

# THE LINK<sup>35</sup>

CONCORDIA'S INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1980

## PARTY'S OVER

Student politicians make misogynist  
and racist comments, all eyes on the  
university's reaction.

P.3

### EDITORIAL

Bro culture fosters rape culture

P.15

# ANDREW'S PUB

**1241 Guy**  
South of St. Catherine Street



- Free pool table
- 20+ kinds of shooters: 4 for \$10.00
- Large Beer \$4.50
- Small Beer: \$3.50
- Pitcher: \$12.00
- Thursday Karaoke

Taxes Included

Facebook: Andrews Pub - official

**Booze to fit a student budget**



**The Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program would like to invite you to our Annual General Meeting!**

**April 10th, 2015, 1:30pm**  
Concordia University, EV 6.720,  
1515 Ste. Catherine O.

Lunch will be provided

Join CVAP as we continue to strengthen our programs in Canada and Uganda. This year, our members will be asked to contribute to the future of our organization by helping to rename the program to reflect our new and exciting direction.

We hope to see you there!

**www.ConcordiaVolunteers.org/AGM**  
**info@concordiavolunteers.org**

**VOTE FOR YOUR ASFA EXECUTIVES AND IMPORTANT FEE LEVY!**



# VOTE!

**ASFA IS YOURS; TAKE OWNERSHIP AND VOTE!**

**Are YOU an Arts and Science Student?**  
**ASFA's annual elections are this April 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>!**

Stations located in:

- H Building Lobby - LB Library Lobby - SP Building Main Hall - VL Library Entrance

**thali**  
5 YEARS taxes inc.

**Thali:** 2 Diff. Meats + 1 Veg., Riz & Naan - **\$9.50** (\$8.50 All veg)  
**Wraps:** Chicken, Lamb or Veg. - **\$5.50** (+ \$1 Butter Chicken Sauce)  
**Dosa:** \$8.50. \*\* **Biryani** (Chicken, Lamb or Veg) - **\$8.75**  
**Butter Chicken+Rice+Naan - \$11.00 T. Leg & Naan - \$6.50**

**1409 St. Marc** **514 989 9048** **thalimontreal.com**

**LES WEEK-ENDS X-LARGES**  
EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

**5 SHOOTERS FOR 10\$**  
LABATT 25 BEFORE 10:22 PM

**TOP40'S BEST AND MUCH MORE!**

**CAFÉ CAMPUS**  
57 PRINCE ARTHUR EST MTL

**thelinknewspaper.ca**

**McGill** | School of Continuing Studies

**EXPERIENCE MCGILL THIS SUMMER!**

**GLOBAL MARKETING USING THE INTERNET**

ONLINE COURSES WHICH INCLUDE ONE WEEK OF INTENSIVE CLASSES HELD IN MONTREAL.

BEGINS MAY 2015  
**REGISTER NOW.**

**WWW.MCGILL.CA/GM**

## CLASSIFIED ADS

\$3.50+tax for Concordia undergraduate students.  
\$5.00+tax for others \$0.25/word after 15 words.

**DEADLINE: 2 p.m. Friday**

Classifieds must be purchased at our offices  
1455 De Maisonneuve W. Room 649  
and be accompanied by full payment.

Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed on Wednesdays.

We do not take classified ads  
by telephone, fax or E-mail.

**DRIVING PRATICE LESSONS:** 70 min. / \$32,  
2 hrs / \$52 with ad. Exam car rental starting  
\$19 taxes included. 514-744-5623, Jimmy.

**STRING INSTRUMENT REPAIR.** Hand-made,  
guitars, mandolins and bouzouki's. Call time  
514-655-4941, Nick.

**Your business**

**LINK**

**40 000 students**

**ADVERTISE IN THE LINK**  
**514-848-7406**

**THIS IS THE LAST LINK'S PRINTED ISSUE OF THE SEMESTER.**

**KEEP CHECKING**

**thelinknewspaper.ca**

**FOR UPDATES DURING THE SUMMER!**



I. “I had absolutely no idea that it would be that bad.”

That’s how Mei-Ling, an anonymous former student politician, describes working at Concordia’s Arts and Science Federation of Students, a body that represents over 15,000 students.

Now she’s filing a complaint to the Quebec Human Rights Commission for discrimination and harassment.

In March 2014, Mei-Ling sat down at one of the communal computers in the ASFA office for printing. That’s when she noticed the vice-president of social affairs was still logged onto Facebook. And she found conversations about her between him and the president of the association.

The conversations included things like: “I’m going to try to fuck her at the first meeting,” and “Well whatever, if she doesn’t suck our dicks: impeached.”

This particular conversation happened before the executives had all met. “They had only seen my photo,” she said. “I was one-dimensional.”

At one point, later on in the thread, they referred to her as a “chink slave.”

“The terms were so explicit I didn’t feel human,” Mei-Ling said. “They described me as a sex object, a bird—I’m not even kidding.”

When Mei-Ling found the messages, she went to the Dean of Students. There, she was told that her story was a common one in student associations. Also, the Dean couldn’t help her without a quote from the Office of Rights and Responsibilities.

That quote arrived during that same meeting, and it said the conversations were private and Mei-Ling was alone to handle the situation.

So she went to the Centre for Gender Advocacy, and the Legal Information Clinic, and eventually was referred to Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR), which filed the human rights case.

She’s seeking moral and punitive damages. But she’s also demanding mandatory sensitivity training on race and gender for ASFA execs for the next two years.

Mei-Ling says after she found the messages she stopped going to the office in the daytime. She asked her parents to accompany her at night, because she was afraid something would happen to her. But she was determined to complete her projects and her mandate, which ended in May.

She says the behaviour extended beyond a Facebook chat.

She described ASFA as a “toxic, blatantly misogynistic, sexist, racist environment that stifled how student leaders should be creating positive change.”

Other ASFA executives and councillors told *The Link* they had seen signs of this toxicity, but had no idea it had been so bad. They described ASFA as a “fraternity,” a “boys club,” full of “beer-pong culture.”

Most sources were also quick to point out that not everyone at ASFA shares the mindset of these two executives. There’s an expectation for council to act. Quickly.

The next ASFA council meeting is on April 9 at Loyola, but a petition is circulating to have it held downtown instead.

“Mei-Ling somehow became an outsider in this very clique-y political world that is ASFA,” said Vithu Namasivayam, president of the

Urban Planning Association. Even now, some Member Associations are blaming the current situation on her character.

Combatting racism and sexism within the organization should be a priority, he said. “If there’s a place that we should start, it’s probably here.”

One former ASFA member described student leadership as a “high,” a popularity contest of who could get laid more.

“It wasn’t a safe place for women,” one ASFA representative said. And although she never felt threatened, she did feel disrespected as a woman.

“I know [one of the executives involved], and I know that he isn’t sexist or racist,” she said, admitting that this “unsafe” culture is normalized.

What is agreed is that the federation and university need to send a clear picture that this is not okay.

“This is not about being politically correct, it’s about complying with the Quebec Charter of Human Rights,” said Fo Niemi of CRARR, the civil rights organization.

Mei-Ling asked that her real name not be used, because she does not want to be targeted for cyber bullying, or have this case follow her in the future. She is also still a student at Concordia.

But she says she already felt bullied at ASFA.

“They made it very, very hard for me to complete things,” she said.

At the end of her mandate, Mei-Ling was accused of financial mismanagement because her budgets hadn’t been properly updated.

The ASFA council suggested cutting \$500 from her honorarium for a deficit in her portfolio that added up to \$91.

At the final council meeting, Mei-Ling was called out for: 1) not holding events in the original budgets, 2) going over-budget for events and 3) holding events not included in the budget.

She was the only executive to have her finances scrutinized.

Mei-Ling had submitted requests for quotes regularly about her spending and kept receiving different numbers.

“I wasn’t just making expenses left and right,” she said. “I thought I was on the right track.”

When she first heard from the finance committee that her budget was out of order, she says she filled out the forms immediately to fix it. She never heard back from the committee.

In the end, council agreed to give executives their full honorarium of \$1,500 for the year. But Mei-Ling didn’t receive her bonus—meanwhile, the president received a bonus of \$3,000.

According to ASFA bylaws, “each Executive may also receive a bonus of up to \$1,500.00,” as decided by the council.

Mei-Ling only received her honorarium two months ago—even though her mandate ended in May.

The men involved in the Facebook conversation, and other current ASFA executives did not respond to *The Link*’s request for comment.

These cases are not exclusive to ASFA.

Jane was a former student representative for the Concordia Student Union and would often work on the computers at the union’s office.

After leaving her email open one day, another person at the union

“I just want to go on a retreat without Mei-fag”

“fucking fag”

“fucking retard”

“She speaks five languages, English, French, ...and WHORE”

“There’s a reason for that chink slave”

“Imagine she’s a nymph”

## Mei-Ling is Not Alone

Student Politicians Speak Out About Racism and Sexism at Concordia

by Michelle Pucci  
@michellempucci

“Well whatever, if she doesn’t suck our dicks: impeached.”

“learn to count, whore”

“She seems like one of those girls that’s a horny slut.”

“pussy whore”

“so you think you’re better than me, whore?”

“I’m going to try to fuck her at the first meeting.”

found photos of her without clothes on and distributed them around the office.

She found out months later. She was horrified. She wanted answers.

“I really hoped it wasn’t true,” she said.

She confronted the person that had been blamed. “It wasn’t me,” he told her. “But I’m really glad I got to see those pictures.”

Eventually, she learned it had been the doing of an executive. But this came after they told her to “calm down.”

After requesting some sort of action from the CSU and the university, the Office of Rights and Responsibilities finally agreed to hear her case. But by then she felt hopeless and dropped it.

“For every person that comes to lodge a complaint, there are many who will not,” said Anaïs Van Vliet from the Concordia’s Centre for Gender Advocacy.

They call the current complaint procedure incredibly complicated, with an emphasis on mediation.

“Which can be really tricky if you’re someone who has experienced violence,” said Van Vliet. “That you’re being asked to meet with the person that has harmed you, to try to come up with some sort of resolution.”

If Mei-Ling’s case proves anything, it was the reason why victims don’t report, they said.

“The university has to understand that it’s not a question of damage control. It’s not a question of just Mei-Ling,” said Gabrielle Bouchard, the Centre’s Peer Support and Trans Advocacy Coordinator.

“Mei-Ling is just one person who was in a good enough space in her life to be able to speak of these things.”

II. This isn’t the first time ASFA execs have been called out for downplaying harassment. In August, a debate over the necessity of a three-hour consent workshop led to an apology letter written to the *Gazette* by the president of ASFA.

“We are working hard to prevent any occurrences of sexual violence at our events, and to educate our peers about the issue,” he wrote.

ASFA then partnered up with the Sexual Assault Resource Centre and SextEd, an anonymous mobile sex education service.

When asked about implementing mandatory consent workshops in residences, President Alan Shepard told *The Link* in September that “saying it’s mandatory, in my view, actually can diminish its effectiveness.”

McGill residences already run a mandatory three-hour workshop on gender, sexual identity and sexual assault through the Rez Project.

“The worst thing is silence,” said Bouchard. “Right now, we’re in structures that encourage silence.”

What is the solution? Bouchard says creating a safer university means having open conversations and mandatory training.

“It’s about providing an environment that is respectful and safe, and safety can be psychological,” said Niemi.

The Center for Research-Action on Race Relations wants the university to enforce the student code of conduct and operate with zero tolerance for racism, sexism and homophobia.

“I would like to see the president

of Concordia come out and say, ‘No, we shall not tolerate this kind of conduct,’” Niemi said.

The Centre for Gender Advocacy has already submitted an open letter to President Shepard, offering to bring back the consent workshops to residences. The workshops were given to students at Grey Nuns in the fall of 2012 for the first and only time.

