

# THE LINK

39.4 | JANUARY 2019



THE HEALTH ISSUE

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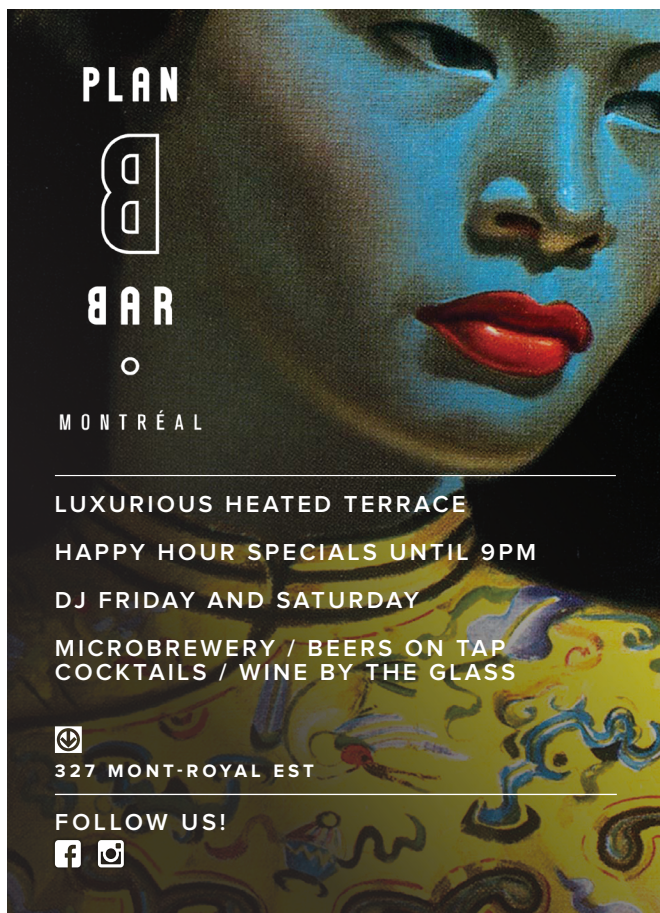
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# EDITORIAL:

## Addressing Mental Health, Addiction Support and Education Within Our Institutions

From a young age to well into our later years, our education system seems to be working against our mental health and, at times, our physical health. With a lack of education on addiction and mental illness, how can we recognize them in ourselves or those around us? How can we understand and address the issues we may face or provide adequate support to a loved one?

Most Canadian schools do not address mental illness or addiction in enough detail in students' formative years. A report based on Ontario elementary schools found that students in 2013 not only had a lack of resources to seek aid for mental health, but they also had insufficient education on mental health.

Youths in the study noted that the internet was the main source where they find information on addiction and mental health, with media ranked second and school as third. The internet may not always be an accurate source, along with providing a lack of face-to-face support and conversation.

Study participants shared they wanted to learn more about how to properly manage stress, addiction, and mental health earlier.

Statistics identify that 70 per cent of mental health difficulties arise in childhood or adolescence. If children aren't receiving an adequate detailed education early enough to identify mental illness or addiction, how can they properly know how to identify them and to ask for or seek help?

Along with a lack of support and awareness, this generates a stigma, as the lack of education shows that addiction and mental health is not as important as physical health.

As this issue addresses the growing

opioid-related overdoses and deaths in our country, young Canadians need to be aware of the threat of addiction. Those impacted by mental illness may be twice as likely to develop addiction. Alternately, people with substance abuse problems are three times more likely to have a mental illness.

Between January and June 2017, there were 2,066 opioid-related overdose deaths, with nearly 4,000 Canadians passing due to opioid-related deaths.

The history of harm reduction has been fatal, with conservative laws threatening the existence of and ability to open safe injection sites. While laws have changed and Quebec has pushed for free naloxone and different versions of the product, our neighbouring province Ontario may face threats to the lives of opioid users and other users as Premier Doug Ford is set against supervised injection sites. He had halted the opening of three sites in August to review their "merit."

Despite Ford's objection, safe injection sites have demonstrated a considerable decrease in opioid-related overdose deaths, as drug test kits are available and healthcare practitioners are on site to handle overdoses with naloxone on hand.

In Vancouver, fatal overdoses decreased by 35 per cent in the area surrounding the safe injection site InSite, while research demonstrates users at InSite are less likely to share needles, which pose a threat to spreading of bloodborne diseases.

The environment we're in impacts us as well and burnout is a reality that students often face. Chronic stress and emotional exhaustion are widespread.

A recent Health & Wellness report was mandated by Concordia President

Alan Shepard last fall in response to an increase in students seeking health services and the school's counselling and psychological services. The findings state that relaxing spaces such as a nap room should be provided on campus, and that the university should implement a fall reading week.


One of the most challenging change recommended is to address the culture that exists on campus—going from a "survival of the fittest" mentality to one of health and wellbeing instead.

This drive for improved health and wellness can also be seen in the fight against unpaid internships. Many students are forced to experience financial stress while providing free labour.

Students shouldn't be prioritized based on their class. All students should be paid for their labour and have equal opportunity into the workforce.

The issue of class plays into the services offered at Concordia. On average, students have to wait between five and seven weeks to seek an appointment with a psychologist, unless their needs are urgent. This creates a barrier for students seeking timely support who lack the money to go elsewhere.

With long wait times for therapy and a lack of resources for students, Concordia needs to step up. The school hasn't announced yet whether they plan to increase their funding to their health and wellness services on campus.

Outside our institution, we urge our governments to take mental illness and addiction into better account. While conducting reports and opening safe injection sites are vital, funding has to be emphasized and filtered into youth education and services to support students when they need help the most. 

# Timeline of the Opioid Crisis in Canada

How Prescription Drugs, the Government's War on Drugs, and Black Market Fentanyl Generated High Addiction Rates

SAVANNA CRAIG  
@SAVANNACRAIG



This timeline examines the catalysts that generated an opioid epidemic in Canada, and services and circumstances that sprung from the growing death toll. While our neighbours in the United States face a greater amount of opioid-related deaths, the larger population in the U.S. plays a factor, as a United

Nations report finds that Canada is the largest consumer of prescription opioids on a per-capita basis.

This timeline looks into factors that furthered the epidemic—with the introduction of new opioids, government policies, and initiatives, such as safe injection sites, aimed to help diminish the rates

of opioid-related deaths.

This is not all encompassing of every event or factor leading to the growing death toll in Canada due to opiates, as well as all of the initiatives aimed to relieve this toll. But it intends to highlight some of the factors and events stimulating an epidemic.

1992

American pharmaceutical company Purdue Pharma patents OxyContin, their brand named pill of oxycodone, promising a remarkable new way to treat pain. OxyContin later hits the shelves in 1996.

When recommending the drug to medical professionals, Purdue Pharma downplays the addictive properties of the medication. This begins a long term abuse of physicians overprescribing opioids to patients, not knowing how strong of an addiction the drug creates.

2003

InSite, North America's first safe injection site is founded in downtown Vancouver, an area facing the largest rates of opioid deaths in the country. This allows users to inject drugs, with first aid on site to handle any potential overdoses, and medical staff to provide addiction treatment and mental health assistance. Despite safe injection sites not being legalized, the site is permitted by the former Liberal government by exempting InSite from certain provisions relating to trafficking within the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

2006

InSite's existence is put under threat after the Conservative government gains power. The Tories start a war on drugs that involves prosecuting low-level offenders. Harm reduction is also eliminated from Canada's anti-drug policy, creating barriers for the Vancouver injection site and threatening the site's immunity from the act.

2007

The war on drugs continues, as information about harm reduction is removed from Health Canada's website. The National Drug Strategy's name is changed to the National Anti-Drug Strategy.

2011

InSite's establishment remains, as the Conservative government loses in their battle to shut down Vancouver's safe injection site in Canada's Supreme Court. Later the government imposes legislation making it difficult for other safe injection sites to open, despite the lives InSite has saved since its establishment.

OxyContin is pulled from shelves in Canada by Purdue Pharma due to some opiate users crushing and snorting the green pill or injecting it for a stronger high.

Purdue Pharma replaces OxyContin with OxyNEO, which is difficult to crush, snort or inject. Canadian provinces remove both OxyContin and OxyNEO from their public drug plans. Meanwhile, prescriptions for painkillers such as fentanyl and hydromorphone increase.

2012

After OxyContin is removed from Canada's legal market, space opens for counterfeit versions of the pill made with fentanyl instead, a drug much more potent than oxycodone. These pills are manufactured to look the same as OxyContin, shaped as a tiny, green pill with the same "80" written on it, representing the oxy dosage. They are sold as "greenies" or "shady eighties" accross North America.

Counterfeit OxyContin enters the Canadian border from China. Labs in China are able to generate fentanyl analogues, utilizing the main ingredient to make analogues—drugs with similar chemical structures as pharmaceutical-grade versions, but with slight chemical modifications. One version of these unique illegally engineered fentanyl has the street name China White. Since fentanyl is cheaper than other opioids, such as heroin, it is often mixed in more expensive opiates so dealers don't have to spend as much while still selling a drug with a strong high.

APRIL 2013

The first known fentanyl bust in Canada occurs in April in Montreal. Police raid a clandestine laboratory located in Pointe-St-Charles, seizing around 200,000 pills containing the drug, also finding counterfeit versions of Cialis and Viagra. Unaware they need to wear hazmat suits, officers become ill due to exposure to the strong opiate in the lab.

JUNE 2013

The Conservative government imposes a new law titled "The Respect For Communities Act," generating more rules for safe injection sites to face. The law requires that city officials and police to be more involved, which at the time failed to facilitate collaboration, as many politicians and police were opposed to safe injection sites.

2014

When asked about the profit the company made from selling OxyContin, Purdue Pharma Canada chief executive officer Craig Landau said, "I'm honestly not certain. I don't know. It's in the billions of dollars for sure," he tells a House of Commons committee reviewing prescription-drug abuse.

The profits from OxyContin are colossal and keep on climbing. Since the 1990s in both Canada and the United States—where the drug was also patented—Purdue Pharma has earned more than \$30-billion U.S.

As the epidemic originated in the west, hitting Alberta and British Columbia at accelerating rates, Ontario takes a hit from overdose deaths, specifically from fentanyl. In 2014, fentanyl is the leading cause of opioid deaths for the first time in the province. Fatal overdoses from fentanyl occur in communities in Toronto, Kingston and the region of Niagara.

DECEMBER 2014

Alberta's provincial government issues province-wide alert to doctors, after illegal fentanyl starts being sold and used in the province.

A Globe and Mail investigation finds that doctors wrote enough opioid prescriptions for one in every two Canadians, continuing the rates of overprescription of opioids dating back to the 90s. Doctors prescribe 19.1 million opiate prescriptions to people in Canada this year, surpassing rates in 2014—where doctors gave out 18.7 million prescriptions. Overdose rates result not only from prescriptions, but also from illegal opioids, as the Canada Border Services Agency makes just less than 11,000 illicit-drug seizures within the year, with about half of the seizures coming from the postal system.

2015

2016

This year in Canada there are 2,816 apparent opioid-related deaths. Fentanyl is on the rise, as one in every three overdose deaths in Alberta occurs in Calgary. Since the first drug bust of fentanyl in Montreal, 58 seizures of fentanyl occur across the country.

Canada begins to add legislative and regulatory changes to respond to issues stemming from the opioid epidemic, allowing safe injection sites to operate by removing application requirements to receive an exemption from the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act for a site to operate.

2017

APRIL 2017

Nearly 4,000 Canadians die this year because of opioid-related deaths. Seventy-two per cent of these deaths involved fentanyl or fentanyl analogues. This is a 34 per cent jump from the death rates the year before. British Columbia experiences the highest rate, with 1,399 opioid-related deaths in 2017, compared to 974 in 2016.

The 2017 Canada Guideline for Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain is made, shedding light on physicians overprescribing opiates, with an aim to promote awareness to reduce over prescriptions of the drug.

Purdue Pharma settles a class-action lawsuit, paying \$20 million. The lawsuit blames Purdue Pharma of knowing how addictive OxyContin is, but not admitting the risk of addiction. This case represents about 1,500 Canadians that became addicted to OxyContin after being prescribed the drug by their doctors.

British Columbia's provincial health officer declares opioids a public health emergency on April 14, after a spike in overdoses and deaths.

MAY 2017

The Government of Canada passes the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act. This grants legal protection from those seeking help during an overdose emergency, diminishing fears of getting charged for drug possession for calling 911 to prevent an overdose.

Alberta declares opioid abuse a public health crisis, as the number of death rates increases. The province also allots \$30 million to tackle the crisis, and initiates a commission to handle the crisis.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police launch at least 20 investigations on dozens of vendors with shipments of fentanyl originating from China. The RCMP, CBSA and Canada Post team together to plan the most effective way to flag parcels shipped from China from three mail sorting centres located in Montreal, Vancouver and Mississauga, ON.

SEPTEMBER 2017

42 kilograms of carfentanil is found by police in Durham, ON. Carfentanil, 100 times more potent than fentanyl it's derived from, is so deadly some countries have experimented with using it as a chemical weapon. This isn't the first time the drug had been found in the city, as local police seized enough carfentanil to wipe out a small city a month prior.

SEPT. 20, 2017

Canada's neighbour in the south declares opioid deaths in the United States a national public health emergency, as Donald Trump addresses an audience at the White House. The U.S. faces a higher number of deaths than Canadians, with more than 40,000 people dying from opioid-related deaths in 2017.

OCTOBER 26, 2017

## NOVEMBER 2017

By this time, due to legislative changes, 22 safe injection sites, with three interim ones, are operating in Canada. On Nov. 4, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh addresses delegates and supporters in Vancouver, calling on the federal government to declare opioid addiction a national crisis.

Singh receives a standing ovation after he says the NDP's would decriminalize the possession of all drugs. "I saw that people's lives are being destroyed while the federal government does little or nothing and it breaks my heart," Singh said. "I saw with my own eyes the devastation of the opioid crisis."

Then-Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Eric Hoskins declares opioids a public health emergency in Ontario.

The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control announces it intends to install three vending machines to help dispense hydromorphone pills to people at a greater risk of overdose. Hydromorphone is a strong prescription opioid used for opioid replacement therapy; and experts say it can reduce addiction to street drugs cut with fentanyl or similarly potent substances.

## DECEMBER 2017

## MARCH 2017

The federal government promises changes towards drug laws, removing barriers doctors face prescribing methadone or heroin to ease into ceasing its use. The government also promises to also allow these opioids to be given outside of hospitals, such as in addiction clinics, allowing for users to slowly wean themselves from strong to weaker opioids.

Between January and June of this year there are 2,066 opioid-related overdose deaths in the country, with British Columbia facing the highest rates with 754 deaths (however this province records all illicit drugs in the death toll, not just opioids), and Ontario following with 638 deaths.

The Quebec government plans to put \$35 million towards handling addiction in the province, \$23 million of which will go towards preventing opioid overdoses.

## JULY 2018

## AUGUST 2018

British Columbia Attorney General David Eby launches a proposed class action lawsuit against dozens of pharmaceutical companies, including Purdue Pharma, alleging that opioids were wrongly marketed to be represented as less addictive compared to other drugs, arguing this helped initiate an overdose crisis that killed thousands. The proposed suit also claimed pharmacies like Shoppers Drug Mart in Quebec, known as Pharmaprix, should also face lawsuit, as they were aware of the amount of opioids being circulated by the legal market.

As opioid-related deaths plateau in Nova Scotia, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Robert Strang attributes this to harm reduction efforts the province has made. Between January and August this year, there were 38 opioid overdose deaths in the province, maintaining the province's average since 2011. Last year, Nova Scotia experienced 63 opioid-related deaths.

## SEPTEMBER 2018

Rhodes Technologies Inc.—a subsidiary of Purdue Pharma—obtains the patent for naloxone, an antidote for opioid overdoses. Purdue Pharma also donates \$3.4 million to a non-profit drug developer generating a nasal spray that is an over the counter version of Naloxone, which amounts to a retail price of \$140 U.S.

Chief of Kwanlin Dun First Nation in Whitehorse Doris Bill says opioids are taking a toll in the Yukon. Calling it an epidemic in the territory, she says there aren't enough people discussing the problem. Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health Brendan Hanley said there were 16 fatal opioid overdoses, 12 being fentanyl-related, since early 2016. The territory agrees that Yukon is in an opioid crisis and presents a plan of action to address it, with the government expanding access to naloxone kits, support drug-checking services and education about substance abuse in schools.

At the beginning of December, Health Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor also tells the House of Commons that declaring opioids a "public health emergency" in Canada won't help the problem.

## DECEMBER 2018

Despite Petitpas' comments the government of Canada's website states opioid abuse is a "national public health crisis", making the federal government's classification of the epidemic unclear. □

# How Concordia is Preparing For Anti-Sexual Violence Legislation

How the University is Handling Sexual Violence on Campus, With Deadlines to Meet the Provincial Demands Approaching Soon

NICHOLAS WARD

Concordia has submitted a renewed policy on sexual violence, but how close to meeting their other obligations are they?

The first deadline for Quebec universities to meet their obligations under Bill 151, aimed to prevent and fight sexual violence on campuses, has passed on Jan. 1, 2019, with Concordia submitting a renewed policy on sexual violence.

After Quebec passed Bill 151, universities and CEGEPs in the province were given until Sept. 1 2019 to put in place new rules aimed to protect their students from sexual violence.

Concordia will need to uphold other commitments towards the provincial government, and has founded a permanent committee on sexual misconduct and sexual violence. The committee exists to revise and enforce Concordia's policy on sexual violence, which was first implemented as a "standalone" policy in 2016 and updated to be submitted for Jan. 1. The university will also implement mandatory consent training for students, soon to be required across Quebec, and staff and faculty will also be able to access the same training. Additional funding for the Sexual Assault Resource Centre is also planned.

## THE POLICY

Lisa Ostiguy, special advisor to the provost on campus life, said this sexual violence policy reflects an updated version of one made in 2016, Concordia's first standalone policy on sexual violence. "The main changes that we made are much more accessible in terms of

language," said Ostiguy.

One of the critiques from the Task Force on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence—a group mandated by the university to consult issues and policies related to sexual violence and misconduct—released in a report mentioned that students lacked awareness about the policy and resources for sexual violence on campus.

In an interview during the summer semester, when Concordia Student Union's General Coordinator Sophie Hough-Martin was not yet on the standing committee, she argued the report pinned too much of the blame on students not understanding how to use the university's existing resources.

Ostiguy said that she found it wasn't only students who weren't aware of existing policies and resources, but also that faculty and staff were out of the loop. She said the standing committee is addressing how to better communicate what the university has in place, as the school's website will be updated soon to address this.

The committee will also be looking at how to engage more people in understanding Concordia's sexual violence policy, with Ostiguy mentioning a breakdown of the policy will be included in mandatory consent training for students.

The updated policy was approved by the Board of Governors on Dec. 12 2018. Ostiguy said maintenance of the policy will be ongoing.

"Now that we have a permanent standing committee, we're going to always be hearing things that may or may not be

successful," she continued. She said the committee will be open to critique and questions on the policy. Ostiguy said a formal review of the updated policy will be done in one year.

## CONSULTATIONS

Over the fall semester, the sexual violence committee hosted four public consultations, accessible to all students, faculty and staff. These one hour long "community conversations" sought input on what students think of sexual violence and sexual misconduct on campus, and how the university should best address the issue.

"When we did the task force process from January to June last year we had a lot of consultation opportunities," said Ostiguy. "And what came out of those conversations and consultations was that we need an ongoing conversation around sexual violence and sexual misconduct."

She said sometimes there's a lack of awareness of opportunities to informally discuss concerns, so the consultations give a chance for the community to provide input to the sexual violence committee and become familiar with its members.

She said the new year will hold more consultations, as two are scheduled in January, with more in February, March and the following months.

