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ENCS					
Tutorial Leader	Lab Demonstrator	Programmer/Tutor on Duty	Marker	Marker	Marker
			PhD	Masters	Ugrad
\$24.67	\$18.53	\$17.10	-	-	-

Engineering and computer science teaching assistants at Concordia have been paid according to different wage scales since the first collective agreement was signed in 2010. Students in the faculties of Arts and Science, Fine Arts, John Molson School of Business and the School of Graduate Studies are grouped together in the collective agreement and split into Grade 1 and Grade 2 pay grades, with Grade 2 wages split into PhD, Masters and Undergraduate salaries. Engineering and Computer Science TA wages are split into three job descriptions: Tutorial Leaders, Lab Demonstrators and Programmer or Tutor on Duty.

GRAPHIC LAURA LALONDE

TRAC Wants Resolution for Wage Disparities

BY MICHELLE PUCCI
@MICHELLEMPUCCI

Concordia's engineering and computer science teaching assistants will have to wait until March 2016 before a grievance against the disparity in their wages with other faculty TAs is heard.

The union representing Teaching and Research Assistants at Concordia (TRAC) filed a grievance last September on behalf of its members over different wage scales for engineering and computer science TAs compared to wages of TAs in other faculties.

Concordia rejected the complaint, and it was sent to arbitration in March 2016, according to TRAC's Grievance Office Gounash Pirniya.

"The problem is lab demonstrators in the engineering faculty receive \$18.53 per hour, but in other faculties [Grade 1 TAs] would receive \$24.68," said Pirniya. Despite

the difference in wages, both positions do the same job, she said.

Wage disparities have existed in the union since it signed its first collective agreement in 2011. TRAC's newest collective agreement was signed in 2014 and kept the wage disparities. Pay grade negotiations for new salaries were postponed.

The new agreement solved some wage issues: the lowest pay grades for markers were scrapped altogether and bumped up to wages between \$14 and \$20 per hour. TAs for eConcordia—a system used for online classes—also joined the highest pay grade with a salary of \$24 an hour.

But wages for engineering and computer science TAs remained separate from other faculties. Pirniya said no other university has different wages for engineering TAs.

When wages for markers were

bumped up, PhD and Masters markers in other faculties started receiving \$20 and \$17.79 per hour respectively, but Engineering markers, regardless of the level of education, were only bumped to \$17.10 per hour.

Only undergraduate TAs in other faculties are paid less, around \$14 per hour.

Pirniya said nothing came out of meetings with Concordia when the complaints were filed last year. The university pointed to the collective agreement, which was signed by TRAC and is binding until it expires.

"There could be a lot of problems with the rules and regulations, and that's why grievances can be filed," Piriya said. The fact that the union agreed to the wage disparity in the past doesn't mean it shouldn't be changed, she added.

"It's been a problem for years, so

Concordia should at least resolve it and pay it retroactively.”

According to Pirniya, the number of TAs and RAs in the faculty of engineering is very high, and most of them are international students.

"I'm not talking as the grievance officer when I say this, but I would like to call this discriminatory rather than disparity in pay grade, because I know that engineering is one of the faculties that has the most international students," Pirniya said. "Why is this just happening in engineering?"

Pirniya said many international engineering TAs will probably finish their studies and head home by the time the complaint is resolved.

“Even if the grievance [is resolved], a lot of them will not receive [retroactive] payments.”

This year TRAC plans to spend a lot more money on mobilization and communication to encourage

members to come forward with any problems they have. Members have 20 days from the incident of complaint to bring forward grievances or labour disputes.

"These days Concordia is really strict about deadlines," Pirniva said.

Pirniya also brought up the difference in length of the union's contract compared to other universities. TRAC's collective agreement is around 15 pages, while the McGill teaching assistant union's agreement is 40 pages.

"I'm not saying that if you have 100 pages to your collective agreement that you have the best agreement ever, but it means there are a lot of points taken into account," she said.

Concordia University spokesperson Chris Mota said the university had no comment on ongoing labour negotiations and grievances.

Hive Café Delayed Another Week, May Postpone Reggie's October Opening

BY JONATHAN CARAGAY-COOK
@HIIMBIRACIAL

Students looking for a place to study while enjoying a grilled cheese sandwich will have noticed that the Hive Café is still boarded up, with a “Petite Hive” serving adjacent to the café instead.

Touted to reopen around school's start last week, the cooperative's opening will be postponed at least another week, and could cause its neighbouring space Reggie's to face delays as well, according to Concordia Student Union VP Clubs and Internal Affairs Lori Dimaria.

"I'm hoping the Hive [staff] can go into the space by next week to start stocking and begin their operations," she said. "It's up to them to decide when to open."

The Hive Café Solidarity Cooperative team released a statement that “coffee, and basic food and drink items” will be served at the makeshift kiosk on the mezzanine level of the Hall Building, also saying that new workers and a revamped menu were integrated over the summer. It makes no mention of when the space will reopen.

With the Hive's reopening prioritized because it has a governance and operational structure already in place, Reggie's may not meet its projected late October opening, previously given to *The Link* by CSU President Terry Wilkings.

"If we prioritize the Hive, then some things may not be getting done on [Reggie's]," Dimaria said.

The delay is due to a “couple of hiccups” that occurred during the demolition process. “There are certain things you can’t expect until you’re demolishing,” Dimaria said. According to her, an example of one such complication was the need to tear down a podium, which turned out to be concrete instead of wood.

She has been meeting with the space's contractor Doverco every two weeks, which includes the company's president and the engineers. Dimaria says despite the CSU believing the Hive would be open by school's start, there was no miscommunication between the contractor and client. She attributed Doverco's incorrect projections to "overconfidence."

"The contractor didn't really pose any red flags," she said. "Through the hiccups they still felt very confident."

The Hive team also requested modifications to the service counter, and the lighting fixtures had to be changed to comply with new safety standards, the CSU VP added.

The CSU council decided last May to hire Doverco at a cost of \$1.4 million. They had the lowest bid out of four formal proposals the CSU received.



PHOTO BRANDON JOHNSTON

Senate Postpones Appointment of Controversial Professor to Tribunal Pool



Senator Stephen Brown works at the Concordia Student Union Advocacy Centre

PHOTO NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

BY JONATHAN CARAGAY-COOK
@HIIMBIRACIAL

A professor's appointment to be in a faculty tribunal pool was postponed after a claim emerged that up to 50 per cent of his students in 200-level courses are accused of plagiarism at Concordia University Senate on Friday.

Senator Stephen Brown, who is also the Concordia Student Union Advocacy Centre Director, brought the issue forward, saying that Professor Michael Lipson of the political science department would create an "inconsistency" within the tribunal pool.

Lipson was one of five appointments to the faculty representatives that would be selected for tribunals called by the Office of Rights and Responsibilities. He would have served for the 2015-2016 academic year if appointed.

The political science professor was not at Senate to defend his teaching practices. However, in an email, Lipson—who had no

knowledge of what happened on Friday—says that he has never accused half of a class of plagiarism.

"To the best of my recollection, every plagiarism charge I have filed in the past decade has been upheld," he wrote.