The fact that these things are happening within student associations should not be a reason for the university to step back, according to former CSU president Melissa Kate Wheeler.

“These assaults are happening largely on campus and Concordia has to take responsibility for that,” she said.

Wheeler is among others demanding harsher punishments and a hard stance against racial and gender violence and discrimination.

“This is an epidemic on a lot of campuses, and Concordia is no exception,” she said. Many students come from out of town and Concordia becomes the only place they think to turn to, she added.

“The creation of the Sexual Assault Resource Centre was a very good first step, but in its current state it’s nowhere near enough.”

The day after Mei-Ling’s story was published in the *Gazette*, a Facebook page called “Not Safe at Concordia” was created. On Monday it had over 680 likes. Wheeler is encouraging victims of assault and harassment to share their stories confidentially through the page or with [mystory@genderadvocacy.org](mailto:mystory@genderadvocacy.org).

Since the *Gazette* reported on the story, the university has taken an informal stance against misogynistic and racist behaviour.

President Shepard has outlined in an open letter that safety is “paramount,” and that the university has reached out to Mei-Ling.

In the fall, an investigation by the *Toronto Star* revealed that only nine out of 102 post-secondary institutions in Canada have a special sexual assault policy—which is supposed to provide clear guidelines when dealing with issues of sexual violence.

Since then, Ontario colleges have adopted a policy and the University of Ottawa accepted 11 sexual violence task force recommendations.

A review of Concordia’s sexual assault policies was launched in December. Concordia’s current code of rights has no mention of sexual assault.

Chris Mota, the university’s spokesperson, said an initial review of a sexual assault policy has since broadened to include sexual harassment.

“They’re also going to look at our processes. If this student didn’t get the kind of advice or if we weren’t as clear as we could have been, we want to make sure it doesn’t happen again,” she said.

She has said Concordia will work on ensuring that students get the information they need, giving them a “very clear roadmap of where to go.”

But until the recommendations are made by the end of the semester, there’s no word on implementing consent workshops.

“Let’s see what the recommendations of the deputy provost’s working group come up with,” Mota said.

+ For an extended version of this article, visit [thelinknewspaper.ca](http://thelinknewspaper.ca)



## list of relevant (or ironic) definitions

**heteronormative:** cis, heterosexual, and monogamous

**cis:** assigned gender at birth corresponding with actual gender

**heterosexual:** within the framework of the gender binary, sexual attraction to only the opposite gender

**monogomous:** being sexually active with only one person at a time, either due to personal preference or an agreement made with a partner

**passing:** having strangers correctly identify your gender according to your gender presentation

**homonormative:** an uncommon term referring to how the dominant culture is such that spaces claiming to be the opposite of heteronormative often recreate heteronormative gender roles

**Relationship spectrum:** this is a concept that doesn't quite have its own word to build theories around yet.

Dialogue in regards to the kinds of intimate and/or sexual relationships people are capable of having is sadly lacking. Even among those with actively polyamorous lives, vocabulary around equal relationships, primary/secondary relationships, sex-buddies, platonic life-partners, etc. is not clear or defined. As such, it is an aspect of relationships and identity that usually gets ignored until it becomes a problem, rather than an active aspect of negotiating new relationships.

## why we need to remove the 'T' from 'LGBT'

by Lucas Charlie Rose

The most obvious reason to stop including the T in the LGBT struggle for social rights is that the struggle from the lesbian, gay and bisexual perspective is one of sexuality, and from the trans perspective it is one of gender.

By grouping these two struggles together, the social struggle of trans individuals gets mistaken as one of sexuality and not gender. Where, then, can trans individuals that identify as straight go? And what box do they tick in forms asking if they are straight, gay, bisexual, or transgender?

LGB(T) friendly spaces seldom take into consideration ways in which trans individuals can be made to feel safe. LGB(T) spaces seldom foster or open conversations that acknowledge the identities and needs of trans individuals. They are typically ciscentric.

An example of this kind of centrism is the presumption that only/all women have periods. Untrue. Women who have had hysterectomies, gone through menopause or simply never had an uterus don't have periods. Conversely, there are men who do get periods.

This lack of consideration makes many LGB spaces unsafe for trans people, which is another reason to remove the T from LGBT.

## redefining queer

by Angisel Kiermaier

The word "queer" has gone through many transformations. Originally, it was used to refer to an odd thing or occurrence.

Then it was used to out, insult or otherwise denigrate individuals that weren't heteronormative—that is to say, straight and/or adherent to gender roles and presentation.

Then the LGB (a friend currently involved in trans politics strongly objects to the T being added there; see sidebar) movement contributed to it being reclaimed and used as a word of power around the '80s (see *Queer as Folk* or *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*).

Today, with the gender and sexuality movements in their heyday, new words have come into use (such as cis, poly, non-binary, passing) and the word "queer" has fallen into limbo. Some use it as an umbrella term to refer to all things non-heteronormative, which works in an ad hoc way but ignores the reproduction of heteronormative dynamics in queer spaces, as well as the fluidity that actually exists within gender, sexuality and the relationship spectrum.

Some of my friends identify as "queer" because they don't conform to the norm of feminine body hair. Their "queerness" is a challenge to beauty standards. Another friend urgently corrected me when I said I wanted her to be part of a party with all my queer friends. She identifies as cis,

heterosexual, and monogamous, and is cautious of appropriating the identity of individuals who are none of these things. Her definition of queer equals non-heteronormative. Yet another friend was peer-pressured out of a communal household because she wasn't "queer" enough for the space, nor sufficiently well-versed in queer politics.

For me the word "queer" has acquired a new dimension, one I see reflected in my immediate community.

When referring to queer spaces in terms of places to advertise events or share news with, I assume spaces where people meet based on particular genders and sexualities. In this context, I use it as an umbrella term for non-heteronormative identity groups.

When referring to queer spaces as somewhere to go, I'd expect to interact with people aware and respectful of the diversity of genders and sexualities (and usually of other marginalized identities, though I don't assume this).

In other words, even if diversity isn't actually represented, it is taken into account.

For me, being queer means being aware of diverse identities and consciously fostering an inclusive environment.

We are open to being checked and are willing to check others for the sake of creating spaces in which everyone can be included. In this context, "queer" still has very strong connotations of gender

and sexuality. There is an expectation of intersectionality in politics and values.

This is far from being a universal way of identifying as queer. Ask people respectfully what they mean if they share their identity with you.

Under this definition, you can be cis, straight, and also queer. Odds are, if you share these values and are in my spaces, one of us will ask you if you identify as such, and start that conversation.

Someone asked me recently if the word "ally" wouldn't encompass this definition. It might, but in the ways I've seen people self-identify as allies, it doesn't. While this is far from being universal, I have encountered a fair number of "allies" that simply cannot handle being checked or, while having aligning philosophies, don't actively challenge practices of exclusion in mainstream spaces.

I also personally dislike the element of "othering" the word ally has. It seems to only be applicable to people with mainstream identities (straight, cis, typically white), marking them as supporting of "alternative" lifestyles. In contrast, under this proposed definition of queer, a person can identify as feeling more comfortable in non-heteronormative communities. It's a way to break the segregation based on gender, sexuality, and often of other marginalized identities.

Graphic Paku-Daoust Cloutier



## beating the bookstore

Concordia Students Develop Alternatives to Sky-High Textbook Prices

by Alison Bertho

Finals had barely finished when Matthew Bruna noticed the stack of textbooks that had accumulated in the corner of his room.

If the editions weren't already expired, he'd be lucky to find another student to buy them back.

That's when the 24-year-old John Molson School of Business graduate got the idea to create studEtree, an application that enables students to buy and sell their textbooks with one another.

"The way the publishers of the books release a new edition every year is crazy," said Bruna. "If they are not going to change the system, we are going to create an alternative."

Undergraduate students spend about \$800 to \$1,000 a year in books and school materials according to the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, which says costs can vary depending on the program of study.

Bruna is one of many young entrepreneurs who now competes with the university's bookstores to provide students with an alternative to high-priced textbooks.

Another Concordia graduate, Gabrielle Jacques, 22, launched SwapMyBooks.ca in July 2014, a free website that provides students with a platform to swap, sell and buy textbooks.

"The bookstores are buying back the books for way too cheap because they already have over-stocks of books," Jacques said. "They are making money off of the students."

Jason Kack, general manager of McGill's bookstore, explains that if they buy back books for their own store they pay 50 per cent, while 30 per

cent is entitled when the destination is other universities and 10 per cent for wholesalers.

Students are also using Facebook groups as an alternative, but they can be difficult to navigate, Bruna said.

With all these new alternatives, university bookstores face new challenges. Kack says university bookstores are finding ways to be more competitive, because "students are going elsewhere."

Concordia's bookstore, too, is responding to the issue. It recently submitted a survey to gather student opinions on course materials and customer service. As an incentive to complete the survey, students have the chance to win a \$200 gift card.

"We are looking at how we can make a difference," said Ken Bissonnette, operations and text manager of Campus Retail Stores at Concordia. "We are always at the top of any initiative."

The Concordia Bookstore has had its own rental program since 2010, while many university bookstores in Canada work with a wholesaler, he said.

The program offers 60 per cent off retail prices and is growing every year.

"We are up to 1005 units of rental and the goal is to increase it from 200 to 300 every semester," said Bissonnette.

The price is added directly to the student's account on MyConcordia, so there is no point of sale for purchases with the program. The student signs a contract that tells them when the textbook has to be back in the bookstore. If the textbook is not returned on the due date, the charge of the full price of the book is put on the student account.

However, with the constant change of editions, most of the textbooks put on rental are for entry-level courses,

for which demand is higher.

"The publishers are very greedy; they would change just a few pages only so that they can sell more," Jacques, the founder of SwapMyBooks.ca, said, adding that teachers have the most sway in which books students buy and could avoid prescribing almost-identical new editions.

"Professors deal with representatives of the publishers," said Kack. "Sometimes they are not even told what the price is."

University bookstores, following American post-secondary institutions, are now trying their own alternatives such as e-books or e-packs, according to Kack.

For Bruna, these electronic versions go against the very idea of a book. "I think that a lot of students still like that idea of a [physical] textbook," he said. "Students want to buy the book, but because buying an e-book version or a photocopy textbook is cheaper, they don't."

The McGill bookstore is working on including a price comparison with online retailers on its website, so students have more buying power.

"Our primary purpose is to supply the campus with course material. In the end, it's far more important to have credibility in that than to necessarily ignore what's happening on the other side," Kack said, adding that this will dispel the illusion that bookstores are always more expensive.

"It's a market where everybody is trying to survive right now," said Kack. "I don't know what it is going to look like in five or 10 years."

Photo Brandon Johnston

**"The publishers are very greedy; they would change just a few pages only so that they can sell more."**

— Gabrielle Jacques, founder of SwapMyBooks.ca





## performing the psyche

*'Rouge Mekong' Breaks New Ground in Psychological Immersion*

by Jake Russell @jakeryanrussell

Journeying to the centre of a character's mind has become a well-worn trope in the film world—from traipsing haphazardly through dreams in *Inception*, to getting high on DMT first-person in *Enter the Void*, directors often try to go “deeper” into the inner workings of the mind with different experimental techniques.

The revived immersive piece *Rouge Mékong* makes these techniques look like cheap parlour tricks.

For starters, any work shown in the SATosphere literally goes beyond your standard 16x9 projected film. The films surround you in the full-dome environment, screening everywhere but the floor—only by lying on your back can you take in the full scope.

*Rouge Mékong*, running from April 2 to April 16 in the SATosphere at the Société des Arts Technologiques, is a true baptism into the mind of Sarah Lebowitz, a cryptically poetic Jane Doe that the audience becomes intimately familiar with.

