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Le lundi 30 novembre 2009 - Volume 99 Numéro 12
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12-18 L'UNIVERSITÉ INC.
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22-25 MCGILL AU QUÉBEC AU CANADA
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26-35 NOTRE ÉDUCATION (EN CONTEXTE)
OUR EDUCATION (IN CONTEXT)

36-42 VIE ÉTUDIANTE
STUDENT WELL-BEING

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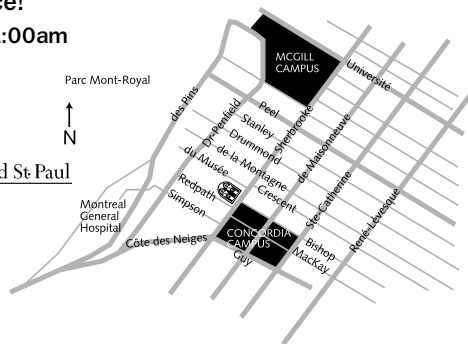
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THE UNIVERSITY QUE L'ON VEUT

«Quelle université voulons-nous?» Lorsqu'elle est posée par des francophones au sein d'une des institutions anglophones les plus prestigieuses au pays, impossible de trouver réponse à cette question sans aborder l'habituel mais toujours épineux enjeu de la langue. Toute discussion sur un modèle idéal d'université, qu'il s'applique à McGill en particulier ou au réseau universitaire québécois dans son ensemble, nous ramène inévitablement à débattre de la place du français à McGill, et parallèlement, de la place faite aux francophones dans le réseau d'éducation postsecondaire québécois. Les étudiants passent, les écrits restent (depuis 1977) Afin d'alimenter notre réflexion sur cette université idéale que l'on tente d'imaginer dans ce numéro, l'équipe du Délit a cherché à s'inspirer des idées de ceux qui l'ont précédée en se replongeant dans les anciens numéros du journal depuis sa création en 1977. À l'époque, le Délit s'appelait encore le Daily français, et était publié sous la forme d'un encart hebdomadaire au sein du quotidien anglophone du même nom. Le Délit n'a toutefois pas été enfanté sans douleur: vous imaginez bien qu'en pleine crise nationalo-linguistique (la Loi 101 venait d'être adoptée; le Parti Québécois venait de prendre le pouvoir et préparait la voie pour le référendum de 1980...), la création d'un journal francophone au cœur du bastion de l'«anglophonie» montréalaise a été perçue par certains comme une déclaration de guerre, et ce malgré les précautions prises par l'équipe éditoriale. Le débat n'en a pas moins fait rage entre les groupes linguistiques, au point que la CBC qualifia la création d'une publication francophone à McGill de «scandale d'ordre national» («French Daily today, McGill français demain» pronostiquait-on). Si dans les faits les prévisions de la CBC se sont avérées aussi exactes que celles de Jojo Savard sur l'élection de Kim Campbell en 1993, il reste que la question de fond est toujours brûlante d'actualité: quelle est la place du français et des francophones à McGill?

What does Le Délit want? Quand Le Délit a été créé en 1977, le mouvement d'affirmation nationale des Québécois battait son plein et la nécessité de donner voix aux francophones à l'intérieur même de McGill était criante. Les choses ont bien changé depuis, mais la pertinence d'une publication étudiante en langue française nous semble toujours d'actualité. Les francophones représentent bon an mal an environ un cinquième de l'effectif étudiant de McGill, mais la culture francophone est loin d'avoir une voix proportionnelle au chapitre. À l'aube de la nouvelle décennie, les frontières de la «bulle» ou du «ghetto» qu'on évoque souvent ne semblent pas encore avoir été percées, ni même être prêtes de l'être. Le Délit représente l'une des rares interfaces qui permettent aux deux cultures de se rencontrer, puisque ceux qui y contribuent participent activement à la vie mcgilloise. Ce lien entre les deux communautés nous semble néanmoins encore beaucoup trop ténu, et l'une des raisons principales est que la francophonie ne semble intéresser... que les francophones! Comment, alors, arriver à jeter des ponts entre les deux solitudes qui perdurent au sein de notre institution? Nous ne prétendons pas avoir la réponse. Cette édition conjointe Délit-Daily est une amorce, et nous espérons qu'elle permettra à de nombreux lecteurs de l'édition anglaise de lever le voile sur le fait français à McGill.

Notre vision de l'université idéale est certes bilingue, mais dépasse de loin la seule question linguistique. Nous vous invitons à plonger dans la lecture de ces pages (bilingues!) qui vous sont offertes afin d'y puiser un peu d'inspiration pour rêver l'université de demain. ☺

THE UNIVERSITY WE WANT

The end of the decade is quickly approaching, and as we look back at how McGill has fared over the past 10 years, it's clear that though students have come and gone, the big issues on campus have endured.

Tuition has been increasing at a faster pace than inflation for the past two decades, and headlines in issues of the two Daily Publications Society papers throughout the "aughts" bear witness to this trend.

There's also a clear trend toward students being pushed out of the centre of the University. Initiatives run by students and catering to student needs have had to fight for their space, from SACOMSS to the Architecture Café to the Muslim Students' Association's ongoing battle to gain a permanent prayer space. In 2001, the Arts, Music, and Education students' societies had to hand over control of their cafeterias to the University, part of a trend toward the centralization and corporatization of food services that's continued since then.

McGill has also become increasingly concerned with liability, a pattern that's manifested itself in more red tape limiting the ability of clubs to hold events on campus, and restrictions on which clubs can use the McGill name. More recently, this preoccupation with liability has extended into McGill residence culture.

At the end of the decade, Le Délit français and The McGill Daily are teaming up for this bilingual special issue. We've tried to track some trends of where McGill's been going in its policies and relationship with students since the year 2000. More importantly, we've tried to provide a forum for student voices to articulate visions for a better University. We hope this will bring some things into focus, despite all that can get lost in the shuffle of student turnover. Among these voices, a lot of common themes emerge:

The University we want is truly student-centred, putting student wellbeing first rather than treating us as numbers to push through a system, as sources of cash, or as potential liabilities. The University we want recognizes that a student-run university is a perennial goal of the student body, despite the recycling of that body every four years.

The University we want is not-for-profit. The University we want researches responsibly and recognizes its role in a world facing the challenges of climate change and peak oil, moving toward sustainability in campus use of resources and in the ideas about consumption it disseminates to students within its lecture halls.

The University we want handles itself responsibly as an economic and political actor. The University we want treats workers fairly and does not see quality and accessibility of education as mutually exclusive goals.

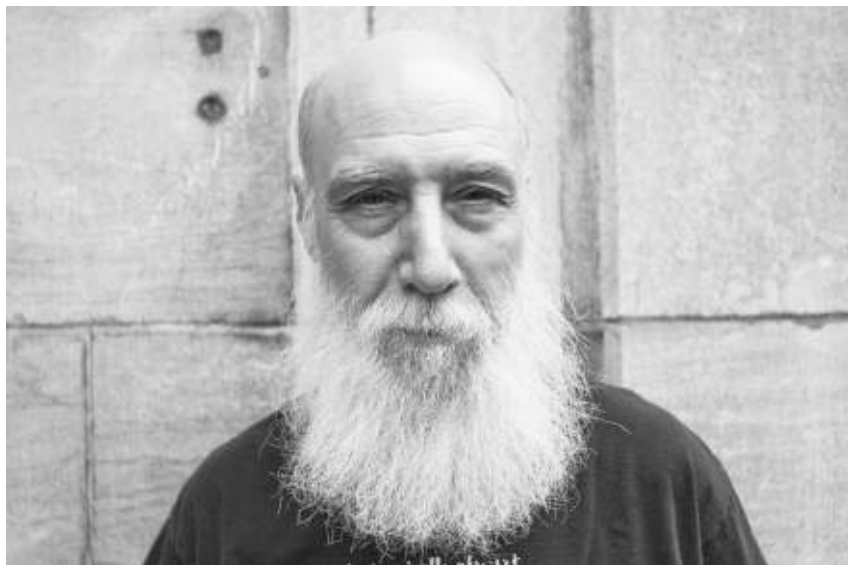
The University we want acknowledges that it is still structurally complicit in perpetuating the power imbalances in our society, even though it can equip people to combat them.