He continued by expressing his disappointment that a student leader would make "blatantly false" statements at Senate.

After deliberation between senators and university President Alan Shepard—who also acts as chair of Senate—a motion passed to have his specific appointment postponed and re-evaluated by the nominators from the School of Graduate Studies, which includes its Dean, Paula Wood-Adams.

Brown clarified that his intention to discuss the problem at council was not to "besmirch" Lipson and added that an example of the professor's standards of defining plagiarism included students accidentally citing the wrong year and edition of a class textbook.

Some senators expressed discomfort that such allegations were brought up directly at Senate without any prior notice. Shepard made the recommendation to postpone the appointment and commented that he wants to avoid a culture of "gotcha" moments at Senate in the future.

He added that he doesn't know Lipson very well but imagined he would not like his reputation discussed without his knowing.

Senator Patrice Blais said at the meeting that it was the first time in years that senate debated an appointment.

A part-time faculty member in political science, Blais acknowledged that Lipson has a "rigorous" reputation in regard to his work but that he is fully capable of knowing what plagiarism is or isn't.

Blais, along with student senator Benjamin Prunty, initially suggested tabling the appointment until further evaluation.

Tim Shaw, a student from John Molson

School of Business, took Lipson's Introduction to International Relations 200-level course last year but withdrew following an "unsatisfactory" grade on a midterm.

"It sounded interesting from the outside, but he ruined it for me," Shaw told *The Link*.

He called the course challenging—while clarifying that professors aren't always to blame for a course's difficulty—and added that Lipson taught the intro class like a 300-level, while making no effort to provide proper resources to succeed.

He continued that Lipson wouldn't answer questions and became frazzled when students did pose some in class.

After receiving the poor marks on his midterm, Shaw said he formally withdrew from the course—which means a "W" appears on his transcript—because he heard about Lipson's reputation of grading papers "severely," which meant he probably couldn't salvage a better grade.

MCGILL STUDENTS WANT INFORMATION ON MILITARY RESEARCH

BY MICHELLE PUCCI @MICHELLEPUCCI

Student activists within Demilitarize McGill say the university is trying to avoid releasing information on military research by delaying the access to information process.

The university is obliged to respond to access to information requests within a month, but some student activists say their requests are being blocked.

Cadence O'Neal was a first-year student when she filed a request in 2012 for all communications between researchers at McGill's Computational Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (CFD Lab), which develops software, deciding and aerodynamics technology. O'Neal says the lab plays a role in developing military drones. Her information request asked for all emails between the CFD lab and companies like CAE, Bell Helicopter, Bombardier and Lockheed Martin, as well as all research topics at the lab.

McGill sent her all of the research topics, but O'Neal says she's still waiting on the emails, which add up to 8,944 messages in total. Her case is going to the Commission responsible for access to information law in October.

"I'm quite sure McGill wouldn't be fighting so hard to avoid giving us this information if there wasn't anything interesting in it," O'Neal said.

McGill graduate Kevin Paul also challenged the university for redacted documents he received in response to a request for research contracts with the Shockwave Physics Group, which studies explosive and detonation technology.

The university says it's doing its best to disclose documents, but that not all documents are accessible.

"For example, McGill alerted private sector sponsors (mostly corporations that fund the research) when such documents were requested, and some sponsors objected to disclosure, as is their right," communications director Carole Graveline wrote in the statement.

She cited concerns of intellectual property with

commercial value, or "emails with results or research strategies sponsors do not want disclosed."

"It does not mean there is something untoward in the research," the statement continued. "This group of students and former students keeps asking for the same or very similar documents, which the University and/or the research sponsors believe are not accessible pursuant to the law."

In 2012, McGill accused students, including members of Demilitarize McGill, *The McGill Daily* and *The Link* of using access to information requests as "retaliation measure against McGill in the aftermath of the 2011-2012 student protests."

The university asked for the right to block access to information requests by students affiliated with *The Daily*, *The Link* and the website McGillLeaked, which publishes all documents released by the university through requests. High-profile lawyer Raymond Doray represented McGill at the time, and O'Neal says he will represent the university at the hearing in October. The students will be self-represented.

In their 2012 petition to the Commission, McGill called the access to information requests "frivolous" or targeting "trivial documents and information such as documents and information pertaining to the filling of a refrigerator."

Requests filed at the time sought all documents related to military research contracted by companies and the Canadian government, including O'Neal's request, but also asked for administrative expenses such as catering receipts.

The Commission rejected McGill's request, citing the Commission's exclusive right to reject access to information requests it deems abusive.

"[The ruling] meant that they would have to give us the information that we asked for and McGill said they weren't going to give me the emails," O'Neal said.

"[McGill] still has the right to argue with us on an individual basis, so we're still stuck here without the original information that we asked for in 2012."



PHOTO NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

MONTREAL CHARACTER SERIES: GREG STROLL

On Making Peace and Staying Grounded



“It’s a journey either way, right? It’s gonna hang over you for a while, but it’s gonna help form a large portion of your life and you as a person.”

PHOTO ZACH GOLDBERG

BY ZACH GOLDBERG
@ZACHGOLDBERG

Schiz.o.phre.ni.a:
(skits frēnē , skits frenē)
(noun)

Comparable to living life as a puzzle with missing pieces. A brain disorder, largely undefined and lacking medical certainty of treatment. It is as though there were a misinformation exchange between the brain and its thoughts, like perceptions are sent down the wrong path to the wrong conclusion. People with schizophrenia often suffer delusions, sensory and auditory hallucinations, social withdrawal, and “disturbed” thinking.

Greg Stroll
33 Years Old
Born and Raised in Montreal

When was your first psychotic episode?

To preface that, I was diagnosed at 21. That was before my first episode. In the two years leading up to my first episode, the first signs I had weren't clear to me. I didn't believe at first that I was schizophrenic. I thought it was something the doctors made up, that I made up to get out of working. I hadn't had the canon symptoms of hearing voices, hallucinating, delusions. I had very precursor symptoms, what I was experiencing is called Schizotypy, which is more like in-between

symptoms. You're not hearing voices, you're mishearing voices. You're getting paranoid, but you're not having full-on paranoid delusions. Anyway, when I was 23 I started hearing voices, and I was like, “No, I'm actually crazy. I've lost my marbles.”

That must have been very frightening.

It was very scary. A lot of people don't realize that nobody has the answers for you. Nobody knows what to tell you, what to think, what to do. It's all on you. And it's like, you're in this situation, you have to do things to protect yourself but you're not necessarily capable of it, and the people around you are trying to figure out what happened, and ultimately they're either going to blame you or blame your family or blame the people around you, when it's just that stuff happens to people. People get cancer, people get all kinds of things. Anyway, this was a very low percent chance to be passed down. I think my grandmother was undiagnosed or something like that. People just did not talk about stuff like that back then.

Thankfully I've been able to make my peace with it over the years. I give lectures for nursing students about my experiences, and they'll ask me what it's like now, and I'll say it doesn't really bother me. Most of the time, the voices are beneficial in that they'll help me do what I'm doing. Let's say I'm writing a book or something, I'll have that feedback of what is or isn't good. Sometimes if I forget to do

something they'll get particularly active, and I'll go back and think about it. It's become a bit of a trigger—if I'm hearing them, what is it I've forgotten to do? I don't know. It's uncanny how it works out that way.

