

THE

LINK 35

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE

GET BORN

+ EDITORIAL

Concordia needs to stand with the Muslim Students Association P. 19

+ THE WOMEN OF GET BORN KICKFLIP INTO MONTREAL'S SKATEBOARDING UNDERGROUND

P. 6

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THE LINK

Notice of election
The Link Publication Society Board of Directors
Three (3) Board Staff representatives

Eligibility: You are a member of the Link (paying fees) and you have the staff status with 4 (four) or more contributions and not a masthead member of the Link.

Candidates must present a **letter of intent by Wednesday, March 18, 2015** at 5 p.m. to the secretary of the board of directors by email to business@thelinknewspaper.ca

Election will be held Wednesday March 25 at 4 p.m. in the Link's office, 1455 de Maisonneuve W. Blvd. Room H-649.

THE LINK

The Link Publication Society Inc.
Annual General Assembly
Thursday, March 26, 2015, 4 p.m.
1455 de Maisonneuve W. Blvd.
Room H-649

Agenda

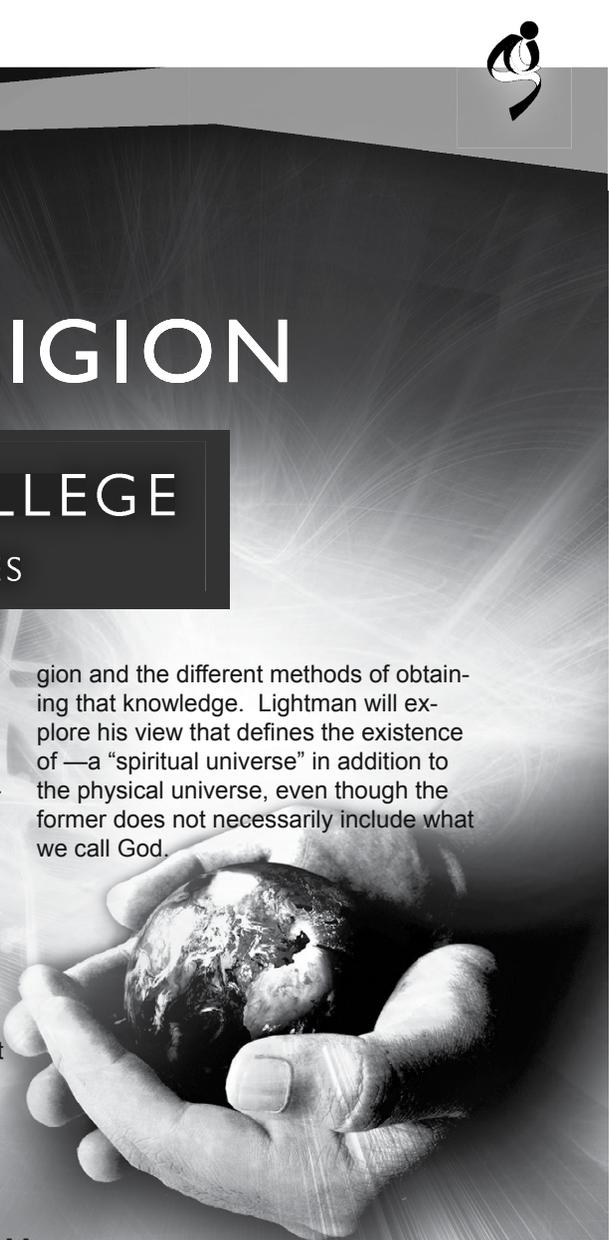
1. Call to order
2. Election of a secretary
3. Reading and approval of the agenda
4. Reading and approval of the minutes of the 2014 AGA
5. By-Law amendments
6. Board of directors report for 2014-2015
7. Presentation of the 2013-2014 financial statements
8. Appointment of the auditor
9. Presentation of financial statements as of the last day of February 2015
10. Presentation of the preliminary budget 2015-2016
11. Election of the board of directors
12. Other business
13. End of the assembly

All Concordia undergraduate students are eligible to attend, vote at the meeting and run for a position on The Link's board.

Board of Directors
Two (2) positions are open to members at large and two (2) positions are open to members of the community who have had staff status within the last three (3) years.

Candidates for the Board must present a **letter of intent by Thursday, March 19, 2015** at 5 p.m. to the secretary of the board of directors by email to business@thelinknewspaper.ca

Constitutional amendments are available at The Link office.



SCIENCE AND RELIGION

SCIENCE COLLEGE
PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

ALAN LIGHTMAN

The general tendency of science over the centuries has been to enlarge the domain of what we call the "physical universe," and to develop purely material and rational explanations for its phenomena. In this lecture, the noted American writer, physicist, and social entrepreneur Alan Lightman first surveys some climaxes in the sciences that bear upon philosophical, theological, and ethical issues. Currently, he focusses on religion and discusses the different kinds of religious beliefs that are compatible with science. The lecturer probes the different kinds of knowledge in science and religion and the different methods of obtaining that knowledge. Lightman will explore his view that defines the existence of—a "spiritual universe" in addition to the physical universe, even though the former does not necessarily include what we call God.

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 **Concordia**
UNIVERSITY
SCIENCE COLLEGE



links in a chain of struggles

Israeli Apartheid Week Aims to Highlight Social Injustices in Palestine and Around the World

by Jane Lakes

When it comes to social justice causes, long-running issues can often look like complicated messes to the uneducated citizen.

Israeli Apartheid Week, which began this Sunday and runs until March 17, hopes to untangle the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while also diversifying the issue.

Themed “Resistance to Colonization,” Israeli Apartheid Week’s aims are to educate, inform and create solidarity between the conflict in Palestine and social injustices that are experienced worldwide.

The goal of the week is to “create awareness that there are other movements that are also trying to be linked with the Palestinian struggle,” said Javier Hoyos, head of Concordia’s Boycott, Divest and Sanction Campaign Yes Committee.

Some of these movements include gender rights, queer rights, anti-police brutality and anti-capitalist groups, which will be addressed during the week’s extensive set of panels and workshops.

“Even though it’s called Israeli Apartheid Week, not all the events are just centered [around] Palestine,” explained Israeli Apartheid Week Event Organizer Rana Salah.

“There are events that tie in with other social justice struggles.”

The Workshop on Israeli Pinkwashing and Homonationalism is set to include presentations by queer feminist activists Melis Cagan and Ralph Haddad and aims to promote learning and discussion on queer rights in Palestine.

Salah defined pinkwashing as “when countries like Israel try to portray themselves as a democracy and as not guilty of human rights violations by pointing out how queer Israelis have more rights than queer Palestinians.” Pinkwashing is just one of these struggles that will be addressed during the week.

“If you’re going to advocate for women’s rights or queer rights, you’re supposed to advocate them for everyone,” said Salah. “It is this sort of white supremacist, capitalist, patriarchal system that actually creates many of these global issues; that’s why they’re all interconnected.”

Queer Palestinians must often live illegally and as undocumented workers in Israel due to the social instability of Palestine, leaving them with no protections against harassment and rape, among many other factors. There are around 2,000 queer Palestinians living in Tel Aviv at any given time, according to LGBT organization The Aguda.

“Many of us believe that one cannot be engaging in massacres and targeting Palestinians and engaging in apartheid, essentially, and still be queer- and trans-friendly,” said Maya Khamala, an event organizer from the Centre for Gender Advocacy.

“It is a gender issue, it is a racial issue; people who feel oppressed, who go through oppression can actually relate to what is happening,” said Hoyos. “They relate because it’s exactly how Palestinians feel. They are disenfranchised, they are voiceless, they are powerless and they are stateless.”

Police brutality is another widespread issue that will be a topic of discussion in the Racial Profiling and Police Brutality panel on Tuesday evening.

The workshop will feature guest speakers who recently travelled from the US to Palestine and saw firsthand the parallels between the struggles.

“There are certain links to be made and parallels that exist, but the struggles are very different as well,” said Khamala. “This event will be all about both respecting those differences and talking about them.”

She added links exist between government tactics and the ways in which police reproduce colonial mentalities in Quebec, Canada

and Israel.

People are often turned off or wish to remain “neutral” when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because of the complexity of the issue, according to Hoyos, which is why it’s important to provide educational platforms to be able to create change.

“If there’s anyone that can fix this, it’s going to be our generation,” said Hoyos. “What we need is that dramatic shift [...] in perspective.”

However, change may take years to fully manifest itself, Hoyos continued.

“It starts with little things like this,” said Hoyos. “We hope that one day, our government’s policies [will] reflect the wishes of the population.”

Ultimately, it is solidarity between everyone who advocates for a cause that will create change in Palestine, explained Hoyos.

“When you get to see that people from different backgrounds, different linguistic backgrounds, racial backgrounds, religious backgrounds, get to relate and get to understand what oppression truly means, that’s when you create solidarity,” said Hoyos, “and that’s the awareness that we want from Israeli Apartheid Week.”

Photo courtesy of Maysara Salah



ASFA SPRING ELECTIONS

Call For Nominations Open Positions:

- President
- VP Internal Affairs
- VP Finance
- VP Communications and Promotions
- VP Social
- VP Academics and Loyola Affairs
- VP External and Sustainability
- Five (5) Independent Councillor Positions

Pick up a Nomination Form at the ASFA Office (EN building, 4th floor, 2070 Mackay). Nominations must be submitted to the same place by 17:00 Friday, March 13th

Nomination Period:
March 2nd to March 13th
Campaign Period:
March 16th to April 6th
Polling Period:
April 7th, 8th, and 9th

Polling Places:

- H Hall Building (SGW)
- LB Library Building (SGW)
- SP Science Building (Loyola)
- VL Vanier Library Building (Loyola)

Questions? Please Contact:
CEO@ASFA.CA

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The CSU and CFS Settle

by Michelle Pucci @michellempucci

It took less than 20 minutes.