The University we want assumes the responsibility that comes with the privilege of study, and will commit to producing research that addresses those power imbalances.

Here's to another decade of students pushing for their stake in the University.

Found on campus

Humera Jabir talks to the people behind the scenes at McGill



Alan Youster

Shoes off, and be silent – or else

Alan is the librarian for the Birks Reading Room, a source of great conversation when in search of wisdom, and an inspiration to bearded persons everywhere.

“I’ve worked at Birks since 2000, but I’ve been at McGill for 39 years. I have a bit of background at McGill; I’ve been at the Board of Governors for 15 years. I would like to see us become a great university, obviously, recognized for its contribution to knowledge and to teaching. But somehow I’d like to be able to see that university, and to see it do that and find a way to treat its staff better. It’s a general comment, but we can take specific issues, like ... the benefits issue that is going around that you are probably not aware of at the moment, and I think that’s an issue that highlights the problem that...needs to be addressed.

“The focus of the University should be students, knowledge, and teaching – but the non-academic staff play a large role in how the University functions, and if it functions, I mean you could plan meetings but if the doors aren’t open and the rooms aren’t clean, it doesn’t work. We should treat people better.... Students are people too, and academics are people too, and we tend to divide ourselves too much. I know that we all have different roles to play, but it doesn’t mean that groups playing different roles within the University community should be left out or feel alienated, so that’s my wish.”



Angelo Tambasco

Keeping the grounds safe in all seasons

Angelo has worked at McGill for the past 23 years, and is now Supervisor of Grounds and Vehicle Maintenance.

“My daily work here starts by serving the campus, getting information from various key departments, such as security services, parking, that inform us of problem areas, and we make sure that outside our regular maintenance that we take care of the problem.... To be honest with you, students are very understanding with us, and we try and be very understanding with them, no matter whoever comes in and requests our help, because at the end we are here for you.

“There are certain issues that are grassroots, that you can just come to me directly and ask, ‘Angie, can we borrow some barriers, some shovels?’ as has been the case, you don’t have to go through all the channels to come and see me. It depends what is being asked. You can look me up on the web, come meet me here at our office, where we can share a cup of coffee and discuss whatever is at hand.

“It’s 23 years that I am here, and I do enjoy it.... I’ve seen students come and go. I’ve seen students succeed in life, which I am happy to have witnessed. These are individuals that I have worked closely with, and seeing them succeed is a greatest satisfaction, as if they are part of you, part of the family.... As I’ve mentioned it to many other students, please come and see me in our office: if you need any guidance, just come by.”



Jeff Alcendor

Security guy at the Milton Gates. Yes, you have to get off your bike

«Je vis à Montréal depuis cinq ans, et je vivais en Haïti auparavant. Certains de mes collègues viennent du Chili, d’autres d’Afrique. Il y a plusieurs nationalités, dont les Québécois. Mon horaire de travail est flexible: aujourd’hui j’ai travaillé pendant dix heures, mais habituellement, c’est huit heures. En fait, je suis remplaçant à McGill. Quand je reçois des appels pour y travailler, j’y viens.

Généralement, je surveille les gens qui passent, avec leurs vélos, sans compter les voitures qui circulent. Je trouve cela parfois difficile, parce que je demande aux cyclistes de descendre du vélo, et ils ne m’entendent pas ou n’écoutent pas; je ne crois pourtant pas qu’il s’agisse de racisme.

C’est obligatoire de descendre du vélo et de marcher, mais certains passent rapidement. Quelques étudiants sont aimables. J’imagine qu’on pourrait tout de même améliorer la situation. Je ne fais que mon travail, mais il n’en reste pas moins qu’on gagnerait à ce que les étudiants se conforment aux limites de vitesse.»



Marie LaRica

Welcoming more student visitors

Marie’s been working at the Redpath Museum since 1984, and is proud to share the museum’s collection.

“I have been working here since 1984. I came to McGill a lot earlier, in 1981 – I guess we had one computer here and it was a PC and the reason I was hired was because I had computer experience. The secretary who was leaving told me, ‘Well, the machine is there; they tell me you know how to use it!’

“I think all of the museum is important. It’s the only museum of its kind in Quebec. It holds the second largest anthropology or ethnology collection in Canada and that’s up on the third floor. It’s the only natural history museum in Montreal. There is a mineral collection, [a] very expensive shell collection, and we have some animals that are endangered. There is a diversity of life, so from the beginning of life that can be observed. We have a dinosaur that’s pretty popular, and we have a mummy.... And that’s what the museum is really.”

All photos by Stephen Davis / The McGill Daily

Une université qui roule

Abordable et écologique, le vélo n'est pas qu'un sport, c'est aussi un moyen de transport de plus en plus populaire, mais McGill est-elle l'université rêvée pour les vélos?

Guillaume Doré
Le Délit

Si il est question de parler de l'université rêvée, il semble bien que la question du financement et de l'accès à une éducation de niveau supérieur est primordiale. Par contre, je décide aujourd'hui d'éviter de vous présenter ma vision utopiste de l'université et de diriger ma discussion vers un autre enjeu actuel de notre société qui touche aussi nos campus: l'environnement.

Si la ville de Montréal a de quoi être fière de l'installation des vélos BIXI, pour les étudiants, aller à l'école à vélo n'est toujours pas la solution de transport la plus simple. En fait, l'idée des BIXI est fantastique, mais peu réaliste comme moyen de transport efficace: il faut trouver un vélo à la station de départ *et* un espace libre à l'arrivée, ce qui n'est pas garanti. Pour éviter ces contraintes, mieux vaut acheter un vieux vélo et l'enchaîner à tout ce qui peut nous tomber sous la main; clôture, panneau de signalisation, arbre et avec beaucoup de chance, un bon vieux *rack* à vélo –bien trop rare sur le campus à mon avis. Je vous propose donc un petit voyage au Japon afin de chercher une solution possible.

Le 16 juillet 2008, je suis à Sapporo et la famille qui m'héberge me laisse utiliser un vélo pour me rendre jusqu'au métro, qui se trouve tout de même à un kilomètre de la maison. Sur mon vélo, le trajet se fait rapidement et arrivé à la station de métro, je suis sous le choc: il y a ce que j'appellerais un... stationnement incitatif... pour vélo. J'avais déjà vu un grand nombre de vélos près d'une gare à Tokyo, mais là,



Guillaume Doré / Le Délit

À l'Université de Hokkaidô, le vélo est roi et les stationnements ne manquent pas.

j'étais vraiment stupéfait. Je laisse donc mon vélo dans ce stationnement, en prenant soin de bien le verrouiller... à la japonaise: il suffit de tirer un levier pour lever la selle et barrer la roue arrière; aucun besoin d'enchaîner son vélo à une structure bien ancrée au sol.

Je prends le métro pour aller à l'Université de Hokkaidô et arrivé là-bas, je réalise que là aussi les vélos sont omniprésents. Près de la porte de chaque bâtiment, il y a des vélos, et de nombreux espaces de stationnement sont amé-

nagés. La preuve que les vélos sont populaires, il m'arrive de croiser une longue file de vélos alignés les uns à côté des autres, le long de la rue.

Bien que j'ai souvent vu des sportifs à vélo à Montréal depuis que j'y habite, il ne m'a jamais semblé que le vélo était un moyen de transport très commun dans la métropole. S'il faut féliciter Montréal pour les BIXI et pour la création de pistes cyclables dans la ville, cette dernière ne semble pas avoir songé à installer des espaces de stationne-

ment raisonnables pour les vélos près des stations de métro. Les universités non plus ne semblent pas avoir compris: pour que les étudiants utilisent un vélo, il faut leur donner des outils pour faciliter son utilisation. Au Japon, certaines compagnies vont plus loin et proposent des primes pour les utilisateurs de vélo, et des centres proposant des espaces de stationnement, des vestiaires et des douches pour les cyclistes ouvrent leurs portes.

