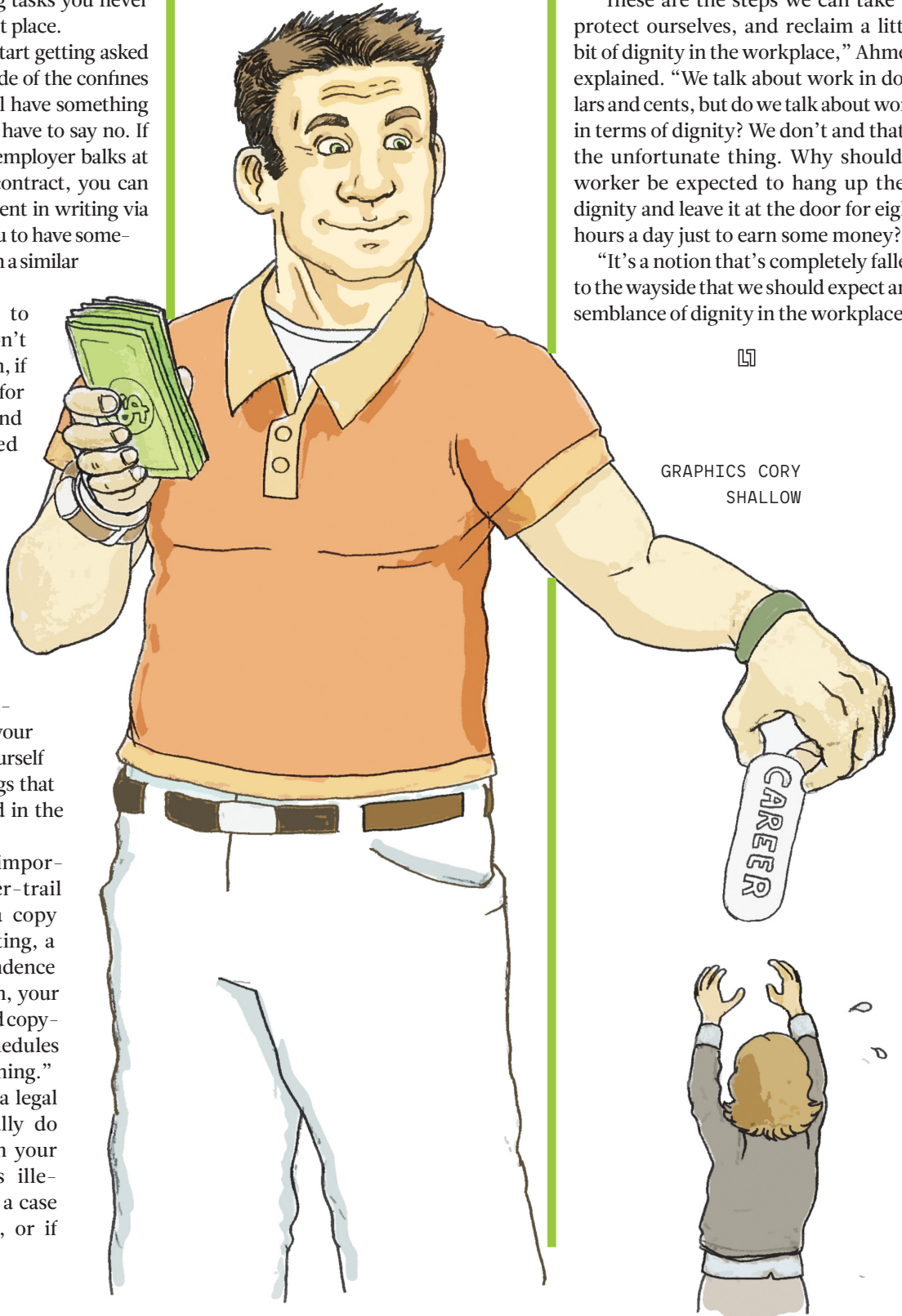
you want to file some sort of grievance internally or through the CNESST. "You can't have a he said, she said situation—you need to have hard facts, evidence, a paper trail."

"These are the steps we can take to protect ourselves, and reclaim a little bit of dignity in the workplace," Ahmed explained. "We talk about work in dollars and cents, but do we talk about work in terms of dignity? We don't and that's the unfortunate thing. Why should a worker be expected to hang up their dignity and leave it at the door for eight hours a day just to earn some money?"

"It's a notion that's completely fallen to the wayside that we should expect any semblance of dignity in the workplace."



GRAPHICS CORY
SHALLOW



It's Time for Change: The Working Conditions of Montreal Bike Couriers



From Documents to Dinner, the People Who Deliver Your Poutine Through the Cold and Rain Speak Up

GABRIELLE MULHOLLAND

Standing in front of the Hall Building at any given time, even on the coldest of days, it would be difficult not to notice the traffic of the bike lane. As pedestrians avoid Montreal's treacherous winter conditions by taking the many indoor and underground paths through the downtown core, cyclists padded in layers of clothing ride back and forth, dodging potholes and dangerous drivers.

