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Threats Won't Intimidate Our Muslim Students

MSA Concordia's Islamic Awareness Week Goes on Despite Terror Threat

CLAIRE LOEWEN
@CLAIRELWN

Instead of being intimidated by threats toward his community, Bara Abuhamed of Concordia's Muslim Students Association said its members were motivated to keep working towards their main goal—to dispel misconceptions of what Islam is.

A letter threatening to set off a bomb in two of Concordia's downtown buildings was sent to MSA, and to various media outlets on Wednesday. The letter, sent by a group called the Council of Conservative Citizens of Canada, who was later referred to as C4, warned that if the university did not halt all Muslim activities at once, a bomb would be set off sometime between Wednesday and Friday of last week.

The threat coincided with the group's Islamic Awareness Week, an event with the main purpose of teaching about Islam. Abuhamed, the association's VP External, was on the Sir George Williams campus when they received the threats.

"It was shocking," Abuhamed said. "It's something we're not used to seeing on Concordia grounds."

MSA president Hamaad Nami told his members to remain calm and let the university take care of things. An evacuation and police sweep of the EV, GM and Hall buildings followed at around 11:30 a.m., about two hours after the threats were received.

On Wednesday evening at 6 p.m., the school reopened and classes resumed despite the letter threatening to attack the school until Friday. A Friday meeting for the Concordia Council on Student Life scheduled to be on the downtown campus was moved to Loyola, "considering some people may feel nervous about the statements in the media regarding the rest of the week."

On an individual basis, many professors were understanding and flexible with students who had concerns about the threat even after the SPVM investigation, according to Abuhamed.

Since then, Hisham Saadi, a PhD at Concordia, has been arrested and charged with inciting fear of terrorism for having sent the



Bara Abuhamed helped Concordia community members about Islam during MSA's Islam Awareness Week.

COURTESY MSA

letter. The MSA called for the SPVM to investigate these events as a hate crime.

Islamic Awareness Week events continued despite the letter, which included detailed descriptions of Muslim prayers that take place on the Hall building's seventh floor.

"Even though they had a lot of errors in what they said, and a lot of exaggeration, [...] it's either a student or someone who shows up to Concordia," Abuhamed said.

The MSA went on with Islamic Awareness Week because its members knew the support from the Concordia community was greater than the hatred.

Posters explaining different facets of Islam were set up in the EV building, including information about women and the environment from an Islamic perspective. The association served samosas, cotton candy, and Krispy Kreme donuts. MSA also set up chairs in case people walking by wanted to ask its members any questions.

"We have a simple conversation just to build those connections and build those bonds," Abuhamed said.

The letter intended to terrorize and incite fear had the opposite effect on the MSA—its members felt a sense of motivation, according to Abuhamed. The misinterpretations in the

letter were a perfect example of exactly what the MSA was trying to stop.

After Wednesday, Abuhamed said many more people showed up to Islamic Awareness Week in the EV building. The interactions were deeper, he said, and people wanted to know not only about the threats, but about Islam itself.

"For such misconceptions to happen, for one to be able to tell between what's the truth and what's not the truth [about Islam], they need to have facts, and that was the whole purpose of Islamic Awareness Week," Abuhamed said.

Conversation and communication are crucial to MSA. Abuhamed said the threat wouldn't have happened had the problems been brought to the association first.

"No one came up to us to tell us, 'We're uncomfortable with you,'" he said. "Because if they did, we would have given them the time to discuss those concerns and we would have come up with a halfway point where everyone is satisfied."

In December, a similar Islamophobic instance took place at Dawson College during their Muslim Students Association's Islamic Awareness Day. After a *Journal de Montreal* article was published featuring a photo of MSA Dawson member Samar Eldabaa wearing a hijab, she was subject to online harassment.

The college also received about a dozen online complaints—their main issue was that Dawson's MSA offered students the chance to try on the hijab. A CBC article showed the cyber crimes could have been connected to far-right group La Meute, who organized in front of Montreal City Hall on Saturday, in protest of a motion condemning islamophobia.

"La Meute did not instruct its members to make complaints to [Dawson] College," Sylvain Malkan, spokesperson for La Meute wrote in a message in December. "It is possible that some members of La Meute did it by personal initiative and that is their right."

Malkan added that the group wants Muslim associations to "present to us all side of Islam" when awareness events take place. "As they do not, La Meute will take care of it."

MSA Dawson's President Nevin Hoque said that similarly to Concordia's MSA, more people have been approaching his association to ask questions since these events took place. "Because of these Islamophobic events, it's

gaining more awareness about our religion and we're able to voice out the real story about Islam," he said.

Since the harassment, Dawson's association has been continuing to organize events—like women's week, which begins on Wednesday, March 8. The MSA has been collaborating with other clubs, and have their own Islamic Awareness Week coming up.

Hoque said the best way to end these racist and Islamophobic instances is to be open and collaborate with other people.

"The reason why people hate one another is because they don't have enough knowledge, they haven't had an interaction with that person," he said, adding that seeking knowledge is an important way to combat stereotypes.

Both MSAs have the goal of building bridges with other communities.

Homa Hoodfar, an anthropologist at Concordia, and expert on Muslim women's status in the West, said the problem is, in the context of globalization, that we tend to focus on differences rather than commonalities, in an interview in response to the events at Dawson.

In this multicultural society, she added, it's important that to realize that some things are harmless to the public, like a woman wearing a hijab.

"You might not like the sight of women wearing the veil or the Sikh wearing their turban, [or] the sight of people wearing 25 earrings," Hoodfar said. "But tough luck, it's not interfering with my life and it's not interfering with the way they want to live."

She added that these disagreements do not mean we shouldn't respect each others' choices.

"I think the problem with the far right is that they dwell on differences because of their political stance, because they want everyone to be like them. If they didn't have immigrants, they would go after [others]" she said.

Despite these events—and because of them—the MSA Concordia will continue building connections and bonds to keep all people united, Abuhamed said.

"We're here to stop [this] from happening again, because the more people know the truth, the less the chance is that people have such misconceptions that will lead to such violence."



Bara Abuhamed is a member of Concordia's MSA.

NIKOLAS LITZENBERGER

An Election Without a Vacancy

The Teaching and Research Assistant

Union Faces Inner Confusion, Again

by Kelsey Litwin @kelseylitwin

When a special General Assembly was called to elect a new president and vice-president last week, Teaching and Research Assistants at Concordia union members began questioning why it was necessary.

The union already had a president and VP, and there are only three months left until the end of the current executive's mandate. Nonetheless, Nader Jafari Nodoushan and Meysam Salari were stepping down from their positions ahead of schedule. Fifty-odd TAs, RAs, and invigilators had gathered in Concordia's Hall building on a Monday evening to choose new ones.

That evening only heard Jafari Nodoushan say that he was "eligible to stay in [his] position until [his] mandate terminates," which is on May 31, 2017. He continued to explain that resigning from his post was a benevolent decision on his part, and that it's what's best for the union.

This is when the rumours started that Jafari Nodoushan was resigning because he graduated last semester. But that wasn't the case. Rather, it was just an example of murky bylaws and a murkier Collective Agreement.

TRAC has bylaws which clearly outline who is and who is not eligible to hold a seat on the union's executive committee. Their bylaw details that, except for invigilators, a member must be in good academic standing, according to Concordia University regulations, and that they must be able to remain a member of the union—so be a TA, RA or invigilator—for one full year following their election. If they are finishing their program, they must prove that they have been accepted to Concordia for the following semester.

The term "member" itself is less clear. Particularly because it includes a clause that says, "they must always be enrolled at the university or on a temporary absence authorized by the regulations of the university."

Gounash Pirniya, TRAC's Labour Relation and Grievance Officer, explained that to be a member of the union, one does not need to be enrolled at Concordia University. If they are elected onto a committee, such as the executive or bargaining committee, she said, their membership is guaranteed until the end of their mandate, even if they do not have a TA, RA or invigilator contract for the upcoming semester. Such is the case for Jafari Nodoushan, she explained.

It's defined in TRAC's collective agreement

as union leave. Essentially, the university dedicates a specified number of paid hours to be allocated to working on union business. It says individuals are not required to be teaching assistants to also be members of the union. Jafari Nodoushan has not been a teaching assistant since 2013.

Jafari Nodoushan acknowledged that there had been questions surrounding his resignation prior to the special GA. When Amit Chandra, a Research Assistant completing his PhD at Concordia, asked during the opening comment period why they were all gathered, the president said it wasn't the first time he had been asked this.

His answer, ultimately, did not explain much. Jafari Nodoushan responded that there were some issues at play in the background, without disclosing what they were.

Instead, he said that by resigning earlier than the end of his mandate, the incoming president would be better prepared to face the challenges ahead. The early election would allow himself and Meysam Salari, the outgoing VP, extra time to training their successors, Jafari Nodoushan explained.

"We are not here to fight each other. We are here to understand what is in favour of the union's functionality, and what is in favour of the members," he said while explaining his early resignation during a point of order at the meeting.

The idea, Jafari Nodoushan said, was that when the rest of the newly-elected executives are brought in later in the year, the two people in charge would already have a clear idea of how the committee should function. This would effectively minimize the learning curve. A full transition, meaning one in which the current executive team were to give way to a completely new team all at once, would "shut down" the union, Jafari Nodoushan said.

A Battle Ahead

An executive team who is ready to be on the frontlines is needed, as they're about to head into another round of Collective Agreement negotiations.

In December, Jafari Nodoushan and Concordia President Alan Shepard sat side-by-side in a boardroom, both smiling for the camera as their pens rested over the pages of TRAC's latest CA for TAs—a document outlining the university and the union's rela-

KEEPING TRAC OF TIME

Fall 2013:

Nader Jafari Nodoushan became a teaching assistant at Concordia University.

April 2014:

Jafari Nodoushan was elected as Teaching and Research Assistant at Concordia's president. He no longer needs to take on TA or RA duties to be a member of the union.

June 1, 2014:

Jafari Nodoushan's mandate as president began.

January 2015:

TRAC put under the trusteeship of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, their parent organization during an investigation into internal fighting.

March 2015:

Jafari Nodoushan was re-elected as TRAC's president after the union voted to reject PSAC's recommendation to bar him from running for executive committee for one year.

May 2015:

Negotiations between TRAC and Concordia for a new Collective Agreement for TAs begin.

November 2015:

Negotiations hit a standstill when TRAC walks out.

August 2015:

CA negotiations begin again.

May 31, 2016:

Jafari Nodoushan's second mandate as president ended, as his third is set to begin the next day.

August 2016:

CA negotiations finished, considered to be a success by TRAC.

November 2016:

Jafari Nodoushan graduates from Concordia University with a Masters in Engineering.

