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Chapter photography by **Yasmine Atallah, Xuejiao Long, Liam Ragan, and Kaitlin Wong**

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# Notes on Contributors

**Yasmine Atallah** is a U3 Political Science student with a minor in International Development Studies. Of Lebanese origin, born and raised in Dubai, the Montreal international scene felt like home to her. It is this constant exposure to diverse things that encouraged her to focus on International and Comparative Politics, as well as helped her build a passion for photography with outside-the-box perspectives. She has a growing love for arts, languages and culture, and welcomes any tips of the “What to do with your life after your graduate” variety.

**Hannah Downard** is in her third year at McGill University, pursuing a Joint Honours degree in Political Science and History with a minor in Communication Studies. Hannah’s commitment to women’s rights and her aim to delineate inequalities in contemporary Canadian society drove her to investigate the state of women’s access to abortion care in New Brunswick. She hopes that the publication of this paper will allow a greater understanding of the unjust barriers to choice in New Brunswick and ultimately lead to action toward a remedy.

**Olivia A. Kurajian** is in her final semester of an Honors Bachelor of Arts degree from McGill University in Montreal. She is an American citizen born in Detroit who has lived in several US States and now resides in Canada as a landed immigrant. Olivia is especially interested in borderlands and migration in the North American context. As an emerging scholar, she hopes to work primarily in the fields of oral and public history paying particular attention to how discourses of identity and belonging are shaped by time and space.

**Xuejiao Long** is a U2 civil engineering student. She likes photography and uses it to record the beautiful world and her life. Xuejiao is interested in research about seismic testing for the Greater Montreal Area.

**Eliza McCullum** is in her final semester at McGill with a major in Political Science and minors in History and Canadian Studies. She is particularly interested in west coast women’s and Indigenous histories and Canadian constitutional studies. Her paper “‘Testing the Claims of Names’: A Historical Overview of the Development of Manhood Suffrage in Victorian Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia” was previously published in Volume 10 of Canadian Content.

**Étienne Poirier** est un étudiant de troisième année originaire de Québec. Il termine présentement une double spécialisation en histoire et en littérature française. Ses intérêts de recherche portent principalement sur les liens entre ces deux disciplines et sur la façon dont l'histoire influence les œuvres de fiction. Il entrera à la maîtrise en littérature française à l'Université McGill à l'automne 2019.

**Liam Ragan** is a wildlife photographer currently in his last semester studying conservation management here at McGill. While he enjoys photographing the natural world in its entirety he is particularly drawn to owls, and is currently on a mission to see and photograph all 16 species of owls which occur in Canada. If you're interested in tracking his progress you can check out his work on his Instagram @pouncepronto.

**Mikayla Salmon-Beitel** will be graduating with an Honours degree from the McGill School of Environment this spring, with a specialization in Biodiversity and Conservation. She is especially interested in decolonizing conservation and development projects by promoting Indigenous community-led natural resource management in Canada and across the world. Mikayla is a strong advocate for environmental and social justice, hoping to advance these causes in her future academic and work pursuits, wherever her path takes her.

**Daryn Tyndale** is a U3 Honours Political Science student with a minor in Communication Studies. Her research primarily focuses on the overlap between these two disciplines, exploring how contemporary communication practices affect and uphold distributions of power. Her other interests include Aaron Sorkin dramas, collegiate a cappella, and nachos.

**Kaitlin Wong** is a second-year student studying International Development, History, and Urban Systems. Born and raised in Vancouver, she pursues a handful of artistic and academic interests. These include illustration, photography, and filmmaking, as well as taking on leadership roles in the McGill Policy Association, which also publishes content on Canadian Federal, Provincial, and Municipal issues. Her work has been published in The McGill Tribune, the McGill Policy Association, and she has been commissioned to curate holiday cards for start-ups.

# Promoting the Comparative Turn in Canadian Studies, a Foreword

Daniel Béland

*Daniel Béland is Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada and Professor of Political Science at McGill University.*

In the past decades, the field of Canadian studies has made tremendous contributions to our understanding of Canada, fostering interdisciplinary perspectives on a host of issues that matter to Canadians such as immigration, health care, gender relations, and Indigenous reconciliation. That being said, recognizing the value of these perspectives should not prevent us from acknowledging a key limitation of Canadian studies and area studies more generally, which is the limited use of comparative insight. As Munroe Eagles and Jane Koustas stressed exactly a decade ago, promoting a comparative turn in Canadian Studies is essential to move this interdisciplinary field forward.<sup>1</sup>

As these two authors alluded to, the comparative turn in the study of Canada has already taken place at the disciplinary level, where a growing number of Canada specialists have started to compare it with other countries in order to grasp what is both unique and general about their country. A striking example of this is *The Comparative Turn in Canadian Political Science*.<sup>1</sup> This book suggests that using Canada as a case study can enrich the analysis of comparative politics at the international level and vice versa. In other words, comparing and contrasting Canada with other countries is a fruitful endeavor that can make a strong contribution to academic and public knowledge about our country.<sup>2</sup> Truly, many cases are comparable to Canada, especially other advanced industrial countries such as Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Beyond these countries, we can compare Canada to low- or middle-income countries, when they have something major in common with us, such as federalism (in the cases of Brazil and India) or geographical dispersion (in the cases of China and Russia).

The advantage of studying Canada alongside other countries is that it helps people from other parts of the world become interested in Canada. As one of my mentors, John Myles, told me when I was in graduate school: people abroad are not necessarily interested in Canada, so it is important to use a comparative or theoretical lens to make them pay attention to research about this country. That way, he suggested, you can convey more clearly how Canadian realities can help them reflect on the countries and processes they are already interested in.

Yet, the comparative turn in Canadian studies is not only about learning from other countries and showing how Canada is an interesting case for people around the world who are studying specific empirical and theoretical issues. This turn should also be internal, comparing different regions of the country. For instance, when we look at public policy, we realize that the provinces and territories themselves enact and implement many policies in key areas. Therefore, focusing only or even mainly on the federal government's policy process and agenda is misleading at best. This is why, when we turn to issues such as Welfare Reform in Canada,<sup>3</sup> it is essential to compare the provinces and territories in a systematic manner.

The comparative approach is essential to get a better sense of how these policies work on the ground and how they affect Canadians in their everyday lives. Canada is not an abstract and homogenous entity but a diverse and fragmented country that is the perfect site for historically informed and interdisciplinary work grounded in both internal and international comparative perspectives. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Canadian studies must become more comparative if it wants to remain relevant both for Canadians and for people around the world who may find in aspects of Canadian life and history answers to the intellectual puzzles they seek to tackle.

## Notes

1. Munroe Eagles and Jane Koustas, *A Comparative Turn in Canadian Studies?* (Brock University and University of Buffalo—The SUNY: Institute for Transatlantic Studies in the Americas). <http://itsa.buffalo.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/50/2015/11/1AComparativeTurninCanadianStudies.pdf>.
2. Linda White, Richard Simeon, Rob Vipond and Jennifer Wallner (eds.), *The Comparative Turn in Canadian Political Science*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).
3. See, for example, Antonia Maioni, *Parting at the Crossroads: The Emergence of Health Insurance in the United States and Canada*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), which compares the development of health care systems in Canada and the United States in the post-World War II era.
4. Daniel Béland and Pierre-Marc Daigneault (eds.), *Welfare Reform in Canada: Provincial Social Assistance in Comparative Perspective*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).



# Letter from the Editors

Fresh out of last year's tenth birthday party, Canadian Content's eleventh volume proposes a revised style and original content which speak to its growth and maturation as a publication, as well as to the continued life force invigorating Canadian Studies at McGill. Circling outwards from our home institution, this year's contributors invite readers upon a truly telescopic consideration of Canada – from micro to macro and across the disciplines, these authors highlight the variety of points of view which can and must inform studies of this country.

This volume's very organisation highlights the diverse geographical spectrum that these articles propose. Thus, our volume begins with Eliza McCullum's thoughtful historical analysis of archival documents pertaining to McGill's Winter Carnival pageants before zooming out to consider, alongside Olivia Kurajian, the roles prominent Scottish fraternities have afforded to women in this city that McGill calls home. S'écartant de la métropole montréalaise proprement dite, Étienne Poirier nous invite par la suite à considérer les pratiques hétérolingues d'une chanteuse autochtone, ainsi que le jeu entre mondialisation et québécity qui s'articule dans la critique journalistique de son œuvre. Stepping outside of Quebec's borders, Hannah Downard studies the unique disparities obstructing access to abortion care in New Brunswick, while Daryn Tyndale evaluates Canadian unemployment insurance and parental leave policies in light of the ongoing quest for gender equality. Finally, Mikayla Salmon-Beitel encourages us to take a hard look at our country's actions and impact abroad, focusing particularly on Canadian mining practices and policies in Latin America. In sum, these six articles offer readers a panorama of Canada which spans the institutional, municipal, provincial, national and international scales.

Nonetheless, there are countless other ways to study and give an account of Canada and its situation in the world. Yasmine Atallah, Xuejiao Long, Liam Ragan, and Kaitlin Wong have captured decidedly artistic photographic perceptions of Canada which enrich our vision of it even further.

We congratulate our contributors for the hard work that they have put into the editorial process; getting a journal ready for publication is never an easy affair. That being said, we know that the final product will signify a lot to them, to us, and to readers.

Stubbornly multifaceted, Canada continues to merit second (third, fourth, etc.) looks. This volume answers that call.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie, Aidan, Olivier, Dune, Dharana, and Arimbi

# Queen of the Campus

The McGill Winter Carnival Queen, 1948-1969

Eliza McCullum



“St. Lawrence River in Winter”  
by Xuejiao Long

The scene of Dusty Baxter's coronation as McGill's Winter Carnival Queen in 1951 was opulent. Baxter herself sat on a throne, enveloped in a satiny cape, with a tiara perched upon her head. She and her four attendants were atop a sleigh with branches curved above them in the shape of an arch, and three men in tuxedos pulled the sleigh over the ice of the Montreal Forum with ropes. Baxter was the third winner of the campus pageant, which was held from 1948-1969, with the exception of 1952. Many North American schools held pageants during the mid-twentieth century, to the extent that Waterloo Lutheran University hosted the Miss Canadian University Pageant from 1963 onwards, with representatives from many universities competing for a national title. Indeed, McGill itself had a minimum of six pageants over the course of the twenty-two years of the Carnival Queen contest. Pageants provided the schools with the opportunity of selecting one campus beauty to show off for national acclaim (sometimes international, as in McGill's case), the students with the fun of a lighthearted election, and the women themselves with the chance to be recognized for their accomplishments in a socially acceptable manner.

In this paper I rely primarily on editions of *Old McGill* as well as *McGill Daily* articles to provide a brief overview of the format and history of the Winter Carnival and the Winter Carnival Queen pageant. I then explain who the women who won the crown were—their lives at McGill, the benefits they reaped from the competition, and the role of racialized women in the pageant. Finally, I conclude by arguing that the rise of women's liberation as part of an increasingly activist campus culture led to the end of the Carnival Queen pageant.

### **A History of McGill's Winter Carnival and Carnival Queen Pageant**

McGill's first Winter Carnival was held between February 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 1948. Originally organized by the Student Athletic Council (SAC), it was clear from the beginning that there would be no holds barred in its execution; the weekend included multiple dances, a snow sculpture competition, various winter activities, intercollegiate sporting competitions, a coronation, and a ball.

The first Carnival in 1948 offered students a five-dollar "blanket ticket" which entitled the holder entrance to all events held throughout the weekend. An alternative four-dollar ticket was offered for those who could not skip their Friday classes to make the trip to Sainte Marguerite (the Senate later declared Friday a holiday, however, and holders of the four-dollar ticket were allowed to purchase a blanket ticket for just one dollar more). Tickets

were sold around campus by the “traditional, red-blazered group of girls in the Arts and Engineering buildings” and in an “ice igloo” built by the Cosmopolitan Club.<sup>1</sup> There was a strong push in campus publications for women to purchase their own tickets. Male students were glad to spend five dollars to buy their own tickets, however the expectation of a man to also purchase one for “his best gal” posed a financial burden that most were not able or willing to bear.<sup>2</sup> Visiting male athletes provided greater incentive for women to purchase their own tickets if they were unimpressed with McGill men, as a “Date Bureau” was opened with the sole purpose of accommodating the nearly 150 “womanless men” arriving in Montreal to participate in the Carnival athletics.<sup>3</sup>

The structure of Carnival stayed fairly consistent into the 1960s: the opening Thursday saw a parade (omitted on select years), activities on Mont Royal (skating, sleigh rides, and fireworks), and a dance at the *Chalet du Mont Royal*. Though often overshadowed by the following days’ events, attendance was high: the 1951 Winter Carnival Report recorded eight to ten thousand attendees from McGill and the Montreal community.<sup>4</sup> The second day, known as “up-north-day,” involved a bus trip (included in the blanket ticket price) to a nearby ski hill—Sainte-Marguerite, Mont-Tremblant, or Saint-Adèle, depending on the year—where attendees would either ski or watch the ski meet. Back in Montreal, students attended a hockey match usually held at the Montreal Forum. Known as the Birks Cup, the game tended to pit McGill against one of its classic rivals, the University of Montreal or the University of Toronto. The rivalry element was vital; turnout had to be significant to warrant renting out the Forum. However, the actual turnout never met the 13 000-person goal, even in popular years.<sup>5</sup> A skating show followed the hockey game and would feature either a McGill club or individual ice dancers. Many years, following the ice show was a performance from the McGill musical parody group the Red and White Revue. As part of the final act, the Carnival Queen and her Princesses were brought out onto the ice. The Student Athletic Council began escorting finalists onto the ice in a convertible rather than a sleigh after a 1953 incident in which the sleigh, “because of its wooden runners, slid along for a few feet and then refused to budge.”<sup>6</sup> The Saturday night Carnival Ball wrapped up the weekend and culminated in the presentation of the season’s athletics awards by the Carnival Queen. McGill prohibited school events taking place on Sundays, so students were guaranteed a day off before the school week began.

In the first year of Carnival as well as for many years to come, there was a heavy emphasis on intercollegiate sporting meets. Though most years

included skiing (cross-country, alpine, and ski jump), Carnivals tended to feature different sports, amongst them basketball, figure skating, and speed skating. In 1948 alone, thirty-two Canadian and American universities submitted entries for the Carnival,<sup>7</sup> however due to the decline in its athletic content over time, Carnival was transferred to be within the Students' Executive Council (SEC) portfolio in 1965. Nevertheless, the one sport which endures as a key event in the Carnival schedule to this day is the hockey game. It was likely the high-profile nature of Carnival as well as the broadly attended sporting events which attracted notable figures to attend as well as participate in the weekend. It quickly became a tradition for the mayor of the time to attend at least the Forum Night (and sometimes crown the Carnival Queen), and former mayors such as Camillien Houde attended multiple years. Other significant figures to grace the weekend were Montreal Alouettes quarterback star Sam Etcheverry, who crowned Carnival Queen Nancy Cavanaugh in 1961, then-Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, who opened Carnival in the same year, and Maurice "Rocket" Richard who crowned Queen Rhoda Feinstein in 1962.

Though the Carnival Queen beauty contest began with the first Winter Carnival, it was not immediately recognized as the major highlight that it subsequently became. In 1948, it was not even included in the thirty-seven-page program, save for being listed at 10:15 p.m. after "Carnival Hop (informal)."<sup>8</sup> It was not even added to the plan for the weekend until much later in the planning process—while Council members may have discussed it amongst themselves, it was not noted in any budgets nor correspondence until December 1947. Despite this, curiosity about the selection process brewed amongst the student population. The *McGill Daily* conducted a "very informal survey of campus opinion" and found that the Queen should be a coed from any year and "besides being the most beautiful girl, she should be active in college affairs, athletic and popular with both sexes. It will be a remarkable girl who fills this bill, but for such a high honour, so it should be."<sup>9</sup> It was suggested that nominations be signed by twenty-three students and accompanied by a picture of the candidate, both of which were to be submitted to the committee—the idea was that this would eliminate the confusion that a general election would surely bring. Ultimately, however, the SAC decided that a general election held the Tuesday before Carnival was the fitting option, with the result kept secret until the coronation.

The McGill competition did not neatly conform to typical pageant categories. In her book *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World: Beauty Pageants and National Identity*, media and communications scholar Sarah Banet-Weiser di-

vides pageants in the United States into two categories: scholarship programs and “boobs and bounce” pageants.<sup>10</sup> In explaining the major difference between Miss America and Miss Universe, Banet-Weiser situates Miss America in the former category and Miss Universe in the latter, as it “never claimed to be anything but a beauty pageant ... [it made] no pretensions toward talent or education, and not ambitious expectations as to future careers.”<sup>11</sup> While most American pageants, including campus pageants, fit into one of these two categories, McGill’s Winter Carnival Queen contest fell somewhere in the middle. This was because while the primary factor that decided the winner each year was her beauty, the finalists’ accomplishments were also acknowledged and even lauded.

The nomination rules were minimal, yet difficult to unpack in hindsight: in early February 1948 *The Daily* reported that each nomination required twenty-five signatures from female *or* male undergraduates,<sup>12</sup> but by February 10<sup>th</sup> an article stated that “Artsmen, Engineers, Scientists, ALL men students, you are reminded that this is the last day for nominations for Carnival Queen,”<sup>13</sup> which implies that only male signatures were counted. As well, in 1950 it was reported that few women were nominated in that year despite a belief that many women wanted to run. In *The Daily*, this discrepancy was attributed to men refusing to sign many women’s nomination kits, though there was no limit to how many one man may sign. Further searching in *The Daily* suggests that the initial article contained a misprint, as it appears that only male students’ signatures were accepted on nomination forms.