Before I learnt to balance my emotions, though, they were very negative, very hard to deal with, very controlling. Very demanding. Manipulative. A whole bunch of other adjectives I could just throw on there. That was a huge turning point. Learning how to balance myself emotionally changed everything, because...once you remove the pain from anything it's just symptoms, right? Like, a soldier learns how to resist torture so they go into some kind of training, and they come out of it, and it's like well, this is happening, and it's not particularly pleasant, but...

It's something I have to live with.
Right.

What have been your modes for staying grounded? How did you temper your emotions?

Well, okay, the first and most important thing was to remain objective. Because when I'm experiencing delusions or what not, it's never really full-on I believe this or I don't believe that. It's sort of somewhere in between. It's like being of two minds. It's a little bit of both, and you're somewhere in the middle. You have that delusion of reference, of grandeur, whatever it is. So that TV show said something that really relates to my life, but

who am I that somebody would write something like that about me? So you go back and forth. So, being objective is really important.

You'd say, “If I was doing well, what would I think right now?” Or, even if it's not how I feel or what I believe, I'm in a situation where I have to be careful, to protect myself and protect the people around me. Like, I don't want to commit to anything I believe. It's that moment of stepping outside yourself and saying, “I do believe this, but I don't have to act on this.”

What advice would you give to people living with mental disorders?

Learning how to remain objective is the most important thing. I've actually thought a little about how I would teach someone to be objective. Because beyond that, all you need is your eight hours sleep, and you're going to have your symptoms. So beyond that, all you can control is who you are.

You have to know that this is what's important to me. I want to be this type of person, whoever you want to be. And you just remain objective. I'm trying to do this in spite of whatever's happening. Those are essentially the two most important things I found that made the hugest impact.

For the full interview (and it is full, in body, mind, and soul; in hope and more), visit thelinknewspaper.ca/fringe



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARTICLE

BY ELYSIA-MARIE CAMPBELL

A hundred thousand pins for roughly the hundred thousand people, said to be killed in Mexico's ongoing drug war. It may seem crazy to imagine such a large number of pins bunched up into a pile only a few feet wide, but Maria Ezcurra's latest artwork seeks to represent facts and make audiences reflect on them.

The work, entitled *Pinned Down* (or *how to keep hiding thousands of needles in a haystack*), opens at Montreal's Article on Sept. 23.

Almost a year ago on Sept. 26, 2014, 43 students from the Ayotzinapa Rural Teacher's College in Iguala, Mexico were kidnapped on their way out of their rural town for a protest against government de-funding programs.

When the story went public, prosecutors who investigated the mass kidnapping said that the students who were stopped by the police might have been secretly working for a local gang. They purportedly got into a confrontation with the police when they tried to steal buses to take to and from the demonstration, according to human rights groups.

"The students disappeared and were killed. We still don't know where they are," said Ezcurra.

Dead bodies were found near the area of Iguala in the state of Guerrero, where the confrontations occurred, but there was never any confirmation that they were those of the students who were kidnapped that day.

"There were no faces or names, no lists, and no records," said Ezcurra. This meant she couldn't include names of the students and teachers who were kidnapped in her project.

Ezcurra is presenting this artwork in hopes of spreading awareness of the broader issues at hand across Latin America. The ongoing drug war between the Mexican government and drug cartels has caused many complex forms of vio-

REFUSING SILENCE

Article Presents Pinned Down by Maria Ezcurra

lence in the country.

This case, in particular, was closed by the government, who chose to neglect the situation rather than investigate it further.

"[This art piece] was my way of doing something and participating in this exchange of ideas to denounce what is going on," continued Ezcurra. "I think we have to make noise in order for things to change."

"The parents of the missing students need people to know about the situation," she said. "They need to ask people around the world for support, so that the Mexican government won't close this case so they can keep looking and find their children."

The case generated alarm because the students were not known to have any criminal ties. Moreover, the police's potentially violent involvement caused great concern to the citizens of the state and the rest of the world.

According to an article published by the *New York Times* on Oct. 6, 2014, the students at the Ayotzinapa Rural Teacher's College in Iguala had been soliciting money for a demonstration on Oct. 2, to protest budget cuts to their state-financed school. In addition, the college has been known to ignite local social justice movements that have provoked violence in the past.

Growing up in Mexico and being a student and teacher herself, Ezcurra feels she can relate to the situation, but she also feels a disconnect from it. A PhD candidate in Art Education, she currently lives in Montreal and has brought her teaching experiences from Mexico to a couple of courses at Concordia over the past ten years.

Creating *Pinned Down* was her way of using her voice to spread the word on the larger situation in Mexico. She is

aiming to incite positive change for the crisis happening back in her hometown.

"I feel so far away," she said. "It's hard to participate in demonstrations in Mexico because it's too far, but Montreal is so multicultural, so people are very aware of what's happening around the world."

"People care and follow the stories and ask questions."

Ezcurra wanted to do something symbolic to best represent the situation.

"One hundred thousand is really a big number. I thought pins were a simple way of representing the number, and it's something that you can use easily and mend. Putting them all together makes it strong and big and you can't miss it anymore," she said.

The pins, which represent the number of people killed or reported missing over the last decade in drug-affiliated conflicts, are magnetically held over a metal cutout of Mexico.

Audience members are invited to take a pin and talk with the artist about the idea behind the work. In return, Ezcurra will give each person a black ribbon, to represent a person who died in the drug war.

"You relate and [are] more in contact with the situation this way. It helps you understand how big the number is," said Ezcurra.

Ezcurra often works with clothing and addresses subjects of violence, memory and identity in her art projects.

"[Clothing] is something we interpret unconsciously, something we all use and can relate to," she said. "The fact that clothing is in touch with the body makes it very personal and social. I have worked with [it] in many different ways to represent cultures and foundations, performance, gender roles, violence, memory and immigration."

The display of the artwork runs for one day only at Montreal's Article, marking the one-year anniversary of the disappearance of the students.



THE JAPANESE IRREVERENCE

Film POP Hosts a Retrospective on Sho Miyake, a Landmark in the Japanese Independent Scene

BY OLIVIA FREY

Film POP will showcase a special retrospective of the work of a young, upcoming independent filmmaker from Japan, Sho Miyake, for the 14th edition of POP Montreal.

The two films being presented are Miyake's most recent productions, *Playback* (2012) and *The Cockpit* (2015). Curator Ariel Esteban Cayer, a Concordia film student and Japanophile, who has been working as programmer for the renowned Fantasia International Film Festival for the last four years, sheds light on the current state of independent filmmaking in a country whose artistically prestigious silver-screen has never ceased to map out the polarities of Japanese realities and fantasies with a strong and enduring undercurrent of rebellious zeal.

Sho Miyake, who will be present during the screenings of his films on Saturday Sept. 20 in Concordia's J.A. De Sève cinema, is one of many largely unheard voices.