Il y a encore beaucoup à faire ici, mais installer des *racks* à

vélo en grand nombre sur le campus est une action simple qui permettrait de faire un pas vers l'université rêvée, une université qui prône un mode de transport sain pour le corps et pour l'environnement. ☺

Visitez notre site internet pour voir des photos comparatives des stationnements de vélo à Sapporo et à Montréal. Partagez aussi avec nous vos stationnements favoris à Montréal et sur le campus. delitfrancais.com

Campus space should meet student needs

David Zuluaga Cano
The McGill Daily

A good rule of thumb is that every hour of class should be backed by three hours of studying. This means that for many students, time on campus is largely spent outside of lecture halls. No one is more aware of this than McGill Library staff, who see thousands of students walking into and out of the 13 branches every day. As the student population has grown and their technological needs have changed, the library has adapted to accommodate them.

The Schulich Library for

Science and Engineering was renovated in 2006, increasing the number of workstations, improving the lighting of the building, and restoring the handsome oak furniture. The Cyberthèque, part of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library, opened on January 2008, adding 125 computers to the network. Starting in February 2008, the library made it possible to book the Cyberthèque pods through the online catalogue. This online room booking system expanded to the rest of the network a year later.

McGill Libraries has continued investing in its facilities. A renovated Walter Hirschfeld Geographic Information Centre

(GIC) was opened on the fifth floor of Burnside Hall last October. Students have enthusiastically embraced these changes in the library. Schulich Library, for example, saw an increase in traffic of 40 per cent since the refurbishment was completed.

"It's a lot more pleasant to study at the library," says Erin Shulich, a U1 Cognitive Science student. "There's less hassle in trying to find a place where to connect your computer, and it's great that they finally added a little bit of colour."

Despite the many improvements in recent years, there remain shortcomings in the system. Group study is mostly

limited to the fifth floor of the Schulich Engineering Library. Because of the popularity of the space, and the small size of the Schulich Library in comparison to the other major libraries, finding a spot can be extremely difficult. The group workrooms interspersed across the network are useful, but they tend to be booked solidly in advance. The renovated GIC has helped alleviate some of this shortage, but it is still unclear how much of an effect it will ultimately have.

An issue that prevents the full use of study spaces at McGill is how difficult it is to plan to stay on campus for the day. On evenings and weekends, access to

many buildings is restricted. This presents a problem for students who are prevented from accessing their lockers during those periods. And for those students who have a lengthy commute home – especially those off the island of Montreal – studying on campus means hauling heavy textbooks across the city.

"Coming to campus on a weekend is always a hassle, because of the amount of crap that I have to carry around," observes Marie-Lise Drapeau-Bisson, a U1 Economics student, who lives on the South Shore. "It'd be much easier to study at a library if I could just get stuff from my locker in Leacock."



Turning research into action

McGill should use students to make our campus green

Jonathan Glencross
Daily Writer

Over the past month, McGill has increasingly become a university that I want to be a part of. The first step in this direction was the presentation of the most recent version of the McGill sustainability policy to the Board of Governors and the Senate: both groups endorsed the vision for a sustainable McGill. The policy clearly outlines a series of activities and aspirations to be undertaken by the University, with the goal of becoming an institutional model of sustainability for society. One of the policy's commitments is to consider activities carried out by or on behalf of the University in light of their life cycle (social, economic, and environmental), and to establish sustainability indicators to enable accountability, to communicate specific goals, and to monitor and report on progress. The second step was the SSMU referendum, where the overwhelming majority of students voted to match the administration's commitment to the sustainability projects fund, which

will raise more than \$2.5-million over the next three years.

It is impossible to treat these two steps in isolation, as the intention of both students and the administration with regard to sustainability has been made very clear: it is time for McGill to get up to speed. Now that we have our intentions in the right place, how are we going to get where we want to go? I think it begins by turning Deputy Provost Morton Mendelson into a prophet. He recently announced at McGill's annual Rethink conference on sustainability in education that McGill was a student-centred university. This is simply not true, and we all know it. Rather, McGill is driven primarily by its research. But let's hope Mendelson is predicting the future.

So in the spirit of the "student-centred" university, I have a suggestion. Since we do not yet measure, promote, or report on our sustainability as a university in any formal way, we should use research by informed students to drive and judge how well we are doing in this field – instead of worry about *Maclean's* rankings.

Commonly referred to as "exper-

iential learning" or applied student research, this is not a new idea. Students can and should be at the centre of both developing and completing sustainability performance indicators through their coursework. Gaps in knowledge or information are simply opportunities for student projects and research – in consultation with relevant staff and professors – to find creative ways to resolve these problems or to develop entirely new methods of gauging our successes and failures.

Each year, the results would be shared with the entire community as a means to facilitate action and to make more informed decisions. The University would then disseminate the knowledge and information required to support long-term planning objectives related to sustainability, and maintain positive institutional memory.

The best part is that we do not have to sit around writing op-eds in *The Daily* while we wait for permission to make this happen – we can start now. This year, McGill will be one among hundreds of universities across North America taking part in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's

voluntary self-reporting framework for gauging relative progress toward sustainability. Those involved in sustainability on campus want to move away from the "Ministry of Truth"-style promotion of positive external rankings that universities often fall into. Actions aimed at achieving outside praise could end in greenwashing that would undermine everything we have accomplished to date.

Visit the site, read the policy, ask tough questions, and find courses that can support your becoming the centre of the University when it comes to sustainability. Use the University's strengths to develop a worthwhile and honest account of our performance – both the good and the bad – so that our actions on sustainability continue to speak louder than our words for years to come.

Questions or comments are encouraged, and can be directed to jonathan.glencross@mail.mcgill.ca. The sustainability policy can be found at mcgill.ca/sustainability/plan, and the STARS reporting framework can be found at aashe.org.



Sasha Pothukova / The McGill Daily

Beating books into ploughshares

Campus Crops envisions a university that grows its own food

Maddie Guerlain
The McGill Daily

Picture this: beans and tomatoes scaling the walls of Burnside, Leacock, Otto Maass, and McConnell; the perimeter of Lower Field transformed into vegetable plots and pumpkin patches; tame decorative flower beds filled with edibles like kale and chard and even fiddleheads; and the Farmers' Market sporting a stall of campus-only veggies. Wouldn't life on campus be far more vibrant? Filling McGill's space with plants that bear food and not just flowers would imbue more colour into our concrete campus, nourishing our creative minds and feeding our hungry stomachs.

At McGill, we're lucky to have such an expansive and well-used green space in the centre of our campus, not to mention the plants we see in other places. Even now, flowers creep out of sidewalk cracks and mint invades unattended plots of grass tucked

between buildings. But we could have so much more.

Urban spaces' ability to provide food is often vastly underestimated. But issues of food security are becoming more pressing with the onset of climate change, our fragile dependence on oil, and the breakdown of global commodity chains.

McGill is brimming with opportunities for crop growth, but is marred by a lack of action. The Edible Campus Garden is an amazing example of student initiative, but there is literally so much more room to grow. Think of new green space between Leacock and Morrice Hall, outside the Law building, and near the fences along Sherbrooke, or the terraces outside of Otto Maass, Leacock, Redpath, Bronfman, and Trotter.

The results would be more than tasty. With so much growing on campus, McGill could well become the first university in Montreal to start an urban agriculture course. Although McGill, Concordia, and UQAM all

have student gardening groups, no university has yet taken it a step further by institutionalizing these spaces as sites of academic, hands-on learning. Research projects could easily sprout from these gardens, and agriculture courses would no longer be limited to the Macdonald campus. What if McGill's architecture and engineering students designed the physical spaces on campus? What if our science and environment students maintained our green spaces? There is learning that could come from such close interaction with our physical environment. We feel that, given those responsibilities, students could foster a sense of collective ownership of campus spaces, and from that could develop the skills needed to build communities where people take care of each other and their physical surroundings.