Ostiguy said minutes are not being taken during these consultations because the university wants to maintain a casual conversation and not expose personal experiences students or faculty may be discussing with the committee during these meetings. She said people who

want to give input outside of consultations are also available to email her.

### LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

Senior Legal Counsel Melodie Sullivan told *The Link* that minutes are not kept for the private meetings of Concordia's sexual violence committee, making it difficult to track how often student representatives from the CSU and Graduate Student Association are attending these meetings. Though minutes for sexual violence committees for Quebec schools are not required by the provincial government, annual reports of these committees will be required so the province can oversee how well school's are meeting Bill 151's demands.

### ONLINE CONSENT TRAINING

Jennifer Drummond, coordinator of the SARC, said online consent training for students will be rolled out for the fall of 2019.

Concordia has offered consent training for several years through the SARC, however until obligations under Bill 151, this training has been voluntary. The training is only given when a group requests it, such as student associations—with exceptions toward varsity athletes, said Drummond. For privacy reasons, the university wouldn't reveal which groups have made requests for consent training or doesn't allow outsiders to observe trainings for signed up groups.

Finance student and Stingers hockey player Curtis Gass underwent the consent training after joining the Stingers and shared his experiences.

"The training we receive is a workshop presentation that [lasted] around an hour," he said. "Usually two to three speakers will come and talk to us about consent." He said there was a presentation during which they invited the team to ask questions and give their opinion on certain subjects.

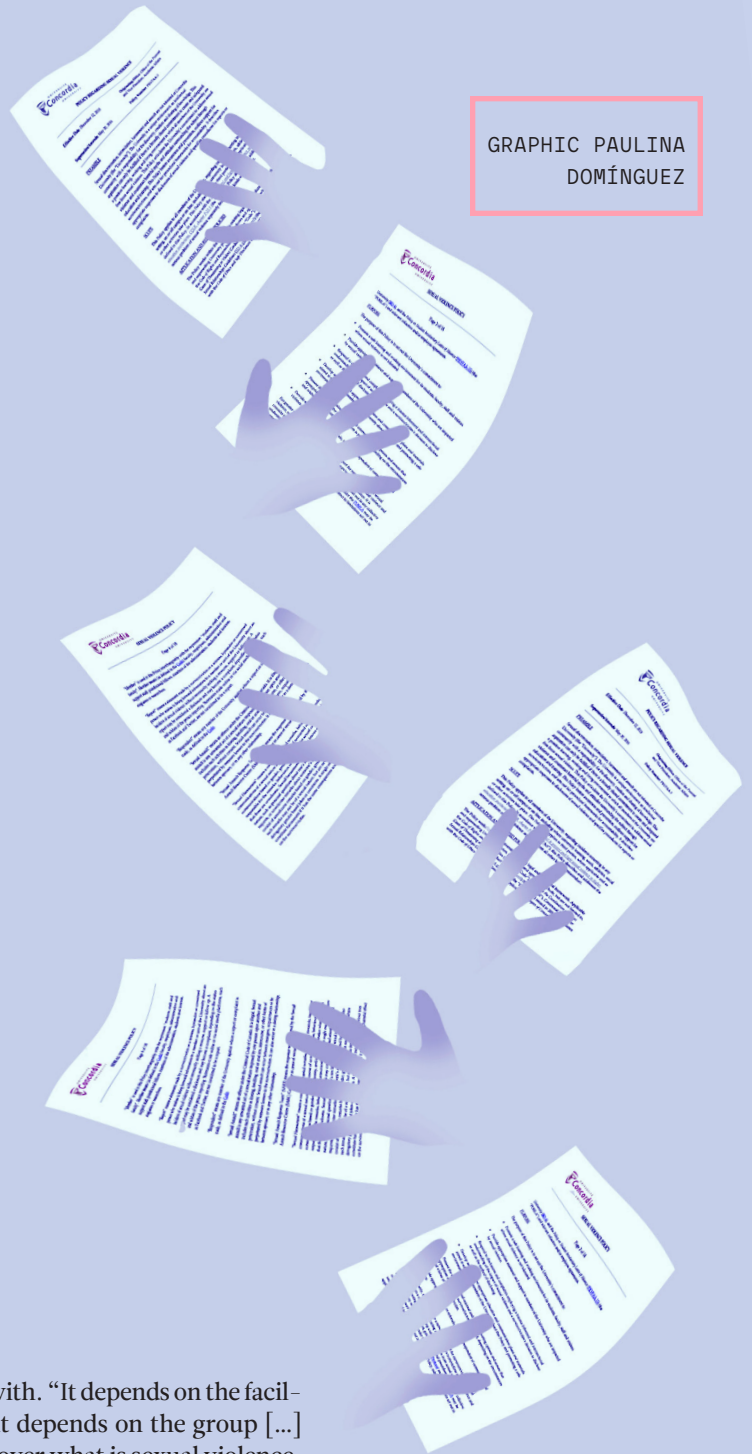
"There are group discussions and scenario training as well, where we divide into groups and talk about what should be done in specific situations," Gass said.

Drummond says the SARC doesn't have a standard playbook for its training, but rather tailors sessions for each group

it engages with. "It depends on the facilitator and it depends on the group [...] we like to cover what is sexual violence, what kind of behaviours fall under that, how prevalent is this issue [...] and then we talk about consent."

Gass hadn't realized varsity athletes were the only group obligated to take consent training. However, he thinks the university is making a good decision rolling out the training to all students.

GRAPHIC PAULINA  
DOMÍNGUEZ



“As university students and young adults, I believe we are often put into situations where consent might be a grey area,” said Gass. “These trainings help us navigate these grey areas.”

Whether mandatory training will go smoothly is yet to be seen. The SARC will be responsible for setting up the workshops and training a staff of volunteers who will run the training. Drummond said the SARC is continuing with its in-person training, however it appears at the moment the majority of training for students, staff, and faculty will happen online.

Ostiguy said for the past year Drummond has been working on various training modules to be administered both in person and online.

“This was before any announcement was made with the government,” Ostiguy said. “The idea with the online training is that we’ve got a big community and we want to make sure that the information is accessible to as many people as possible.”

In terms of how it’s going to be presented, Ostiguy said there’s a training committee with 14 members that will assess the logistics of the training.

### SARC OVERSHADOWED BY THE CSU

Prior to the last consultation at the downtown campus, the CSU put up posters to rally students to “flood Concordia’s community conversations,” pointing out that the consultations were held at 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. during finals. “That’s certainly not enough to keep us away! [...] make our voices heard and demand more from our institution” the CSU posters read.

If you’ve walked around campus recently you may have noticed the plethora of sexual consent awareness posters stating things like, “Never asking for it.” These are not connected to the school’s efforts or SARC. The student union is committing to bringing awareness of consent to campus life. Less visible are the small handful of posters warning things like, “Most sexual assaults happen in the first eight weeks of class,” which are placed in the

Loyola—Downtown shuttle buses and around campus by the SARC.

Established in 2013, the centre has grown from being a one-woman operation. The SARC now has multiple full-time staffers to help students who are victims of sexual violence. Yet Drummond said SARC’s presence on campus is currently overshadowed by the CSU’s campaign.

“We’re limited in how much we can have a visual presence on campus, for example the CSU campaign is much more visible because they have a much bigger budget than us,” said Drummond.

The CSU has an annual budget of \$4.5 million—\$50,000 of which is dedicated to union’s advocacy campaigns, while the SARC’s entire operating budget was \$24,000 between May 2017 and April 2018, according to an expense report obtained through an access to information request.

The university has increased the SARC’s funding and the organisation by recently adding two new employees. Come next semester, SARC is getting a new full-time receptionist and an additional full-time staff member. This is a far cry from when the SARC opened its doors and Drummond was the sole staffer.

The centrepiece of Concordia’s new policy is consent training. But given the SARC was only run by Drummond until 2016, the logistics of providing consent training to more than 46,000 students is daunting. Hough-Martin said the CSU is looking to set up meetings with the SARC to look at the shared priorities they have considering sexual violence to ensure more attention to the issue.

“The SARC is going to play a big role in training and education, the standing committee fully recommends that [Drummond] gets more resources and so does the Office of Rights and Responsibilities,” said Ostiguy.

“The government gives a bit of funding to go along with Bill 151 to implement changes,” she said. However, the university is still looking into how often Concordia will be obtaining funding. □

*With files from Savanna Craig and Miriam Lafontaine*

## TIMELINE OF UNIVERSITY’S EFFORTS TOWARDS BILL 151

### JANUARY 2018

*Concordia launches the Task Force on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence*



### MARCH 2018

*The Task Force begins consultations with the Concordia community.*



### JUNE 2018

*Concordia releases the Task Force’s report. It comes under criticism for victim blaming students.*



### SEPTEMBER 2018

*Concordia’s Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence is formed. Its mandate is to make sure Concordia complies with Bill 151.*



### NOVEMBER 2018

*The university holds its first two public consultations on campus sexual violence.*



### DECEMBER 2018

*Sexual violence committee holds last two scheduled public consultations. It comes under criticism for holding the meetings early in the morning during exams.*



### WINTER 2019

*The SARC’s new full time employees begin.*



### FALL 2019

*Mandatory online consent training for all students to begin.*

# The Artloft Promises Laughter in the Funkiest Room in Town

Learn About One  
of the Most Unique  
Comedy Space in  
Montreal: The Artloft

AYSHA WHITE



If you stand across the street from 4152 St. Laurent Blvd. and look up towards the right side of the grey building you'll see the inside of The Artloft, home to five people and a weekly bilingual comedy show.

Would you allow strangers into the place where you sleep once a week, effectively blurring the boundaries between public and private space, for the sake of art? The people who run The Artloft do just that, leading to an experience that some call the best comedy room in the city.

For around two years now the doors have opened at 9 p.m., with shows starting at around 10:30 p.m. every Friday, except during Christmas. The venue is a private home whose residents all have an important role in running the show, as well as others who've become integral like the "Hypeman Extraordinaire," a comic named Vance Michel.

There's host and booker Quinn McMorrow, DJ Cian Ponsidine, Sean Scobbie who could be considered the Artloft's general manager, Alex Johannes Cameron the doorman, James Cadelli the videographer, and Alex Stairs the photographer.

By 10:02 p.m. on the night of "Artloft #102," the large main room is starting to look more crowded. People trickled in at 9 p.m. when the doors first opened, installing themselves on couches, cracking open beers and chattering happily to friends. The hosts greet everyone cheerfully. The mood is ebullient; it's a Friday night. By 10:23 p.m. the room starts to look full, but people keep coming in. As the volume of the conversation rises, so does the music, almost imperceptibly.

At 10:40 p.m. the lights flash, before being dimmed. The only one left on is a front light shining over the microphone, where the performances will take place. The show is almost ready to start.

The atmosphere is clearly loud and celebratory like that of a bar but it differs in the sense that it feels more relaxed, as though you're at a high school house party, but in the best way, without any of the anxiety about proving yourself.

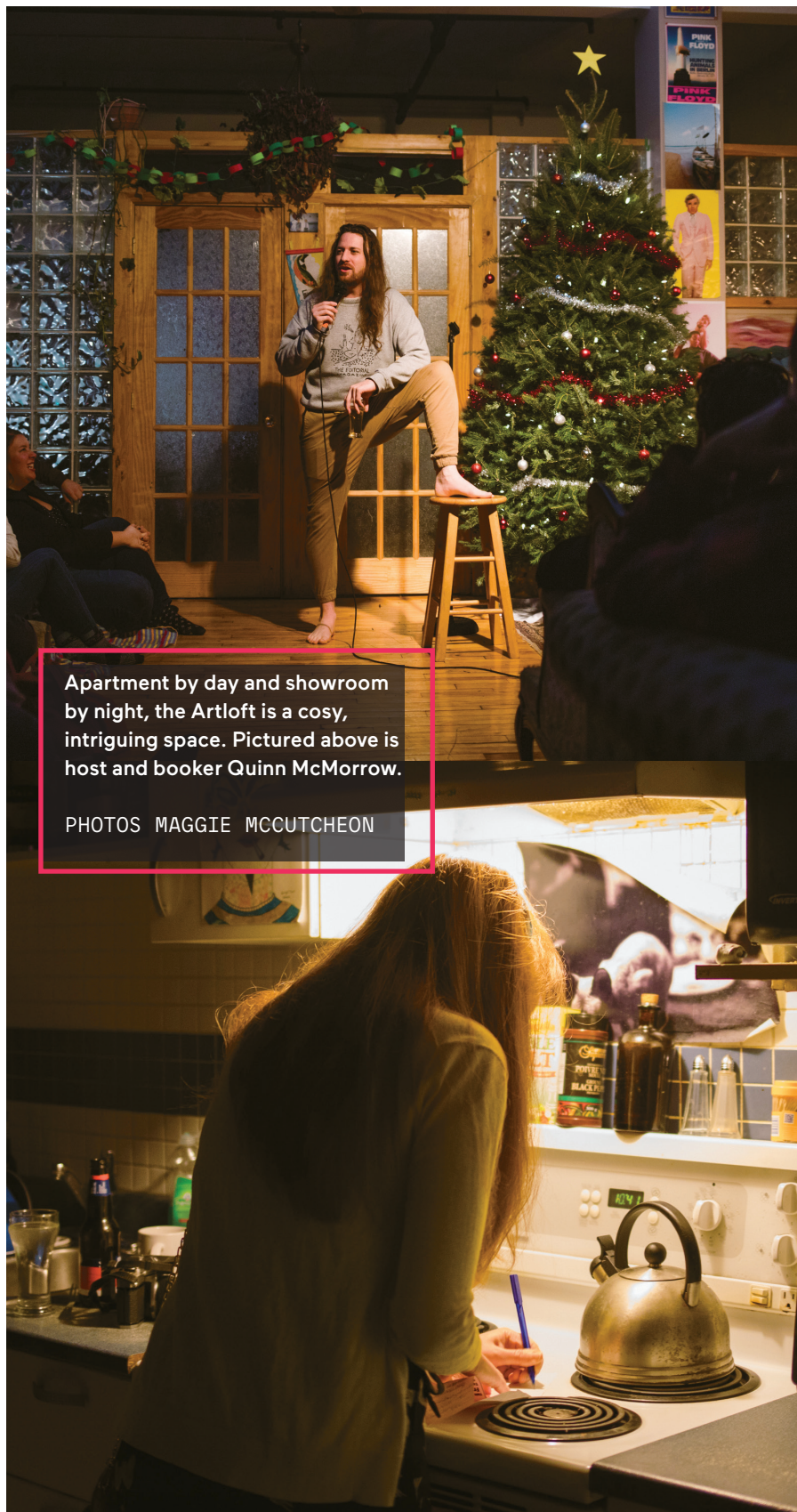
McMorrow notes that The Artloft differs from the experience of going to a comedy club in the sense that doors for that sort of performance might open 20 or so minutes before the show, leaving people less time to catch up with their friends.

The doors opening earlier gives people

the chance to talk and relax before the set begins, McMorrow explained.

The Artloft, without question, is one of the current standouts of Montreal's art scene. Not comedy scene, but of all art available here as a whole. Is this a big statement? Yes. Is the title deserved? Yes. The space could be considered an art gallery, a living archive of Montreal's collective artistic presence in the last two years.

The arrangement of everything inside feels like one large art installation itself; featuring smaller sculptures and exhibits within it. A giant blue fish tank sits in the middle of the room. It is supported by cinder blocks forming a rectangle, home to small stacks of books, composing an unusual bookcase. Look upwards and you'll see twinkling white Christmas lights hanging overhead, and records alternating small and large.



Apartment by day and showroom by night, the Artloft is a cosy, intriguing space. Pictured above is host and booker Quinn McMorrow.

PHOTOS MAGGIE MCCUTCHEON

“Once the ball gets rolling people are more inclined to want to leave something,” said McMorrow, noting that the artwork covering the walls changes periodically. Nothing about the visual arrangement is static, enforcing the feeling that one is in a gallery, just not a traditional one.

There is so much visual stimulation it’s hard to know where to look.

“We all like having a lot of stuff, it’s cool cause it makes people forget what they’re doing while they’re here, there’s enough distraction, [...] for example during the show it’s less of a problem if someone is distracted by a painting than if they’re on their phone,” explained McMorrow.

Scobbie and McMorrow, “The original Artloft-ers,” found the space off a Craigslist advertisement around five years ago. McMorrow estimates they’ve had 20 different roommates since then. They’ve had couchsurfers and found roommates off of Craigslist, but said ones from the site have led to negative experiences that McMorrow was able to make positive use out of by using that as material for his comedy.

That is one of the most interesting aspects about The Artloft; everything happening inside of it becomes potential live material during the shows. The sets tend to be around seven minutes, finished by a longer headlining act. McMorrow warms up the audience before they start, and introduces each subsequent comedian.

*The Link* was present for “Artloft #102.” McMorrow announced that there was some kind of problem with the toilet at 11:05 p.m. McMorrow cracks a joke about it, “We don’t call the landlord here,” he said, giving a knowing, impish look to the audience.

Other comedians who performed that night riffed on the toilet situation too, leading to a feeling of integration with the space and the mood of evening.

While it’s worth noting that comedians at any kind of venue will pick up what’s naturally going on and vamp on

it, that's an understood part of going to a comedy show, that you could be picked on, it feels very different at The Artloft because of the venue's intimacy.

McMorrow noted that the audience has always been encouraging towards comics performing in their non-native language; the context of the space being bilingual welcomes that sort of experimentation to occur, and even encourages it.

As an example of what McMorrow was referring to occurred the night of #102, when comedian Aliya Kanani did part of her set in French, which isn't her first language. She was very well received by the crowd, and it added to the intimacy to have someone practice and make themselves vulnerable.

Artloft's resident DJ Ponsidine was actually one of the aforementioned 20 roommates before becoming one of the Artloft's founders.

"I immigrated here and my first day in Canada, I couch surfed here with the lads," this was around 2 and a half years ago.

"I did snowball pretty quickly. I would say by the fourth or fifth show we had 20 or 30 people in the audience. In our first show we had like maybe nine people in the audience," said McMorrow.

The Artloft has hosted other kinds of events, like photography vernissages and a pop up markets, which were one-offs, as well as music shows that happen about once a month.

Because of the open concept of the loft, roommates sacrifice a lot of privacy to live there in general, not just when the shows occur. So what makes them capable of sustaining this kind of living arrangement? "Being passionate and slightly driven towards the space being an entity within itself [and] realizing that the space has outgrown us as individuals," said Ponsidine.

"At a certain point too we almost have a responsibility because it does take on a life of its own," said McMorrow.

McMorrow relayed an anecdote about

how Ponsidine had to gently herd about 20 people out of the loft like sheep, using a hockey stick because they wouldn't leave. Ponsidine added that herding sheep was something he grew up doing in rural Ireland.

The shows tend to end around 12:30 a.m. to 1 a.m. Ponsidine's role as the DJ, always important, becomes especially so after the set ends, as he intuitively feels the emotional temperature of the room and can influence it with his music choices. He can subliminally encourage people

**"I was reading that the St. Laurent Blvd. is historically the English-French divide, that was kinda cool coincidentally to have it be located where there would be the divide, that there would be a show where both French and English comedians and audience come together."**

**— Quinn McMorrow**

to leave the space by playing a soft, sad song or the opposite; playing a dance song to get an after party going.

There are not many regular bilingual comedy shows in Montreal, and to the best of McMorrow's knowledge, The Artloft was the only one in existence at the time it was started.

Ponsidine observed that some comedians will perform their sets half and half.

"I was reading that the St. Laurent Blvd. is historically the English-French divide, [...] that was kinda cool coincidentally to have it be located where there would be the divide, that there would be a show where both French and

English comedians and audience come together."

"I think that that's one of the tickets to success as a comedy show is that it's a unique thing," said McMorrow, noting that the environment is uplifting and fun like a club but without certain downsides.