Both films have a place at POP and deserve to be included within the musical cultural event for different reasons. *The Cockpit* dives into Tokyo's underground hip-hop scene: showcasing a group of sampling musicians building beats in a shoebox-sized apartment. The film takes its audience's mind through the repetitious, hypnotic process of beat-making and sampling, revealing the block-building, looping magic behind the final finished product.

On the other hand, Cayer teases, "the musical quality of *Playback* relates more to the rhythm with which its story unfolds," that of an ageing voice-actor stuck in a midlife crisis, transported back into his past through a strange, introspective reverie. These gems will give their audience glimpses into a sensuous and private world; contemporary work trickling from one of the world's richest cinematic heritages and generations of relentless boundary-pushing filmmakers.

JAPANESE CINEMA IN RETROSPECT

For a better understanding of the relationship between the industry and those that work outside it, a brief overview of Japan's modern film industry is necessary: in the Golden Age of the 1950s, the Japanese film industry was under the monopoly of six major studios—of which three (Toho, Toei and Shochiku) still, to this day dominate the entertainment mainstream.

These studios established themselves by delivering the works of the great masters that we all know from every "Top Ten Best Japanese Films Ever Made" list: Yasujiro Ozu, Akira Kurosawa, Kenji Mizoguchi and Yoji Yamada, to name a few.

The genius expertise of these artists set the bar at an all-time high and in order to enter the industry, youthful newcomers were tutored as humble assistant directors, under a strict student-teacher hierarchy. It wasn't until a roaring new wave of radical individuals, much like their French counterparts, that a movement was launched aimed at rejecting the ideologies, styles and stories of the past, which they saw as antiquated, over-reliant on literary adaptation and out of touch with current realities.

Although New Wave filmmakers like Nagisa Oshima, Yoshishige Yoshida or Masahiro Shinoda all started out at Shochiku, the company which had nurtured the restrained, traditional artistry of Ozu, their films chronicled the younger generation's iconoclasm in a time of deep social unrest.

Studio heads saw how their verve might invigorate a cinema undermined by the domestic attractions of television.

"Young audiences at the time marveled and mimicked the cool irreverence of the film's causeless rebels, and the slick poise of Japanese modernity, coupled with a selective appropriation of American styles, enhanced by nifty cinematography, continues to fascinate audiences today," said Cayer.

TOOLS FOR AN ALTERNATIVE SOCIO-HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In 1959 and 1960, when these directors made their debuts, mass protests against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo) were raging. Oshima himself responded quickly to these events, making *Night and Fog in Japan* as a satire on the disunity of the radical left.

By the mid 1960s, Japan's postwar economic miracle was

at its height: 1964 witnessed the opening of the *shinkansen*, the Tokyo Olympics, and Japan's admission to the OECD. But there was a dark underside to this success story, and the New Wave directors were its chroniclers. Shohei Imamura's films can be read as an alternative social history, focusing on those excluded from the official postwar narrative of peace, reconstruction and economic growth.

In films like *Death by Hanging*, Oshima denounced the power of the Japanese state and highlighted the oppression of the ethnic Korean minority in Japan. The history of the New Wave shows both the rewards and penalties of innovation and independence.

In the late 1960s, its directors were able to work on subject matter and in styles of their own choosing, producing some of the most individual and imaginative films in the history of Japanese cinema. The unforgettable B-movie visionary Seijun Suzuki has had considerable influence, in elaborating a boundlessly inventive pop-art aesthetic of frenzied and voluptuous excess: in *Tokyo Drifter* and *Branded to Kill* (a film that Jim Jarmusch reverts to and cites explicitly), disaffected yakuza gangsters sprawl through surreal and seedy streets and deal with a unanimously corrupt society.

Such stylistic exuberance and narrative chaos, despite the films' commercial success, were deemed incomprehensible by studio heads who ultimately revoked Suzuki's contract. Within a few years, funding became scarce for workers outside the studio system.

INDEPENDENT CINEMA & MAJOR STUDIOS: THE CONFLICT

Once the home of serious auteur directors, the major studios became hostile environments for filmmakers unwilling to produce mass-audience fare. Rather than nurture new talent or develop new ideas, they recycled tried-and-true formulas whose appeal was simply steady returns.

In the 1990s, while the mainstream was growing ever more sclerotic, new blood was injected into the industry with the arrival of young filmmakers, with diverse sensibilities: Shunji Iwai's arthouse production, Hideo Nakata's and Kiyoshi Kurosawa's hugely influential and oft-imitated and remade approach

to horror (*Ringu* and *Pulse* a.k.a. *Kairo*, respectively), Takashi Miike's hyper-productive shock cinema, to name a few.

All seem desirous to shape a more contemporary and personal cinema within the bounds of the industry. The international sway of Hollywood packaged glamour has its share on Japanese screens, but it seems Japanese audiences remain faithful to domestic entertainment.

Against all odds, it is through independent film and a local theatrical scene that the most exciting, aesthetically groundbreaking film genres were coming to the fore. For example, Sogo Ishii is credited as a precursor to the underground cyberpunk movement that emerged in the 1980s, of which Shinya Tsukamoto is another definitive example.

Ever since the generational break within Japanese cinema in the 1960s, the desire to reject the status quo has grown considerably.

A stable manifestation of this is the perpetual return to and innumerable derivations of what Oshima had launched with his *Cruel Story of Youth*: the alienation and solitude of young people, determined to live on the margins of society.

This underground rebellion against rigid social constructs, portrayed in so many films of the 60s, up to today (in the more low-key and nonchalant work of contemporary filmmakers such as Yuya Ishii or Satoshi Miike, for example) mirrors exactly the romantic desires of young film artists forging their visions outside of the stale studio system.

The flourishing of independent filmmakers coming out of Japan, producing low-budget films on their own and with their friends, is largely invisible to a worldwide audience, despite sporadic festival show-casings.

However, a growing number of small theatre venues have started screening independent Japanese films in the 1990s, including several mini-theatre operators like Tokyo's Theater Shinjuku and Eurospace, who started investing in film production. Not to forget, the rise of new-media venues, like cable and satellite channels, have also created more demand for indie films, all this building towards an increasingly tasteful and attentive audience.



Playback by Sho Miyake

PHOTO COURTESY POP MONTREAL



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FOR THE WIN

Soccer Rookie Kaitlyn Fournier Brings Goal Scorer's Tough to Concordia Stadium

BY SHAUN MICHAUD
@SHAUN_MIC

She whizzes by two defenders like hot metal through butter. The Martlets double-team her hoping to break her down. She explodes on the pitch; her wiry legs running, crisscrossing between enemies, dribbling a ball seemingly magnetized to her cleats.

"She's so fast it's hard to photograph her," says a photographer assigned to cover the game.

Number 10, Kaitlyn Fournier, is the Concordia Stingers women's soccer team's new centre midfielder. Coach Sanchez recruited her in the hopes of adding some scoring power to his squad. Last year, the Stingers found the back of the net a dismal 10 times in 14 league games.

The 22-year-old rookie was quick to put her talent on display at Concordia Stadium, scoring two goals at a recent exhibition game in a 3-1 victory against Acadia University on Aug. 29. She added another against the University of New Brunswick on Sept. 1.