With so many environmentally focused groups on campus – Organic Campus, Greening McGill, and Gorilla Composting, to name a few – and

more and more sustainability measures being passed by SSMU, the student backing is obviously present. Currently, Campus Crops runs a small garden behind the School of Environment building. Over the summer, our produce is split between volunteers, and – in the fall – everything we grow goes straight to Midnight Kitchen in an attempt to create the smallest food chain possible: planted, grown, and eaten by students, all on campus.

The possibility of changing a significant amount of campus space into sources of food is not that far fetched. We have the space, the motivation and with the new Sustainability Project Fund, we certainly have the money. Directly empowering students in local food production will not only make campus a little more delicious and nutritious, it will provide the campus with a better sense of place and community. And come on, everybody likes getting their hands and feet a little dirty, right?

Hold the tuition, please

Rhetoric of high tuition and increased student aid is a scam

Joël Pedneault
The McGill Daily

Recent statements made by McGill's principal, Heather Munroe-Blum, have reminded us of the administration's contradictory stance on tuition fees. In the past, Munroe-Blum has expressed a concern for the ability of lower-income students to attend university. However, Munroe-Blum has also repeatedly said that Quebec tuition fees should be "re-regulated" to match the Canadian average. Her stance is that 30 per cent of tuition fee increases could be redirected toward student aid in the form of bursaries to allow underprivileged students to attend university. Munroe-Blum is right to reject the current tuition model as unfair towards lower-income families. However, her proposal that the overarching problem of accessibility can be fixed by increasing student aid to those students who would be most adversely affected by fee hikes doesn't stand up to the facts.

Providing financial aid to underprivileged students is a short-term solution to a long-term problem, namely the underfunding of the post-secondary education system. Although administrators recognize this problem to be a very important one, the "charity model" they propose to increase students' contribution to university budgets would increase the overall financial burden on the student population. Research has shown that this would lead to a steep drop in enrolment numbers.

According to Université de Sherbrooke economist Valérie Vierstraete, increases in Quebec tuition fees to just half the average Canadian rate in 2007 would reduce enrolment across Quebec by 6,000 students. Based on this estimate, one out of every twenty Quebec students would no longer be able to afford post-secondary education if the administration had it their way. One can only imagine the increased debt load that those students who could stay on would face after graduating.

Munroe-Blum's response to the current problem of student



Higher tuition would send students into crippling debt.

Rebecca Hartz / The McGill Daily

debt is that students don't need free post-secondary education so much as a combination of grants and loans. And while these definitely provide a needed subsidy to students who otherwise would not be able to afford the cost of university, they are subject to periodic cutbacks and as such are not the most viable solution to guaranteeing accessibility. One need only remind readers of the attempt by the Quebec government to convert student bursaries into loans in 2005, sparking massive outcry.

At the turn of the millennium, the Ontario university system enacted a very similar policy to that advocated by Munroe-Blum: tuition fees were increased, and 30 per cent of the margin was earmarked toward financial aid for students. According to a

Statistics Canada researcher, the attendance of students whose parents were in both the least educated and the most educated segments of the population more than doubled. However, since the enrolment of students from less advantaged segments of society was small to start with, the actual increase in attendance figures was not very significant for the most underprivileged students.

Granted, this policy allowed a relatively small number of people who otherwise wouldn't have attended university to do so. However, the tuition increase simply shifted the heaviest financial burden onto lower-middle-class students who could not qualify for student aid. Raising tuition fees while reinvesting some of the funds into student aid only pushes the problem up

the social ladder. At any rate, nothing would guarantee that the overall levels of student debt wouldn't increase.

The ability to attend university must be recognized as a right on par with access to free health care and guaranteed old age pensions. Fighting to get rid of tuition fees is the first step toward ensuring that all persons, regardless of their background, are able to attend university if they wish to. It is imperative that we find practical solutions to the barriers that prevent people from attending university. Many students struggle to support themselves during their studies, and we can help to address this issue by helping to reduce the day-to-day costs of being a student. Low-cost housing, lower public transportation fees, and an on-campus book

cooperative would help to ease the burden on students while tuition fees still exist.

And as we strive to guarantee accessibility to post-secondary education, we need to reassess the role of universities within society. Over centuries, universities have provided a valuable space for independent scholarship to come to fruition and eventually reach the broader population. The current administration's desire for tuition increases would predictably reduce enrolment in universities. As students, we must promote a vision of universities as inclusive institutions whose mission is to work with a large segment of the population in order to raise consciousness and foster social change.

Quelques points saillants

La principale de l'Université McGill, Heather Monro-Blum, s'évertue à trouver des façons de permettre aux moins nantis d'accéder à un diplôme universitaire. En priorité, elle souhaiterait harmoniser les frais de scolarité des étudiants québécois à ceux de la moyenne canadienne, et allouer 30 %

de cette augmentation à l'aide financière versée aux étudiants dans le besoin. Pourquoi s'y opposer?

Selon une économiste de l'Université Sherbrooke, une augmentation des frais québécois à la moitié du niveau de la moyenne canadienne entraînerait une baisse

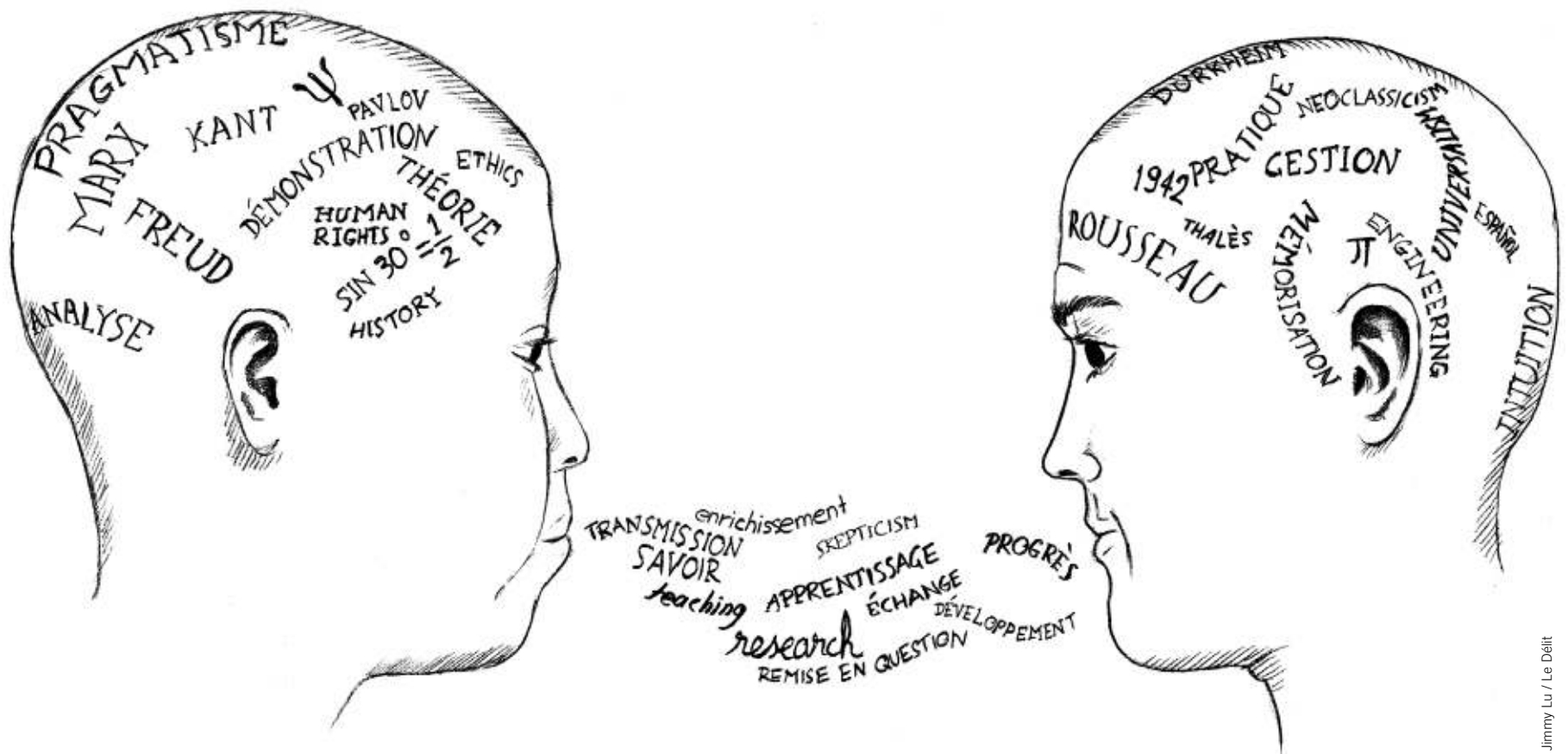
d'effectifs de 6000 étudiants, soit 2,5 % du total. Ainsi, on peut s'attendre à ce qu'un étudiant québécois sur vingt ne puisse plus poursuivre des études au niveau postsecondaire après une augmentation de frais telle que celle proposée par Mme Monro-Blum.