Walking into the dome theatre for the piece felt like equal parts uncovering a treasure trove of long-forgotten beloved childhood items and elbowing your way between lovers embracing under the sheet. From the open, utilitarian space of the theatre—with no stage and no seating—sprouted Sarah's modest and warm bedroom adornments. The centerpiece was a really large bed, with a bureau, couch, antique television set and circles of small suitcases artfully arranged around the spheatre

(sphere theatre—mind blow initiated).

What began as tentatively milling through the space like art gallery patrons, quickly gave way to rigorous exploration, plundering the interior space. The level of detail that went into the production design was very impressive—photos and makeup scattered on the bureau, underwear, journals and other keepsakes in the glowing suitcases. It felt like a real, authentic bedroom. With the conspicuous absence of an occupant, the intimate artifacts peppered around the room evoked twinges of nostalgia, like the space was a mausoleum of memories.

Teasing out the little details in the set felt like trying to solve a mystery, and I realized audience participation wasn't just an added novelty to the show—it made the show what it was. Theatre-goers splayed themselves across Sarah's bed, pawed through her clothes, read her books. It seemed the creators of *Rouge Mékong* didn't want us to be just voyeurs of Sarah's experience, but to physically ease ourselves into her psyche in our time and in ways of our choosing.

A murky, ambient piano soundtrack set the tone for the initial exploration. The lights eventually dimmed to seal the illusion and produce a 360-degree rendering of *Amélie*-esque bedroom walls. This eventually transitioned to the cinema component of the piece, following a loose narrative of Sarah enduring a breakup and moving in wanderlust fashion to an unspecified location in Asia.

The films projected in the dome had the fleeting feeling of memories or dreams—

quick cuts jumping through time and space, from candid close-ups of Sarah to shaky first-person views of bustling city streets. Some of these scenes were displayed through a ring of shimmering light in the dome, like gazing through a wormhole, while others had the grainy aesthetic of a flickering 16mm film reel projection.

Sarah's enigmatic poetry began around this time, and her dialogue (translated to me in real time by my superior French-speaking girlfriend) usually raised more questions than answers. She implored the audience to “open our eyes,” and described her life and feelings as if she were merely murmuring to herself, alone at night. But of course, *Rouge Mékong* isn't as interested in narrative and a typical story arc as it is in entrenching its audience in the inner world they've composed.

Film, set design and music weren't the only elements of the show—the physical form of Sarah herself made appearances throughout. There were a number of Sarah manifestations, and it was difficult to discern exactly how many actresses there were. They were like anonymous shape-shifters in the theatre—often only through lighting and musical cues did one of the Sarahs reveal herself and become distinct from the crowd. Trying to keep track of them after their brief exposures was like a futile human shell game.

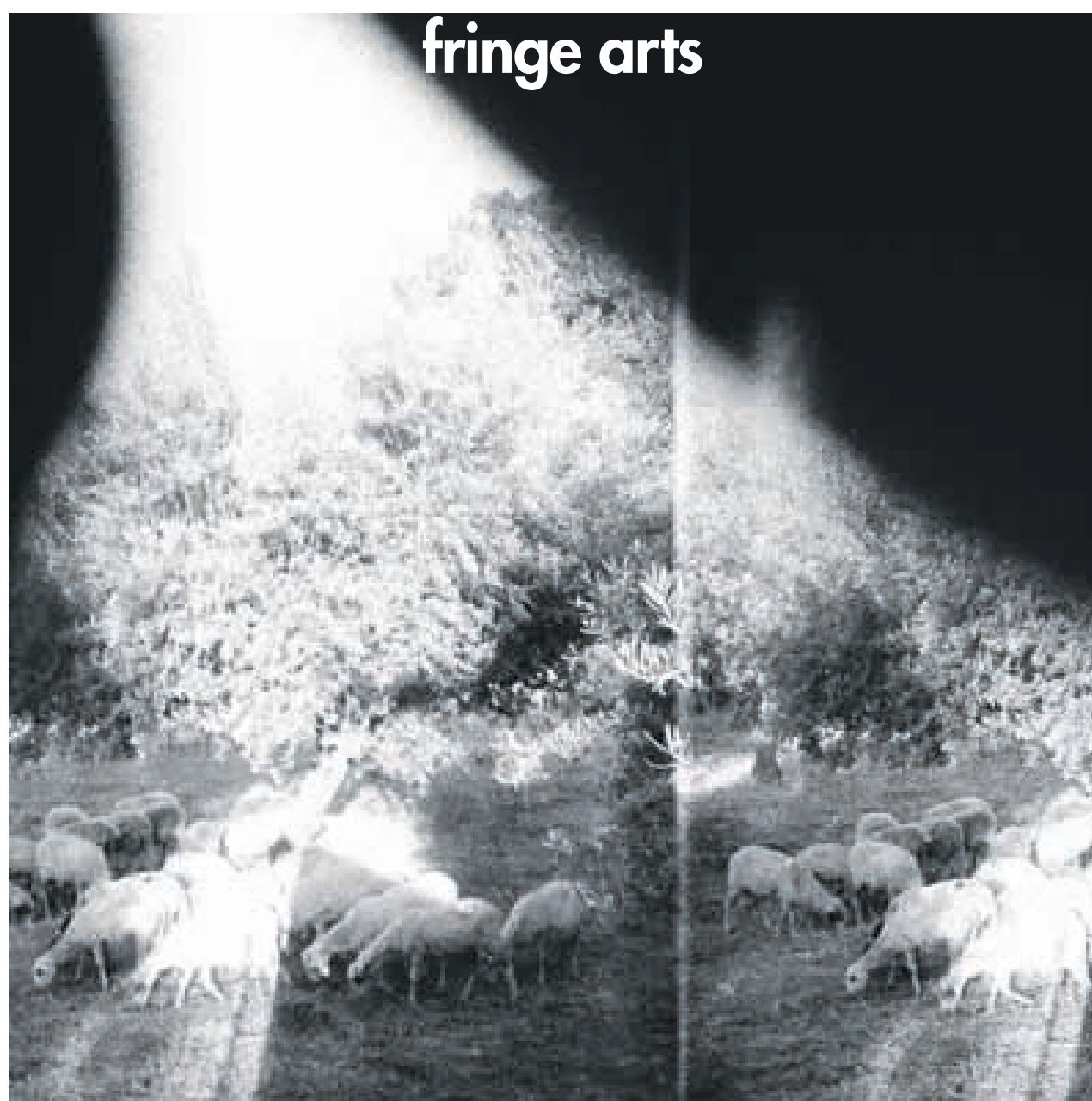
The Sarahs performed passively and solo at first, but as the show built momentum, multiple Sarahs performed at once and actively approached audience members. I

felt the subsequent adrenaline rush while eyeing the Sarahs gliding through the crowd, riding out the anxiety of possibly entering the show myself, spectator to the spectated. But strangely, a large part of me actually wished that Sarah would zero in on me. Hypnotized, a voice in me yearned for her to shatter that final barrier and physically touch me. In a show that collapsed the fourth wall from the start, it destroyed the final remnants of singularity from Sarah in its climax.

*Rouge Mékong* was able to capture and express the essence of consciousness in an unprecedented, unparalleled way. It successfully transcended the sum of its distinct media (cinema, music and theatre) to create something utterly unique, that intangible deeper element that ambitious filmmakers often seek. While the show may be too jarring and perhaps psychologically and emotionally heavy for a first date, it does feel like a form of escapism—literally becoming someone else for an hour, existing solely within the mind of the elusive Sarah Lebowitz.

Lying alone in your bed at night, thinking back on your life and the choices you've made is something we all inevitably do. This intensely personal, introspective act is brought to beyond life-size in *Rouge Mékong*. By eliminating the fourth wall and utilizing the space of the SATosphere in new and brilliant ways, *Rouge Mékong* offers a psychological experience unlike any other.

Graphic Ruth Webber-Juggoo



## a review of *asunder, sweet and other distress*.

Played in the key of F-Minor, in 3 movements.

by Zach Goldberg @ZachGoldbergg

### Listening directions:

Combine with 6 oz. apricot brandy, 2 oz. lemon sour, 1 vinyl LP, 2 electroacoustic transducers, 800-3500Hz, preferably vint. b/w 1973-'86, 1 sheltered room bathed in sunlight, 40mins.

The following review is to be consumed under strict guidelines.

It is a review for the album *Asunder, Sweet, and Other Distress*, the sixth studio release of Montreal post-rock heroes Godspeed You! Black Emperor. The six hundred words to follow should be read sitting, in an upright position, preferably outdoors, or at least in a sundrenched area. Put your arms at your side. Stretch your fingers out. Try not to breathe. Have peer stand in front of you, holding the review to your face, but not blocking the sun. Keep the sun on your legs, and your arms. Read the article slowly, considering every syllable, every space and period and dash. Imagine the words falling slowly across your body. Listen to the sounds brewing below your open window. Listen to the way they meld with the sounds flowing from speakers. Blink your eyes.

Consider the following:

Godspeed took a ten year hiatus (2002-2012), returning with *'Allelujah! Don't Bend! Ascend!*, a collection of largely pre-hiatus work. A large portion of the material on *Asunder* dates back to those days, the rest being worked out in live sets over the last few years. Fans had nicknamed the new tracks "Behemoth." Without being unoriginal, they

are most assuredly Godspeed, dripping with the group's trademark themes.

The band's members are notably ingrained in the Montreal scene, making up a number of bands including A Silver Mount Zion, Maica Mia, Set Fire to Flames, etc. They also operate a number of venues, community action groups, collectives, and a recording studio, in and around Greater Montreal. You may notice members on the street, or in the park with their kids, or at a bar nursing a drink.

The album premiered on March 31. The band will tour Europe shortly.

### **Movement 1 (Peasantry or 'Light! Inside of Light!') (00:00 - 10:28)**

They are back. Without hesitation, without pause; no rising action, all action. Blown up as if by divine-dynamite, soaring as if elated, heavenly.

Heaven, exploding, riding across tsunami waves toward doomed cities of sinners. Huddled masses consumed by streaks of flame across a black sky.

They are back and they did miss us, clearly, and we, them. Kissing the air above them, breathing in spring in Montreal and breathing out heaven, never asunder but instead aflame, with light, with their own light.

They are back and they had been missed. Like always, dipping away back into themselves, into Montreal, away from their sounds and towards others. But again, returning. Thank God(speed), returning.

I have been waiting for this, anticipating this, but I did not anticipate this. Roaring with more reverence for sound than ever, with

absolutely no fear of dying or flying or getting old. Without patience, but with as much respect for silence as ever before.

Explosions. Intense, purposeful, like encroaching steps, like the coming of war.

But then.

Retreating. Slowing. Calming my anxiety, swilling to not a stop, but a slow whirr, an itch, an ellipsis, straining...

### **Movement 2 (Lamb's Breath//Asunder, Sweet) (10:28 - 26:36)**

Almost Sunn 0))), almost Swans. But not. Breathing in, and out, but rasping, ragged inhalation. Humming quietly. Explosive life replaced by gnawing dread, a growing tumour, an unkempt wound. Noise, discontent, chaos restrained, a stirring deep down somewhere, something is getting the better of me.

The drone is wet with apocalypse.

Three movements. Essentially. Maybe like life. Like their indefinite hiatus—springing back, unfinished business, words left unspoken. The gnawing of an itch unscratched. Can't quite shake a feeling. The drone calling behind everything, like tinnitus, the loudest thing in a loud room, gnawing, omnipresent, echoing, "Where? Where?"

Where is my drink?

Drink.

Drone.

Drone.