"I'm an attacking midfielder," she says.

Despite the laconic replies, the Pincoirt native isn't timid when asked about her abilities or her team's potential.

"I want to get as many goals as I can as a midfielder and take the team as far as we could go," she says. "Playoffs, nationals would be good."

This seems a tall order for a program that hasn't reached the postseason in close to a decade. Still, the terse but candid Fournier doesn't waver a minute about her team's chances to win it all this year.

"Why not?" she says.

At the Stingers home opener, though, the McGill Martlets pour cold water on these aspirations. That night, the fresh-faced soccer team—10 players graduated last year—loses 4-0 to their crosstown rivals.

Still, even in defeat, Fournier shows flashes of her human highlight reel potential. Almost every time she touches the ball, her assigned defenders double back in a huff to catch up with the speedy midfielder. And when she streaks too close to the box, the Martlets are forced to become a phalanx to stamp out the threat. The unimpressed rookie dazzles, dribbling through the defense before the wall closes in on her, ending her run.

She gets too few scoring chances though. By the end of the game, her shoulders slouch; the Martlets have blocked her every attempt at finding space. She finally gets a break and pushes the ball down the wing.

Even running on empty—she can only kick a lob that reaches the goalkeeper from a bad angle—she never gives up.

"When I played with them in the winter, we got good results against two good teams, McGill and Sherbrooke," she says. "So, we know that we can compete with them. I think that if we work hard we'll go far."

Fournier joined the team for their indoor season earlier this year. This is her second semester at Concordia; she is enrolled in Arts and Science courses. Before this, she played two years for John Abbott College.

"Both my years, we made it to provincial semifinals, which I think is better than what they had done in the past," she says.

It seems the natural goal scorer encounters success everywhere she goes.

During the summer, she suits up for the Laval Comets of the USL W-League, the second tier of women's soccer in North America. The competition is fierce with players hailing from all over the world. The team finished first in the Northeastern Conference and reached the National Semifinals in the playoffs.

Since the W-League is an open league, Fournier maintained her eligibility to play at the collegiate level. She played 10 out of this season's 12 games, scoring once.

Stingers coach Jorge Sanchez was so proud he tweeted about her first game playing with the professionals.

Fournier started playing when she was five years old. She says she knew she wanted to play soccer from the start.

"I always was like a little tomboy so I was the rough one on the field," she says. "Not the one picking daisies. So at about eight years old, I was known as being one of the better ones."

Coach Sanchez recognized her skills early—first scouting her when she was 16—and is a major reason why she joined the Bees this year. The midfielder also likes the technical advantage of playing at Loyola.

"We have a training facility with a good coach there," Fournier says. "Practicing every day. The group of girls is good also."

However, those aren't the only reasons she chose Concordia. She smiles as she mentions her teammates.

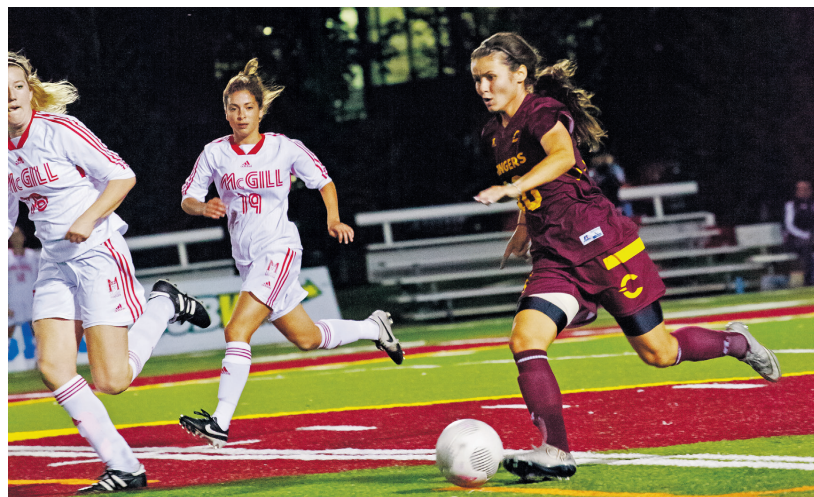
"Well, I have a lot of friends on the team," she says. "I don't have a favourite teammate. I like them all. They're good."

Home opener aside, if the past is portent of the future, the Stingers' looks bright with number 10. If only she can touch the ball more often.



The women's soccer team has a new up and coming star. Kaitlyn Fournier is going to be Stingers main threat down the middle of the pitch as an attacking midfielder.

PHOTOS SHAUN MICHAUD



"I want to get as many goals as I can as a midfielder and take the team as far as we could go."

— Kaitlyn Fournier



The Montreal Stars opened their training camp at the Complexe Sportif Bell with two former Concordia Stingers, Alyssa Sherrard and Audrey Morand, recently drafted and looking to find their spot on the opening night roster. **PHOTOS ELYSIA-MARIE CAMPBELL**

TO BEE A STAR

Former Stinger Women's Hockey Players Begin New Careers As Members of the Montreal Stars

BY VINCE MORELLO
@VINNYMORELLZ

Feb. 28 was the last day of the Concordia Stingers women's hockey league campaign. The team lost their playoff game to the Université de Montréal Carabins and exited the post-season festivities. For some of those Stingers, it was the curtain call for their hockey careers as they ventured off into new passions, but not for Audrey Morand and Alyssa Sherrard.

Nearly seven months removed from their final Canadian Interuniversity Sport game, Morand and Sherrard were waiting for their names to be selected in the annual Canadian Women's Hockey League draft.

"I was kind of nervous in knowing when I was going to be selected, so when the day came I was really excited," Sherrard said.

Sherrard did have to wait, but the Montreal Stars eventually selected her in the fifth round. The Stars also took her teammate Morand two rounds later.

The team had contacted both players about playing for them prior to the draft, and the two former Stingers couldn't be happier about where they ended up.

"Playing for the Montreal Stars was really a big objective of mine," said Morand.

"When I moved to Montreal, the Stars were my next step," Sherrard said. "[Getting drafted] was the debut of my next step in my career and I've made it to the highest level that I could play."

Morand and Sherrard were excited about the prospect of being drafted to the same team and continuing their hockey careers as teammates.

"I'm familiar with her playing and we've

played pretty much every year at Concordia together, she was my line mate," Sherrard said. "It's just exciting to continue this chapter with her."

"It's fun to go through this together, it's less intimidating to have someone you know better than others when you start," Morand added.



At the Complexe Sportif Bell, Morand and Sherrard are among the new blood joining current players through fitness tests and drills, all in the hopes of finding a spot on the team ahead of their upcoming season.

With a new league comes a new challenge, and there are notable differences for players making the jump from university hockey to the CWHL.

"The level of maturity, physical maturity, the experience of all the players [are all different]," said Stars head coach Dany Brunet when asked about the major differences between university and professional leagues.

It's a change that Morand and Sherrard have noticed as well.

"I think the women are stronger, bigger, and have more experience, so it'll make a difference," Morand said.