Many of these cyclists are commuting to work or school, avoiding the equally treacherous conditions of the STM during rush hour. But as the app-based food delivery industry grows internationally, it's increasingly apparent how many of the cyclists crossing downtown

are already at work, delivering large, branded, insulated bags of food to offices and homes all over the city.

On Feb. 13, several couriers at a major Montreal paper messenger were let go for refusing to work during a snowstorm. That day, a storm blanketed Montreal in 30 cm of snow, resulting in the closure of schools, offices, and businesses across the city. When the couriers voiced their concerns to their employer, they were told that not working would be in violation of their terms as contract workers.

As paper couriers, messengers are hired as "independent contractors," which means that despite their positions functioning exactly as an employee, they are denied the status



of an employee. Their work is seen as precarious, dependent on a fluctuating economy and freelance or contract agreements that leave them without the rights many workers are afforded.

This status is what provides workers with basic labour rights such as sick days, vacation pay, and the right to refuse work in dangerous conditions. A high turnover of workers and looming threat of unemployment often stops those currently employed from mobilizing towards change.

Kris, who asked to remain anonymous because of legal action being taken by their former employer, was one of those fired couriers.

“What we’re asking for is not much at all, simply employee status with basic benefits like overtime, vacation, sick leave and health coverage like almost every other worker in Canada is guaranteed,” he said. “We shouldn’t have to fight for this.”

He explained how their precarious position as contract workers also deny them the benefits that independent contractors truly do have, such as having their hours set for them, being provided company IDs as well as control over the conditions of their contracts.

Kris explained why his former employer, and so many messenger services in North America, are significantly behind on their approach to wages and workers’ rights.

“We’re providing an essential service for multi-billion-dollar, international, white collar businesses, as long as there are physical items that need to be traded between businesses—ones that can’t be sent electronically—we’ll be around to deliver them,” he explained.

“The impact of first fax machines and now email have made courier companies desperate to cut costs. This is why our rates haven’t changed in 20 years due to intense competition between courier companies,” said Kris.

Long before the big names of app delivery gained foothold in North America, delivering goods by bike was still an industry in dense urban cities.

Generally overlooked by the corporate and civilian interactions they encountered, bike couriers gained interest generated by media representing them as urban cowboys of the counterculture in films like 1986’s *Quicksilver* and 2012’s *Premium Rush*. The narratives of the films themselves depict edu-

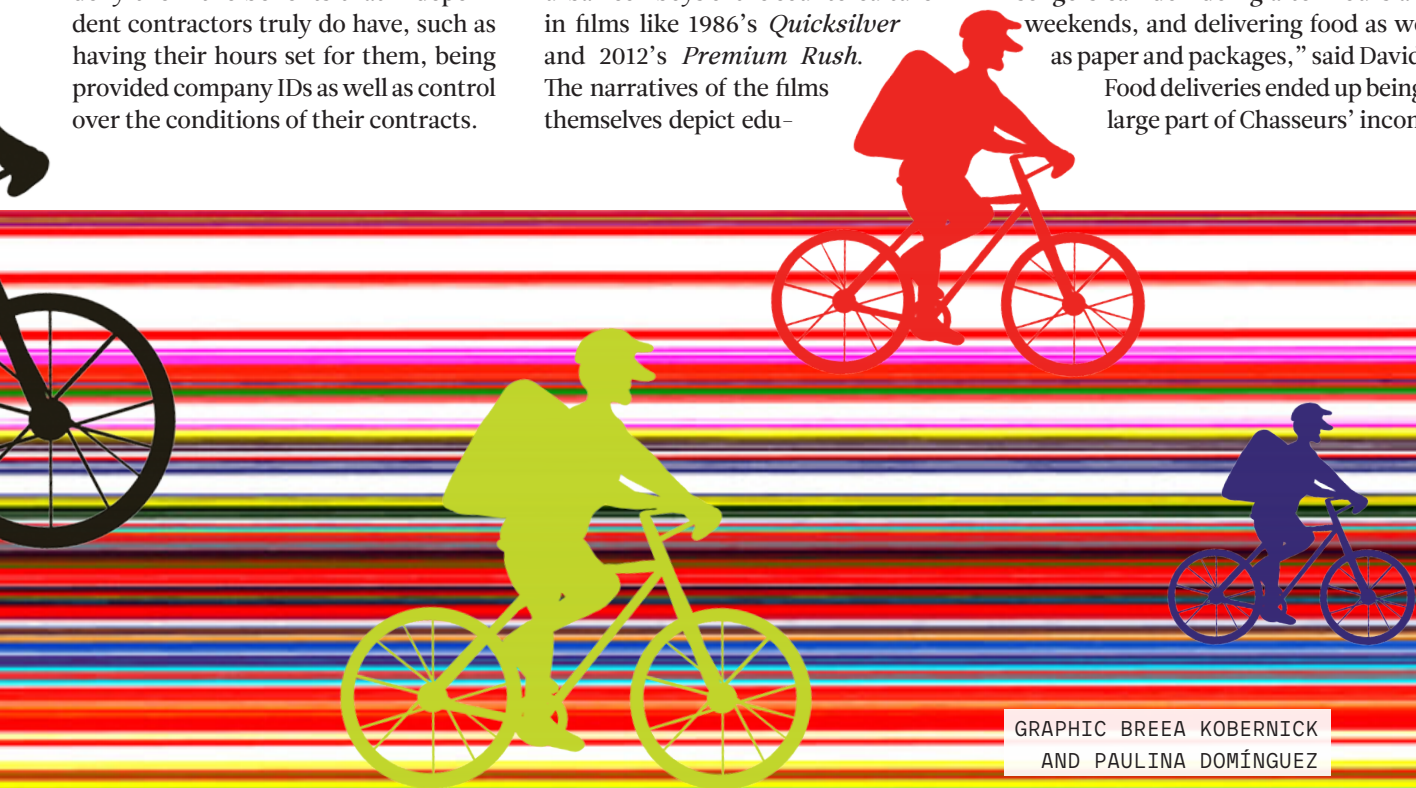
cated, privileged men in high stress corporate worlds, leaving their powerful positions and finding themselves in a community of bike messengers and regaining their joy for life on the streets of New York. The films are examples of male fantasy more than an accurate illustration of the job.

