

From the Director

The now famous quote by photo-theorist and critic Susan Sontag, “Narratives can make us understand. However, photographs do something else: they haunt us,” is a compelling reminder of the power of images—photographs, yes, but also videos, cellphilms, drawings, and other visual artworks. The idea that images and image-making, in their transformational power, might also be linked to well-being is something that frames many interventions in health and education. Beyond simply raising awareness, many of the articles in this newsletter illuminate how images actively shape well-being, impacting issues of sexual violence, mental health, youth engagement, and social justice.

This issue of the IHDW Newsletter highlights the many ways that researchers, practitioners, NGOs, educators and those working in community health are exploring and studying the impact of images. From the groundbreaking “Walking With Trauma” art pieces on sexual violence exhibited at the McGill Faculty Club in April, 2025 through the iPACTs project, to cellphilms produced by older adults in Botswana as part of a community health project, to a review of several rap videos produced by Inuit boys and young men in relation to community connections, to coverage of the most recent McGill International Cellphilm Festival organized around the theme “Conversations and Connections: This is Not a Time for Silence”, we see up-close how these images are making a difference. But there is a lot to learn. Art historians and photo theorists have been studying aspects of the impact of images and other art forms for decades. But how do we study the impact of images produced in community-based research.

What more could we know about well-being? These are some of the questions that are by sparked the articles and reviews in this issue, alongside coverage of lots more coming out of the work of the various researchers and students attached in way or another to the Institute for Human Development and Well-being.

I would like to thank all the contributors to the newsletter, and a very special thanks to Lauren Frasca from the Department of Anthropology at McGill for her meticulous editing and for her submission.

Claudia Mitchell,
Distinguished James McGill Professor



Claudia Mitchell is a Distinguished James McGill Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE) at McGill University. She is the recipient of 2022 José Vasconcelos World Award of Education, for her research on gender-based violence prevention, HIV, and AIDS awareness, and working with youth around the world.

I. Impact of Images

II. IHDW Updates

III. Cellphilms

IV. Publications

V. Final Pages

I. Impact of Images

Feature: Walking Alongside Trauma

Working Group: Sexual Violence

iMPACTS, led by Professor Shaheen Shariff, is a multi-year initiative dedicated to addressing sexual violence on university campuses across Canada and internationally. Its central aim is to uncover, disrupt, and prevent sexual violence within higher education—and by extension, in society—through rigorous, evidence-based research that informs lasting changes in curriculum and policy. Distinct from isolated interventions, this SSHRC Partnership Project is the first of its kind to take a comprehensive, collaborative approach across education, law, policy, the arts, popular culture, news, and social media. Walking Alongside Trauma (WAT) was a conference and exhibit held by iMPACTS March 20th-21st 2025.



From left to right: Debra Sloan, A Gulliver Moment, 2024; Hope Forstenzer, Hard to Hold, 2024; Debra Sloan, Trio of Walkers, 2024.

Professor Shaheen Shariff is pleased to report that her project, iMPACTS, in partnership with Craft Council of British Columbia, hosted an informative final annual partners meeting, and a very well received art exhibit entitled Walking Alongside Trauma (WAT). The exhibit presented the work of 13 Canadian artists, including the work of Project Director, Shaheen Shariff.

iMPACTS partner Craft Council of B.C. brought together twelve B.C. artists and twelve front line workers in an informal setting to discuss systemic barriers in addressing sexual violence. The discussion obtained participatory consent and protected the anonymity of front line workers



Amy Gogarty, Monument, 2025. Clay

The artists in turn depicted the front-line worker's trauma as well as their own. Concurrently, Professor Shariff created five clay face masks reflecting trauma such as "grey rape" and "broken" on generic faces of trauma resulting from a misogynistic culture in which toxic masculinity intersects with racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination.



Top to bottom, left to right: Shaheen Shariff, *Broken: From Online Dating to Ghosting & Sexual Harassment*, 2025; *Grey Rape*, 2025; *Report or Disclose? Who Will Believe Me?*, 2025

Shariff's faces also express the deep trauma she experienced while researching sexual violence over nine years.

The exhibit then travelled to the Baie-D'Urfe community centre, Fritz Farm, for seven days, receiving excellent reviews from visitors and the local newspaper.



Debra Sloan, *Trio of Walkers*, 2024

By Shaheen Shariff



Dr. Shaheen Shariff is an expert on policy development in the intersection of law, education, and technology at McGill's Department of Integrated Studies in Education. In her work as co-Director of the IHDW and Project Director of iMPACTS, Shariff leads the working group, **Sexual Violence**, which seeks to understand how to create a cultural climate conducive to sexual wellness across the life cycle online, on-campus, in schools, in social policy, and across the cultural divide. They envision meaningful investigation of the causes and conditions underlying a culture of consent and how the many manifestations of rape culture can be transfigured.

WALKING ALONGSIDE TRAUMA

a material-based exhibition
exploring the societal impact
of vicarious traumatization
of sexualized violence

opening :
03.20.25 | 4-6pm
03.20.25 - 03.21.25

mcgill faculty club,
mcgill university



Well-Being Through the Voices of Older People in Botswana

Working Group: Participation Across the Lifespan

Participation across the lifespan is a Working Group led by co-director Dr. Neil Andersson. Participation marks the entire human life cycle. From learning how to play one's first game, participating in workplace dynamics, to engaging in civic duties, participation takes on many different forms and qualities as humans engage with different sets of developmental tasks. The group examines these and other questions through an interdisciplinary lens involving education, medicine, dentistry nursing, social work, business, and fine arts.

The APPROACH project in Botswana is led by Participatory Research at McGill (PRAM) and its affiliated Community Information for Empowerment and Transparency (CIET), in collaboration with the Healthy and Active Aging unit in the Botswana Ministry of Health. It pilots an innovative, low-cost, widely applicable intervention for dementia prevention. Older adults participate in groups to gather evidence about a shared concern and plan ways to tackle the problem. The elements of authentic participation – co-ownership of the process, use of evidence, and innovation – link with the elements of executive function, which are lost in dementia.

Older women, surviving in the village on their old age pension, identified problems with grandchildren being foisted on them by their children who go to stay in the capital. Other older women and men identified problems interacting with health care services. The older people explained they found it difficult to express their concerns to their families or to the health services.