Some of their teammates are highly experienced veterans and winners on the biggest stage. Forward Marie-Philip Poulin spent time with the Stars before winning two Olympic gold medals for Team Canada's women's hockey team in 2010 and 2014. She had spent the last four years playing hockey at Boston University before being re-drafted by the Stars.

Olympians Caroline Ouellette and Julie

Chu are also on the team, and both have Concordia ties. Ouellette won four gold medals for Team Canada and is about to enter her seventh season with the Stars. Ouellette was once both a player and an assistant coach for the Stingers women's hockey team.

Chu has three Olympic silver medals representing the American team and in addition to playing with the Stars, she will take over as co-head coach of the Stingers women's hockey team after head coach Les Lawton took a medical leave of absence.

"We're playing in the CWHL with the top players of the world," Sherrard said. "When I was younger, I never thought in a million years [that] I'd be playing with them."

"Caroline and Julie always had high intensity every time they were on the ice,

whether it was practice, a game or a demonstration," said Morand.

"[Chu] is not only a good player but a good coach," continued Sherrard. "She knows how to pinpoint the things you need to work on and tell you exactly what you need to know to make you a better player."

Looking forward to the rest of training camp, the former Stingers turned Stars are excited about the upcoming season, and making an impact on the CWHL.

"I'm just looking forward to playing with these girls and finding my spot on the team," Sherrard said. "I'm excited to explore what other type of talents that I have and to put it all on the ice."

"It's a nice continuity to my career after university," Morand added.





With the Stingers sporting a new look, Director of Recreation and Athletics Patrick Boivin spoke about the economics of the project. **PHOTO MICHELLE PUCCI**

THIS IS YOUR REBRANDING, THIS IS HOW MUCH IT COSTS

Cost of Stingers Recreation and Athletics Much-Hyped Rebranding Revealed to be \$160,000

BY VINCE MORELLO
@VINNYMORELLZ

In the midst of austerity crisis surrounding the Quebec education system, Concordia and its athletic department opted to invest in the university's dormant sports culture. The institution embarked on a thorough rebranding in an effort to create a sense of unity between the athletes, fans and students.

Concordia's Recreation and Athletics department faced some scrutiny, but the rebranding was revealed before its budget was: the total cost of the rebrand was \$160,000, according to Chris Mota, the university's spokesperson.

In an effort to be cost-efficient, Patrick Boivin, Director of Recreation and Athletics, spoke about how most costs were covered by alumni donations and divided into two fiscal years: 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

"Roughly 70 per cent of the money that was spent was all pulled from donor funds," Boivin said.

Despite disclosing the total budget, specifics of the rebrand are still off-limits.

"If we start divulging, then we start letting out specific numbers with regards to Cossette," said Boivin, referring to the marketing firm Concordia teamed up with for the project. "What you're doing then is, you're going against a privileged relationship that you have with them."

"No different with regards to Russell [Athletics] either," he added. Russell Athletics is responsible for the new Stingers jerseys.

Boivin revealed that most of the \$160,000 spent on the project went to the production of the rebranding's five pillars: "Passion, Roots, Adversity, Road, and Hive." Each "pillar" has promotional videos and posters, designed and created by Concordia alum and photographer John Londono, and involved students and student-athletes.

It has been noted that new "away" uniforms would only come next year for cost efficiency. It was also mentioned that

uniforms weren't a significant dent in the budget, because the Stingers routinely change them every year.

As it is already known, the rebrand was done in order to garner support not only from fans, but alumni as well. The school hopes to use the newfound buzz around the Stingers to get donors interested in sports at Concordia. Boivin admits the school has not properly cultivated their alumni, which has hurt the school in some ways.

"The sports teams will only progress if that donor support can progress, either from an infrastructure perspective or a development perspective," Boivin said. "Most typically, if not all the time, that extra step that they need, that delta, will come from donor support."

Boivin, the athletics department and Concordia have more ideas in mind post-rebrand, but they are staying mum on what they are.

"There's a couple of projects that I can't discuss for obvious reasons that are in the pipeline," Boivin said.

BOX SCORES

Tuesday, Sept. 8

Women's Rugby—Concordia 57, Carleton 3

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Baseball—Concordia 8, Montreal 3

Thursday, Sept. 10

Men's Hockey—Concordia 0, McGill 4

Friday, Sept. 11

Men's Soccer—Concordia 4, McGill 0
Women's Soccer—Concordia 0, McGill 4

Saturday, Sept. 12

Football—Concordia 38, Bishop's 18

Sunday, Sept. 13

Baseball—Concordia, Carleton - POSTPONED
Baseball—Concordia, Carleton - POSTPONED
Women's Rugby—Concordia 80, Bishop's 7
Men's Rugby—Concordia 20, Bishop's 13
Women's Soccer—Concordia 2, UQTR 1
Men's Soccer—Concordia 0, UQTR 2

UPCOMING GAMES

Tuesday, Sept. 15

7:30 p.m. Baseball vs. UdeM Carabins (Trudeau Park)

Wednesday, Sept. 16

7:00 p.m. Women's Rugby at McGill Martlets

Friday, Sept. 18

6:30 p.m. Women's Soccer at UdeM Carabins
7:00 p.m. Men's Hockey at UQTR Patriotes
7:00 p.m. Women's Hockey at Nipissing Lakers
7:00 p.m. Men's Rugby vs. UdeM Carabins (Concordia Stadium)
8:30 p.m. Men's Soccer at UdeM Carabins

Saturday, Sept. 19

2:00 p.m. Football vs. McGill Redmen (Concordia Stadium)
7:20 p.m. Women's Hockey at Laurentian Voyageurs

Saturday, Sept. 20

9:50 a.m. Women's Hockey at Laurentian Voyageurs
12:00 p.m. Baseball vs. Carleton Ravens (Trudeau Park)
1:00 p.m. Women's Soccer vs. Bishop's Gaiters (Concordia Stadium)
3:00 p.m. Baseball vs. Carleton Ravens (Trudeau Park)

BEHIND THE SCENES OF ASFA'S LAUNCH WEEK

From the Perspective of a Launch Leader

BY DAVID EASEY

This year, the Arts and Science Federation of Associations (ASFA) rebranded their Frosh activities by adopting the title "Launch Week" and aimed to create a safer, more inclusive space for those entering university.

I naively applied to be a Launch leader, not really knowing what the job entailed, but thought it would be a great opportunity to meet new people and have some fun. What resulted was a chaotic week filled with many highs and lows, which felt more like a high school experience than a university orientation.

As a part of the rebranding and a push to create a safer environment, all Launch leaders (as well as "Launchees") had to undergo sensitivity training—a bold initiative aimed at educating and preventing future cases of sexual assault and harassment. As soon as I sat down for the three-hour seminar with my fellow leaders, I sensed trouble.

As the lecture began, it became apparent that many of my fellow leaders had never been educated on sexual ethics and gender issues. Some also began to voice their discontent with the training and refused to take it seriously, with one male individual failing to understand that it's not okay to approach women on the street and compliment them. When it came to a written exercise to discuss the meaning of "Launch Week," one group wrote that it was all about Jack Daniels and condoms—an ironic and vapid answer that clearly goes against the new rebranding strategy.