"It's important to us that people have a good time [...] we want you to have fun, we want you to come back," said McMorrow.

Ponsidine observed that at The Artloft different groups of people will interact, not just sticking with the group they came with, in contrast to the atmosphere at a lot of bars.

The entrance fee is \$10 or pay what you can. Most of the money goes back into the show said McMorrow. Another example Ponsidine mentioned was using the door money to buy free beer for everyone to celebrate the Artloft's one hundredth show, which the hosts were all very excited for, even dressing up in suits.

The collaborative effort is imperative to the show's success. "Because we all live together, we're always discussing, maybe not the show but like The Artloft at large [...] today we were sitting around talking, like maybe we could do this differently, [and] between all of us we end up getting to a conclusion," McMorrow said. He also observed that having collaborators means that someone else always has the potential to catch something you've missed.

"I don't think we'd be able to do it as well if we all had separate places [...] say we just rented the loft as a space [...] and just met up here Friday before the show I don't think we'd have the same camaraderie," said McMorrow.

Part of what makes seeing a show at The Artloft such a unique, and unmissable experience, is that it's so personalized and intimate.

"Every time someone creates something in their image of beauty, it's bound to be perceived as beauty by others," said McMorrow. □

# Lotus Collective Is a Transformative Force in Montreal's Music Scene

Gender Diversity on Stage Happens Through Mentorship and Collaboration

VICTORIA LAMAS

**I**f you step into the dimly lit entryway of Maison 2019 on Bleury St. on the final Wednesday of the month, you just might catch Lotus Collective, a blooming revelation in Montreal's music scene.

Inside the heart of the brick and wood venue—the low seating, the candles, the people dancing—are women and femmes rapping, singing, and fingering their instruments.

They own the stage.

Four co-founders created Lotus in October 2017; each of them have an organisational role. From vocalists to saxophonists, they bring in different artists on stage. Lotus strives to give a platform for women and femmes, as well as professional and creative opportunities that are not necessarily given to them in the music scene, explained MC, vocalist and Lotus Collective co-founder Marcelle Partouche Gutierrez.

“Every single person is a support system within themselves,” explained Partouche Gutierrez. “I think that’s also another thing that we bring as women or within a feminist approach. We take care of each other. It’s not just, ‘You play your notes, you learn your scores.’ It’s also, ‘Hey, are you okay? How’s your heart?’”

The year old collective has been taking over hosting duties once a month at Maison 2019's weekly jam session called Mercredi Live.

“There’s no real difference between the stage and the crowd,” said vocalist and co-founder Monica Paraghamian. “When the jam session opens there’s just this flow onto the stage. Everyone

you were looking at in the audience eventually ends up on the stage. That’s visually, I think, [our] best symbol.”

“I also think women feel more empowered to see us,” said drummer and co-founder Salin Gas. She recounted that after shows, people often come up to her expressing how amazing it is to see them on stage. At last February’s Rap Battle for Representation, where Lotus Collective was the backing band, a woman in attendance said, “If you can do it, I can do it too. I can be part of the [music] scene.”

The collective hit the ground running in October 2017, playing and creating in the styles of soul, R&B, and hip-hop. Along with Paraghamian, Partouche Gutierrez, and Gas, Lotus was also co-founded by keyboardist Sarah MK.

“What makes us a collective is the fact that it’s permeable,” explained Paraghamian. “The fact is that we’re open [...] through gigs, we invite other female and femme musicians to jam. And then, we create songs together, we build on other people’s ideas and then we pull on a growing roster of musicians for different shows.”

Systematically being the only woman or femme musician among men can be isolating, Partouche Gutierrez said. The co-founders came together to actively make space for gender diversity in the music scene, creating a network of women and femme musicians and artists who can act as mentors to each other.

Being a group of women and femmes on stage creates a supportive environment that facilitates certain topics being expressed.

“It flips the script,” said MK. “For me,



joining Lotus was [the realization] that I've been feeling this thing this whole time, where I feel like I can't fully express myself or I can't fully show myself in a certain way. But I didn't realize it until experiencing Lotus. I think that's what happens with people."

"They didn't know that they could talk about certain things and that it can

be celebrated with a lot of people," she continued.

The Lotus Collective steadily grew over the last year, performing at Pop Montreal twice in September, and backing multiple Rap Battles for Social Justice shows. They've also opened for Fly Ladies and at Le Cypher jam nights—the list is not exhaustive. Beyond perfor-

mance, the collective also reaches into the community with a drive to educate.

"We've had a workshop on song writing with Aiza, who's a beautiful local artist, also an actress [...] How it went down is that we had a presentation from Aiza, so she basically talked a little bit about her creative process," explained Partouche Gutierrez. "Then we broke into small groups with a couple of chords and we had to write a song." They shared their creations with each other.

"I think one of the best feedback that I got was from one of the participant while she cried, which is awesome, because I think you need to be able to be emotionally



From top to bottom, Marcelle Partouche Gutierrez, Sarah MK, Monica Paraghamian, Salin Gas are the four co-founders of Montreal's blooming revelation, Lotus Collective.

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vulnerable in those spaces, is the [sense of] collective sharing,” said Partouche Gutierrez. “Sometimes when you’re always aiming at performing you forget that you can connect really deeply with people and not necessarily think about the aesthetics but more of the community component of music making.”

Paraghamian said that people need help in their lives, and for a mentor to guide them in recognizing their potential and talent even if they don’t see it in themselves yet.

She recalled the effect of Partouche Gutierrez’ guidance, saying that the artist took a chance on her. It was Paraghamian’s dream to sing with a band or in a collective.

“I remember the very first rehearsal that we had for [our first show] and I remember just having the mic in my hand and Marcelle looking at me with these beaming eyes [saying], ‘Come on, you can do it, you can do it,’” said Paraghamian. “And I remember when I sang loudly, she was like: ‘That’s what I knew was there.’”

Whether the meeting of the four core members was destiny, or dumb luck, we’ll never know. MK said that they all came across each other over the years, attending the same workshops with the urban arts improv collective Kalmunity and jam nights at Le Cypher.

“We all never all met at once,” MK said. “It’s Montreal; it’s like two degrees of separation.”

The creation of Lotus Collective was organic, stirred by the need to create space for women and femmes in the music scene. Partouche Gutierrez explained that during her vocal lessons with MK, they would

often discuss and share experiences about gender in the industry.

“The seed was kind of planted just through dialogue and observations, that we’re really lacking representation of women and femme and [non-binary] folks on the music scene.”

Paraghamian recalled sharing her budding idea of jam sessions at an event hosted by friends, The Gathering where women came together to share and support each other in carrying out personal projects.

“I remember Sarah was there, Marcelle was

there. And I talked about how I wanted to have jam sessions, I just wanted to organize those,” explained Paraghamian. “Marcelle was like, ‘I want to have this female and femme music collective,’ and I [thought], ‘OK, we can merge the two together.’”

Partouche Gutierrez explained that the Montreal music scene is not overtly unwelcoming to women and femmes, but it’s not made “accessible and inviting enough and welcoming enough for them to actually feel like they have a place. So, this is what Lotus can actually fill.”

Partouche Gutierrez is an experienced figure in the music scene, and has observed that male-identifying people tend to, “Flex a lot, like they want to show their chops and take that moment to shine, and that’s great because as an artist you work so hard into crafting something you want to be proud of.”

In the upcoming year, Lotus is planning to formalize their mandate, and work on composing more original songs.

“We want to show that women and femmes should be proud of what they craft,” continued Partouche Gutierrez. “But there’s also a component that I see, that we share space differently and we listen to each other differently. And I want people to [...] take that home with them. You can give and take space and you can listen, and be part of something that doesn’t have to take away all the light [from] other people.”

**“I want people to take that home with them. You can give and take space and you can listen, and be part of something that doesn’t have to take away all the light from other people.”**

**—Marcelle Partouche Gutierrez**



# Vogue Goes Viable?

The Evolving Role of Fashion as a Commodity,  
Art Form and Sustainability Movement

NANOR FROUNDJIAN

Opinions, consumption habits, behaviours, priorities and lifestyle choices are the raw expression of a generation's mentality. Certainly, what is considered fashionable today is radically different than in the twentieth century, since consumption patterns and social norms always evolve.

According to Nielsen, a global data analytics company, "66 per cent of global consumers say they're willing to pay more for sustainable brands—up 55 per cent from 2014." Buying sustainable products is a growing trend for the average millennial shopper. And this is not only limited to fashion; it encompasses several areas of many millennial's lives.

The book *Fashion Marketing: Contemporary Issues*, by Professor of marketing Tony Hines and Professor of design management and marketing Margaret Bruce, explained that, "The turbulent economic environments of the 1970s and 1980s [...] revolutionized the fashion industry as it began importing and exporting at a global level and the market was no longer constricted to the local economy."

## CONSUMERS TAKE THE LEAD

An industrial building in the Mile Ex opens into a short corridor leading to Marilyne Baril's atelier. Sunbeams shone through the window, giving more life to the already cosy space. The walls were lined with two rows of superimposed

clothing racks, reaching the ceiling.

Trousers with scalloped edges, striped blouses and winter coats are among the garments in a range of solid neutral tones or simple prints tightly packed onto the racks.

Baril is a fashion designer based in Montreal who launched her brand Marigold in 2013. She began the project after realizing she wanted to contribute to the local economy by creating ethically manufactured products that offer a sustainable "chic urban" alternative for the modern woman, which is how she described her customers.

One of the most significant shifts about the fashion consumption culture Baril has noticed pertains to the consumer-producer dynamic. "The market changed just because the consumer changed," she said.

"Before the opening of the market in approximately 2000, we didn't have Zara and H&M and all the big international brands, there were less choices. Seeing the 'Made in Canada' label was normal, and higher prices were normal," she explained.

Baril learned through her attendance and participation at a conference in New York City that manufacturers were pressed to conduct research about biological fabrics to supply the increasing demand of their customers.

"The designers, like me, we have to listen to them, and then we ask our manufacturer to produce biological fabrics," she explained.

In previous generations, the freedom of choice was limited, and the consumer

had to buy whatever was available, said Baril.

Many millennial shoppers are well informed about certain realities regarding health issues, environmental standings and fashion consumption due to the globalization and the abundance of information available on the web.

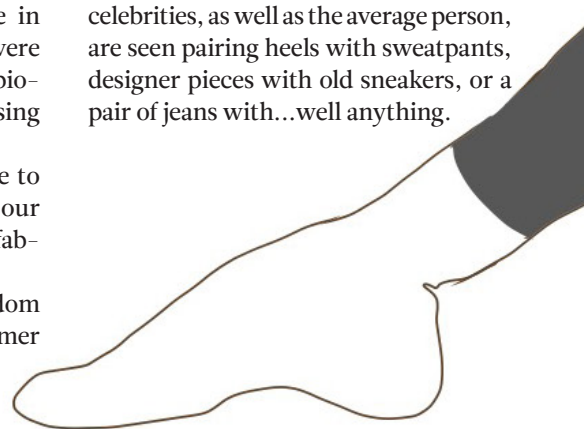
Norma Rantisi, professor in Concordia's geography, planning and environment department, said that the 1990s brought on, "The adoption of fashion [as] part of an individualistic kind of expression of your personality rather than following a collective lead."

The average consumer relies less on magazines to tell them what they should be wearing, Rantisi said.

"A lot of consumers want to pick their own styles to mix and match rather than to have kind of a complete seasonal style suggested to them," said Rantisi.

Consumers seem to have stepped away from always following a mold created by fashion magazines and are starting to personalize their projected personas.

Indeed, more and more Hollywood celebrities, as well as the average person, are seen pairing heels with sweatpants, designer pieces with old sneakers, or a pair of jeans with...well anything.



## FASHION ACCOMMODATES LIFE

With the accelerating pace of life, the overwhelmingly busy schedules and the rising expectations for women, especially after they joined the workforce, Rantisi said different aspects of women's lives have amalgamated.

"I think fashion has strived through the 1990s to become more about lifestyle, so you started to see the cross-marketing of clothing with home furnishing or with other things that embody someone's total package," she said.

The 90s also popularized the trend of casual dressing, which Rantisi said is an extension of the lifestyle approach to fashion.

Sustainability occupies an increasingly significant portion of today's generation's discourse, leading people to select their wardrobe according to their personal values and life choices. However, it is a slow transition.

Baril said she often receives remarks regarding the seemingly outstanding pricing of her collections because people don't understand the conceptual element behind her brand, which not only respects the craft of designing quality products, but also operates with ethical practices.

The importance of ethical manufacturing and sustainable production bypasses the shoppers who look for the

cheapest price tags. However, Baril's brand speaks to a clientele who recognize the values that Marigold embodies and brings to the fashion market.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FASHIONABLE

Pierre-Yann Dolbec, an assistant professor in Concordia's marketing department, pointed out that "the logic of accessibility" present in the fashion industry has changed the consumer's perception of what it means to be fashionable. "You can mix and match fast fashion brands, second-hand clothes, and designer items and still come out as being fashionable and stylish," he said.

Dolbec explained that this type of "mix and match" accessibility allows for the development of a more sustainable alternative, all the while giving people the chance to develop and diversify their personal style.

## \$ MONEY, MONEY, MONEY \$

Aside from second-hand shopping, the affordable alternatives consist of fast-fashion brands known for their unethical standards of production.

Rantisi suggested a solution to improve labour conditions in the garment production industry by re-proportioning the costs.

Rantisi explained that fair wages for labourers results in the production of



GRAPHIC  
KAYLEIGH VALENTINE

higher quality garments, while operating under sustainable and ethical standards, creating a “virtuous cycle.”

At the beginning of her career, when Baril worked for fast-fashion companies, she noticed the way they operate was based on a high turnover rate, prioritizing the quantity produced rather than its quality.

She said that some shoppers fail to recognize the value of her product without first understanding the operation of the garment manufacturing industry.

“[My girlfriends] buy my stuff only when it's at a discount.”

Baril explained that her friends say it is expensive, but she disagreed saying, “No, it's the real price of real clothes.”

In order to promote a conscious consumption habit, Baril believes it is crucial to educate people to look for ethical clothing choices. She explained that many of her customers do research before shopping in order to find clothing that has been ethically produced, because it is important to them.

Baril said it's all about the budget you allow yourself to spend on clothes. “You want to pay 10 bucks today, but in the back of your head, you know it's going to stay nice for maybe one month and you're gonna have to pay again.”

## CYCLE OF OVERCONSUMPTION

Overconsumption is an undeniable characteristic of the North American lifestyle. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported that 10.5 million tons of textiles, a category within municipal solid waste, were landfilled in 2015, up from 1.7 million tons in 1960.

With the influence of platforms like Instagram that prompt their users to present their ideal life to their virtual followers by showing off belongings as well as experiences, users are often pushed towards a materialistic lifestyle to sustain their brand. Dolbec suggested that consumers are unconsciously pursuing an ideal.

“Somehow, you are geared towards finding where you have an edge towards others, and it's not in an evil competitive kind of way but more of wanting to feel special,” he said.

He believes that part of the destructive consumption patterns are associated to ideologies promoted all around us that we subconsciously implement into our own lives.

Rantisi explained that “It's important to understand the structure of industry and the role it plays in driving consumption too. There are these general changes, demographic changes, changes in work and life boundaries, but it's also important to consider role of the industry. With globalization, which can be traced back to the 1970s, what you started to have was an outsourcing of production to overseas and there was a real decline in the industry because of competition.”

The restructuring of the clothing industry's entire operating system constituted a struggle for North American companies in regards to higher costs allocated to workers' salaries, compared to their competition. This pushed them to cut their expenses elsewhere continued Rantisi.

She said this led to a proliferation of competition based on innovation, which in fashion translates into multiple offerings rather than on one quality product.

**“I think a lot of fashion is, for most people, what you see hanging on the rack and not the whole system that lies behind it.”**

—Norma Rantisi

## IDENTITY PROJECTION

According to Rantisi, social media has become an outlet to project an idealized identity. Dolbec goes on to explain that the greater the chance we have to socially compare ourselves to others, the more likely we are to purposely engage in behaviour that we perceive as an elevation of our status, which can lead to dissatisfaction with life.

Social media platforms have given ways for their users to show off a lifestyle. Some, as Dolbec said, use it as a tool for competition and comparison. Others, however, want to advertise their lifestyle through their fashion choices that support a wholesome approach to life.

“People decide to show off what they want to show off,” Baril said. She added that her clientele wants it to be known that they are wearing Marigold, since it is a sustainable and locally produced brand. As a response to her customers' request, Baril designed t-shirts with the word “Marigold” centered on the front in her brand's font. “Montreal” appears right under it, in a smaller font size. She even made an elastic trimming repeating the word “Marigold” which she plans to include on upcoming undergarments designs.

Baril hopes that sustainable fashion will outlive its current status of being a trend for some consumers, leading to it becoming a permanent choice.

## LEANING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

With the rise in popularity of sustainable consumption, the thrifting market has gained a newfound fame. Although some thrift stores still adhere to their original purpose of simply providing an affordable option for the less fortunate, many in Montreal are part of a trendsetting market.

Dolbec pointed out that the way, “Second hand is being pushed at the moment is very well embedded into social distinctiveness, like logic, because [consumers] can go to a second hand shop and buy clothes that would be the

same price as they would be at H&M. I don't think it's outside of a neoliberal capitalist system, I think it's very well embedded in it."

Rantisi said that, "Thrifting is itself now, in response, becoming appropriated as also a new means of market niche or market advantage and finding ways of ensuring that sustainability is conceived not only in terms of environment impacts but also social considerations and affordability. My only concern is that thrifting itself is becoming an industry."

Nevertheless, thrifting is an option that works with the model of recycling and reusing clothes and does not require new production.

While the debate around its economic future in the fashion scene continues, the principles of thrift shopping resonate with today's consumers, who have grown conscious about environmental issues and their own sense of individualism.

### MOVING FORWARD

Despite the consumer's efforts to make conscious decisions, Baril pointed out that oftentimes, the entirety of the fashion industry is reduced to the final product people see in stores or in magazines.

"But when it comes to fashion industry, because we don't see [its production] and it's far [removed]; we don't see [the condition of the working people] and we don't want to see it," she said.

Rantisi expressed a similar conviction to Baril explaining that, "I think a lot of fashion is, for most people, what you see hanging on the rack and not the whole system that lies behind it." □

GRAPHIC

NANOR FROUNDJIAN



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# "My Dream Job"

Daryl Ashenden Loves Every Minute of His Life as an Equipment Manager

ELIAS GRIGORIADIS  
@ELIGRIGORIADIS

On Nov. 9, the Stingers men's hockey team prepared for another game against their crosstown rivals as they visited McGill's McConnell Arena. What was supposed to be an intense and riveting game turned into a needlessly violent affair with more penalty minutes than total time played. What most onlookers didn't notice was the absolute chaos that was unfolding behind the scenes.

With broken sticks, broken helmets, and bloody injuries all needing to be addressed simultaneously, the night was the quintessential example of something Stingers equipment manager Daryl Ashenden calls a "nightmare game."



"The first five minutes of that game, I probably did more behind the bench than I had at any point during the season," said Ashenden. "I felt like a player in that respect, because you can't let anything get to you and you can't get in your own head, otherwise you're screwed."

Hockey operates at ludicrous speeds, which means things are bound to break, undo, or just simply wear out. If that

ever happens in the middle of a game, being prepared for everything that such an unpredictable sport can throw your way is of paramount importance.

Equipment management is all about operating behind the scenes. If nobody notices you, odds are you're doing your job right. However, with that territory comes a thankless and gruelling endeavour that can become monotonous and borderline maddening if you aren't cut out for it.

"You really have to love what you do to have this job, or else you'll drive yourself insane within a couple of days," laughed Ashenden. "It's definitely not a job for everyone, and people who think it's an easy ride of just showing up to watch hockey and replacing a few broken sticks here and there are in for a wild surprise."