The deadline for nominations was one week before the election. The next day, all nominated women (numbering between twenty and seventy-five) were invited to a tea where a judges’ panel would be present. The panel was comprised of members of the SAC, the SEC, faculty members, and a representative of a modelling agency who would consider the nominees based on “personal appearance, poise, graciousness, and accomplishments.”<sup>14</sup> Using these criteria, judges divided the women into five groups and chose the best one from each group—however the women who were not chosen “should not [have felt] that there [was] any reflection on their charm and appeal.”<sup>15</sup> The photos of the top five women (along with their names and the cities they were from) ran in the next week’s edition of *The Daily* “so that all students [would] have a chance to decide for themselves which of these attractive co-eds they would [have liked] to see crowned Queen of the Carnival.”<sup>16</sup> Finally, the student body voted on who it wanted as its Carnival Queen, with the franchise being extended to the whole student population. Voting booths were established at Dawson College and in major buildings around campus, and the

ballot boxes were taken unopened to an office in the Athletics Department to be counted. In addition to representatives from the Students' Society, the Women's Union, the Men's Union, *The Daily*, and the Winter Carnival Committee, each candidate sent a scrutineer to the ballot counting.<sup>17</sup>

The winner of the popular vote was kept secret—some years more successfully than others—until she was brought out by sleigh or car on the night of the hockey game, with the four runners-up as her Princesses. In 1948, the pageant organizers went so far as to sit Queen Sue Bishop on a sleigh drawn by “four spirited horses” that circled the hockey arena before she mounted the dais in an “ermine-tipped robe.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, it was established from the beginning that the queen's reign was not confined to the Carnival weekend but rather it was to be a year-long affair: “[t]he honour of the position will surround her for the rest of the college year. She will in fact remain Queen of the campus until another Carnival Queen is chosen another year.”<sup>19</sup>

Based on this selection process, it is clear that the origins of the contest were predicated upon the women's physical beauty. The finalists were not even publicly asked any soft-ball questions to give the student body an idea as to their opinions or personalities—instead the only factors influencing the vote were the Princesses' appearances, their city of origin, and any prior personal connection a voter may have to one of them. Though the McGill student population was not large in the mid-twentieth century, no Queen could have personally known the majority of voters. As well, while hometown bias may have swayed or even determined some votes, a few Queens were from places without significant representation on campus, such as small-town Manitoba and Trinidad. This shows that while Queens did not need a hometown base in order to win. As a result, the only other major factor that could have decided the winning woman was her physical beauty.

Starting in the early 1950s, though, the Princesses began to hold many scheduled appearances on campus so that students could meet them. Some were short greetings at the beginning of lectures (such as in Money and Banking and English 100), while others were set dinners at different residence cafeterias, or even photo sessions with students. It was around this time that the Princesses began to do interviews on radio stations, and by the early '60s they were regularly appearing on television and radio shows. Unfortunately, transcripts of these interviews are not available, or else they would prove to be fruitful areas of inquiry.

With the trend of candidates' voices and composure receiving a greater audience came a new McGill tradition: the mock trial. Starting in

1961, the Carnival Queen candidates were tried by law students in a mock trial which “was enough to drive any self-respecting girl back to the simple pleasures of blissful obscurity.” The 1963 trial was particularly scandalous, with *The Daily* headline reading “Princesses Convicted of ‘Carnival Knowledge.’” After the ten days of activity that followed being announced as a candidate for Carnival Queen, the five finalists had to be “their smiling, relaxed, witty, talkative, attractive, well-mannered, sincere, thoughtful and horribly composed selves”<sup>20</sup> in the face of direct questioning from up-and-coming legal minds. *The Daily* took pains to assure readers that the proceedings of the mock trial were not improper, “just filthy dirty. The charge against the girls was of not being virginal.”<sup>21</sup> As a test of their equanimity, the finalists were grilled by law students about the status of their virginity because the students had “decided as defenders of the faith that they must see to it that precious customs founded on and embedded in the years of history of this University should be preserved.”<sup>22</sup> The trial seems to have been a joke, folded into the competition as a light-hearted test of the finalists’ humour and affability, though there were also clear boundaries—the women would not be found guilty of having had sex before marriage, as that was too serious an accusation to level against them. Instead, the trial contained moments that poked fun at the women yet did not question their sexual morality, such as the following: “JUDGE: Is it true that 95% of all virgins are? POOR HARASSED PRINCESS: Are what? Could you please repeat the question? JUDGE: Certainly, my dear. Is it true that 95% of all virgins are hard of hearing?”<sup>23</sup>

While the Carnival Queen contest broadened over time to allow more space for the finalists’ voices, as far as can be ascertained from the available sources, they were not given platforms to discuss issues that mattered to them nor were they asked for their opinions. Following the first pageant, the Princesses’ academic and athletic achievements as well as their involvement in campus clubs were listed and lauded. Because of the limited platform that the queens were allowed, their actual personalities and opinions were not celebrated, rather the idea of them was. These women were indisputably beautiful, active, intelligent, charismatic, and poised, yet had little opportunity and time to express their characters and goals to the McGill community before election day. This begs the question: who were the women that McGill elected its Queen?

## **The Carnival Queens**

In researching the Queens, I looked through the *Old McGill* archives for each

Queen's photo, academic program, year of graduation, and club involvement. The yearbooks proved extremely helpful in building profiles of the earlier Queens, however the stylistic changes made to them in the early 1960s meant that equivalent information for each Queen was unfortunately not available. I also looked at *The Daily* archives to find Queens' written profiles from the final stage of the competition, however those were also inconsistent—some years, *The Daily* wrote a full biography for each finalist, while other years only printed their headshot and name. While much can be determined from a photo and a name, the following account of the Queens should by no means be viewed as exhaustive. Instead, it is intended to give an overall picture of the type of woman who won the competition, as well as a more in-depth look at a few of the remarkable women for whom I was able to find more information; particularly those who left public legacies.

Over the course of the twenty-two years of 1948–1969, McGill had only twenty-one Winter Carnival Queens due to the cancellation of Carnival in 1952, in the wake of King George VI's death. The Queens were predominantly brunette, white, Protestant, from Montreal or Ontario, and thin. They were also most commonly eighteen to twenty-one years of age. Students in first year were barred from entering the competition and while there was no upper age limit, older students seem to have self-selected out of contention. Most winners were highly academically successful as well as very involved on campus, belonging to at least two clubs as well as often participating in a campus publication. As well, many played multiple sports, though not always competitively, on a school team. In many cases, a Queen would have served on the Carnival Committee or on one of the subcommittees the year before being elected. Multiple Queens expressed a desire to pursue a graduate degree, however it is not clear how many of those who voiced such a goal actually fulfilled it in later years. The only Queen who certainly completed her graduate degree was 1958 Carnival Queen Rae Tucker (later Tucker Ram-bally), who was the only Queen to have become an academic. Tucker was also one of only three women of colour to win the crown: 1949 Queen Beryl Dickinson-Dash (later Rapier), a black woman, and 1960 Queen Vivienne Lee (later Poy), who is Hong Kong Chinese. Also notable in the list of Queens was Rhoda Feinstein (later Feinstein Rosenbloom), from Outremont, who was an active member in the Montreal Jewish community. In a following section of this paper, I will analyse the role of the Queens of colour in a different light from the white Queens, as racialized women occupied a different space in pageants than white women did in the mid-twentieth century.

While there is unfortunately little available information about the

original Carnival Queen Sue Bishop, 1950 Queen Ann Dohan embodied many of the attributes common amongst the pageant winners. She was born in Westmount, was twenty-one years old when she won, and came from a highly educated family: her father was a dentist who was formerly a staff member of the McGill Faculty of Dentistry, a brother and sister of hers were already McGill graduates, and another brother was in the second year of a law degree when Ann was coronated. At the time of her coronation, Dohan was a second year Arts student, and went on to be president of the Delta Gamma sorority the following year. During her McGill career she was active in: *The McGill Daily* from 1948-49, the Red and White Revue from '49-50, the Carnival Executive Committee from '50-'51, and the Senior Prom Committee from '51-'52. She was academically successful, having won prizes in English and History when she graduated from the Sacred Heart School of Montreal—a Catholic school, with was unusual for a Carnival Queen. Her goal, she stated, had been to go to McGill, and since she had achieved that, she was “satisfied”—but was thinking about going into Library School or Social Work, two very common avenues for women to pursue at that time. Dohan was elected by 2,062 students, which was around one quarter of the student body population at the time.<sup>24</sup>

The 1951 Carnival Queen, Dusty Baxter of Saint Lambert, Quebec, was an interesting case. While there is not a large amount of information to be found on her, what is available is rich in detail. 1951 may have been the most significant year to win Carnival Queen, as more than fifty percent of the student population voted that year, which speaks highly of Baxter's popularity, comportment, and, of course, her beauty. However, she also stands out as the only Architecture student to win the crown. She expressed a desire to pursue architecture after completion of her degree, stating that she hoped to build homes after graduation, but in an interview for the McGill School of Architecture, David Bourke (B.Arch. '54) said that she “went and married a Marine and went off to California. I don't think that she ever graduated ... I don't think she ever earned her degree. I think she got married instead.”<sup>25</sup> The first *Daily* after Baxter's coronation featured a front-page article on her titled “Future Architect ‘Dusty’ Baxter Crowned Winter Carnival Queen.” No other Queen had her degree so prominently featured in the coverage of her coronation, likely because Architecture was a highly male-dominated faculty at the time. Though Baxter did not finish her degree, the graduating architecture classes around her year had an average of one woman per class.<sup>26</sup> This made her academic achievement all the more notable.

While Baxter was notable for her academic prowess, 1954 Queen

Frankie Adams, a blonde, was remarkable for an offhand line written about her in the *Daily*. A nineteen-year-old blonde, Adams was crowned in front of an estimated five thousand spectators at the Forum. Adams was the youngest of seven children, with four sisters “much better looking than [she was].” “Though the only unwed member of the septet, she [was] non-committal on matrimonial plans.”<sup>27</sup> This latter statement was written without any comment, though it was certainly dramatic in its effect. Pageants were firmly grounded in heterosexual norms and the sexual morality of the female contestants—largely predicated on their future marriage—so for Adams to be “non-committal” (and for the *Daily* to print her statement) signified a tacit ambivalence if not acceptance of the coed’s desire to not settle down right away.

Nancy Cavanaugh, the 1961 Carnival Queen, was a second year Arts student from Toronto. She was quoted as saying that she liked Montreal and the McGill atmosphere more than Toronto because of its “more cosmopolitan flavour”<sup>28</sup>—“cosmopolitan” at McGill often meaning multicultural, as is clear from the long-running Cosmopolitan Club. Her desire to live in a more diverse place may have been influenced by the year in which she attended Neuchatel Junior College, an independent school in the French-speaking city of Neuchatel, Switzerland that offered the Ontario curriculum for students in their final year pre-university. In addition to providing Ontarians with an international setting for their last year of high school, Neuchatel offered trips to destinations in countries as varied as Italy, Spain, Africa, and Poland. Unusually, the biography following Cavanaugh’s photo in the 1963 yearbook lists no extracurricular activities before she joined the Winter Carnival Executive in 1962 as the reigning Queen. While she conformed to many of the common attributes of the Carnival Queen, she also diverged from the stereotype in a number of categories.

Cavanaugh’s successor was Rhoda Feinstein, who appears to be the only Jewish Carnival Queen. While Feinstein was not a woman of colour, the Montreal Jewish community was in a vulnerable position at the beginning of the ‘60s, with the anti-Semitism of the interwar and World War II periods fresh in its history and the threat of a Parti Québécois government in its future. According to sociologist Morton Weinfeld, the rise of French Canadian nationalism and the separatist movement in the 1960s led to the migration of a large portion of Quebec Jews to other provinces, as they were afraid of “insecurity or loss of status as English speakers should Quebec become independent.”<sup>29</sup> More specific to the McGill community, the university implemented a quota on Jewish students in 1920 that continued into the 1960s. Following the introduction of the quota, the percentage of Arts students who were Jewish

dropped from twenty-five percent down to the ten percent limit.<sup>30</sup> The quota meant that Feinstein would have had to be an exceptional applicant in order to even be admitted to McGill, and, once a student, would likely have faced other instances of discrimination. Feinstein later married Marvin Rosenbloom and the two of them became very active in the Montreal Jewish community, as is clear from the Jewish General Hospital Auxiliary of Montreal's "Rhoda Feinstein Rosenbloom Trophy" for the winner of one of their three bridge categories. Furthermore, the Marvin and Rhoda Rosenbloom Family Foundation is a registered charity that primarily donates to Federation CJA, the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation, and the Shaare Zion Congregation.<sup>31</sup> Given her last name, students would have assumed Feinstein to be Jewish and yet, despite the anti-Semitic climate, they elected her to be their Queen. Shortly following her election, the quota on Jewish students was phased out. Due to the prestige of the Carnival Queen title and the highly visible nature of a Jewish woman being selected to represent the McGill population, the school administration's choice to reverse this policy was likely influenced, to an extent, by Feinstein's coronation, as it would be bad optics for the university to continue with the quota.

The last of the Carnival Queens, Sandy Woticky, was crowned in 1969. Woticky was born in Ottawa but attended high school in Montreal. Woticky liked to swim, play tennis, go horseback riding, and drive motorcycles, wanted to travel, and wanted to end up pursuing a career in medicine. Her election caused some controversy, stirred by *The Daily* writer Mike Boone, who wrote following Carnival that the frontrunner was Wendy Tomlinson, "a tall blonde who is very attractive, reminiscent of the Beach Boys-California girls – 1962 scene. The voters proved themselves 10 years behind the times by electing Sandy Woticki [sic] who remind[ed] one of a 1959 Ohio State Homecoming Queen."<sup>32</sup> This scathing remark reflected a broader trend of modernization on campus, moving away from the beauty standard of the '50s housewife and towards that of the '70s "hippie chick." Whereas the housewife was refined and demure, the "hippie chick" was natural and strong-willed, and vocal members of the McGill student body clearly expressed their preference for the latter by the end of the competition.

### **The Queens of Colour**

Beauty standards are one of the most salient areas of analysis for any pageant. The woman who is crowned is supposed to represent the ideal for women in that community, as well as be the embodiment of that community's val-

ues. Miss America, the oldest pageant still running today, did not crown a black woman until 1984, which reflected the United States' anti-black racism and history of racial segregation.<sup>33</sup> In contrast, McGill's second-ever Carnival Queen, Beryl Dickinson-Dash, was a black woman who was crowned thirty-five years before the 1984 Miss America, Vanessa Williams. At the time of Dickinson-Dash's coronation, little was printed about her in the *Daily* other than her picture and name, however she was interviewed near the end of her term. She stated that she had received hundreds of letters of congratulations from places as far as "Burma, Germany, Jerusalem, England, Australia, the West Indies, and South America."<sup>34</sup> Some were invitations and others were proposals, but they were for naught as she had become engaged to her Carnival Queen campaign publicity manager Dunbar Rapier. She also received an apparent offer from Hollywood (though its content was not substantiated). Following her reigning year, Dickinson-Dash continued to receive publicity in the American publication *Jet: The Weekly Negro News Magazine*. She was included in a 1952 article "What Happens to Beauty Queens?" which followed up with former black beauty pageant winners. Though not awarded the most space in the article, her inclusion in it illustrated the popularity of the McGill Winter Carnival pageant, and her status as a symbol of beauty within North American black cultural spaces. *Jet* found that she had married Rapier and settled down as a housewife in Montreal, painting landscapes in her spare time.<sup>35</sup> Five years later, in its "Stork Report," *Jet* announced that Dickinson-Dash had been "crowned "Queen Mother"" by her husband, by then Dr. Rapier, when she bore twins at Saint Mary's Hospital.<sup>36</sup>

Dickinson-Dash's coronation did not make any perceptible waves on campus—there is no reference to her ethnicity affecting her role as Queen in the 1949 yearbook, and I have not been able to find any articles in the *Daily* that mention her ethnicity at all. There seemed to be an editorial choice made to be colourblind in Carnival Queen reporting which persisted until Rae Tucker was crowned in 1958.

Tucker was an exceptional choice for Carnival Queen, and her later career as an academic meant that there was much more information about her from which to draw. Born in Trinidad, she maintained a connection to the British West Indies through her involvement with the Caribbean Chorus while at McGill. Despite her family being wealthy enough that she was able to attend McGill, she worked as a long-distance operator at the Bell Telephone Company on the weekends, "money being the vital factor involved."<sup>37</sup> The year prior to her Carnival victory, she had been rushed by several of the sororities on campus, however had not received a bid from any of them. Though

she said that she had no ill will towards them, she attributed this choice to discrimination on campus.<sup>38</sup> When asked about her claim that her election “show[ed] broadmindedness,” Tucker did not say much about racism on campus, however when asked if she thought that “the McGill campus [was] really as cosmopolitan as it keeps telling itself,” she replied that “the over-all atmosphere [was] cosmopolitan. But when you [got] right down to it, there [were] still areas of discrimination.”<sup>39</sup> This quote was the extent of her commentary on racial issues at McGill, however the mere fact that she felt able to voice her experience at the school signalled a major shift from Dickinson-Dash’s time. Racism on campus was no longer being ignored, instead it was called out by a beautiful, charismatic, morally pure woman in a position of power.