Following this day of training, all of the leaders and coordinators met again and gave a quick introduction to everyone, stating our names, some basic information and our preferred pronouns. This was supposed to be a simple exercise to include those who use alternative pronouns, but was sadly perceived as a joke by many people in the room.

As we went around the room one by one, many laughed and joked as they stated their pronouns, making the space uncomfortable and unsafe for those who identify differently than the traditional gender binary. At this moment, it was clear that many of my fellow leaders embodied the definition of machismo and "bro culture"—something that plagued ASFA even before the Mei-Ling controversy—and had little empathy and consideration for those who might be different.

Fast forward to the opening barbeque of "Launch Week" at the Loyola campus: I arrived at 9:30 a.m. to find hoards of "Launchees" waiting in a snaking line around the premises. Nothing had been set up yet, and they were forced to wait an hour for proceedings to get started. Teams had to be prepared.

One would think that this would've been an organized affair with teams being pre-planned and coordinated, but no—chaos ensued and leaders went into the crowd and chose whomever they wanted on their team. This was the most cringe-worthy and uncomfortable moment by far, like high school gym class all over again, as leaders selected individuals based on their

physicality. At one point I looked over to see one male leader surrounded by at least ten female Launchees he had chosen. Clearly this also went against the ideas of inclusion that were lamented in our trainings. I must mention though that the coordinators tried their best to stop this entire "gym class" scenario as soon as they heard what was going on, but almost all the teams were formed at this point, and it was too late to turn back.

"When it came to a written exercise to discuss the meaning of 'Launch Week,' one group wrote that it was all about Jack Daniels and condoms—an ironic and vapid answer that clearly goes against the new rebranding strategy."



After this chaotic morning, all 400 Launch Week participants underwent two hours of sensitivity training in classrooms at Loyola. Many of the Launchees were upset at having to sit in a classroom talking about consent and sexual ethics on a bright sunny day, especially when there was free beer outside.

But this was an important conversation to bring up, especially during a week when peer pressure and binge drinking can cause a number of regrets. Most of the Launchees understood the concepts that were being explained, but I could tell by the looks on their faces that they just wanted to get drunk.

The afternoon continued with a lot of beer, sunburns and socializing. It was clear that this year's budget for "Launch Week" was at an all-time minimum, considering we had to cut camping tarps into long strips and lathered them with baby oil as a form of "slip and slide" (a very economical version indeed).

During the interview process, we were told Launch Week was trying to move away from the typical binge-drinking culture that accompanies typical "Frosh" activities, although there would be alcohol present at most events. This turned out to be a bit of a problem when one of my "Launchees" informed me that she couldn't drink because of the medication she was on.

Now, not every event had drinking involved, but there was always alcohol present (such as people drinking from water bottles, coffee cups, etc.), and I could tell that she felt left out because she was sober. After the barbeque, she only came to one other event, and she dished out \$150 like everyone else to participate for the whole week. The environment was not very accommodating for those who wished to remain sober.

The next few days would be long and somewhat torturous, with each event being poorly organized and filled with confusion. Some examples of this included a breakfast on Mont Royal, where the organizers showed up late to serve a measly bagel breakfast to an eager mob of hung-over students, and a scavenger hunt that was essentially an anarchic and drunken pub-crawl (with a pit stop at Boustan). Every night there was an after party, and there were always rumors swirling of participants and leaders hooking up with each other, which was strictly prohibited this year.

Apart from the lack of organization, I witnessed a lot of positive moments during "Launch Week" that are worth mentioning. The fact that 400 students underwent sensitivity training is unprecedented and progressive, and other universities should take note.

On a personal level, I also met a lot of really interesting and diverse Concordia students from different fields of study whom I never would have encountered on a regular basis. I also saw many new Concordia students forging bonds with each other, which will certainly help ease their transition into university. This was the main goal of Launch Week, and it was definitely achieved.

GRAPHIC LAURA LALONDE

BY MICHAEL WROBEL
@MICHAEL_WROBEL

Most undergraduate students probably don't consider affordable childcare to be a top issue in this federal election campaign. Faced with a challenging labour market, out-of-control housing prices and unstable employment, we are, on average, taking longer to finish school, enter into established relationships and have children of our own.

But perhaps we should be paying attention to what the federal parties have to say about childcare. After all, if we decide to start a family and leave Quebec and its universal childcare program behind for a job in Toronto, we can expect a single year of unsubsidized childcare for an infant to cost twice as much as the tuition for all three years of a Quebec bachelor's degree.

It's clear the Conservative Party's plan isn't working.

In 2005, the then-Liberal government came close to establishing a national childcare program, but the Conservatives scrapped those plans after coming to power the following year. They chose instead to launch the Universal Child Care Benefit, which provides parents of kids aged five and under with \$160 per child per month. That barely makes a dent in childcare costs; for a single infant spot, Canadian families pay average monthly fees of \$1,152 in Ontario, \$1,047 in British Columbia and \$825 in Nova Scotia.

Two national parties—the New Democratic Party and the Green Party—have unequivocally declared their support for a national universal childcare program.

The Greens argue that the bilateral agreements reached in 2005 between the Liberal government and the provinces, which have jurisdiction over the delivery of childcare, should be used as a starting point and revamped.

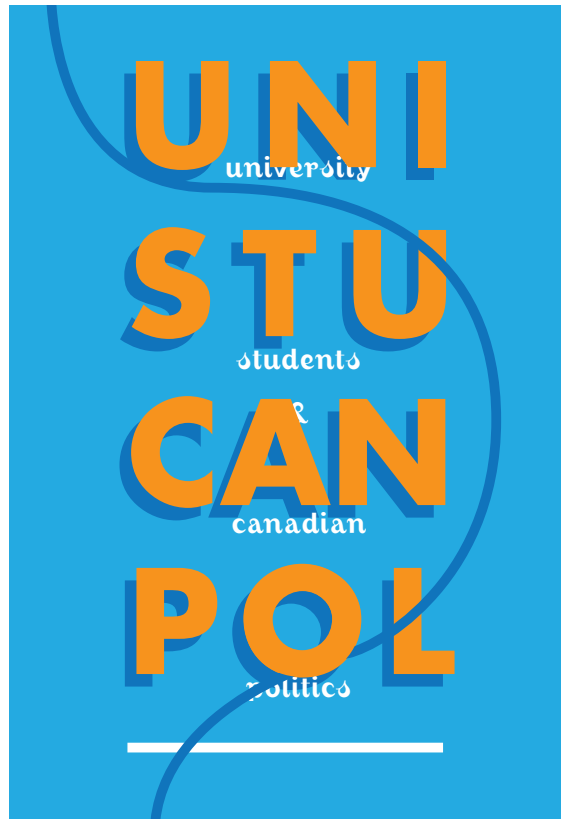
The NDP, meanwhile, has taken Quebec's childcare program as a model, pledging to create one million childcare spaces across the country that would cost parents \$15 per day or less. Funding, they say, will be phased in over eight years.

The Liberals have criticized the NDP's plan.