With the growth of available employment as a bike courier in a time of app-reliant, gig economy professions, what’s missing from the representations of bike couriers is an awareness of the working conditions within the industry.

In May 2014, a group of Montreal bike couriers who found they were unhappy with their working conditions came together to form Chasseurs Courier, a local, courier-owned messenger service that aimed to address many of the labour issues within the industry. Sam Davids, an employee, spoke with *The Link* about beginning a courier company whose primary goal was to put riders first.

“I think a secondary motivation was to diversify the kinds of work bike messengers can do—doing after hours and weekends, and delivering food as well as paper and packages,” said Davids.

Food deliveries ended up being a large part of Chasseurs’ income



GRAPHIC BREEA KOBERNICK
AND PAULINA DOMÍNGUEZ



as, until several months ago, their service worked with one of the city's biggest food delivery platforms, Just Eat.

"There was a change of ownership in the various multinational companies involved, which meant the company we worked for here would be dissolving and replaced by another brand who uses a gig economy type hiring model," Davids explained. "So we were left out in the cold, effectively."

These changes resulted in downsizing the already small company, and more non-food deliveries taking up a larger proportion of their business. Chasseurs is different from other bike delivery services in the city as it's not only independently owned, but deliveries are done almost 100 per cent by bike. Instead of the delivery fees going towards corporations who own most other companies, delivery fees go straight to the riders.

Chasseurs met the challenge of losing one of their many sources of income by developing their own food delivery platform. This fall, Chasseurs soft launched SupMtl.com, their response to the changes in the food delivery industry. Food orders can now be placed through the site to several prominent, locally owned Montreal restaurants comprised of a number of Chasseurs' former clients who stayed for their transition to Sup.

Chasseurs also maintains a store front office space in the Plateau, a central location between their diverse business clients. The office provides a warm place for riders to rest between calls, a perk that doesn't exist for those working for most app delivery services.

Still, the growing popularity in app delivery services means that riders for these apps have the potential to earn more than they might have working as paper couriers at smaller companies. Kris recognizes how before app jobs, it was difficult to find a job as a courier without already knowing someone working for a company, and the job used

"What we're asking for is not much at all, simply employee status with basic benefits. We shouldn't have to fight for this."

— Kris

to be solely full time. Many of these factors explain the recent influx of app delivery riders in Montreal, as the job requires no French and allows part-time work.

As a result of some of the downsizing that occurred at Chasseurs, several of the riders have found themselves working shifts both for the independent company in addition to app delivery services. This includes Ash Desmarais, a Chasseurs courier who said Foodora allows them to pick up extra shifts.

"Every single person who works at Chasseurs dispatching is also a rider. They know the ins and outs of the job and they listen to the issues that are affecting their friends and co-workers. It feels like friends who have your back, and care about you at Chasseurs, whereas with apps it feels like talking to a robotic company manual," they said.

When delivering for Foodora, Desmarais can complete eight to 15 deliveries per day, putting them just above minimum wage. The physically demanding job can result in what Desmarais refers to as "courier burnout." They went on to explain how they've found themselves, "Working nine-plus hour days just because I could, and while it's great for the bank account, it's not so great for mental health."