December 2016:

TRAC and Concordia sign a retroactive collective agreement. All TAs, regardless of faculty or level of education, are now being paid \$24.93 an hour.

February 2017:

TRAC elects Alexandre St-Onge-Perron as their interim president. His mandate will end on May 31, 2016.



Alexandre St-Onge-Perron, the new TRAC President, posed with his predecessor, Nader Jafari Nodoushan, after a general assembly on Feb. 26.

Photo Kelsey Litwin @kelseylitwin

tionship, and pay rates of employees.

This signing was considered an accomplishment by TRAC. In a previous interview with *The Link* about a month after the photo was taken, Jafari Nodoushan and Pirniya repeatedly referred to it as their success.

This new agreement simplified the pay system for TAs of all levels of education, across all faculties, ensuring that all TAs would receive the same pay for the same work, Pirniya previously explained.

For example, under the old system, an undergraduate TA was being paid \$14.47 per hour while a PhD student was being paid \$20.01 per hour for doing the same job. Now, both are paid \$24.93 an hour.

But, as *The Link* has previously reported, this agreement is retroactive and is only effective for a year.

Similarly, TRAC has recently begun meeting with the university to settle on a new collective agreement for invigilators. In yellow flyers scattered around the downtown campus, TRAC claims that the university has yet to respond to their proposal for increased wages.

Uncertain Terms

Electing a president and VP now who will continue on through the next year—so for 15 months, as opposed to the regular 12—would help prepare them for these negotiations, TRAC's executives explained.

It's something that had been done before, Pirniya said. She recalled that when she and Jafari Nodoushan were elected to TRAC's executive committee for a second time. It was in March 2015, and their mandates for that year lasted past the end of the by-law-defined term of May 31, extending into the next aca-

demical year. Rather, it ended on May 31, 2016.

When Chandra, among others, questioned the length of the terms for the two new executive committee members at the special GA, it became apparent that a repeat of that elections wouldn't be possible. "It is unclear," Chandra said at the meeting. "If it is a by-election, the tenure of the incumbent president and vice-president should be ending by the end of the year."

"Back then it wasn't against the bylaws, but now it is against the bylaws," questioned Pirniya. When the executive's intentions—and the way in which their intentions violated the by-laws—became evident, Vincent-Carl Leriche, a Public Service Alliance of Canada representative sent to chair the meeting, made it clear it wouldn't be possible to elect someone for that long. PSAC is TRAC's parent organization, and supervises their proceedings. Leriche suggested that in order to proceed with the election as presented, the by-laws would need to be amended.

But, as another procedural misstep, those amendments would have had to have been presented to TRAC's members prior to the meeting—which they were not.

TRAC's executive team was backed into a corner. They would only be able to elect a president and VP for the next three months, which was exactly what the current executives were trying to avoid.

The other election Pirniya was referring to was, in fact, a different situation all together. When she and her team were re-elected in March 2015, it was because they had previously lost control of the union due to internal fighting, she explained.

As a result, PSAC took over the local

until an investigation could be conducted. The results of that investigation, which found that Jafari Nodoushan had knowingly and willingly violated bylaws, was later rejected by all levels of the union.

VP Missing in Action

About two years later, Jafari Nodoushan is giving way to Alexandre St-Onge-Perron, an undergraduate student in the School of Community and Public Affairs who was the only candidate for president. St-Onge-Perron has been a member of TRAC for about a year, he said, beginning with a contract as an RA. He was a member of the bargaining committee, helping advise the executives and those negotiating the successful collective agreement. While a student at Cégep Édouard-Monpetit, he explained, he helped negotiate a collective agreement for the school's student union.

"I think I have a good understanding," he said of the negotiating process. "I'm not perfect, I still have to learn, that's for sure."

As of now, he will be learning with an empty seat beside him, as no VP was elected at the special GA. Mohammad Al-Sharqawi and Natalie Greenberg, the two candidates, faced a tie of 23-23. By the time the votes were counted—almost four hours following the start of the meeting—the group in attendance had dwindled down to a mere handful, not enough to meet quorum of 30 TAs and RAs, and three invigilators.

Leriche, after some deliberation, decided that another special GA would need to be called to fill the vacancy as quickly as possible, to be in accordance with the bylaws.

His thoughts: "It's been a very long night."

The Complex World of Concordia Art

The Link's Top Picks From Art Matters 2017

by Ocean DeRouchie @oshieposhie, Shannon Carranco, and Taliesin Herb

Last Saturday, curators and artists premiered the first of Art Matters' eleven exhibits, kicking off the Concordia undergraduate arts festival that continues until March 31. The festival has been running since 2000.

Vernissages and shows will be taking place over the next few weeks, giving everyone a chance to check out the student-curated shows in their own time. For this year's edition of the festival viewers will have the unique opportunity to experience performances, video and audio installations, sculptural pieces, photo series and, of course, artwork through traditional mediums like painting and drawing.

Ontology

An immersive-meditative experience of photography, sculptural installations, a video work, and more culminate to form *Ontology*, an exhibit curated by Xan Shian. Among the many works featured in the exhibit is a dreamy room dubbed "The Garden" from multimedia artist VJ Aya Avalon. It includes pastel-coloured sculptures juxtaposed with dark, emotional photographs from Maxime Saint-Jean, with the purpose of exploring the notion of anxiety.

The inspiration behind the show comes from Shian's personal exploration of anxiety through portraiture, but because everyone experiences it differently, she wanted to extend the theme to other artists.

"I thought it would be really interesting to see what the broad spectrum of the anxious experience can incorporate through other artists' ways of addressing it," she said.

"The Garden," a sensory environmental experience, includes a guided "meditation" recording that was created with relaxation in mind. In a room separate from the rest of the exhibit, visitors can enter a small space decorated with pseudo-plant streamers made of paper and other trippy elements that they can touch and feel while listening to the recording.

"It's going to be a little bit of an immersive experience where people can crawl in [...] and just decompress," explained Shian.

Beyond "The Garden," visitors will be able to appreciate the soft, dreamy colour story of Hea Kim's multi-sculpture installation, which features an arrangement of visually pleasing shelving, flowers and a rabbit composed of various materials.

"It's a really interesting play on something that is quite aesthetically beautiful and calming and sweet and lovely, but also this sort of veneer for what isn't talked about or what isn't necessarily apparent on the surface," said Shian of the piece.

Anxiety—"this sort of cataclysmic word"—glues these pieces together, explained Shian, and draws the lines between the many facets of the human experience presented in *Ontology*. It's surely one not to miss, with its vernissage on March 11 at 9 p.m. at Espace Projet.

Ce qu'il en reste (A Good Ending to the Exercise)

Curator Roxane Halary mixes performance and visual art for *Ce qu'il en reste*, a special exhibit that looks at the theme of "documentation." Unlike static art shows that stay the same from day one till the end, *Ce qu'il en reste* takes a bold step in offering its viewers a one-time performance piece that will only be presented during the March 14 vernissage at Eastern Bloc, starting at 6 p.m.

What follows are the "remnants" of said performance, according to Halary. The other performances, which will be filmed and recorded, are what will be presented during the rest of the 10-day exhibit. For instance, recorded sounds of performers using weight

and movement against wood sculptures will be played.

"People from theatre, dance or visual arts will have a very different process in terms of making things happen and creating that conversation between those different works," she said.

Halary focuses on the ephemeral aspect of performance art and uses video, sculpture, sound recording and art installations to document the movement pieces.

Islands

Themes of separation, fragmentation and geography are at the crux of the *Islands* exhibit, by means of poetry, photographs, drawings and projected images.

Its curators, Jordan Beaulieu and Zeke Best Rothfels—who are from Newfoundland and Toronto, respectively—explore the physical and abstract subject of *Islands* in their show, and subsequently open the floor for other artists to interpret these notions.

"We were thinking of *Islands* as physical places, as geography, as [being] about Montreal specifically," Beaulieu said of their show, which will be on display at Espace Cercle Carré starting March 12. "An island is also a synonym of isolation, about a person or a culture or a community as an island."

Ten projects and 12 artists are showcased in *Islands*. Maia Céleste Donnelly shares photographs from her travels hiking through Iceland and Newfoundland. Ali Hendra presents a series of poems she wrote while on an exchange in Iceland. Stéphanie Pineau showcases a double projection of two different landscapes that she recorded while she was on the bank on the edge of a river, looking across to an island.

"They kind of communicate fragmentation and separation," explained Beaulieu, adding that the works explore the subject in their own unique way. For some, geography is considered through imagery and sound, while others compare people to *Islands*. Overall, the curators are hoping that viewers will reflect on their own connection to the island they inhabit—Montreal.

"It's great when something can feel like it was made for you in a way, and creates that sense of seeing something and recognizing it," said Beaulieu.

Wire Forest

Your body will no longer be physical when the cityscape and nature have bled into each other beyond recognition.

- Permeation sequences
- Sub/hyper intuit
- Δ End of cycle

Wire Forest is the first opportunity within Art Matters to experience electroacoustics as an integral part of an exhibit. Opened last Saturday, *Wire Forest* presents a glimpse of a "world, [where] technology has replaced the organic," and the Earth is remade from its foundations, according to its Art Matters description.

The installation appears at first to be waves of discrete geo-political/socio-economic visions. But after 15 minutes, it also becomes an immersive, high inescapable segue into post-human emotions.

Sound art pieces interweave with each other and loop without end, arguing amongst them.

The format lends itself to realizing that every experience cycles you back to a contradictory, original position from the stance you hold at the end.

All that is auditory strives to make it heard, while the plastic and graphic artworks hover in silence along the fringes of Studio XX.

Body Works

If bowls made of human hair are more your thing, then *Body Works*, showing at Gham & Café until March 18, is probably for you.

"I realized that I was a lot more attracted to work that featured the body that wasn't necessarily portraiture," explained the show's curator, Alyse Tunnell. Using the body as a canvas, or a medium, rather than the subject of a work is at the centre of this exhibit in which artists reclaim the body and steer away from idealistic representations of it.