The lawyers defending the Concordia Student Union, the Graduate Students' Association and the Canadian Federation of Students slipped into a courtroom at 9 a.m. yesterday morning, informed the judge of their plan to settle out of court, packed up their things and left.

This—after more than four years of legal battles.

The Canadian Federation of Students is a national student organization the CSU and the GSA joined in the 1990s, before things went downhill in the mid-2000s and unions across the country tried to vote to get out. A number of unions ended up taking the CFS to court.

Yesterday at the Montreal courthouse no arguments were heard. There was no time for the accusations against former CSU president Keyana Kashfi for illegally signing an agreement of debt to the

CFS of \$1 million, the questionable bylaw changes by the CFS in 2009 and their denial of referenda results showing a clear desire for students to leave.

Over the weekend, both parties came to an agreement. The agreement was supposed to be presented and approved by the boards of directors of both sides.

This follows the lead of the Simon Fraser Student Society, which settled its case out of court years ago. The details of the agreement and any monetary arrangement will remain unknown—but chances are for the CSU that it's probably less than the estimated \$3 million allegedly owed to the CFS.

While the terms of the settlement are confidential, at least the Concordia Student Union and the Graduate Student Association will no longer be a part of the Canadian Federation of Students.

You can read up more on the issues at thelinknewspaper.ca

Oct. 19, 1981, The Canadian Federation of Students is founded, merging the National Union of Students and Association of Student Councils. The goal is to fight tuition hikes and student debt.

Sept. 30, 1998, The CSU joins the CFS. Arts and Science and Fine Arts students are the only members that pay fees to the CSU until 2007, making these students the only voting members at the time.

Summer and Fall 2007, There's a fracture in the student movement when fights over leadership positions at the CFS-Q, the Quebec branch of the organization, leads a judge to order a freeze of all of the organization's activities.

Dec. 14, 2007, Concordia's Board of Governors approves a \$0.41 CFS fee levy for John Molson School of Business and Engineering and Computer Science students. The levy is in place after CSU members actually vote to decrease the fee from \$0.42. Since JMSB and ENCS students were not part of the initial bid to join the CFS in 1998, they had not been paying any fees until this date.

July 31, 2008, Andrew Haig, treasurer of the CFS-Q finds a \$150,000 discrepancy in CFS finances. Despite increased student enrollment, revenue falls in the 2007-2008 academic year.

April 19, 2009, CSU president from 2008 to 2009 Keyana Kashfi signs an acknowledgment that the CSU owes over \$1 million in unpaid fees. The CSU says Kashfi did not have the authority to sign the agreement without council approval. The existence of this debt comes to light Feb. 10, 2010.

July 2009, A new round of leadership squabbles at the CFS-Q. Three executives refuse to leave their positions and reject their replacements.

Oct. 19, 2009, A petition signed by over 5,000 students is sent to the CFS, calling for a referendum. Twelve other associations, including the Dawson Student Union and Concordia's Graduate Student Association submit petitions around the same time.

CFS TIMELINE

April 15, 2011, The GSA also files a lawsuit to the CFS to have their referendum vote to separate recognized. They ask for \$100,000 in damages.

March 17, 2011, The CSU heads to court. The union initially asks for \$100,000 in damages, but after years of litigation, it asks for an additional \$25,000. The GSA begins its own proceedings.

May 22 to 25, 2010, At a national meeting, the CSU and GSA are unable to present motions to have their referendum results recognized. By the following month, the CFS says the "polls have no legal force."

April 6 to 8, 2010, Along the same lines as the CSU, 75 per cent of graduate students vote to leave the CFS.

March 23 to 25, 2010, After months of sending letters back and forth, the CSU holds a referendum without CFS oversight. Concordia undergraduate students vote overwhelmingly to leave the CFS.

February 2010, Both the GSA and the CSU are informed they owe outstanding fees to the CFS (about \$200,000 and \$1 million respectively).

Dec. 23, 2009, The Simon Fraser Student Society settles out of court.

Nov. 25 2009, At their annual general meeting, the CFS passes a new bylaw that only allows two member associations to hold a referendum on disaffiliation in a three-month period. Petitions also now require signatures by 20 per cent of students instead of 10 per cent. It's now impossible to call two votes on disaffiliation within five years of each other. The CSU disputes the legality of the vote, claiming it was short of the two-thirds majority needed.

Jan. 16, 2013, The CSU and GSA propose merging their cases. Justice Julien Lanctôt approves, and the disputes are combined.

Sept. 4, 2014, Justice Claude D'Almeida rules that the Rassemblement des associations étudiantes, formerly the CFS-Q, is entitled to the membership dues collected on behalf of the CFS' provincial wing from 2007 to 2010. The RAE is made up of the four student unions that are trying to leave the CFS, including the CSU.

Sept. 9, 2014, The court orders the CFS to hold a referendum on whether or not the Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University (PGSS) should remain a member association. This comes after the first vote to leave was rejected and a second petition to vote was refused.

March 9, 2015, The CSU, GSA and CFS move to settle in court. The decision must be approved by the boards of directors of all parties involved. The terms of the agreement will remain confidential.



the danger girls of skateboarding

by Shaun Michaud @shaun_mic

Safelights and red-hot Christmas bulbs lit the apartment. Only a few women graced the crowd. It looked like an overcrowded darkroom posing as the lobby of a peep show — minus the photo enlargers and dominatrixes. Lovers hugged the walls sharing long midnight kisses while lonely buddies tightened their grips around a cold one. Figures, some hooded, started spray-painting one-night-socialite Hope Christerson's walls. No fucks given. Get Born's Friday The 13th Party had just hit a snag.

"It was crazy," said Chanelle Rezko. "Some of them climbed on top of people's shoulders to tag the walls."

A little over two years ago, Rezko, a human relations student at Concordia, helped found Get Born, a non-profit online magazine dedicated to supporting the skateboarding culture in Montreal and Chicago. She persuaded co-founders Christerson and Liv Seidel—a green-hair-don't-care idol—to make their mark documenting a lifestyle dominated by men. All three grew up in Chicago but moved to Montreal to study. They faced some heavy setbacks at first.

"It was really hard to get anybody to trust us," said Seidel, a psychology major at Concordia. "People were like, 'well, what do you guys know about skateboarding? What am I getting out of this?'"

My iPhone vibrates. A text message appears.

*Bruv
They Dangerous*

I stare at my cell trying to suppress a smile. One opinionated Tinder-obsessed editor —no doubt intimidated—had just fled. Moments earlier, five members of Get Born had invaded *The Link* office.

Slumped like a discarded banana peel, my spine shot up when Rezko slammed the doors open. Dressed in shades of black, the girls—all in their early twenties—could have

started a riot.

Our runaway editor—he requested his name to be struck from this account—barely managed to mumble a quip to one of the girls.

Athena Gerakis and her friends pose for this week's cover. Yet only a lion tamer could make her, Liv Seidel, Ayda Omidvar and Laura Buchanan stand in one place. Rezko proves to have the ability to marshal the girls. Her beauty reflects a keyed up attitude reminiscent of that college buddy who carries you home after she gets you plastered.

"I've been infatuated with the skate culture since I was 12," Rezko said as I hang on every word like a newborn pup. I interviewed her a few weeks before the photoshoot. *The Link* staff hushed when she walked in. "I followed my older brothers to the skatepark to escape chaos at home."

Similar to what transpired during the interview, I make the best attempt to force my sweat glands from bursting at the photoshoot. She has been a friend of Rezko since their days as outsider tween girls, sipping slurpees on the ramps.

"After we moved here, Chanelle came up to me saying 'I need to get involved in the skateboarding culture here, I'm thinking about starting a magazine'" Seidel said. "How can we do this?"

Barry Walsh first met Rezko at Underworld Cabaret, where he was DJing. Along with fellow skateboarding legend Marc Tison, Walsh helped save the gnarly Big O—an international skater sanctuary—from getting demolished and sold for parts. Impressed by the girls' verve, Walsh took them under his wing.

"These are cool chicks basically into covering real skating in the city," said Walsh. "They focus on the underground community rather than the competitions and all that commercial stuff. They're creative, young and energetic so I hooked them up with key people."

With their many connections, Get Born covers both the Chicago and Montreal



A Group of Women are Taking on the Male-Dominated Skateboard Culture in North America

scenes.

The girls get invitations to several events connected to skateboarding. They were even invited to Street League in Chicago last summer.

"I almost lost my mind because it was just so commercialized. It just seemed like a big mockery of skateboarding culture," said Rezko. "Every skateboarder looked like a stock car."

Despite her misgivings concerning big-name companies financing pro athletes, Rezko said she understands that this is a necessary evil.

"If you can make millions of dollars off of your skateboard then good for you, like, you should be sponsored by Nike or Red Bull or Mountain Dew," she said.

Get Born also had help from Adam Green. They featured the well-known Montreal skateboarder online. Since then, they've collaborated on promoting Pool Block, a monthly competition at TRH-Bar. Like Walsh, Green is ecstatic about the potential of this young enterprise. I contacted the veteran over the phone.

"It's hard to pinpoint what makes it work," he said, his voice a rasp prone to curse-laden interjections. "I think they're their own marketing. If you're a 20-year-old with a boner, are you going on a dude's site or on hot chicks? I'm not trying to sound sexist or anything, but..."

Omidvar's probing eyes don't let their guard down. As per usual, I'm fidgeting with some technical difficulty on my wireless flash transceiver. She stamps her feet and circles toward the exit. I try to reassure her by overcoming my natural pusillanimity. I introduce myself again. Her smile breaks the ice. She remembers me.

"That's enough! Stop taking photos of me," she said, loud enough for me to hear at the booming Get Born Friday The 13th Party. Her black cat ear hair clip contrasted with the deep red sheen that engulfed the scene.

She walked past me and into the crowd. It's still a wonder how revelers found the place. The girls had posted the wrong

address on the Facebook event page. It was at Christerson's apartment. The other location didn't exist and the sheer number of people who showed up to this place of limbo had attracted a police cruiser.