Desmarais continued that it can be especially discouraging that many of

the customers who use food apps seem to not appreciate the difficulties of the job, recounting a Montreal Reddit post in which a user boasted about how they didn't tip bike couriers delivering food in the winter as his food could arrive cold.

"If you are having food delivered directly to you, while you sit in your undies and spew nonsense on Reddit, the least you can do is spare a few dollars to the person risking frost bite to bring it to you," they said. Desmarais explained that a great deal of care is taken to keep



food warm, but acknowledged that there is always a risk when ordering food in sub-zero temperatures.

Despite a clientele who are often ignorant of the challenges created by construction and harsh weather, each rider spoke highly of the diverse community they've found in the bike couriers of Montreal. Kris elaborated on the unique culture of messengers in the city, which is diverse not only in part because of the divide in French and English speaking riders, but also in regards to the variety in age and education—with many couriers holding Masters degrees, and yet many still having only completed some of high school.

This unique blend of socio-economic status provided an ideal environment for messenger culture to develop into a social and political counterculture for what Kris refers to lovingly as the "freaks and weirdos" who occupy most of Montreal's courier communities. Desmarais supported this statement.

"Here, they, for the most part, actively encourage women, non-binary, queer and trans riders," they said.

The diversity among bike couriers might also provide insight as to why their occupation leaves them vulnerable to exploitation from their employers—as a community of marginalized people including the LGBTQ+ populations and the large minority of Anglophone workers in Montreal—given that their work is dependent on the ebb and flow of

the economy and freelance or contract agreements that leave them without workers' rights.

However, as the economy continues to move away from accessible full-time positions with benefits, the diversity within delivery jobs is expanding to include members of mainstream culture, now excluded from the secure

positions post-secondary education had once promised in the past. With this change comes hope for delivery cyclists to gain the job recognition they might need for employers to reconsider the status and rights of their workers.

When asked what both app services and traditional courier companies could be doing to better support their riders, everyone provided similar responses. "It's as simple as taking into account and making changes based on what the riders are saying will make a difference. The riders are speaking; they just need to listen," said Desmarais. □



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When Burning Out Becomes a Trend

I'm Burnt Out, You're Burnt Out, We're All Burnt Out

SARAH BOUMEDDA
@BMDASARAH

Hey. How have you been doing, lately?

Really, though. I don't care about how your classes are going, or if you got the last job you applied to. I don't care about how many hours you've worked in the past week, or how your over-achieving tendencies aren't actually ruining your life, because you're just living that #hustle kind of lifestyle.

I mean, how are you, really? How is your body doing? What about your mind?

Are you tired?

Yeah, me too. My classes are going well, I have a stable and rewarding job, and I'm actually studying and working in something I absolutely love. But if I'm honest with myself, maybe I've been working too much. Studying too hard. Not living enough.

It's gotten to the point where I don't really know where my grindin' hours end, and when my self-care time begins. Hell, I don't even know if I practice any kind of self-care at all. I haven't seen some of my friends in weeks—others in months. And I kind of hate everything, right now.

Relatable, huh?

If you've been feeling chronically stressed, overworked, so much so that you've started losing interest in most things and you feel like you're not even as good at working or studying (or anything, really) as you used to be, the answer is simple. It's called burnout—you're burnt out.

So am I.

If you've noticed the same thing in your circle of friends and coworkers, chances are they're probably burnt out, too. In fact, it's becoming such a sickening trend that there's a term that's been coined specifically to refer to this phenomenon: burnout culture.

Dr. Emily Blake is a psychologist, and the founder and clinical director of Blake Psychology in Montreal. She described symptoms of burnout as physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion resulting from chronic stress at work (it can be professional, academic, social, or resulting from something else).

That also leads to negative feelings towards said work—and ironically, no matter how stressed we are about doing well, burnout also results in decreasing performance. Talk about a vicious cycle.

How exactly does that translate in everyday life?

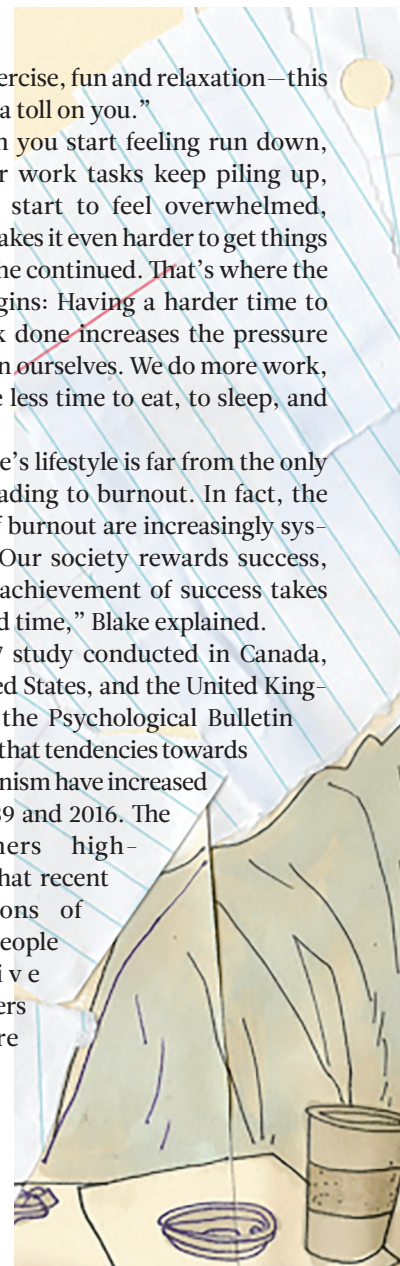
"If you work long hours and don't have time for adequate self-care, your overall health can deteriorate," said Blake. "For example, if you are so focused on work that you don't have time or energy to eat well, or get enough