The shortest Godspeed record yet, just as patient, but just as controlled, completely aware of the audience, me, I, sitting here, listening to this record, consuming this brandy, which really is quite lovely, at this time of the

night, with the air just getting warmer, and the brandy just swishing in my cup, and the drone just droning, just building, with short clips of voices I think I have heard but am not entirely sure, of strings recorded in a large room whose walls I can feel quiver as the shrieks of violins and cellos crawl and drag across and up and around.

There is movement. Unsure, tentative; taking steps, climbing upward.

### **Movement 3 (Piss Crowns Are Trebled) (26:36 - ∞)**

The word rebirth isn't the right word, but it's the first that comes to mind. Flowing grass and strangely salty, but not bitter tears flowing in the best way out of very wet eyes gazing out of the window onto the beautiful city this music was born in and into and unbelievably amazed to be alive and not an ant or a beetle or a dead person or some similarly regrettable position.

To be alive and hearing the smashing raging swords of this record pierce through these speakers and out over my empty glass and into my ears and down into my stomach to shake my insides with such relentless explosion of distorted guitars and groaning organs and screaming bells and whistles and alarms and whirls and swirling masses ever growing and then subsiding and slipping silently away from me as the record quietly, finally, stops spinning.

My glass is somehow even more empty.

Great fucking record, though.

Photo courtesy Godspeed You! Black Emperor





## experimenting with catharsis

Film Preservationist Mark Toscano Talks David Rimmer and Experimental Filmmaking

by Matteo Ciambella

Canadian filmmaker David Rimmer has produced an impressive body of work in a career that spans more than 40 years. With films like *Canadian Pacific* (1974), he has established himself as one of the most influential and respected artists in his field.

In anticipation of the series of screenings entitled *David Rimmer: A Retrospective* taking place at the Cinémathèque Québécoise on April 10 and April 11, *The Link* spoke with Mark Toscano from the Academy Film Archive, a film preservationist who worked on the restoration of Rimmer's films.

**Could you tell us something about the techniques and themes Rimmer explored in his films?**

I think that one of the fundamental underlying interests in much of David Rimmer's work is the idea of vision. And by vision, I mean not just seeing, but connecting, knowing, having a certain awareness, and making certain leaps of understanding through extended and careful observation. As a result, a lot of David's work deals with the close scrutiny of both the content of his images as well as the qualities of the image itself.

To grossly generalize, David's early work is often characterized by a very manual, almost sculptural interaction with the film medium and its qualities, whether by the kaleidoscopic montage of his earliest films, or the re-photography and repetition of some of his most widely seen films. At the centre of this is always a heightened awareness of looking and seeking, something which manifests in perhaps even more transcendent ways when David turns his own camera on a real world subject, as in *Real Italian Pizza* or the incredible *Al Neil / A Portrait*. As David's work moves into the '80s and '90s, I feel like all the lessons he taught himself in his earlier filmmaking start to synthesize, as he explores the external world with a very sensitive sense of montage, time, space, and texture.

**Has the panorama of experimental filmmaking changed in North America since the 1960s? If so, in what ways has it changed?**

This is a tough question. Like with any medium, there are cycles. So the efflorescence of experimental filmmaking in the 1960s and '70s transformed quite a bit going into the '80s, but it certainly never went away. I feel like a lot of people think films practically stopped being made in the '80s, which couldn't be further from the truth.

Of course there were a lot of technological, aesthetic, social, political, and other kinds of shifts in the filmmaking and exhibiting being done, but it hardly went away. However I do feel that perhaps now, though there's probably not a radically larger amount of people making experimental work than before, there is a lot more global awareness about it, in large part due to the internet and electronic communication, and I think this has fomented a more pronounced and wide-ranging sense of community than could have been possible before, even with the organizations and publications that did a lot to create community over the past several decades.

**What is the relationship of the Academy with underground and experimental filmmakers like Rimmer?**

I can really only speak from the point of

view of the archive here, and particularly my own experiences and processes. Although I'm greatly simplifying things, it could be said that the Academy Film Archive sees its role as that of caretaker for work that has contributed to the art and science of motion pictures.

This very crucially includes the work of independent artists. The collections of approximately 100 different experimental filmmakers are currently on deposit at the Academy.

The approach has always been to not focus on a "greatest hits" of artists or their films, so the collections of significant but perhaps lesser-known (or even practically unknown) filmmakers are strongly represented as well.

With David Rimmer, I've worked on quite a few of his films, which means we now have brand new internegatives, soundtrack masters, and prints for each of those films. All the prints showing in the three Montreal programs are either restored, or at the very least newly struck from existing negatives.

**In your introduction to the retrospective you mention that, while working on the preservation of Rimmer's films, you felt as if they were handmade objects, almost like a sculpture, in which the manual interaction with the mate-**

**rial is very palpable.**

**Do you think this could happen with digital filmmaking? Or is there something about film that the digital medium cannot offer?**

I was at a symposium at the Getty a few years ago, and one participant talked about his enthusiasm for the way that, for example, smartphones reintroduced a level of hands-on interactivity that had been previously lacking in digital, and he saw that as similar to pre-cinematic optical toys.

I totally disagreed, because I feel like the technology itself—which for the vast majority of people (including me) is completely, impenetrably abstract, unlike optical toys—is an obstacle to true hands-on interaction and comprehension.

In other words, if we don't really know how what our hand is doing relates to what our eye sees or mind thinks, then it's an abstracted connection. I don't mean it's a meaningless one. But I do feel that the actual connection itself, that bridge between the apparatus and our mind, is an abstracted, less intrinsically meaningful one, because we don't actually understand it.

If you scratch a piece of film, you can fully understand exactly the causality at work there. If you make a mark on a tablet and see it onscreen in a paint program, you can't, because there's a highly abstract series of translations going on that comparatively very few people can apprehend. You know that a particular movement on a tablet makes a particular mark on the screen, and can even master that process beautifully, but I think it's incorrect to think of this as a kind of hands-on interaction or full comprehension of the act.

However, the abstracted nature of that relationship can create its own very rich meaning which would be impossible in film, and furthermore, that nuanced connection or lack of connection ultimately needn't be important for everyone. Digital offers many creative opportunities that film doesn't, and vice versa. But this is really because they are utterly different mediums from each other.

Photos courtesy Double Negative Collective







## leaving the nest?

Men's Soccer Journeyman Odaine Demar Prepares to Leave ConU

by Julian McKenzie @JulianTheIntern

Concordia men's soccer player Odaine Demar can be compared to a nomadic traveler. He's constantly on the move from place to place, never staying too long, and like a nomad, his destination isn't always defined.

"The journey continues," said Demar. "I could never say no to experiencing new things. It can be stressful at times, and I know this will not be easy for me. I just love being able to entice people into asking 'what have you done, where have you been?'"

Come this summer, Demar says he will leave the collegiate soccer world to return to professional ranks. Following one season with Concordia, Demar told *The Link* that he will be on the move to New Zealand.

In the Jamaican's lone season with Concordia, Demar suited up for the Stingers in only seven matches yet still notched two goals for the team, which was good enough for the second-best scoring record behind midfielder Nick Sisti.

Following stints with teams in Germany, Sweden, Ottawa and West Virginia, Demar made his debut this season with the Stingers, his tenth team during his eight-year career.

The name of the upcoming eleventh, however, doesn't necessarily roll off the tongue.

When asked about the name of his future club, Demar pulled out his phone—its screen boasting an enormous crack—and tried to

remember how the team's name was spelt.

"The actual spelling of the [club] has a really long name," he said.

An attempt at the team name, "Ngahara," on Google, brought little results. Eventually, it was revealed that Demar will be joining Ngaruawahia United AFC, a team in the Lotto Sport Italia NRFL Premier Division.

Demar says he reached out to clubs and mulled over playing in Ireland and Jamaica, while still debating whether to stay at Concordia, but eventually decided on the New Zealand club.

"New Zealand is one of those up-and-coming markets," he said.

When he got in touch with the club's team president, Jared Williams, he sensed that the team coveted him as a "designated player," a term used for players who are high-profile and agree to deals that are outside of team's salary caps. This term was made famous in Major League Soccer when the league signed David Beckham in 2007.

"I think I'll have a pretty good role on the team," Demar said. "Honestly, I love having roles like [being a designated player] because it puts a lot of pressure on me and it leaves me with no choice but to perform."

Williams admitted that though details have yet to be finalized between both sides, the club and Demar have been in contact since October. Williams has seen Demar's highlights online and thinks he could be a vital piece for his team.

"We are keen to add his strength and speed to our squad as we go through a rebuilding phase," said Williams.

Not all of Demar's teammates were aware of his impending departure.

"I've spoken to a couple of guys about it," Demar said. "I've had a shoulder to lean on with fourth-year guys like Jayson Gallahue. We're pretty close; I've spoken to him about my decision. He's been giving me advice, helping me [with] the pros and cons."

Demar also adds that he'll likely break the news to the rest of teammates during the Concordia Athletics banquet on April 11.

"It's kind of hard to get everyone together so maybe then will be a good time to let the guys know," he said.

Demar's teammate Dominique Smith knew he was going to leave for a professional team, but was still shocked when he heard about Demar going to New Zealand.

"I thought he was going to Kingston," he said. "He's going to New Zealand? No one tells me [anything]."

Despite this, Smith has nothing but admiration for Demar.

"I've got to give respect to Odaine; he's [doing] what he loves," he said. "I wish I could play soccer at [the professional] level."

"He's a really good player," Smith continued. "You can tell he played professional—the way he talks, the way he sees things."

Demar also opened up on his relationship with team head coach Greg Sutton and praised the former goalkeeper for

helping him out during his year at Concordia, while also taking some pressure off him following a winless 2014 season.

"Before even coming to [Concordia] I thought he was a stand-up guy," he said. "He's literally gone out of his way for me like no one could ever imagine. He's been there for me when stuff hasn't been going good at soccer or in class. He's always been there to give me good advice."