Finding it had felt like a treasure hunt.

I snapped a few shots and got acquainted with a hookah to tamper my stage fright. This backfired. I lurched for the exit soon after.

Sometime later, a few idle hands broke the door leading to Christerson's bedroom. The first few taggers created a domino effect.

"I'm still sick about it," said Seidel. "At about 2:30, within five minutes walls were covered in graffiti. The front door is pretty much ruined. We all felt really disrespected. There's like fucking 'grape' on the wall. I'm like, really?"

Sheep mentality prompted other taggers to join in. A confrontation at the door forced the vandals out.

"I was at the bar, I couldn't see," said Rezko. "But the guys who started it were friends with the DJ. So, we were able to track them down."

The party poopers came back and painted over the walls.

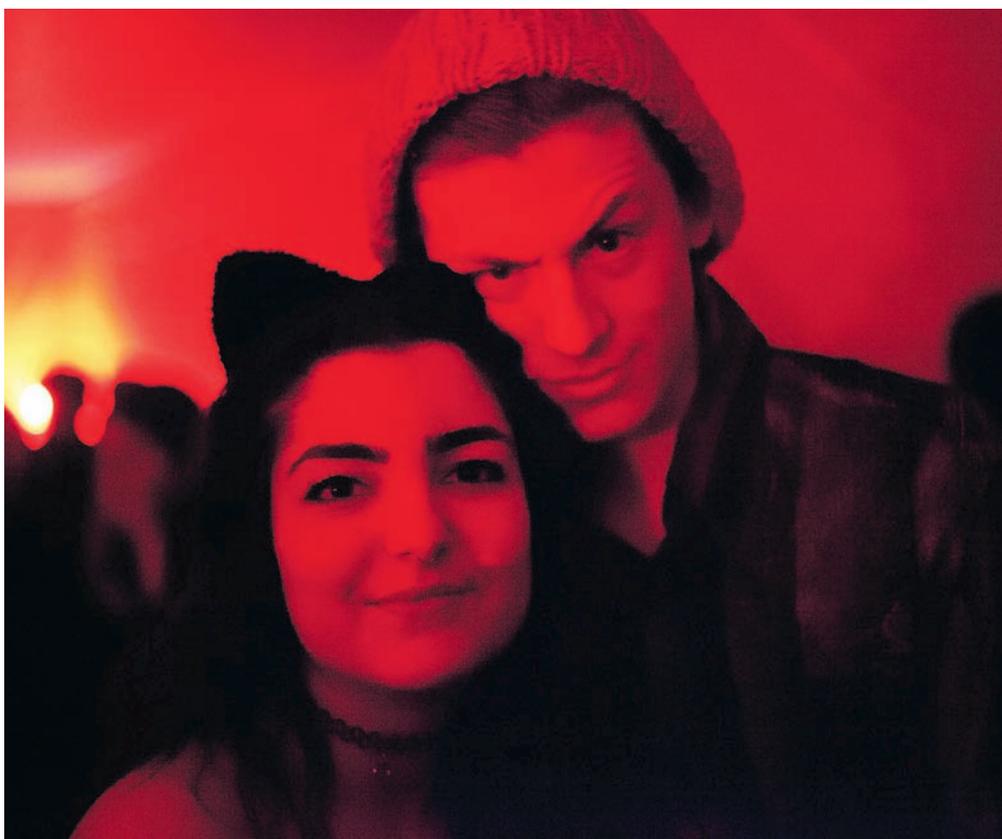
"They actually said that 'we've done this to a ton of houses and this is the first time we've ever gone to clean it up,'" said Seidel.

Get Born raised \$420 from the party. They intend on using profits to fund future blowouts and concerts. In the long run, they want to open their own skateboarding shop and start a clothing line.

Despite the accolades they've received in Montreal, Get Born still encounter some resistance in Chicago. The close-knit cliques in the Windy City have proven harder to crack.

"Wheel whores," said Seidel, the epithet almost burning my eardrums. "We've been called a lot of derogatory names just because we're women. I mean, there's not much we can do about it. We just continue to create content and stick to our message. Hopefully what we're doing comes through to people."

Photos Shaun Michaud





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Dissecting Intersection

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Mixes Media to Explore History, Language and Power

by Athina Lugez

If a single word could define the complex work of conceptual artist and writer Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, intermediality comes to mind. A concept at the centre of the 1960s Fluxus artistic movement, it describes the intersecting of different medias while evading categorization.

Influenced by this practice, Cha cross-bred literature with visual culture and performance art with cinema, as well as other art forms, during her artistic career, spanning from 1974 to 1982.

Following her death in 1982, Cha's artworks and writings were digitally archived by the Berkeley Art Museum. Currently on display at the Phi Centre in collaboration with DHC/ART, the art exhibition *Theresa Hak Kyung Cha | Immatériel* exposes a selection of Cha's prolific body of work accumulated over an eight year period. The show focuses on an intersectional exploration of diasporic identities, representations of power, language, translation and poetics.

Curated by Monika Kin Gagnon, professor of Communications Studies at Concordia University, the show explores the ephemerality and immateriality that pervades Cha's work.

"This is the first time Theresa Hak Kyung Cha is [being] shown in Canada," stated Gagnon. "When you look at her work there's an ephemeral quality to it, and you find it in the spoken language, sound works, performances and videos.

"This definition is not only grounded in matter or the world that we know so much, but as well the spiritual realm. Cha's work speaks with her ancestors. It elevates things to a spiritual realm, which was what I was trying to evoke with the title [of the exhibition]," Gagnon continued.

The art show is centered around Cha's 1982 experimental historical novel *Dictée*, considered the magnum opus of Cha's literary career. The book received praise following its publication because of its unorthodox structure. Written in Korean, French and English, the book combines the

genre of autobiography with visual culture. Cha also experimented with the juxtaposition of hypertext in both print and visual media. The plot focuses on Korean colonial history and female revolutionaries while attempting to express the arbitrariness of language and representation.

"The book was really embraced by language poets and experimental writers and artists of the period because it's a fascinating historical, experimental, partly biographical but postmodern type of book," Gagnon said.

"It's a trilingual book that looks at Korean history and uses photography in it. It examines her own personal matrilineal history through her mother."

"Interest in her work has been successive and embraced by different types of literary and identity communities," Gagnon continued. "It was also taken up in 1990s by a group of feminists of colour in the US, [who] created a cult around her. Cha can be credited as being pre-identity politics or identity politics avant la lettre [...] The forms she was writing and conducting were the most avant-garde forms of the period."

Also on display are videos and film directed by the intermedia artist between 1974 and 1977. These include *Secret Spill*, *Mouth to Mouth*, *Vidéoème*, *Re Dis Appearing and Permutations*. Fascinated by her generation's artistic culture, Cha spent a year studying cinema in France and drew her influences from contemporary experimental filmmakers such as Marguerite Duras and Jean-Luc Godard.

"Those filmmakers were playing with language of cinema in abstract and conceptual ways," Gagnon explained. "What we see when looking at Cha's videos is dialogue that she was bringing with the experimental work of her period, but inserting a level of questioning around memory and diaspora, identity and subjectivity. This was unique to her."

Vietnamese-American filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-Ha referred to Cha's moving image practice as creating a "page-screen." Cha's ability to skillfully combine multiple media and disciplines made her work deeply fas-

cinating to many.

Cha was always on the artistic cutting edge of her period, whether it was in literature or film. The artist associated with Fluxus, an avant-garde artistic movement from the 1960s that developed anti-commercial aesthetics and playful subversions of traditional art, under the tutelage of Lithuanian-American artist George Maciunas. Cha was also linked to the populist artistic movement Mail Art, which centered on sending artwork through the mail.

"When you look at Cha's work [...] there's a prevailing playfulness of media, forms and ideas. Looking at her work today slows things down for us in this hyper-saturated media environment," Gagnon said. "Cha's work is non-dogmatic work but political in a subtle way. That's the mark that she has left in the world of contemporary art."

Gagnon curated this exhibition in a way for spectators to see the intersections and spaces between media Cha played with.

"Cha's work is so complex because of the relationship between different works and themes that run through her work. It's impossible to show everything together,"

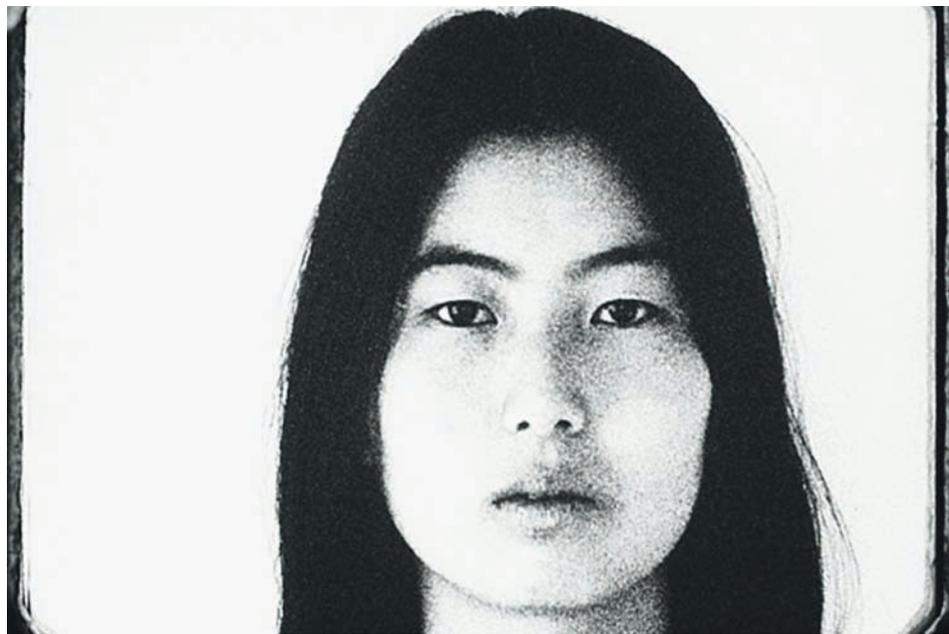
Gagnon said. I wanted to point people to the digital archive, to allow them to explore her work in more depth. I've also been interested in traces and [what the] archive leaves behind."