sleep, exercise, fun and relaxation—this can take a toll on you."

"When you start feeling run down, and your work tasks keep piling up, you can start to feel overwhelmed, which makes it even harder to get things done," she continued. That's where the cycle begins: Having a harder time to get work done increases the pressure we put on ourselves. We do more work, and have less time to eat, to sleep, and to live.

But one's lifestyle is far from the only factor leading to burnout. In fact, the causes of burnout are increasingly systemic. "Our society rewards success, and the achievement of success takes effort and time," Blake explained.

A 2017 study conducted in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom by the Psychological Bulletin revealed that tendencies towards perfectionism have increased since 1989 and 2016. The researchers highlight, "That recent generations of young people perceive that others are more



“When you start feeling run down, and your work tasks keep piling up, you can start to feel overwhelmed, which makes it even harder to get things done”

— *Emily Blake*

demanding of them, are more demanding of others, and are more demanding of themselves.”

The study also points out that, “The emergence of neoliberalism in the industrialized world has reshaped the cultural, political, and economic landscape,”

which has consequently changed us as people. We are more competitive, more individualistic, more perfectionistic, and tend to strive towards “irrational ideals of the perfectible self.”

These societal changes in behaviour don’t come without a price. The study also highlights the possibility of a “link between rising perfectionism and rising psychopathology.” Among possible resulting disorders and symptoms, the researchers list depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, eating disorders, body dysmorphia, and one sad, increasing feeling: loneliness.

At first glance, these conclusions might seem quite obvious, despite their alarming tone. Yet why aren’t any of us doing anything?

Because the system we’re evolving and working in isn’t letting us. We live in a world that’s increasingly connected and expensive, which obviously has its drawbacks. While burnout might arise from the pressure we put on ourselves, Blake also listed the rising cost of living as well as, “The increased number of daily tasks outside of work—

such as housework, childcare, and social media” as other factors leading to burnout.

If burnout is such a present, almost inevitable part of our modern lives, is there anything we can do to prevent it?

The first step is to recognize it. If you feel overwhelmed, if you feel guilty about taking breaks from any type of work, if you have even an inkling that you might be burnt out, take some time to acknowledge those feelings.

“Sometimes people feel guilty acknowledging limits and needs,” she explained. “Unpleasant thoughts can show up, such as ‘taking a break is a sign of weakness,’ or ‘I shouldn’t be tired, others do more than I do.’ If you can make space for these thoughts and feelings to show up, and still take a break when you need to, this can help you.”