They decided to create cellphilms to communicate about their problem with their families and health care workers. The older women were excited to make cellphilms, a little nervous if they could manage. The older men at first thought this was not something for them at their age. However, they came around to the idea upon hearing that the women were participating. After training for our own local team, we organized a two-day cellphilming workshop in the village. In the initial sessions to learn about cellphilms, men and women sat together, but then preferred to work separately.



Groups of about 10 men and 10 women split into smaller groups to plan and make their cellphilms. By the end of day one, most of them had created their storyboards. On day two, they filmed their cellphilms, using a shoot-pause-shoot approach to minimize the need for editing.

Of course, there were challenges! The old people living in a rural setting needed time to get used to smart phone handsets. Some had tremors or arthritis in their hands so needed help to hold the handset steady.

They mostly chose to make drama style cellphilms. The women threw themselves into their roles and were inventive with storylines and props. The men struggled much more. They just could not remember their lines in front of the camera! In the end, they opted to make an interview-style cellphilms, in which they simply expressed their own views.

Screening of the cellphilms has been exciting. The older people were nervous about speaking to introduce the cellphilms to audiences of village leaders, social workers, and health workers from the community and district. They overcame this by composing and singing songs in traditional style to welcome the audience. The audience were surprised and impressed at what the old people had achieved and took their concerns seriously. Many actions are in process, sparked by the cellphilms.



By Anne Cockcroft



Dr. Anne Cockcroft is a researcher with Aproche, a project of CIET-PRAM (Community Information for Empowerment and Transparency – Participatory Research at McGill) led by Dr. Neil Andersson, Associate Director of the IHDW. Her research encompasses regions in southern Africa and Pakistan, where she has overseen surveys and qualitative studies aimed at developing strategies to challenge harmful gender norms and reduce violence. Currently, her work in Botswana examines the interconnected causes of violence against young women and suicide among young men, with a particular emphasis on the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community.

Moving Images: Evaluating the Impact of Participatory Visual Methodologies

Moving Images, or the idea that images can move audiences, is a project coming out of the growing field of participatory arts-based research in areas such as health, social change, and human rights education. Researchers and community practitioners are increasingly exploring how images affect both participants and audiences— especially youth audiences— in terms of inspiring action. At the heart of participatory visual research is the central question of how visual methods mobilize knowledge and drive change. The unifying aims behind these approaches is to address social injustices through partnership and collective action.

Under the 2025 McBurney Fellowship located within the Department of Equity, Ethics and Policy, I am exploring the issue of measuring the impact of moving images. My research will contribute to a five-year partnership project, TRANSFORM. Its goal is to provide an overview of existing frameworks for studying impact while highlighting gaps in current knowledge. Spending time between Equitas and the Participatory Cultures Lab at McGill has allowed me to better recognize the practical implications of measuring impact.

To examine the role of images as participatory evaluation, I am reviewing common trends in the literature on how various case studies approach measuring impact. From the participant's side, impact begins during the process of image-creation. Audience contributions can further bolster this impact. As opposed to their more traditional counterparts, evaluation data directly involves community members and encourages collaboration and reflection.

Participatory research revealed gaps in our current knowledge, most notably surrounding the question of representation of marginalized communities in research. In order to sustain the impact of visual data, there is a necessity for sustained follow-ups to participatory evaluation as well as the need for more researcher reflexivity, so as to allow adult and youth participants to shape their own stories. In examining impact for participants, audiences, and the public, my literature review aims to be a tool for researchers and educators in better advocating for social change through visual research.

By Michele Fu



***Michele Fu** is a recent History graduate and recipient of the McBurney Fellowship from McGill University. As an artist and community advocate, they are passionate about the use of creative visual methodologies to promote sustainable development. For the summer of 2025, they are working between the Participatory Cultures Lab and Equitas, an NGO focusing on human rights education, to examine the impact and use of participatory research in human rights education.*

II. IHDW Updates

Gender Transformative Climate Justice: Welcome Shannon Weekes



This summer, Shannon Weekes from the University of West Indies, Barbados joins the TRANSFORM: Engaging With Young People for Social Change project as a research assistant under the supervision of Dr. Claudia Mitchell and Dr. Blane Harvey. She is also working closely with Shiqing Gong, a PhD student at the Department of Integrated Studies in Education, to contribute to research on youth engagement in gender-transformative climate justice. The project examines how youth, particularly young women and girls in the Global South, are at the forefront of climate action, using justice-oriented and intersectional approaches to drive change.

It explores how gender is integrated into youth-led climate initiatives and how these efforts are creating new forms of activism while confronting systemic social inequalities. Shannon's work will support this research by investigating how young people understand, navigate and lead transformative climate justice within their local contexts.

Shannon Weekes is well positioned to take up this internship as part of the Queen Elizabeth Scholars program managed through McGill's Department of Equity, Ethics, and Policy. Shannon is a dedicated Barbadian development practitioner with a strong academic and professional background in environmental sustainability. She holds a BSc. in Environmental Science and Biology and is currently pursuing an MSc. in Natural Resources and Environmental Management at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, specializing in Tropical, Coastal and Marine Management.

Shannon has consistently championed youth engagement and environmental advocacy, both locally and regionally. As a former National Coordinator of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN) in Barbados, she played a pivotal role in organizing national coastal cleanups, supporting citizen science, and contributing to environmental policy dialogue. She has represented youth on national committees, contributed to stakeholder consultations, and participated in international forums, always advocating for meaningful youth inclusion in decision-making spaces.

Her work reflects a deep commitment to sustainable development, climate resilience, and community empowerment. Outside of her professional life, Shannon enjoys exploring new places, connecting with diverse people, and discovering great food and conversation. She remains passionate about creating a just and sustainable future for generations to come.

Shannon's project this summer, attached to Dr. Harvey's Sustainability for Leadership and Learning Lab promises to be an exciting one for forging new links between and among gender transformation, climate justice, and well-being.