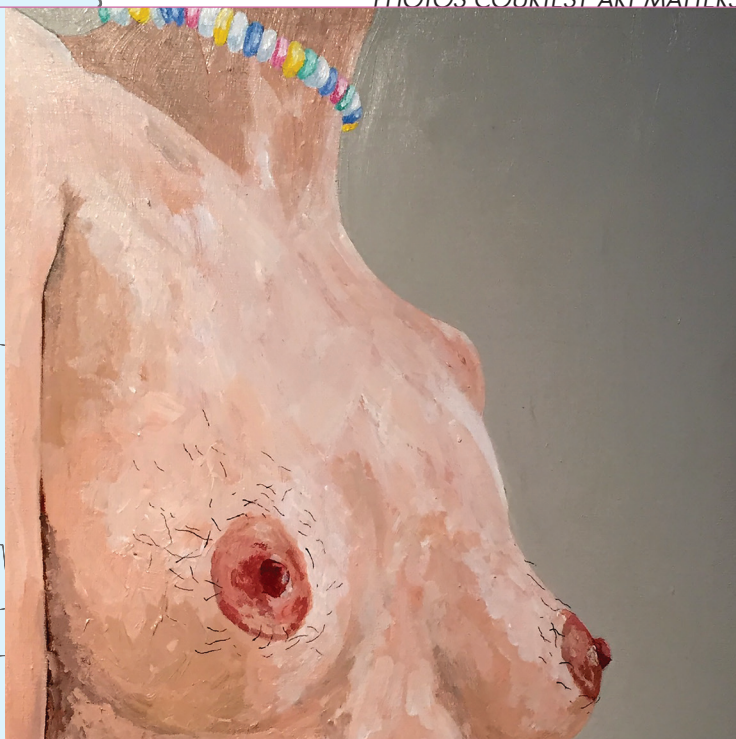
"Each of the works takes a different critical perspective of looking at the body and how we relate to our bodies," said Tunnell, an art history student.

The aforementioned hair bowls, from Dina Georgaros, extends the concept further as she uses hair from both the mother and sister. In fact, they were actually the inspiration for the rest of the show's pieces.

A video piece from Clare Grehan, in which she sews into her hands, is another example of how the feature artists interpreted the show's theme.

So while the sight of hair bowls or the image of someone sewing into their own hands might make some people uncomfortable, "I think that's part of what I'm getting at," said the curator. "This discomfort with bodies doing things they're not supposed to [...] it's supposed to bring an awareness that we have this physicality."

PHOTOS COURTESY ART MATTERS



One of Lydia Mccourt's paintings featured in the Body Works show.



Indecisive Valleys is a sculptural installation by Hea Kim for the Ontology exhibition.



One of Maia Céleste Donnelly's photographs featured in the Islands exhibition.

1. Body Works

Vernissage:

March 9, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Spans:

March 4 – March 18

Place:

Gham & Dafe, 3425 Ste. Catherine St.

2. Wire Forest

Vernissage:

March 10, 7p.m. – 10 p.m.

Spans:

March 4 to March 18

Place:

Studio XX, 4001 Berri St. #201

3. Ontology

Vernissage:

March 11, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Spans:

March 12 – March 21

Place:

Espace Projet, 353 Villeray St.

4. Ce qu'il en reste (A good ending to the exercise)

Vernissage:

March 14, 6 p.m. – 11 p.m.

Spans:

March 14 to March 24

Place:

Eastern Bloc, 240 Clark St.

5. Islands

Finissage:

March 20, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Spans:

March 12 – March 21

Place:

Espace Cercle Carré, 36 Queen St.

6. Untitled

Finissage:

March 21, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Discussion:

March 13, 5 p.m.

Spans:

March 13 to March 24

Place:

VAV Gallery, 1395 René Lévesque Blvd.

7. The View From Here

Spans:

March 27, 6 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Place:

Espace Cercle Carré, 36 Queen St.

THE

LINK CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

March 7 - 14

<div>TU7</div> <div><p>Panel Discussion - The Right to Die Organized by students from the School of Community and Public Affairs, this panel will focus on doctor-assisted euthanasia and the notion of “sound mind” decision-making among other things involved. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 6 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Workshop - Rhyme Writing w/ Nazim: Rap Battle Against Consumerism The first installment of a two-part workshop. A discussion about how collective and individual decisions have the biggest social and environmental impact. Then rap and rhyme what you learned. Concordia Hall Building H-564 • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 6:30 p.m. // FREE</p></div>	<div>WE8</div> <div><p>Talk and Exchange - Seed and Gardening Knowledge Got good advice on gardening and plant-care? Wanna share that knowledge and maybe even gain some? Well, damn! Bring some seeds, gardening supplies, and knowledge that you’re will to swap and show up to this! The Yellow Door Hive • 3625 Aylmer St. • 4:30 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Workshop - Alteration/Repair at the Concordia Clothing Swap Common Thread and Concordia’s Anti-Consumerism Week are pairing up to put together a clothing alteration and upcycling workshop! There’ll be sewing machines and tools to help you tailor your clothes. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 2 p.m. // FREE</p></div>	<div>TH9</div> <div><p>Panel Discussion - The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine: A Never Ending Resistance Dr. Nahla Abdo will be giving a talk on the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their land, their right of return and the obstacles that they face. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 7 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Panel Discussion - The Ethics of Immigration Is it our ethical obligation to welcome people from around the world into our country? Assistant teacher from Georgetown University, Professor Peter Jaworski, will present his views on the ethics of immigration. McGill University • 845 Sherbrooke St. W. • 7 p.m. // FREE</p></div>	<div>FR10</div> <div><p>Workshop - Dumpster Diving Beginning with a talk about today’s food system, followed by a discussion about what you should and shouldn’t do during dumpster dives. Then it’ll be time to put what you’ve learned into practice! Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 4 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Workshop - How to Do Feature Writing w/ Adam Kovac It’s not easy to keep your readers captivated in a journalistic piece of 2,000 words or more. Luckily, the former features and current affairs editor of <i>The Link</i>, Adam Kovac will be teaching us the art of this craft. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 5 p.m. // FREE</p></div>
<div>SA11</div> <div><p>Art Exhibition - Art Matters: <i>Ontology</i> A whole lineup of artists have brought their own works spanning over several different mediums to this exhibition. All focused on the deconstruction of the universal experience of anxiety and the many forms it takes. Espace Projet • 353 Villeray St. • 6 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Anniversary - Happy 15th to Kafein Our beloved cafe and bar is celebrating 15 years of service! Go on over and celebrate with ‘em. Kafein café-bar • 1429A Bishop St. • 7 p.m. // FREE</p></div>	<div>SU12</div> <div><p>Poetry Reading - Burgoyne, MacEachern, Morrissy, and Robinsong Four talented poets at the beginning of their artistic careers will be presenting their work all in one place for the first time! Drawn and Quarterly Library • 211 Bernard St. W. • 7 p.m. // FREE</p><p>Concert - All Them Witches and Irata Blue Skies Turn Black, Evenko, and Greenland Productions have come together to bring you these two bands onstage in our city! Check ‘em out! Bar Le Ritz PDB • 179 Jean Talon St. W. • 8 p.m. // \$15 - \$17.50 in advance, \$18 at the door</p></div>	<div>MO13</div> <div><p>Screening - <i>Ambulance</i> The premiere of <i>Ambulance</i>, a film directed by Palestinian filmmaker Mohamed Jabaly. With raw footage of the wars ravaging the city of Gaza territory. A Q&A with the director himself will follow. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 7 p.m. // PWYC</p><p>Screening - <i>Streets of Fire</i> (1984) A lawless city where rock and roll music holds all the power and anything goes, <i>Streets of Fire</i> is one action-packed flick. Check it out with friends and have a time. Cinema 1999 • 179 Jean Talon St. W. • 8 p.m. // \$10</p></div>	<div>TU14</div> <div><p>Panel Discussion - The Changing Landscape of Language in Montreal Is the French language really being snuffed out by the snowballing juggernaut that is the English language? Unsurprisingly, no. The year marks the 40th anniversary of notorious legislative action Bill 101, a law that has made French the dominant language in Quebec. This panel will discuss this matter and then some. Concordia Hall Building • 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. • 6 p.m. // FREE</p></div>

If you have an event you want featured, email: calendar@thelinknewspaper.ca

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

-The Gender and Sexuality Issue-

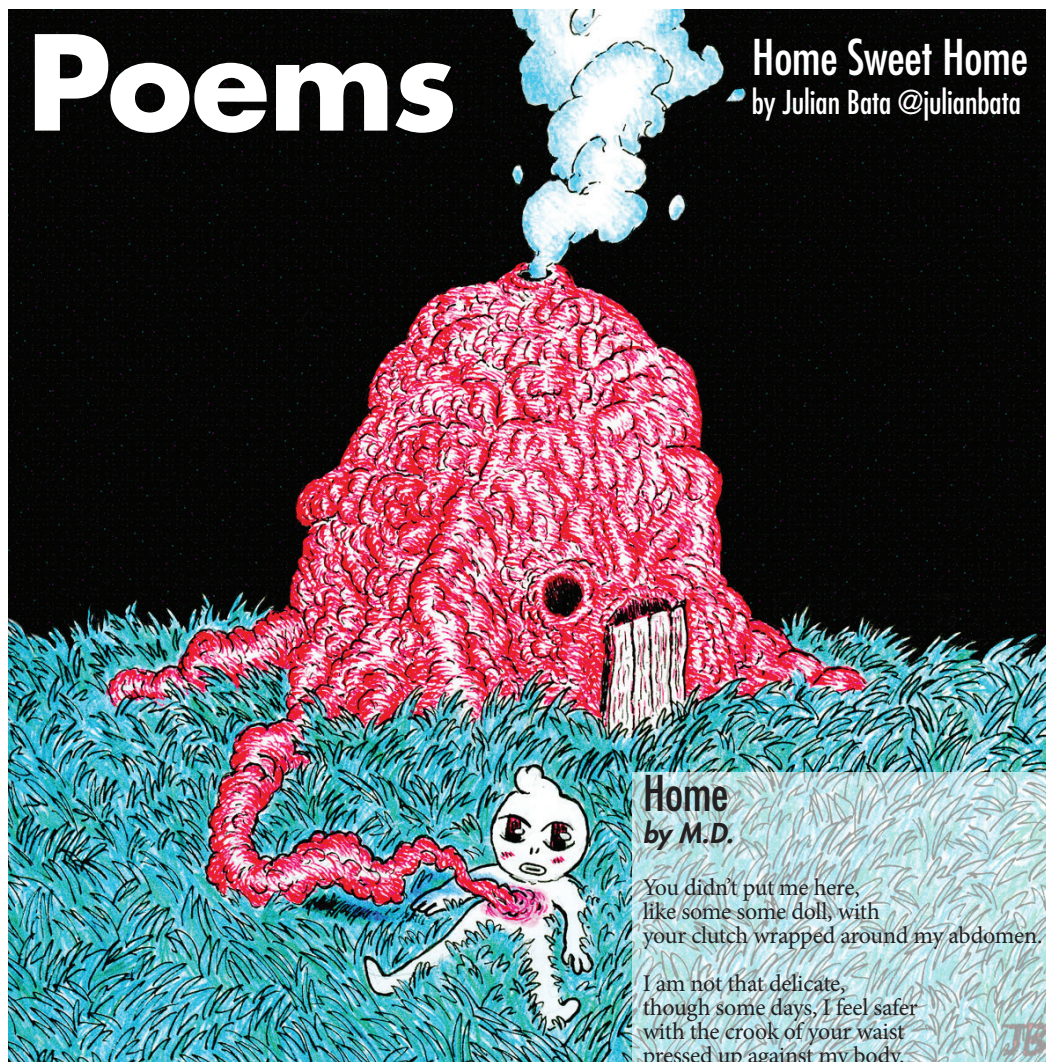
Do you have a personal experience to share about gender or sexuality that could benefit others?