"[NDP leader Tom] Mulcair's solution will benefit families who are making an awful lot of money and quite frankly don't need subsidized childcare spaces," Trudeau told CBC Radio's *The House* in May.

It's not entirely clear from this statement why Trudeau

“Canada needs to invest directly in childcare by providing both operating funds to daycares and capital funds for opening new childcare spaces.”



On Oct. 19, Canadians Need to Vote for a Universal Childcare Program

opposes the NDP's plan. Is it because the federal Liberals feel wealthy families should be charged more than \$15 per day for a subsidized childcare spot? Or is it that they think wealthy families don't need subsidized care so priority should go to low-income or middle-class families in filling these spots? There's a big difference.

Putting daycare fees on a sliding scale based on family income and charging the wealthiest more than \$15 per day merits consideration. This year, Quebec's Liberal government decided to abandon the fixed \$7-a-day rate previously charged to parents and instead start differentiating, or "modulating," daycare fees in relation to household income. Families making less than \$50,000 a year will continue to pay just \$7.30 per day, but above that, fees will rise as income rises, reaching a maximum daily cost of \$20 when household income hits \$160,000 annually.

The rationale is that a wealthier family can afford to pay more and although the government should subsidize daycare for all families, subsidies should be greater for low-income families than wealthy ones. Though fees vary, the system

remains, in essence, a universal one, since all families have access to public daycare.

A sliding fee scale thus does not, in and of itself, mean the end of a program's universality. However, it does represent an ideological shift away from thinking of these programs as a collective public good toward seeing them as principally benefiting the individual. We've made a conscious decision as a society that things like healthcare and a basic education are best delivered collectively with almost no fee at the point of service. Healthier citizens and better-educated children benefit the whole of society, not just the recipients of those public services. It's not at all unreasonable to suggest that daycare be treated the same way and fees become very low, if not non-existent.

As for excluding wealthier families from subsidized daycares and targeting childcare spaces specifically at low-income households, that would be a big mistake. It may seem counterintuitive, but targeted programs tend not to work as well as universal ones.

That's because "universal services tend to bring together children from different backgrounds rather than reinforcing concentrations of disadvantage," notes a 2008 report by UNICEF. What's more, services specifically for the poor tend to end up being poor and underfunded services, whereas universally available services "usually command broader and more sustainable public support and engender greater public concern for quality." Basically, when everyone has something at stake in the system, there's more public

pressure on the government to get it right.

The Liberals say they are in favour of a national childcare program, but even though the election campaign has now entered its second month, they haven't yet explained what type of system they'd create. The fact that the Liberals have made their proposal for a "Canada Child Benefit" the cornerstone of their family policy while mostly staying mum about direct public investment in daycare centres raises questions about the Liberals' commitment to creating a universal childcare system.

The Liberal Party's promised Canada Child Benefit would replace the Conservatives' Universal Child Care Benefit and several other benefits. The amount that a family receives would be calculated based on household income; starting with a base of \$6,400 annually for each child aged five or under and \$5,400 per child aged six to 17, the payment would decline as a family's income rises. The Liberals say a two-kid family making \$90,000 annually can expect to receive \$490 per month.

Such money would go a sizable way to reducing the financial burden of childcare on low- and middle-income families. Still, handing out larger cheques to help parents pay for childcare in the private market can't be the whole solution. There's a huge gap between the number of young children in households with working parents and the number of regulated childcare spaces. Canada needs to invest directly in childcare by providing both operating funds to daycares and capital funds for opening new childcare spaces.

Many journalists have questioned how we can pay for universal childcare, but evidence from Quebec suggests that childcare may actually pay for itself. After Quebec introduced its childcare program in 1997, women's participation in the workforce increased by 70,000 by 2008, not only promoting greater gender equality but also generating new tax revenue.

It also decreased dependency on other social-assistance programs, resulting in cost savings for the government. One study by economist Pierre Fortin suggests that, in 2008, every \$100 spent on childcare by the Quebec government generated a return of \$104 for itself and a windfall of \$43 for the federal government.

Universal childcare has been on the national agenda since women's rights groups began advocating for such a program in the 1960s. It's shameful that we've made little progress in the past 50 years. Of 14 comparable countries in the OECD, Canada ranks last in spending on early childhood education as a percentage of GDP. We need a federal government that has a clearly articulated plan to create such a system.



GRAPHIC MADELINE GENDREAU

EDITORIAL

No Question, a TA is a TA

TRAC's record is slowly straightening out. Led by a new executive team—featuring some familiar faces—the Teaching and Research Assistants of Concordia held its first general assembly of the year on Wednesday. In addition, negotiations between the union and the university over new pay grades are set to resume this month, following reports in the summer that Concordia admin initially offered them more than 43 per cent in cuts to some positions.

However, the union has filed a formal grievance with the school about differing wage scales for Engineering and Computer Science TAs compared to TAs in other faculties. The grievance was outright rejected. Arbitration begins in March 2016.

Why are there different wage scales for the four faculties and the School of Graduate Studies?

Currently, lab demonstrators in the Engineering and Computer Science fac-

ulty receive \$18.53 per hour compared to the other three faculties and the School of Graduate Studies that see their TAs collect \$24.68 per hour. Have former executives and Concordia admin previously decided that Engineering and Computer Science TAs have easier jobs than, say, an Arts and Science TA? *The Link* has a difficult time believing that.

The job descriptions found on the previous collective agreement, between a Grade 1 lab demonstrator in the Arts and Science, Fine Arts, and John Molson School of Business versus a "Grade 1" lab demonstrator in Engineering and Computer Science, are practically identical. In fact, it states that the latter have to "supervise and grade laboratory exams," while the former three do not have to.

This differentiation between faculties, especially in regard to having one specific faculty valued differently than the others, seems unprecedented in recent collective agreements

signed by other major Canadian universities.

The University of British Columbia, York University, University of Toronto and McGill University don't differentiate pay by faculty, according to the collective agreements signed with their equivalent unions representing TAs. In other words, TAs of the same level at these universities are paid the same, regardless of which course they're assisting with.

In contrast, Concordia's Grade 2 Doctoral and Master's TAs in "other faculties" are paid more than a Laboratory Demonstrator of any level from Engineering and Computer Science. So a PhD lab demonstrator working in the engineering faculty is paid approximately 80 cents less than a Master's TA from another faculty.

TRAC executives say many TAs in the engineering faculty are international students, and by the time this grievance will end, many of them will return home from classes and will not receive their payments retroactively.

To be honest, *The Link* is dumbfounded as

to why Engineering and Computer Science TAs have a different pay scale than other faculties. Unfortunately, it's almost impossible to argue against the university's logic because it is unknown why the past collective agreements were signed with these differences. Was it a strategic compromise former TRAC bargaining officers made to appease the school? At this point, no one really knows.

Partial blame has to be laid on the past two TRAC executive teams that oversaw the bargaining of the last two collective agreements. A union is supposed to represent all its members equally and fairly. Why did they allow a binding document to be signed, which now gives the university precedent in future negotiations?

Engineering and Computer Science TAs deserve equal pay like any other TA. Regrettably, it may be an uphill battle for the current executive to secure, because of the lack of unification of their predecessors.

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