Education for Mental Health Resilience Office (EMHR) Updates

The Education for Mental Health Resilience (EMHR) office within the Faculty of Education is committed to leveraging education to promote well-being. Here are some exciting highlights from our latest projects and activities:

Adjustment to University Life and Transition (AdULT) Project

The Adjustment to University Life and Transition (AdULT) project is a three-year initiative which aims to help incoming undergraduate students thrive as they navigate the transition to university life at McGill. With generous funding and support from the Rossy Foundation, this collaborative initiative between McGill's Faculty of Education and the Office of the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) reflects a shared commitment to supporting student success during the often challenging transitional period of starting university. The AdULT project seeks to share practical information, evidence-based strategies, and tailored guidance across key areas of university adjustment including academic life, social life, "adulthood", as well as mental health and well-being.

Collaborations

Daniel and Monica Gold Centre for Early Childhood Development: The EMHR office have created and shared digital professional development resource packages to equip early childhood educators with practical tools to support emotion regulation in the early childhood classroom. The multimedia professional development package includes: (1) a brief professional development video featuring evidence-based strategies and expert advice; (2) a summary sheet for video contents for ongoing

reference; (3) a strategy guide to apply evidence-based strategies in classroom contexts; (4) a list of additional resources & readings; as well as (5) a supplemental video featuring expert tips. All consistent with the goal of helping children get the best start in life!

Concordia Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD): The EMHR office recently completed the dissemination and evaluation of another key digital outreach initiative aimed at supporting student mental health and well-being. This collaboration involved the sharing of evidence-based strategies for stress management in multimedia formats for students accessing services at Concordia's Access Center for Students with Disabilities. Preliminary results demonstrated students' high satisfaction with the strategies as well as the various modalities (i.e., infographic, video, workshop) through which this information was shared. Additionally, findings revealed effectiveness in decreasing student stress, as well as increasing healthy coping and well-being. These findings underscore that delivery modality matters, and that student preferences, satisfaction, and accessibility considerations must be central in designing campus-wide mental health support programming.

Innovate to Elevate Design Thinking Challenge: The EMHR office was proud to contribute to McGill University's participation in the Innovate to Elevate Design Thinking Challenge; a dynamic, inter-university initiative aimed at reimagining mental health and performance support for Canadian student-athletes. This collaborative challenge brought together interdisciplinary teams from the University of Ottawa, McGill University, and Bishop's University, comprising student-athletes, coaches, mental performance consultants, mental health researchers, and varsity and administrative staff. Guided by the principles of Design Thinking, participants engaged in immersive field research, synthesized insights, and developed rapid prototypes to address the central question: How might we better support the mental well-being and performance of student-athletes across Canada?

The challenge culminated in a final summit, where teams presented their innovative, practical, and scalable solutions, fostering a shared commitment to enhancing student-athlete support systems nationwide.

EMHR Office as a Fieldwork Site for M.Ed.

Students: The EMHR office now serves as a fieldwork site for students in McGill's M.Ed. programs enrolled in EDPI 539, EDPI 540, and EDPI 656D1-656D2. Students engage in hands-on professional development activities focused on knowledge mobilization, interviewing, and digital outreach to support mental health and well-being in educational settings. As part of their fieldwork, students contribute to the development of educational materials across a range of EMHR projects, gaining valuable experience in translating research into practice. Interested in completing your fieldwork with us? Reach out at emhr@mcgill.ca

Key Activities

National recognition for the RESST Program: The Regulating Emotions and Stress for pre-Service Teachers (RESST) program has been evaluated at McGill with high ratings of satisfaction and significant benefits for stress, coping, and well-being outcomes. The study presenting the results of the evaluation of the RESST program at McGill was awarded the 2025 Guy-Bégin prize by the Société Québécoise pour la Recherche en Psychologie (SQRP) in the education and development category. Dr. Bilun Naz Böke, first author of the study and co-director of the EMHR office gave a talk titled "Deux pour un: Efficacité d'un programme obligatoire de gestion du stress personnel et scolaire pour les enseignants en formation" and accepted the award on May 30th, 2025 during the 47nd annual conference of SQRP.



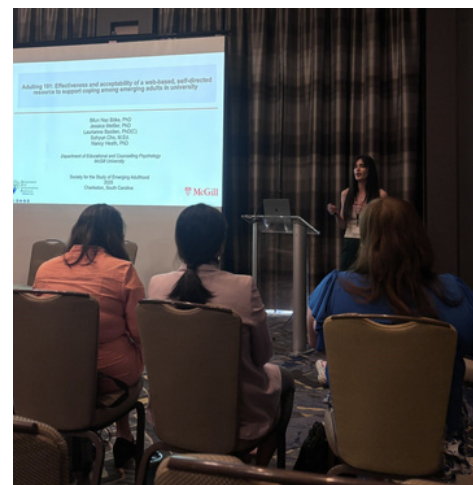
Dr Bilun Naz Bøke accepting the Guy-Bégin Prize at the 47th annual conference of the Société Québécoise pour la Recherche en Psychologie (SQRP) held in Saint-Sauveur, Quebec.

EMHR office at Acfas 2025: Members of the EMHR Office; Bilun Naz Böke and Laurianne Bastien participated in a panel discussion at the 92nd Congrès de l'Association francophone pour le savoir (Acfas). The session titled "Pour une culture favorable à la santé mentale étudiante en enseignement supérieur : miser sur le développement et la mobilisation des connaissances avec les personnes étudiantes" brought together representatives from Université de Sherbrooke, TELUQ, and Concordia University. As part of the knowledge mobilization axis of the Observatoire sur la santé mentale étudiante en enseignement supérieur (OSMÉES), the panel focused on fostering a culture of mental health in higher education through collaborative knowledge development and mobilization with students.



EMHR Office members, Laurianne Bastien (left) and Bilun Naz Bøke (right), present as part of a panel at the 92nd Congrès de l'association francophone pour le savoir (Acfas) held in Montreal, Quebec.

EMHR study results shared at SSEA conference: EMHR office completed the evaluation of our self-directed multimedia website providing university students with resources to support their stress management and coping capacity. Results showed that students who engaged with the resource showed significant improvements in stress and coping outcomes and reported high satisfaction with both the content and the user experience. These results were presented in a talk titled "Adulting 101: Effectiveness and Acceptability of a Web-Based, Self-Directed Resource to Support Coping Among Emerging Adults in University" at the 12th Annual Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood (SSEA) Conference in Charleston, South Carolina!



Co-director, Bilun Naz Bøke, presents EMHR office study results at the 12th annual Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood conference in Charleston, South Carolina.