However, this quote also encapsulated sociologist Rebecca Chiyoko King-O’Riain’s stance that “ethnic beauty queens are contested symbolic representations of their local communities and touchstones for racial/ethnic community issues.”<sup>40</sup> With Tucker’s election came a new position for her as a point of reference for race relations at McGill, whether she liked it or not. This role gave her useful skills applicable later in life, though, when her career in social work shifted into academia and she started exposing racial inequalities in the social service system.<sup>41</sup> After having lived and worked in London, England and Montreal, Tucker spent the last phase of her career lecturing in the social work department at the University of the West Indies in Barbados. In a review of Tucker’s autobiography, former child care worker Joan Eyolfson Cadham said of Tucker’s occupational social work years: “somehow she survived those forty years without burning out, and without adopting either an all-pervasive desperation or an all-knowing arrogance.”<sup>42</sup> Confronted with institutional racism at university, in her career, and in the lives of those she helped, Tucker was the only Carnival Queen to visibly oppose racism on the McGill campus.

She was not the last racialized Carnival Queen, though. Crowned only two years later, Vivienne Lee (later Poy) was a second year Arts student from Hong Kong who had only been in Canada for six months at the time of her coronation. She was the granddaughter of Hysan Lee, a prominent merchant tied to the Hong Kong opium refinery business and real estate market in the early 1900s. Her father, Richard Charles Lee, was a highly successful businessman and philanthropist in Hong Kong. Having served on the Legislative Council of Hong Kong in 1955 and again from 1959-1965, in addition to being an honorary member of the Executive Council from 1961-66, he was awarded Officer and Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1949 and 1963 respectively.

Clearly, Lee came from an influential family with significant power in Hong Kong. After graduating, she married plastic surgeon Dr. Neville Poy (whose sister Adrienne would later become Governor General of Canada). She also opened her own fashion design company, Vivienne Poy Mode, in 1981, in 1998 was appointed the first Canadian Senator of Asian heritage by Jean Chretien (serving until 2012) and became Chancellor of the University of Toronto in December of 2002. Regrettably, there was little documentation of Lee during her McGill years, so the extent to which her race influenced her reign is difficult to ascertain. However, it is clear that Lee went on to become the most highly decorated Winter Carnival Queen.

The benefits of the pageant were innumerable, both material and immaterial. During Beryl Dickinson-Dash's reign she had her picture printed in every major newspaper in Canada and the northern United States, and even received a two-week trip to West Virginia over the course of the summer (sponsored by a "well-known American publication") where she was "feted like a true princess, balls and receptions being given in her honor."<sup>43</sup> In 1961, the candidates modeled for a Morgan's ad that appeared in a local newspaper, and the following year the top five were given free shoes from Mayfair Shoe Salon. In 1965, they were given complimentary shoes from Ogilvy's and brought up to the Executive Suite of the store.

While these material benefits may have been exciting and maybe even help to alleviate financial stresses for the Princesses who were of a lower socioeconomic standing, they did not compare to the role of pageants as one of the limited areas available for women at McGill to assume a leadership position and be presented as an ambassador for the school. The pageant amplified their identity as a key actor in campus life, but also maintained and even augmented their femininity.

### **Women's Liberation and the Fall of the Pageant**

Despite the best intentions of the SAC and SEC to position the Winter Carnival as an event for the entire student body, over the years it became an increasingly niche affair. Though it is never outright stated in *The Daily* or *Old McGill*, twenty-two years of their coverage of the Carnival Queen competition reveals a downward trend in Carnival's accessibility to the general student population, and its overall success. Mike Boone's 1969 *The Daily* article "Happiness is a good, old-fashioned carnival" includes his statement that "despite [Carnival Chairman Derek Powers'] attempts to move Carnival away from catering to the greasy-crewcut-and-pork-pie-hat set, the show turned out to

be just some more of the [normal] festivities.”<sup>44</sup> The student body was particularly distracted from Carnival weekend in 1969, the final year of the pageant, due to the Stanley Gray affair dominating campus publications. As well, the pageant was beginning to be seen by the broader student body as a relic of the ‘50s. *The Daily* reassured that “... the Queen and her Princesses won’t be wearing dull evening dresses[,] but modern psychedelic outfits designed to delight”<sup>45</sup> in an effort to dispel criticism of the contest as outdated.

The shift in Carnival’s reception on campus was part of a broader change in campus culture around this time that was noticeable enough to be recorded in the 1971 *Old McGill*. According to an opinion piece titled “Four views of old McGill: Entropy, Apathy, and McGill,” there was “a decline of interest in traditional student activities [that] became manifest two years ago, and continues unchecked.”<sup>46</sup> The article went on to state that the clubs to which students had dedicated their time in past years had become irrelevant compared to what were viewed as “real” issues of the day: the world wars, the Cold War, Vietnam, and the “pollution controversy.”<sup>47</sup> As the campus atmosphere became more politically charged and activist, there came a visible rise in support for women’s liberation. The primary pieces of evidence for the rise of women’s liberation at McGill are articles printed in the *Daily*. A particularly eye-catching one is a 1970 full-page article on abortion – the risks of illegal abortions, the difficulty of procuring legal ones, the process of abortion law reform, and the actual law itself.<sup>48</sup> Another full-page article in a 1970 edition of *Together*, the *Daily*’s political supplement, focused on sexual liberation and was dedicated to women’s pleasure based on Masters and Johnson’s findings about vaginal orgasms.<sup>49</sup> The regular publication of articles such as these in *The Daily* illustrate a strong women’s liberation movement on campus based on legal and scientific grounds for feminist advancement. The focus of women’s liberation on fighting objectification of the female body was not compatible with the McGill Carnival Queen pageant’s emphasis on physical beauty, and the rise of the movement spelled the end of the pageant’s acceptability on campus.

It is my contention that this movement impeded the Carnival Queen Pageant from becoming an enduring part of McGill campus tradition. Indeed, a small photo and caption of Sandy Woticky going to the Miss Canadian University Pageant in 1970 called her the “last of the McGill Carnival queens” and opened with the line “[a]lthough the McGill campus versions of “Queen for a day” seem to have gone the way of the padded bra...”<sup>50</sup> As women began to reject their padded bras and other forms of female discomfort and societal constraint (perhaps most visibly in the famous demonstration against

the 1968 Miss America pageant), the environment previously well-suited to a pageant became increasingly inhospitable. As the younger, more socially and politically aware generation gained leadership at McGill, new spaces began to open within which women could be recognized for their accomplishments—academic or otherwise—and the less progressive aspects of the pageant (such as the pervasive female objectification) became less palatable to the more activist student community. When the Carnival Queens' reign ended, women's liberationists took up the reins.

Appendix A



Figure 1: Dusty Baxter's Winter Carnival Queen Coronation in 1951. See *Old McGill* 1951, p. 109.

Appendix B



Figure 2: The 1958 Princesses. Rae Tucker seated third from the left. See *Old McGill* 1958, p. 89.

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# “Fraternally Yours”

Women’s Role in Montreal’s  
Prominent Scottish Fraternities,  
1870s-2000s

Olivia Kurajian



“Vieux-Port en Vert” by Kaitlin Wong



The history of a Scottish presence in Canada extends back for centuries. In fact, Scottish settlers can be considered one of the founding peoples of Canada. To think of Scottish emigrants as a homogenous group, however would not only be inaccurate but potentially misleading in understanding the history of the Scottish presence in Canada. A wide range of social, political, and economic factors influenced the creation and sustainment of Scottish fraternal organizations since the nineteenth century. This paper narrows in on the case of Montreal—one of Canada's most historically diverse urban centers. In Montreal, the heterogeneity of the Scottish presence should render a discussion about the municipal Scottish community in such a way that the conversation caters to several communities rather than a single one. Regardless of their shared ethnic identity, the lived experiences, beliefs, identities, socio-economic realities, religions, and approaches to inclusion were markedly different among Scottish-Canadian Montrealers. The two dominant fraternal societies in Montreal demonstrating the differences among this community in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were The St. Andrew's Society and the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association (S.O.S.B.A). This paper argues that the histories of these groups are distinct, the membership in these communities are clashing, and the role of women in the survival and successes of these groups helped mark them in history. The paper discusses the way in which the Scots, as a diasporic people, made Canada home, thus suggesting that Montreal was a hotspot for Scottish migrants. The paper then aims to position Scottish fraternal societies in Montreal to illuminate modes of gender discrimination, and finally imagines the life of women within and on the periphery of fraternities in Montreal throughout the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCOTTISH IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

Settler peoples in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often regarded North America as *terra nullius*, or land void of legal inhabitants and thus prime for the taking. This mentality sparked colonization of the continent. In the nineteenth century, European migration to North America increased population in places like the Canadian prairielands.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian government aimed to settle the West with agriculturalists and Scottish were deemed as such.<sup>2</sup> In fact, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an influx of Scots to the country made them the third largest ethnic group in Canada, after the English and French.<sup>3</sup>

Like other immigrant groups, the Scots sought to establish their own

community networks, protections, and relationships in order to retain parts of their heritage and to better integrate into broader society. In order to do this, the Scots established fraternal orders, also known as fraternities or fraternal societies, with the explicit goal to better consolidate their resources and offer assistance to their community. However, these organizations were also implicitly founded to help with the creation of a distinctly Scottish-Canadian identity. In her doctoral dissertation, author Catherine Bourbeau stresses that much is left to be desired in the current understanding of the role of Scottish fraternal associations in Canada.<sup>4</sup> By serving as a reservoir of resources, helping to assimilate newcomers, and reinforcing the idea of a common Scottish heritage, fraternal societies accomplished both the identity-making provisions that are so necessary to the formation of culture.<sup>5</sup> Lynn Dumenil makes a distinction between the ‘expressive’ and ‘instrumental’ roles of community organizations. She notes that “fraternal orders, like churches, are ‘expressive’ organizations — they are directed primarily toward meeting the social and personal needs of their members. In contrast, ‘instrumental’ organizations, such as trade unions or professional associations, have specific goals to accomplish. They mediate between members and the outside world.”<sup>6</sup> That being said, the St. Andrew’s Society and S.O.S.B.A. can both be considered expressive and instrumental in their functions within their respective Scottish-Canadian communities.

Two dedicated members of the S.O.S.B.A, Lorna Joannette and May Cook felt as though their participation in the association was inclusive and important. This speaks to how the S.O.S.B.A served an expressive purpose, as a hub for identity seekers and friendship. Indeed, “ [the purpose of the S.O.S.B.A] wasn’t a case of just taking out an insurance policy” as it was, in reality, an instrumental function intended to help their targeted Scottish community in Montreal [xiii]. In both ‘expressive’ and ‘instrumental’ terms, Scottish fraternities in Montreal performed charitable functions that simultaneously reinforced identity and purpose while pursuing more tangible goals. For example, Scottish identity in Canada was maintained through the philanthropic and celebratory roles played by fraternal orders. Commemorative events held on Saint Andrew’s Day and Burns’ Night helped community efforts to promote Scottish identity in Canada.<sup>7</sup> That being said, the fraternal orders were selective in who they deemed worthy to receive their charity. For the St. Andrew’s Society specifically, members were keenly focused on the Scottish poor in Montreal and recent emigrants from Scotland. Thus, this higher class of Scottish community members were able to maintain their social distance from the lower classes through philanthropy.<sup>8</sup>

While Canada was often promoted as “classless” due to its varied ethnic composition and comparably boundless natural resources and land availability, Scottish-Canadians surely felt the weight of hierarchies on Canadian soil.<sup>9</sup> In Montreal, “the establishment of a social and spatial distance between the higher and lower classes of society” began to emerge simultaneously with the creation of fraternal societies.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the St. Andrew’s Society and the (S.O.S.B.A) were markedly different in terms of scope, membership, requirements, and mission. The organizations and the communities they served were certainly not devoid of hierarchy, nor were they always welcoming and inclusive.

## **MEMBERSHIP, NARRATIVES OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION**

“I’ve got a life membership”

May Cook, interview by author, October 15, 2018.

Both the S.O.S.B.A and the St. Andrews Society catered to the needs of Scottish-Canadians. For the effective functioning of the societies, membership was always of great importance. Recruiting and retaining members was a major goal of fraternal societies in Montreal as declining numbers could threaten the health of the organization. Both the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association and the St. Andrews Society began as male-only. However, both groups later accepted women, and by the late twentieth century women had risen to the highest positions in the societies as President (St. Andrew’s Society) and both District Chief (local in Montreal) and Grand Chief (overall in the Association throughout Canada) (S.O.S.B.A). For the first female Grand Chief of the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association, May Cook, “membership was important because it was to promote Scottish heritage and benevolence. Not only benevolence to the members, but [also] to charities.”<sup>11</sup> Membership was also dependent upon culturally determined ideas of gender and ethnic identity.

Women have been influential on the periphery of fraternities for hundreds of years. According to Daniel Weinbren, women have been allowed to join many previously male-only fraternities since the late nineteenth century, as was the case for both the S.O.S.B.A. and Montreal’s St. Andrew’s Society.<sup>12</sup> It was not until the late twentieth century, though, that they were able to rise to the highest positions.

Figure 1:



May Cook as Newly Elected Grand Chief of the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association  
1991, *The Scotian*, Volume 26, No. 2, Winter Edition

Figure 1 shows the front cover of the 1991 Winter Edition of *The Scotian*, a quarterly magazine published by the S.O.S.B.A promoting relevant events, news, and opportunities. While perusing the archival material donated to McGill's Rare Books and Special Collections, this edition stood out as the front page depicts a woman. When the club was formed in 1876, as a male-only social club, women were on the periphery of the association. This changed, however, starting in the 1930s when women were able to become full members of the association.<sup>13</sup> Within four decades, May Cook, the woman pictured in Figure 1, was elected District Chief of the Montreal S.O.S.B.A Camps. Less than twenty years later, she was elected to the highest position of Grand Chief.

The position of Grand Chief was widely respected and ritually important for the members of the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association. Pamphlets that seldom used gender-inclusive language with instructions of how to address the Grand Chief were circulated amongst members and potential members. Referring to the Grand Chief by using traditionally male pronouns in the literature seemingly undermined the status of women in the association. Nevertheless, women like Lorna Joannette and May Cook never seemed to feel inferior to the men in the association and were keenly aware of their own places in the uppermost echelons of the association. Originally, the St. An-

drew's Society was solely comprised of men even though it was not outwardly prohibitive, in its constitution, of other genders. Until full membership was achieved in the 1930s, "the women who surrounded the members of the Saint Andrew's Society nonetheless played, from the very formation of the association, an active role."<sup>14</sup> However, as the century charged on, women became further implicated in the internal body of the Society. Interestingly, the Montreal St. Andrew's Society elected its first female President in the 1970s, the same decade as May Cook was elected District Chief of the Montreal region's S.O.S.B.A Camps. At the same time, 'stag' or all-male Camps of the S.O.S.B.A were disappearing from Montreal.<sup>15</sup> Despite the inclusion of women to the highest ranks in the societies, male-dominated language remained to be used in publications, membership information, and correspondence. As fraternal organizations "are a product of (and have informed) gendered societies, their support for male bonds across social and economic divides and their assertion of specific gender roles which marginalize women from male civic structures have often been to the fore. However, there have been myriad ways in which fraternity assigned and reinforced gender roles."<sup>16</sup> While women have found their places within Montreal Scottish fraternities, this inclusion is not extended to all groups. Even today, non-Scots are prohibited from enrolling in certain memberships with the St. Andrew's Society. The S.O.S.B.A retains similar distinctions in membership options.<sup>17</sup>

Overall, the St. Andrew's Society and S.O.S.B.A were more inclusive than other fraternities in the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries in terms of their perspective on gender. While the former catered to more of a Scottish bourgeoisie, the latter was more targeted to the working person. In Canada, relating to a sense of 'Scottishness' was originally associated strongly with charity and helping migrants that were deemed to be less fortunate. Thus, the St. Andrew's Societies with their hierarchical and bourgeoisie tendencies rose soon to prominence in urban centers like Montreal.<sup>18</sup> However, both fraternal orders were similar in their strong desire to retain a Scottish heritage in Canada. While Montreal's S.O.S.B.A and St. Andrew's Society stressed the importance of 'sociability,' "their principal aim was to position [their] associations as a tool in the provision of benevolence for Scots in distress, which, in turn, enabled associations to act as carriers [... of] civility. Scots were thereby able not only to fulfil their sense of patrician duty, but also position themselves as key shapers of society."<sup>19</sup> Thus, this societal influence was marked by modes of inclusion and exclusion. This pride and loyalty to their ethnicity was a hindrance to increasing membership but nevertheless provided the Scottish-Montrealers with vital social links and services. Access to these networks

was augmented by the role of women in these societies.

Fraternal orders in Montreal from the late nineteenth century to the twenty-first century were marked with rituals, secrecy, hierarchy, and gendered roles.<sup>20</sup> The fraternities, structured as kinship networks with titles such as “brother” dominating correspondence and publications, were akin to a Scottish family network.<sup>21</sup> Thus, in Montreal and elsewhere in Canada, “fraternal bodies emphasized their similarity to idealized notions of the family, perhaps in order to promote charitable, trusting sentiments and reciprocity.”<sup>22</sup> While a paternalistic approach was often promoted through charity wherein the members of a fraternity looked upon the needy recipients as wards in their care, within the internal structure of the orders there was also a hierarchy. Women, as individuals, were seen to “achieve virtue only through family roles and through their relationships to men” as a daughter, sister, wife, mother or widow.<sup>23</sup> Within societies, women were “defined by their connections to already existing male organizations.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, women often found their place on the periphery within these male-only social clubs. This periphery mostly included the creation and maintenance of ladies’ auxiliaries, which protected the fragile masculinity of the fraternal hierarchy while giving women their own physical and social space to share ideas and foster change.