Interested in delving into research and interviews with key players about a topics you’re passionate about?

Do you witness underreported injustice at every turn?

Email our coordinators at: assistantnews@thelinknewspaper.ca, fringe@thelinknewspaper.ca, fringeonline@thelinknewspaper.ca

Submit articles, poems, art, graphics, etc. by March 24



Voices by S.G.

It began with a sharp
Intake of breath.
A space in a sentence where
A word should have been.
The word, forgotten instantly,
Was replaced with a space
In which thoughts grew,
Festered and multiplied.
The space became silence.
And in that silence,
The next word was contested.
How can a second word
Follow an absent first?
Thus within moments
The sentence,
So bold to begin with,
Found itself tripping over its own
Cluttered existence.
The sentence then disappeared entirely.
And in that silence,
The thoughts grew taller, wider
Until cancerous quietness
Pervaded the room like a
Ghost on our tongues.
Then, as with all good ghost stories,
The story was left untold -
Words hanging on the edge of our tongues;
Saliva that we instantly retracted
And swallowed in shame.
The words began to be forgotten.
And in that silence,
We soon forgot the meaning of our
Loudness.
Why we had spoken up before,
When silence became easier and
Far more practical.
Politeness was possible
When nobody dared to speak.
Utterance caused clutter,
Clutter caused error,
And error caused trouble.
In our silence we were perfect.
The silence became our sound.
And in that silence,
We forgot how to be.
We forgot how to live with conviction,
We forgot how to die with meaning.
We forgot how to laugh,
Cry, sing and talk.
But mostly,
We forgot that we had voices at all.

Home Sweet Home by Julian Bata @julianbata

Home by M.D.

You didn't put me here,
like some some doll, with
your clutch wrapped around my abdomen.

I am not that delicate,
though some days, I feel safer
with the crook of your waist
pressed up against my body.

But you didn't put me here.

"I wish you could see yourself
from my eyes," I used to tell you.

(I've never shown you my favourite poem.)

If only you could see through them now,
when something else entirely
seems to infiltrate the green of them.

If only you knew what I see in you, doll.

No, you didn't put me here.
I carved this place for myself, a pocket of darkness in my ribcage.
But I saw you;
insecurity seeping from your pores
like the coffee you pour in the mornings.

You push, and then pull them into you
grasping at them as though they could fill
the void that maybe you thought I once could.

I walked to this place,
on my own terms; slowly but surely.
Every step taking me further away from myself.

It's happening
again----

..
..
...

We were supposed to be a home,
for us—for her.
I was structure, with my reliably late nights
and a certainty that the sun will greet us in the morning.

You were the roof that kept us dry; the bed we sleep in;
the chest we laid our heads on,
whispering across the canyon of you.

She was, is still, the sky.
The stars that I've dreamt about, a sunrise so far from us.

I wanted to be a home for us.
I wanted a home for us.
I still do.

You—
walk through the hallways with mucky boots,
drop glasses of me and spill my insides out on the floor.

(As if somehow,
I haven't put in the work.)

My mother left her dream home.
Walked away from the chipped shingles and the fireplace,
The beach in our front yard and the forest behind the Oak.
Perhaps now, I know
what it's like to put your soul into a place—into a home,
thinking "This will always be ours."

The Girl With the Golden Crown by E.B.

She walks as the wind blows, as the heart beats,
and as the thrushes throw among the skies;
as the lovers meet, and as the rivers flow.
She ebbs and flows, to and fro,
from the stars where she was born
to the fleeting sounds of an earth below.

She trains her ear to a heart breaking,
to the great remaking,
as a ravenous disaster that rates
ten point oh on the scales
where the earthquakes go,
comes to take the old and replace it
with the stakes of a new world.

The earthly buildings
will crack
and hurt
and lovely people may crash and burn,
but you might discern,
that when the sun rises,
it does rise the brighter with the bread that we've earned.

And so after breaking our backs
with the burdens of blood on our hands,
we'll spill our own and then we will stand—
staring at the chaos that we've created,
and not quite diverted.

She knows that too hastily
we have flirted with the ideas of dying,
a little too early, and a little too young.

And a little too brashly,
and without enough sun,
to stain our hearts with the warmth
that would tide us through the winter,
so she lets us continue
to watch our blood spill into naked pitchers,
filling up and spilling over,
one at time until we're rotting into the damns,
of one another.

And I'll be damned if we stood to do nothing.
For remember,
she watches waiting for our blood to spill;
and she'll spill out her laughter.
Tears will hit the floor of the universe
when she moves from above
because her heart lacks enough
love to see what we're worth.
We strive, yet the harder we try,
the quicker we fade;
workers as thin as the wisps
that try to whisk them away.

We work the fields night and day
just to feel the calluses grow and
the heat burn on our skulls;
the steel of our own scythes slice
into our skin all the deeper,
and we look up as she keeps us here.

I will try to touch the sun someday,
I say—I'll try to ride the clouds.
Even if I just get burnt and rained on,
or fall from your depths to my death below—
I will find the stepping-stone
to the stars in your eyes.
Because I would rather die
trying to be significant than
die a worker in your fields,
I would rather die
trying to be someone
than a gentle wisp of how that girl feels.

by Harrison-Milo Rahajason @harrimilo

It's difficult to think that one weekend can define an entire season.

As the last seed in the Final Four of the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec, Concordia's women's basketball team had to face the top-seeded Laval Rouge et Or, who had only lost twice in the regular season.

The Stingers pulled off the improbable upset, with a score of 69-65, on Thursday night at the Centre Pierre Charbonneau.

Present in the audience that evening was the men's team, who had finished second in their league with an 11-5 regular season record.

They cheered on their colleagues as they awaited their Friday night tilt with the UQAM Citadins—a team they had beaten three times out of four during the season—and were motivated by the chance to get some revenge, as that very same UQAM team abruptly ended their campaign a year before.

"We're definitely motivated by it," said Concordia guard Ken Beaulieu following their final regular season game on Feb. 25. "We knew we played badly in that game [last year], so we want to show that it was a fluke."

On Thursday night, it certainly looked like the men's team had every chance to beat the inferior UQAM team, and join the women's team in competing for a RSEQ title on Saturday.

As the weekend concluded, all the optimism from that Thursday night had evaporated just as fast as it was established.

The road to the Final Four was anything but conventional for both teams.

Women's Team

The 2015-2016 season ended in unspectacular fashion for the Stingers women's team.

They registered a win-loss record of seven and nine before the top-ranked McGill Martlets beat them in the semi-finals of the RSEQ Final Four.

Still, there was optimism for what that team might be able to do the following season. Tenicha Gittens, who took over for longtime head coach John Dore in the summer of 2015, entered the 2016-2017 season with an experienced roster and a full year of recruiting new contributors under her belt.

"I think Concordia definitely has big chances for next year," said former Stingers guard Marie-Eve Martin after that season ending loss from a year ago. "This was a transition year at Concordia, but there are definitely great things coming up."

The Stingers brought back key players Richelle Gregoire, Marilyse Roy-Viau and Tamara Pinard-Devos for their fifth and final years of eligibility. They also added rookie Caroline Task and first year Stinger Jazlin Barker, who quickly became entrenched as the starters at shooting guard and point guard, respectively.

The early returns, however, weren't positive.

They beat Bishop's in their first RSEQ game on Nov. 10, but wouldn't win another game until Jan. 7, when they beat UQAM 69-55. A four-game losing streak was sandwiched between their two wins, and they quickly found themselves in last place.

On Jan. 19, a week after their first win in a month, they beat McGill. This was their second consecutive win, and their first win against the Martlets since February 2014.

The win against the Martlets was a turning point for the Stingers. Prior to that game, they

averaged 58.9 points per game and made 33 per cent of their shots. Those numbers got better over the remainder of the season, as they would go on to average nearly 63 points per game and improved their shooting to 36 per cent.

Though they could muster just four wins in those last nine games, they did manage to beat McGill for a second time, and lose two very close games to Laval.

"They aren't who they were last year, but they're still a good team," said Gittens of the Martlets after beating them on Feb. 16. "They gave us trouble all year last year, so we're happy with this outcome."

They ended their regular season as the fourth-ranked team in the RSEQ, which meant they'd be facing Laval.

"We know we match up well [with Laval]," said Gregoire. "We just have to make sure we don't let them shoot three's."

"I'm excited to have one more shot at them," she said, laughing.

Roy-Viau and Gregoire were named to the RSEQ's All-Star Team after the regular season, while Task was named the league's Rookie of the Year, but they had their sights on bigger prizes.

"We all have the same goal, and that's to win a championship," said Roy-Viau.

The stage was set for the team. They got the matchup they were looking for, and they got the chance to get the last laugh against a Laval team that beat them four times during the season.

The women's team made it to the RSEQ finals, vanquished only by McGill on Saturday.

Richelle Gregoire goes in for a layup against McGill.

Photos Brian Lapuz @brianlapuz

A TURBULE

Scenes From the Sting



NT SEASON

ers Year in Basketball



Men's Team

The Stingers came into the 2016-2017 season with a lot to prove.

With their surprising, season-ending Final Four loss to UQAM still fresh in their memories, the coaching staff knew they had a number of issues to address on their team. According to head coach Rastko Popovic, first on their offseason agenda was to add depth to their roster.

"We knew we had to deal with our lack of depth in the offseason," said Popovic during a preseason practice in September. "We brought in some young guys that are going to play, as well as some veterans, that will be able to contribute over the course of the long season."

The men's squad brought in four new contributors, including Nicholas Noble, who was quickly able to earn a spot in the starting lineup at shooting guard.

They also were lucky enough to replace graduating point guard Inti Salinas with Ricardo Monge, who had served as a backup to Salinas since the 2014-2015 season.

Veteran starters Ken Beaulieu, Schneiders Suffard and Michael Fosu joined Monge and Noble in the starting lineup.

Big Loss

In five RSEQ games before the winter break, the Stingers won three and lost two. That record put them in second place, a good start for a team looking to break in some new players.