Prepared by: B.N Böke, L. Bastien, & N. Heath



***Bilun Naz Böke, PhD,** is an academic associate and co-director of Education for Mental Health Resilience initiatives within the Faculty of Education.*



Laurianne Bastien, PhD(c), is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and a senior member of the DAIR research team leading on the SSHRC-funded Insight Development Grant project.



Nancy Heath, PhD, is a Distinguished James McGill Professor and director of Education for Mental Health Resilience initiatives within the Faculty of Education. In addition, Prof. Heath is the director of the Development and Intrapersonal Resilience (DAIR) research team.

Participants' cellphilms reflected on many important topics, ranging from challenging gender norms to fighting for climate justice, confronting colonialism, and addressing the impacts of wars. Through their powerful visual narratives, these filmmakers demonstrated that meaningful dialogue and authentic human connection are essential in times when silence threatens to overshadow the voices that need to be amplified most.



Still from *My Roots*, Children's category winner

The festival took place on June 19th with attendees joining from across the globe. Claudia Mitchell began by speaking about the urgency of this year's theme and how it emerged from pressing global poly-crises. She framed the festival as a platform for urgent voices and stories, inviting participants to share what they wanted the world to hear, resulting in one of the largest and most globally diverse gatherings in the festival's history. Dr. Joshua Schwab-Cartas, one of the festival's original co-creators and Assistant Professor in the Art Education at NSCAD University, delivered the keynote address reflecting on the cellphilming movement's evolution from a small classroom gathering to a global platform. He shared the inaugural festival's promotional video, describing cellphilming as a movement that breaks silence and sparks dialogue. Drawing from his work documenting Zapotec cultural practices, he emphasized how cellphilming preserves traditions while connecting generations. Dr. Anne Cockcroft, researcher with Aproche, a project of CIET-PRAM, introduced the festival's new Older Adults category, demonstrating how elderly participants in Botswana used cellphilming to document their experiences with healthcare access.

III. Cellphilms

The 13th International Cellphilming Festival Report

How can we connect in a disconnected world? In search of answers, storytellers from all over the world gathered to participate in the 13th McGill International Cellphilming Festival to respond to this very prompt and address this year's theme - "Conversations and Connections: This is Not a Time for Silence".

This year's submissions were reviewed by three judges: Nicole Guan from the Participatory Cultures Lab who presented the Children's and Older Adults categories, Joan Summers, Chief Operating Officer at CODE who introduced the Youth Category, and Dr. Brett Parry, instructor in Media and Communication Studies at the University of Fraser Valley, who presented the Individual and Group categories.



Still from *Dear Future Me*, Youth category winner.

This year's festival saw submissions from 21 countries spanning 6 continents. Bringing in cellphilms from diverse ages, contexts, and perspectives across the globe made for spoke to the festival mission. That is, to connect communities and spark conversations about the issues that matter most.



The 13th ICF in Summary: The Awards

Children's Category

Winner: *My Roots* by Maryam Atiku, Eleorah Nicholas, David Zebulun, Atiku Yakubu of Bauchi State Nigeria
Honourable Mention 1: *Birraring* by Max Adams Schleser and Elfie Adams Schleser of Australia

Honourable Mention 2: *Un monde meilleur avec l'album de vie* by Sophie An et Laura Guinand, Children of Foyer ClairMatin of France

Honorable Mention 3: *Comment protéger les animaux?* by Baran, Kamelia, Matilda, and Seigna of Ukraine, Columbia, and Iran

Youth Category

Winner: *Dear Future Me* by Erica Yoshikawa of Japan

Honourable Mention 1: *Cutting Edge Forestry* by Adrienne Boyd of Canada

Honourable Mention 2: *Life on a Leaf* by Melissa Bilodeau of Canada

Individual Category

Winner: *Shatter the Silence* by Leena Abdel-Dayem of Canada

Honourable Mention 1: *Roots* by Timea Nagy of Hungary

Honourable Mention 2: *Slow Down and Get Curious* by Katya Teague of Canada

Group Category

Winner: *Used and Abused* by Ellah Tambalaweko, Jackline Kamungwe, Dennis Zulu, Ellah Tambalawenko, Eunice Banda, Gift Lusewa, Paul Banda, Jacobs Daniel of Malawi

Honourable Mention 1: *RED ANT Awareness Video on Chaupadi* by RED ANT Youths (Hema Balayar, Janaki Mahai, Santosh Timalisina, Sangita Simkhada) of Nepal

Honourable Mention 2: *From Waste to Awareness: Climate Justice and Human Relationships* by Dr Fatoumata, Abdoulaye Abou, Boureima H, Abdoulaye Ibrahim, Aminata T, Mahalmadane, Balkissa M, Aicha BS, Aminata K, Wassilatou, Assitan, Saran, Abdoulaye D, Demba, and Lassana C of Mali

Older Adults Category

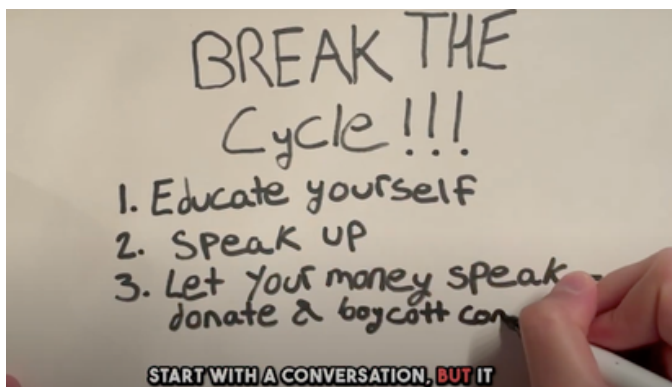
Winner: *We would like to be treated well by health services* by Joseph Nkgwe, Katlego Sethibe, Kebonyemodisa Setsiba, Maabe Phale, Maima Kiki, Otshidile Tiro, Ramonyana Motsuri, Segwete Mmesi of Botswana

Honourable Mention 1: *As Old people, We Need to be Treated on Time* by Agnes Modise, Gabane Bose, Gadifele Mokotedi, Kelebogile Leiso, Lorato Lejage, Motshabi Sennye, Olebogeng Tiro, Regina Letlole of Botswana



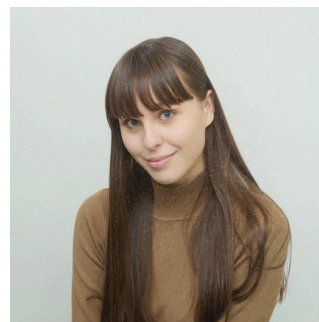
Still from Used and Abused, Group category winner.