Gagnon hopes this first-time exhibition of Cha's work in Canada will bring greater attention to the artist's work. Cha's pieces have been presented in Europe and recently in the USA, during the historical feminist retrospective held in Brooklyn, NY and titled *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*.

"This exhibition could be of particular interest to Quebec because of its bilingual dimension, since we're constantly playing with wordplay, translation of words and terms, as Cha does," Gagnon said. "Language, place-work identity, transnational identities, memory and history are the main themes of the exhibition."

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha | Immatériel // Mar. 5 to Apr. 4 // Phi Centre (407 St. Pierre St.) // Mon. to Fri. 10 a.m.—5 p.m.; Sat. 12 p.m.—5 p.m. // Free admission

Photo courtesy of PHI Centre





Montreal Roller Derby league teams Les Filles du Roi (purple) and La Racaille square off in a match on Saturday, March 8th 2015.

step into the oval

A Look Into the Women's Roller Derby Scene in Montreal

by Julian McKenzie @JulianTheIntern

It's Saturday night in Montreal and sports fans are making their way to the arena. With a packed parking lot and long lines for tickets, the prospect of fast skating and hip checks is clearly enticing. It sounds like an average night at a Montreal Canadiens game, but it's nowhere near as conventional.

A large gymnasium with an oval track at Le Taz Roulodome replaces an ice rink. There aren't 20,000 plus fans but around 1000, made up of children, teenagers, young adults and families. When they aren't cheering the competitors on, they're making pyramids stacked with Pabst Blue Ribbon beer cans. The jersey names aren't familiar ones like "Crosby," "Subban" or "Ovechkin" but "Boobi Puncher," "Falcon Punch" and "Rocky Road."

This is a night at a roller derby game, specifically, the first night of the Montreal Roller Derby League's 2015 season. It's the only female roller derby league in the city. The league features five teams—Les Contrabanditas, Les Filles du Roi, La Racaille, The New Skids on the Block and The Sexpos.

The league even hosts a "boot camp" in the summer, where they teach new players various fundamentals of the game, from how to skate to how to fall. The new players then go through a draft where they're selected by the different teams in the league.

"When I started, I couldn't even skate. I could barely stand on my skates. Within a year I was playing games," said Kate Feather-Adams, known as Rocky Road in the oval.

The short and self-proclaimed "clumsy" skater has been playing roller derby for four years. Rocky Road has played in Hamilton and Calgary, but says the Montreal scene is more vibrant.

"Everybody's on board here in [Montreal]," she said. "Hamilton and Calgary, they're building their teams and their fanbase, but it's not as big as here. Here they sell out crowds."

On this night Les Contrabanditas, Les Filles du Roi and La Racaille are participating in a round robin. The teams will play two games each—once against each other team—to kick off the fifth Montreal Roller Derby League season.

"Roller derby's a great sport," said Grace Burke, also known as Hot Cross Guns, the Vice-President of the Montreal Roller Derby

League. "People [in roller derby] come from many different athletic backgrounds. Some people have no skating ability, others used to play hockey or other competitive sports."

Roller derby is a contact sport where two teams race around an oval track with roller skates. Both teams field five players aside, and each team has a "jammer," a designated player with a star on their helmet who tries to lap around "blockers" to score points. The blockers, as their name suggests, try to block the jammers from passing them, which often leads to some spills, falls and the occasional injury.

"It's full contact," adds Burke. "[But] it's not like the roller derbies from the seventies where there was punches to the face or choking,

"We get a lot of bruises, sometimes bones can be broken, but we have a lot of safety gear."

Burke has dislocated her shoulder from playing, but the other players are blessed that they haven't suffered any serious injuries during games.

"It's not unusual for girls to have ice baths every night," said Amanda Fraser, also known as Demanda Lashing.

Fraser is a member of the New Skids on the

Block Team, a traveling team within the league that plays other teams in Canada and in the United States. Fraser has even played nationally for Team Canada alongside some of the best roller derby players in the country.

"Normally these are our rivals," said Lashing about her teammates on Team Canada. "So to be able to fight the title of best in the world with these women was pretty awesome."

The roller derby community appears to be tight-knit. Teammates and opponents are often amicable, even friends, and will often share a couple of beers post-game.

Booing among fans is even discouraged during games between Montreal teams and squads from other cities like Boston or Philadelphia—two cities known to harbour hate for each other in other sports.

"We really appreciate when these teams travel from the States over the border. [It's] quite a distance to come play us. They're also our friends within the international community," said Fraser. "We discourage booing but it always kind of happens. Our fans get really riled up and really protective of us."

As fun as the sport of roller derby is, it can only serve as a distraction from regular life for most of the players, as they each have regular jobs and school during the day.

Most players are still university students, teachers, directors or personal trainers. Only a few players have been fortunate enough to live off being a professional roller derby player, mostly through sponsorships with skate companies.

In the meantime, the women who wreak havoc in roulodomes, whether they are in Montreal or across the country, are more than content to take part in a sport that provides an escape and bonding time among players.

"It's a really great place where women can continue to grow in a competitive atmosphere that's not available in many other sports," said Burke.

"It's a great adrenaline high, it's a great team sport," said Featherstone-Adams. "The camaraderie, the contact, the speed, it's everything. It's fast paced and it's slow. It's strategic, it's skill and it's strength. It's everything."

Photos Elysia-Marie Campbell





Concordia women's rugby phenom Alex Tessier was named 2014 RSEQ MVP and a CIS All-Canadian this past season.

Don't Mess With Tess

Rugby Sophomore Turning Heads At All Levels

by David S. Landsman @dslands

Rugby wasn't Alex Tessier's first sport. Nor was it her second. Many Concordia Stingers and fans who have watched the sophomore centre play would be surprised to know she only learned how to play in her second year at Dawson College, four years ago.

"A friend of mine invited me to a [rugby] practice, and since it was a contact sport I liked it right away," said Tessier. "I might have been sore now and then after every game day, but it's so worth it."

Since taking up rugby full-time, Tessier has added to her trophy case. After being named the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec rookie of the year in 2013, she was recognized as conference MVP and all-star and as a Canadian Interuniversity Sport All-Canadian this past season. In addition, Tessier has represented Team Canada in various Sevens tournaments.

Tessier's rugby career might not have happened had she continued playing basketball, or even boys football.

The 21-year-old from Sainte-Clotilde-de-Horton, a small town an hour and a half away from Montreal, was into playing basketball before rugby. She played for three years while at Dawson. In high school, she even played as a wide receiver for the boys'

football team.

"I played to discover. I'm just a little crazy I guess and like challenges," said Tessier. The atmosphere was good and I got the guys to respect me. At first they didn't believe I could be a part of their team, but I proved them wrong."

"I might have been sore now and then after every game day, but it's so worth it."

-Alex Tessier

In her first year at Concordia, Tessier played the first half of the season for both women's basketball and rugby team until she decided to commit full time to rugby.

"I realized it was way too much [committing to two teams]," said Tessier. "Being able to commit solely to rugby was good because it allowed me to achieve my personal goals," Tessier added.

Judging by her busy schedule, rugby has proven to be a priority. She trains six days a week with three days devoted to strength and conditioning, two days only to skills and also another day to speed and agility. In between training, she fits in her studies towards a degree in Math & Statistics. But she does find at least one day to cool down.

"Sunday is thankfully a day of rest," said Tessier. "Trying to have a social life isn't easy. I have one, but I don't go out too much."

Since her arrival at Concordia, and her decision to play rugby full-time, she has helped her team to win back-to-back conference championship appearances. The Stingers were on the verge of a perfect season this past year before bowing out in the final to their rival the McGill Martlets, a game that still stings.

"It was a really fun season that (we) had," said Tessier. "[It] sucks that we lost in the final. It hurt [the team] and me. I'm still not fully over it. I think we definitely learned from it. We're still looking to bring a championship title home to Concordia. Having three years left is reassuring."

Tessier is also looking to add to her accolades by playing for her country. Tessier recently came back from a Sevens tournament in Las Vegas with Team Canada's East squad. She led her team to a third place finish.

In 2012, she traveled to play in the fifth world university championship edition of the FISU (International University Sports Federation) games in France.

This past summer, she was invited to the sixth edition of the FISU games in Brazil. She and her teammates took home the championship.

"It was definitely one of the highlights of my career so far, and a great experience because we won gold," said Tessier. "I got to play with some [players] who are already on the national team. It was great rugby and a great time."

Tessier will be traveling to Hong Kong on March 19 for more training with Team Canada. She will also make a pit stop in Victoria, British Columbia, the headquarters for the Sevens National Program, where she will attempt to crack the roster for Team Canada's 2016 Summer Olympic rugby team.

"I don't know whether 2016 is a realistic goal or not," said Tessier. "Definitely possible, but 2020 is more plausible at this time."

Tessier was once a basketball player and a football player. Now rugby has become her number one sport, and she is an Olympic hopeful. For the moment, and perhaps for the future, picking rugby is turning out to be a great decision.

Photo Shaun Michaud

BOX SCORES WEEK OF MARCH 3 TO MARCH 9

THURSDAY

5

Women's Basketball—Concordia 47, UQAM 54 (RSEQ Playoffs)



FRIDAY

6

Men's Basketball—Concordia 60, McGill 74 (RSEQ Playoffs)



Photo & Video Editor
Brandon Johnston



Assistant News Editor
Jane Lakes



Sports Online Editor
Julian McKenzie

The Link held their annual elections last Wednesday! Here are the results for our 36th edition's editorial staff.