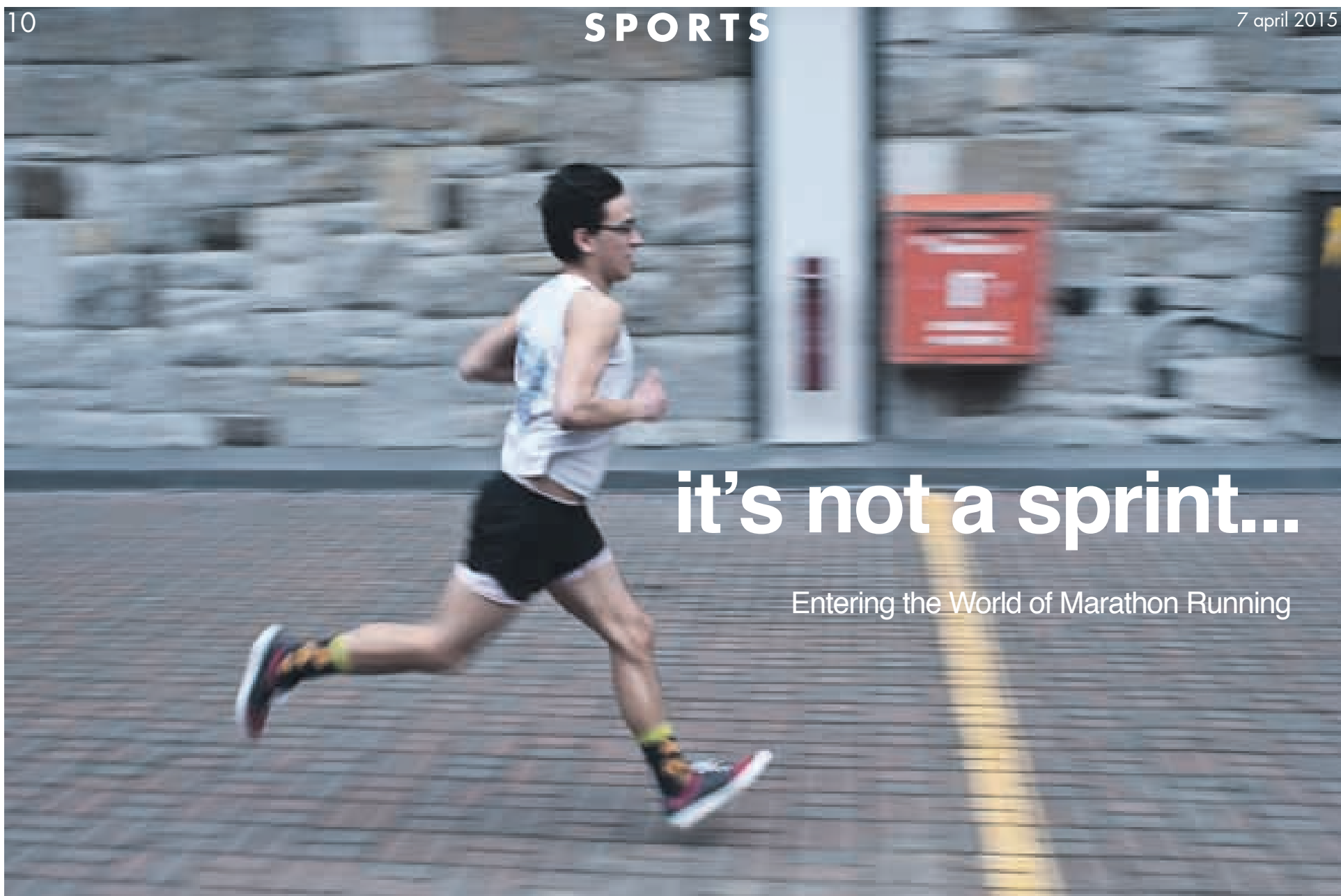
"I couldn't have asked for a better coach, to be honest," Demar continued. "A lot of people would question that from our results I guess, but that has nothing to do with the coach. Us, as players have to take responsibility for that."

Finally, Demar says he won't close the door on a possible return to the Maroon and Gold, but only if things don't work out overseas. He says he will miss "every single thing about Concordia."

"I've been treated with nothing but respect here. I have nothing but respect for all the staff and everyone I've come in contact with here," he said. "I truly, truly would honestly miss the school every single day if I was to end my chapter here."

"By the end of the season if I don't make that contact to the ASB [the first division of New Zealand soccer] or maybe somewhere higher, I have to be realistic and say education comes first for the time being and then, next summer, try again."

Graphic Sam Jones



# it's not a sprint...

Entering the World of Marathon Running

by Fiona Maynard

They will change your mindset, plan your schedule, tell you what to consume, force you to exercise and decide when you should rest. No two are the same and each one is challenging. You can hate them for pushing you past your breaking point and forcing you to fight with yourself, but their tantalizing pull on your character will empower you to prove them wrong and take control. They are marathons.

People tackle marathons for different reasons. For some, it's a recreational opportunity to confront the limits our bodies and minds impose on us; for others, it's a new challenge to help measure progress from one marathon to the next. Everyone is running the same course, but they're all chasing different goals.

"I participate in marathons because I love running, competing and setting goals for myself. If I start something I have to finish it, and finish it well," said Melisa Farias Gonzalez, a half-marathon runner who trains with Concordia's track and field team.

Concordia's track and field team added structure to her exercise routine and gave her tips she wouldn't have otherwise known, including to stretch only two hours after a workout, as stretching immediately is not good for the muscles. Gonzalez has been running for years, but her main challenge was learning how to train for a marathon.

"You're not allowed to listen to music when competing. It was hard to adjust but now I prefer running without music because I think about my muscles, I understand how my body feels," Gonzalez said. "I speed up and slow down and I think about what I'm doing; I'm not as distracted."

Gonzalez runs outside until mid-November and then starts again at the

beginning of March, regardless of the temperature.

"It's even better to run in -10°C weather because the air is more condensed and the atoms are more compact, which makes the air harder to breathe and in turn will target the muscles around your lungs to grow," she said.

Training is a process, but anyone can run a marathon. Some adapt quickly to extreme changes, while some are slower when it comes to adding intensity to their workout regimes.

Kalem Kachur, a physiotherapist from Westmount Square Health Group, and Sarah Marshall, a physiotherapist from McGill's School of Physical and Occupational Therapy, say that some of the most popular running injuries they treat are tears or ruptures of the Achilles tendon, tendinitis, shin splints, bursitis and hip and knee pain.

To avoid these injuries, Kachur suggests modifying the training program gradually for people slowly increasing their intensity or duration of running. Everyone transitions

"Minimalist shoes have no heel padding; it's as if you're running barefoot," explains Kachur. "If someone runs the way most people run, as a heel-striker, the heels won't handle it because it hurts too much. Running on the toes when wearing minimalist shoes will put more stress on the calves and the Achilles tendon when working nonstop. However, the shoes will decrease stress on knees and decrease total impact stresses."

Marshall points out that the best way to recover after a half or full marathon is to keep hydrated, fuel the body with nutrients and actively rest, which means keeping active but not getting the heart rate up. Some of the tips she has for runners: "don't start a race too fast; anti-chafing stick is a life saver for armpits and upper thighs; and use band aids on nipples for both men and women."

It can be hard to find the inner strength to run a marathon. Some have fitness goals, some want to lose weight, maybe increase energy or confidence—all of

running longer than three hours and that injury occurs the most around that time.

A marathon takes around three and a half to five hours to complete. So why run?

"The marathon is a sporting achievement and can be a great source of motivation as a long-term goal," said Pierre Thiffault, a personal trainer and specialist in running and triathlons.

Thiffault has run marathons before and advises to not start too fast, keep energy for the end and remain positive at all times. He notes that some of the reasons people get injured is because they don't have a good running technique and they don't follow a program.

"They go too fast too soon and they don't work on their running drills. Running is not enough to be a good runner," Thiffault said, adding that he highly recommends hiring a coach who will analyze and correct running techniques. He also suggests buying books about running training, as well as focusing on other activities like cross-training, swimming or cycling. These activities will leave room for rest days and round out an athlete's overall performance.

Running a marathon doesn't rely solely on motivation and courage; it's a 42km run that will physically wear and tear a person's muscles, bones, ligaments, tendons and the rest of the body. Training carefully, eating clean and respecting the body's limits are all key components to ensuring a successful trip across the finish line. They are journeys that make one embrace the pursuit of the unknown, they lead to a path of self-discovery, and they're all about being lost in the moment.

Photo Brandon Johnston

**"If I start something I have to finish it, and finish it well."**

— Melisa Farias Gonzalez, half-marathon runner.

differently, he adds. Many aspiring runners turn to minimalist shoes which are in high demand as they make a huge difference on the biomechanics of running, but it's important to adjust to training with them systematically.

that becomes difficult when these goals are being reached alone. This is where a professional trainer's input is vital. Many coaches and exercise scientists know that there are minimal training benefits after





# thank you

This year, *The Link* received **385** contributions from **114** writers, graphic artists & photographers.

Our **27 issues** accounted for more than **500 pages** of content distributed across Montreal.

We couldn't have done it without you.

*The Link* will be publishing news, fringe, sports & opinions articles throughout the summer at [thelinknewspaper.ca](http://thelinknewspaper.ca)

**Volume 36 Issue 1** will hit the stands on **August 25**.



## LINK WORKSHOP: EDITING

If journalists were Zorro, then editors would be Bernardo, the trusted sidekick that keeps it all together.

But what do editors do when they have to copy edit a story?

Join *The Link's* Editor-In-Chief Michelle Pucci and News Editor Jon Cook to learn the trade secrets of editing copy at *The Link's* office this Friday.

They'll go over what you should be looking for when editing copy, from strengthening the lead to cutting repetitive and useless words, while also explaining some of *The Link's* copy-editing standards.

A workshop you don't want too miss.

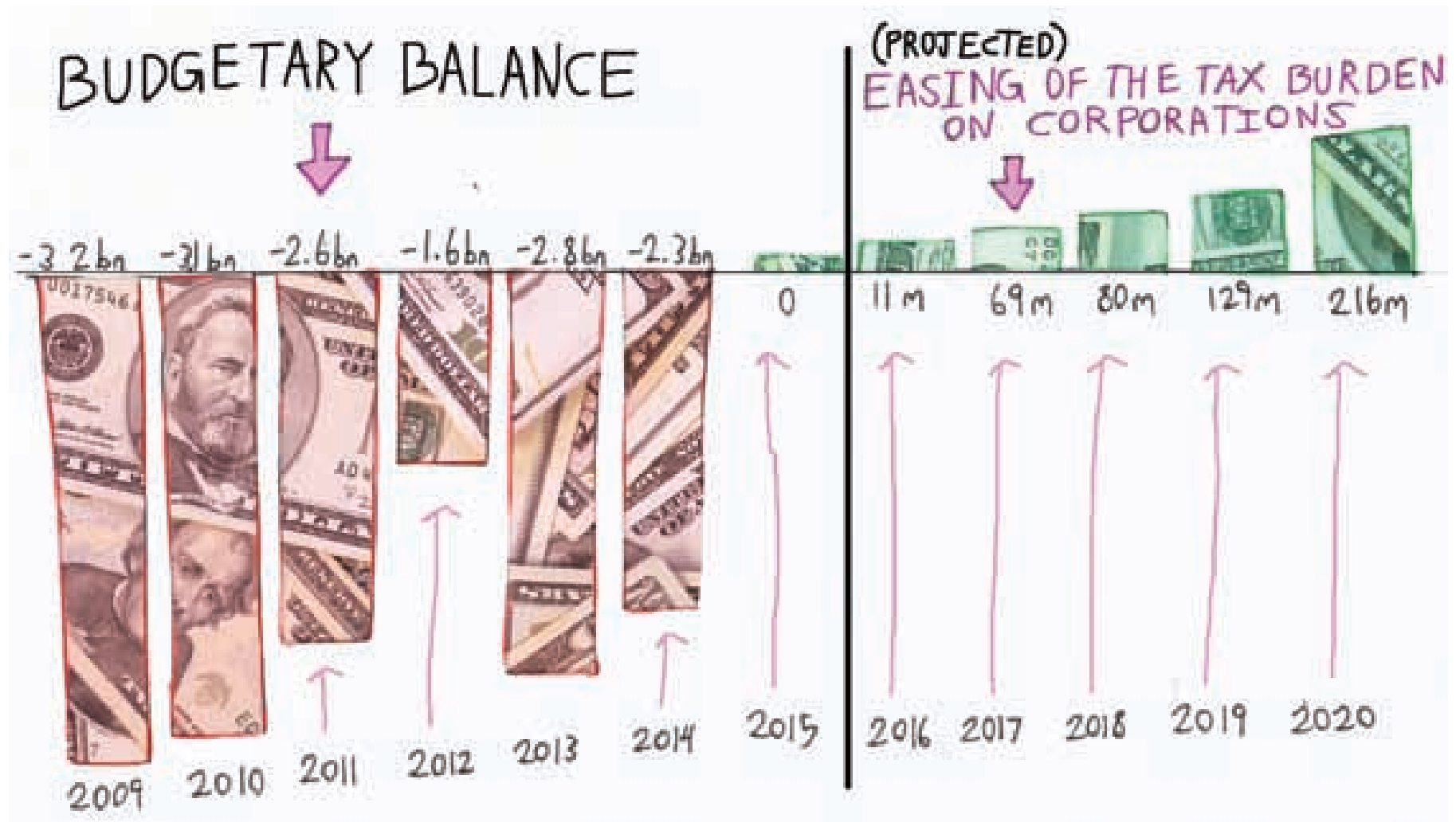
**FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 3 P.M.**  
***The Link* Office**  
**1455 De Maisonneuve Ouest**



JON COOK



MICHELLE PUCCI



figures from Quebec budget 2015-2016

# a budget for bankers and businessmen

## The Unfortunate Tale of the Unbalanced Balanced Budget

by Mattha Busby @itsmattha

Last week, Quebec announced its first balanced budget in six years as the Liberal Party seeks to reduce the province's fiscal deficit, which currently stands at \$2.35bn.