The festival drew overwhelming participation, with creators across all categories sharing valuable insights about their work. Particularly moving was the discussion with the children who created "Comment protéger les animaux ?" as they proudly demonstrated the animal masks they crafted for their cellphilm, explaining how they were inspired by witnessing suffering animals in their daily lives: abandoned cats, squirrels hit by cars, and starving animals. The youth category winner offered insights on their creative choices for "Dear Future Me," revealing how they deliberately used simple animal-like characters and animation to create space for personal interpretation and emotional connection. In a powerful thank you video, the RED Youth team, honored in the group category, provided deeper context about their work against the harmful practice of Chaupadi, emphasizing their commitment to fighting for dignity, justice, and the protection of sexual and reproductive rights.



Still from Shatter the Silence, Individual Category Winner

By Sasha Uktina



Sasha Uktina is an undergraduate student in Political Science and International Development at McGill University with a strong interest in education, community engagement, and social impact. Sasha is passionate about finding creative ways to bring people together and contribute to meaningful initiatives.

Through the Lens of “Conversations and Connections”: A Reflection on Cellphilm Image-Making

“And maybe that’s the magic of cellphilming,” stated Joshua Shwab-Cartas, “it invites us into each other’s lives, not as tourists, but as witnesses. It challenges us to slow down, to listen. It reminds us that lived experiences are knowledge, that emotion is data, and that connection is political.” Over 60 attendees from around the world— Participatory Cultures Lab staff new and old, the festival’s community of scholars and friends, winners and participants— listened attentively to the keynote address opening the 13th International Cellphilm Festival. Schwab-Cartas’ words perfectly articulated how the 13th ICF’s theme, *Conversations and Connections: This is not a time for silence*, spoke directly to the transformative, relational, and active properties of images and image-making.

While the videos themselves may have only played across computer screens, this year we were reminded, more than ever, that cellphilms are in-the-world practices—ones which transform through and by their dynamic, imagistic processes of making, sharing, and watching. Schwab-Cartas beautifully summarizes how the mediative and transformative properties of the image translate directly to political and social impacts: “[By] capturing [our stories] on a cell phone screen we are saying: this matters, we matter, our ways of knowing are not relics, they are blueprints, in fact, for the future— for a different future”. This year, to film became to act— and even more, to act with others.

As a theme, *Conversations and Connections* functioned reflexively. It emphasized cellphilming not merely as creative production, but as a social agent that shapes how we engage in the world and connect across diverse experiences. The overwhelmingly political, urgent, and emotional submissions demonstrate how, faced with such a theme, participants were made to meaningfully reflect on and engage with the full potentials of image-making. This year, it was not only scholars of the cellphilming method who engaged with the knowledge that image-making is not passive documentation. Rather, participants from over twenty countries— aged as young as five and as old as ninety— reflected on cellphilming as an action that affects change in the world. They were propelled into engaging with the process of image creation, explicitly aware of its potential to alter another’s perspective. The thematic and energetic unification of the submissions attests to how *Conversations and Connections* engaged the relational nature of the image. By inviting participants to create cellphilms that speak to this theme, we invited the community to explore the layered relationality of image-making itself. And... participants delivered! The festival was dynamic, not only as the films themselves brimmed with action and emotion, but as it saw impressively high engagement.

Common topics across all submissions included Indigeneity, decolonization, gender equality, women's empowerment, and economic inequality. As well, we saw some of the world’s most urgent topics distinguished as winners and honourable mentions, including colonialism and imperialism, war and humanitarian crises, and climate crisis and environmental justice. Our internal analysis of the festival illuminated prevailing themes of breaking tradition and pushing past social stagnation, as many cellphilms denounced silence, depicted the effects of turning a blind eye to institutional and structural injustice, and demonstrated why and how one should take action. As such, the festival took on a determined and cathartic tone; voices spoke with clarity and conviction as the imagistic became a sphere of liberative expression.

During the screening, a representative from nearly every winner and honourable mention spoke live, giving valuable insight into their processes. The winner of the Youth category stated, explaining her motivations behind the emotion piece, “I hope one thing you take away from my video (Shatter the Silence) is that privilege isn’t just something to be thankful for, it’s something that carries responsibility... I have a duty to care, to act, and to NOT be complicit”. Creator input enriched not only the cellphilms themselves, but spoke to the conviction and passion behind the camera. In response, friends and attendees poured compliments into the chat, commenting praises describing how they were moved to a state of awe and speechlessness— “OMG, I am wordless, this cellphilms was so powerful”— and calling for the cellphilms to be “broadcasted everywhere!”.

In many ways, I believe the high-energy of the 13th ICF can be credited to the reflexive quality of the theme. It was not only a call-out for submissions, but also a call-back to what makes cellphilming, or even image-making in general, so special— that by cellphilming, one is acting.

Schwab-Cartas also closed out his keynote address by unifying images, image-making, and action: “And so I return to this year's theme, ‘not a time for silence’—let's honor that, not just as a slogan, but as a call to action. Let's keep making films that ask those hard questions, that hold space for joy, that confront systems of harm, and that make space for wonder, laughter, and hope...”

By Lauren Frasca



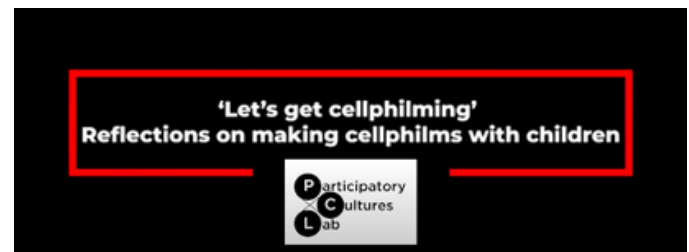
Lauren Frasca is an undergraduate student in Anthropology and Religious Studies at McGill University with a focus on psychological and medical anthropology. Lauren is interested in visual and digital methods, researching art as knowledge production, and hopes to pursue graduate studies in anthropology.