En Ontario, vers la fin des

années 1990, on a accordé 30 % du produit de l'augmentation des frais de scolarité à l'aide financière. Le résultat: la proportion des étudiants les plus aisés, tout comme celle des plus dépossédés, a doublé. Toutefois, le nombre d'étudiants provenant de milieux plus défavorisés était

déjà bas et n'a augmenté que très peu en chiffres absolus. Le problème demeure.

Depuis presque deux décennies, le fardeau d'endettement des étudiants canadiens continue à augmenter, et les banquiers en profitent pour se remplir les poches. À quand une réelle accessibilité aux études? — J.P.



Le savoir idéal

Quels critères doivent guider l'université idéale dans le choix du savoir qui est enseigné et financé? Entrevue avec Vincent Pouliot, professeur adjoint au Département de science politique et expert en philosophie des sciences sociales.

Thomas Didier
Le Délit

L'université a le rôle de préserver, de générer et de diffuser le savoir. Mais quel savoir? Qui choisit ce savoir? Serait-il pertinent remettre en question la connaissance placée sous le sceau de la consécration académique? L'université idéale devrait avoir une réponse idéale à ces questions. Mais la réalité complexe n'appelle pas une réponse simple.

L'inertie de la science

L'avancement de la science est un processus laborieux. Une fois qu'une idée est acceptée, il est particulièrement difficile de la remettre en question. Il fallu près de 2000 ans, entre Aristote et la révolution copernicienne, pour se défaire de l'idée que la Terre est le centre de l'univers. Le philosophe des sciences Thomas Kuhn qualifie un tel changement de révolution scientifique parce qu'il change la «science normale», c'est-à-dire la science fondée sur des accomplissements scientifiques passés, à laquelle une communauté scientifique adhère et qui définit quels problèmes et quelles méthodes de recherche sont légitimes. La science normale actuelle croit en l'objectivité de la recherche. Son but est de trouver des liens de causalité et des règles générales vérifiables,

dans le monde naturel comme dans le monde social.

Dans la pratique de la recherche, les découvertes sont souvent contradictoires, et les chercheurs luttent non seulement pour démontrer la véracité de leurs hypothèses, mais également pour obtenir les ressources nécessaires à la continuation de leurs recherches. Le dilemme fondamental auquel est confrontée l'université dans la détermination du «bon» savoir, est de décider pour quoi, et à qui, sont allouées les ressources de la recherche.

Toutefois, le système

«Personne n'a bu à la fontaine du savoir. [...] C'est un choix politique.»

Vincent Pouliot Professeur-adjoint, Département de science politique

d'allocation des ressources à la recherche scientifique offre peu d'opportunités à la remise en question. L'enseignement se limite au savoir considéré comme «scientifique». Les bourses et les publications sont octroyées selon des lignes directrices établies par la science normale, et mènent à l'obtention de postes de professeurs, plaçant les individus ayant le mieux intégré la science normale dans la position de diffuseurs du savoir et de juges de

la connaissance acceptable pour quelques décennies, perpétuant le système. Certains étudiants se sentent même contraints d'adhérer à des approches conventionnelles pour s'assurer une place sur le marché hautement compétitif de l'emploi académique.

Que peut faire l'université idéale pour corriger cette dynamique? Pour répondre à ces questions, *Le Délit* a demandé l'opinion de Vincent Pouliot, professeur adjoint au département de science politique, expert en philosophie des sciences sociales et de la méthode interprétative,

une méthode qui questionne le postulat d'objectivité de la science normale. Selon le professeur Pouliot, «la science doit poser des questions que d'autres acteurs de la société ne posent pas et être sceptique face au sens commun. Rien ne va de soi.» Ce professeur en poste à McGill depuis 2008, adepte d'une méthode qui, sans être marginale, n'est pas considérée comme conventionnelle, estime que la lutte des «ismes» est contre-productive, que les grands

paradigmes ne se nuisent pas et que ces différences doivent être mises en sourdine pour favoriser un débat constructif.

Spécialisation ou diversification?

Pour le professeur Pouliot, «le progrès scientifique, c'est lorsqu'une idée éclaire un aspect du monde qui n'était pas compréhensible auparavant». Pour maximiser la recherche, certaines universités développent un avantage comparatif en concentrant leurs ressources dans des champs de recherche très spécialisés. Ce qui est considéré comme le savoir accepté devient alors relatif. La méthodologie interprétative qu'utilise le professeur Pouliot, par exemple, n'est pas conventionnelle par rapport aux méthodes des politologues de *Ivy League* américaine, mais est très courante en Europe. Premier adepte de cette méthode au département de science politique de McGill, le professeur Pouliot considère que «sur le plan méthodologique, McGill se fonde bien aux courants nord-américains, tandis que d'autres universités canadiennes ont une tradition plus critique».

La spécialisation, nonobstant ses bénéfices, ne devrait toutefois pas être l'unique objectif des universités; la diversification est également essentielle. «La diversification est une responsabilité de l'université envers les étudiants: celle de forger l'esprit critique», indique le professeur

Pouliot. «McGill rempli ce mandat» ajoute-t-il, faisant référence à la diversité présente dans le département de science politique.

Il n'y a donc pas lieu de tracer une ligne nette entre le savoir scientifique et les idées non-scientifiques. Au contraire, c'est précisément pour garder un esprit critique aiguisé que l'université idéale doit savoir tirer profit des contributions intellectuelles d'une pluralité d'approches et d'opinions. Dans cette perspective, avec des ressources «idéales», illimitées, l'objectif devrait être de maximiser la diversité des points de vue. Mais les ressources sont évidemment limitées, et il est nécessaire de faire des choix. A qui appartient ce choix?

Selon le professeur Pouliot, «personne n'a bu à la fontaine du savoir. Les universitaires proposent un menu d'options, mais il appartient à la société de décider en fonction de ses valeurs. C'est un choix politique.» Si le menu d'options politiques est à la portée de la société, il est par contre à douter que tous comprennent la haute voltige intellectuelle des théories et méthodes qui soutiennent ces options. Outre la diversification, l'université idéale doit donc faire un effort de vulgarisation et de diffusion du savoir au-delà du portail Roddick. Une nécessité dont l'université est bien consciente, mais qui mérite d'être rappelée souvent. ☉

Unions fight for benefits

Facing deficit, administration tries to roll back the safety net

Courtney Graham
The McGill Daily

As the first year of the financial crisis draws to a close, the unions on McGill's campus are gearing up for what 2010 will bring, and reflecting on the impacts of the University's budgetary reform and deficit-reduction on their respective groups.

The unions affected by McGill's budgetary rollback are the Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (AGSEM), the McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association (MUNACA), the McGill University Non-Academic Staff Association (MUNASA), and the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT).

Most recently, union representatives from MAUT, MUNACA, and MUNASA have been in a process of recommendation and discussion with the administration, through the Staff Benefits Advisory Committee (SBAC), regarding the \$1 million in cuts that needed to be made to the employee health benefit plan as a part of the new University budget released last May.

This comes after the May 2009 delay of staff pay raises to MUNACA, MUNASA, AGSEM, and MAUT, and the finalization of the \$1 million cut to the benefits plan. These raises were meant to come in January of 2010 and last until June of 2010 – with no retroactive compensation.