Ashenden got his start in the Greater Metro Junior Hockey League with his hometown Tottenham Steam. He spent two years with the North Bay Battalion in the Ontario Hockey League before coming on board with the Stingers. Between working in retail, various pro-shops and coaching, Ashenden's working experience with equipment spans over 20



years, despite only having had the title of equipment manager for a portion of them.

“It just felt like the natural progression of things for me since I want to stay involved in hockey as much as possible,” Ashenden said. “Once I finished playing, I started coaching and now as an equipment manager I still get to be involved with a team and have a really good bond with the guys.”

It’s not just Ashenden who enjoys the players’ company as that sentiment is often reciprocated. Stingers defence-man Carl Neill and others in the locker room say they’ve noticed how much more personal of an approach Ashenden implements compared to past equipment managers.

“Daryl is one of the guys, no doubt about it,” said Neill. “He’s the hardest worker on the team and he’s here more than anyone else so everybody just enjoys having that kind of passion around.”

Ashenden’s days start bright and early at 4:30 a.m. to be able to make it to the Loyola campus rink by 5:30 a.m. Once there, he prepares for the women’s team’s practice, which takes place before the men get on. He works in conjunction with Andrew Davis, who works as an equipment manager on the women’s games, to assure that the practice goes off without a hitch. Responsibilities range from laundry to double checking with all the players to make sure everything is in order.

“[Ashenden’s] already got his hands full with the men’s team but he always

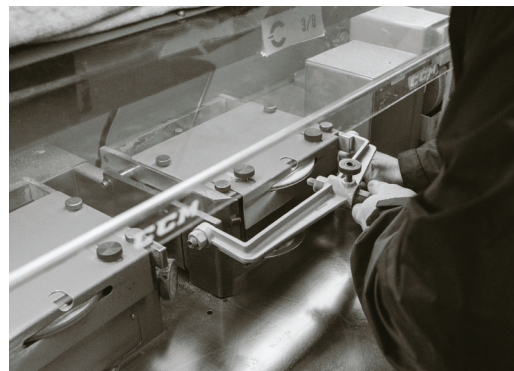
manages to find time to help out with anything we need,” said women’s team captain Devon Thompson. “It’s always nice for everybody’s morale to have someone that’s so passionate about what they do.”

After finishing the preparations for the women’s practice at around 7 a.m., Ashenden then turns his full attention to the men’s practice, where he replaces any broken equipment, sharpens everyone’s skates, and organizes the jerseys after men’s head coach Marc-André Élement informs him of the lines.

“[Ashenden’s] been with us less than a year and he’s really transitioned nicely,” said Élement. “He’s getting along really well with the guys and he takes any possible situation in stride. He’s a guy you can count on and that’s a big thing in your staff.”

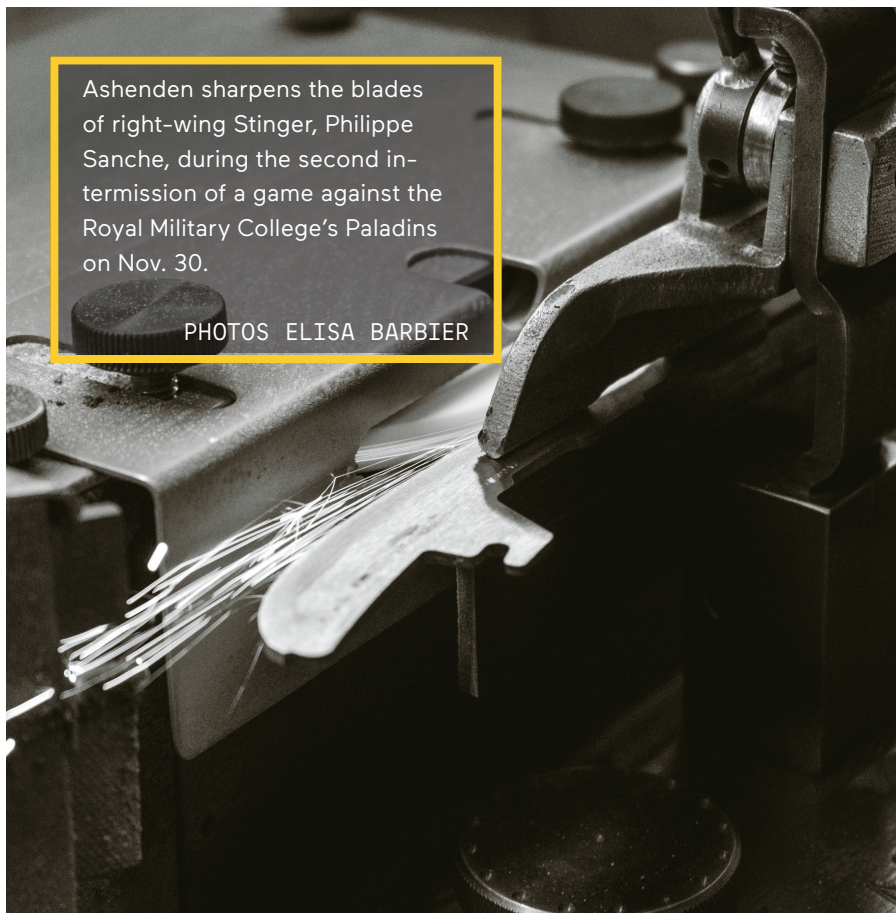
Everything is in order and ready for practice at 9 a.m., hours before the men’s team is on the ice. That kind of preparation and readiness has been a focus for Ashenden since his days in his hometown of Tottenham.

“Whether it’s practice or a game day, I always like getting everything done early so that if there’s ever even a potential problem we can address it before the



Ashenden sharpens the blades of right-wing Stinger, Philippe Sanche, during the second intermission of a game against the Royal Military College’s Paladins on Nov. 30.

PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER



players even get here,” said Ashenden. “I usually like to get to the rink four or five hours before a game so that everything runs smoothly come game-time.”

It’s not just the comradery that helps Ashenden stay motivated, but a passion for both hockey and its minutiae that keeps him light on his feet and always smiling. Even if he has to run around all practice to make sure everything is handled, there’s always a discernable spring in his step.

“At the end of the day, hockey is my life. I get up every morning and I’m instantly surrounded by my favourite sport. Then, I get to talk about it with a bunch of friends who feel exactly the same way,” said Ashenden. “How can you not be motivated to work when the job is this great?”

While playing a team sport is in no way a rarity, very few have gotten to the level where an equipment manager is provided. This leads to the misconception that the job essentially boils down to being an “overqualified water-boy,” something

**“At the end of the day, hockey is my life. I get up every morning and I’m instantly surrounded by my favourite sport. Then, I get to talk about it with a bunch of friends who feel exactly the same way.”**

— *Daryl Ashenden*


that couldn’t be further from the truth.

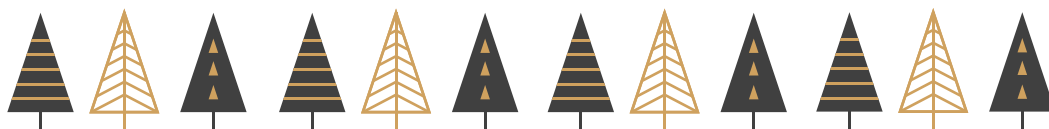
“I really do take offense to that when people think that way. This is my dream job and every day I get to come to the rink with a bunch of great guys and do what I love,” said Ashenden. “I think that a lot of those ideas might just come from people not necessarily being

informed and the fact that equipment managers aren’t available at every level and they may not have much experience with one.”

Stingers players are certainly aware of just how important Ashenden and his work are.

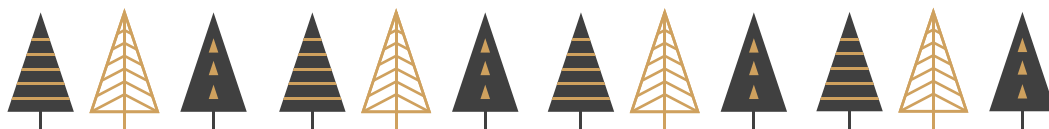
“He gets nowhere near enough credit for what he does; it’s a pretty thankless job and he still comes in every day with the best attitude and a massive smile” said Neill. “He works insane hours and always goes above and beyond what’s needed of him.”

What people can take away from Ashenden’s story is that you may not know what your dream job is right away. But once you find it, nothing—not even sweaty, smelly hockey equipment or waking up before sunrise—can stop you from being passionate about working in a field where you not only excel, but are surrounded by people who appreciate effort and commitment. 



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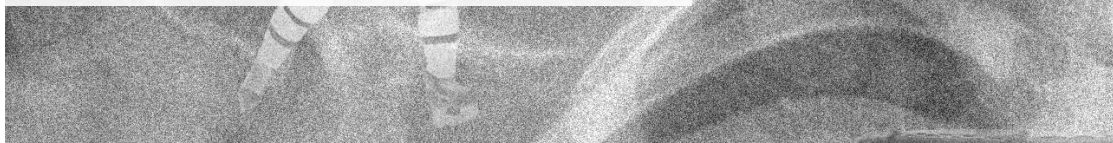
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# Battling Back

## Athletic Injuries Also Leave Psychological Scars

WALA AMARA  
@WALAAMARA



Injuries in sports are anything but surprising. From the amateur level to professional leagues, whenever there is physicality, incidents are inevitable, whether minor or major.

These injuries, however, don't just occur on the physical level. Several studies have shown that athletes are prone to experience mental health struggles like depression or anxiety at some point following their injury.

When an athlete gets injured, they are immediately overwhelmed by an adrenaline rush followed by the stress of not knowing what has just happened. Whether the incident is minor or major, they wonder if they'll make it back. Or are they out indefinitely? A series of thoughts and fears happen instantly.

How important is an athlete's mental health while going through the recovery process? How important is it to create a safe environment for athletes to speak up about how they feel following an injury?

Looking at things more thoroughly, it's not a simple matter.

Last season during the fall semester, Concordia Stingers women's basketball shooting guard Aurélie D'Anjou Drouin tore ligaments in her right ankle before completely dislocating her left ankle two months later.

"At that time, I thought it was over for me," she said. "After the game, I was really emotional, I thought I had broken up with basketball for good."

Drouin said her confidence levels went downhill after two back-to-back injuries. She wasn't able to walk without crutches for two months and it took her

an extra month before she was able to trust her body again.

"The way we're coached is very beneficial to us when it comes to remaining strong mentally. It was due to the way I was coached that I got back to playing shape," said D'Anjou Drouin.

An open and honest relationship with her team and its coaching staff let D'Anjou Drouin keep a positive mindset throughout her long recovery process.

The first person to respond to the athletes upon injury is the athletic therapist in most cases. Therapists are crucial to the athlete's well-being from the moment they get hurt to the moment they are fully recovered.

NBA Brooklyn Nets assistant athletic trainer Jana Austin elaborated on the importance of her job as a therapist and point of first contact after an injury. Not long ago, she assisted Nets' shooting guard Caris LeVert as he left a game with a gruesome right leg injury on Nov. 12.

"Depending on the severity of the injury, the ones that are more long-term such as major injuries usually harbour the emotion of denial," she said. "That definitely is something that you see early on. The best thing is to educate the

players about their injury and the rehab process."

Austin articulated the importance of being honest but optimistic with players at the same time. That allows them to feel some positivity.

"There are going to be good days and bad days but you as a clinician have to make sure you stay neutral and keep coming with the positive reinforcements," she continued.

Stingers men's basketball forward Sami Ghandour also dislocated his shoulder during last season's finals against McGill.

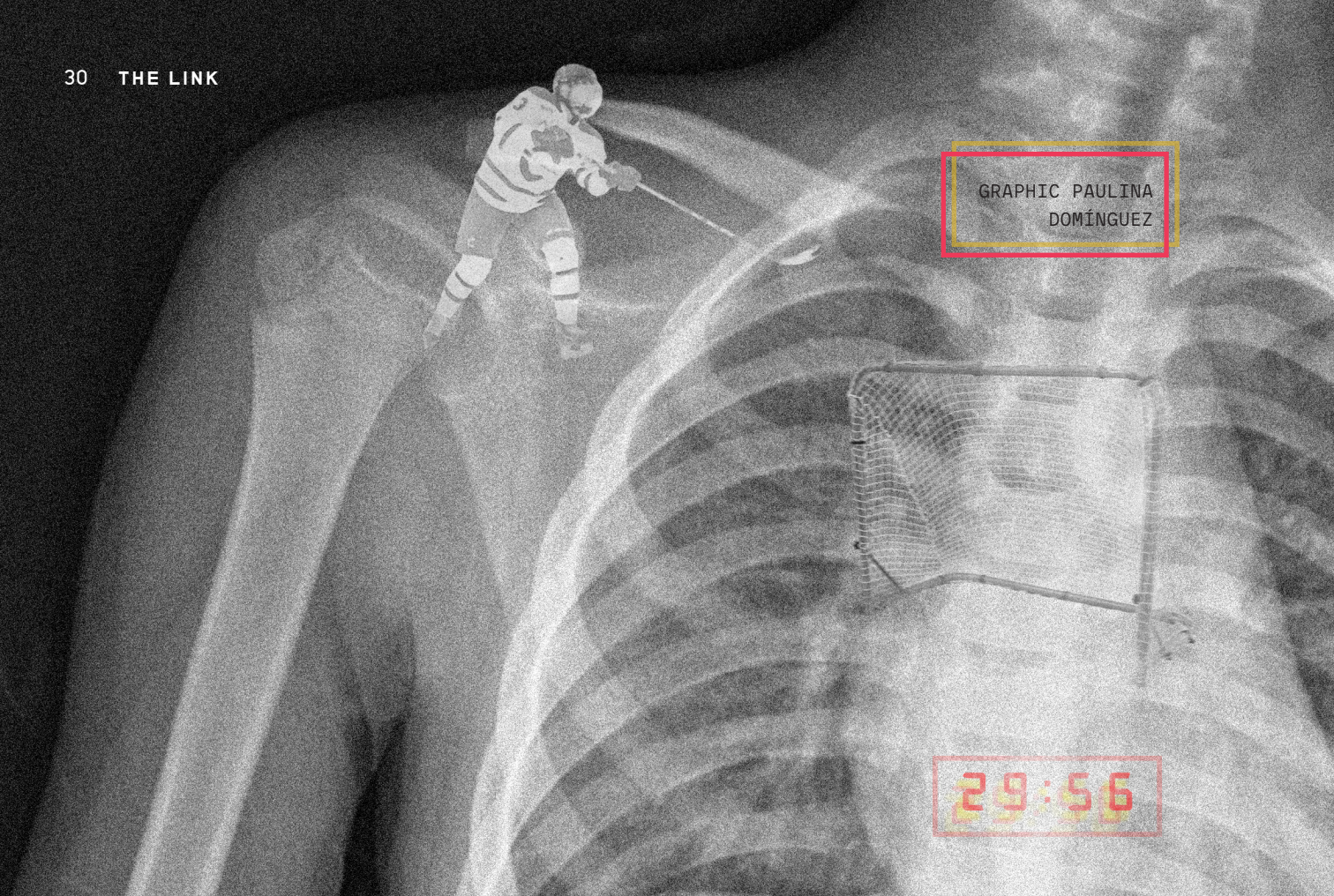
"At first, I was in total shock when I found out that I would need surgery and miss six months of playing

basketball. It seemed unreal. I had a lot of thoughts in my head. Like, 'Would I ever get back to being how I was before getting injured?'" Ghandour said.

Fortunately, Ghandour's father, who had previously dealt with injuries in his former kick-boxing career, was supportive of him through his rehabilitation. His dad reassured him that after surgery, his shoulder would be much better and that it wouldn't be his only season as a Stinger. Ghandour credits his father for helping him tremendously

**"It hurts to watch something that you love doing so much but you physically can't do it. Sometimes, I would think to myself 'is this it? Like, will I ever be able to play again? Could this be the end of my career?'"**

— Sami Ghandour



through the recovery process.

"It hurts to watch something that you love doing so much but you physically can't do it. Sometimes, I would think to myself, 'Is this it? Like, will I ever be able to play again? Could this be the end of my career?'" Ghandour continued.

The second-year forward got back to the floor in playing shape in mid-November and ever since, he has been feeling better and able to run the floor.

Former Canada national basketball team player and Concordia Stingers men's basketball assistant coach Dwight Walton is accustomed to the world of injuries.

Walton was first introduced to dealing with physical distress back in 1991 at the age of 26 when he had to have his left knee operated on. He was with Canada's national team at the time. Walton woke up one morning and could not bend his leg. When he went to the training room, the therapists told him that he would have to undergo surgery.

All of Walton's injuries, however, are different in the sense that they did not occur while playing. "My injuries are more wear and tear," he said. "I'm a sports guy and my body just started [weakening]."

Throughout his basketball career, Walton underwent a total of five knee surgeries, three on his left knee and two on his right. Alongside the knee injuries, he also previously dealt with a dislocated shoulder and a broken jaw.

The road of distress didn't end there for Walton. At the age of 35, he found out he had arthritis but decided to continue playing. As a result his body started breaking down. In June 2017, he was obliged to undergo a hip replacement followed by another replacement in the summer of 2018.

As per exposure to rehabilitation, Walton put a lot of emphasis on not taking any alternate routes to getting back into playing shape.

"You may take shortcuts to get back, you may feel okay but you're not truly 100 [per cent]. As a result of that, more surgeries occur, and

because we're athletes we have pride. We're competitive. We're strong. We're also taught to be tough," said Walton. "But when we're tough, we're not smart either. I came back before I was supposed to, that was my competitive drive, I wanted to keep my spot on the team so nobody else would get it."

Sports culture has always been known for being "tough." Everybody is there to win.

When speaking about toughness in sports, the coach explained that his hope when dealing with players is that he and the coaching staff try to get as close to them as possible.

"Unless you open up to us as coaches, we don't know what you're going through off the court. We don't know unless you tell us," he said.

Sadness, isolation, disengagement, irritation, frustration, sleep disturbance and changes in appetite are all common emotional responses that injured athletes go through.

According to Walton, athletes often hear, "'Stop being soft, stop being a wimp, stop being weak mentally.' It's an unfortunate part of the culture," he added. "I've been hearing it since I've been an athlete. It's difficult for people to come out and talk about their personal lives because they don't want to come across as being soft."

Walton explained that when dealing with mental illness, athletes are automatically considered weak, when that couldn't be farther from the truth.

"Our job is also being a [psychologist]," he said, explaining the need for coaches to be there for their players when times get tough.

While not every institution has the proper resources to assist athletes through rehabilitation, the care of coaches and therapists, not only physically but mentally, proved to be welcome help for athletes like D'Anjou Drouin and Ghandour. For injured athletes, the long road to recovery travels through the mental just as much as the physical. □

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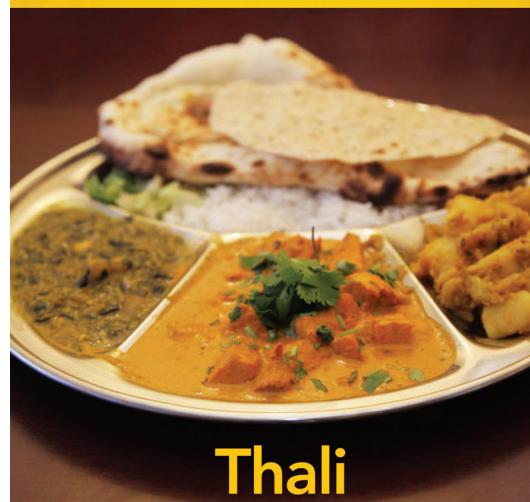
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# Around the World in 80 Games

How a Lack of Options Brought European Athletes to Concordia

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“Hockey where I lived is really not big at all. I really wanted to play at a normal level and back home I had to play with guys, and I really wanted to play with girls again,” said Bieke van Nes, one of Concordia’s newest women’s hockey players and one of only two players from outside of Canada on the team.