IV. Publications

‘Let’s Get Cellphilming’ By Hossein Khodadadi

Let’s Get Cellphilming: Reflections on Making Cellphilms with Children is a short documentary that explores why cellphilming practices matter—especially in a world that urgently needs fresh, authentic narratives. It shows how a smartphone becomes an open invitation for those routinely ignored—children, teens, elders, everyday bystanders—to speak their truth.

Shot entirely on an iPhone, *Let’s Get Cellphilming* blends footage of children making their own films with reflections from researchers, filmmakers, and community scholars. This meta-story reveals how a simple cellphone can merge digital literacy with equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility to spur real social change. Drawn from hours of dialogue, the film urges us to pause, hear the quiet stories we overlook, and amplify them—so grab your phone, hit record, and help break the silence.



Filmmaker: Hossein Khodadadi

Running time: 10 minutes 37 seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4qs2TExsKw

The film builds on more than a decade of work with cellphilming at McGill’s Participatory Cultures Lab (PCL), led by Distinguished James McGill Professor Claudia Mitchell. Home to the McGill International Cellfilm Festival dating back to 2013, the PCL brings together researchers, doctoral and masters students, undergraduate interns and NGOs collaborate to advance visual and other participatory methods—digital storytelling, photovoice, cellphilming, collage, and related arts-based techniques—for collecting, analyzing, and mobilizing research data. The lab addresses social-justice concerns—including youth sexuality, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, food security, poverty, and children’s ethics and agency—championing young people’s right to express themselves on matters that are of their concern.

Pathways2Equity Video Documentaries: Re-writing the Masculinities Script with Indigenous Boys & Young Men

***Pathways2Equity* is a project Supported by The Department for Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). P2E is a girl-informed project, focusing on work with Indigenous boys and young men in communities across Canada. The project takes up youth-led, Indigenous-Focused, gender-transformative, and arts-based approaches in order to challenge gender norms and address gender based violence.**

Re-writing the Masculinities Script with Indigenous Boys & Young Men (16 Minutes Version)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvVtMPjU41c>

As part of the arts-based programming of the Pathways2Equity (P2E) research project, this documentary, "Re-writing the Masculinities Script with Indigenous Boys & Young Men" (16 Minutes Version) highlights how arts-based work is being harnessed by youth groups in three sites: Treaty 6, Saskatchewan; Rankin Inlet, Nunavut; and Eskasoni Mi'kmaq Nation, Nova Scotia, to address the harmful gender norms that fuel gender-based violence.

The documentary includes interviews with young Indigenous participants, Indigenous and non-Indigenous adult facilitators of healthy masculinities programming, and researchers. It showcases the writing and performing of rap music as an useful and creative avenue for the young men in Nunavut and Saskatchewan to express themselves

authentically, underscores the strong value young men hold towards having non-judgmental spaces to connect with their culture and engage in arts-based activities, and highlights their support for the Pathways2Equity program and its positive impact on fostering personal growth and stronger relationships in their communities.



Additionally, the documentary features facilitators and their reflections on supporting healthy masculinities programming, creating safe spaces for expression and community, and challenging harmful stereotypes. Notably, they underscore the importance of mentorship, representation, and peer role models during their work with young men.



These testimonies provide valuable insights for individuals and organizations aspiring to support the healthy development of young men in their community, and the Pathways2Equity project and resources are part of a broader "ripple effect" that contributes to breaking cycles of violence and oppression.

Re-writing the Masculinities Script with Indigenous Boys & Young Men (5 Minutes Version)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeqPelx1UeM>

"Re-writing the Masculinities Script with Indigenous Boys & Young Men" is a short documentary-style video developed through the Pathways2Equity (P2E) research project. The video includes interviews with young Indigenous participants from youth groups: The Butterfly Effect Collective (Treaty 6, Saskatchewan), Boys Expressing Themselves through Art (Rankin Inlet, Nunavut), and Break the Silence (Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Nation, Nova Scotia).

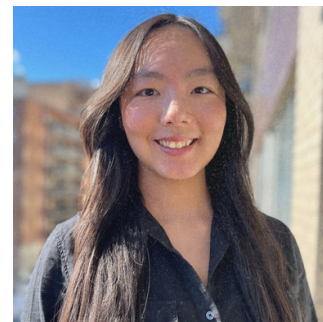


Interviews with youth highlight the impact of the Pathways2Equity project and how it created non-judgmental spaces with opportunities for young men to connect with their culture and engage in arts-based activities. These activities have helped them process traumatic experiences, empathize with their peers, relinquish harmful perceptions of masculinity, and build their own identities. P2E programming strengthens relationships and the sense of community between participants, allowing them to reflect on past actions and experiences and express emotions.



These testimonies showcase “connection” as crucial for promoting healthy masculinities. Through the support of facilitators and role models, adults can provide opportunities for young men to engage with each other, form peer mentorship relationships, and become supportive resources to one another as they work together to dismantle damaging, stereotypical expectations of masculinity in their lives. The video also shows a shared desire among participants for the program to continue, as they credit the project with directly influencing their personal growth and improved well-being. Thus, the Pathways2Equity project and resources form part of a broader “ripple effect” that contributes to breaking cycles of violence and oppression.