When you look at the \$100bn budget, it is clear that pensioners and corporations seem to be relatively unaffected by the austere neoliberal policies that youths are disproportionately affected by.

Last Thursday's budget saw former Laurentian Bank chief economist and current Finance Minister Carlos Leitão announce another \$729 million in cuts, largely in the health and education sector—including a further \$70 million to universities after \$200 million of cuts throughout the past year. The economic plan seeks to “ease the tax burden” and “ensure public finances remain sound,” thus engendering the conditions for economic growth.

“This is a turning point, not an end point,” Leitão announced as he revealed his party's budget, as quoted in the *Montreal Gazette*. “And we've done it without raising taxes.”

Keynesian economic solutions are surely primed for a renaissance if this neoliberal economic strategy fails to deliver growth.

Much is made of the tax rates in Quebec being the highest in Canada, but the code is not at all progressive. When one considers the revolving door between corporate banks and government through North America and Europe, the failure to reform an already conservative tax code is unsurprising.

As former Citigroup chief operating officer Jack Lew took over the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury job from Timothy Geithner (who is now president of Wall Street private equity firm Warburg Pincus); and as

ex-Goldman Sachs executive director Mark Carney, who was governor of the Bank of Canada, was appointed governor of the Bank of England by Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron, it is clear that our treasuries are in the hands of venture capitalists vowing to reduce the state.

Ex-Laurentian Bank chief economist Leitão is a man in this mould. It seems appropriate that his family fled Portugal after the fall of the Estado Novo as Marxists looked primed to take over; the influence of the private sector is such that technocrats are being brought in to administer austerity when politicians fail.

There are four personal income tax brackets in Quebec: first \$41,935; up to \$83,865; up to \$102,040; and over \$102,040. The Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante (ASSÉ) has funded and disseminated a series of posters, supported by the Concordia Student Union, which, albeit vaguely, have been advocating proposals for the adoption of ten tax brackets which would amount to a more progressive tax code—one where, for instance, those earning in excess of one million dollars would be expected to pay more than those earning \$100,000.

This would certainly be a step in the right direction for Quebec, as the better-off would shoulder more of the fiscal burden whose accumulation that the Parti Québécois and the Liberals have themselves overseen through recent memory.

Why does the adoption of a Scandinavian- or Belgian-style tax code, rising from 0 per cent to 64 per cent, sound like sacrilege to so many? Economists such as Thomas Piketty and Paul Krugman have recently argued that higher top tax rates would not stunt economic growth but that the revenue could “redress inequality.” This

is in direct contradiction to the Laffer curve theory, which claims that tax rates rising beyond a certain point will be detrimental to revenue collection—a notion central to Reaganomic, small state theory. Certainly in Belgium this is the case, where 47.2 per cent of the national wealth is held by the top 10 per cent; in contrast to the U.S. where this figure is 74.6 per cent.

As the Pope recently said, “[supply side economic theories rely on] a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system.” When one considers the distribution of wealth in the U.S., it's clear that laissez-faire economic theories are actually facilitating a widening of inequality.

Corporate taxes will be cut from 11.9 per cent to 11.5 per cent and the salaries of public sector workers will be frozen for two years, rising 1 per cent annually thereafter, while little has been made of job creation in this ideologically-driven budget.

The Liberal government has hitherto attacked the small fry during their tenure. It is indeed true that Quebec's corporate base is relatively small, but a 0.4 per cent increase, as opposed to a reduction, would at the very least soften the blow to the public sector.

Quebec's 11.9 per cent corporate tax rate is among the lowest in Canada anyway—situated between Alberta's 10 per cent and Newfoundland and P.E.I.'s 16 per cent. Essentially, the government should not be pampering the corporations who contribute 16 per cent of the public purse while individuals fund 84 per cent of it.

When you consider that Bell made a profit of \$1bn in the third quarter of last year, it seems quite bizarre that the taxes

that they and other corporations pay, such as Desjardins and Molson, are being cut as their profits increase. This is in correlation with a Western economy edging out of the mist of the 2008 crash.

This is a budget which will make upward social mobility less likely, squeezing the middle class and making living ever more difficult for the working and lower middle classes. Solidarity Concordia, ASSÉ and other anti-austerity groups claim that a rise to a 15 per cent rate would increase revenues by more than \$1bn.

This is surely a viable economic option, but perhaps they prefer squeezing one group until the pips squeal.

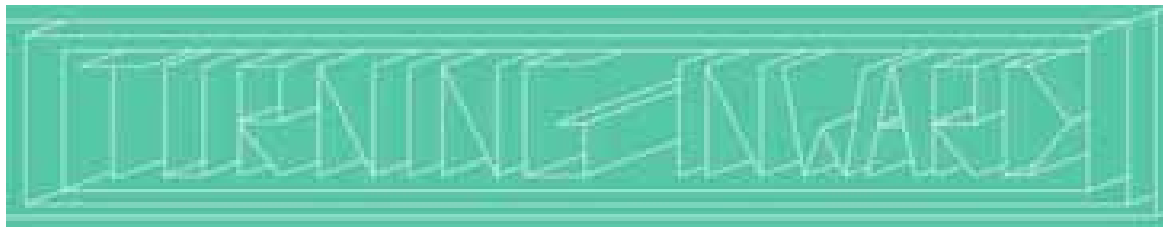
Tax relief will not come until 2017, to coincide with the impending election campaign where the Liberals will hope the electorate remembers them for tax cuts and not welfare cuts.

The Liberal government seems to be pushing through their plan as quickly as possible to buy time to win back the voters before the 2018 election. Young people don't vote much anyway. The 62 per cent turnout in 2012 was an anomaly, and the 2014 election saw this figure edge back towards the 37.7 per cent of 2008—let's go and vote as much as pensioners do to make a change.

We are a long way from the humane capitalism that John Maynard Keynes championed. Milton Friedman still rules the roost, though for how much longer we do not know. It's time to start thinking about Keynes again, away from the oft-quoted Friedmanist notion: “Is there some society you know that doesn't run on greed?”

Graphic Sam Jones





by Gonzo Nieto @gonzebo

In a recent interview with VICE founder Shane Smith, President Obama was asked about his thoughts on legalizing marijuana, which was one of the most popular viewer-submitted topics for the interview.

"It shouldn't be young people's biggest priority," he dictated. "I understand this is important to you, but you should be thinking about climate change, the economy, jobs, war and peace. Maybe way at the bottom you should be thinking about marijuana."

But people's interest in his answer to this question isn't about their political priorities.

Rather, it stems from the fact that the US is in a state of cognitive dissonance with regards to cannabis. Some states are still enforcing criminal laws and incarcerating people for possession and trafficking, while other states are regulating and taxing its sale just like alcohol.

That, and the general feeling that legalization is inevitable given the present situation and its momentum, leads one to plead: *why can he not just say it already?*

Certainly, there have been improvements from the president himself, as he recently granted clemency to 22 federal prisoners doing time for nonviolent drug offenses.

But that's a drop in the bucket with respect to the number of people currently behind bars for nonviolent drug charges. With a little more effort I don't see why that number couldn't have been more like 2000 pardons granted.

It sure would be lovely to remind President Obama that legalization and drug policy reform have everything to do with the economy, jobs, war and peace. They're interconnected issues, not separate ones.



## prioritize cannabis legalization

Regulating and taxing cannabis brings significant economic benefits, no question about it. What you're essentially doing when you legalize and regulate is funneling into the economy millions or billions of dollars which are currently circulating in an unregulated black market.

Case in point: Colorado raised \$50 million in taxes after selling \$700 million worth of medical and recreational cannabis in the first year of legalization. Certainly, people were still buying pot before legalization, but

now it can be taxed to contribute to schools and other public services, and its quality can be well-regulated.

These same measures of legalization and regulation also create jobs. An entirely new industry sprouts up, with supply chains and cannabis clubs and lounges to be staffed.

With regards to war, the "War on Drugs" has really been a war on some people who use some drugs. Obama himself recognized that drug war policy not only hands out disproportionate sentences, but has also

disproportionately affected communities of colour, rendering many people unemployable due to criminal records.

In 2012 alone 660,000 Americans were arrested for possessing small amounts of cannabis, a plant whose general safety we're well beyond establishing. This has indeed been a war on drug users waged for decades with devastating results for communities.

Drug war policies also directly affect war and peace in other countries. To give just one example, the drug gangs in Central and South American countries, and the resulting violence and deaths, are enabled by the black market whose demand they supply.

Despite what Obama thinks we should be prioritizing, cannabis legalization is gaining momentum and making quick progress. Successful legalization in Colorado has been followed by Oregon, Washington D.C. and Alaska, with more states surely to follow.

In Canada, cannabis legalization seems poised to be an issue in the next federal election. Countries around the world have been adopting smarter drug laws, and a UN General Assembly Special Session on drugs in 2016 may finally change the direction of international drug policy away from criminalization and toward regulation and health-based approaches.

In conclusion, cannabis legalization is a movement with relevance to all the things Obama says we should be prioritizing. And because of the socio-cultural momentum of the time we're living in, it's a movement to which passionate and motivated people can readily contribute and see tangible progress. It's rewarding. Make it a priority!

Graphic Sam Jones

## Touchin' Yr Dick—It's Actually Pretty Sweet!

by Zach Goldberg

This article may come off wrong to some people. I actually kind of feel uncomfortable writing it, as it's an article that, in reality, only people with penises can really understand. I generally pride myself on writing for everyone, even generally eschewing coverage of male-dominated topics, but damn, I just had to get these thoughts off my chest.

It's comforting to touch your dick.

Honestly, I'm not joking. I have no idea what the genetic or psychological underpinnings of that fact are, but I know it to be a truth nonetheless. Straight up, if you're in a situation where you are uncomfortable, or scared, or unsure—touching your dick makes you feel a little better.

It's even nice in comfortable situations, like when you're falling asleep or just lounging around. My dad used to lay on the living room floor with his hands down the front of his pants on Saturday mornings.

I always thought it was gross—I still definitely think it's pretty gross—but at least now I understand the drive.

Christ, and I do understand the drive. Sitting through a boring meeting, or standing half-asleep in the corner of some upscale vernisage, the subconscious, casual

inclination to slip my fingers down the front of my pants—but not all the way, just far enough to know my dick is still there, safe and sound, resting against my leg.

This isn't a sexual thing, either. I'm not whipping my cock out to jerk off every time someone scares me. I really don't know what it is that drives it. A female friend once told me it probably had to do with asserting dominance, or malehood, but I can honestly say that isn't it for me at all.

I am incredibly un-male, in terms of male stereotypes or societal norms, and pride myself on my breaking from cismale culture. I am not interested in asserting myself, am generally quite welcoming of other opinions, and have few major insecurities.

It just feels good to touch your dick. In a nonsexual way.

So I submit this fact to the world, and issue a call of tentative personhood to the dick-bearers of the world. To the hoodrats, the rap gods, the construction creeps, hocking loogies on street corners, gruffly cupping your cargo-swad-dled packages, I see you, and for once, for just one moment, I tip my hat to you, in brief rapport.