Van Nes, a Dutch native, had thought about going abroad again after spending time back home in Amsterdam. She soon found herself in Canada, a familiar hockey country where she had previously spent a year playing with a team in Banff, Alberta.

“My friend played here on the hockey team as well and I really wanted to go abroad again,” said van Nes. “So I kind of through her got in contact with Julie [Chu] and Mike [McGrath] again and that’s how I ended up back here.”

The friend van Nes is referring to is Emily Even. She spent four seasons on defence with the Stingers women’s hockey team, from the 2013–2014 school year to the 2016–2017 one. The former Stinger is an Amsterdam native as well, and has spent a number of years in the Dutch national development program

alongside van Nes.

“Bieke and I grew up playing against and with each other, so she approached me with the idea of potentially coming back to North America to continue to play competitive hockey,” said Even. “I had just graduated from Concordia and felt that her personality and character aligned well with the culture coach Chu and McGrath were implementing.”

Knowing that Even was familiar with Concordia’s program and recommended it, having had a positive experience living in Canada previously was enough to convince van Nes to make the jump. Now she finds herself a U Sports athlete on one of the top teams in the country.

“I think it’s going really well,” she said. “This year we have a big rookie

**“I really wanted to continue studying and play my sport, and the fact that in North America it’s really school and sports intertwined, we don’t find that in Europe.”**

— *Bieke van Nes*

class, so that kind of makes the dynamic between veterans and rookies a bit blurred because half the team [are] rookies. Plus everyone is really making the effort to make everyone feel included, it’s just the spirit and the team-first mentality and the inclusion of everyone, even if you’re from Europe. I think that’s going to translate on the ice as well.”

Van Nes said that she’s been really enjoying her time at Concordia this season. One of the main reasons Canada and university sports were a big draw for her when deciding to go abroad again was the opportunity to continue her studies while playing at an elite level, something uncommon in her home country.



“I really like the atmosphere here and the fact that it’s school and sports combined,” she explained. “If I wanted to play with girls I could have done that in Europe as well, but I really wanted to continue studying and playing my sport, and the fact that in North America it’s really school and sports intertwined, we don’t find that in Europe.”

Something that can be noted about North American university athletics is that the possibilities are nearly endless in terms of options for athletes of all levels, and elite athletes in particular, in terms of schools to go to and teams to play for. Nowhere in Europe can you find as many nationally and internationally recognized varsity programs as are offered in Canada and the United States.

Of course, it is possible for an athlete to compete in their sport while working towards a secondary education in Europe, but options are slim on campus and high-level athletes are often forced to look



Van Nes has enjoyed the blend of on and off-ice opportunities that she has found at Concordia.

PHOTOS SARAH BOUMEDDA



elsewhere for elite programs to partake in.

“Athletics and school are often two separate entities, which makes balancing the two more complicated,” said Even. “On top of that, athletics are significantly better funded in North America than in Europe. The overall athlete culture is accessible from a young age, whereas athletes in Europe need to invest a lot of their own time, effort and money to even be able to play.”

In Canada, elite level athletics and quality education live in harmony by allowing athletes to succeed in their sport and in their academic endeavours, making it a very attractive option for young athletes looking to study and compete abroad. Not to mention the wealth of resources for young athletes when it comes to mentorship.

Concordia’s women’s hockey team in particular boasts an impressive roster of coaches. Head coach Julie Chu, the former captain of team USA is backed by Caroline Ouellette, former team Canada captain, each of whom have multiple Olympic medals to their name. The Stingers coaching staff also includes a number of current and former Canadian Women’s Hockey League pro players.

The opportunities for athletes when their time as a student is up are plentiful in North America.

While not everyone is guaranteed a professional contract at the end of their university eligibility, U Sports and the NCAA often serve as stepping stones to semi professional or professional careers. A number of Stingers have gone on to play professionally, especially women’s

hockey players. In the last few years, three Stingers have been drafted to Les Canadiennes de Montreal in the CWHL draft: including former captains Tracy-Ann Lavigne in 2017 as well as Marie-Joëlle Allard and Caroll-Ann Gagné in 2018.

Despite being happy with her decision to come to Canada, van Nes acknowledges that moving halfway across the world was no easy task.

“Obviously moving countries is a big step, there’s a lot to think about and a lot to take care of,” she said. She also explained that while she sometimes feels homesick, she thinks of it as less of missing home in the physical sense.

“[It’s not] home itself,” she

said. “I used to move around a lot when I was a kid in general so really, not like a specific home but my family and my friends, I’d like to see them.”

Van Nes’ fellow Stinger Stijn Kruidenier, also a Dutch native, has found himself in a similar situation to van Nes. As a member of Concordia’s men’s soccer team for the past two seasons, the marketing masters student at the John Molson School of Business has spent a number of years travelling the world as both a student and an athlete.

Moving from place to place as a child for his father’s career, Kruidenier said he caught the travel bug and it just stuck with him. He was born in Amsterdam, and has lived or studied in the United States, Switzerland, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

“The younger part of my life was mainly due to my parents, but I guess it kind of got built into me that I like adventuring a little bit,” he explained.

Prior to committing to Concordia for his graduate studies, Kruidenier earned bachelor’s degrees from Nyenrode New Business School in Amsterdam and Westminster University in the UK. After finishing, Kruidenier decided he wanted to move west. Like van Nes, he moved to Canada with the hopes of obtaining a degree while continuing to play soccer at a high level.

“I came to Canada just because I wanted to play soccer and in Europe you can’t play soccer and study at the same time, it’s not very well coordinated,” he said.

For the past two seasons, Kruidenier has settled into life in Montreal, and as a member of Concordia’s men’s soccer team. Despite the team’s less than stel-



Kruidenier decided on Canada, where he finished his second season with the Stingers, because the country offers the opportunity to study and play.

PHOTO ELISA BARBIER



lar record over his two seasons with the program, Kruidenier said he's really enjoyed his experience.

"I really enjoy the Stingers, it's a really cool community and it's fun to play in," he said. "I think the level is quite high, unfortunately we didn't have the best of seasons but I think there's plenty of potential and talent there."

As the marketing student prepares to finish his degree and graduate at the end of this school year, he's contemplated staying in Montreal or somewhere else in Canada.

"That's still to be determined," he chuckled.

For now, van Nes is here to stay as she finishes up her masters. Living away from home and playing with the Stingers in Montreal, van Nes still remains connected to her birth country as a member of the Dutch national women's hockey team. The young forward has represented the Netherlands in seven consecutive International Ice Hockey

Federation Women's World Championships, and participated in the Olympic Games qualification for the 2018 Winter Olympics held in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

She plans to continue representing her country while completing her degree at Concordia, something she said is common among many of her teammates on Team Netherlands.

"A lot of the girls on our team right now actually play abroad because like I said hockey back home is really small," she said. "There's a lot of girls on our team who branch out, in Europe mostly, like Scandinavia, Sweden."

We have Worlds in April so that's right after the season ends so it lines up perfectly."

During her time here with the Stingers, she puts in her own hours in the gym training in anticipation of the upcoming World Championships; her teammates do the same with their respective club teams. Over the holiday break, van Nes

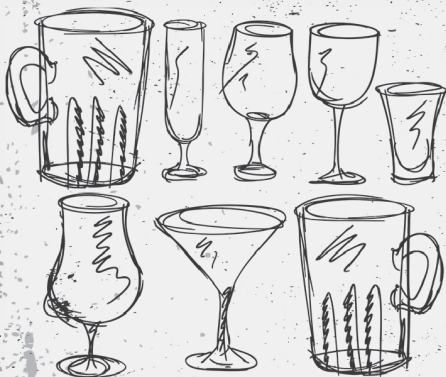
joined her Team Netherlands teammates on home turf where they had the chance to regroup and train as a team.

"Usually that's how we group together, and then a couple weeks before Worlds we have training as well," she said. "For a national team that's kind of always the case though, you can't always train as intensively with that team as we do here [at Concordia]."

Van Nes also mentioned that a more long term stay in Montreal or Canada might be in her plans, but since she still has two years to work towards her degree, that's a conversation for another day.

"It depends, because after this I'm done studying and I'm not going to do another masters or anything," she said. "I'm going to spend the next two years here and then I'm going to have to get a job. Maybe I'll get a job around here, and the chances are bigger that I find a job here rather than back home. So maybe I'll stick around. I really like Canada, it's just so much fun here." ☐

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# Happy 2019!

To those of you returning from the holiday break, welcome back!

If you are joining our community for a first term, I hope you'll enjoy everything Concordia has to offer.

I'd like to invite all of you to bring a mug and join me for a **Back-to-School Get-Together** with snacks and fair trade coffee and tea:

- January 8, 2:00 to 3:30 at Loyola in the SP Atrium
- January 9, 2:00 to 3:30 at SGW, EV Atrium



Alan Shepard  
President

[alan.shepard@concordia.ca](mailto:alan.shepard@concordia.ca)

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# Don't @ Me: There Are No Decent Christmas Songs From the Twenty-First Century

When the Last Good One Dates Back to 1994, You Know We've Got a Problem

CAITLIN YARDLEY

Whether or not you celebrate Christmas, the music is unavoidable. By the middle of December, everyone has re-learned the lyrics to “Jingle Bell Rock,” and Wham’s “Last Christmas” is blasted on repeat on every Christmas playlist on the planet.

But you know what you won’t find on a great Christmas classics list? Any songs written within the past 20 years.

Mariah Carey’s “All I Want for Christmas Is You” was released over 24 years ago, and since then, not a single potential Christmas classic has emerged.

Since the break of the twenty-first century, we have seen the development of some very revolutionary technologies in the music industry. We’ve gotten the iPod, YouTube music channels, and more

music streaming services than you can count. But one thing the new millennium has yet to come up with is a half-decent Christmas chart-topper.

Christmas music is supposed to heighten all of our capitalist urges, to purchase ironic Christmas sweaters and spend copious amounts of money and time in shopping malls. Yet, despite it all, these tunes still manage to remedy the winter blues during one of the most stressful times of the year.

There is an instant nostalgia that comes with a great Christmas tune. The first few notes of “Feliz Navidad” will send everyone to the dance floor, and Elvis Presley’s “Blue Christmas” can get anyone in touch with their sensitive side. The fact is, no matter how many

new Christmas songs come out each year, none of them are any less disappointing than the last.

The list of contenders for a new holiday hit is pretty short so far, but it does include Justin Bieber’s “Mistletoe,” which managed to hit the Billboard charts. The catchy tune from 2011 (arguably Bieber’s prime) will still play on loudspeakers while you’re rushing to grab those last minute Secret Santa presents at the mall. However, the lukewarm performance and lyrics will not find their way to any reputable Christmas playlist.

Ariana Grande’s “Santa Tell Me” or “Christmas Lights” by Coldplay are other examples of songs that just fall a little short, but they may be the closest songs we have to modern Christmas classics.

There are only so many covers of songs like “White Christmas” I can take, even if they are from everybody’s favorite family man, Michael Bublé, who continues to try very hard to be Frank Sinatra on his rendition of the holiday classic. And Eartha Kitt’s version of “Santa Baby” will always be number one in my mind, no matter how many people try and fail to cover it.

There is still room on my playlist for some great Christmas jingles, but all I can say is that when it comes to the 2000s and 2010s, I am truly disappointed in their failed attempts at creating a Christmas classic. □



GRAPHIC  
ELISA BARBIER

# Sex Ed(itorial): I Can't Believe It's Not Urine!

## Squirting, Explained

SAVANNAH STEWART  
@SAV\_EDEN\_S

It's 2019, yet it's still up for debate whether or not ejaculating or "squirting" are genuine phenomena that people with vulvas can experience.

Sadly, many people actually know very little about the sexual pleasure of biologically female bodies, including some people in possession of such a body and even medical professionals. This leads to all sorts of misinformation, and can make people who experience squirting feel like there's something wrong with them, when it's actually a very natural response to a specific type of stimulation.

Only a few days before pitching the idea of writing an article demystifying squirting, I'd gotten into a disagreement with a guy friend about whether or not it's actually a real thing. "It's just pee," he insisted vehemently, ignoring the fact that he doesn't pos-

sess the parts required to experience the sensation firsthand.

Now I have to be honest. When I started doing research before writing this article, I learned just how misinformed I also was about this phenomenon. Before, I thought people who insisted that squirting is strictly urination couldn't be more wrong. I'll concede now that there is a valid reason for the ejaculating and peeing mix up, which I'll get into soon. But first, let me break down some of the basic information required to understand this juicy phenomenon.

When squirting, the fluid actually comes from the urethra, not the vaginal opening. But though it does come from the same canal, those who experience squirting can attest that it is often different from urine in its colour, consistency and smell. Studies conducted on the ejaculate have shown that its composition is different as well, as it contains a protein called prostate-specific antigen, something that isn't found in urine.

This protein comes from glands that surround the urethra. In biologically male bodies, these glands make up the prostate, which produces fluid that nourishes and protects sperm. In bodies with a vulva, the glands are known as Skene's glands, or the "female prostate." The Skene's glands' primary function is to lubricate the urethra, and is believed to help protect the body from urinary tract infections. Studies have shown that when the glands are stimulated through the vaginal wall—specifically, at a dime-sized spot a few centimetres in the vagina called the G-spot—they can also expel a fluid that is usually referred to as female ejaculate, which contains that PSA protein we talked about before.

Now, here's where it gets tricky, and where the whole "pee" thing comes in. It's recently been shown through studies that two different fluids are expelled from the urethra as a result of this stimulation. Some people report small amounts of a milky white substance similar to semen, while others describe larger amounts of a clear watery fluid.

The former is the female ejaculate that I just mentioned, coming from the



Skene's glands. The latter, when analyzed, does contain the protein, but also contains urea, meaning it comes from the bladder and is likely mixed with the ejaculate coming from the glands in the urethra. Colloquially, this is what folks call "squirting."

Still, squirting is not the same as peeing. Peeing is—usually—the voluntary act of expelling urine. There is nothing really voluntary about squirting, as anyone who's experienced it can tell you.

For the sake of comprehension, let me put it this way: squirting is the involuntary expulsion of the bladder at the same time as the expulsion of ejaculate.

A 2014 study conducted by gynecologist Dr. Samuel Salama on seven women who reported being able to squirt showed that even though the women emptied their bladders before beginning to stimulate themselves, their bladders would then quickly refill during that

stimulation and expel at the moment of climax. A 2011 study showed that the fluid that came from squirting was more diluted than urine, which explains the lack of colour and smell.

**Squirting is a natural response to G-spot stimulation that can occur to between 10 and 40 per cent of people, as it's often cited.**

Though it may appear to be easy to chalk squirting up to involuntarily peeing yourself, these two studies indicate that there is something else going on, an anatomical response to pleasure

involving both the Skene's glands and the bladder that we are only just starting to understand.

We could attribute this ignorance to a patriarchal unwillingness to get to the bottom of female pleasure. Though squirting was referenced in written texts dating back to fourth century China and even pondered by Aristotle, later centuries came with sexual repression and a widespread concern with women actually feeling sexual pleasure. As such, squirting only began to be studied in the

later half of the 1900s.

Still, there are some things we do know, or at least that we are pretty sure of.

For one, squirting is a natural response to G-spot stimulation that can occur to between 10 and 40 per cent of people, as it's often cited. Salama, who conducted the 2014 study, believes that every person with a vulva is theoretically capable of squirting.

We also know that squirting doesn't necessarily happen at the same time as an orgasm for some people, but for many others it does. And, we know that this phenomenon is by no means the ultimate feeling of pleasure: some people who squirt report that it's actually a draining, uncomfortable experience, while others feel otherwise.

Porn also misinforms people by depicting women squirting after being aggressively stimulated. Deborah Sundahl, author of *Female Ejaculation and the G-Spot*, recommends taking it slow and massaging the G-Spot more gently and rhythmically, spending all the time necessary to reach climax and not hurrying things to a close.

If squirting feels like a nuisance and leads to discomfort, pelvic floor strengthening and taking frequent bathroom breaks during pleasurable moments are some ways to avoid it. But if it isn't a bother, squirting is really nothing to worry about, or be ashamed about.

So if squirting feels good, go ahead and lean into it. Practice on yourself, or experiment with a partner. Just as with any other sex act, keep things consensual and safe, and replace your fluids by drinking lots of water. Have fun! ☞

PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER  
AND AIDEN LOCKE

# Polytechnique Is No Longer an Isolated Incident

A People's History  
of Canada Column

APRIL TARDIF-LEVESQUE  
@APRILTARDIF

This year, it will have been 30 years since the Polytechnique shooting, which claimed the lives of 14 promising women engineers. The shooter, Marc Lépine, was a spurned engineering applicant who felt women took what he thought was his rightful place. We still think solemnly of the brilliant engineers that could have been, these sisters and daughters, friends and family members, taken away from their loved ones violently by someone full of blind hatred. Someone who wanted them dead just for being born as they were, for daring to want what he felt was his birthright as a man. We still hold ceremonies and vigils, that I dutifully attend and bear in mind, and as people whisper or think “never again,” a chill runs down my very core.

Coming from a troubled home and childhood, Lépine was himself a troubled person. While he blamed many, including women, for his shortcomings in life, the truth is that women had nothing to do with his failures. He applied to study engineering, and was rejected because he had prerequisites to complete first. He was rejected a second time for incomplete prerequisites a few months later. On Dec. 6 1989, after months of planning, the 25 year-old walked into Polytechnique and shot 28 people, killing 14 women.

He felt women were taking his place, that women didn't belong in male-dominated professions like engineering. His manifesto found among his possessions was clear about this, and he even enclosed a list of notable feminists he

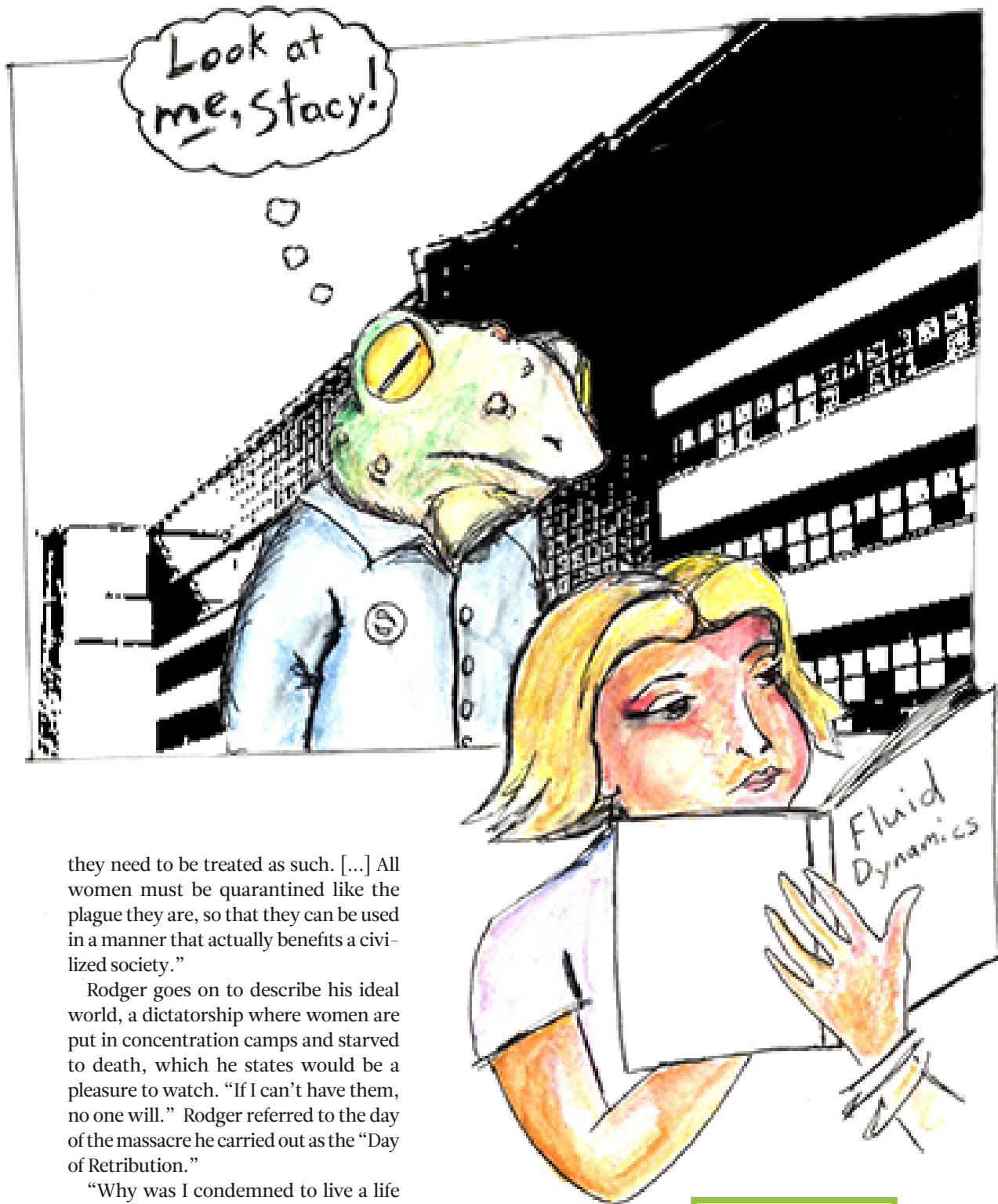
would have killed had he had the chance on his suicide note, like CBC reporter Francine Pelletier. Lépine turned the gun on himself before he could be arrested, and although he's dead, the memory of this day isn't. Every year, Montrealers put on a vigil to honour the memory of the dead and reflect on ongoing misogyny. The memory of the events of this day remain haunting. As a woman, I know better than to think events like the Polytechnique shooting are left in the past, however.