By Nicole Guan

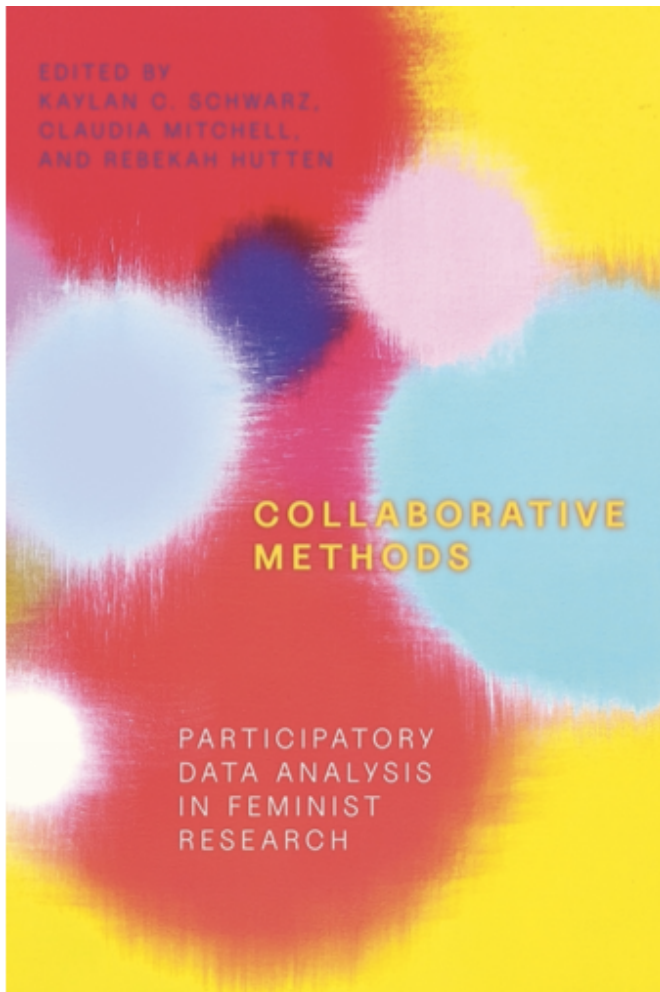


***Nicole Guan** is studying English Literature and is interested in the intersection of education and literature as well as education law. Formerly an intern at the Participatory Cultures Lab, she is currently working as a Research Assistant at PATHWAYS2EQUITY and WAGE.*

New In 2025!

Collaborative Methods: Participatory Data Analysis in Feminist Research

Collaborative Methods explores the intersections between participatory data analysis and feminist research, two traditions that complement each other but are rarely examined together.



The chapters highlight two key approaches: methods where participants help analyze the data they contributed to, and non-hierarchical, collaborative methods involving research teams. Contributors demonstrate how to choose an approach that best aligns with one's research questions, study context, and participant availability and interest. They also encourage scholars to thoroughly describe their methodological designs, decision points, and processes rather than keeping the focus only on their findings. Through a feminist lens, the authors present a range of perspectives, resisting a singular approach. Instead, they engage with the fluid and contested nature of feminist research, each author drawing on different feminist traditions to shape their work. The volume encourages scholars to think critically about the co-production of knowledge, making it an essential resource for social science researchers and students who are invested in feminist and participatory methodologies.

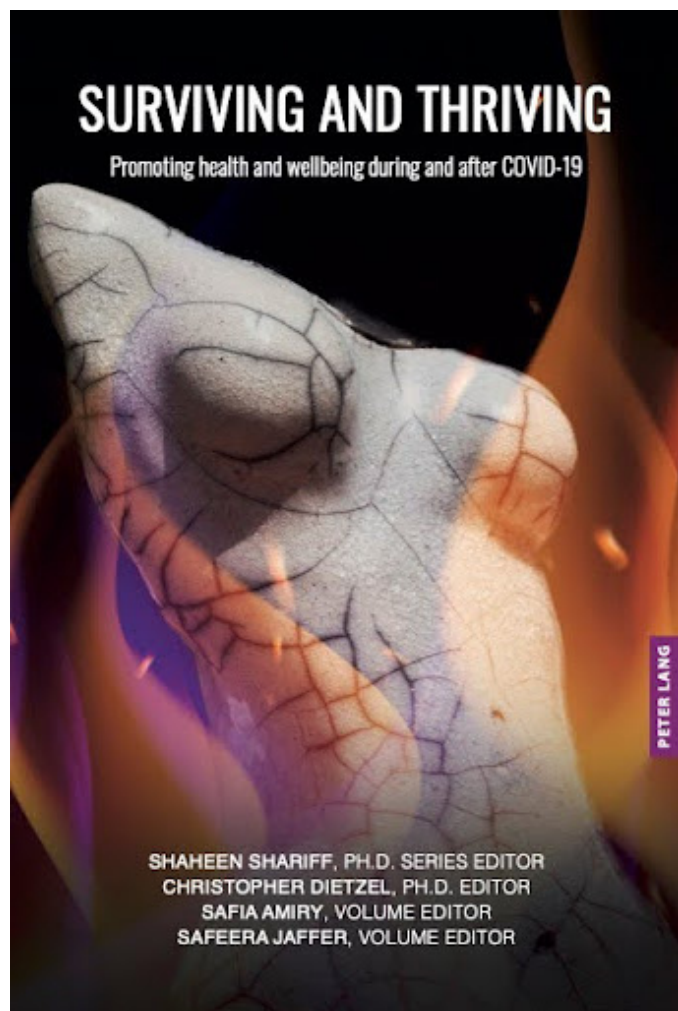
Contributors: Nesa Bandarchian Rashti, Emma C. Cognet, L. Rebeca Esquivel, Jessica Fields, Sarah Flicker, Geetanjali Gill, Nadha Hassen, Rebekah Hutten, Terra Léger-Goodes, Meegwun Logan, Jillian Grace Goyeau, Catherine Malboeuf-Hurtubise, Mitchell McLarnon, Claudia Mitchell, Milka Nyariro, Kathryn Kendal Ryan, Kaylan C. Schwarz, Grace Skahan, Catherine Vanner, Angelina Weenie, Dawn Wiseman, 4theRecord Team.

Table of Contents

Participatory, Collaborative, and Feminist Data Analysis / Rebekah Hutten, Kaylan C. Schwarz, and Claudia Mitchell

1. Collaborative "Sensemaking": Picturing a Feminist, Anti-Racist, Community-Based Participatory Action Research Dissertation — *Nadha Hassen and Sarah Flicker*
2. Participatory Data Analysis in a Photovoice Project with Refugee Girls — *Nesa Bandarchian Rashti*
3. Sculpting Possibilities for Feminist Praxis: Participatory Data Analysis and Clay- Elicitation with Young Men Involved in Gender-Based Violence Prevention — *Grace Skahan*
4. Multi-Participatory Data Analysis: A Feminist Approach for Working with Transient Populations — *Milka Nyariro*
5. Pivoting to Participatory Data Analysis in Transnational, Collaborative, NGO-Academic Research — *Geetanjali Gill*
6. 4theRecord: An Intersectional Feminist Approach to Collaborative Data Analysis — *Sarah Flicker, Nadha Hassen, Jessica Fields, and the 4theRecord Team*
7. Collective Data Analysis as Feminist Methodology: Reflecting Through Research Memos on Education about MMIWG2S in Canada — *Catherine Vanner, Angelina Weenie, Claudia Mitchell, Meegwun Logan, Jillian Grace Goyeau, and Kathryn Kendal Ryan*
8. What Do Teachers Need in the Context of Climate Change? Reflecting on Feminist, Interdisciplinary, and Collaborative Survey Design and Analysis Processes — *Mitchell McLarnon, Dawn Wiseman, Catherine Malboeuf-Hurtubise, L. Rebeca Esquivel, Terra Léger-Goodes, and Emma C. Cognet*
9. Feminist Endings: Designing a Seat Around the Table — *Claudia Mitchell, Rebekah Hutten, and Kaylan C. Schwarz*

Surviving and Thriving: Promoting Health and Well- being During and After COVID-19



We are pleased to announce that the edited collection, *Surviving and Thriving: Promoting Health and Well-being During and After COVID-19*, is set to be published in July, 2025.