Their early season, though, was defined by a crushing 96-56 loss to McGill on Nov. 24. They stood behind the Redmen in the standings, and the loss made it clear that the gap between those two top teams was larger than anyone thought.

New Year

When the team got back from an invitational tournament in Florida over the holidays, they had to quickly prepare for a meeting with UQAM on Jan. 7.

They lost that game by a single point, dropping their record to 3-3, reminding them of their heartbreaking loss that ended their 2015-2016 season.

"We lost a few close games this year, and they were because of us," said Beaulieu after their win against Laval on Feb. 25. "We should have won those games."

The news got worse for the Stingers. They were set to play the Redmen again, who were red-hot at that point after having won four of their last six games, including three-straight entering that Jan. 19 meeting with Concordia.

With encouragement from the women's team—who had just beaten McGill earlier that evening—and from the men's hockey team, who sat behind the Redmen bench to distract them during timeouts, the Stingers scratched out a gutsy 69-65 win.

"It was a nice way to bounce back after a couple bad performances," said head coach Popovic after that game.

The men's team fell to UQAM in the RSEQ semi-final on Friday.

Photo Alexander Perez @alex02perez

Like the women's team, their win against McGill on Jan. 19 got their season moving in the right direction.

They won seven out of their last nine regular season games, including a five-game winning streak spanning from Jan. 26 to Feb. 11.

The Stingers fortunes turned once they started playing better, with a more consistent offence. Before that McGill game, they'd been shooting 35 per cent from the field. After that game, their shooting improved to 38 per cent.

"We asked our guys to be more aggressive and find more efficient shots," said Popovic after their win against Laval on Feb. 25.

They closed out their season with the second seed in the RSEQ. They were healthy, and had hit their stride at the right time.

Everything was set up perfectly for them; they'd face UQAM in the semi-finals of the Final Four, and, should they advance, would likely meet McGill in the finals.

The Stingers were buzzing.

"I think we took [being in the Final Four] for granted last year," said Concordia centre Fosu. "I think we'll be more ready this time."

Final Four

After the women's team shocked the Quebec basketball world by eliminating top-seeded Laval on Thursday night, the men's team was ready for their anticipated clash with UQAM.

With the strong close to the regular season, the Stingers came up empty when it mattered most.

UQAM outrebounded Concordia 46-36, and made 10 three-pointers in the game, en route to an 81-71 win. The Stingers stood no chance, and what looked like a promising weekend just a few hours earlier suddenly didn't look so good.

"Anything can happen in the playoffs," said Fosu, after the loss. "I believe we took them lightly. We beat them three times in the regular season, but as we saw last year, that doesn't mean much."

Still, there was the women's final the next day, and they had a chance to salvage the weekend for Concordia.

They faced McGill, a team they'd beaten two out of four times during the season. The fifth meeting, however, was a dominant win for the Martlets. They outrebounded the Stingers 51-30, and cruised to a 63-51 win. It was their sixth consecutive RSEQ title.

"I'm proud because of what this team was able to accomplish this year," said Roy-Viau, holding back tears. "I'm just disappointed because I'll never have a chance to play at this level, with these girls again."

"I don't think I did everything I could to help my team win."

The Stingers went home disappointed and empty-handed for the second year in a row. For both teams, this season may have been more painful than last because of their realistic chances at advancing to the national tournament.

For both teams, an entire season was defined by one weekend.

"I think this was a good first year for me," said Concordia guard Nicholas Noble.

"Just a shitty way to end it."

Leaving the Swarm

Concordia's Men's Hockey Captain Olivier Hinse Reflects on Five Years as a Stinger

SAFIA AHMAD
@SAFS_ONTHEGO

It was a chilly Thursday afternoon. Olivier Hinse sat on the bench in front of his locker room stall. He wasn't drenched in sweat nor was he dressed in his Stingers uniform. His skates were perched on the shelf above him—his maroon and gold jersey rested on a hangar behind him.

Four days earlier, on Feb. 26, the Concordia Stingers were eliminated by the Queen's Golden Gaels in the second round of the U Sports playoffs. It marked the end of the team's incredible season, where they finished second in the Ontario University Athletics East Division with 40 points and made it past the first round of the playoffs for the first time since 2001.

It also meant the end of the road for Hinse. "Five years of my life have been [spent] in this locker room," he said reflectively. "Being here was always a pleasure and I was always looking forward to practices, games and everything."

At the end of the 2015-2016 season, the captain planned to pack his bags after completing his undergraduate degree in child studies.

Turns out, Hinse had changed his mind. At the Stingers banquet last April, he announced that he was going to take advantage of his fifth and final year of eligibility as. The news took everyone by surprise—well, maybe not everyone.

"I knew he would come back for another year," said head coach Marc-Andre Element,

with a slight smile of satisfaction on his face. "He was the face of the program for the last five years and he did amazing at school, at hockey and his life."

Indeed, his efforts on and off the ice have been recognized through the Dr. Randy Gregg award in 2015 for exhibiting "outstanding achievement in hockey, academics and community involvement" as well as the Guy Lafleur award of excellence "in athletics and academics and shown exceptional leadership."

In 133 games, Hinse has scored 72 goals and 67 assists for a total of 139 points—over a point per game. He has impressed at almost every turn, so much so that teammate Philippe Hudon is convinced that Hinse is the "perfect human."

"He comes to the rink, he's happy whether it's at six a.m. or seven at night," said Hudon, the assistant captain. "He always finds a reason to smile. He has left such a big footprint."

That footprint got a lot bigger this year—and Hinse predicted it. In a previous interview last year, the Stingers centre voiced his excitement about the upcoming 2016-2017. He felt that the team had a lot of promise with new recruits coming in the off-season.

Hinse was right. Veteran leaders like himself, Hudon, Raphael Lafontaine and Dominic Beauchemin, as well as rookies like goaltender Philippe Cadorette, defensemen Mathieu Desautels and Alexandre Gosselin formed an impressive core. Adding forwards Anthony De Luca and Philippe Sanche—to name a few of

the 14 new recruits—the Stingers' second place finish in the OUA east division was remarkable, considering the team finished in the bottom five teams of the division in Hinse's first four years.

"It's the best one," he said about his fifth season. "I created a lot of friendships throughout the years and guys were amazing. But hockey-wise and on a personal level, this year was just amazing."

The dream year for Hinse and the Stingers didn't end there. The quarterfinal win against the University of Ontario Institute of Technology Ridgebacks broke the 16-year curse barring the Stingers from the second round of the playoffs.

"My goal was to do something at Concordia and bring Concordia to another level," he said. "I know it's not a lot but I think it's a great start looking forward for the future. We have to win one and that's what we did."

Many memorable moments have come to define Hinse's varsity career—this first round win being one of them. In the 2012-2013 season, he became an assistant captain in his first year.

"Coach [Kevin] Figsby came to me and just gave me an 'A' without saying anything," he said.

Being given the "C" two seasons later is also something that the 26-year-old will cherish along with the countless road trips taken with his teammates who he considers family.

"We have so much fun on the road. We create bonds [...] and yes, we study, yes we study," he said, smiling.

Hinse left his mark on the international stage

too. He was named captain of the Canadian national team at the International University Sports Federation Winter Universiade, a bi-annual event in the summer and winter, uniting university athletes from across the world. He helped bring home the bronze medal, for team Canada.

"Being captain of Concordia was one of the greatest honours, and having to wear the 'C' for your country [...] it's amazing," he said.

Between the Stingers hockey revival and a medal win for Canada, the business administration student is currently assessing his options to play in Europe. When asked about his aspirations of making it to the NHL, he said, "it's always there" at the back of his mind. He is also not ruling out a return to Concordia in some capacity. Element already said that Hinse will help with recruiting next year.

"Concordia's my home," he said. "If I have the opportunity I'm going to take it for sure."

Until then, he will prepare for his final speech at the upcoming Stingers banquet in April while completing his certificate. Despite all his accomplishments, there remains one thing that Hinse would like to cross off his bucket list.

When he made the announcement to come back last year, he wanted to drop the mic—but the mic was attached to the stand. This year, announcement or not, Hinse remains determined to drop that mic, one way or another.

"If I can drop the mic, I'll do it for sure," he said, laughing. "I'll find a way to drop it."



Olivier Hinse walks off the ice after his final game as a Concordia Stinger on Feb. 27.

MATT GARIES @mattgaries

Strike, Disrupt, Win

Organized Labour's Evolution in Quebec

NOELLE SOLANGE DIDIERJEAN
@NOELLESOLANGE

It's not an exaggeration to say that a generation of young people was profoundly influenced by the 2012 student strike.

From the militant carré rouge, to the conservatives hissing about the entitlement of young people, all parts of society stood up and took note of the maple spring five years ago.

The rate of university tuition probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind at the mention of Labour with a capital L. Many attempted to discredit the student strike on that basis, drawing a line between the hard-working, ordinary people of Quebec and the impractical, no-good intéllos cutting class and lighting cop cars on fire.

It's true that the students on strike didn't physically jam the means of production—they couldn't seize every MacBook, destroy every chalkboard. So the connection from factory workers who cut off access to industrial looms and textile supplies to political science students banging pots during "noise disruptions" to cut off access to cultivating intellectual labour at a lecture hall isn't made intuitively.

But although their strike didn't block access to any mines or stop any factories from churning out undergarments, the student work stoppage is emblematic of the power the Quebec labour movement has shown for decades. It's the most recent manifestation of collective power that's kept worker-capital relations tipped marginally less in favour of the latter since the turn of the century—albeit now in a post-industrial economy.

In 2012, the strikers affirmed their right to respect as intellectual workers. The students realized that the for-profit, state-subsidized universities couldn't function without them, regardless of the fact that the labour they produced was immaterial.

From the Miners to Marois

Picture a millennial, sleep-deprived philosophy undergrad coming home after a ten-hour shift in the dish pit for just long enough to down a redbull before running to the library to churn out an essay in Western political theory. Drowning in debt, fed up with sky-high administrative fees, and decked out in a red felt square, Montreal has no lack of intellectual labourers pulling a double shift to pay for their education.

The dime-a-dozen dishwashing intellectual labourer is a far cry from the chain-smoking, flat hat-wearing miners of Asbestos in 1949. It might not seem fair to compare spending eight hours hunched over a laptop to wading into the depths of the earth to hack up cancerous insulating material, but there are more similarities to their struggle than you would think.

Let's start by laying out some basic facts.

The asbestos strike of 1949 involved 5,000 miners from Asbestos and Thetford Mines. It lasted for four months, from February to July 1949.