In the last few years, we have seen the incel—or involuntary celibate—movement, go mainstream. The meaning of the term is found in the growing movement of involuntary celibacy or virginity being blamed on the entire female population.

Following their ban from Reddit (they have since resurfaced in differently-named subreddits), screenshots give a dark glimpse into some of the mentalities and ideas of how to treat women who refuse to put out. While their views are both dangerous and toxic, the movement was basically treated as a joke. That changed pretty quickly, though.

In May 2014, Elliot Rodger killed six people in Isla Vista, California. A video posted to YouTube and emails sent out before he killed himself following the attack became the manifesto of the growing incel movement. Rodger's 141 page manifesto provided a view into his mental state and hatred of women, fueled by the resentment of his own virginity.

“Women are like a plague. They don't deserve to have any rights. [...] Women are vicious, evil, barbaric animals and



they need to be treated as such. [...] All women must be quarantined like the plague they are, so that they can be used in a manner that actually benefits a civilized society.”

Rodger goes on to describe his ideal world, a dictatorship where women are put in concentration camps and starved to death, which he states would be a pleasure to watch. “If I can’t have them, no one will.” Rodger referred to the day of the massacre he carried out as the “Day of Retribution.”

“Why was I condemned to live a life of misery and worthlessness while other men were able to experience the pleasures of sex and love with women?” the manifesto reads. Psychology Today took a stab at examining the mental state of Rodger, and they cleverly pointed out

GRAPHIC  
CHRIS MICHAUD

that when his mother alerted police about her son's worrisome behavior, police left after seeing his timid comportment.

Police failed to uncover his YouTube channel, the manifesto, and even frightening Facebook comments he wrote before the killing spree. Researcher Amy Broadway made parallels between Rodger's behavior and narcissistic personality disorder, with a particular hatred for women. We see here, and in the case of the Polytechnique shooter, a disturbing trend of entitlement and self-centeredness that becomes apparent in other cases of incel violence.

The manifesto is available to incel communities online, and circulation of such ideas to like-minded men has contributed to Rodger being worshipped by those with the same mindset.

Alek Minassian, the Toronto murderer who drove into and killed 10 pedestrians on Yonge St. in April 2018, explicitly hailed Rodger as the "Supreme Gentleman" on Facebook, and referred to his subsequent massacre as an "incel rebellion." Unlike Rodger, neither Minassian or Lépine were known to police, and no previous signs of violence were visible. This shows that past trouble with the law isn't always related to these murderous sprees.

In October 2018, Scott Beierle went to a hot yoga studio in Florida and killed two women while injuring five others. CNN reported that the shooter had been arrested on two prior occasions for having groped women and for trespassing on the Florida State University campus to do so. He was not convicted on the groping and trespassing, and died by suicide shortly after his spree. Nancy Van Vessel and Maura Binkley, killed in the shooting, both had promising years of life ahead, robbed from them by the same man who sought to rob women of their physical agency as well. BuzzFeed revealed videos of him calling women sluts and whores, lashing out at women dating people of other races as having "betrayed their blood." This is a different facet of misogyny from what Lépine had expressed, but misogyny is multifaceted

and can change with the times and the people.

One of the videos Beierle made, titled "Plight of the Adolescent Male," sympathized openly with Rodger and claimed solidarity in not "Getting any, no love, no nothing." In another video called "The Rebirth of My Misogynism," Beierle lists the names of women he knew, from the eighth grade until his term in the army began, who he blames for him identifying as a misogynist. This list is similar to the one in the manifesto-suicide letter of Lépine, where he listed the feminists he would have killed if he had the opportunity.

Beierle's video also mentions a woman who stood him up on a date, saying he "Could have ripped her head off." He uploaded a song to SoundCloud called "Locked in My Basement" where he describes a woman he keeps in his basement as a prisoner using chains to facilitate raping her. YouTube and SoundCloud have since removed his songs, but only after BuzzFeed's reporting.

Chris Harper-Mercer, who in 2016 killed 10 at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon, cited wanting to get revenge for being "26, with no friends, no job, no girlfriend, a virgin." He also saluted Rodger. Many other examples of shootings exist a simple Google search away.

How then is Polytechnique an isolated incident? It looks like only the beginning of misogynists with guns committing acts of violence.

Feminist writer Jessica Valenti points out that in several mass shooting deaths in recent American history where the motive is not specifically misogyny, the men in question often have misogynistic tendencies appearing in their troubled past alongside domestic abuse allegations. Polytechnique was not the beginning of mass violence against women or the mentality behind it, but

we can find similar traces of Lépine's mentality and narcissism beneath the surface of many other mass shooters.

The internet has become a battlefield for women, and ground zero for the radicalization of men and organized violence. The internet provides a discreet, often anonymous way to get caught up in hatred and slide down the digital rabbit hole. Whereas before it may have been easier to catch certain changes in people, expressions online can be made unbeknownst to close ones. Nowadays,

even light frustrations can lead down this path, when too much time is spent consuming and ruminating in these forums and isolating oneself from society.

We cannot allow grown men to blame women for their

own failures and shortcomings. To keep myself from feeling heartbroken as the thirtieth anniversary of Polytechnique approaches, I focus on what we can fix. The problem is closer to home than we think, perhaps somewhere in the neighbours' computer, one subreddit or visit to 4chan away from our own fingertips.

One can put roadblocks between the man and the gun, but until we address the hate, we will never be rid of the issue, we'll only delay it. These groups and people need to be monitored before more acts of terror occur, and the warning signs are there already. The internet is a hotbed for organizing these attacks. If the incel community and their vision of violent repression of women was viewed as real hate speech, rather than the rumblings of sad internet trolls, we might have busted some of these inciters of violence before women had to die for these men's virginity or lack of career motivation. As we see the lights go up each year in their memory, think of these women, and all the women who have died at the hands of hateful men since. Commit to fighting this mindset anytime you can, anyway you can. ☐

**In the last few years, we have seen the incel, or involuntary celibate, go mainstream.**



**THE**

# HEALTH ISSUE



# Where to Find Support in Montreal

## Mental Health, Financial and Addiction Resources

SAVANNA CRAIG  
@SAVANNACRAIG

**N**eed help but feel lost? Here are some services in Montreal that offer support to those with mental illness, disabilities, addiction or sexually transmitted infections. You can also learn about organizations that provide educational workshops or other types of social support.



### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

For some students, seeking mental health services at Concordia can be cumbersome, with long wait times and a limited number of mental health professionals. There are off-campus mental health services, which may better fit the needs of people of colour who take issue with the lack of diversity with the staff at Psychological and Counselling Services at Concordia, or those who need support in a shorter time frame.

#### **DESTA Black Youth Network - 1950 Ste. Antoine St. W. (Little Burgundy)**

A Black youth network which provides free individual counselling for youth aged 18 to 35 in need of emotional support or psychological intervention.

#### **The Native Friendship Centre - 2001 St. Laurent Blvd. (between Milton Park and the Old Port)**

This centre offers peer counselling and mentorship to Indigenous people.

#### **Open Centre - 5165 Sherbrooke St. W., Suite 300 (Monkland Village)**

The Open Centre offers a staff with more diversity and aims to serve the LBGTQ+ community and those who are

polyamorous. They also provide a sliding scale option, allowing patients to pay what they can afford.

#### **Argyle Institute - 4150 Ste. Catherine St. W.**

The Argyle Institute offers a sliding scale and administers background checks to confirm what pay bracket you may be placed within.

#### **Monster Academy (online community)**

A social justice-oriented group that grants workshops for youth in Montreal on things like anti-oppression, how to help friends deal with PTSD, or how to manage anxiety. There are no therapy services offered by Monster Academy, but the site shares a list of BIPOC counsellors which is often updated.

#### **Project 10 - 1575 Amherst St. (The Gay Village)**

Project 10 offers BIPOC and LGBTQ+ therapists. Aside from mental health support, Project 10 also offers other services, helping those within the LGBTQ+ community find housing, employment, or change their name and gender markers on identity papers. They can also assist you in obtaining a sex-change surgery, getting refugee status, or in documenting experiences of discrimination and filing complaints.



### SAFE INJECTION SITES

Safe injection sites offer a safe space for opioid users or other drug users to inject. Nurses stay on site and can administer naloxone if a user experiences an opioid

overdose. These sites are also community organizations that have been operating since the city approved safe injection sites in the summer of 2017. Safe injection sites are not only beneficial to opioid users, but all drug users, as they provide drug test kits and naloxone kits, beneficial when using any drug as fentanyl contamination poses a threat to the safety of all drug users.

**L'Anonyme's Mobile Safe Injection Site – 5600 Hochelaga St., Suite 160 (Hochelaga)**

L'Anonyme is a community organization operating in Hochelaga that aims to support safe behaviour and relationships around sexually transmitted infections. L'Anonyme provides a mobile safe injection site, which can often be seen parked at Norman Bethune Square on Concordia's downtown campus at night. It can be seen traveling in other parts of the city to provide a safe injection site in different areas.

Besides that, here are some other injection sites you can find around Montreal:

**Cactus Montréal – 1244 Du Berger St. (between Milton Park and Ville Marie)**

**Spectre de Rue – 1280 Ontario St E (The Gay Village)**

**Dopamine – 3591 Ste. Catherine St. E. (Hochelaga)**



## HOMELESS SHELTERS

This list is not encompassing of all homeless shelters, however, it aims to identify some shelters in the greater area of Montreal, especially ones run to support marginalized communities.

**Native Women's Shelter – (514) 933-4688**

The Native Women's Shelter provides a safe space for Indigenous women and children, and is open 365 days a year with 16 spots available each night for women and children. There

are in-house programs and services, along with outreach services to support women's healing process so they can return to a balanced lifestyle. Contemporary approaches to healing are combined with traditional healing methods to provide a variety of avenues for women to address their needs. The shelter does so by working within an Indigenous framework, involving different education from First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures. To protect women and children escaping dangerous situations, the address of the Native Women's Shelter is confidential, but you can reach them at (514) 933-4688.

**The Open Door – 3535 Park Ave., (Located close to Place des Arts metro)**

The Open Door recently moved from its old home near Cabot Square to the Plateau. The drop-in centre offers services for no cost for low-income and homeless people in Montreal. Daytime shelter, food, clothing, laundry services, free prescription glasses, haircuts and counselling is available in house. Those with substance abuse or gambling problems can also make use of their services, as they provide recommendations to addiction counsellors, mental health care professionals, as well as employment assistance.

**Chez Doris – 1430 Chomedey St. (Located close to Atwater metro)**

Similar to the Open Door, Chez Doris is a daytime shelter for women, operating seven days a week. Chez Doris provides meals, clothing, and an environment for psychological assistance and relief for women in precarity, as well as socio-recreational activities. Shower services are offered, along with financial management. Women can also make use of legal support and their program dedicated to aiding Inuit women. They also run housing placements for First Nations, Inuit and Métis women.

**Dans la rue – 1664 Ontario St. E. (The Gay Village)**

Dans la rue's mission is to help homeless youth in vulnerable situa-

tions. Dans la rue offers The Bunker, an emergency shelter for those needing a place to stay for a night or who want to speak with a counsellor in safety. For those seeking long term shelter, apartments are available for 15 youth and two families who use Dans la rue's services currently or did in the past. Their daytime shelter also provides clothing, meals, healthcare, employment programs, educational opportunities and legal advice. They also have a mobile van that provides those on the street with food, company and recommendations to other services.



#### ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES

This encompasses rehabilitation for either gambling, alcohol or drugs. Since these services are offered by the Quebec government, the services are free and available to the public.

##### **The Foster Pavilion – 3285 Cavendish Blvd. (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce)**

The Foster Addiction Rehabilitation Centre is a free public rehabilitation centre, with services for rehab and social integration for English-speaking Montrealers. There are both youth and adult programs offered to aid substance addictions or gambling, and social integration services to help clients seek housing, education or work. Those who make use of their services can do so from their Cavendish location or can leave the city for their live-in rehabilitation program.

##### **Centre for Research and Help for Drug Users – 110 Prince Arthur St. W. (Plateau)**

CRAN is a public harm reduction addiction treatment centre, offering methadone or buprenorphine treatment for those with opioid

addictions. Along with harm reduction programs, socio-professional reintegration and rehabilitation is offered. There are also services provided to those who have loved ones addicted to opioids.

##### **Centre Dollard-Cormier Youth Program – 3530 Ste. Urbain St. (Plateau)**

This youth program is offered to those 24 years or younger, providing treatment and rehabilitation for drugs, alcohol and gambling addictions. Educational services are also provided within a program with a teacher in a small classroom setting. The centre also helps those with legal troubles, homelessness and mental health problems. Those in need can also live for up to three months in the centre to escape situations that could influence them to use. Support is also extended to loved ones, with individual, couple, or family support.



#### OTHER COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

##### **Head & Hands – 3465 Benny Ave. (Notre-Dame-des-Grâce)**

Head & Hands provides referrals to medical clinics, HIV testing, legal aid, and counseling for individuals, families and couples. There's an emergency food pantry made available to the community, as well as workshops on safer sex and drug use, babysitting, legal rights and body image, self-esteem and boundaries. Head & Hands also offers Project X, which supports youth by helping them find creative ways to deal with the impacts of institutional racism and racial profiling.

##### **Coalition sida des sourds du Québec – 2075 Plessis St., Suite 320 (The Gay Village)**

Coalition sida des sourds du Québec provides support and educational preventative services on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

##### **Regional Program for the Settlement and Integration of Asylum Seekers – 3725 Ste. Denis St. (Plateau)**

PRAIDA offers assistance to asylum seekers waiting for legal status. Some of their services include shelter, legal aid, psychosocial services, welfare and recommendations to hospitals or clinics.

##### **Réseau d'intervention auprès des personnes ayant subi la violence organisée – 6865 Christophe-Colomb Ave., Suites 300-309 (Little Italy)**

RIVO serves people who have been impacted by organized violence, like torture, and their services are free. Most of those who seek help from RIVO are asylum seekers, but the organization also helps those with residency or citizenship and those with no status. Those who work within RIVO are social workers or psychologists who offer not only traditional therapy, but also arts-based therapy.

##### **Action on Mental Illness Quebec – 5800 Decarie Blvd. (Côte-des-Neiges)**

This organization helps families who care for loved one's with mental illness via education, guidance, support and advocacy. AMI-Quebec also offers workshops, with one on bipolar disorder, creative expression and how to cope with stressful situations. Most programs that are offered are free.

##### **Independent Living – 5555 Westminister Ave., Suite 404 (Côte-Saint-Luc)**

This organization is managed by and for people with all kinds of disabilities. Independent Living provides guidance, with the aim to further self-development within each individual's set of skills. ☐

# Climate Catastrophe and Its Effects on Mental Health

Reports Show Climate Change Isn't Only Melting Our Ice Caps

LEAH FITZGERALD

“I definitely think my perspective of the future has become more pessimistic. I feel an overall sense of cynicism and helplessness because I feel that one person can't make too much of a difference on a global scale,” said Grace Feiler, a second year political science major at McGill University. “I know that's a bad way of looking at it, but for something as big and catastrophic as climate change, it's easy to feel that way.”

Feiler isn't the only one feeling gloomy about global warming. Within the last decade, climate change has undoubtedly become one of the biggest issues impacting our world. However, ecosystems and wildlife aren't the only thing being impacted—our mental health is at risk as well.

At least six studies in recent years have found that humans' mental health is being directly impacted by the effects of global warming. The results from studies show that changes in temperature can lead to spikes in certain types of mental illness, suicide rates, and can cause displacement of people from their communities.

According to a 2018 study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, even a small rise in average monthly temperatures can be linked to an increase in mental health problems.

By examining daily meteorological data and combining this with a survey of over two million U.S. residents, researchers found that an increase of just

one degree over five years was linked to a two per cent increase in mental health problems. Although this may seem like a small change, lead author of the study and research scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab Nick Obradovich told CNN the change, “Produces approximately two million additional individuals reporting mental health difficulties.”

Obradovich also went on to state, “Exposure to hotter temperatures and higher rates of precipitation in that period produced increases in the probability that people were going to report some mental health problem in that period.”

In some cases, the effects of climate change may even be fatal. This year, the Nature Climate Change journal led a study looking into the link between temperatures and suicide. The study, conducted in the U.S. and Mexico over multiple decades, showed that if the monthly temperature is just one degree hotter than usual, suicide rates spiked by 0.7 per cent in the U.S. and by 2.1 per cent in Mexico. Because of these results, the study's authors estimate that climate change could evoke nine to 40,000 additional suicides across the U.S. and Mexico by 2050.

## HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE AGGRAVATE MENTAL ILLNESS?

While the exact cause behind this issue is unknown, scientists have a few theories. Some theorize the same neurotransmitters used within the brain to regulate



GRAPHIC  
AIDEN LOCKE

the body's temperature are also used to control emotions. When more neurotransmitters are being used to cool the body, fewer neurotransmitters can be put towards managing emotions like aggression or impatience.

Sleepless nights may also be contributing to the decline of mental health. Climate change will lead to hotter nights in some regions, impacting our ability to get a good night's rest. Because getting enough sleep is essential for the human body to regulate itself, sleep deprivation is the leading cause for depression and suicidal thoughts.

### ECO-ANXIETY AND ECO-GRIEF

Psychologists across the world are now acknowledging that some mental health disorders are likely caused by climate change. Growing concerns about the state of our environment has led to people reporting symptoms of "eco-anxiety" or "eco-grief." These terms have become shorthand descriptions for the existential fear stemming environmental doom. If you experience anxiety or feel depressed while you reflect on coral reefs dying, or rainforests shrinking, then you may be experiencing this condition yourself. Some other concerns plaguing those suffering from these conditions may include fear of impending natural disasters, species extinction and other climate change-related issues.

Alex Tyrrell, leader of the Green Party of Quebec, told *The Link* this is an issue he hears about more and more frequently.