Unlike other Scottish societies within Canada, the S.O.S.B.A and the St. Andrew’s Society were different in that women were included within these governing hierarchies. Even though these auxiliaries are often read in historical literature as being secondary to the dominant male organization, historians have recently argued that the male-only and female-only groups were actually auxiliary to one another.<sup>25</sup> In fact, organizing separately from the male-only clubs often gave women ‘greater collective autonomy’ as they were in alliance with men rather than being subordinate to them in a hierarchy reliant upon gendered hegemony.<sup>26</sup> In answering the possible question of whether or not a ladies’ auxiliary was a way for men to continue dominating the women’s sphere, Daniel Weinbren suggests that ladies’ auxiliaries began due to “women’s initiative and [was] followed by accommodation and negotiation, rather than a one-sided imposition of male power.”<sup>27</sup> In the S.O.S.B.A and St. Andrew’s Society, instead of being simply accommodated, women became implicated in the fraternity itself, serving a variety of roles over the centuries.

In the nineteenth century in Canada, the insidious reliance on men was felt less strongly in the S.O.S.B.A than other more exclusively male oriented clubs in Montreal. According to a vote in 1909, Scottish-Canadian women were able to join as official members but were not initiated until the

following decade. May Cook and Lorna Joannette, both women who rose to some of the highest ranks in the Montreal chapters of the S.O.S.B.A found their time in the organization as “warm and welcoming” and that there was little perceived difference based on gender.<sup>28</sup> Despite joining in the 1950s and 2000s respectively, to have such shared views of the Association despite the different temporal experiences is telling. However, even while May Cook was Grand Chief, there were membership packages being produced by the head office in Toronto that used male pronouns when speaking about the role of a chief—whether District or Grand Chief.

Before paving the way for women like herself, S.O.S.B.A.’s May Cook was a member of the association, and the wife of someone in a higher position than she was. One of the highlights of her experience in the Sons of Scotland was “being the first lady, the Grand Chief of the whole association...it was a first, before that it was all men, men, men.”<sup>29</sup> She was also active in other associations, like the Order of Scottish Clans, albeit, in the ladies’ auxiliary. In our interview she mentioned that the auxiliary was just a social association and did not have jurisdiction over the insurance policies or anything of this sort. With the S.O.S.B.A, women and men shared responsibilities more equally and many of those in charge of the ledgers for the policies were women.

Comparably to the experience in the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association, women in the St. Andrew’s Society of Montreal were active within the fraternity. Notwithstanding, in a ‘band of brothers’ the space for women remained ambiguous wherein women signed their correspondence as “sister” with the signature “fraternally yours” which was a common and expected way to end a letter. In other fraternal societies, women were sometimes referred to as “mother” and other times were disregarded entirely and their contributions remained masked under the official participation of their husbands or other male relatives that were given the status of “brother”.

Not ‘mothers’ or ‘brothers’, women in the Sons of Scotland Benevolent Association and St. Andrew’s Society were more closely embodied the role of a ‘sister’—equal to their male counterparts in the societies in which they claimed membership. They were able to navigate the social space in order to rise to the highest rankings in the orders, despite the uncommon inclusion of women at the heart of fraternities. The Scottish-Canadian population in Montreal was unique in this way. Women were able to participate quite fully within these organizations, and not on the periphery for most of their existence.

## CONCLUSION

The S.O.S.B.A and St. Andrew's Societies were both active fraternal orders in Canada since the nineteenth. The S.O.S.B.A had numerous 'camps' in the city of Montreal but was intimately linked with the other camps throughout the nation. The St. Andrew's Society, while similar to others in Canada, had unique Montreal elements. Both of these societies continue to exist today, as they were and continue to be ground-breaking in their relationship to the communities they served. Despite both associations catering to the Scottish-Canadian population of Montreal, the two societies had slightly different membership composition. A common Scottish ethnicity was required for most types of memberships in both societies as it was deemed the most important unifying factor. What was not common, however, were the discriminatory policies that pushed women to the periphery of male-only clubs.

Researching the archival material and secondary source literature for this paper uncovered several possible avenues for future inquiry. Not only would it be beneficial to the Scottish-Canadian history of Canada, and more specifically of urban centers like Montreal, but further study of the Sons of Scotland and St. Andrew's Society could provide useful information for researchers of labour history, feminism, sociology, among others. One area of study of particular importance that is seemingly absent from the literature reviewed for the production of this paper would inquire why the population of members has not only declined, but aged in the twenty-first century. It is important to consider the lasting impact of Scottish-Canadian fraternal associations on members and their communities. Whether these orders served as philanthropic associations, fictive kinship networks, or insurance providers, S.O.S.B.A and St. Andrew's Society were influential in the social, political, and economic spheres of their members' lives.

## Notes

1. T. M. Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora 1750-2010*, London: Allen Lane, (2011): 59.
2. Ibid, 97.
3. T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire: The Origins of the Global Diaspora*, 100.
4. Catherine Bourbeau, *The migration of Scots to Québec: Montreal's Scottish public*

*community and the formation of identities, from the 18th to the 21st century*, University of Aberdeen, (2010): 91.

5. R. Blaustein, *The Thistle and the Brier: Historical Links and Cultural Parallels Between Scotland and the Appalachia*, Jefferson, North Carolina and London, McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, (2003): 73.

6. Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930*, Princeton Legacy Library. Princeton: Princeton University Press, (2014): xii

7. Catherine Bourbeau, *The migration of Scots to Québec: Montreal's Scottish public community and the formation of identities*, 91.

8. *Ibid*, 119.

9. *Ibid*, 88.

10. *Ibid*, 139.

11. Interview by author with May Cook and Lorna Joannette on October 15, 2018.

12. Daniel Weinbren, *Seven hundred years of fraternal orders*, in: Cross, Maire Fedelma ed. *Gender and Fraternal Orders in Europe, 1300-2000*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, (2010): 2.

13. Tanja Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together: Ethnicity, Civility and Formal Sociability in the Scottish Diaspora to 1930*, *Migrations and Identities*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, (2015): 85

14. Catherine Bourbeau, *The migration of Scots to Québec: Montreal's Scottish public community and the formation of identities*, 109.

15. Interview by author with May Cook and Lorna Joannette on October 15, 2018.

16. Daniel Weinbren, *Seven hundred years of fraternal orders*, 6.

17. St. Andrew's Society webpage.

18. Tanja Bueltmann, *Clubbing Together: Ethnicity, Civility and Formal Sociability in the Scottish Diaspora to 1930*, 24.

19. *Ibid*, 91.

20. Daniel Weinbren, *Seven hundred years of fraternal orders*, 1.

21. *Ibid*, 5.

22. *Ibid*, 5.

23. Mary Ann Clawson, *Nineteenth-Century Women's Auxiliaries and Fraternal Orders*, *Signs* 12, no. 1 (1986): 50

24. *Ibid*, 51.

25. Mary Ann Clawson, *Nineteenth-Century Women's Auxiliaries and Fraternal Orders*, 52

26. Daniel Weinbren, *Seven hundred years of fraternal orders*, 6, 22.

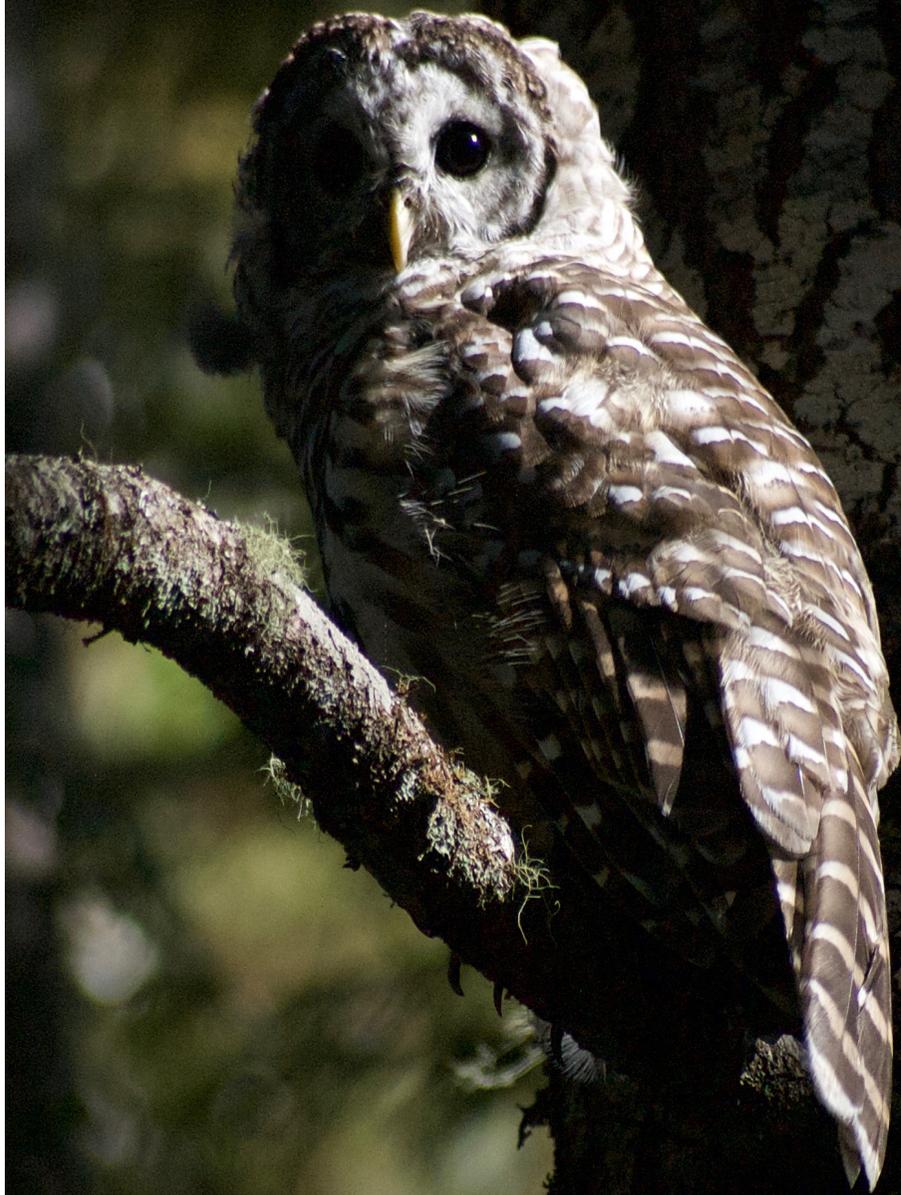
27. *Ibid*. 52.

28. *Ibid*.

29. *Ibid*.

# Elisapie face à la critique

Étienne Poirier



“Barred Owl” by Liam Ragan

Depuis l'an 2000, nous assistons à la percée de plusieurs artistes des Premières Nations sur la scène musicale québécoise. Cette nouvelle génération, marquée par le rappeur Samian, le *reggaeman* Shauit ou la chanteuse pop Elisapie, propose des chansons qui mélangent les styles et les langues et contribue à renouveler la musique autochtone. Bénéficiant d'une plus grande attention médiatique, ces artistes sont toutefois confrontés à certains enjeux de représentation. En effet, on observe, au sein de la critique, une attention importante portée à la culture d'origine, qui se lie parfois difficilement avec la critique de l'œuvre. À ce niveau, si les pratiques linguistiques sont saluées, elles demeurent difficiles à commenter.

C'est dans cette optique que nous proposons d'analyser la réception journalistique de l'artiste d'origine inuite Elisapie Isaac entre 2009 et 2017. Originaire de Salluit au Nunavik et habitant Montréal depuis 1999, la chanteuse a lancé son premier album solo *There Will Be Stars* en 2009 et son second, *Travelling Love*, en 2012. Elle s'est rapidement fait remarquer par son style pop assumé et son mélange de l'inuktitut, du français et de l'anglais dans ses compositions. Ainsi, nous défendrons que sa position sur ses pratiques esthétiques et linguistiques est fortement liée à l'expression de son identité et s'apparente ainsi au « discours mondialisant » défini par les linguistes Monica Heller et Normand Labrie. Le discours d'Elisapie sera ensuite comparé à celui de la critique journalistique au Québec, en analysant la façon dont celle-ci tente d'en imiter les codes dans le but de promouvoir une vision fidèle de l'artiste et de son œuvre. Nous tenterons ainsi de caractériser les enjeux qui touchent les débats sur la langue au Québec dans la perspective de la création autochtone, et d'évaluer la façon dont la critique journalistique aborde ces enjeux.

Heller et Labrie, tous deux spécialistes des questions linguistiques au Canada, identifient l'émergence d'un discours mondialisant sur la langue qui, comme son nom l'indique, apparaît comme une conception transnationale et transculturelle des pratiques linguistiques. Ils identifient quelques caractéristiques clés de ce discours qui revendique l'authenticité par le choix de la langue qui devient marqueur d'identité, et où l'usage personnel de la langue participe à la création d'une identité unique :

Ce type de discours mise sur : 1) l'économie comme domaine clé pour la valorisation des formes et des pratiques langagières, ainsi que pour les identités et les appartenances; 2) le rôle du bilinguisme anglais-français pour avoir accès aux bénéfices de la mondialisation et pour participer à la nouvelle économie ; 3) la diversification sociale, linguistique

et culturelle de la population, et conséquemment, la négociation des identités multiples sur une base contextuelle et stratégique ; 4) l'extension et la multiplication des réseaux sociaux ; et 5) la commercialisation des biens linguistiques et culturels, souvent séparément. Combinés, ces éléments du discours créent aussi une juxtaposition du local et du mondial.<sup>1</sup>

Bien que les travaux des chercheurs portent sur les usages du français et de l'anglais au Canada et ne touchent pas l'utilisation des langues autochtones, leurs définitions ne se limitent pas strictement à ces cas particuliers et peuvent être appliquées à différents contextes. Nous tenterons donc de montrer que les explications d'Elisapie sur ses pratiques hétérolingues se rattachent à ce type de discours en observant le rapport que la chanteuse entretient avec chacune des langues.

### **Elisapie et le discours mondialisant**

L'œuvre de l'artiste Elisapie se distingue par son utilisation du français, de l'anglais et de l'inuktitut, ce qui l'inscrit dans une perspective hétérolingue. Son premier album contient autant de passages en anglais et en inuktitut et inclut une chanson entièrement en français, alors que son second album est composé en majorité en anglais, entrecoupé de quelques passages en inuktitut. Dans cette mesure, il devient pertinent de s'interroger sur les raisons qui motivent l'artiste à recourir à une telle pratique et sur le type de discours qu'elle utilise pour la défendre. Il est à noter que les revendications identitaires et linguistiques sont particulièrement importantes chez les peuples autochtones, puisqu'elles s'inscrivent dans un processus de réappropriation culturelle, ceux-ci ayant été historiquement empêchés d'apprendre les langues autochtones. Or le rapport d'Elisapie à l'inuktitut est différent. Ayant été élevée dans une communauté inuite et ayant appris l'inuktitut dès son enfance, elle n'a pas connu le processus d'acculturation vécu par les membres des Premières Nations plus au Sud. Elle ne revendique pas non plus de message politique dans ses chansons. Néanmoins, son discours, de même que celui de la réception journalistique, s'inscrit dans ce courant de revendications politiques et culturelles des Premières Nations qui prend forme au même moment. Les commentaires sur ses pratiques linguistiques sont ainsi vraisemblablement influencés par ce mouvement de réappropriation des langues autochtones.

Notre analyse du discours d'Elisapie sur ses pratiques linguistiques doit prendre en compte la définition qu'elle donne de son identité, les deux étant intrinsèquement liés, comme le soulignent Heller et Labrie<sup>2</sup>. D'origine

métisse, elle confie en entrevue que c'est à son arrivée à Montréal qu'elle a pris conscience de son identité inuite<sup>3</sup>. Sa prise de conscience s'est accompagnée d'une remise en question constante à ce sujet. Aujourd'hui, elle se considère comme étant porteuse de plusieurs identités<sup>4</sup>. Si elle refuse de se voir comme messagère de sa communauté ou d'être appelée « la fille du Grand Nord », Elisapie accepte le surnom de « fille moderne du Grand Nord<sup>5</sup> ». La nuance qui apparaît importante à l'artiste est aussi révélatrice du discours qu'elle tient sur son identité. En effet, elle adopte une posture mondialisante : elle jumelle les appartenances, les considère comme des atouts et accepte de se définir en relation avec ses origines.

Ce rapport particulier à ses appartenances multiples trouve écho dans la façon dont Elisapie définit son utilisation du plurilinguisme dans ses chansons. Même si elle défend que son écriture lui vienne naturellement dans une langue plutôt qu'une autre, elle associe un ton particulier à chacune des langues. L'inspiration naturelle et la valeur associée aux langues ne doivent pas être comprises comme contradictoires. Elisapie semble plutôt défendre que le ton et la langue sont en adéquation pour elle. De la même manière, le passage d'un album hétérolingue vers un album majoritairement en anglais est le résultat d'un processus créatif pour l'artiste : « C'était très instinctif, intuitif. Je ne me suis donc pas posé de questions et j'y suis allée. J'ai toujours écrit en anglais et je suis probablement même plus anglophone, avec mon père biologique qui était Terre-Neuvien<sup>6</sup> ». Son usage des langues est ainsi le résultat d'une démarche où authenticité et héritage vont de pair pour l'auteure-compositrice-interprète.

Évitons néanmoins de trop simplifier : la langue ne participe pas seulement d'un processus d'identification pour l'artiste, mais résulte également d'une réflexion esthétique assumée. En effet, le choix de se tourner vers l'anglais pour son deuxième album s'explique par ses influences pop — l'album est beaucoup plus pop que le premier — qui sont principalement anglophones<sup>7</sup>. Dans le même ordre d'idées, l'anglais apparaît plus naturel pour Elisapie au niveau des sonorités qu'elle recherche<sup>8</sup>. Cette position révèle une conception particulière de la langue qui porte une « valeur » qui lui est propre et qui s'exploite différemment d'une autre<sup>9</sup>. Le passage vers un album presque entièrement chanté en anglais devient non seulement le résultat d'inspirations particulières ou de choix esthétiques, mais aussi du désir de valoriser certains aspects de son art qui, selon l'artiste, se véhiculent plus facilement en anglais. Elisapie dit ainsi qu'elle « était rendue au stade de faire un album dans une seule langue<sup>10</sup> », y reconnaissant un message plus unifié, d'inspiration pop très marquée.