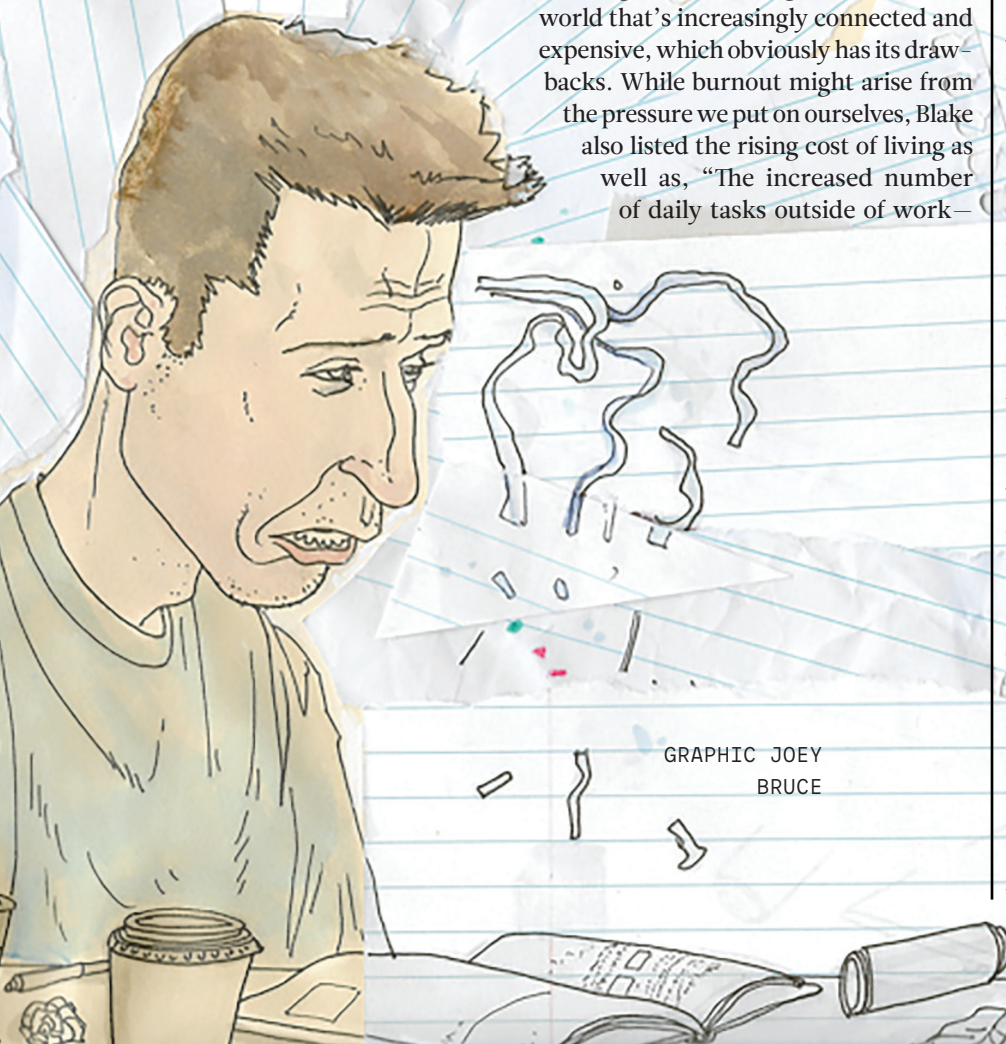
“Speaking to a professional [...] can be helpful to put a plan in place to either prevent burnout or help you cope,” Blake said. “Ideally, there is a way for you to meet your external demands, while still having time for relationships and self-care activities such as healthy eating, exercise, sleep, fun, and relaxation.”

And of course, we have a lot of work to do as a society, especially regarding the prevalence of burnout in our communities. “We can place greater importance on valuing mental health and well-being,” said Blake. “We can demonstrate openness towards having conversations about burnout and problem-solving, [and find] concrete ways to reduce workloads and promote health.”

Changing the system obviously cannot happen overnight—but recognizing the problem is already good enough of a first step, and that also applies for ourselves and our loved ones. Check up on your friends. Let them know it’s okay to take a break, to breathe. Sometimes, just the reassurance is enough.

Don’t know where to start? Simple. Ask them one simple question.

“Hey, how have you been doing, lately?” ☐



GRAPHIC JOEY
BRUCE

Invisible Labour

The Cost of Doing It All

APRIL TARDIF-LEVESQUE
@APRILTARDIF

She has a great job, one that takes a lot of her time. Work-life balance? She will talk about it at board meetings or during an interview with an eager applicant, before going home with a pile of paperwork and her work laptop.

Meticulously coiffed, rocking a freshly pressed blazer, everything a man can do she does backwards and in high-heels. Wellness-at-work is her favourite buzz term, and she shows up to all the march-for-whatever-charity on Saturdays with her team, rocking the corporate swag.

On Sundays, she brings her 8-year-old to ballet and her 12-year-old to judo. Everyone is impressed with her senior management role at the big corporation, a coveted position that she is trailblazing.

After work, she gets the kids from daycare and after-school sports, and heads home where supper must now be prepared. She checks the fridge. "Where the hell is the milk?" Her husband must

be doing overtime, but should be home around 6:30 p.m. She texts him to pick up milk for supper and begins prepping the other ingredients in the meantime. She tidies up a bit, vacuums under the table.

She checks for the apron before starting the sauce. "Damn it, it's still in the dryer." There's lint all over the bathroom floor, and her husband left the seat up. She vacuums the bathroom, cleans the seat, and finally the timer in the kitchen goes off.

Her husband gets home, and he forgot the milk. "Why are you always nagging me, you have no idea what I do for you and this family, I put in twice the hours last week!"

"So? Why can't you help around here?"

His phone rings. Great. She gets her keys, and leaves to fetch the milk. If she can't get dinner ready by 7 p.m., the kids will destroy the pantry, her husband will make instant noodles, and she



will miss evening yoga.

In the checkout line, she checks Instagram. Her favourite mommy-blogger posted a new detox tea collaboration advertisement. She rolls her eyes, as if this woman got her figure with no liposuction or personal trainer. She laments that her stretch marks ruin the abs-look three years of yoga should have given her. At least she looks great in her new dress.