Their demands were to eliminate the cancerous asbestos dust from their work environment, a 15 cent hourly raise across the board, and union consultation in all cases of promotion, workplace transfer, and hiring. Before the strike began, the main mining employer, Canadian Johns-Manville, countered with a five cent hourly raise and some basic workplace improvements. The bosses refused all other demands by the workers.

As negotiations got under way, the miners union—the Commission des relations ouvrières—lost faith in the arbitration process.

"It was in this climate of exasperation with the company and the government that the miners decided by a vast majority to go on strike without going through the legal arbitration process," Jacques Rouillard explained in

his book on Quebec labour history.

The illegal strike was enough for the government to remove the union's accredited status. The miner's employer hired replacement workers to break the strike, took out injunctions against picketing miners, and brought in the provincial police.

Maurice Duplessis—the Premier of Quebec at the time—was pissed. Duplessis wanted to get business back as usual, and demanded that the strikers get back to work and stop breaking the law. When the workers persisted, he accused them of being "saboteurs and troublemakers."

After four months, the strike wound down. The miners won certain short-term concessions, chiefly the recognition of the union, hiring miners based on seniority, and amnesty for striking workers—though this didn't stop the company from legally pursuing certain strikers. In a more lasting win, the miners got the company to agree to set up an arbitration tribunal to agree on a collective agreement that would be re-negotiated every two years.

The first of these tribunals won an hourly raise of 10 cents an hour. On the flip side, they failed to force the company to eliminate asbestos dust in the workplace.

Though the cancerous dust persisted at first, over time the collective agreements signed with Canadian Johns-Manville afforded some of the best conditions in the industry.

Fast forward about 60 years and compare the numbers.

There were over 150,000 students on strike during the peak of the maple spring. The strike lasted for eight months, from February to September 2012.

The student's initial demand, faced with a proposed tuition hike of \$1,500 over a five-year period, was to freeze provincial tuition. Over time, many student groups would addi-

tionally call for completely free education. The Liberal government didn't concede to their demands at any point.

Quebec is exceptional in giving student groups legal status. There isn't any specific legislation on when and how student unions can go on strike, but that didn't stop the Liberal government from doing anything they could to stop them.

Bill 78, or the "act to enable students to receive instruction from the postsecondary institutions they attend," was passed in May 2012. It made it illegal to form a picket line around a university campus, and restricted protests within universities if they prevented students from going to class. The bill also made it illegal to protest with over 50 people without submitting a route to police in advance.

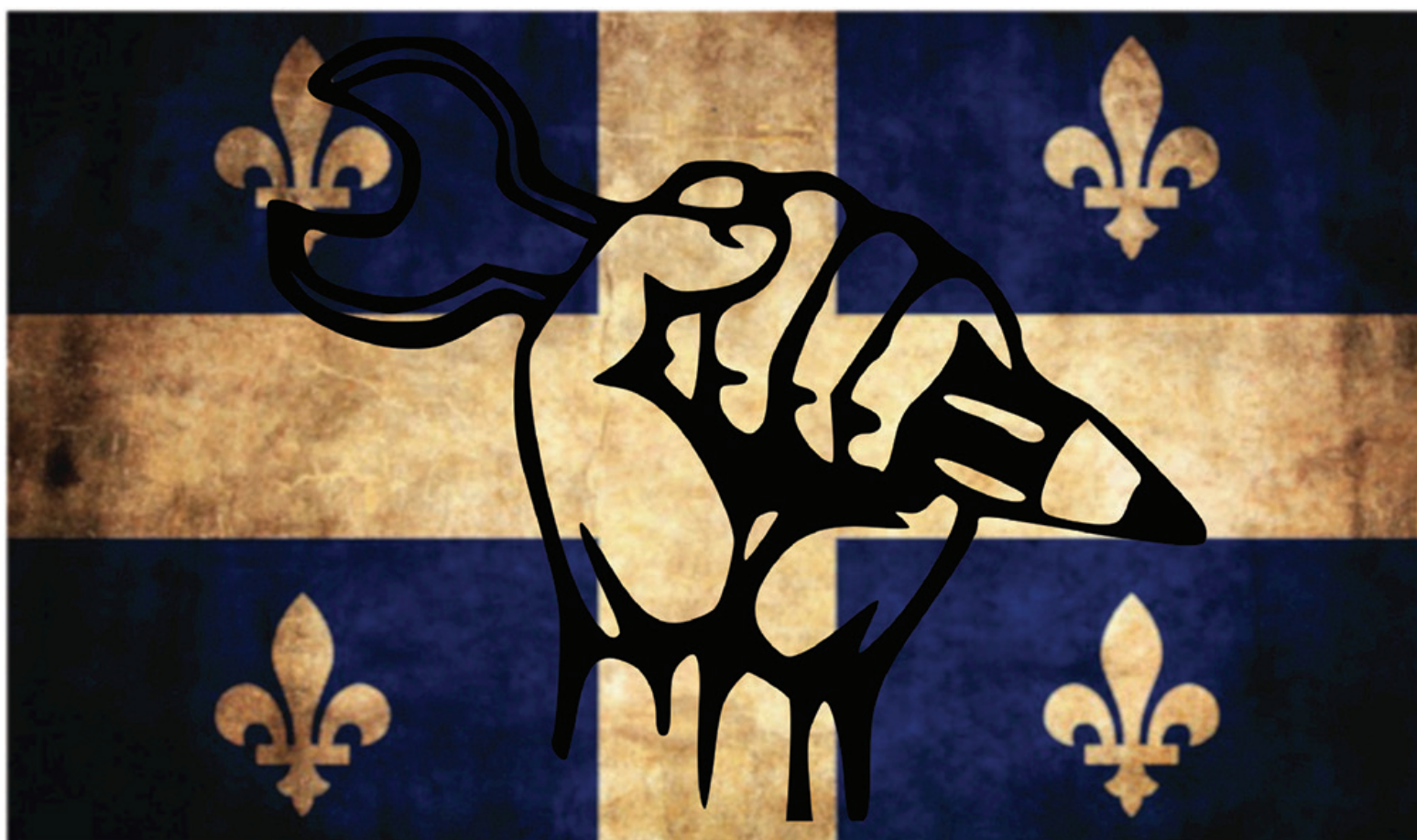
The nightly demonstrations that happened for months and occasionally engendered collateral property damage led many to dismiss the students as rioters and anarchists.

As the new school year approached, the Parti Québécois was elected and froze tuition fees, in line with campaign promises.

Now, students in the new millennium don't have to deal with asbestos dust in their work environment. But that doesn't make the poverty that many students endure acceptable.

As the Quebec labour movement adapts to the new post-industrial landscape, it's more important than ever to remember that the insults levied at students and service workers are the same ones used to legitimize the miners, textile workers and other industrial employees.

A pen is just as legitimate a tool of labour as a pickaxe. If it seems impossible for immaterial labour to win workplace recognition, it might be useful to remember that less than 70 years ago, our industrial predecessors were fighting the same battle.



SHREYA BISWAS @shrey_dora

Death by a Thousand Paper Cuts

ERIKA MORRIS

Have you ever caught yourself saying something along the lines of “You’d look better if you dressed for your size?”

Or maybe “Shouldn’t you be wearing pink?” How about “Oh, you don’t act gay?” Or even “Where are you really from?” Those statements aren’t offensive or harmful, right?

Wrong. In reality, these are all forms of sexist microaggressions—and they’re a very real form of violence.

Microaggressions are subtle insults against people of a marginalized group that are derogatory, set them out as “others,” and make them feel small. There are three forms of microaggression.

The first is the microassault—an unmasked discrimination, like name-calling. The second and most common kind is the microinsult—a rude snub that reinforces stereotypes and degrades a person’s identity. The last kind of microaggression—and possibly the most damaging—is the microinvalidation. Microinvalidations disregard and discredit a person’s thoughts and feelings concerning their identity.

People in all marginalized groups face microaggressive behavior on a daily basis. Microaggressions indicate to a person that

you think of them as abnormal, different, or as an “other.”

To undermine someone’s feelings, to suggest that they’re hypersensitive or overreacting, actually normalizes hatred and perpetuates oppression.

Though microaggressions don’t seem like a big deal individually, those who are subject to them can feel the weight of them build over time, leaving a lasting feeling of smallness and insecurity. And while we’re not always speaking from a place of malice, the damage that these kinds of comments can cause is real.

A study at the University of New Hampshire shows that microaggressions not only have detrimental effects on a person’s mental health, like depression and anxiety, but also impact a person’s physical health—increasing risks of autoimmune diseases as well as heart disease.

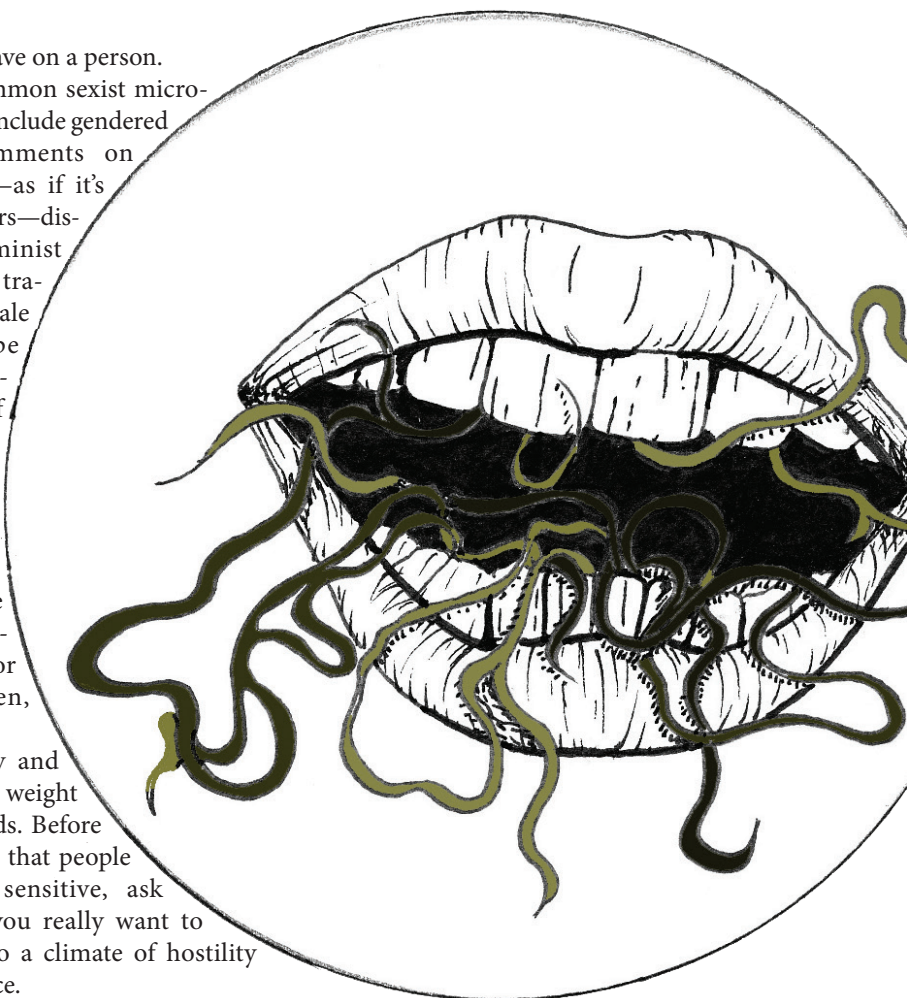
Ignorance isn’t normal. We need to stop passing hateful comments off as casual statements. We all make mistakes, but we also all need to ask ourselves how we might be complicit in this kind of violent rhetoric.