L'emploi de l'inuktitut rejoint cette vision de la langue comme reflet de son identité. Cette langue prend toutefois un sens différent, puisqu'elle n'est pas partagée avec une majorité du public que l'artiste souhaite rejoindre. Ainsi, Elisapie se retrouve au centre des tensions qui agitent le discours mondialisant, soit partagée entre la reconnaissance de ses origines et le désir de les faire connaître à un public élargi. De cette façon, si, tout comme l'anglais, l'inuktitut lui vient de façon naturelle lorsqu'elle compose ses chansons, elle reconnaît chanter dans cette langue « pour les gens de chez nous<sup>11</sup> ». Tout de même, la démarche est fortement teintée d'un parcours esthétique qui se rapproche de celui de l'anglais. Alors que l'anglais est la langue qu'elle associe à la musique, l'inuktitut est « une langue qui est avant tout pratique<sup>12</sup> », « *straight forward* et rigolote<sup>13</sup> ». En ce sens, l'utilisation plus poétique de la langue demeure un défi pour l'artiste<sup>14</sup>. La chercheuse spécialisée en littérature inuite Nelly Duvicq souligne que les thèmes déterminent généralement la langue utilisée par les artistes autochtones, les enjeux liés au territoire (« Salluit », dans le second album d'Elisapie) ou aux enfants (« Arnaapik », dans le premier album) étant généralement écrits en inuktitut<sup>15</sup>. De ces manières, les conceptions d'Elisapie de la langue influent grandement sur l'utilisation qu'elle en fait.

L'emploi du français, finalement, est considéré par l'artiste comme étant beaucoup moins naturel que l'usage des deux autres langues<sup>16</sup>. L'associant à un style plus poétique, romantique et raffiné<sup>17</sup>, elle préfère ne pas l'utiliser dans ses propres compositions. Seul son premier album contient une chanson entièrement en français écrite par Richard Desjardins, à la demande d'Elisapie, « Moi, Elsie ». Si la commande confirme le malaise évoqué par l'artiste à l'idée d'écrire elle-même dans cette langue, elle révèle également son désir de rejoindre un auditoire plus grand avec la pièce. Notons que la chanson est la pièce avec le texte le plus élaboré et le plus politique de l'album. Son sujet est une idée d'Elisapie, qui souhaitait avoir une pièce « au nom des filles de chez nous<sup>18</sup>. » Elle partage d'ailleurs que le choix de chanter en français vient d'une curiosité des Québécois francophones pour sa région natale dont elle souhaite transmettre l'histoire<sup>19</sup>. La langue devient alors un moyen de témoigner de sa réalité, et le français représente, pour des raisons esthétiques, mais aussi démographiques, le meilleur moyen de l'exprimer.

Si Elisapie traite très peu de l'hétérolinguisme au sein des chansons, elle défend ce choix avec des arguments à la fois culturels et esthétiques. L'artiste est consciente des enjeux linguistiques liés à sa pratique au Québec, notamment se l'être fait reprocher. Elle considère que la protection du français au Québec est « correcte », mais admet ressentir un malaise lorsque les gens constatent qu'elle chante en anglais : « tu [te] dis : "Oh my God, non, non, pour-

quoi ? » Si l'inuktitut est accepté, le choix de l'anglais demeure problématique chez un certain public selon elle, et ce, malgré le fait qu'elle soit à moitié anglophone « de sang<sup>20</sup> ». Ses pratiques linguistiques sont associées à des raisons à la fois identitaires et esthétiques, qui s'inscrivent dans un discours mondialisant. Elle défend par ailleurs que l'utilisation de l'anglais n'a pas la même portée politique pour elle que dans le reste du Québec, soulignant que « les gens de chez nous, ils le font sans poser de questions. Parce qu'ils ne sont pas menacés, c'est juste naturel pour eux autres<sup>21</sup> ». Le mélange des deux langues s'est fait de façon tout aussi naturelle et selon les mêmes paramètres : « C'est plus en anglais que j'ai commencé. Après, je me suis dit, on va essayer en inuktitut, pis c'est ça, je fais les deux tout le temps, je me pose pas de questions là-dessus<sup>22</sup> ». L'authenticité dont se réclame Elisapie est plutôt le résultat de choix esthétiques motivés par des perceptions éclairées sur la langue. Dans cette perspective, son discours rejoint ce que Heller et Labrie définissent comme le discours mondialisant, se revendiquant d'un plurilinguisme éclairé et d'une juxtaposition entre plusieurs identités.

### **Répondre au discours mondialisant**

Le discours d'Elisapie sur la langue fait donc état d'une conscience des enjeux liés à sa pratique et d'une justification de ceux-ci par le recours à des arguments touchant au discours mondialisant. Or, la réception journalistique a généralement fait preuve d'une difficulté à évaluer ces codes. La critique a été très favorable à l'œuvre d'Elisapie et l'enjeu linguistique n'a pas causé de polémique ou d'indignation majeure. Spécifions au préalable que les pratiques linguistiques ne sont jamais discutées ouvertement par les journalistes : la plupart du temps, les critiques les notent, mais ne portent pas de jugement dessus. L'absence de commentaires sur la langue n'est pas anodine : si elle peut révéler une certaine acceptation de ces pratiques, que nous verrons plus en détail, elle peut aussi souligner un malaise face à elles et un inconfort à l'idée de les commenter, comme elles proviennent d'une artiste inuite. Ce que l'on remarque d'abord au sein des articles, c'est surtout une difficulté à caractériser l'identité, les journalistes se montrant ouverts et tentant de décrire habilement les origines d'Elisapie, mais parfois avec un succès mitigé.

Les enjeux liés à l'identité s'observent déjà par le choix des titres donnés aux articles qui portent sur la chanteuse. Reprenant des images généralement associées au Nord, on présente ainsi Elisapie comme une « étoile polaire<sup>23</sup> », un « pôle d'attraction<sup>24</sup> », « portée par les étoiles<sup>25</sup> », une « chaleur nordique<sup>26</sup> », en « direction des étoiles<sup>27</sup> » ou une « étoile venue du Nord<sup>28</sup> ».

Ces qualificatifs ne sont certes pas très problématiques, mais renvoient néanmoins à une vision essentialiste de l'artiste. Il est toutefois plus important de mentionner certaines erreurs ou certains commentaires sur l'artiste qui renforcent quelques stéréotypes sur les Inuits. Une journaliste qualifie Elisapie de « chanteuse [i]nnu<sup>29</sup> » plutôt qu'inuite, alors qu'un autre voit en Elisapie une négation de ses origines : « à première vue, plusieurs croient que la chanteuse interprète des chants de gorge ou de la musique traditionnelle de son pays d'origine, le Nunavik. Mais, contrairement à ce que l'on pourrait croire, Elisapie Isaac ne tient pas à transmettre sa culture dans son art<sup>30</sup> ». Non seulement le journaliste présente ici une vision erronée du Nunavik et de sa culture, mais il semble insinuer que les choix de la chanteuse lui servent à se détacher de sa culture, ce dont Elisapie se défend explicitement.

Les critiques de ses concerts tournent également autour de ces visions où les subtilités liées à son identité sont mal interprétées ou ignorées au profit de comparaisons inadéquates : « Elisapie Issac [...] belle comme une aurore boréale et douce comme la lune est dans la région pour une série de trois spectacles<sup>31</sup> » ; « un vent du nord qui n'avait rien de glacial a soufflé sur le Cabaret-Théâtre du Vieux Saint-Jean jeudi dernier. [...] Si elle l'avait voulu, Elisapie Isaac aurait sans doute pu faire fondre un bloc de glace en un rien de temps avec son charisme fou, sa sensualité et sa voix chaude et prenante<sup>32</sup> » ; « Elisapie Isaac semble baigner dans des aurores boréales dansantes sur scène. Elle a beau venir du Nord, Elisapie Isaac possède une voix et une présence scénique capables d'irradier une telle chaleur qu'elles ne laissent personne de glace<sup>33</sup> ». Alors que certains journalistes semblent limiter leur critique à une telle série de métaphores plus ou moins réussies qui jouent l'identité d'Elisapie, d'autres proposent une vision plus sensible des enjeux identitaires soulevés par l'artiste. Steve Bergeron se questionne : « alors que nous aurions dû tendre vers davantage de diversité et d'ouverture culturelle, avons-nous plutôt régressé ?<sup>34</sup> » Charles-Éric Blais-Poulin identifie le statut d'Elisapie comme « contrepoids à la culture dominante<sup>35</sup> » et Alain Crevier reconnaît qu'elle « porte plusieurs identités.<sup>36</sup> » Les critiques semblent ainsi dans un mouvement de transition : on respecte l'artiste et ses origines, on se questionne sur la place que l'on accorde aux Premières Nations, et on tente de se défaire progressivement de certains vieux clichés, mais parfois de façon maladroite.

Or, si les enjeux liés à son identité sont parfois mal interprétés, sa démarche liée à ses choix linguistiques est, dans l'ensemble, assez reconnue. Les discours des journalistes ont également évolué entre 2009 et 2017. De façon générale, l'utilisation des trois langues dans le premier album est considérée comme originale, voire surprenante, et comme facteur de différenci-

ation. Bien que certains journalistes émettent des réserves, ils constatent que la langue ne constitue pas un obstacle à l'appréciation : « même si l'inuktitut n'est pas tellement en usage à Blainville, l'univers musical d'Elisapie Isaac est rapidement accessible au public<sup>37</sup> ». On reconnaît son caractère unique : « l'un des éléments qui distinguent Élisapie Isaac du commun des mortels, c'est le fait que la moitié de ses chansons ont été écrites en inuktitut<sup>38</sup> », et même, les enjeux liés à son identité : « femme du monde, elle chante ses racines sans les brandir<sup>39</sup> ». L'accueil est non seulement unanimement favorable, mais semble comprendre les subtilités liées à cette démarche.

Il est également intéressant de distinguer, au sein du corpus à l'étude, les critiques du premier album et l'importance mineure que chacune donne à la langue, alors qu'elle devient presque un sujet incontournable lorsque les journalistes dressent un portrait de l'artiste. Ainsi, sur les six critiques du premier album que nous avons recensées, aucune ne fait de la langue un enjeu important. Dans la plupart des cas, on nomme d'abord le style, on résume la carrière d'Elisapie et on aborde les arrangements, pour finir avec une remarque presque anodine sur l'hétérolinguisme. Bergeron, qui rédige une critique dithyrambique : « Enfin ! Je l'ai, mon album de l'année !<sup>40</sup> », ne fait mention de la langue nulle part. Seul Alain de Repentigny remarque que certaines chansons sont hétérolingues<sup>41</sup>, tandis que Marc-André Joanisse et Ralph Boncy font mention de la langue sans la commenter<sup>42</sup>. Olivier Robillard-Laveaux se montre sceptique face à la pratique : « le simple fait de chanter quelques titres en inuktitut ne lui confère pas l'exotisme nécessaire pour se distinguer dans un registre contingenté<sup>43</sup> », mais aborde l'enjeu sous un angle résolument esthétique et reprend les codes du discours mondialisant, où l'exotisme est ici associé à l'originalité. Finalement, Nicolas Houle est le seul à critiquer les textes, qu'il juge pertinents<sup>44</sup>. Nous observons dans ces critiques que l'hétérolinguisme n'est pas un enjeu dans cet album, et n'est véritablement évalué comme procédé artistique que dans un seul des articles.

Face à cette conclusion, l'analyse de la réception du second album dont la majorité des textes sont en anglais est aussi révélatrice de l'hésitation des journalistes à caractériser les choix linguistiques d'Elisapie. Si la critique journalistique souligne généralement ce passage vers un style moins hétérolingue, on aborde l'enjeu sous le prisme de l'abandon de l'inuktitut. Émilie Côté en fait à peine mention, écrivant que « Salluit » est « pratiquement la seule en inuktitut », le tout entre parenthèses<sup>45</sup>. Robillard-Laveaux y critique un manque de singularité et associe ce choix à « un effort d'exportation réfléchi<sup>46</sup> ». Il critique l'utilisation de l'anglais pour s'exporter alors que l'inuktitut constituait l'élément le plus distinctif de l'artiste et donc, dans une perspective mondial-

isante, une « valeur ajoutée ». Bergeron, qui s'était montré si enthousiaste pour le premier album, débute sa critique avec le choix de la langue, mais présente l'enjeu comme non problématique : « Elisapie rêvait depuis longtemps d'un album en anglais, elle en a bien le droit et l'on se réjouit qu'elle l'ait fait<sup>47</sup> ». Or la déclaration semble plutôt chercher à désamorcer la critique qu'il fait de l'album par la suite, où il déplore des textes moins recherchés de ce deuxième opus. Dans cette mesure, il est donc intéressant que Bergeron, en sentant le besoin de réaffirmer la position personnelle liée au choix d'Elisapie, semble conscient qu'une critique du choix de l'anglais, si elle se veut elle aussi purement esthétique, est à risque d'être reçue autrement. La remarque est d'autant plus surprenante qu'elle se situe dans une critique d'album, où l'intention de l'artiste est généralement considérée comme peu pertinente à l'appréciation de l'œuvre.

Sur ce point, il faut également souligner que la plupart des articles dédiés au second album se présentent plutôt sous la forme de portraits ou d'entrevues, ce qui permet au journaliste de donner la parole à Elisapie afin d'expliquer son choix d'aller vers l'anglais. Ces entretiens, que nous avons commentés lors de notre évaluation du discours de l'artiste, sont révélateurs de deux aspects. D'abord, le fait d'accorder un article plus long à l'artiste engage une certaine reconnaissance sur la scène culturelle. Ensuite, ces articles permettent également aux journalistes de traiter de la langue de l'album de façon détournée, sans avoir à donner leur propre opinion sur le sujet. Il semblerait que, dans le cas d'Elisapie, la meilleure façon de réagir au discours mondialisant qu'elle propose sur l'usage des langues est de la laisser s'exprimer librement sur sa pratique.

Il est donc possible de relever chez Elisapie un discours tout à fait cohérent quant à la construction de son identité et à ses pratiques linguistiques. Elle voit le mélange des langues comme un facteur d'authenticité, une démarche fondamentalement esthétique et naturelle, ce qui se rattache à la perspective mondialisante définie par Heller et Labrie. La position de la réception journaliste est par contre plus ambiguë. Si les critiques se montrent ouverts à la culture d'origine de l'artiste, leur interprétation de cette identité est parfois erronée ou réductrice. De même, le discours sur les pratiques linguistiques d'Elisapie porte très peu sur l'hérolinguisme au sein des albums et privilégie de simples remarques sur l'utilisation de l'inuktitut. Ce manque d'attention sur les pratiques linguistiques influence les critiques du second album solo, qui n'osent commenter le choix d'une plus grande utilisation de l'anglais, préférant noter l'absence d'inuktitut.

Cette étude suggère toutefois que les journalistes font preuve d'une

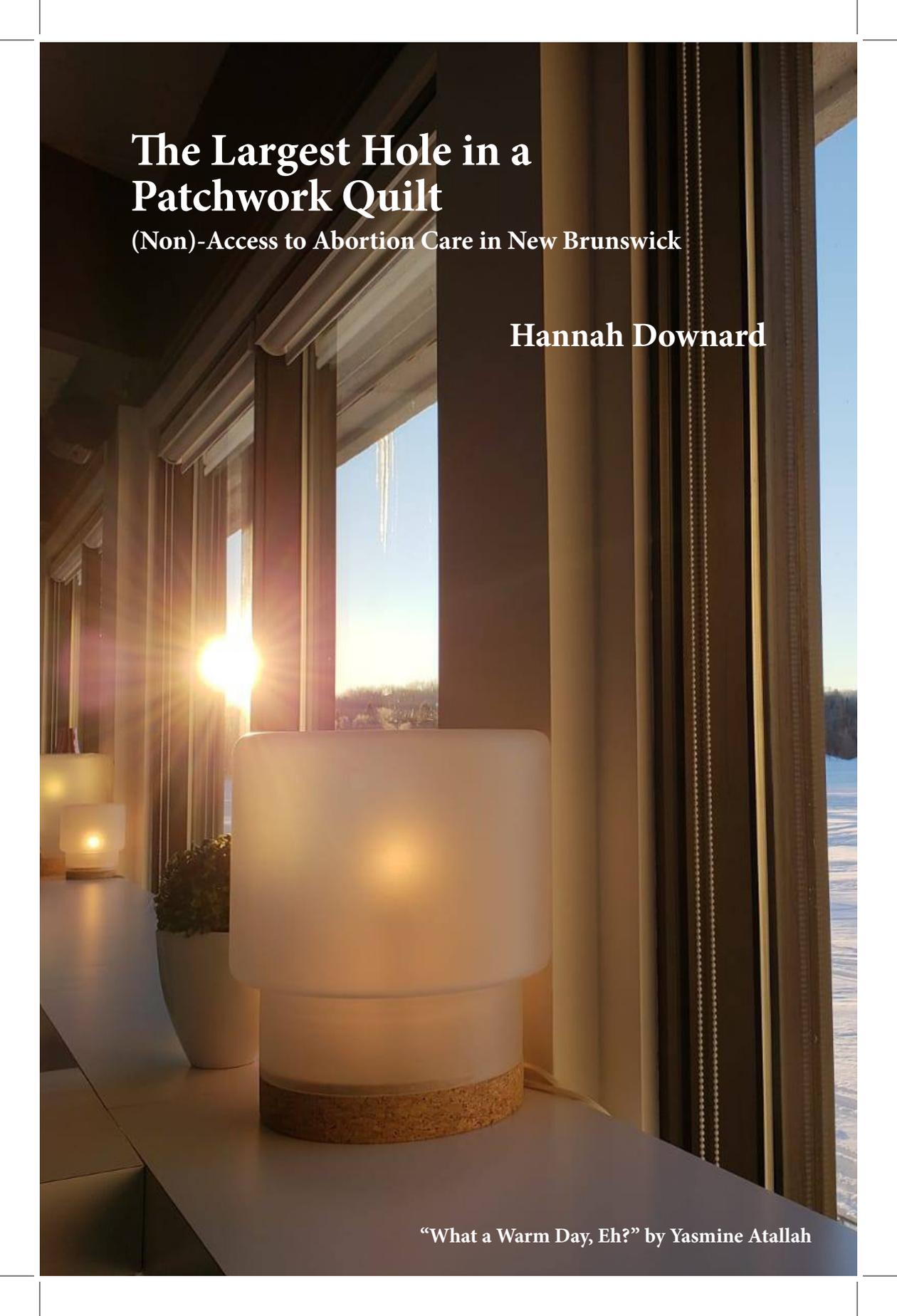
plus grande ouverture face aux artistes autochtones. Les commentaires relevés ont permis de voir que la critique accueille ces utilisations originales de la langue par une artiste des Premières Nations, et tente d'en donner une description fidèle, sans toutefois mettre les enjeux linguistiques de l'avant. Alors que le discours d'Elisapie sur la langue est clairement défini, celui de la critique nous apparaît plus hésitant à se prononcer de façon claire sur ces pratiques. Avec le lancement de son troisième album solo après un hiatus de plus de cinq ans en septembre 2018, il serait par ailleurs pertinent de se pencher une fois de plus sur la critique journalistique afin de voir comment ont évolué les perceptions sur la langue dans les discours des journalistes, et du même coup, les changements majeurs qui se produisent dans la réception des artistes autochtones au Québec.