Does this woman sound familiar to you? Possibly. She's made up, but could

be someone you know.

I created the character from my own mother, coupled with a teacher of mine, and a former boss with a great job who simultaneously juggled her role with a husband and three kids.

These are women we all know. We can all think of a woman we know who does it all. Looks great, works hard, great mom and wife. We all know of mommy bloggers who make work, social media content creation, raising kids, and main-

taining a relationship look easy as pie.

We see those TV moms who are workaholics, vilified for not giving enough attention to their kids, and the stay-at-home ones covered in flour in the kitchen, working hard but listening to her husband's stories about "a real job." The new trend is do-it-yourself and doing it all.

What is invisible labour? With all the buzzwords in feminist theory, we can have a tendency not to fully understand



GRAPHICS AIDEN
LOCKE

their meaning, and see them as nothing more than a label. The woman I just described is a perfect example of an invisible labourer.

Everything she does when she steps out of the office is invisible labour, and this definition in intersectional terms can include much more. According to *The Atlantic's* article "The Invisible Labour Women Do Around the World," in developing countries, women are largely excluded from economic improvements. They cook, clean, look after kids, and even gather water or firewood in some situations. We see this here too, to quote the article, "Women work more than men, even if a large part is relatively invisible."

The United Nations found women do three out of four hours of unpaid labour and men do two-thirds of paid work. The UN also found that women do 2.6 times the unpaid work that men would do, including caring for aging parents and childcare, balancing household

expenses, and domestic work.

This is in addition to emotional labour, of course, balancing relationships, and carrying what is referred to as a "mental load."

In the Forbes article, "How Emotional Labour Affects Women's Career," Gemma Hartley defines emotional labour as unpaid and invisible work that contributes to making those around a woman comfortable and happy.

She introduces other terms like "worry work," which highlights that effort is put into emotional and mental obligations and commitments, which are often undervalued and not seen as work. These add to a woman's workload and can even seep into their career, and I'd assume this could increase the likelihood of burning out or mental health difficulties.

None of this is helped by a social media fueled society that only showcases the very best of people's lives, where individuals market themselves constantly. Of course, the sexual revolution

and the women's equality movement was extremely important and allowed women to enter the workforce in full throttle; where they went on to prove themselves as capable of the same level of work as their male colleagues.

In addition to all other societal expectations of women, however, they can then feel bad about their appearance, feel pressured to be Instagram fitness models, food bloggers, DIY queens, financially secure in a tough economy, all the while being well-dressed, and beautiful.

Books about being the best parent, best wife, best at work, and put together fill bookshelves. Social media sensations have capitalized on this with inspirational videos and arti-


cles on how to be your best self and take control of your situation.

This can lead to a self-blame mentality, and a sense of shame over being unable to balance all of this, which adds to the emotional labour. Counting calories and trying crash diets, feeling obligated to exercise instead of genuinely enjoying it, to maintaining relationships, to parenting "properly," to be more involved at work, and keeping a nice home like in the magazines is hard work. We need to recognize everything we do that is unpaid labour and wonder why we are doing it. Do we