If our comments wound someone, it’s our responsibility to be accountable for that hurt. Instead of telling someone to lighten up, apologize and recognize the impact that

words can have on a person.

Other common sexist microaggressions include gendered insults, comments on appearance—as if it’s all that matters—dismissing feminist opinions on traditionally male topics, rape jokes, questioning of credentials based on someone’s gender, claiming that safe spaces disadvantage or punish men, and so on.

Be an ally and consider the weight of your words. Before complaining that people are overly sensitive, ask yourself if you really want to contribute to a climate of hostility and ignorance.



GRAPHICS ZOË GELFANT @203631f4h7

Terrorizing the Other

CARL BINDMAN
@CARLBINDMAN

In the aftermath of the bomb threat on Wednesday, I saw two main families of response from non-Muslims like me.

The first was along the lines of an opinion piece in the *Gazette*, saying “We no longer have the luxury of dismissing such threats as sick pranks, empty bluster or delusional ramblings.” These were meant to be responses of solidarity, and they were numerous.

The second was along the lines of a post in Spotted Concordia, saying “We got the message and we’ve all moved on [...] Bomb threats scare me a little but midterms make me wanna [sic] shit myself.” These were posts of abject minimization. They were rare, but they were infuriating, because those people had not, in fact, received the message.

If you don’t speak the language of hate, you’re going to struggle to know what the hateful words are saying. It’s understandable, if contemptible, that some students didn’t make the effort. But I know this language well. My history as a Jew is written with it.

The fact that I’m a secular, non-practicing, barely-even-Jew, but that even I can effortlessly translate what happened here, speaks to the enduring violence of hate. After all, it’s so much easier to remind the hated of the pain of unhealed wounds than it is to spill new blood.

That’s the message, by the way. Pain.

The timing of the letter, sent during Islamic Awareness week and one month after the shoot-

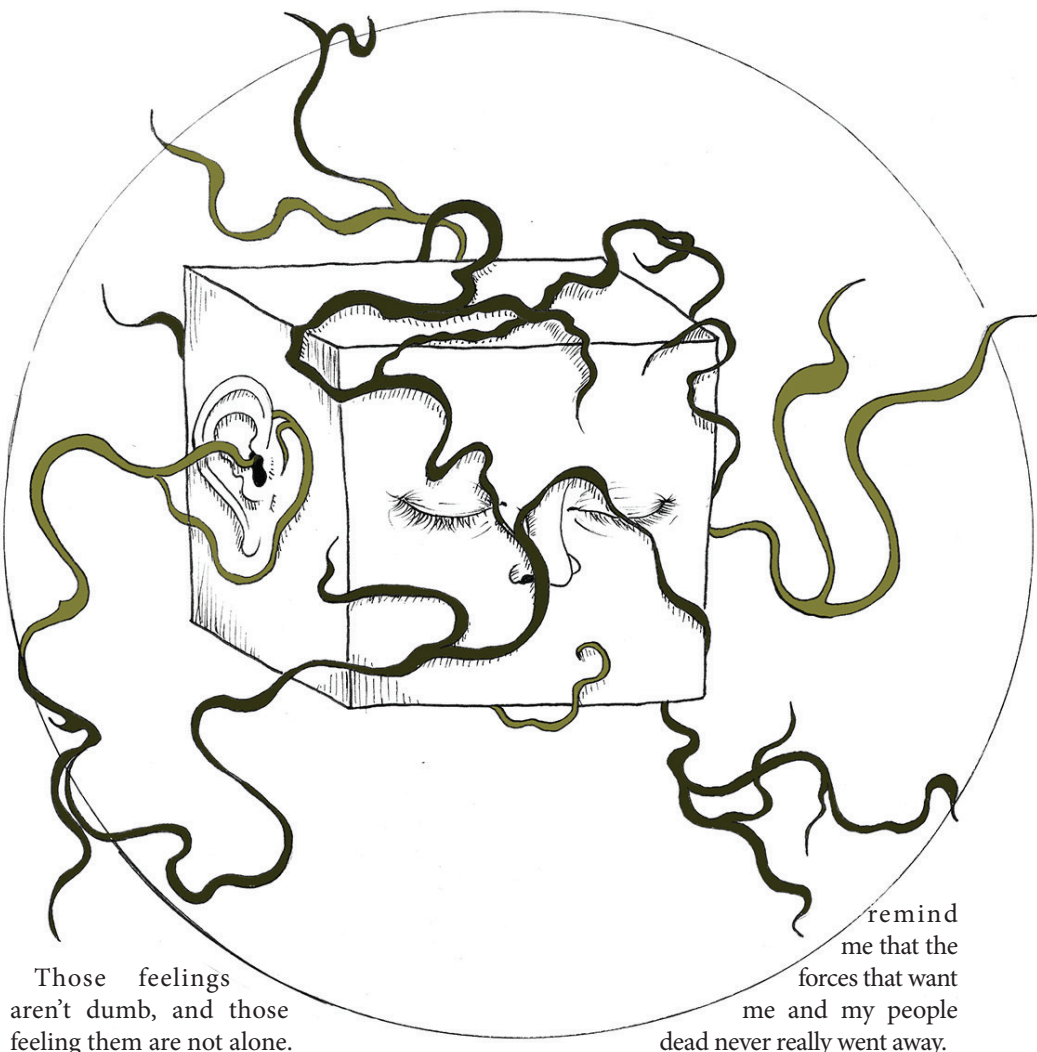
ings in Quebec, makes it clear enough. It’s meant to remind Muslim students of the physical violence they faced and could face again, and, by doing so, force them to relive the feelings that violence conjures. It’s another kind of violence.

The specificity of the threat against Muslim students is truly meant to isolate the targets in that experience of violence. The aftermath, all the posts and articles, does so as well.

Showing Muslim students that some others’ biggest fears from this threat was the inconvenience of missing an exam is isolating. The administration moving their meetings to a different campus but insisting students go to class is isolating. The media referring to the threat as a “terror hoax,” as did the CBC, instead of an act of violence, is isolating.

This isolation serves to enhance the pain of that violence. And make no mistake, bomb or not, Lebanese perpetrator or not, this was an act of hateful violence. Transforming the place a student goes to every day to study and be with friends into the place where they could die is a traumatic change. People remember bad things more than they remember good things. With this very bad thing and its aftermath, one letter has the potential to rewrite how thousands of students will remember some of their most formative years.

So, anybody saying it was “just a letter,” and that students should “move on” from that, is demonstrating a failure of empathy and effectively saying to their Muslim peers who might be reeling from an existential threat: “Your feelings are dumb.”



Those feelings aren’t dumb, and those feeling them are not alone.

My father works at a synagogue. My Jewish family fled violence and persecution in Eastern Europe at the turn of the 19th century. People with my last name were gassed to death at Auschwitz. Every spray painted swastika or bomb “hoax” against a Jewish place of gathering reminds me of the precariousness of my circumstances, even within the contemporary safety provided by my Jewish whiteness. They

remind me that the forces that want me and my people dead never really went away.

Wednesday’s threat did the same, because the hate directed against Muslims is the same as that directed against Jews and other Others. But right now, for a racism-full of reasons, Muslims are at risk of and victims to all forms of violence much more so than Jews.

When that violence happens, call it what it is. Minimizing its targeted effects is tantamount to complicity in what I call terrorism-as-othering.

"Having a friend or a significant other that is of a minority race does not excuse one from racist thoughts."



The Dangers of Implicit Racism

MARISSA RAMNANAN

Are you racist?

Now before you start saying, "No, of course not," sit down and really think about it. Maybe it's not the extreme type of racism, but the low key, guilty-thoughts kind?

Do you cross the street when you see a Black man walking in your direction? Do you assume that the Asian girl who sits next to you in your math course is acing the class? Do you get nervous when an Arab man sits next to you on the metro?

If you do, guess what—it's not your fault, and having those thoughts doesn't make you a bad person. In fact, it is practically unavoidable as a citizen of Western civilization.

It is important to realize you are thinking these thoughts as they happen, analyze them, ask yourself where they came from, why, and whether they are factual. Personal exposure to those of different races, ethnicities and cultures might decrease these judgements, in that it will humanize those of minority races.

These thoughts are due to a collective mindset, known as "institutionalized" or "systemic" racism.

Institutional racism is a form of racism expressed in the practice of social and political institutions. It is also racism by individuals or informal social groups, governed by behavioral norms that support racist thinking and foment active racism. Whether implicitly or explicitly expressed, institutional racism occurs when a certain group is targeted and discriminated against based upon their race. Institutional racism can go unnoticed, as it is not always explicit and can be overlooked.

Having a friend or a significant other that is of a minority race does not excuse one from racist thoughts. Neither does being part of a minority race excuse one from systemic racist beliefs and ideas.

Institutionalized racism is woven into the fabric of society, and is hard to shake. Ideally, in a utopian world, these issues would have been solved long ago, and people of colour would have an equal chance in society compared to those of the majority. Unfortunately, this is not yet the case.

In an article called "White Fragility" from *Huffington Post*, Dr. Robin DiAngelo, a multicultural educator from Seattle, wrote, "mainstream dictionary definitions reduce racism to individual racial prejudice and the intentional actions that result."

She explained that racism and being a good person have

become mutually exclusive items.

"But this definition does little to explain how racial hierarchies are consistently reproduced. Social scientists understand racism as a multi-dimensional and highly adaptive system—a system that ensures an unequal distribution of resources between racial groups," DiAngelo concluded.

Institutional racism in Western civilization started with colonialism and continued to be propagated by longstanding stereotypes—an "unequal distribution of resources between racial groups," as mentioned by Dr. Di Angelo, and a culture that posits whites as more relevant. This is prevalent in our education, with the centrality of European civilization and peoples in our textbooks, and our predominately white teachers and role models.