## Notes

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A photograph of a room with large windows and a lamp. The sun is shining through the windows, creating a warm, golden glow. A large, white, cylindrical lamp with a cork base is in the foreground. The room has dark wood paneling and a white table. The view outside the windows shows a snowy landscape under a clear blue sky.

# The Largest Hole in a Patchwork Quilt

(Non)-Access to Abortion Care in New Brunswick

Hannah Downard

“What a Warm Day, Eh?” by Yasmine Atallah

New Brunswick women continue to face systemic barriers in accessing abortion care despite abortion being decriminalized in Canada in 1988 by the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *R. v. Morgentaler*.<sup>1</sup> The decision ruled, based on the procedure's unequal accessibility, that Canada's abortion law violated the rights enshrined to women under Section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.<sup>2</sup> While criminal law falls under federal jurisdiction, health care policy decisions – and, as of the decision's ruling, the administration and funding of abortion – is within the jurisdiction of provincial and territorial governments.<sup>3</sup> A lack of federal regulation and uniform provincial agreements for abortion funding has left women's access to reproductive care entirely subject to the discretion of provincial governments. This reality has resulted in abortion care in Canada having been referred to by Laura Eggertson as a “patchwork quilt with many holes”.<sup>4</sup>

With regards to this issue, New Brunswick has one of the most restrictive and stringent regulatory regimes in Canada. It is one of only two Canadian provinces that refuse to fund crucial clinical abortion care. This barrier not only stifles women's access to abortion, but it exemplifies a profound health inequity for New Brunswick women within a country that prides itself on its citizens' rights to universal health care. This paper will argue that women in New Brunswick continue to face uniquely province-specific, nearly impenetrable barriers in this regard due to financially restrictive provincial legislation and the province's scarcity of centres performing abortion.

### **The Politics of Abortion in New Brunswick**

Historically, the New Brunswick government has exercised its legislative jurisdiction to consistently resist granting women complete and unrestricted access to abortion. This government first expressed its inclination toward restrictive abortion policies in the wake of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's selective abortion decriminalization with his 1969 Omnibus bill (Bill C-150). When Holocaust survivor and staunch abortion rights activist Dr. Henry Morgentaler wrote New Brunswick's Minister of Health in 1985, expressing his desire to open a free-standing clinic in the hopes of “[making] abortion more accessible for women in the Maritimes”, the letter prompted the Progressive Conservative government to amend the province's *Medical Act* with Bill 92.<sup>5</sup> This bill stipulated that “physicians could be found guilty of professional misconduct if they were involved in performing an abortion elsewhere than in a hospital approved by the Minister of Health”.<sup>6</sup> The legislation empowered the province to revoke Morgentaler's medical license should

he proceed to open and practice in a private clinic.<sup>7</sup> Although Bill 92 was ultimately found unconstitutional in 1994 in *Morgentaler v. New Brunswick*,<sup>8</sup> its implementation illustrates both the government's repressive attitude towards reproductive care, and the depth of its hostility toward the possibility of greater access to the procedure.<sup>9</sup>

In 1989, following abortion's complete decriminalization, New Brunswick reasserted its jurisdiction over the procedure's accessibility. Premier Frank McKenna's newly formed Liberal government amended the *Medical Services Payment Act* to classify abortion as an "entitled service"<sup>10</sup> while implementing Regulation 84-20, a regulatory process reminiscent of the unconstitutional therapeutic abortion committees of Bill C-150.<sup>11</sup> Until 2015, Regulation 84-20

[mandated that] procedures eligible for coverage and reimbursement were required to be performed in a hospital facility, deemed medically necessary by two separate medical practitioners, and [be] provided by a physician who specializes in obstetrics and gynecology.<sup>12</sup>

Such complex hurdles to accessibility established an extensive barrier to women's access to reproductive care by making the availability of abortion services "contingent upon the vicissitudes of a committee judgement",<sup>13</sup> determining whether the procedure was a medical necessity.<sup>14</sup> What is more, the fundamental mechanism of the Regulation had been previously determined unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in *R. v. Morgentaler*, when abortion was regulated under the *Criminal Code*.<sup>15</sup>

In 2015, Brian Gallant's Liberal government amended Regulation 84-20's stringent procedure for accessing hospital-based abortion care to no longer require the approval of two physicians, nor that the procedure be executed by an obstetrician-gynecologist. Despite this change, the provincial government has maintained a strict refusal to fund clinic-based abortion care:<sup>16</sup> New Brunswick has continuously retained Regulation 84-20's financial clause providing that, "[n]otwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the medical services plan shall not provide payment for ... entitled services furnished in a private hospital facility in the Province".<sup>17</sup> This provision makes New Brunswick one of the most strict legislative regimes in Canada to date, in regards to access to abortion care, as it continues to mandate that abortions conducted outside of a hospital either inside or out of the province are ineligible for reimbursement by the provincial government.<sup>18</sup> Ultimately, this unique financial

restriction has served as a devastating obstruction to New Brunswick women's abortion access, undermining the rights enshrined to them under the *Canada Health Act* (CHA) and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Furthermore, travel costs, stress and hardship, and ultimately an inability for women to access the procedure independently aggravate the initial financial barrier.

### **Financial Burden and Physical Scarcity of Access**

New Brunswick's refusal to fund clinical abortion care has greatly thwarted women's access to abortion care by imposing two arduous burdens. The government's refusal exacerbates a physical scarcity of access resulting from a lack of sites at which abortion care is available within the province.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, the lack of public insurance coverage for clinic-based abortion care specifically also adds financial expenses associated with the travel – necessary for many women – to receive abortions at the sites in which they are available. Due to the impact of these two burdens on women, New Brunswick tends to merely present the façade of access to abortion rather than the reality.

Today, New Brunswick only provides abortion care at four facilities:<sup>20</sup> one regional hospital open only to patients in the immediate local area, two public hospitals, and Clinic 554 which opened in Fredericton in 2015 thanks to a grassroots fundraising campaign after the closure of Morgentaler's Clinic.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, Clinic 554 is the only centre in the province which offers abortions past thirteen weeks and six days of pregnancy,<sup>22</sup> further restricting the procedure's availability. When compared to the travel required for access to and to the physical availability of services in other Canadian provinces, New Brunswick's scarcity of abortion-providing facilities presents a stark inequity. An analysis conducted by University of Ottawa associate professor Christabelle Sethna and University of British Columbia post-doctoral fellow Marion Doull found that in 2013, 73 percent of New Brunswick women who travelled to the Morgentaler Clinic journeyed more than 100 kilometres to access its services. In comparison, only approximately 29 to 36 percent of women in Alberta, Manitoba, and Vancouver Island travelled the same distance to access clinical abortion care.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, only 0 to 12 percent of women in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver – cities offering plentiful abortion access in a multitude of clinics and hospitals – reported having travelled over 100 kilometres to gain clinical access.<sup>24</sup>

Subjected to the greatest travel distances in the country, New Brunswick women represent the portion of Canada's population most vulnerable to Sethna et. al's finding that "the further a woman must travel to access abortion

services, the less likely she is to have the procedure”.<sup>25</sup> This is because a lack of abortion-providing facilities not only confronts women with the obstacle of having to traverse pure distance, but also introduces socially qualitative obstacles associated with travelling for the service. For instance, travel burdens require a woman to “justify her trip to others, make arrangements to miss work, arrange for childcare ... [and] have access to transportation and the funds to travel”.<sup>26</sup> What is more, this scant access disproportionately affects the province’s rural inhabitants, who are situated even further from the relevant facilities. The isolation of rural inhabitants has caused for “marginalized women, particularly Aboriginal women and poor women, [to be the] hardest hit”<sup>27</sup> by the necessity of travel to access the procedure, due to the physical distance between these demographics of women and hospitals providing abortion care. This reality is fundamental in explaining the province’s bulwark to abortion access, as the majority of women seeking abortion services meet the low-income threshold and therefore are unable to overcome the barrier of costly travel.<sup>28</sup> The province’s utter lack of abortion-providing hospitals has thus not only disproportionately impeded marginalized women’s access to the procedure due to physical distance, but also further solidified this barrier based on the cost of traversing it.

Even those women who are able to surmount the distance barrier and reach a funded hospital are met with a complex bureaucracy and an additional form of financial strain, as they are often required to make multiple hospital visits “costing patients both [additional] time and money”.<sup>29</sup> Under the documentation of Foster et al – detailing the qualitative experiences of New Brunswick women attempting to procure abortion care following Regulation 84-20’s amendment –, on average, each of the study’s participants required three individual visits to the hospital.<sup>30</sup> This mandated travel has led the women in Foster et. al’s qualitative study to categorize New Brunswick’s hospital-based abortion care as “arduous and complicated”.<sup>31</sup> In addition, women obtaining abortions after the amendment of Regulation of 84-20 were not informed by their physicians that a referral for their termination was no longer necessary. This lack of transparency later frustrated the participants as they went to the unnecessary lengths of obtaining a referral, ultimately delaying their procedures.<sup>32</sup> One participant’s testimony reveals the toll of multiple hospitals visits: Sadie highlighted how the so-called “free procedure” located at a hospital more than three hours away from her home resulted in two different appointments over two separate days.<sup>33</sup> As a result, Sadie incurred “significant financial cost” (including the costs of hotel accommodation and travel), making the process of accessing a hospital-based abortion “expensive

and hard”.<sup>34</sup> Sadie’s testimony reveals a common reality for New Brunswick women attempting to access sparsely available hospital-based abortion care.

As for women who are unable to reach one of New Brunswick’s three hospitals and instead must opt for clinical care, the great out of pocket cost for the abortion itself further compounds the pure strain and costs of travel. Excluding travel costs, the out of pocket cost for a clinic-based abortion ranges from \$400 to \$1600 CAD.<sup>35</sup> Seeing as most New Brunswick women seek to terminate their pregnancy precisely because of “a lack of financial stability”,<sup>36</sup> most members of this majority are forced to rely on the aid of family members and social networks to secure funds for the expensive procedure.<sup>37</sup> This reliance has further forced some women to reluctantly disclose their unwanted pregnancy.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the out of pocket cost poses an insurmountable barrier for financially insecure women to independently and privately access fundamental reproductive care. If not for the government’s legislative refusal to provide provincial coverage for the service in clinics, such obstructions would be eliminated.

In 2009, Dr. Morgentaler argued, in *Morgentaler v. New Brunswick*, how this government-instituted financial restriction has served as a barrier to women’s access to abortion. While the *Canada Health Act* (CHA), established on five fundamental principles, federally mandates that “health care within Canada [is] publicly administered, comprehensive, universal, portable, and accessible”<sup>39</sup>, the Act also empowers the government to withhold federal funding from provinces who fail to uphold “their commitment to public healthcare”.<sup>40</sup> According to Morgentaler, New Brunswick’s policy violated the CHA’s provisions and well as the rights enshrined to women under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The province was failing to provide abortion services which are “an integral component of women’s necessary reproductive-related health care”,<sup>41</sup> and “[erecting] a barrier to abortion services that violate[d] rights guaranteed to women under [section] 7 (‘Life, Liberty and Security of Person’) and [section] 15 (‘Equality’)”<sup>42</sup> of the *Charter*. Yet with Morgentaler’s death in 2013, the ongoing case halted,<sup>43</sup> leaving the provincial regime unchallenged. In the meantime, women in New Brunswick continue to be subjected to the barriers to access explored above.

### **Conclusion: The Future of Abortion Care in New Brunswick**

Despite maintaining a refusal to fund provincial clinical care, Premier Galant’s Liberal government has made recent positive progress towards greater access to abortion care. In July 2017, the Minister of Health, Victor Boudreau,

announced that the provincial government will cover access to the abortion pill Mifegymiso – formally known as RU-486 – for any woman with a valid Medicare card.<sup>44</sup> This momentous development makes New Brunswick “the first province to provide universal access to Mifegymiso.”<sup>45</sup> Authorized by Health Canada in 2015, Mifegymiso enables the home termination of a pregnancy within forty-three days of conception by “terminating the pregnancy and [expelling] the contents of the uterus.”<sup>46</sup> The abortion pill typically costs approximately \$300 CAD.<sup>47</sup> As such, it can serve as a “game-changer” for women in rural and remote areas, eliminating the need for a clinic or hospital visit,<sup>48</sup> and thereby marks a promising governmental attempt to increase women’s access to abortion care.

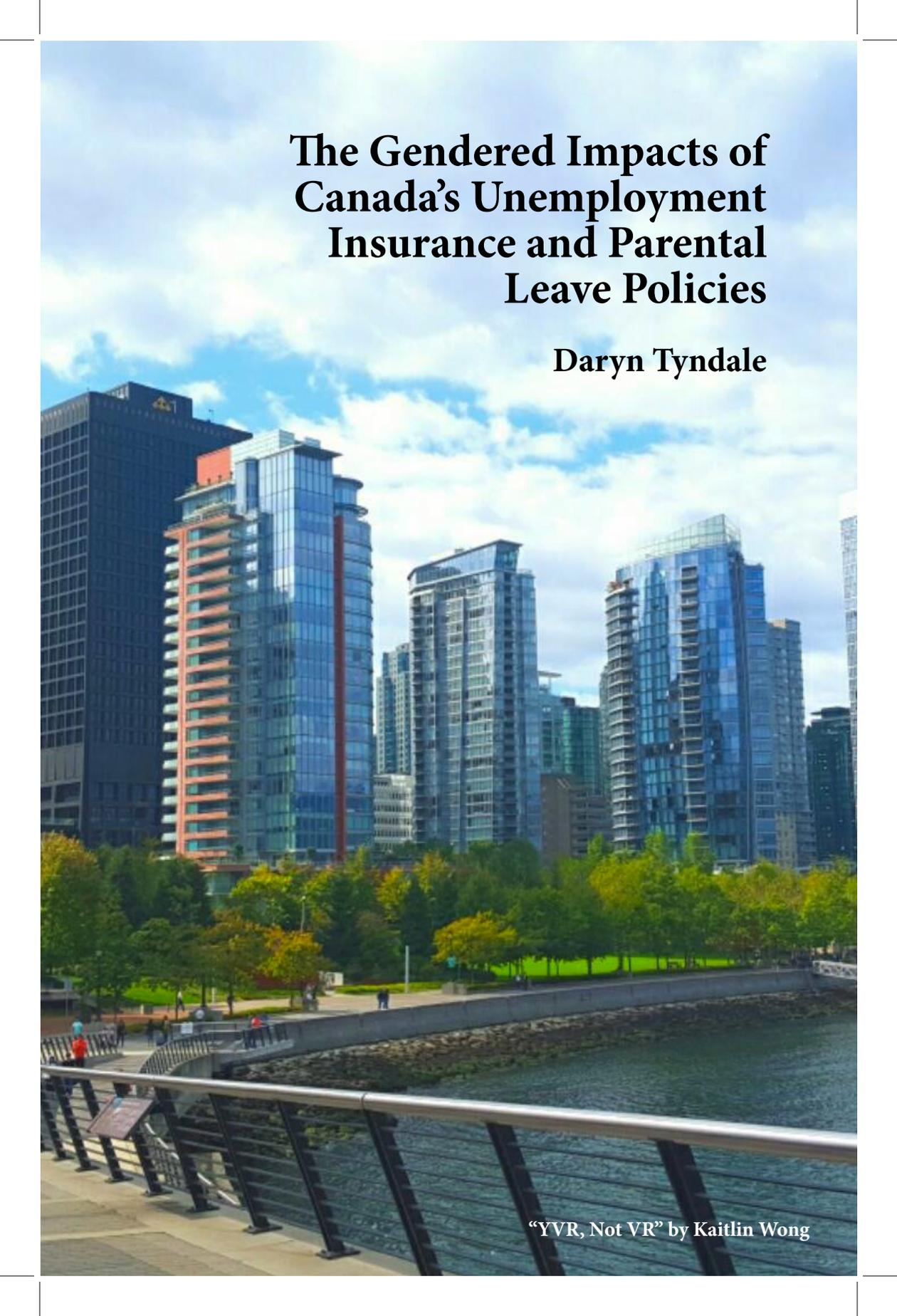
However, while this progress constitutes a positive shift towards greater access, critical problems still arise when attempting to gain access to Mifegymiso. Although the home-termination pill is free, no public list details the physicians who have undergone the mandatory training required to prescribe it, nor the pharmacies which will provide it.<sup>49</sup> This information gap has placed women in the uncomfortable position of cold calling physicians and pharmacies in the hopes of gaining access. Beth Lyons, director of the New Brunswick Women’s Council, described the negative toll of this reality, stating how “that’s a really tough call to make again and again if you’re afraid you’ll face stigma and particularly if you’re in a space where your safety is in danger, you’re precarious in some way or worried about more people finding out about this.”<sup>50</sup> In addition, women will need to undergo an ultrasound to determine whether their pregnancy falls within the pill’s forty-three-day feasibility,<sup>51</sup> after which they would still be required to make an in-person clinical or hospital visit. Thus, despite the government’s promotion of a comfortable home termination, failure to meet the guidelines would still impose further burdens of travel on women. When confronted with the matter of amending the government’s financial bulwark of clinical abortion care, Boudreau confirmed that the government would not remove the financial barriers to access to abortion care “in the near future.”<sup>52</sup> This reality deserves both attention and political action. Although New Brunswick’s recent coverage of a home-termination option is significant, the province’s conscious and selective provision continues to undermine the right of the women of New Brunswick to an integral medical process that was legalized on the national scale over thirty-one years ago.