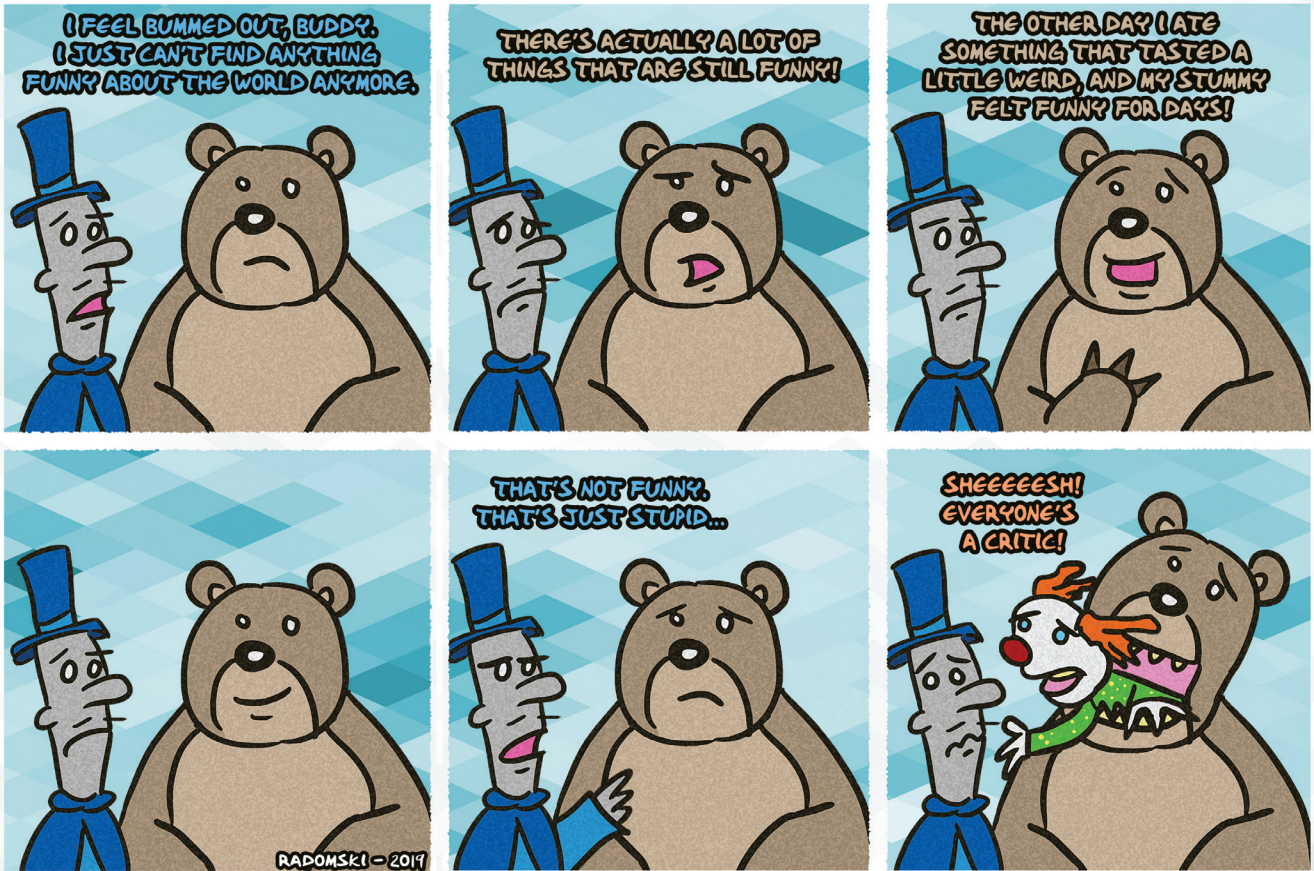
These are women we all know. We can all think of a woman we know who does it all.

genuinely want to or do we feel obligated?

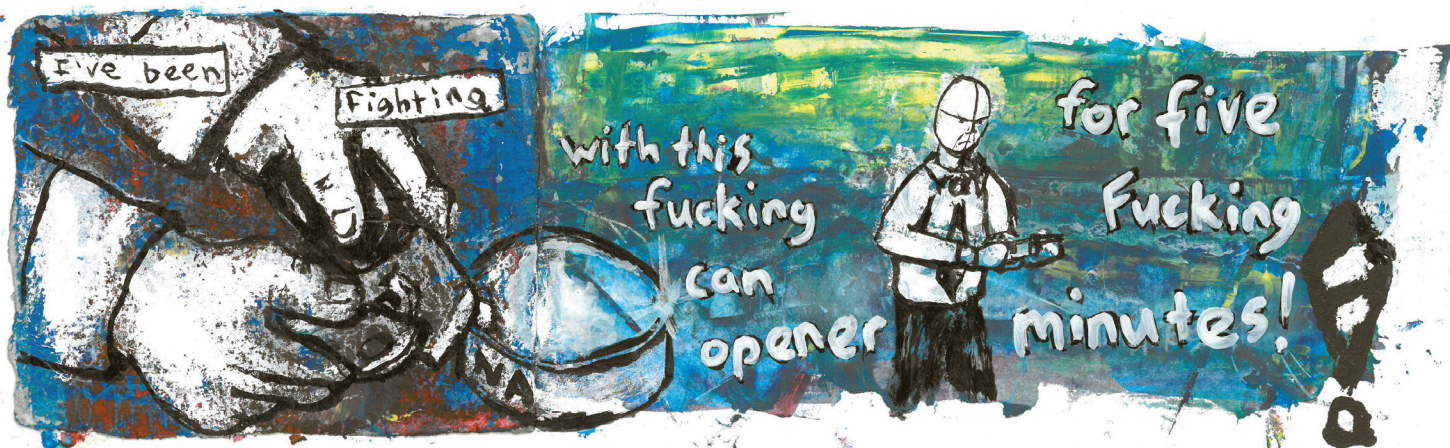
The first step to freedom is realizing what's holding you back. You can then fight back by refusing to perform unpaid work that doesn't directly benefit you. You can spot in advance the workload being imposed on you that you never asked for.

Remind yourself that you can refuse to put the happiness of those around you before your own, and you can refuse to believe what is marketed as reality that you do not see as realistically attainable. Where there is a drive to profit from making people feel inadequate, the truest form of rebellion is to decide to be happy as you are and only do what you can manage. 

Hastily Put Together | by Theo Radomski @flannelogue



Old Man and the Sea | by Chris Michaud



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