The perpetuation of racial stereotypes is also apparent in the media, with the negative or disproportionate representation of minorities in popular television shows and movies. There is also a disproportionate representation of minorities in seats of power, such as in the government—although that is gradually changing, for example with Justin Trudeau's Canadian government and the Presidency of Barack Obama in the United States.

However, slow progress of racial equality does not negate the existence of institutionalized racism.

The stereotypes of the "angry Black woman," "dangerous Black man," "Muslim terrorist," "drunken Native-American," and "drug-dealing Latino," to name a few, are still very real and present in our society's mindset. These preconceived ideas of minorities can lead to larger, more violent consequences.

For example, the bomb threat at Concordia University on March 1, 2017 was aimed at Muslim students at our school. The shooting at the Quebec City mosque on Jan. 29, 2017 was again aimed at those who practice Islam.

Racial profiling by police is a real issue as well. According to the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the Kingston Police began researching the issue of racial profiling in 2003. For one year, police officers were required to fill out a form whenever

they made a traffic or pedestrian stop. After releasing their findings in 2005, they concluded that "Blacks were over-represented in police stops when compared to whites, and that Black residents were four times more likely to be pulled over by the police."

In 2010, *The Toronto Star* conducted their own study of Toronto police and concluded that Black and brown youths were approximately three times more likely to be stopped than white youths between 2003 and 2008. The outlet discovered this out through examining the Toronto police practice of carding, which is the process of filling out a "208 card" with information on any individual stopped. The Toronto Anti Violence Intervention Strategy used 208 cards filled out by police to record information about persons "to be of interest." These happened during both pedestrian stops and traffic stops. *The Star's* conclusion: Black people filled out 41 per cent of the cards.

There are organizations in place to decrease these issues. For example, CRAAR, the Center for Research Action on Race Relations, is a Montreal based non-profit organization whose mandate is to promote racial equality and to combat racism in Canada. Since the year 2000, according to their website, CRARR has represented and assisted more than 1,000 people in different cities, advocating for victims of discrimination based on religion, race, ethnicity and citizen status.

Dr. Myrna Lashley, a professor in psychiatry from McGill, is another person speaking out on systemic racism. "The police are us. They reflect us, and we reflect them. [...] We are the institutionalized racism," said Lashley as panelist on a talk about institutionalized racism on Feb. 7 at Concordia.

How does it happen that we live in Montreal, and most students have never had an Indigenous teacher, she asked. "Why is it that we only know about Black people during Black History Month? Have you looked at your schools?"

We need the staff and members of our institutions to be racially proportional to the population, and, if they aren't, Lashley said, we should stand up and ask why that's not the case. That's *the start*, she explained. Otherwise, in 10 years "we'll be back here asking the same bloody questions, getting the same bleeding answers."



Meet The Link Masthead for '17 - '18 Volume

A MESSAGE FROM THE MUSLIM STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

In a university known for its diversity, the threats made on Wednesday morning were shocking and out of place. They represent a disturbing effort to intimidate the campus community at large, and to target Concordia's Muslim student population during Islam Awareness Week.

The MSA congratulates and thanks law enforcement and the Concordia administration for their prompt response and the measures taken to ensure the safety at the facilities of Concordia University. We thank the Concordia Student Union for their words of solidarity and support. Indeed, "A threat against one of us is indeed a threat against all of us."

The letter containing the threats mentions a complaint made against the MSA to the student union. However, the association has not received any complaints and we would like to emphasize that we are committed to promoting inclusive and welcoming spaces and fully support the university's rights and equity policies. Furthermore, the MSA stands shoulder to shoulder with other faith groups, and remains committed to promoting safe and respectful communities. We have an open-door policy and welcome feedback or concerns and are committed to working with concerned parties to rectify any issues that may arise.

Overall, the MSA wants to show the greatest appreciation towards the student body for their support during these hard times. We want to highlight the effort made by Dahlia Madden, the president of the Centre des femmes de l'Université de Québec à Montréal:

"It was important for the Centre des femmes de l'UQÀM to let MSA know we stand in solidarity with them. Because they are students and part of our community. We can't control the results of Islamophobia but we can control

whether we support our community or not. Which is why I lent a hand during Islam Awareness Week. I had the chance to meet resilient members who greeted my presence with open arms. The ambiance was heart warming; many students and staff members came to show their support towards MSA. I witnessed beautiful dialogues opening a better understanding of Islam."

Unfortunately, we also feel the need to highlight that policies taken in our neighbouring country, and an increase in the number of reported hate crimes within our own country—including the tragic terrorist attack in a Quebec City mosque a few weeks ago—makes Wednesday's bomb scare mentioning Muslims not a surprise. Canada is by no means immune to this rising hostile political climate, where sadly even a largely symbolic anti-Islamophobia motion like M-103 is being met with opposition.

As students, we often focus on exams and deadlines and do not realize how much we support each other. The Concordia community came together and we received great support from clubs, organizations, and individuals. An unfortunate event brought us together and made more people aware of the issue of Islamophobia.

We do acknowledge the safe environment that Concordia university is, but as we witnessed we are not immune to intolerant individuals or organizations. The solution—or at least one of them—is to keep being open-minded and push for more interfaith dialogue. University is a place where we can find people from all over the world. It is the perfect place to discuss and understand one another in our differences, and to combat stereotypes and discrimination as much as we can.

It is therefore only fitting that our theme for the 2017 Islamic Awareness Week was: "One conversation = one misconception down."

Crap Comics by Morag Rahn-Campbell @madd.egg



Hastily Put Together by Theo Radomski @flannelogue



Room 9 by Bronson Smillie @bronsosaurus



Caity Comics by Caity Hall @caityhallart



The Epic Adventures of Every Man by Every Man





EDITORIAL

Concordia Owes You an Apology

Something major happened at Concordia University this week.

On Wednesday, a letter was sent to the university and several media outlets that threatened to detonate bombs near Muslim prayer spaces if the school did not ban Muslim activities on campus.

It was a tense day. The letter was sent just before 10 a.m., and police arrived on scene shortly afterwards. At around 11:30 a.m., the school began an evacuation of the Hall, EV, and GM buildings on the downtown campus. Guy-Concordia metro was briefly shut down around noon. Chris Mota, the university's spokesperson spoke to the media soon after. A few hours later, Concordia President Alan Shepard and Minister of Education Hélène David held their own conference in front of the evacuated EV building. By 6 p.m., the buildings were reopened, and students were heading back to their classes.

The following morning, police arrested a suspect who has now been charged in connection with the bomb threats.

It's a pretty exceptional situation, for sure—

and one that we hope stays exceptional. Some disarray is inevitable when buildings have to be evacuated on short notice under duress. We recognize that. But we also think that Concordia's response was inadequate—and if the bomb threat had been real, it could have cost lives.

By the time the buildings were empty, the bomb threat had already been out for over an hour and a half. The sender threatened to detonate explosives shortly after noon, but the building still should have been evacuated immediately.

When the evacuation actually happened, there were no clear efforts to organize the crowds that amassed outside the buildings. Several *Link* reporters were on campus trying to figure out what was going on. It soon became clear that no perimeter was set up around the targeted buildings. Students still lined up along the big glass windows in front of the Hall building, waiting for the shuttle bus to Loyola.

There's more decorum for fire drills, where students are made to cross the street away from the building.

The letter also stated that the bombs would

detonate anytime between noon on Wednesday and Friday. Yet the university insisted on sending students back to class on the day the threat was issued. This was a horrendous decision, potentially putting multiple lives in danger, and the mental health and physical safety of the Muslim student population at risk. Not only could this leave students in a state of fear of dying at any given moment, but how on earth did the Concordia administration think students would be able to simply carry on with their exams with a bomb threat is hanging over their heads?

Something else to take note of was the police presence on the scene, or more specifically its scarcity. With an extensive number of students being evacuated under highly urgent circumstances all at once, you'd think there would be more hands on deck to help get everyone to safety. Ironically, you'd have a better chance at seeing multiple police officers at a student protest, ready with their pepper spray if anything got too rowdy for their liking.

On Wednesday night, the Concordia Student Union sent an open letter to the university administration asking them to grant

academic amnesty for all students from Wednesday to Friday, the period that the threats specified. Academic amnesty means that no marks would count for those days and that there would be no penalization for not attending class. The university responded the next day and said that appropriate accommodations would be made for students that had classes disrupted the day of the initial threat.

They did not apologize for reopening school the night of, but they said there was legitimate confusion as to whether operations were restarting again or not. *The Link* believes this retroactive gesture wasn't enough. Even though Montreal police declared that no suspicious or explosive items were found, the effects that such a threat has on the mental health of students, most importantly for Muslim students, was cause enough to enforce academic amnesty for those three days.

Like the CSU, we call on the Concordia administration to retroactively implement academic amnesty and apologize for reopening the university the night when the threats first emerged.

THE LINK

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Concordia University
Hall Building, Room H-649
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8
editor: 514-848-2424 x. 7407
arts: 514-848-2424 x. 5813
news: 514-848-2424 x. 8682
business: 514-848-7406
advertising: 514-848-7406

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CONTRIBUTORS: Safia Ahmad, Alex Bailey, Julian Bata, Shreya Biswas, Emily Boudreau, Shannon Carranco, Mark Di Franco, Noelle Solange Didierjean, Ion Etzebarria, Matt Garies, Zoë Gelfant, Sydney Goodaire, Caitly Hall, Taliesin Herb, Brian Lapuz, Emily Lee, Every Man, Erika Morris, Theo Radomski, Harrison-Milo Rahajason, Marissa Ramnanan, Bronson Smillie, Jordan Stoopler, Savannah Stewart, Willie Wilson

Cover: Carl Bindman & Kelsey Litwin

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THE LINK WORKSHOP SERIES

March 10 Feature Writing With Adam Kovac

Long-form journalism is hard. You have to captivate your audience in 2,000 words or more. Rest assured, all you aspiring storytellers—we have one of the best in Canada coming in to give some tips on the craft.

Adam Kovac has written features for *Rolling Stone*, *Maisonneuve Magazine*, *The Toronto Star*, *The Montreal Gazette*, and more. He's also the former features and current affairs editor at *The Link*.

March 17 Magazine 101 Andrea Bennett

In a world of fast-paced online news, there is something about certain print media that has a staying power: The magazine.

Join us for a special workshop with *Maisonneuve Magazine's* Editor-in-Chief, Andrea Bennett. She'll be talking about *Maisonneuve's* process of design, gathering and editing longform content, managing the print-online balance, and how to pitch your own stories.

Workshops happen at 3 p.m in our office: Room H-649 of Concordia's Hall Building (1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.)

See you there!