A new iMPACTS publication, *Surviving and Thriving* is volume 3 in Professor Shaheen Shariff's edited series with Peter Lang, titled "Confronting Systemic Omissions and Impacts in Educational Policy". It was edited by Dr. Christopher Dietzel, Safia Amiry, and Safeera Jaffer and aims to analyze the health inequities and inequalities that were exposed and intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic

through an intersectional and health justice-oriented lens. As well, it presents evidence-based recommendations that could be applied to various sectors of society.

Table of Contents

1. A Disaster Within a Disaster: Homelessness During the COVID-19 Pandemic — *Jeff Karabanow, Jean Hughes, Haorui Wu, and Catherine Leviten-Reid*
2. A Reflexive Account of Facilitating an Online Study of the Pandemic Experiences of Canadian Youth Using Cellphilms — *Grace Skahan, S. M. Hani Sadati, Shannon Roy, and Claudia Mitchell*
3. "They're Kind of Losing It": Young Perfectionists' Mental Health Experiences During the First COVID-19 Lockdown — *Dawn Zinga, Danielle S. Molnar, Melissa Blackburn, and Natalie Tacuri*
4. Disclosures of Child Maltreatment Through Computer-Mediated Communication: A Call to Action — *Olivia Leslie Holden, Annie Yun An Shiau, Shayla Chilliak, Victoria Talwar, and Shanna Williams*
5. Recommendations to Mitigate Future Pandemic Impacts on Health Professions Education: Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Pandemic — *Kelly Lackie, Neda Alizadeh, Mark Embrett, Simon Field, Jennifer Lane, Marion Brown, Diane MacKenzie, Bright Huo, Kathleen MacMillan, and Ruth Martin-Misener*

V. Final Pages

Art on the Move

Imagining Connection in a Hospital School

What happens when students in a hospital school become co-curators of their own stories? This past year, I led an arts-based education project called HEAR_T C_ART at Seoul National University Children's Hospital School. The idea was simple at first: to create a space where students could make and share art that reflected their imaginations, memories, and feelings. But after the initial project was completed in 2023, something more mobile and alive began to take shape.

The co-creators of HEAR_T C_ART and I thought: What if their creations could travel—beyond the classroom walls, through hallways, into treatment rooms, even into the hands of other students they might never meet? With this question in mind, we co-designed a “moving exhibition,” transforming a hospital cart into an ever-evolving gallery on wheels. It carried student drawings, collaborative sculptures, and personal artifacts through the hospital, stopping in different floors of the children’s hospital and gathering new meaning with each stop.

In a setting where many pediatric patients come and go due to treatment schedules, the cart offered continuity. The mobile exhibition wall held traces of each student’s presence and allowed new students to add their voices over time. It became more than just a display—it was a conversation piece, a traveling journal, a shared art wall moving through the hospital.



A mobile exhibition installed in the hallway of the children's hospital displays students' collaborative artworks under the theme of place, memory, and imagination.

Throughout this project, I found myself thinking less about outcomes and more about rhythms and process. What rhythms of care, creativity, and interruption shape learning in hospital schools? How can art education adapt to follow these rhythms rather than resist them? HEAR_T C_ART taught me that sometimes, the most meaningful exhibitions don't hang on walls. They roll, pause, adapt, and carry the stories of those who can't always stay in one place. And in doing so, they remind us that learning, like healing, is often about movement, not arrival.

This year, HEAR_T C_ART continues to move—both physically and in spirit. Since April 2025, I've been working in Korea with a new group of students and a refreshed curriculum. For the first time, we're expanding the exhibition beyond the hospital walls to a gallery space just across the street. This external venue invites a wider audience to encounter the students' stories in a new light. As we prepare for this next phase, we carry forward the same values—flexibility, participation, and visibility—but with a broader sense of community. The cart still moves through the hospital, but now it also points outward, offering windows into the lived experiences of young patients. In doing so, HEAR_T C_ART continues to reimagine what learning, sharing, and healing can look like when art is allowed to travel.



The HEAR_T C_ART exhibition positioned between pediatric wards.



Students contribute to the growing map wall titled “Our Map,” where each tile adds a unique story of a personal place.



Student interacts with the exhibition, highlighting the accessibility and mobility of the HEAR_T C_ART display.



Close-up view of the introductory panel and artworks made during the Fall 2024 hospital school art sessions.



An interactive section allows participants to rearrange pieces of the collaborative map, engaging with each other's memories and drawings.



A young patient explores the mirrored artwork at the bottom of the moving exhibition wall.

By Ji Yoon Chung

Ji Yoon Chung, the graduate student representative on the IHDW Advisory Committee, is a PhD student in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University. Her research explores inclusive, responsive approaches to integrating arts education in hospital schools. Based in Seoul, Montreal, and currently Albuquerque, she teaches visual arts at Seoul National University Children's Hospital School. Her arts-based education project has received support from the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture, Arts Council Korea, and the Korea Arts and Culture Education Service.

Connect with the Institute for Human Development and Well- being **Ste 930 , 2001 McGill College Montreal, QC** **H3A 1G1**



mailto:
ihdw.education@mcgill.ca



Website:
www.mcgill.ca/ihdw



<https://www.facebook.com/ihdw.mcgill/>

*This edition of the IHDW newsletter was
edited by Lauren Frasca*

For further information
contact Claudia Mitchell at:
claudia.mitchell@mcgill.ca



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