Fringe Arts Editor
June Loper



Editor-in-Chief
Michelle Pucci



Current Affairs Editor
Noelle Didierjean



Graphics Editor
Sam Jones



Coordinating Editor
Shaun Michaud

We still need to fill our *Opinions* and *Copy* editor positions and will be holding elections again next fall. If you want to join the team, start contributing today. Visit us at H-649 on the downtown campus to get started.



Sports Editor
Vince Morello



Fringe Arts Online Editor
Zach Goldberg

Creative Director
Laura Lalonde



News Editor
Jonathan Cook



Living in a Player's Paradise



Over 1,000 Players Participate In Canada's Biggest LAN Event

by Vince Morello @vinnymorellz

You wake up at noon. Empty energy drink cans lie around computer desks and the floor, and your favourite video game appears on the screen of a brightly lit monitor. This might sound like your apartment the morning after an all-night gaming session, but this is the norm at Lan ETS.

Lan ETS, now in its 13th year of existence, is a giant local area network (LAN) party that hosts eSports players who compete in a myriad of video games annually.

Held at the École de technologie supérieure de Montreal, the 2015 edition of Lan ETS hosted 1200 players, many with their own computer rigs, giving them a space to plug in and play with their friends either casually or competitively.

"In 2002 LAN parties [were] a big thing with all the LAN setups," said William LeFrançois, the community manager of Lan ETS. "But it's a challenge for us right now, setting up thousands of networks. The reason we do it is because we have fun together."

Lan ETS began on Friday night with the setting up of gaming networks and an opening ceremony, before the tournaments started on Saturday morning. The games included in the tournaments were high-profile titles such as Counterstrike: Global Offensive, League of Legends, DOTA 2, Starcraft 2, Hearthstone, Super Smash Bros:

Melee and Super Smash Bros: Project M.

"At the end of the day you have sponsors, [and] they're looking to support your event because you have popular games," said LeFrançois, when asked about the selection of games at Lan ETS. "They have their target audience, so it's not a decision about what game we love as an organizer. We go with the industry."

LeFrançois said that the number of seats have increased at Lan ETS over the last few years, with tickets selling out faster and faster each year. Lan ETS 2015 sold out their tickets for the event in three hours. It's a sign of the growing success of the eSports industry.

However, critics of the term "eSports" and its involvement in the video game industry remain, even with the popularity of games like League of Legends. The League of Legends Season Three World Championship garnered 32 million viewers online back in October of 2013.

"It's always a huge debate. What is eSports versus sports in general?" asked Alex "Vansilli" Nguyen, a shoutcaster—or video game commentator—for the Counterstrike: Global Offensive finals. "What's similar about [eSports and traditional sports] is the amount of practice the players put in. [There's] a lot of training in terms of reaction times and thinking."

"Of course it's not as physical [as some sports] but at the same time eSports should

be seen as a great spectator sport, because everybody loves watching it and it's great entertainment in terms of watching competition," Nguyen added.

"It's always a huge debate. What is eSports versus sports in general?"

- Alex "Vansilli" Nguyen

"A lot of people in [the gaming] industry don't believe it's a sport," LeFrançois said. He then added that NASCAR and eSports share some skills in terms of coordination, and therefore if NASCAR is a sport, eSports can be one as well.

Whichever side you're on in the eSports debate, there's no denying that Montreal is a city that loves video games. When the video game industry was sprouting, the Quebec government welcomed the industry with open arms. Now companies like Ubisoft, Electronic Arts Games, Warner Bros. and many independent

developers call Montreal home.

"In the past we had a big LAN party culture in Quebec," LeFrançois said. "I think that's why it's popular; people were like 14 years old attending LAN parties and now they're still doing it."

Nguyen believes the gaming community helped gaming and eSports grow in Montreal, pointing to the eSports community Boreal Gaming as an example.

"In a place like ETS, where it's focused on computer engineering, you have a lot of fans from eSports and a lot of fans from gaming as well," said Nguyen. "At the same time you're also breeding some professional players locally in Montreal and that naturally brings out the crowd that is going to follow and support those players too."

Of course, the success of the event is based on the enjoyment of the attendants. Fortunately for the organizers, players and spectators were cheering either from online live streams or the event itself.

"[I feel] exhausted, just drained of energy, but LAN was good, I liked it a lot," said Derek Shao, one of the members of Freebirds, the team who took home first place in the League of Legends tournament.

"I love it. It's been maybe about three years since I came back from the last ETS. It has a great crowd," said Nguyen. "There's a lot of spectators and it keeps growing and growing for CS:GO, so I love seeing this as it grows locally as well for Montreal."

As for the future of Lan ETS and eSports in Montreal, the potential is there, and the organizers at Lan ETS have the intention of making their event bigger and more accessible for anyone who's interested in playing or watching the games.

"We want to do it the right way and with the right people," said LeFrançois.

So if you do find yourself up all night gaming in a Montreal apartment, just know that there's a good chance you're not alone, and you may be in the preliminary stages of a great eSports career.

Photos Brandon Johnston

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seo strategies

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Social media strategist and former staffer at *The Link* **Ingrid Hein** will be teaching the basics of **Search Engine Optimization**. Learn the ins and outs of optimizing your website strategies for higher search result rankings as well as how to integrate all the tools available with **Google Analytics**.

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All workshops take place at *The Link*, 1455 de Maisonneuve W. Room H-649

graphic Sam Jones

opinions

a salvia breakthrough: my first trip

A Glimpse of the World Behind the World



by Gonzo Nieto @gonzebo

It was a warm sunny day, the summer before my friends and I would leave for college. We borrowed my parent's van, drove down to a head shop in Toronto and bought a gram of 20x salvia extract, a bong and a jet lighter.

The bong was short and red with black swirls ascending. The jet lighter was a crucial component, as we knew the optimal temperature for smoking salvia is higher than what a normal lighter can achieve.

As teenagers, a private indoor place for tripping was a scarce luxury, so we instead took to a local park in our suburban neighborhood where we would often hang out, smoke pot and play hacky sack.

In addition to a playground, swing set and a baseball diamond, this park also had several small wooded sections around the perimeter, which I would generously call micro-pseudoforests.

The setting for my travels was one such area, which provided minimal privacy and cover from the neighbours in adjacent houses. Accompanied by two of my closest friends, we walked into these tiny woods and found ourselves a large log that comfortably seated three.

After settling in, we packed the bowl to the rim with the salvia extract and loaded the bong with cold, raspberry-flavoured sparkling water—the cold would counteract salvia's higher burning temperature, and the flavour was in case the smoke tasted gross.

At this point, I should note that I knew very little about salvia at the time. When compared to cannabis, I knew that salvia

burns hotter and needs to be held in longer for optimal effects, but I knew very little about the subjective effects. I certainly didn't know one could have as intense an experience as I was about to.

I brought my lips to the bong and the lighter to the bowl. The smoke was smooth and tasted like a bitter aromatic tea. After taking the hit, I passed the bong to my friend and stood up, taking a few steps toward a small clearing behind our log.

Aided by the chilled bong water, a sizable lung capacity from six years of musical training, and adolescent naïveté, I held the smoke in for a bit over half a minute.

As it turns out, I consumed an immense amount of salvia in that one hit, especially for an unknowing first-timer.

Standing several feet from the log, I held in the smoke and noticed my vision becoming slightly blurry in the periphery. The tricky thing about salvia is that it comes on astonishingly fast—you often find yourself at the peak before you've taken a breath.

As I exhaled, I was pulled out of my identity and—in fact—my body, rather violently. This wasn't something I felt sad or upset about, and there was no struggle. The overwhelming and dysphonic nature of the experience provided no room for an emotional response, and the sudden force with which it pulled could not be resisted.

I was undergoing my own death. The feeling was like being completely engrossed in a narrative and then having the book slammed shut in front of your face, dissolving the storyline and leaving you dazed and perplexed.

Only in this case, the narrative was my life,

and the reader was the pre-identity soul, or point of consciousness, which had been incarnated as my identity.

As I wrapped my head around the sudden termination of my existence, the yellow and brown leaves that covered the ground were imperceptibly converted into an infinite ocean of what seemed to be brown cells, each containing a blue nucleus.

I was immediately filled with the understanding that I was also one of these cells, observing the ocean from within. It wasn't just my existence that had ended, but all of it. It struck me that each cell in this ocean was another soul, and the blue nucleus represented what that soul had been looking at through its incarnate eyes in its final moment. The notion that the eyes are the windows to the soul seemed particularly apt.

From there, it felt like the machinery that lies behind reality as we experience it was being revealed. It was as though everything that surrounds you is a sort of wallpaper, and it was all being pulled back, leaving exposed a very mechanical and inorganic scene set against a backdrop of what felt like interstellar space.

There was a somewhat sinister feeling. The abrupt end of existence, the revelation of this underlying alien machinery—it felt like it had all been a prank of cosmic proportions pulled on me for reasons I couldn't comprehend.

I saw the entities that were doing this to me. Each was a standing oval of a solid colour. They lacked limbs or distinguishable sensory organs, but their presence was felt. They were neither friendly nor malevolent; it felt like they operated on a scale far greater than I,

and were frankly disinterested.

My memory of the remainder of the experience is choppy. I recall several pieces but no continuity between them. At one point, I was a point of consciousness inside a perfectly cubical room with thick vertical coloured stripes, smaller cubes protruding from the walls, and no door.

Some moments after that, I was hovering about 50 feet from where my body was, looking down on a row of houses and the trees where my friends and I were.

Several other disjointed scenes followed which I now have difficulty recalling. Throughout this time, I was completely out of my body and entirely unaware of my surroundings. The next memory I have is feeling as though the wallpaper that had been violently torn away was being put back in place. There was a distinctly different set of entities that were doing this. While they never came into view, they felt more benevolent and their presence was felt.

As this was happening, the first perception of my surroundings entered my consciousness: in the top right corner of my field of view, I could see my two friends sitting on the log, looking at me. Instinctually, I crawled towards them, as they grew larger and larger in my vision.