After nearly six months of discussion, the unions on campus have arrived at a stand still, of sorts. The decision has already been handed down that salary increases will be delayed until June of 2010, and MUNACA had in fact already integrated that provision into their collective agreement last spring.

According to Associate Vice-Principal of Human Resources Lynne Gervais, the \$1 million in benefit cuts announced in the University Budget Book 2009-2010 last May have also been made, as of October 20, when it was decided that the monies would come from employer premium contributions.

Gervais characterized the resolution of these discussions as positive, saying that while it was difficult to reach a unanimous agreement, the cuts had to be made.

She also explained that the final deci-

sion and official recommendations were not made by SBAC but by the administration and the Task Force on Economic Uncertainty – a body created last spring to make cuts in the University's budget in hopes of shrinking its \$17-million deficit.

Speaking with Kevin Whittaker, the president of MUNACA, I got a different picture.

According to Whittaker, the unions intended to go into the SBAC discussion with recommendations to modify their coverage to "make their plan more healthy" and sustainable, not to cut employer contributions and premiums – which was the ultimate result.

The unions unanimously decided that they would not compromise on several issues, including the increase of out-of-pocket expenses for medical coverage, and any renegotiation or redefinition of their dental plan.

In the end, however, the University disregarded the wishes of the union members, and proposed a plan that will significantly increase costs for its employees.

First, prescription drug coverage thresholds went from \$150 for a single individual to \$500, and from \$300 for a family to \$1,000. This means that in any fiscal year, the unions' health insurance policies will only cover costs in excess of those amounts.

This is especially damaging, Whittaker said, to single mothers who are union members. He said that he has received many calls from families, asking him how employees are expected to cover an extra \$700 in expenses every year for something that, for many, is a necessary service. The plan has also seen a reduction in paramedical benefits, which include services such as massage therapy, physiotherapy, and acupuncture.

Whittaker is not happy with the changes.

"[They are] totally unacceptable. It's penalizing the low-income and those that require a lot of mediation. There were other ways that we could have achieved savings perfectly equal to what they've already proposed," he said.

With regard to the dental plan, it was determined that after 2011 all retirees will no longer receive post-employment dental insurance, a service which Whittaker said many older and long-term employees rely on, especially when their income is

reduced.

"It's outrageous," Whittaker said. "They're screaming they have no money and we all know that can't be true with the wages that are going out to the upper management."

MUNACA has been in a constant game of touch-and-go with the University since 2002, when their collective agreement with McGill from 2001 was set to expire.

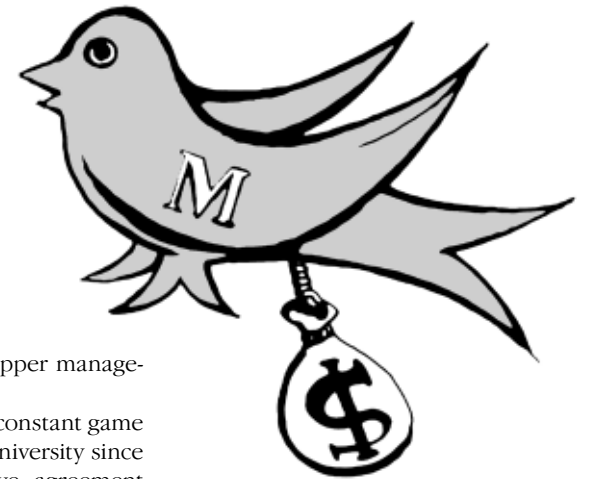
Throughout 2003, during negotiations, and again in 2008, when the next collective agreement expired, McGill developed a habit of delaying these negotiations, pushing MUNACA to demonstrate against the University at least seven times since 2002 – with the majority of these demonstrations being held in the past year alone.

The demonstrations were and remain a tactic used by MUNACA to resist the University's reluctance to come into agreements with MUNACA, instead handing down decisions that do not meet the union's requests. Changes to the union's collective agreement, which were only reached after the union compromised on its demands, included salary increases that were still lower than those of all workers throughout Quebec, equitable provision of vacation days – especially during holidays – and receipt of missing retroactive pay.

In that finalized collective agreement, which was voted in last March, was also the currently contested delay in salary increase, a provision that many MUNACA members, according to Whittaker, did not understand the implications of.

McGill's attempts to downsize these benefits plans have left an especially bitter taste in the mouths of union members following last year's revelation that McGill has a policy of paying its senior administrators hefty severance packages when they leave the University. That year, McGill also created eight new administrator positions that pay over \$100,000 each.

While creating these new high-profile, high-paying positions and theoretically creating a desirable work environment, McGill is simultaneously not only reducing employee benefits across the board, but cutting employment back in some



areas.

"I don't see how they expect the few members that are still working in the student area to maintain the same level of service. There's no relief in sight," said Whittaker.

And he's right: our library services are stretched too thin. One of the busiest times of the year, an already notorious McGill bureaucracy is more sloth than ever, and student services are put under pressure as H1N1 diminishes an already-dwindling staff capacity.

Something, clearly, needs to change.

On a micro level, there can be reform to the mechanisms by which McGill relates to its employees. Whittaker suggested that the SBAC lose the "A" and become a real committee, where decisions are made by the people that they affect most.

Lerona Lewis, the AGSEM president, wrote in an email to The Daily, "As a labour organization, we believe that a University in which the Administration respects the rights of student workers is critical to the life of the university. A university where negotiations are conducted fairly, where management is willing to work honestly to ensure that all student workers are adequately compensated for their role as teaching assistants, research assistants, invigilators or grade-makers is the university that we would like to have."

"We would like to see a little more transparency from the University," Whittaker later added. "We used to be more of a collegial community, and now we just seem to be a corporate community, where all the decisions are made, and we are left to deal with it. Unilateral decisions erode the trust we have for [the administration]."



Worried workers at BMH

New policy reveals administration's priorities for McGill Food Services

Michael Lee-Murphy
The McGill Daily

When student and permanent employees returned to work this September, the composition and design of the McGill Food Services had changed drastically at Bishop Mountain Hall, the primary cafeteria for the 800-plus students in Upper Rez. Shifts were in disarray: some days we were overworked to the point of near catastrophe, others we had to play "musical coffee cups" to fill the time until we punched out. The shift confusion has since been worked out, but the structure of the McGill-run food services has been fundamentally altered.

I entered McGill and lived in Upper Rez in the 2007-08 school year, and while the meal plan wasn't exactly fit for a king, I was comforted by the story of how this particular system came into being. Until this year, the Upper Rez plan was based on a rationing system that divided meals into portions of main courses and desserts. The former plan was the result of a student-led initiative in an effort to keep food costs low and affordable for students.

Last year, Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) Morton Mendelson told The Daily, after being asked about the University's ongoing plans to centralize food services on campus, that "We are 100 per cent committed to having ongoing consultation with students." By reorganizing residence food services over the summer, the administration has completely trampled on the notion of student consultation.

In what seems to be part of a larger effort by the University to move toward a general privatization of most of campus life, McGill has scrapped the old plan for the sake of a for-profit plan that is drastically anti-environment, anti-student, and I believe will become anti-worker in the coming years.

The workers at BMH probably have the best wages of any service-level workers on campus. Numerous co-workers of mine

support their families on the shifts they work at the cafeteria.

Workers at the BMH and RVC cafeterias are represented by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 800. SEIU is one of the strongest unions in North America, and safeguards the high quality of life that workers at BMH currently enjoy. Permanent workers have full health care through McGill, and earn time-and-a-half on weekends. "Casual" workers, such as students, earn the same wage as the permanent workers. This makes BMH one of the best student jobs on campus: you don't need a work visa, you don't need to speak French, and you can more or less choose your hours.

Most of the credit for this belongs to a few BMH administrators who consistently bend over backward to facilitate student employment. But since this year's reorganization of food services, new administrators have been brought on that most employees believe have mandates to reduce the number of shifts and to increase sales in the newly profit-driven system.