"People are increasingly becoming conscious of mental health issues and there's definitely a lot of people in the environmental community that do become depressed when they're faced with all the environmental problems we have."

When asked what plans his party have discussed to respond to this dilemma, Tyrrell said, "There's a big issue right now where people can't access therapy or counseling without paying for it. We've definitely been campaigning for a long time to have mental health services covered by medicare."

## SOLASTALGIA: MENTAL AND EXISTENTIAL DISTRESS CAUSED BY ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

According to the American Psychological Association, one of the most common perceptions people have when impacted by climate change is a sense of loss. We naturally form attachments to our environments when we're around them for a long time. As climate change is constantly changing our physical environment, many experience a loss with the home they are familiar with. This can lead to a phenomenon recently labeled as solastalgia. The APA describes this as, "A sense of desolation and loss similar to that experienced by people forced to migrate from their home environment." People who live in the countryside, such as farmers and Indigenous peoples, are also at a higher risk of experiencing the effects of solastalgia.

Migration due to climate change is predicted to increase in the next few decades. By 2050, it is projected that up to one billion people will be displaced.

External Coordinator at Sustainable Concordia and Vancouver Island native Emily Carson-Apstein has already seen the drastic impacts of climate change in her home province.

"I'm from the West Coast, and when I was a kid we didn't really hear about forest fires that much. Now every summer it seems like everything's on fire," Carson-Apstein told *The Link*.

With more than 2,000 wildfires in British Columbia this year, the province saw its biggest wildfire season yet. The 2018 wildfire season has replaced last year's record number of 1,353 reported fires. Carson-Apstein, who also studies music and English literature at Concordia, described how the lifestyle of British Columbia's citizens has changed in response.

"A lot of people weren't able to go outside last summer and a lot of towns disappeared," said Carson-Apstein. "I also have friends who work at summer camps and they had to keep all their kids inside."

## WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

"Vulnerable populations that are more directly affected by climate change can then more directly be affected by the stress of the impacts of climate change," said Juliet Donald, a clinical psychologist at Restore Your Health in Toronto.

This means that people in already hot regions are more susceptible to these negative impacts on their mental health. Quebec has recently seen increasing temperatures. Though studies have not yet been conducted in Quebec on the climate's effect on mental health, more than 90 deaths were linked to heatwaves in the province in the summer of 2018.

Kristen Perry, a McGill environmental science graduate, also said that Indigenous people are especially at risk.

"Looking at the larger issues of colonization, racism and extractivism, you see that people who are most impacted by that are going to be more vulnerable to the effects of climate change," said Perry. "Especially if you're thinking of environmental racism where big extractive projects are."

She said any extractive project, such as mining or oil extraction, force those inhabiting the area to be forcibly moved or essentially erased to facilitate the extraction to proceed.

The same study carried out by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Scientists of the United States of America also identified low-income populations as being at a higher risk of adverse effects to their mental health from climate change. They also wrote women are at a higher risk than high-income populations and men. United Nation Women wrote in a report last year that, "Climate change effects exacerbate existing gender inequalities, often resulting in more negative impacts for women."

Women are significantly more affected by natural disasters than men. This is because of gender inequalities and power imbalances in access to resources and relevant information.

## TIPS FOR SUPPORT

If you are currently suffering from the impacts of climate change, there are a few things you can try to ease your worries. Psychologist Juliet Donald advises people first and foremost to "take steps to address anxiety of climate change."

Perry also says that it is important to be mindful of your intake of climate-related media, "In terms of recent news, one really good thing to do is to set boundaries around your consumption of information. It's really good to be informed, but at a certain point you don't want to just update yourself over and over again with the same information of essentially the world coming to an end as we know it." Alternatively, Perry suggests connecting with others who have a similar passion for the environment. "Something that really helps me is focusing on solutions more based in community. Environmental justice organizing is something that gives me hope because I see people who are aware of issues or have lived through them, and care so much they want to do something about it." □

## TIPS TO DEAL WITH ECO-ANXIETY OR ECO-GREIF

- Be critical of social media intake. It's important to be aware of issues happening in our environment, however, overuse of social media considering these issues can increase anxiety.
- Practice things that reduce your carbon footprint, such as cycling to work or school or using public transit.
- Prioritize reusing materials over recycling and the consumption of vegan food.
- Practice self-care and find ways to manage stress, so you'll be better able to adjust to changes in environment.

# It's Not Always Easy To Like How We Look

I'm Mad Because I Feel Bad

OLIVIER CADOTTE  
@OLIVIERCADOTTE

I've been trying to figure out for weeks how not to make this piece about my body's shape incredibly depressing.

I haven't found a way yet, by the way, probably because talking about this makes me so...defensive, and depressed.

There I go again, being all sad about the way I look.

If you haven't seen me before, I'm what the cool kids call "thicc." OK, enough sugar coating. I'm overweight. I'd love to tell you how much I weigh, but I haven't weighed myself in years, basically because of the genuine fear of what the scale is going to tell me.

I do know that I'm big. I'm the guy in the bus no one wants to sit next to because I overlap on the seat a little. I'm the guy who takes too much room in a crowded restaurant trying to walk in between tables, so I have to do the weird crab walk shimmy to not knock over people's drinks (sidenote: don't leave your drinks too close to the edge of the table, I probably can't afford to buy you a new one). I'm the guy who hates being called big guy or the much worse French equivalent "mon gros,." If you're gonna call me fat, just go on and say it, person who I have known for all of five minutes.

Loving the way you look is genuinely very good, and there are no bad shapes in nature. It's extremely good if you like the way you look. In fact, it's a pretty damn good message to send out to people, especially people who have very little presence or no presence at

all in media outside the fringes when it comes to body types.

In fact, there should be *way* more variety in people in media in general, because if you've been outside oh, I'll say *ever*, you'll notice not everyone looks like the cast from *General Hospital*.

The thing is, I just don't like how I look. I wish I did, but I don't.

I hate the uncertainty the most. At this point, my weight could fluctuate wildly and I wouldn't notice.

I go down a pant size as easily as I get two back. Forty/34 today, gone tomorrow, as they say. I just want consistency in what clothes are going to make me look bad.

Look, I'm self-deprecating a lot, to a fault. I've done it loads in this article already. The thing I openly self-deprecate the least about though, is the way I look. Not to boo-hoo myself too much, but it's really hard to write openly about things that actually make you feel really bad about yourself, it turns out. It's almost as if it's the one thing that's "too real" for me to jokingly criticize myself for.

I'm very much of two minds about thinking so much about how I look; I realize that I shouldn't carry my self worth in my physical appearance, because marketers already do that enough for me.

I just can't help but tie how I feel with how I want to look. No matter what I try to do with my face, or hair, trying to wear clothes I like wearing, I look into the mirror

and see a pear with weird, not quite emo hair and a scruffy, patchy beard. Except, the pear isn't ripe and juicy, it's weird and lumpy— and looking too long in the mirror thinking about what it must be like to not akin yourself to a weird, lumpy pear.

Speaking of how I want to look, that's a funny concept in its own right. I don't even really know what exactly "how I want to look" is, except it's almost definitely "not like you

do now." I know it's extremely damaging to think like this about oneself (trust me, *I know*), but that's how I see it, for one reason or another.

While having multiple body shapes has become a bit more present in media and marketing, the vast majority of models are what you'd consider conventionally attractive. I'm not asking for every male model to look like me (good luck selling clothes with me as a model), but it would be pretty cool to not have a this body type for men be associated solely with the "guy who was in bad comedy movies 10 years ago is playing the klutzy dad!" Y'know?

I guess another big part of my self-disdain for how I look is the association of people who are overweight with rampant unhealthiness. I've seen a bunch of studies that either say certain diseases are more prone to happen, or another different ton of studies that refute them, and at this point I'm just kinda... scared of what's gonna happen.

**The thing is, I just don't like how I look. I wish I did, but I don't.**

GRAPHIC  
PAULINA DOMÍNGUEZ

I don't want to die when I'm 30 because I wear XL Star Trek t-shirts. I don't want to die feeling shitty like I do now, getting one of endless diseases or various organ failures or anything. That thought has kind of been ingrained in my head on particularly bad mental health days, so much that last year I was sure I was having a stroke when I had a really bad headache, and went to the hospital that day for eight hours only to be told I was fine.

Yes, I know there's a very easy solution to all of these problems: go to the gym, eat more romaine so I can lose a ton of weight through vomiting and pooping (with how real the last paragraph got, I had to go back to cheap laughs)—I know the deal. I guess that because I haven't seen immediate change whenever I've tried to do it, I ended up skipping a day or two or 15 and not getting back to it, which is totally my fault. It also makes me think about how much I want to change, and change *now*, and the failure of that happening makes me feel bad about myself. It's the vicious circle that can only be described as "I'm mad because I feel bad."

For now, I guess I'll have to make do with my 40-inch pants and my gut. I've had 22 years to come to terms with this body, let's hope it doesn't take 22 more to *actually* come to terms with it. But you, reader of this article, I hope you like the way you look, for your own sake. And if you don't, I get that too, I really do. It's tough to look at ourselves and be confident in how we look, because of societal norms, or how we want to look, or even due to a simple lack of the brain chemicals that make you feel not sad and deflated.

I guess what I'm trying to say is try and like yourself, even if I can't always do that myself. ☒



# Life As a Diabetic Athlete

## A PHOTO ESSAY

**SARAH BOUMEDDA**  
**@BMDSARAH**

• • • • •

It's Nov. 18, and it is game day for the Concordia Stingers' women's hockey team. At the Ed Meagher Arena, on the ice rink, one of the players circles around the ice, warming up. Her teammates surround half of the space of the rink, the opposing team takes the other half. Melinda Prévost, #19, is just as nervous about this game as her fellow Stingers. But she has to deal with more than what meets the eye.

*Melinda Prévost, #19 for the Concordia Stingers, poses after practice on Nov. 23, at Ed Meagher Arena at Concordia's Loyola campus.*



PHOTOS SARAH BOUMEDDA



Prévost is in her last year at Concordia University, completing a degree in exercise science with a focus on clinical exercise physiology. She's also a forward on the Stingers' women hockey team, and has competed with Les Canadiennes de Montréal. Prévost is also diabetic—and has been dealing with the disease since age 11.

*Prévost warms up on the ice ahead of the Stingers' game against the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees on Nov. 18 at Ed Meagher Arena.*

"I had normal symptoms of hyperglycaemia," she said about her childhood. "I was dehydrated [and] starving. I was out of energy, and I was losing a lot of weight, too."

Her parents were at a loss, there were no antecedents of the illness in the family prior to her case. After a trip to the Montreal Children's Hospital and a few blood tests, the results were conclusive. Prévost was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. Unlike type 2, this condition has autoimmune roots, and therefore will last a patient's entire lifetime.

*Prévost tests her blood after practice. As a diabetic athlete, she constantly monitors her blood sugar levels before and after every game and practice.*



For Prévost, like many others, the disease simply became a part of her life. "It was obviously a change, but it is what it is, and it's normal to me now," she explained. Then, she added with a shrug, "It doesn't stop me from doing anything. I just have to be a bit more careful than normal people out there."





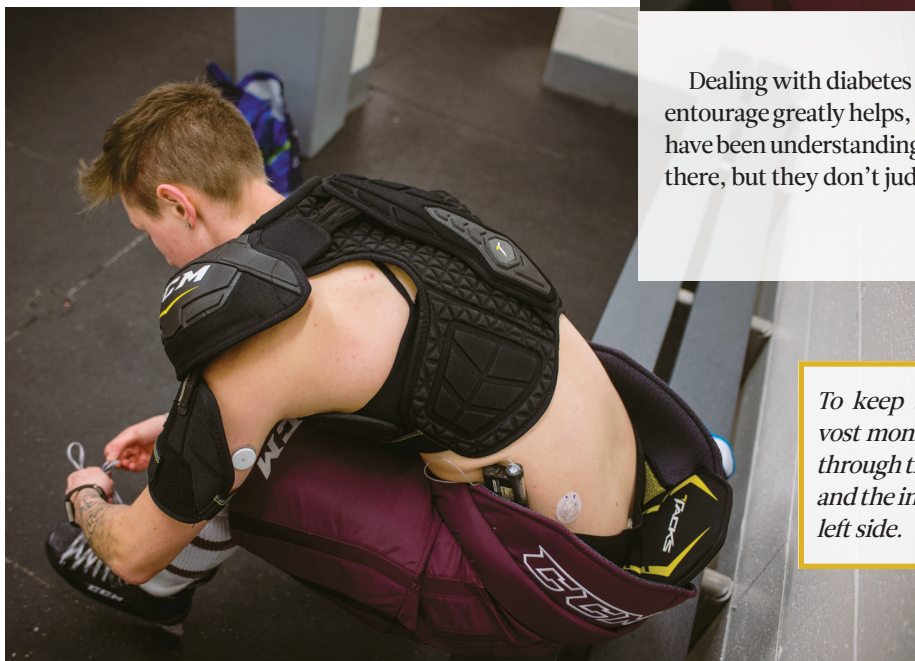
That doesn't mean it doesn't get difficult. Juggling school, hockey, and work while being diabetic can be a challenge at times. "Sometimes, it's definitely a roller-coaster. There's a lot of things that affect blood sugar, exercise being one of them, food, and stress, especially when it comes to exams."

*Prévost has won silver and gold at the RSEQ women's hockey championship in 2017 and 2018 respectively, as well as bronze at the 2018 U Sports women's hockey championship with the Concordia Stingers.*

With so many things coming into play, Prévost has to test her blood sugar often. She keeps her testing tools on her at all times, and even has an easy-access patch on the side of her body that lets her test her blood sugar with the touch of a device without draining out a drop. Very practical, especially in between periods, during a fast-paced hockey game.



Dealing with diabetes alone is no easy feat, and having a supportive entourage greatly helps, Melinda shared. Her teammates, for instance, have been understanding from the start. "They ask questions, here and there, but they don't judge me about it, obviously."



*To keep track of her health, Prévost monitors her blood sugar levels through the test patch on her left arm and the insulin pump attached to her left side.*

*Prévost arrives on the ice as assistant coach Caroline Ouellette watches, ahead of the Stingers' game against the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees.*



"The coaches are really good," she added. "They'll get me a different meal than the team, if they're having like pizza or pasta, you know. They'll get me something with more proteins, and stuff, after the game, especially."

Of all the people around her, however, the person she gets most support from is her girlfriend Katerina Syragakis, who's also studying exercise science at Concordia. "She's obviously my biggest support system. She'll help me a lot with it, and try to figure it out."

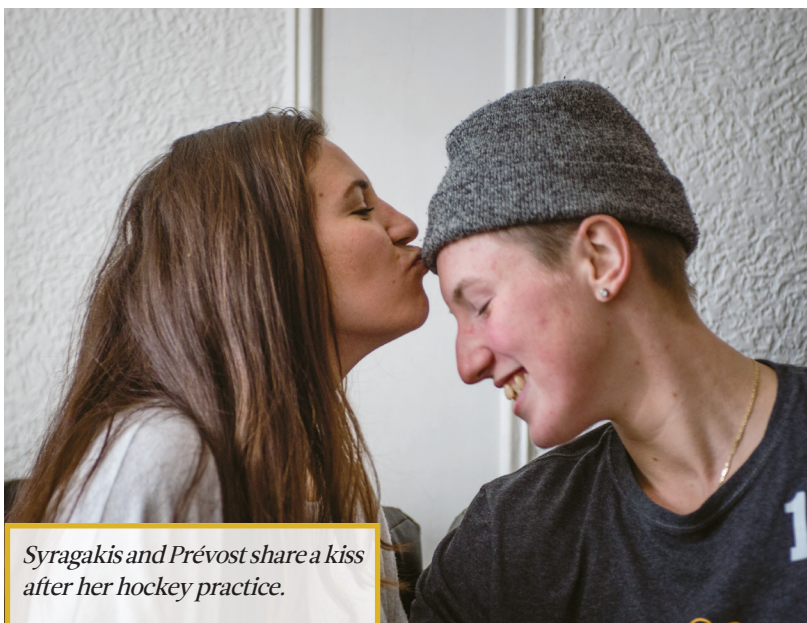
*Katerina Syragakis, gives Prévost an insulin shot after her hockey practice at their home in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.*



“She sees when I get frustrated about it, ‘cause it’s obviously not a walk in the park.”

Prévost said her girlfriend’s desire to learn and help is what makes it easier for her, too. “She’s super interested in it, and wants to learn so I love that too. I’m not shy about it with her, she helps me, and she’s curious, so she’ll want to test my blood for me, and give me needles.” She paused to smile, and added, “No, it’s cool. She makes it easier for me.”

Now in her final year of studies, Prévost shared that her time at Concordia might be the last time she plays competitive hockey, a sport she’s played since she was seven years old. She said she wants to focus on her career, hoping to become a certified kinesiologist and help other people—especially those dealing with diabetes or other chronic, cardio-vascular diseases—be in shape and manage their physique with their chronic disease.



*Syragakis and Prévost share a kiss after her hockey practice.*

*Prévost cheers on her teammates during the Stingers’ game against the University of Ottawa Gee-Gees.*



“I’ll still get on the ice, here and there, but I won’t play competitive hockey anymore,” Prévost explained. “It’s definitely gonna be weird, not having to wake up at 6:30 in the morning to get on the ice all the time, but...I’m still definitely gonna keep in touch with my team.” ☐

# Looking Into the Lifesaving Naloxone

Richard Davy Trains Young People Across the City How to Administer the Drug

SAVANNA CRAIG  
@SAVANNACRAIG

McGill social work student Richard Davy said there's a lack of awareness given towards the importance of naloxone and the growing rate of opioid overdoses in Montreal.

Naloxone is an opioid antagonist that reverses the effects of an overdose resulting from heroin, fentanyl or oxycodone by blocking opiate receptors in the brain. In a push to reduce opioid-related overdoses and deaths in the province, the Quebec government has provided free access to the drug at phar-

macies since the fall of 2017.

Last semester, Davy began providing free naloxone training to the public. Since his small beginnings, Davy's workshops are gradually growing, as he's planning to run four trainings this January. By mid-December, two of the trainings are already at full capacity.

Opioid-related

overdoses and deaths have been steadily climbing in Canada. In 2016, there were 2,816 apparent opioid-related deaths, with the number jumping to 4,000 overdoses in 2017.

In the first half of 2018, Canada surpassed half of last year's rate, with the country seeing 2,066 opioid-related deaths between January and June. In the same timeframe, Quebec ranks fourth place in overdose related deaths, at 195. However this number is not exclusively opioid-related, as the province records deaths by illicit drugs altogether.

Davy first got the idea to host workshops on naloxone after he attended a conference hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association. Sessions on how to administer the drug were held, but he said he only saw about 20 people

in attendance, out of a conference hosting thousands. "It kind of says something for the public's awareness or interest about this to me," Davy said.

The session he attended specifically talked about the nasal spray version of naloxone called NARCAN, as well as the kits with needles.

Davy said after finding out he could get naloxone kits for free at the pharmacy, he felt that if the issue is as vital as the rates are making it out to be, everyone should know about the drug.

Davy was already involved in community outreach with fellow social work students at McGill, where he first pushed for naloxone awareness. He and his colleagues often provide support for the mental health of people in the Montreal community, by providing company and meals for those on the streets. Davy pushed for his colleagues in McGill's School of Social Work to

**"Something that's scary for a lot of people is the needles, and that's part of what I'm doing in the training, is trying to help people to feel more comfortable with them and to know what to do with them."**

— Richard Davy



have naloxone on hand, leading them to carry kits along with them, even offering it to people on the streets.

“We started getting interest from people in the rest of the social work community at McGill, then outside the community,” said Davy. “I decided to open it up to everybody and then from there the takeoff has been great.” He said the first session started off with 40 participants, leading to about 100 participants in recent sessions.