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# The Gendered Impacts of Canada's Unemployment Insurance and Parental Leave Policies

Daryn Tyndale

“YVR, Not VR” by Kaitlin Wong

States' policies act as both a reflection of the society's dominant norms and culture, as well as tools through which governing actors uphold ideology and advance social change.<sup>1</sup> The modern Canadian welfare state originates from the period following the Second World War, where social policies on unemployment insurance and universal old-age pensions were introduced.<sup>2</sup> Though such programs may have aimed to promote the overall welfare of the Canadian public, the frameworks upon which social policy is based affect the ways a given program will benefit—or hinder—particular communities. Post-WWII Canada was largely dominated by traditional gender roles; thus, the social policy created at that time reflected these notions. For instance, the earliest parental leave schemes were offered only to mothers, thereby reinforcing women's role as domestic carers and providing no incentive for men to take time off from their traditional role as a family's primary breadwinner. As Canadian culture and its conceptions of family and gender roles have evolved, so too has Canada's social policy—though not always at pace with the former. The welfare state continues to have differing effects for men and women, in ways which both reflect and reinforce the dominant gender norms of our own time.

Most, if not all, modern welfare states were founded upon the notion that women, due to their assumed natural propensity for caring, were best suited for household duties and childrearing, while men were to seek gainful employment in the labour market.<sup>3</sup> The complex array of historical and cultural factors that led to this perception are beyond the scope of this paper; however, it is undeniable that the trajectory of the modern welfare state has been shaped by the assumption that women are, to some degree, inferior to and dependent upon men.<sup>4</sup> The degree to which this assumption prevails varies considerably between different welfare state models, and carries practical implications for women's opportunities. Indeed, it is “beyond doubt that welfare policies play an important role in structuring women's possibilities and actual labour market behaviour.”<sup>5</sup> Compared to men, “women face dissimilar possibilities or obstacles to work for pay,” and “their options are strongly related to the specific institutionalized welfare policies which, in turn, influence women's freedom of choice.”<sup>6</sup> This paper will explore how Canadian women's “freedom of choice” when it comes to opportunities for paid workforce participation—versus unpaid domestic labour—has been shaped by the gendered impacts of Canada's evolving welfare policy (specifically, unemployment insurance and parental leave), and the degree to which this policy upholds or undermines the institutional subordination of women.

For the majority of its existence, Canada's federal unemployment

insurance program has disadvantaged women because it was founded on a male breadwinner model of the family. That being said, modest gains in counteracting the gendered division of labour can be partially attributed to a shift toward a dual earner model in federal and provincial social insurance arrangements. This paper will provide a brief background on welfare state theory and social policy regimes, followed by a broad outline of the evolution of Canada's federal unemployment insurance program—including the introduction of maternity leave as an extension of unemployment insurance—and the creation of a separate parental leave program for Quebec in 2006. Finally, these changes will be evaluated according to the degree to which they uphold or disrupt the male breadwinner model, and their subsequent effects on the gendered division of both paid and domestic labour.

One metric by which the gender equality of welfare states can be measured is the degree to which social policy relies on the male breadwinner model, which implies a specific arrangement of the family.<sup>7</sup> In all welfare states, the family remains the primary locus of welfare provision, while state policy and programs are intended to supplement—but not entirely replace—family care to varying degrees.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the nature of the provision of state welfare affects families' welfare responsibilities, and family dynamics more broadly. The male breadwinner model assumes a family structure in which the adult male works, and the adult female stays home caring for children and elderly dependents. Social policy aimed at childrearing or care for the elderly is likely inadequate or non-existent, because women are assumed to be responsible for this kind of care work. Without welfare programs to alleviate women's responsibilities to look after dependent children or aging relatives, women's opportunities to enter the labour market are restricted. However, state welfare is primarily allocated through social insurance schemes, which operate based on participation in the labour market.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, women's access to welfare is dependent on their husbands' employment, and only afforded "by virtue of their dependent status within the family as wives."<sup>10</sup> In this sense, welfare regimes that rely heavily on the male breadwinner model limit women's roles to that of mothers, carers, and wives, while also restricting their opportunities for employment.<sup>11</sup>

Canada's first federal social insurance program, the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Act, imposed just such a male breadwinner model. The UI Act was introduced as a benefit to be paid to unemployed individuals who were capable of, but unable to find, work. The benefit was financed through contributions by employers, employees, and the government.<sup>12</sup> UI came into effect in 1940, during a period in which Canadian women began to enter

the labour force in large numbers to make up for the absence of men who had gone to fight in the Second World War. By its peak in 1944, the employment rate among women had risen to 33.5%, up from just 24.4% in 1939.<sup>13</sup> Yet, following the end of the War, measures were taken to actively reduce women's attachment to the labour force, including closing day cares and barring women from employment in the federal government.<sup>14</sup> The UI Act also contained regulations that limited women's employment options and benefit eligibility. Occupations in areas such as domestic work, positions in hospitals, and teaching—all areas where women were likely to be employed—were excluded from coverage. Benefits could also be denied if an individual declined employment that was deemed “suitable” by UI umpires. This led to many women being “disqualified from receiving benefits [...] when they refused to accept work at a fraction of the pay they had received during the war.”<sup>15</sup> These provisions indicate that the rationale behind UI was to provide a social safety net to men in times of need, but had no intention of offering the same security to women, assuming that they were not naturally workers and therefore did not require such protections. Closing child care facilities and insisting that women accept lower pay rates further illustrated that women's primary role was assumed to be that of an unpaid caregiver, not a high-wage worker.

Men's benefits were also frequently more generous than those received by women. In addition to the base rate laid out in the UI Act, recipients were also entitled to a higher wage replacement benefit if they were responsible for a dependent spouse or child(ren) under 16 years old. Though the text of the Act was gender-neutral, its effects were not. In 1945, 56% of male UI beneficiaries were classified as having dependents and thus eligible for the more generous replacement rate, versus only 5% of women.<sup>16</sup> This outcome demonstrates that men were given additional benefits because of their status as husbands and fathers—i.e., breadwinners—while women were less likely to be granted these additional funds because it was not assumed that a woman's income would need to be sufficient to support an entire family. In 1950, an “explicitly discriminatory regulation was introduced that required married women to work an additional period of time in order to prove attachment to the labour force.”<sup>17</sup> As opposed to the 180 days of employment over two years that one had to have worked to be eligible for UI under the original 1940 Act, the new regulation required married women to have worked longer in order to qualify. Though this blatantly sexist provision was repealed by 1957, it succinctly captures the male breadwinner ideology embedded within the welfare policy created in this period. Once they became wives, women were presumed to be dependent on their husband, rather than on the state, for an

income.

In 1971, the federal government introduced the Unemployment Insurance Act's first major reform in its then thirty-year history. Eligibility requirements were lowered such that coverage became "virtually universal."<sup>18</sup> The reform also extended coverage to hospital workers and teachers, which was especially beneficial to the many women in those fields who had previously been barred from accessing UI.<sup>19</sup> Benefits became more generous and were extended for longer periods of coverage, and "overall, the 1971 legislation offered unprecedented income security for the unemployed."<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the most drastic change brought about by the 1971 UI expansion was the introduction of a maternity leave benefit. This ensured not just women's job security (i.e., the right to return to work after a pregnancy, which was already legally mandated in most provinces), but also their security of income throughout pregnancy and early childrearing.<sup>21</sup> The new program allowed mothers with at least 20 weeks of insurable employment in the past year to claim up to 15 weeks of maternity benefits at a rate of 67% wage replacement (with a ceiling of \$100 per week).<sup>22</sup> This policy development represented a significant deviation from the male breadwinner model. A maternity benefit gives women the option to choose to have a family without having their autonomy of income disrupted; it demonstrates the state's recognition that women have a role in the labour force that need not be incompatible with their roles as mothers.<sup>23</sup> Yet although the 1971 UI expansion to include a maternity leave benefit was certainly a meaningful shift in rationale, it did not represent a total departure from the male breadwinner model. Maternity leave policies, while recognizing women's roles as both workers and mothers, also uphold the notion that family care work is primarily a woman's responsibility. Furthermore, the eligibility requirements from the period in question often excluded those in part-time or precarious work—where women were overrepresented.

In 1990, federal UI policy moved closer to a true dual earner welfare model with the introduction of parental leave. 10 weeks of parental benefits could be claimed by either fathers or mothers as an extension of the existing 15 weeks of maternity leave. In 2001, the parental leave benefit more than tripled, to a total of 35 weeks, or 50 weeks when combined with the existing 15-week maternity benefit.<sup>24</sup> The introduction of parental leave represented an important step away from the male breadwinner model. While maternity leave indicated the state's recognition that women were increasingly becoming workers as well as mothers, the parental leave benefit extended the inverse recognition to men. Rather than situating them exclusively as breadwinners,

the parental leave benefit gave men the option to participate in childrearing as fathers without a substantial loss of income.

Despite this remarkable shift in parental leave policy, trends among leave-takers remain decidedly gendered. In 2000, under the original 10-week parental leave benefit introduced in 1991, just 3% of Canadian fathers took their paid leave. By 2008, after its extension to 35 weeks, the proportion of eligible fathers who claimed the benefit was under one third.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the extension actually had the effect of increasing the gap in average length of leave taken by mothers and fathers. In 2000, fathers who took parental leave did so for an average of 87% of the period of time that mothers did; by 2003, the ratio had dropped to 61%.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, parental leave can—and often does—have the counterintuitive effect of reinforcing the male breadwinner model of the family. In theory, the 1991 introduction and 2001 extension of parental leave made it possible for both parents to temporarily withdraw from the labour market to participate in childrearing without substantial loss of income. However, men's earning higher incomes, on average, effectively makes their leave-taking more costly than women's. Thus, "often couched in gender-neutral terms, parental choice does not appear as an option for fathers, because the family income would generally be dramatically reduced if fathers were to choose to stay at home with children".<sup>27</sup> Evidently, while the 35-week leave can either be shared and taken concurrently or consecutively, or be claimed entirely by one parent or the other, Canadian parents have more often chosen the latter arrangement. Thus, the supposedly gender-neutral parental leave benefit (as opposed to a maternity or paternity benefit) only gives the illusion of offering more options to parents. Rather than encouraging both parents to play equal roles, the parental leave benefit, combined with strongly entrenched gender norms, often ensures that women simply take a longer leave while men remain in the workforce.

Recently, one of Canada's provinces has sought to address some of these unequal outcomes. In 2005, Quebec reached an agreement with the federal government to create its own parental leave benefit scheme called the Quebec Parental Insurance Program (QPIP), which came into effect in 2006.<sup>28</sup> QPIP differs from the federal parental benefit program on several dimensions: its eligibility criteria are considerably more attainable, the income replacement rate is more generous, and it also provides greater flexibility by offering two options for benefit delivery (one for a shorter duration with greater benefits, and one for a longer period with reduced benefits).<sup>29</sup> The most notable feature of QPIP, however, is its provision for paternity leave, making it "the only parental benefit program outside Europe to incorporate

an explicit gender equity objective in its design by adding benefits for the sole use of fathers.”<sup>30</sup> Unlike a gender-neutral parental benefit, which can be used by either parent, paternity leave creates a “use it or lose it” mentality that incentivizes fathers to claim their “daddy weeks” or lose the benefit entirely.<sup>31</sup>

In comparison with the federal parental benefit program, QPIP relies much less on a male breadwinner conception of the family. In addition to its modified eligibility requirements, which expand coverage to a greater proportion of new mothers in Quebec than in the rest of Canada, the introduction of paternity leave has made it more likely that fathers will take time off to participate in childcare. This is not to say that Quebec’s program has entirely overhauled the male breadwinner model. In a survey of QPIP leave-takers, a frequent response among fathers was that “they appreciated QPIP paternity leave because it ‘didn’t take away’ from the mother.”<sup>32</sup> This demonstrates that childcare is still predominantly seen as the responsibility—perhaps even the right—of mothers. However, the outcomes under QPIP speak for themselves: in 2005, still under the federal program, 32% of fathers took parental leave; in 2006, when QPIP was introduced, 56% claimed the benefit, rising to 82% in 2008.<sup>33</sup> These outcomes suggest that paternity leave has successfully enabled men to take up a greater share of childcare work, just as maternity leave better allowed women to maintain their positions in the labour market. Both of these developments, when applied in tandem, represent a shift towards a dual earner model as the foundation of welfare policy, and thus create more equal outcomes for men and women by challenging the gendered division of labour. In sum, Evans seems quite right in affirming that the QPIP model, “while not perfect, is considerably better in coverage, levels of benefits, and father targeted incentives than the program available to mothers and fathers in the rest of Canada.”<sup>34</sup>

The history of Canada’s unemployment insurance and parental leave programs demonstrates how social policy can incentivize certain behaviour and uphold particular ideologies. It is perhaps intuitively puzzling that, of the two policies covered in this paper, that which has been more successful in promoting equality is the one which explicitly deals with each gender separately, rather than the one that is neutral. However, the limited effectiveness of the federal program’s gender-neutral provisions speaks to the inevitable shortcomings of policy that appears nominally equal, but is implemented in a context of entrenched inequality. Structural barriers such as the gender pay gap, as well as broader underlying assumptions about traditional gender roles (which have both informed and been upheld by social policy) have conditioned the ways in which Canadian parents take advantage of parental leave

schemes. These are problems that cannot be solved through welfare programming alone, but the Quebec case demonstrates that policy can certainly have an impact on behaviour, and perhaps contribute to greater cultural shifts over time.

Further study of the effects of welfare policy on gender equality should also reflect on other dimensions of equality, taking the experience of transgender and gender nonconforming individuals as well as non-heterosexual couples into consideration. That such reflexions have not yet been made appears to be a gap in the literature on Canadian welfare policies. Existing scholarship largely fails to account for how social policy based on a male breadwinner model—a deeply heteronormative construct—differentially affects those who do not fit neatly into a gender binary or whose spouses are not of the opposite sex. Other sociodemographic considerations, such as class and race, could also be explored in order to produce a more robust account of the impact of Canadian social policy on equality.

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**Corporate Social Irresponsibility**  
Confronting Eco-Imperialism in the Canadian Mining  
Industry in Latin America

**Mikayla Salmon-Beitel**

“The Pedestrian’s Peace Bridge” by Kaitlin Wong

Canada has the largest mining industry in the world, with most of its outward investment concentrated in Latin America.<sup>1</sup> As of 2013, Canadian companies were operating 80 mines in the region, with 48 more properties in development. Mining is a massive source of wealth for Canadians, with profits reaching upwards of \$19.4 billion.<sup>2</sup> Though the Canadian Government refers to mining projects as creating jobs in developing countries, building capacity and contributing to sustainable development, most of the benefits from foreign mining investments rarely reach the communities where the physical mines are located. In fact, mining is well-known for both environmental and social impacts in Latin America, including air and water pollution from tailings ponds, erosion, soil degradation, toxic chemical emissions, forced relocation of local communities, social tensions, and much more.<sup>3</sup> Throughout this paper, I will argue that Canadian mining in Latin America is a form of environmental injustice since it benefits the Canadian economy at the expense of massive social and environmental problems in Latin American communities. I will then outline how mining companies' attempts to address these issues through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies are eco-imperialist, imposing Western conceptions of "sustainable development" onto affected communities. Finally, I will discuss the ways in which Canadian citizens can contribute to ending mining abuses in Latin America by working in their own communities under an anti-imperialist, solidarity-based framework.