Fears are increasing among workers that in 2012, when the current union contract expires, the University will move toward a fully privatized system and outsource the residence food system to a private company like Chartwells. Anyone familiar with the overpriced and thoroughly disgusting pizzas in the Redpath basement knows just what to expect from Chartwells.

In recent years, the company has attempted to expand its operations on campus. Its blatantly anti-union policies are also a cause for concern, particularly among those who rely so heavily on these jobs for their livelihoods. The troubling trend toward the corporatization of McGill Food Services also flies in the face of ongoing efforts at increasing sustainability and gives the administration's pledges of participation a hollow ring.

Whereas in the old system, virtually all beverages, such as coffee, soda, water, and milk were dispensed from fountains into reusable mugs and glasses,



Students now have to pay for salad by the bowl.

Ali MacKellar / The McGill Daily

students now opt for cans of soda and bottles of water, creating bag after bag of waste each shift. As dishwashers, my co-workers and I fill three to four bags' worth of waste more than we did under the previous system. By week's end, the trash room in the cafeteria's basement is overflowing. Much of the food, such as breakfast cereals and sandwiches, is now sold in individually packaged containers.

The motivation for this shift is blatantly capitalistic: people impulsively purchase when things are neatly packaged and individually wrapped, rather than more communally-oriented cereal and soda dispensers. Students are paying, out of a declining balance, as much as \$14 for dinners. Rez students could be eating better food at Plateau restaurants for cheaper than at BMH. For those that stock the fridges, serve the

food, clean up the waste, and throw out the trash, it's quite obvious that the administration is laying the structural foundations to roll in an entirely privatized system.

A food system we want and need is one that respects student budgets, continued sustainability efforts, and a unionized workforce, not the needlessly wasteful new system, masked under a clean corporate Martlet logo.

«Les universitaires font donc face à un double défi pour assurer le rôle de l'université contemporaine: répondre aux besoins de l'économie nationale et en mêmes temps prendre leurs distances à l'endroit de cette exigence.»

Guy Rocher, sociologue, "Re-définition du rôle de l'université" (1990) P.7-8

The H1N1 flu vaccine is now available to people of all ages

▶ **Where:**

Clinics nearest McGill's downtown campus are at Plaza Alexis Nihon, 1500 Atwater Avenue and Palais des congrès, 201 Viger Ouest.

Clinics closest to McGill's Macdonald campus are at Allancroft School, 265 Allancroft Road and Spring Garden Elementary, 175 promenade Sonata.

- ▶ **When:** The clinics are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week. Coupons to determine your appointment time will be distributed each day on a first-come, first-served basis, until the daily supply of vaccines is exhausted.

- ▶ **What you need to take with you:** Quebec residents need a health care card; students from other provinces need a provincial health card and student id, plus proof of residence; students from out of the country need student id, plus proof of residence; McGill staff from outside Canada need to bring their letter of appointment and proof of residence.

- ▶ **Why:** Public health authorities recommend vaccination as an effective way to avoid H1N1 (swine) flu, a virus that can make you very sick for several days. Officials have warned a third wave of the H1N1 virus may hit Quebec in the new year.

▶ **How to get there:**

Alexis Nihon Plaza is near Atwater metro (green line).
Palais des congrès is at Place D'Armes metro (orange line).
Allancroft and Spring Garden school are both accessible by bus.
Transit fare is \$2.75 exact change, one way.

▶ **If you want to go to another clinic that is more convenient:**

Here is where to find a clinic near you,
http://vaccination.msss.gouv.qc.ca/index_en.php



McGill

For more information about the flu and how to avoid it, please visit www.mcgill.ca/health

Get dirty money out of McGill

Donations to University need more transparency, rigorous overview

Stephanie Law
The McGill Daily

Attractive, no-strings-attached, well-connected, and willing to please for a small price. This may sound like a personal ad, but is in fact the message McGill sends out to potential donors, regardless of their STI status. And yet, the rush of investment from large donors is not raising the eyebrows that it should be.

Campaign McGill was launched in October of 2007, and in mid-October of this year proudly announced that it had surpassed the \$500-million mark and was well on its way to reaching the goal of \$750 million.

The administration's desire to attract research dollars has gone so far as to influence its policy review processes.

Earlier this month, the administration introduced its draft of Regulations on the Conduct of Research policy in which sections requiring transparent reporting on research receiving military funding were removed. The administration has cited the need to remain in-line with other research-intensive universities, presumably in order to competitively attract donors.

The administration has also shied away from commitments regarding the adoption of policies that would ensure innovations created at McGill are accessible and affordable for those in developing countries. Again, fears of losing research dollars have dominated discussions.

It appears that McGill is trading in its ethics for big bucks.

Back when she was a prude

In November 1993, "Class A" (most heinous) war criminal and Japanese fascist Ryoichi Sasakawa approached McGill about a possible donation. At the time, Sasakawa's foundation had already made donations worth millions of dollars to various prestigious universities, including Princeton, Berkeley, and Oxford. However, both the University of California at San Diego and University of Chicago refused his money.

The McGill administration was urged by multiple faculty members to be wary of Sasakawa's donations. McGill geography professor Audrey Kobayashi, renowned for redressing injustices to Japanese-Canadians during World War II, advised the McGill administration to inform itself of Sasakawa's political history.

"I would hope that the McGill community would educate itself

about money from this source and other sources acquired by unethical means or from organizations that support what we in our society agree to be unethical," said Kobayashi at the time.

By the end of the month, Vice-Principal (Fundraising), Michael Keifer told Senate that McGill had declined the invitation to discussions with Sasakawa's foundation.

"Before knowing what we now know about Sasakawa we said we would be happy to meet them, but that has changed," Keifer said in Senate.

Professor Emeritus Samuel Noumoff, who was involved in the faculty opposition to the Sasakawa donation, is still proud of McGill's decision at the time.

"Fortunately, McGill had the courage at that point to say 'Thank you, no,'" Noumoff said.

Ignorance, indifference, or denial?

In October of this year, the president of Nestlé Nutrition Canada, Marilyn Knox, co-chaired the Global Food Security Conference at McGill with Munroe-Blum. According to Carole Dobrich, coordinator of the Goldfarb Breastfeeding Program at the Jewish General Hospital and president of the Infant Feeding Action Coalition (INFACT Quebec), this was a direct conflict of interest, as Munroe-Blum formerly served on the Nestlé Canada Advisory Board.

In a letter written in August to Munroe-Blum, Dobrich and others asked Munroe-Blum to "immediately and publicly disengage yourself and McGill University from this and any other affiliation with Nestlé Canada."

The letter cited Nestlé's unethical practices including "unethical marketing of infant formulas and repeated, systematic violations of the UNICEF/WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk substitutes and subsequent resolutions; the use of forced child labour in their cocoa supply chain in West Africa; and controversial water pricing and the privatization of public water resources," among others.

Munroe-Blum dismissed INFACT's concerns in a September 9 email to the group.

"One of the objectives of this conference is to bring the private sector to the table and to engage with them.... We are happy to have a distinguished senior Nestlé Canada executive attend the conference and act as the co-chair of the proceedings," wrote Munroe-Blum.

INFACT members were dissatisfied with Munroe-Blum's response and called it a blatant



Stephen Davis / The McGill Daily archives

HMB shows few scruples about receiving money from shady sources.

denial of Nestlé's role in perpetuating global food insecurity.

"The biggest concern is that you have the principal of McGill placing the university at a conflict of interest. We simply have to ask, 'Is this a good thing?'"

Donations as redemption

Large donations from private corporations, often seen as the corporatization or privatization of education, are problematic. Good research can come out of funding from private companies. However, it is often difficult to disentangle companies' true motives.

One can easily argue that Nestlé's involvement in the Global Food Security Conference was a public relations tactic. And McGill agreed to let them put on the show.

Another example of McGill's donor relationships with potentially unethical corporations is a \$3-million gift received from the Rio Tinto Alcan Canada Fund in 2008, which allowed the creation of the L. Yves Fortier Chair in International Arbitration and International Commercial Law. This money will allow McGill to train international commercial lawyers who will be well-versed in the various legal cases Rio Tinto faces.