That's all I'm empathetic about, though. I'm not a creep. I swear.

Graphic Liz Xu

## nah'msayin?



## I Clit You Not

by Gloria Steinem the Second

How many times have I been in the throes of arousal, only to have elation cut short. An awkward pause, sometimes even a clearing of the throat emerges from between my legs before the inevitable, dreaded question.

"Gloria, can you help me find your clitoris?"

No, I think, internally groaning. But so many attractive, otherwise perfectly sexually competent young men have an enormous amount of trouble with what should be the simplest of tasks.

Often I wish they'd continue, even in a mediocre capacity, rather than bring the embarrassing topic to light. But these obliging sexual partners are to be applauded for their up-frontness—it's not a personal failing, but a problem endemic to our phallogocentric society.

The prick has long been rendered banal, glorified by contemporary architecture and classical sculpture, crude bathroom depictions and snapchat dick pics alike. In contrast, the clit remains sadly neglected, a virtual taboo.

A side effect of this is the cultural emphasis on blowjobs, universally construed as #casual. More broadly, there's an overarching emphasis

placed of the satisfaction of male desire. Female desire is most often ignored, and construed as deviant when asserted ("did you see how X threw herself at him? What a whore!"). Oral sex performed on women is often seen as a trivial precursor to penetration. It's just another example of male satisfaction given priority in what's seen as the only legitimate expression of sexuality.

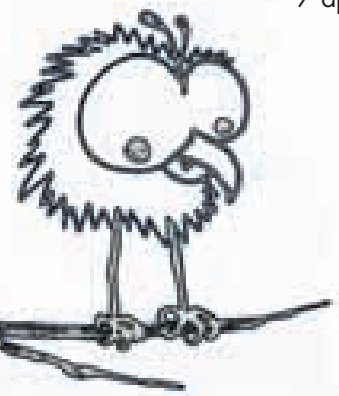
It's in this context that the clitoris is so hard to find (literally and figuratively). Society privileges male sexual expression. Dicks abound, while clitoris are relegated to the clinical, unappealing realm of the gynecologist's office.

This is an appeal to everyone attracted to the female form. Before going down on her, skip the phallogocentric porno and Google some vulvae. It's not that hard to find once you know what you're looking for. I promise.

For women who feel uncomfortable or uncertain with their anatomy, the sex-positive, feminist webcomic *Oh Joy Sex Toy* has a comprehensive cartoon guide to self-pleasure I recommend. It can be found at <http://www.ohjoysextoy.com/masturbate/>.

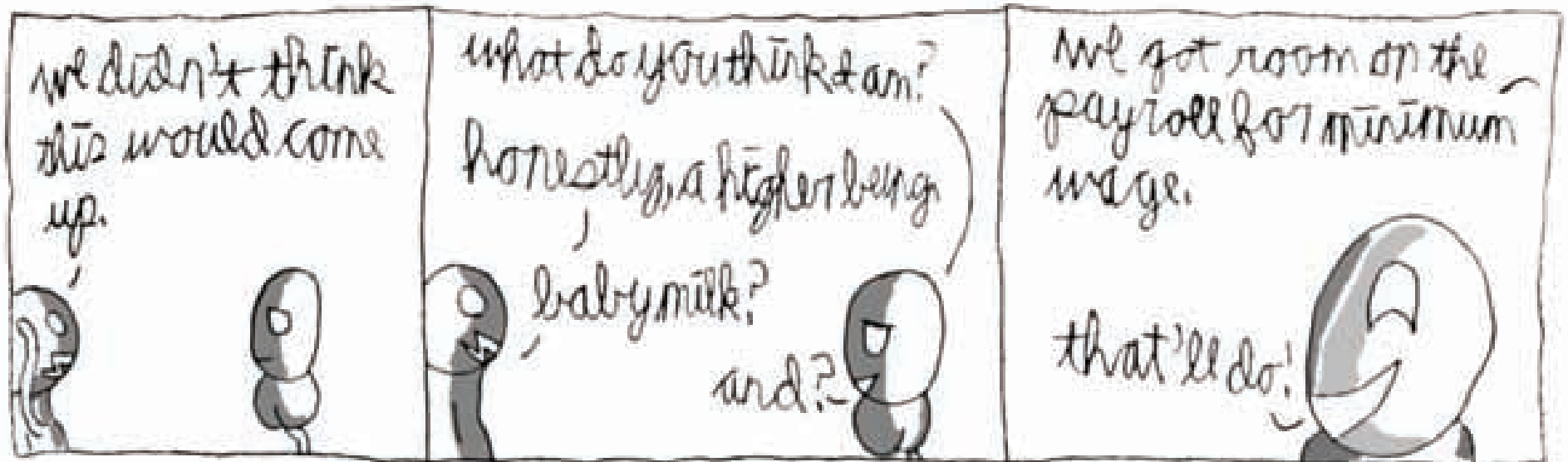
Sincerely,  
Gloria Steinem the Second

# Comics

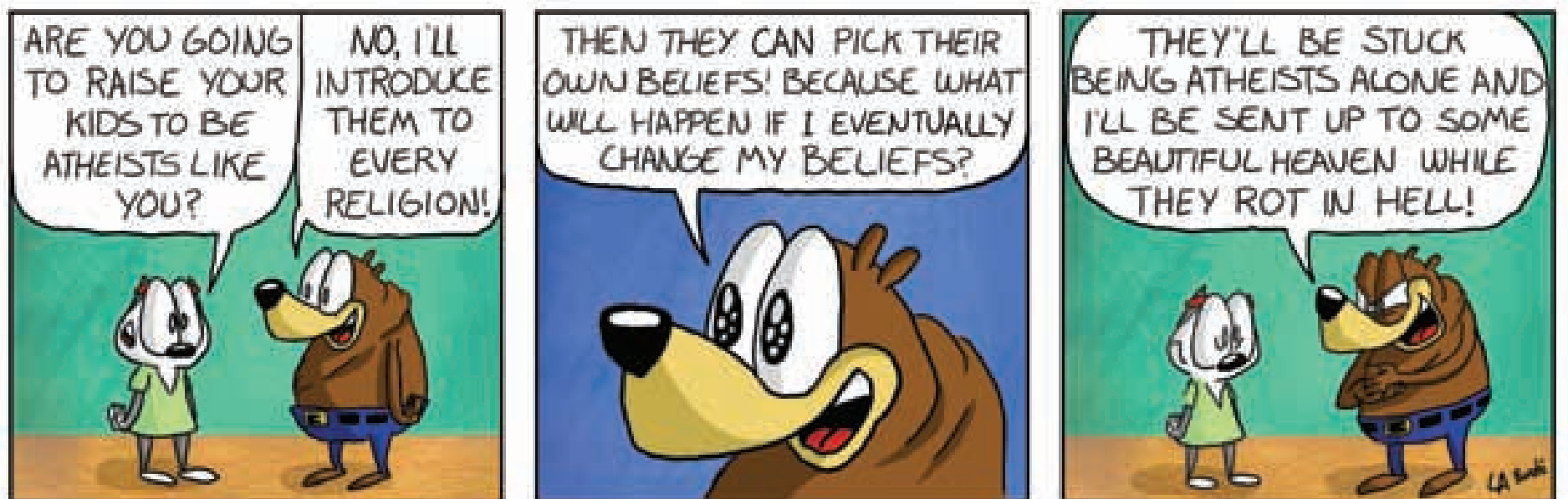


Jennifer Aedy

Balloon Ventures by Mengekko Jones



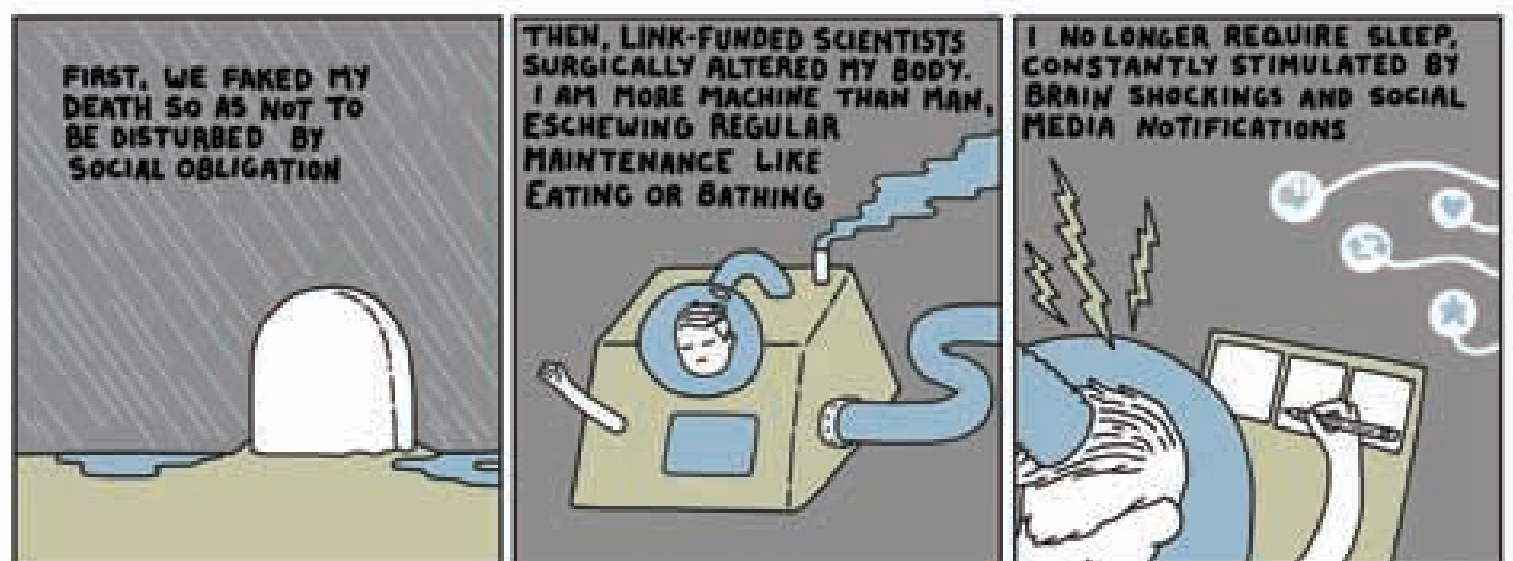
Filbert by L.A. Bonte



For more comics and animations visit [FilbertCartoons.com](http://FilbertCartoons.com)

Power Theater by Alex Callard @alexwcallard

IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE MY COMICS OUTPUT, MY EDITORS AT THE LINK TOOK MEASURES TO FOCUS MY PRODUCTIVITY







## editorial

### ASFA Is Plagued by Rape Culture

So we're back where we started.

Last semester, the Arts and Science Federation of Associations drew criticism for their dismissal of calls to provide sexual consent workshops for Frosh attendees. Sean Nolan, ASFA's VP Social, told the *Montreal Gazette* at the time that, "the attention span of these 18-year-old kids is not going to last long enough to understand the bulk of the presentation."

A few editors and contributors from *The Link* went to Frosh, and they said the consent education consisted of a few trivializing, "let's-cover-our-asses" buttons and stickers that said "No means no."

Paul Jerajian, who recently resigned as president and is now a "consultant" at ASFA, told *The Link* in February that Frosh has many benefits. "A lot of people who do Frosh want to get involved with ASFA because they loved it so much," he said.

The use of the word "love" is questionable. Many Frosh leaders perpetuated the half-assed, trivializing approach to teaching consent. From making creepy advances on young Froshes, to attempting to turn games of flip cup into strip cup, misogyny reared its ugly head in Frosh repeatedly. The allegations of sexual harassment from former ASFA executives hammer in the uncomfortable truth: bro culture is rape culture, it currently defines the association, and it's time for that to change.