### **An Overview of the Canadian Mining Industry in Latin America**

Canadian mining companies became increasingly influential in Latin America at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to neoliberal economic policies installed both in Latin American countries and internationally. Beginning in the 1990s, a shift from authoritarian regimes towards democratically-elected governments in many Latin American countries created the political climate necessary for states to embrace neoliberalism. New governments sought to open up the region to international investment, increase trade, and promote development so as to counteract the debt crisis and plummeting GDP experienced in the 1980s. They privatized state-owned enterprises, decreased social spending, abandoned redistributive policies, and provided preferential treatment for investment in key sectors. Developed countries, including Canada, were looking to increase their foreign investments and natural resource sectors abroad in order to offshore production to cheaper, less regulated countries. They therefore signed Free Trade Agreements, locking in neoliberal re-

forms through internationally-binding agreements and opening the region to a newly globalizing economy.<sup>4</sup> Canada was particularly recognized as an aggressive promoter of these deals, signing both NAFTA in 1994 and a free trade agreement with Chile in 1997, making Chile Canada's top destination for foreign investment.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of these policies, many Latin American countries began updating their mining codes, creating provisions that allowed foreign companies to explore, mine, develop, refine, and transport resources on their lands. Though the land was still technically owned by the local governments, foreign individuals or corporations retained the rights to exploit resources with little regulation.<sup>6</sup> This instigated a major mining boom in the region, especially for Canadian companies. While Canadian companies had established many local mines at home, these economic and political incentives created the push to internationalize the mining industry, increasing mineral exploration throughout the developing world, especially in Latin America. Today, Canada holds the largest share of the global metals exploration budget (excluding iron), with \$1.1 billion invested in this sector, while Latin America still remains the most popular global destination for mining investment.<sup>7</sup>

Since Canadian companies have such a high level of influence in the Latin American mining industry, they are able to commit human and environmental rights abuses without being bound to the same legal standards as they would be when operating on Canadian soil. Canadian companies have been charged with instigating violent conflicts, creating environmental damage by neglecting to enforce regulations, forcing migration or displacement in mining communities, and even committing ethnocide.<sup>8</sup> According to speakers at the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean at a York University Conference in 2002, "Canada does not have criminal liability laws that can hold companies and their officers accountable for criminal actions committed abroad, even when the accused company is employing governmental funds"<sup>9</sup> They noted many instances of human rights violations by Canadian corporations, failure to consult with communities whose land they were exploring, and a lack of enforcement of international agreements to protect against corporate predation. For example, members of the Mayan Q'eqchi' communities near the Fenix mine in Guatemala have launched three lawsuits against the Canadian mining company HudBay Minerals, accusing them of shooting civilians at a peaceful protest and gang-raping women in order to forcibly evict them from their homes.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, the case in Guatemala is not unique. Between 2000 and 2015, 44 people were killed, and 403 people were injured in confrontations between local populations and Ca-

nadian companies in 13 different Latin American countries.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Canadian Mining Industry as an Example of Environmental Injustice**

The exploitation of natural resources in Latin America by Canadian mining companies, compounded by their blatant disregard for the negative social and environmental impacts created in the process, is a prime example of global environmental injustice. Global environmental injustice is a term used to explain the ability of wealthy countries in the Global North to develop by deteriorating the environment in poorer countries in the Global South, maintaining these countries underdevelopment and dependence on wealthier nations.<sup>12</sup> Especially with regards to mining projects, the impacts of environmental injustice are often most intensely felt by Indigenous communities. This is because wealthy capitalist states are able to use land in poorer countries through accumulation by dispossession, a framework of capitalist imperialism. First defined by David Harvey in the early 2000s, accumulation by dispossession describes the tendency of advanced capitalist states to seek out new areas for their natural resource industries, displacing local people and subjecting them to environmental and social injustices in order to meet their need for progress.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, mining companies have a disproportionately higher record of forcibly displacing Indigenous communities than other groups, as up to 50% of extractive projects globally are operating on Indigenous lands.<sup>14</sup> Companies will often ignore Indigenous land claims, acting as if their traditional territories are *terra nullius*: empty lands that are going to waste without industry. Lands used for mining projects are then subject to a plethora of environmental problems, as land surfaces are destroyed by digging large open pits, water is contaminated by chemical outputs, and air is polluted by arsenic, mercury, and lead.<sup>15</sup> Communities are therefore faced with the dilemma of remaining on their lands while the mining project proceeds, increasing their vulnerability to environmental or human injustices, or leaving their land and possibly facing intense poverty or security concerns elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> Though some groups do embrace mining as a form of economic development, over the past few decades, Indigenous movements have emerged throughout Latin America, demanding that groups maintain a right to self-determination over what extractive projects are built on their traditional lands. These resistance efforts actively challenge the neoliberalist development model that prioritizes the profits of large Western corporations over the rights of Indigenous peoples in affected communities. However, since multinational corporations are extremely wealthy and local governments are eager for foreign investment, the

interests of the rich and powerful tend to overcome those of grassroots movements, and most of their demands remain unrecognized.<sup>17</sup>

### **Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies as an Eco-Imperialist Response**

In response to environmental justice issues, many mining companies are in the process of implementing corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives aiming to provide benefits for the communities where their operations take place. However, these projects often take on the lens of eco-imperialism, imposing Western views of environmentalism onto local communities. In Canada, the government has recommended that all Canadian companies working abroad include voluntary CSR strategies in their business plans in order to address accusations of foreign corporate misconduct. In their 2014 report entitled “Doing Business the Canadian Way: A Strategy to Advance Corporate Social Responsibility in Canada’s Extractive Sector Abroad”, they provide recommendations for CSR activities including community infrastructure assistance, local employment, emission monitoring, health and safety policies, and leadership charters.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, the community development and restoration projects they implement to address these issues actually worsen colonial dynamics by following an eco-imperialist framework. This is because there is a strong incentive for companies to partner with international NGOs to push forward their CSR campaigns. While NGOs give the companies credibility, a positive social image, and a way to offload the burden of CSR activities, these organizations then maintain exclusive rights to determine which development projects to implement in mining-affected communities. Since large-scale NGOs are often supported by supra-national bodies such as the United Nations and the World Bank, their funding becomes contingent on meeting a set of predetermined international targets. The projects they implement are therefore more likely to address international concerns than local needs.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of environmentally-focused NGOs specifically, there has been a tendency to focus on environmental issues while ignoring their intersection with larger social problems. In his book *Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death*, Paul Driessen criticizes activist groups such as Greenpeace and The Nature Conservancy for working towards a Western ideal of “sustainable development”, ignoring local needs in the process.<sup>20</sup> CSR strategies that aim to preserve “nature” do not take into account the many different relationships with the natural world that local communities may have. For many subsistence-based groups, the environment is not a separate entity that

can be managed and protected, but rather a sphere of life, a provider of livelihood, and a place of deep spiritual connections; environmental initiatives that aim to conserve nature in a Western sense may thus erode these connections and make their living conditions less tenable.<sup>21</sup> That being said, there are multiple international and locally-based NGOs that are fighting foreign mining companies' abuses in Latin America outside of an eco-imperialist framework. These include Mining and Communities, Mining Watch, Latin American Observatory of Mining Conflicts, OXFAM, The Halifax Initiative, Christian Aid, Kairos, and the Third World Network.<sup>22</sup> Through smaller-scale protest and lobbying activities, they strive to hold mining companies accountable for their misdeeds, educating the public on these issues and supporting the plights of local communities.

CSR strategies are an effective marketing strategy, making companies seem socially aware in order to attract investors, while not contributing to limiting human rights or environmental abuses by mining companies in the region overall.<sup>23</sup> Given that Canada's CSR policy is voluntary and there are no built-in mechanisms for dispute resolution or enforcement, it is inherently non-binding and insufficient for regulating company behaviour.<sup>24</sup> In communities where companies are engaged in CSR activities, citizens then run the risk of becoming reliant on foreign development programs, and therefore on mining projects by extension. During the era of the Harper government in Canada, funds for development aid were increasingly being funneled towards CSR activities carried out by mining companies, meaning that communities could only benefit from development programs if they accepted mining projects as well. CSR programs, especially in conjunction with international NGOs, therefore served to expand mining operations by extension. In response, companies with strong CSR platforms and links to international NGOs are seen as socially-responsible investments, and can, as a result, expand their reach into more marginalized communities in the developing world, despite having a record of social and environmental abuses on their hands. However, since they are under no obligation to actually conduct these programs and very few mechanisms exist to hold them accountable for violations committed in the process, CSR programs therefore benefit mining companies much more than local communities, allowing them to expand their markets and continue to exploit natural resources in developing countries, contributing to global environmental injustice.<sup>25</sup>

## **Solution: Canadian Campaign against Mining in Latin America**

In opposition to the eco-imperialist framework inherent in CSR campaigns and their affiliated international NGOs, I argue that the most effective way to address environmental injustices by the Canadian mining industry in Latin America is by engaging in campaigns centered in Canadian communities. As discussed in the previous sections, community development programs built out of companies' CSR campaigns are not enough to address human and environmental rights abuses. While independent NGOs working against mining companies in the affected communities have a better chance of affecting change in culturally sensitive ways, they still risk acting from an outside perspective, imposing their views of community development based on pre-defined international targets. Therefore, in order to tackle the root of the problem outside of an eco-imperialist framework, Canadian citizens may be most effective at limiting human and environmental rights abuses by Canadian mining companies by working from within local Canadian communities. If enough Canadian citizens voice their concerns to the Canadian government, we may be more effective at changing foreign policy, increasing regulations on mining companies and holding them accountable for their abuses. The alternative solution I propose follows three main pillars, based on Joanna Macy's Framework for Social Transformation: holding actions, shifting worldviews, and promoting alternatives.<sup>26</sup> The specific actions I describe therefore focus on first holding companies accountable for the injustices their activities have caused, then decreasing their ability to expand their production and cause further injustices, and finally promoting sustainable alternatives to mining in affected Latin American communities under a solidarity-based framework.

### *Holding actions*

In order to decrease Canadian mining companies' ability to commit human and environmental injustices, they must be held accountable for their misdeeds in Canadian courts. In January 2018, Global Affairs Canada announced the creation of a new position entitled "Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise," whose task would be to independently resolve disputes between Canadian companies and impacted communities.<sup>27</sup> This position has much potential as it provides the necessary accountability for governments engaged in CSR activities abroad. However, as of February 2019, the position had not been filled. Canadian citizens therefore have a crucial role to play in lobbying politicians to respect their commitments and change Canadian foreign policy so that companies cannot continue to commit the types of in-

ternational crimes they have been accused of. Additionally, if the laws are not strong enough in developing countries to address human rights violations committed by Canadian companies domestically, these lawsuits should be allowed to proceed to trial in Canadian courts instead. In this way, we can assure that Canadian companies are legally held accountable for their transgressions and that all affected groups receive justice.

However, in some cases mining is inevitable and can actually provide a good source of wealth for local Latin American communities. Even still, if a Canadian company intends to start a mining project on community land, it is crucial that local inhabitants give their consent before development can proceed. This is especially true with regards to Indigenous communities. Canada has signed on to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that states that Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination over their lands, including the right to free, prior, and informed consent over projects that could cause them to be relocated.<sup>28</sup> These international agreements need to be upheld, transferring rights and power back to local residents before a new project can be implemented. In this way, Canadian companies will be discouraged from committing human and environmental rights abuses since there will be mechanisms in place to hold them accountable for their transgressions and they will no longer be allowed to start new projects without the consent of nearby local communities.

### *Changing the story*

In order to encourage mining companies to downscale their production, so as to further limit their ability to have environmental and social impacts on nearby communities, Canadian citizens must decrease their monetary support for the industry as much as possible. This involves retracting investments in the metals sector, limiting metal consumption, and prioritizing recycling metal products whenever possible. To begin, I propose launching a divestment campaign aimed at Canadian shareholders and institutions with stocks in the major Canadian mining companies. As of now, many pension funds, life insurance companies, major banks and financial institutions across Canada are investing in Canadian mining companies. For example, recipients of the Canadian Pension Plan are benefitting from Canadian mining companies' profits and inadvertently supporting their human rights violations by paying into it each month.<sup>29</sup> Though investors choose which organizations to invest in, most do not go as far as investigating where those companies are putting their money, and who they are indirectly supporting. Investors therefore need to be better educated on the abuses by mining companies and the plethora of

public institutions investing in them, so that they can make more informed decisions when investing their money. If they are persuaded to practice ethical investing, then they may decide to remove their investments and re-invest in more sustainable initiatives. When mining companies see their investor approval decreasing due to increased public awareness about their human rights violations, they will be more likely to either take corporate abuses seriously and implement more regulatory measures or downscale their business to meet falling investment levels. This is because large corporations rely heavily on investments and will do whatever they can to keep profit margins steady or increasing.

Another effective way to encourage mining companies to decrease their production is by decreasing demand for these commodities. In order to encourage consumers to reduce the amount of metals they purchase, they must first be sensitized about the conditions under which their metals are produced. The activist group Protest Barrick is an effective model of this type of campaign, as in 2015 they launched a large-scale educational program to show supporters of the PanAm games where the metals came from to produce their medals; all of the gold, silver, and copper was sourced from Barrick mines in different parts of the world. Barrick is the world's largest mining company (also Canadian) and has a long history of perpetuating human rights abuses.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, this campaign did not receive much traction since the actual coverage of the PanAm games took up most of the media time. However, if a similar campaign were to be launched around other metal-rich sectors, such as electronics, jewelry, and construction, and consumers were made to better understand the impacts of their metal consumption on Latin American communities, then they will be more likely to decrease spending on these commodities wherever possible. Mining companies would thereby respond to this decrease in demand by downscaling production.

Finally, when citizens do need to consume metal products, they can focus on buying used products and recycling their old ones. Metals recycling, especially in the electronics sector, could then catalyze a shift towards mining-free production. As of 2017, only 9.5% of gold produced globally was used to create new electronics while the majority was used for jewelry and investments.<sup>31</sup> Given that a quarter of all gold produced is recycled, if recycled gold were used to create electronics instead of jewelry, the electronics sector could be almost entirely sustainable. On top of this, technology is currently being developed to recover larger amounts of metals from recycled electronics. If more electronics were recycled and more investments funneled into R&D on recovering metals from electronics, the industry could one day move

towards being self-sufficient. Though this example applies to gold recycling in the electronics sector, this logic can also be applied to other metals in other sectors. Though decreasing consumption of metals and minerals is critical to decreasing the power of mining companies, metals recycling provides a tool to change the pathway of how metal products are produced and disposed of across the sector. Overall, in order to limit Canadian mining companies from expanding their projects in Latin American communities, thereby increasing human and environmental rights abuses by extension, Canadian citizens have an important role to play in limiting their investments in the sector, decreasing their demand for metals and minerals, and encouraging metals recycling projects.

### *Promoting alternatives*

Many alternatives to mining exist that have the potential to promote circular economies, empower local populations, and stimulate the transition to more sustainable societies. In 2015, the World Economic Forum launched an investigation into the role the mining and metals sector can play in a sustainable world, projected for 2050. They contrasted the social and environmental impacts of mining with the sustainable development goals, showing areas of divergence and possibilities for shared opportunities. Overall, they proposed a transition to a circular economy based on recycling metals and limiting new extraction projects. They encouraged mining companies to begin converting their mines to metals recycling plants in order to facilitate this transition.<sup>32</sup> While this is an important first step, I argue that much more needs to be done to promote sustainable alternatives to mining in the near future.

Firstly, mining companies need to take responsibility for spearheading environmental restoration projects which combat the massive environmental degradation that has been accruing on their sites for decades. While expensive, these projects provide an opportunity to create sustainable, local jobs for residents in nearby communities. Secondly, in order to rebuild communities in a more ethical manner after being affected by mining, funds accrued from the divestment movement can be re-invested into sustainable living alternatives in the affected communities, such as community gardens, collective housing projects, and local governance structures. In order for these projects not to fall into the traps of eco-imperialism, as in CSR initiatives, they should be initiated by local Latin American NGOs and supported by Canadian solidarity groups, not imposed on communities by international NGOs. Supporting groups would instead work to amplify the voices of affected communities from within Canada instead of speaking on their behalf.

Allies could therefore be trained in cross-cultural communication skills and be encouraged to recognize their privilege when working on these issues, attempting to dismantle colonial north-south barriers in the process. Some ideas for Canadian solidarity groups to consider include organizing local film screenings to sensitize the public about these issues, engaging in letter-writing campaigns to encourage the government to hold their companies accountable to human rights laws, and writing to pen pals in affected communities in order to better understand their experiences with these projects. If these sustainable alternatives are implemented in affected communities, with support from Canadian groups working under a solidarity-based framework, alongside circular recycling-based mining methods, this provides a firm enough structure to transition towards an environmentally sound and socially just low-carbon economy.

## **Conclusion**

The solutions I have proposed aim to create Canadian-based resistance to the environmental and social injustices that Canadian mining companies have committed throughout Latin America. By following a three-pronged approach, I have shown how Canadian citizens can act to hold Canadian mining companies accountable for their human rights injustices, encourage companies to limit expansion by decreasing their monetary support for the sector, and promote sustainable alternatives in Latin American communities affected by mining. Though these solutions are by no means complete, they serve to encourage Canadian citizens to think about these issues and consider where they can be most effective in promoting change. Canadian mining companies are incredibly powerful and use this power to increase their wealth at the expense of local populations, thereby contributing to global environmental injustice. The solutions they have instilled all fall under corporate social responsibility projects, and as a result have a strong tendency to reinforce and reproduce colonial dynamics by acting under the lens of eco-imperialism. The solutions I have proposed therefore follow a non-colonial, solidarity-based framework to address environmental injustices from *within* Canada, acting as allies to resistance groups instead of foreign helpers. Though confronting corporate greed can be an incredibly daunting task, local groups can have a meaningful impact through targeted, well thought-out projects. I hope that the actions I have proposed can empower affected Latin American communities to resist mining companies in ways that are locally relevant, building capacity for them to create sustainable livelihoods outside the boundaries of

capitalist extraction. By encouraging Canadian citizens to come together in the face of these injustices, we can build communities at home in solidarity with those affected abroad, working together to create a mutually-reinforcing collective future.

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