Soon, I found myself sitting back on the log with my friends. I was now back in my body and aware of my surroundings, although the visions were still present as soon as I closed my eyes. For a while, it felt like I was inhabiting both worlds at once.

Graphic Sam Jones

Food for Thought: Why Are Student Jobs So Undignified?

Questions About Political Views for a Restaurant Job Highlight a Nasty Trend

by Karina Licursi

So I walked into the restaurant for my interview, having no clue what to expect. With no previous experience as a waitress, I had only my savvy organization skills and learning abilities to depend on.

The manager had me sit at a table in the banquet. He gave a brief description of what the position entailed, like any other employer I had met in the past. But from there, things got interesting.

After asking for my availability, he promptly looked over my CV before asking, "So you have no previous experience?"

"No," I told him. *Why am I here then?* I thought to myself. Noting my anglophone accent, he asked where my family was from.

Then he began to read aloud the list of films I had previously directed for school and independently. "*Les étudiants, un journal intime*," he read. *My Student Strike*. "Ah, so you're a socialist," he concluded.

What did I just hear? Yup, a prospective employer just asked me whether I was a socialist. Immediately I get brought back to the McCarthyist Red Scare Era in the United States, where countless people in the entertainment and film industry were being persecuted for their views and many fired from their jobs because of it.

I quickly replied, "No."

"Capitalist?" he pressed.

"No. Centrist," I told him firmly.

Finally he asked which sector I lived in. Upon learning that I was a resident of Nun's Island, he made the comment that I "must be rich."

If only! The whole series of questions that this employer asked me reeked of a blind date gone wrong. Although it wasn't until I left that I realized those questions shouldn't have been asked in the first place.

Before leaving, he noted: "I'll bring you in for two days to see your performance, and then we'll decide whether to hire you."

Walking out, I knew in my gut that I was not coming back.

While reading this, it's easy to assume that I may have played a certain part in my own victimization.

The employer did not force me to answer these questions. I answered, really, because I have no shameful past, no criminal record, which therefore leaves me with nothing to hide.

Right? Wrong. The only reason I went along with answering these intrusive questions is because I knew I wasn't going to take the position.

Many employers assume that as a student living within a certain budget that my situation calls for being desperate enough to take whatever position gets thrown my way, and this is where many students go wrong.

Understandably, there are times where finances, or lack thereof, place us in a mindset to "take what we can get."

That is where the system ultimately fails, by not providing students with the opportunity to find a part-time job that will not only help pay the bills, but teach the skills that will be applied later on in our careers.

Here at Concordia we have the Housing and Job Bank's search engine to ensure that students are helped in finding employment, yet many find themselves in positions which offer little to no benefits.

In today's economy, hours are cut. I remember my first job out of high school as a cashier during 2010.

For the first month I worked twenty hours a week, only to be left with a measly eight hours per week which eventually led to a lay-off once I, along with several of my colleagues, proved no longer useful.

Looking at the bigger picture, the real issue isn't whether or not to get a job, or having to face an employer that will blatantly discriminate against multiple Quebec social groups in the space of one interview, but the fact that a person is only useful depending on how much money they make.

It is no longer about skills, having a diploma, or cramming in hours of study at the dawn of the next big exam, but how much dignity one can lose in a single shift. And an employer who would rather hire me based on my individual makeup rather than my skills-set is not someone I want to work for any day.

Graphic Matthew Stefanson



Sixteen Bars Against the Tar Sands

Activists Call for Climate Justice Through the Mouthpiece of Rap

by Dan Parker

Climate Justice Montreal is throwing the Rap Battle Against the Tar Sands on March 28, 8 p.m. at La Vitrola on St. Laurent Blvd.

Local rappers, slam poets and activists will be performing original verses against the tar sands, and donations will go towards Aamjiwnaang and Sarnia Against Pipelines, an environmental activist group in Ontario.

In preparation for the event there will be a rap and climate justice workshop focusing on the links between climate change, social justice, tar sands and pipelines, while empowering attendees to speak up through the medium of hip-hop.

Check it out on March 16 at 6:30p.m., in room H-1267 of the Hall building.

For the battle CJM has invited Zach Sherwin, a rapper who portrayed Stephen King and Sherlock Holmes on the YouTube series Epic Rap Battles of History, to play the role of a Trans-Canada lobbyist promoting tar sands pipeline projects Energy East and Keystone XL.

Expect other satirical performances too.

This is not the first time hip-hop has been used as an arena for combat between different perspectives on climate change and fossil fuel consumption.

NASA produced a rap where they raise awareness about the effects of climate change:

"For real, all it takes is a couple degrees/ Before floods, droughts, and hurricanes are not anomalies/ And all these catastrophes become our new realities."

While the subject of NASA's rap is worthy of admiration, largely because it raises awareness about climate change, the song is reminiscent of the cheesy public service announcement rap, *Don't Copy That Floppy*.

Plus, the song ends with a focus on false solutions: merely changing individual consumption habits and promoting green

technology.

In contrast, Canadian artist Haidawood denounces the Northern Gateway pipeline proposal from an indigenous perspective in *A Message to Stephen Harper*.

"Searching through my soul trying to find the right flow/ To tell the truth, I can feel it now the fight's close/ Sorry kids it's not enough to just recycle/ Have to go psycho about where the pipe go."

Based in Haida Gwaii in so-called British Columbia, Haidawood argues that simply recycling is a false solution, showing how individual consumption does not affect the root causes behind climate change and, in this case, the destruction of ancestral territory teeming with flora and fauna.

On the local and international level, blocking Big Oil's ecocidal plans is the way to go.

The NASA rap also neglects to point out how there are unequal burdens resulting from climate catastrophes; those who are economically marginalized, especially indigenous people and the people of the Global South, will suffer more than the affluent and privileged classes.

The Dead Prez song "When the Lights Go Out" shows exactly how people of colour are impacted unequally when climate disasters strike: "What did we learn from Katrina?/ I hope you can swim if you're waiting on FEMA." M-1 from Dead Prez is dropping a verse by video at the Battle on March 28.

Environmentalists, whether they write, rant or chant about climate change and green solutions, need to be aware of how privilege based on race, class and nationality will greatly determine which communities will face the brunt of the climate chaos that is predicted to occur if most of the world's carbon isn't left underground.

Hip-hop has always played a pivotal role in reminding us of the race relations and unfair

class divisions that impede us from making the systemic changes necessary to move society forward in a truly equitable way.

Public Enemy made this loud and clear in "Fight the Power."

A future where the Global South, indigenous peoples and the economically oppressed are spared from the terrors of climate change simply cannot occur without system change.

Toronto-based rap duo Test Their Logik state this unequivocally in "Be:"

"Resource wars get started often/ Drilling, fracking, dig our coffin/ Spills attack and kill our oceans/ [...] Food monopolies keep billions starving/ Sweatshop slavery stitching cotton/ Murder king coal keeps releasing carbon/ Chemical plants got the people coughing/ [...] Decolonize the land where you stand is stolen/

[...] Against the bankers NWO'in/ Capital the cancer that can't keep growing."

Hip-hop offers hope. A head-bobbing lyrical flow can help the people mobilize to stop the pipeline flow. An emcee's delivery can landlock the tar sand bitumen in a more permanent way, and maybe inspire other activists to do the same.

This is what the Rap Battle Against the Tar Sands is all about. Reach us at slamthetarsands@gmail.com if you're down to drop a verse and take the pipelines down. Keep it underground (the carbon, that is.)

Dan Parker is a Climate Justice Montreal Organizer at this event

Graphic Jennifer Aedy



Israel Is Not an Apartheid State



by Bradley Martin

A number of students at Concordia University seek to accuse Israel of being an “apartheid state.” The aims of Israeli Apartheid Week are to bolster opposition towards what they term as “Israeli Apartheid.”

This accusation contains no substance and is an insult to actual victims of apartheid.

As students we have a responsibility to critically analyze such a dubious claim.

Apartheid is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as “a former system in South Africa in which black people and people from other racial groups did not have the same political and economic rights as white people and were forced to live separately from white people.”

Contrary to what IAW supporters would like you to think, there is no system of Jewish exclusion of non-Jewish residents in Israel or the territories it administers.

They would do well to contrast the horrors of real apartheid to Ariel University, located in what would be termed as a West Bank “settlement” by IAW proponents.

Their student body consists of Jews, Arabs, Druze, and Circassians. An estimated six hundred Arab-Muslim students are enrolled.

In December 2011 AU held a conference titled “Best Plans for a Peaceful Israel/Palestine,” which Jews, Israeli Arabs and Palestinians alike from Palestinian Authority-controlled areas in the West Bank attended and lectured at.

This is hardly comparable to the now-defunct Rand Afrikaans University, a predecessor institution to the University of

Johannesburg, which limited enrollment to white South Africans and banned prospective Black students from attending.

Israel is a democracy that protects the human rights of all its citizens and residents, including in the so-called “settlements.”

Based on 2007 statistics, about 1,300 of Pisgat Ze'ev's 42,000 residents were Arabs. In nearby French Hill, nearly one sixth of residents are Arabs, which included students at the neighboring Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Meanwhile Neve Yaakov, with 20,000 people, has a population of 600 Arabs according to the Israel Center for Jerusalem Studies.

The absurdity of IAW's accusation can be observed in the upcoming Israeli Elections. Salim Joubran, the Israeli Arab Supreme Court Judge, is serving as the Chairman of the Central Election Committee and will be in charge of overseeing Israel's parliamentary elections.

The Committee is in charge of registering lists of political parties running for election, campaign financing, election logistics, tallying results, and dealing with challenges to the results.

IAW puts forth inaccurate generalizations concerning the State of Israel that are at odds with reality. Its proponents do not comprehend the horrendous injustice of what apartheid truly represents.

Bradley Martin is a Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA) fellow and student at Concordia University.

Graphic Jennifer Aedy

TVA Unfairly Targeted Muslim Students

The Azrieli Holocaust Collection at Concordia's library was established in 1984 by oft-celebrated and oft-criticized Montreal philanthropist and architect, David Azrieli.