It's ironic that an ASFA executive said

18-year-old "kids" lack the attention span to sit through a consent workshop—when it seems that his whole organization, from its executives to its event leaders (some of whom are councillors) are the ones that need the extra education.

Frosh is just one example of the rape culture inherent in ASFA's bro-dominated executive. Although the event, which had a net loss of \$44,207, is its main attraction, the culture of Frosh seems to permeate ASFA's day-to-day operations and smaller events.

Just this week, a former ASFA executive, under the pseudonym Mei-Ling, told the *Gazette* that she experienced a toxic environment at the Federation, which was perpetrated by two male executives.

"I was not a human being to them," she told the *Gazette*. "They dehumanized me and that made me understand how they viewed me."

Her story is sadly unsurprising.

ASFA's "cultural nights," for example, seem to bolster stereotypes more than they enrich students' experiences—check out the event's photo albums on ASFA's Facebook page and see for yourself. These nights of cultural appropriation have cost the Federation upwards of \$3,000, according to an ASFA expense report from January.

The irony is poignant when contrasting these actions with ASFA's mission statement:

"Our goal every year is to provide a vital service to all Arts and Science students, representing and fighting for their rights, as well

as enriching their experience at this university in many different ways."

In its February council meeting, ASFA voted to remove sections from their bylaws that supported gender parity, multiculturalism and sustainability, saying "that kind of ethical guideline is very hard to follow strictly."

Jerajian said that gender and racial parity is a conversation ASFA executives are always having. In the wake of these revelations, it's clear that isn't the case. A first step towards preventing such egregious misconduct in the future would be the reinstatement of bylaws mandating inclusiveness.

This year alone, ASFA accrued a projected deficit of \$61,690, with a large portion of financial losses coming from Frosh.

And now they want a fee levy increase. Again.

In its by-election last semester, a question asking for an increase to the association's fee levy failed.

"We thought the students were going to come to us versus the logical sense that we were going to go to the students," Jerajian said at the time. "It was a poor judgement on our part."

Poor indeed. What kind of leadership believes that thousands of people should personally ask why said leadership is asking for more money? Again, the executive team, with the approval of council, is asking for an added \$0.38 per credit.

We won't fully endorse that students vote no to this—after all, a new executive team will be elected, which hopefully means a clean slate. And ASFA does have the lowest fee levy proportional to its population (approximately 15,000).

What *The Link* does suggest, however, is that voters strongly consider the revelations that surfaced this week. Look over the candidates and decide whether these individuals are suitable for office and deserving of added cash to implement the change in culture ASFA has needed for years.

Also keep in mind that ASFA isn't the only student association or organization at Concordia that's guilty of upholding a misogynistic, toxic culture. Other faculty associations have Frosh too. And the Concordia Student Union has its own troubled history with sexual harassment and gender discrimination, while one can only imagine what secrets lie elsewhere in the school's bureaucracy.

Marginalized groups are discriminated against daily in all walks of society. It's time to face the problem head on. The fact that an unabashed proponent of rape culture shot down the implementation of consent workshops speaks for itself.

Institutionalizing respect in the association's bylaws and instituting mandatory consent workshops are baby steps towards a more inclusive culture, but they're important ones.

## THE LINK<sup>35</sup>

Volume 35, Issue 27  
Tuesday, April 7, 2015  
Concordia University  
Hall Building, Room H-649  
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.  
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8  
editor: 514-848-2424 x. 7405  
arts: 514-848-2424 x. 5813  
news: 514-848-2424 x. 8682  
business: 514-848-7406  
advertising: 514-848-7406  
fax: 514-848-4540

The Link is published every Tuesday during the academic year by The Link Publication Society Inc. Content is independent of the university and student associations (ECA, CASA, ASFA, FASA, CSU). 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.

Material appearing in The Link may not be reproduced without prior written permission from The Link.

Letters to the editor are welcome. All letters 400 words or less will be printed, space permitting. The letters deadline is Friday 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.

**Board of Directors 2014-2015:** Colin Harris, Clément Liu, Jake Russell, Erin Sparks, Verity Stevenson, Graeme Shorten-Adams non-voting members: Rachel Boucher, Michelle Pucci.

**Typesetting** by The Link. **Printing** by Hebdo-Litho.

**Contributors:** Jennifer Aedy, Alison Bertho, L.A. Bonté, Mattha Busby, Alex Callard, Elysia-Marie Campbell, Matteo Ciambella, Paku Daoust-Cloutier, Noëlle Didierjean, Josh Fischlin, Mengelko Jones, Angisel Kiermaier, Fiona Maynard, Gonzo Nieto, Jake Russell, Gloria Steinem the Second, Verity Stevenson, Graeme Shorten Adams, Willie Wilson, Ruth Webber-Juggo, Liz Xu

**Cover:** Laura Lalonde

editor-in-chief **MICHELLE PUCCI**  
coordinating editor **SHAUN MICHAUD**  
news editor **JONATHAN COOK**  
current affairs editor **OPEN**  
assistant news editor **JANE LAKES**  
fringe arts editor **JUNE LOPER**  
fringe arts online editor **ZACHARY GOLDBERG**  
sports editor **VINCE MORELLO**  
sports online editor **JULIAN MCKENZIE**  
opinions editor **OPEN**  
copy editor **OPEN**  
creative director **LAURA LALONDE**  
photo & video editor **BRANDON JOHNSTON**  
graphics editor **SAM JONES**

business manager **RACHEL BOUCHER**  
distribution **MACKENZIE KIRBY**  
system administrator **CLEVE HIGGINS**  
office manager **PIERRE CHAUVIN**

## WANT TO OUTPERFORM THE COMPETITION? **WE DO.**

Our world-renowned faculty bring fresh thinking to the classrooms of our graduate programs where we prepare the next generation of BUSINESS leaders.

THE MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSC) PROGRAMS IN FINANCE, MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING ARE RESEARCH-BASED DEGREES THAT TRAIN YOU TO BECOME AN **EXPERT** IN A SPECIALIZED FIELD OF BUSINESS

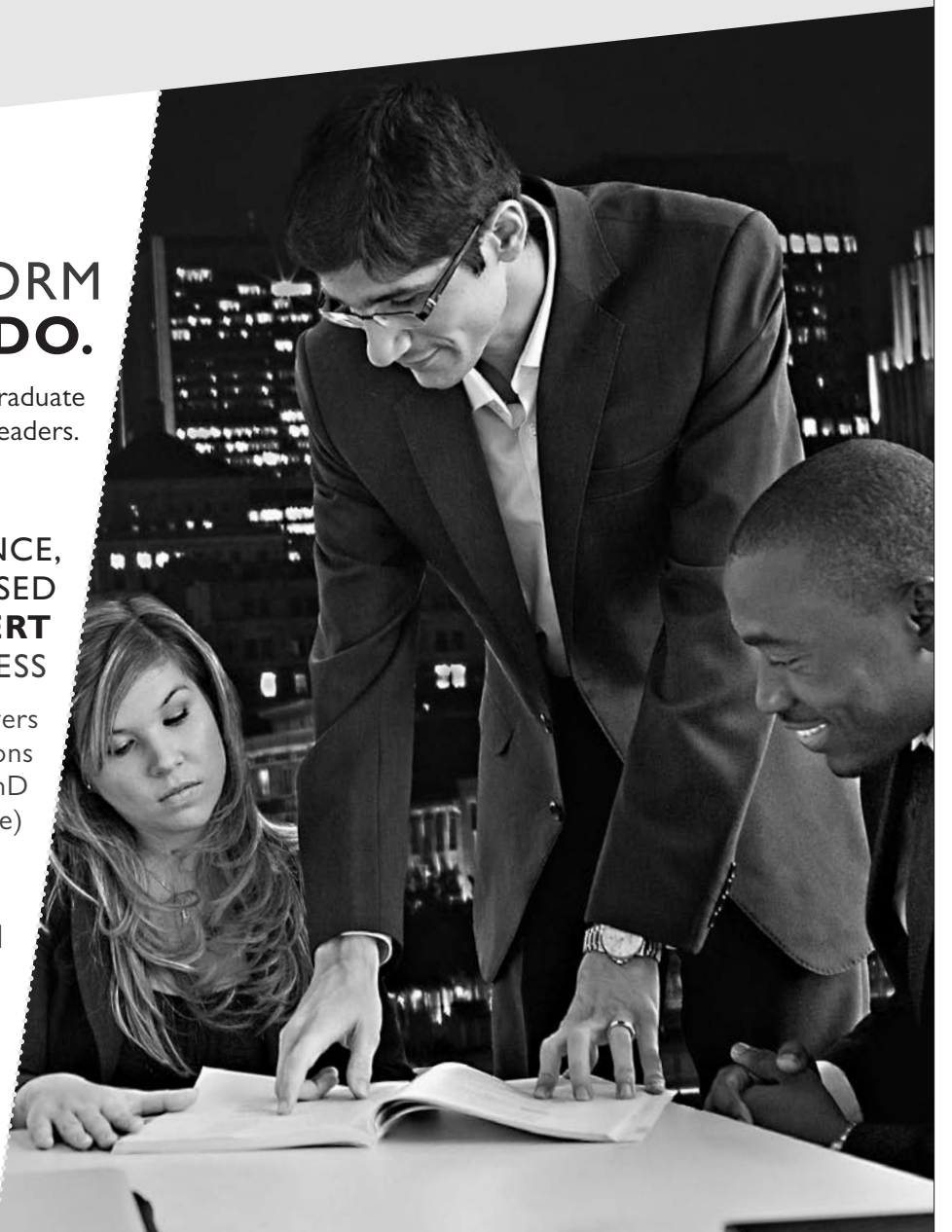
- Develop advanced analytical and technical skills valued by employers
  - Expand your career options
  - Fast-track option to PhD
- Two years of full-time study (or four years part-time)

### INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, April 15 at 5:30 p.m.  
1450 Guy St., Montreal  
10th floor, MB 10.302

SMALL PLANET  BIG THINKING  
BE PART OF THE THINKING

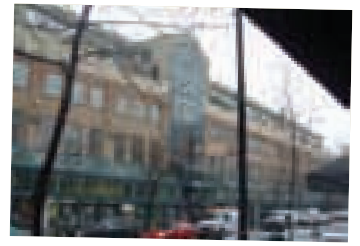
Register at [concordia.ca/jmsbinfosessions](http://concordia.ca/jmsbinfosessions)  
Or visit [concordia.ca/jmsbmsc](http://concordia.ca/jmsbmsc)



## COME TRY OUR FOOD COURT **INTERNATIONAL CUISINE**



**FAUBOURG**  
SAINTÉ-CATHERINE



• **BENDO SUSHI**  
Sushi

• **FORMOSA**  
Taiwanese Teas & Cuisine

• **SAINT-CINNAMON**  
Cinnamon Rolls - Crepes

• **BANGKOK CUISINE**  
Thailand Cuisine

• **YUKI RAMEN**  
Japanese Noodles

• **WOK IMPERIAL**  
Szechuan Cuisine

• **POULET TIKKA**  
Indian Cuisine

• **SAMIR**  
Lebanese Cuisine

• **CHANG LAI**  
Dim Sum & Dumplings

• **JAPOTE**  
Japanese Fast Food

• **FONDUE CHINOISE EXPRESS**  
Chinese Fondue

**GREAT SPECIALS FOR STUDENTS!**

**ONLY 2 STEPS FROM CONCORDIA!  
RIGHT AROUND GUY ST. CORNER!**

**1616 STE. CATHERINE ST. W.**