“Something that’s scary for a lot of people is the needles, and that’s part of what I’m doing in the training, is trying to help people to feel more comfortable with them and to know what to do with them,” Davy said.

He added this is part of the issue with the training offered at pharmacies, which he says are typically rushed and don’t put an effort into making sure the person who will administer naloxone will be comfortable throughout the process.

“You need to have some time to prac-

tice this and for myself, practicing with these ones, it took me ages just to get the solution in the liquid.”

Davy has updated his trainings since the start of this year, with a focus on how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, something he says pharmacies fail to provide during their trainings.

Apart from training, Davy said he wants to reduce stigma around opioids.

“I want people to know this impacts everybody so I’d like them to share that with at least one other person,” said Davy. He also advocates keeping the kit in a visible place to spread awareness of the drug to others.

“There are 21 million prescriptions of opioids in Canada right now, that means that these opioids are in our homes,” said Davy.

Davy said he would love to conduct workshops outside of Montreal, with a hope to host some in Kahnawake. He said he’s in the process of starting a non profit organization with some colleagues

and will eventually be looking into getting funding.

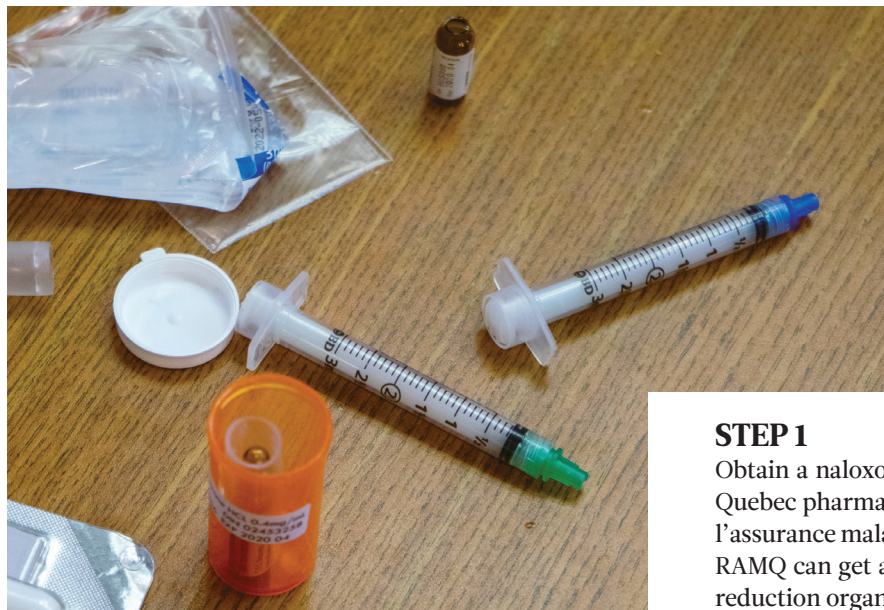
Davy said the aim of the organization will be to enhance and support the growth and maintenance of mental health in the greater Montreal community. He said the funding won’t cover the kits, as the Quebec government already funds up to eight doses of naloxone per person each day, but it will expand the programs they offer, such as outreach work, food services and educational programs at schools.

Davy said if people want to donate they can do so through the PayPal link on his overdose training website.

“All funds go towards expanding and enriching the services we offer now, and will offer in the future,” said Davy.

Naloxone isn’t just for people on the street, Davy said, this is something that’s around us and can impact anyone.

“I believe these should be in first aid kits, I believe everybody should know how to use these.”



## HOW TO ADMINISTER NALOXONE

### STEP 1

Obtain a naloxone kit. Kits can be accessed for free at a Quebec pharmacy for those covered by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec. Those not covered by the RAMQ can get a kit at safe injection sites or other harm reduction organizations.

To see if someone is having an opioid overdose, Davy said to check if the person is having difficulty breathing or isn't at all. Their pupils will be pinprick, and their skin may be clammy to the touch, or they could have blue fingernails or lips.

The kit contains various accessories, such as a set of two needles with auto-retractable needles once the naloxone has been injected.

PHOTOS ELISA BARBIER

## STEP 2

He said first you should try to stimulate the individual. Try to wake them up, call their name, if this does not work, he said to rub their sternum with your knuckles. This is painful and will wake them up unless they are in a deep overdose. He said if there is no response, open their throat, make sure there's no food or vomit blocking the airway, and then begin CPR. Not all versions of naloxone kits provide this, but some include a mouth guard to create a protective barrier while giving someone, potentially a stranger, CPR. He said to breathe into their mouth every five seconds and to see if there are any changes, if not, administer naloxone. If someone else is with you, you can ask them to call 911.

For the purposes of his workshop, Davy uses a small squeezable stress toy to inject the naloxone into to show how to use a needle.



## STEP 3

Take off the lid of the naloxone. If you're not sure an overdose is happening, Davy said to use it anyway, as there are no risks to naloxone if the person is not suffering from an overdose.



## STEP 4

Inject the naloxone into the syringe. Davy said to keep in mind that naloxone may revert a heavy user back into the state of withdrawal, resulting in vomiting or extreme confusion afterwards.



## STEP 5

Squeeze out some of the naloxone to reduce risk of air bubbles, for good measure. Davy said not to be concerned if there are air bubbles as the injection is intramuscular rather than intravenous. Before injecting naloxone into the person, use the alcohol swab provided within the kit to disinfect the area of the skin you will be putting the needle into.



## STEP 6

Inject the drug into an area that has a lot of muscle, such as the thigh, arm or buttox. Davy said for people who are very skinny, try to squeeze and gather their muscle in your hand while you inject the person. Davy said that stress is normal in this situation, however, deep breathing is essential to help your focus and calm yourself down when using the needle. He said to push the needle until you hear a click, indicating that all of the naloxone has been injected.

### TIPS FOR AFTER:

Immediately call 911 for help if you haven't already. Naloxone can often induce the user into withdrawal because naloxone bonds onto opiate receptors, knocking the opioid that was inducing an overdose off the receptor. As a result, this may cause nausea and shaking. The person may wake up confused or aggressive.

Davy said if they need another dose, inject again. He said it's very important to stay with the person until the ambulance arrives, as naloxone can wear off because most opioids, such as heroin, have a longer half life. A half life is used to describe how long opioids last in one's system. Davy said naloxone has a half life of about 90 minutes, whereas other opioids have a half life of maybe 12 hours. It's vital to ensure the user doesn't redose after having naloxone, because it can cause an overdose two times as bad as the first.

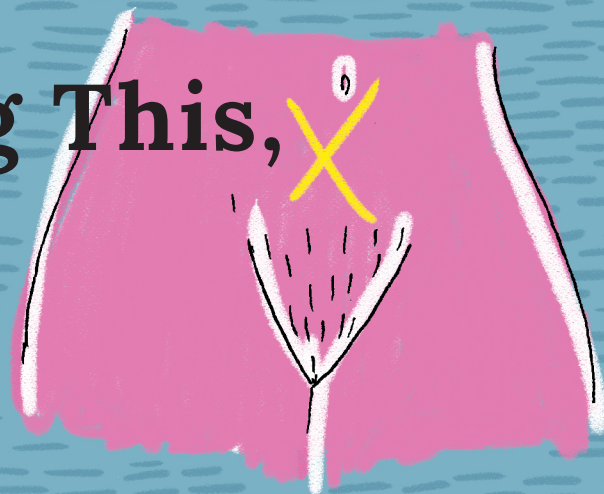
### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:

- In the month of January, Davy has four naloxone workshops. Sessions are free to attend and last about an hour and a half. Sessions for Jan. 10 and Jan. 25 are still accepting participants.
- Jan. 10: 7:00–8:30 p.m. Thomson House, Room #406, 3650 McTavish St.
- Jan. 25: 12:00–1:30 p.m. McGill University School of Social Work, 3506 University St., Room #300.
- For more information, upcoming sessions are listed on the Overdose Training website. Interested participants can also book a session on the site.
- [www.overdosetraining.com](http://www.overdosetraining.com)
- [www.facebook.com/overdosetraining](https://www.facebook.com/overdosetraining)
- Email: [richard@richardcdavy.com](mailto:richard@richardcdavy.com)

# If You're Reading This, Sterilize Me

It's My Body, So Why Not My Rules?

APRIL TARDIF-LEVESQUE  
@APRILTARDIF



**You might argue that birth control, abstinence, condoms and abortion are available. I'm going to call foul. The whole point is that I get to choose what happens to my body.**

**W**hat does a doctor who refuses to help me obtain a tubal ligation—a sterilizing procedure to seal the fallopian tubes—an anti-abortionist, and the early inventors of contraception have in common? The illusion of giving women better choices, the saviour complex, the undermining of women's right and ability to make their own choices, and the ideas regarding who should and shouldn't have children.

Did I just sound harsh? Probably. There are some similarities I'd like to point out... so hear me out.

I am an adult woman of 23-years-old. Despite some struggles with mental health, I am still considered mentally sound enough to make my own medical, reproductive and financial decisions without the need for a power-of-attorney.

This gives me a few legal and civil rights that come with my ripe adulthood.

Some of those rights, choices and privileges I've been able to stash up on until now include: my right to vote and thus have a say in the running of my municipality, province, and country. I'm even technically allowed to run for office. I

am of legal age to consent to sex, produce sexual content, obtain contraception and have an abortion.

God forbid, however, a woman decides she never wants to give birth. They would rather trust me more with a blatant life or death choice than a reproductive choice. Do they prefer I get cancer than not produce children? Why is no one standing in the way of me smoking? I've seen many pregnant women who continue smoking—the doctors can't stop them from doing it. But they can stop me from getting a tubal ligation.

There are many choices society can trust me to make, and I have to bear full responsibility for the consequences of those decisions. Some decisions I need informed consent to make, for my own good, and that's fine. Ultimately, it's helping me make the right choice, either for myself, for my body, my life, or my future.

The final choice I'll raise is the big one: having a child. If I get pregnant, no matter what my socio-economic situation, no matter my life situation, if I choose to keep the child, no one could really stop

me. It would be my fundamental right to choose to be a mother, even if I'd clearly be a sub-par one given where I am in life right now.

I've seen people in my own family

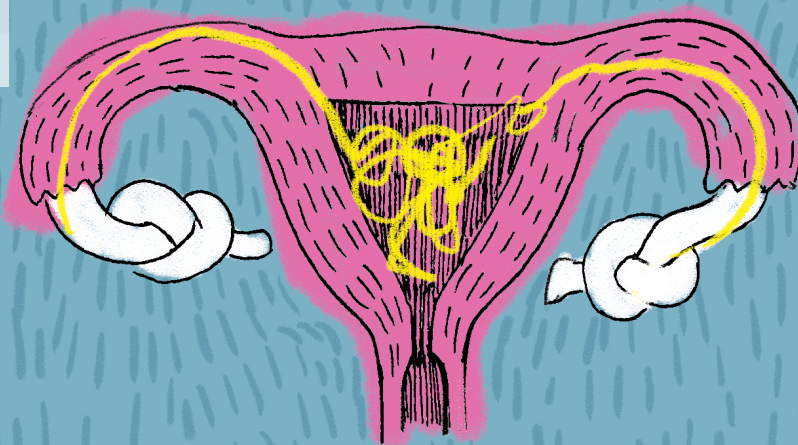
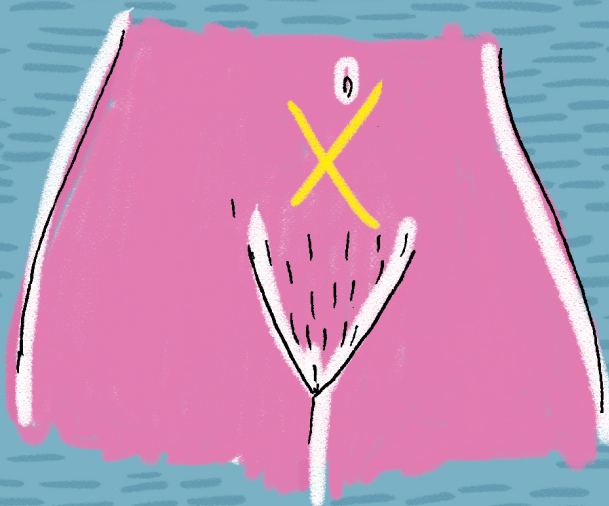
and surroundings who are in very bad places in life having kids and those kids will suffer the consequences for the rest of their lives. Maybe they're not being abused but they're being deprived of a proper family situation because the parents can't see past their desire to have a kid right away.

Is it my place to decide whether they should or shouldn't have kids? No. A doctor? Only if they feel the child will be neglected or abused. Even then, they can't force someone not to have a child, they can simply alert to have the children removed from bad situations. If they then cannot force someone to not have kids who wants kids, why are they preventing people who never want kids from making the choice of not having kids?

You might argue that birth control, abstinence, condoms and abortion are available. I'm going to call foul. The whole point is that I should get to choose what happens to my body.

With birth control, I've tried nearly every kind and suffered awful adverse side effects and no longer want any. I'm sick of feeling like a human guinea pig and having my physical and mental health suffer in consequence. Abstinence? Go be a priest or a nun yourself, then. Finally, abortion. I stand by everyone's right to abortion as fundamental—but that doesn't mean I want to have one.

While a very simple procedure, the Christian guilt would be strong—not on my part as I do not believe abortion is murder. However I know beyond a shadow of a doubt some close to me would consider me a murderer. Have I tried to argue? I firmly stand by any woman's right to an abortion for any reason because I trust that I cannot decide for her and her situation. I just know the toll it would have on me, my mental health and the strain it would cause on my family, and the possible alienation it could generate from them. So abortion isn't really on the table



GRAPHIC  
CAROLINE TRAN



for me and my choices, it's a worst-case-scenario resort.

Not everyone can tolerate condoms. Some get reactions to the lubricant, some people get rashes or allergic or other adverse reactions to latex. Non-latex ones are hard to come by and feel weird or are sometimes more expensive.

In the absence of those options, what's to be done? Let's say I choose abstinence, I'd stay celibate for life? Even if I get married, the only guys I'd ever consider are guys who don't want kids. Am I to sit at the kitchen table across from him every night and have imagination-sex? Frolic like 14-year-olds until we die? Pull-out-and-pray? Live in fear of squalling children? Absurd.

I would change my mind if I met the right guy, as a doctor once said to me in justifying why she didn't feel comfortable referring younger patients for this. The nurse at the same clinic said she had three kids, is in her late twenties and her

doctor pushed her to get an IUD by refusing to refer her for a tubal ligation. I don't think that doctor has ever met a millennial man. The craft-beer obsessions and lumber-sexual beards are birth control in themselves. There is no economic chance in hell I would want to have kids and then depend on a spouse to help me raise those kids in this day and age.

In a world of Tinder, Instagram and infinite choice I need to be ready to divorce at any time and kids hinder that.

I believe in personal freedom: life, liberty, and the pursuit of my own happiness. I cannot bear the feeling of being trapped. Everything in my life can be readily changed at any time. If I hate my job, I can leave and find a new one. If I hate my class, I can drop it. If I hate my program, I can change it. If I hate school, I can drop out. If I'm not happy with a friendship, I can cease the friendship. The same is true with a relationship and marriage. In fact, nothing in life is permanent except

a child. When I'm 45, if I end up regretting not having a child, but managed to live out all my dreams by then because I didn't have a kid—it's still worth it.

It's worth it because I did everything I wanted, and chose my career instead of a family, which totally aligns with who I am and the future I want. If the regret was truly so profound, I could then adopt, get a surrogate or foster some kids.

There is greater risk in having kids you regret, than not having kids and regretting that. There's a misconception that people don't regret having kids, because it's not socially acceptable to say so. Women who speak out about it get shut down and shamed into silence. One such woman I spoke to said she received death threats.

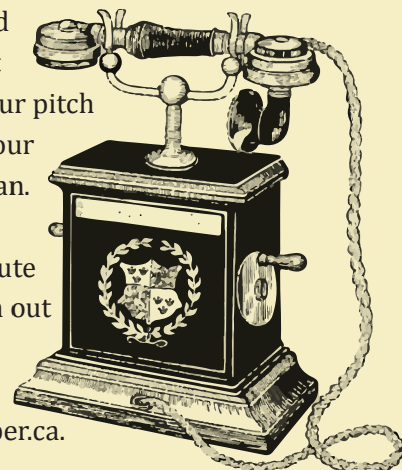
The inextricability of women and motherhood is reductionist, dehumanizing to women who don't have kids, gendered, sexist, and ultimately a tool of the patriarchy to keep us in a place. But no longer. Our place is where we choose. ☐

# THE LINK'S MEET & GREET!

Interested in contributing to *The Link*, or just curious about who we are and what we do? Come by our office Friday, Jan. 11 at 5 p.m. for our Meet & Greet! Coffee and donuts will be served! Room H-649

# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

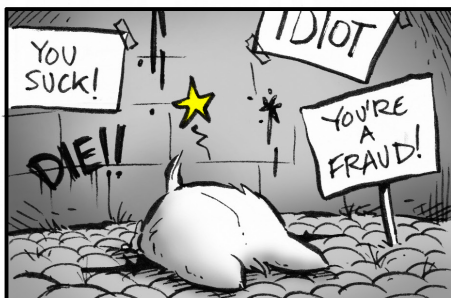
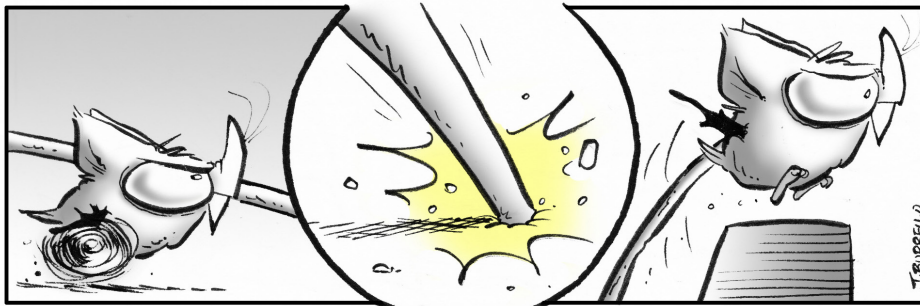
The Link is putting together our annual Gender & Sexuality Issue, and we're looking for articles, poems, photos, illustrations, and personal narratives that explore these themes. Our pitch meeting will be held in our office, Room H-649 on Jan. 8, at 5 p.m. If you have a pitch or want to contribute but cannot attend, reach out to our editor-in-chief Miriam Lafontaine at [editor@thelinknewspaper.ca](mailto:editor@thelinknewspaper.ca).



# ELO'S CORNER



by Eloise Marseille  
@eloisemarseille



**Blinky & Sal**

by Jonathan Burrello  
@biginsanehappy

# The Epic Adventures of Every Man | by Every Man @theepicadventuresofeveryman



## Hastily Put Together | by Theo Radomski @flannelogue



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voting members

non-voting members

## TYPESETTING

**The Link**

## PRINTING

**Hebdo-Litho**

Regarding our last issue: The print version of "Toxic Masculinity Workshop Picks Apart the Roots of Patriarchy" provided photo captions mentioning personal information about Arno Pedram. An updated version of these photo captions has been written online to omit this information.

*The Link* is published every month during the academic year by The Link Publication Society Inc. Content is independent of the university and student associations (ECA, CASA, ASFA, FASA, CSU, AVEQ). Editorial policy is set by an elected board as provided for in *The Link*'s constitution. Any student is welcome to work on *The Link* and become a voting staff member.n

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Special thanks to Carl Bindman.

Letters to the editor are welcome. All letters 400 words or less will be published, space permitting. The letters deadline is Fridays at 4:00 p.m. *The Link* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and length and refuse those deemed racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, libellous, or otherwise contrary to *The Link*'s statement of principles.

*The Link* acknowledges our location on unceded Indigenous land. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of these lands and waters. Tiohtiá:ke is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations.

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