The collection is expansive and incredibly necessary for those who wish to educate themselves about the history of the Holocaust, which unjustly took the lives of approximately 11 million people, over half of which were Jews.

Not surprisingly, the collection also hosts Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, a book that demonstrates the evils and incredible potential of dangerously violent and radical ideologies.

In fact, at the time of this writing, *Mein Kampf* is currently being taken out of Concordia's library and will likely be used solely for academic purposes—just as it should be.

So why then, on Feb. 27, did TVA, the French Language Television Network in Canada, not barge into the Webster library, demanding an explanation concerning this anti-Semitic book's place on its shelves, camera discreetly in hand?

What was so special about the books in the Muslim Student Association's library that their presence had to be documented by TVA journalists?

The answer: nothing. The two reporters did not want to gain an understanding of the benefits of having access to books with ideas that are outside of our ideological and sometimes moral scopes.

Instead, they intended to unfairly target Muslim students in a space where critical thought is encouraged, thereby contributing to the perpetuation of racist notions of what Islam is and how it is practiced.

To be clear, we do not intend to compare the content of books on the MSA's shelves to that of *Mein Kampf*.

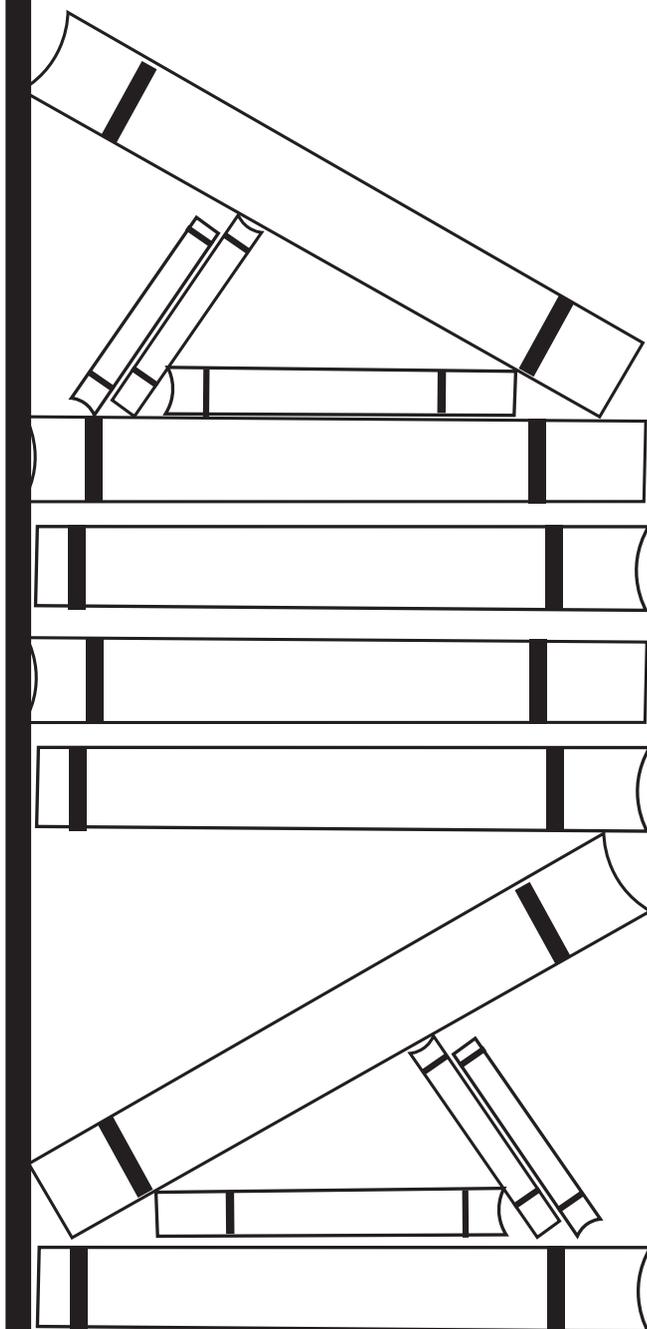
Instead, we hope to bring to light the hypocrisy in “conveniently” singling out only certain books, hence acting with bigoted ulterior motives.

To the members of the MSA: we stand in solidarity with you.

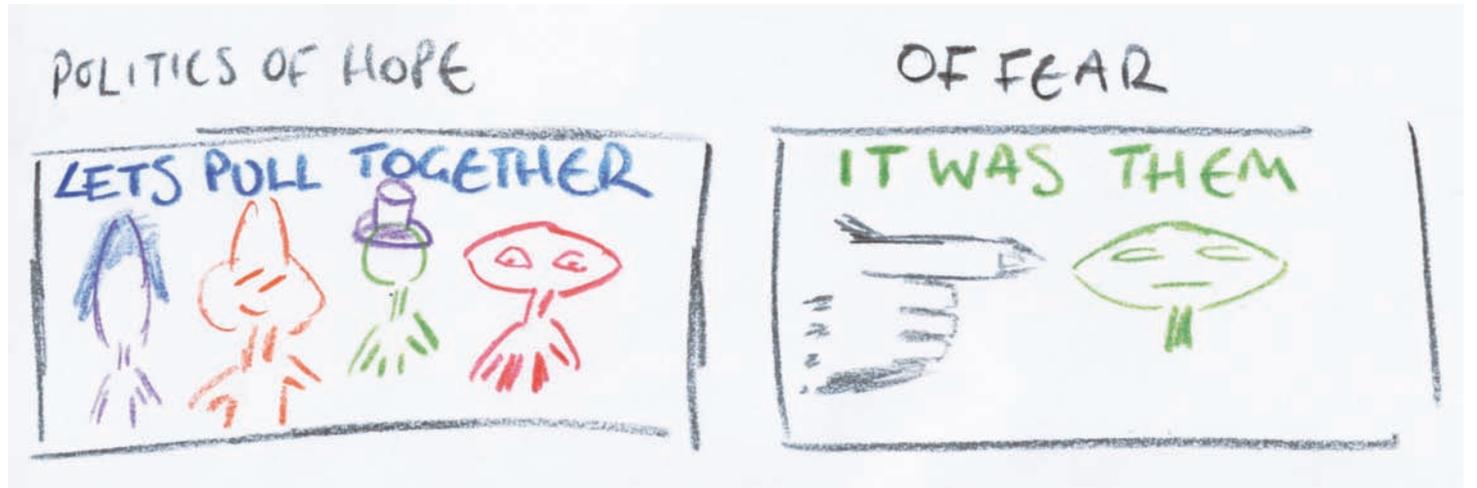
We hope that the very books that challenge our moral standards and present-day ideologies will be removed from your shelves only if they are no longer of use to your community, not because of unjustified bullying.

In solidarity,

Haley Firkser and Yasmine Filali
(Muslim Jewish Feminist Alliance)



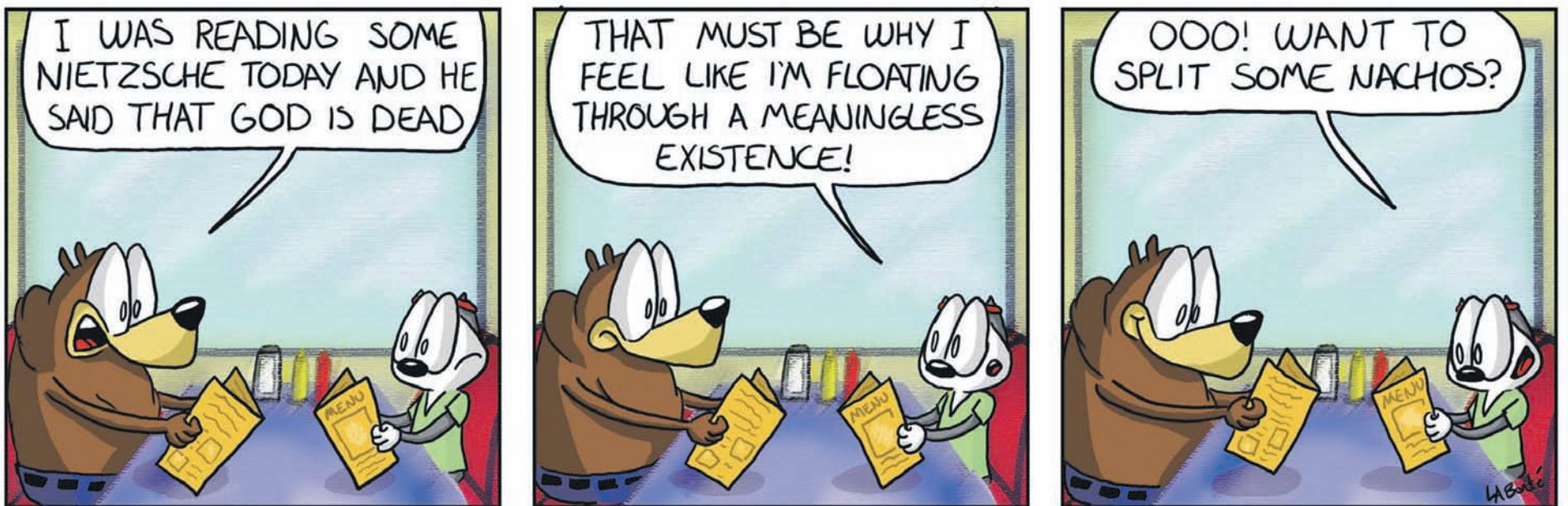
Centrist Failure
by Mattha Busby
@itsmattha



Balloon Ventures
by Mengerko Jones



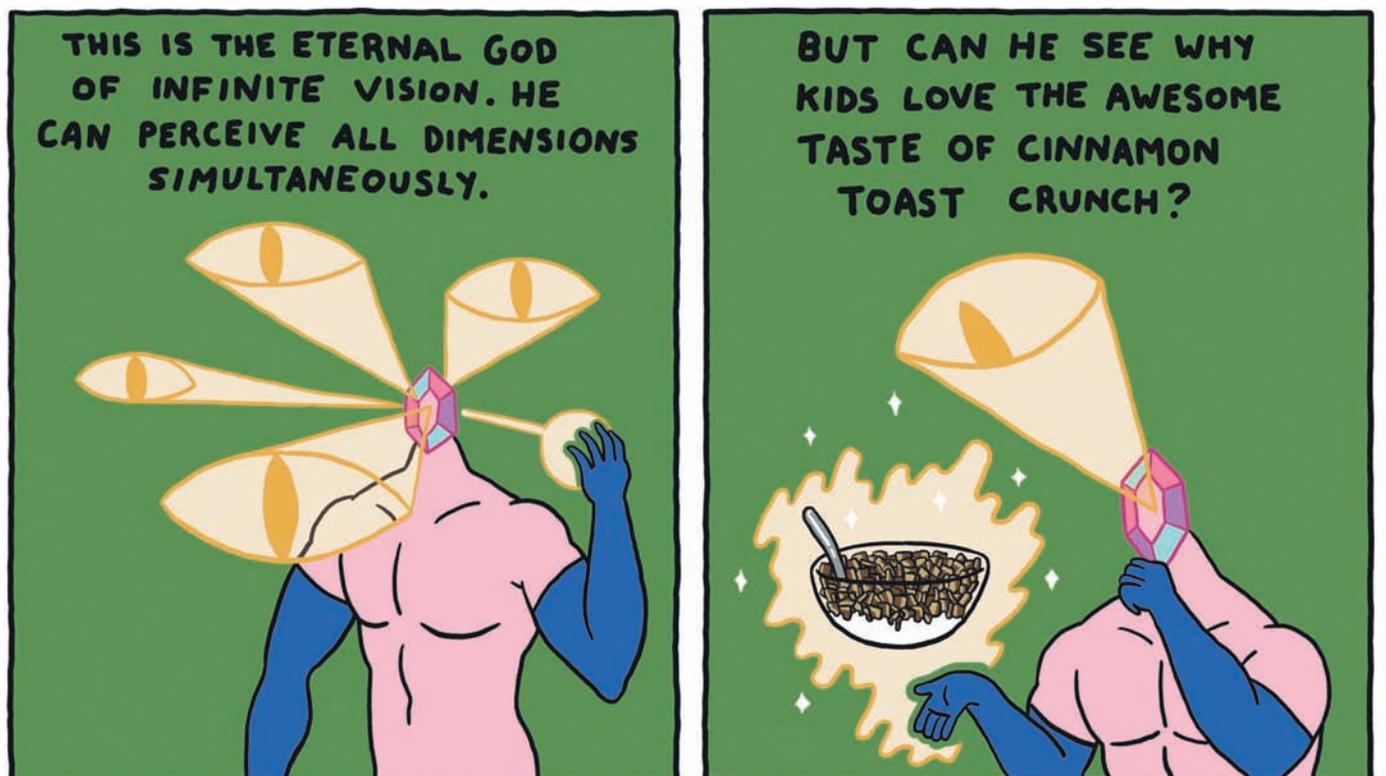
Filbert by L.A. Bonté

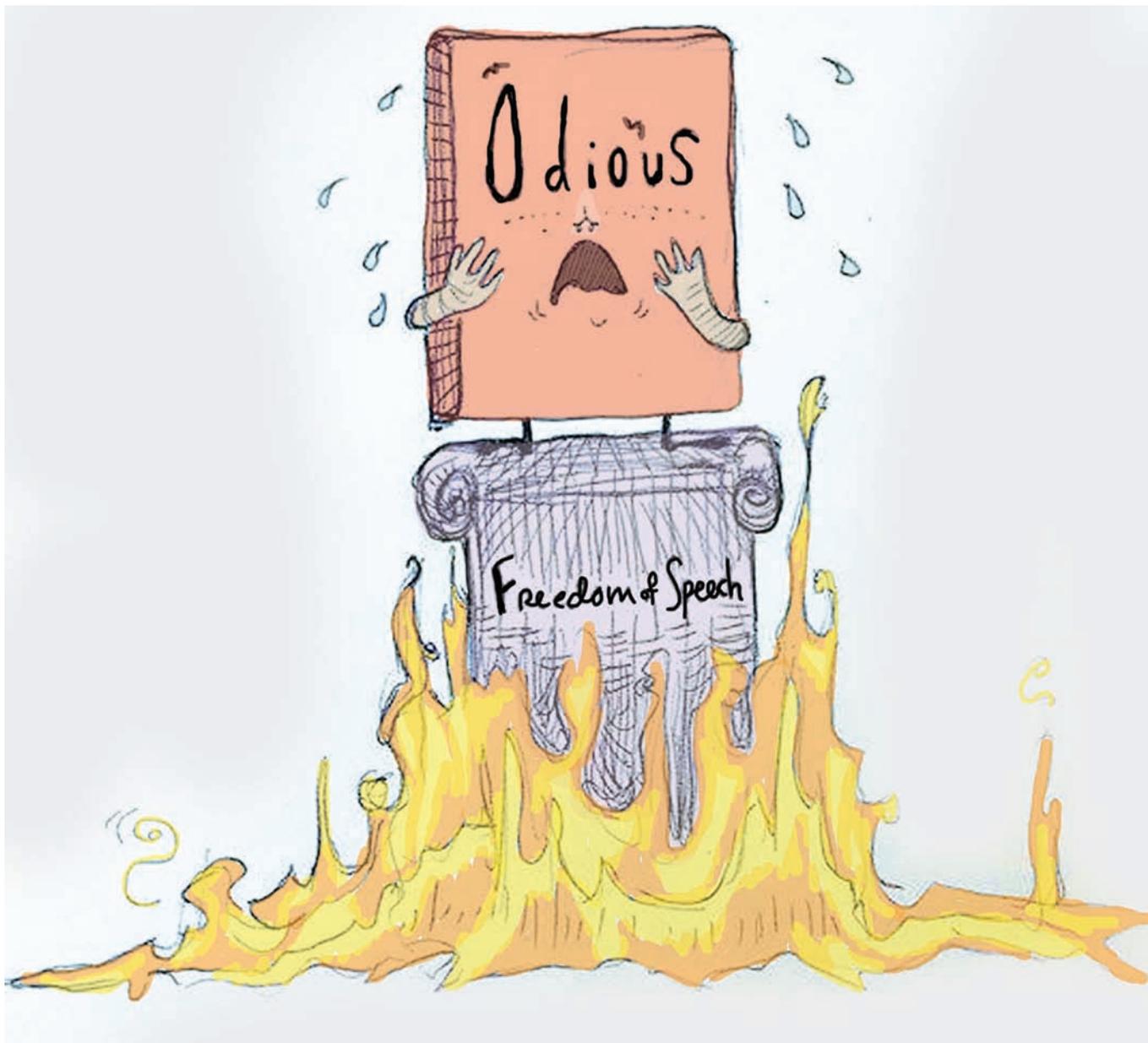


By: L. A. Bonté

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Power Theatre
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What started out as bad reporting ended up as an administrative embarrassment.

TVA contacted Concordia, questioning the presence of works written by controversial Islamic figures in the Muslim Students Association's library, after a reporter and a film crew barged into the MSA office and harassed the students there. Instead of standing by their students, Concordia administrators chose to take those claims seriously and investigate the matter.

A fair response would have been to scrutinize the reporter's process—considering that part of the report involved entering and filming the MSA offices without permission. Instead, the members of the association met with the Dean of Students and began a "review" of their library material.

Dealing with the matter in this way was unbalanced and inappropriate. Why is an educational institution like Concordia using an unreliable source like TVA as the basis for an investigation of its students? TVA is owned by Quebecor, a media corporation whose track record has been called into question as recently as last year.

Quebecor was accused of twisting statements by the SPVM about the death of a woman in the Metro in 2014, after her scarf and hair got tangled in an

escalator. According to the *Journal de Montreal* and the *Sun News Network*, owned by Quebecor, it wasn't her scarf that killed her, but her hijab—which was actually tucked neatly under her coat, according to witnesses.

Negative representations of Muslims in the media are increasingly common. But the response of the general public to cases like that of Rania El-Alloul, whose testimony was refused by a Quebec judge after she refused to remove her hijab in court, demonstrate that fear-based reactionary views are not ubiquitous.

While the MSA's goal was to provide a resource for information and literature, the goal of TVA was to smear and fearmonger. TVA reporter Michel Jean says there are no explanations to be found about the works in the MSA's library. Perhaps that's because the association was not given the chance to respond.

It's easy to brush off TVA's reporting as sensational, but getting to the heart of the library incident has been difficult. When *The Link* contacted other libraries for religious study to discuss information policies, librarians were unwilling to get involved. The ones at Concordia directed us back to Concordia's media relations department. In a statement by the communications director, Concordia argued it was not

editorial

Concordia Needs to Stand With the MSA

"censoring" or "culling" the MSA's collection—just helping the students audit and review their catalogue.

Requesting a literature review of the MSA's library is largely uncharitable and hypocritical, considering what can be found in the university's own collection. Literary aficionados can probably name many texts found at a typical library, including Concordia's, which preach extremist or offensive ideas. *Mein Kampf* is the classic example. Others include *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which some argue is racist, and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, a controversial novel that ignited debate in the Muslim world. All of these are available at the Webster Library.

Changing cultural norms and scientific principles have challenged and denounced many ideas. These ideas should be acknowledged and contended with, but certainly not erased. They are integrated in the public discourse and should remain there for historical context and growth.

Concordia claims to stand for academic freedom and free speech. If that's true, it should have handled the situation differently by weighing the evidence more carefully before picking sides or taking such targeted action. We believe the university owes the MSA an apology and hope it can abide by its own values in the future.

Graphic Madeleine Gendreau

THE LINK³⁵

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