In 2000, victims of Rio Tinto's mining operation on the island of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, filed a lawsuit under the Alien Tort Claims Act in U.S. federal court against Rio Tinto. Specifically, they alleged that improperly dumped waste rock and tailings from the Rio's mining operations had detrimental effects on the environment and the health of the residents.

After nine years, this case has still not been resolved, and the U.S. federal appeals court

is reviewing whether Rio Tinto must face claims of human rights violations. Other cases surrounding Rio Tinto have arisen elsewhere. In 2008, the Norwegian government publicly condemned Rio Tinto's unethical practices by selling close to £500 million, in Rio Tinto shares.

It is clear that Rio Tinto has a lot of cleaning up to do, and one option for doing this might be donating to universities. While the Norwegian government is disassociating itself from the company, Munroe-Blum continues to serve on the board of the Canada Forum of Rio Tinto-Alcan.

Noumoff, for one, argued that large donations from unethical sources affect every member of the University community.

"No matter what view, one [would be] gaining their salary as a result of unethical investment. And that's an unethical issue that every member of the staff [has] to cope with," said Noumoff.

Current donations policy

According to Derek Cassoff, director of communications of the Development and Alumni Relations Office at McGill, decisions regarding donations are largely made by the academic provosts and deans, and proper considerations are given to ethical concerns.

"All the gifts do not run through the Senate or the Board of Governors. It's usually the academic provost that conducts the negotiations with large donors," Cassoff said. "In some cases the donors request to remain anonymous...but we're very prudent when we enter in a relationship with a potential donor. If there's any concern that the donor is unethical, we wouldn't want to

do business with them."

Noumoff believes that better documentation would help McGill make better ethical choices.

"First, it is very important to document the nature of the investment or the donations. Second, [McGill should] document the charges that are made against those companies or those individuals.... If the documentation is sufficient [to suggest unethical practices] then one would request the Board examine it, present briefs, and report," said Noumoff.

Richard Janda, McGill law professor and co-author of *Corporate Social Responsibility: A Legal Analysis*, agreed that transparent criteria for assessing donations are necessary.

"There's an imperative for the University to establish criteria and policies such that its reputation is not harmed by the origins of its money. And any origin of money that could display taint, influence, divert free and open inquiry should not be accepted," said Janda. "Universities are supposed to be leaders with respect to matters of social concern, and I think that this is an example where we could do that."

Janda also explained that policy regulations on military research, as well as global access policies, can demonstrate that McGill is mindful of both the potential harmful applications of its research, and its positive spillovers.

For Dobrich, it's a matter of moral responsibility.

"Sometimes we get lost in the big hype of everything else, sometimes we've got to look at what's right and ethical, not how far we can push the money buck," Dobrich said.



Stephen Davis / The McGill Daily

Fund fine arts

McGill shouldn't stifle creativity

Amelia Schonbek
The McGill Daily

There's a conversation I've been having a lot since I moved to Montreal to study at McGill. It usually goes something like this:

New friend: So, what do you study?

Me: English literature

NF: What do you want to do with that?

Me: Actually, I want to get a job as a dancer.

NF: Oh, do you study dance at McGill too?

Me: No, I can't. McGill has no fine arts.

That last statement isn't entirely true; McGill does teach fine art in the Schulich School of Music. But by and large the University does not fund art, and that's a problem.

There are two ways that this non-support for the arts manifests itself at McGill. To begin with, the University does not offer degree programs in most fine arts disciplines. It's true that not every subject can be studied at every university. But fine art always seems to get the short end of the stick, being overlooked in favour of more "serious" subjects. This is unfortunate for a couple of reasons: it means that the artistically-inclined must look outside of the academic structure at McGill to practice their art, and it also means that McGill is doing its part in maintaining a dominant order, all too pervasive in Canada these days, that says art is not worth funding.

That the University consistently underfunds the arts and humanities programs that it does offer, in favour of disciplines that are traditionally seen as more practical or career-oriented, only adds to the problem. For instance, a scant five per cent of McGill's Faculty Expense Budget is allotted to the Schulich School of Music, in comparison to 27 per cent for the Faculty of Medicine. Despite the fact that 30 per cent of McGill's student population is enrolled in the Faculty of Arts, the largest academic unit at the university, it is only given 16 per cent of the Faculty Expense Budget. To put this in context, you should know that although McGill Med only enrolls 12 per cent of McGill's student population – less than half the number of students studying arts – it is granted nearly twice as much funding.

I don't mean to suggest that medical research isn't a commendable pursuit – it is. What I take issue with is the idea, upheld by McGill's funding structure, that studying medicine or science or engineering is more worthwhile than studying or making art. By refusing to pay for arts programs, the University is telling students from all faculties that art is not worth investing in, and that a career in art is a subpar aspiration. Instead of fostering and supporting the innovation and creativity that flows out of the arts, the University is stifling it.

Greenpeace demands tar sands action

Niko Block
The McGill Daily

With the University's Sustainable Projects Fund slated to come into effect next semester, along with plans to make campus a virtually car-free environment by the end of next year, it is clear that McGill has been making a concerted effort to brand itself as a pioneer in the green revolution.

Greenpeace McGill's tar sands campaign – which kicked off on

Wednesday last week – characterizes the University differently. The group alleges that McGill's patronage of the Royal Bank of Canada, which is heavily invested in the Alberta tar sands project, is contributing to global warming and environmental devastation.

"As students, we have no control over where our money goes," said Nora Hope, one of the campaign's coordinators.

"Things like the sustainability fund are all student initiatives and student-driven things, and every step for student groups has been

such a struggle against the bureaucracy of McGill. But once that stuff [has been established,] McGill's administration is happy to take credit for it," added Hope.

She stated that the next step for the campaign will be to push a policy on ethical investment strategies that would account for the long-term environmental consequences of McGill's financial decisions. She added that Demilitarize McGill's campaign for a revision of the Conduct of Research policy could serve as a model for Greenpeace McGill.

Free-form grassroots radio bridges communities

David Koch & Erin Weisberger
The McGill Daily

CKUT Radio is made up of a group of people so diverse that it is impossible to speak for them all when wrestling with the question, "What kind of McGill do you want?"

Yet it is precisely this diversity of thought, feeling, and expression that seems so crucial for the vitality of this university.

In CKUT's studios, people whose voices are distorted, under-represented, or absent in the mainstream media come together for an empowering act of self-expression. This, in turn, allows for dialogue between the diverse elements of a fractured

social system, where political divisions such as racial profiling and police violence are a harsh reality.

This sense of empowerment is vital for students at McGill, who often experience the alienating sense that they represent nothing but another number to the administration. Similarly, in cavernous lecture halls, the imperative is for students to listen quietly, not to engage in debate and dialogue.

McGill once treated community radio as an asset, fighting to win CKUT its FM license in 1987. Today, the University seems to regard grassroots media as a liability. For example, in 2007 McGill refused to renew its legal relationship with CKUT Radio McGill unless the station removed "McGill" from its name.

This is part of a broader trend that is apparent at McGill, where the administration seems increasingly hostile to groups that they fear may scare away potential corporate sponsors.

The University we want includes a powerful organ of eclectic cultural and political expression that reaches beyond the ivory tower. At CKUT, our hundreds of volunteers would be incapable of making this happen if not for the support we receive from McGill's student body.

Erin Weisberger is the CKUT's Funding & Outreach Coordinator David Koch is CKUT's Interim Community News/Production Coordinator and a recent McGill graduate

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Library stacks in disarray

Shelving staff and administrators disagree over extent of collection mismanagement



Photos by Sarah Mongeau-Birkett / The McGill Daily

Maria Liu
The McGill Daily

It's a familiar experience – you find yourself standing in between the shelves, scanning back and forth between PR2801 and PR 2801C only to find that although the book you're looking for appears on the online map of the catalogue, it isn't actually there. In the mean time, you couldn't help but notice that *Titus Andronicus* was with *Anthony and Cleopatra* and not with other *Titus Andronicus*-es.

Although the University has made a growing effort to modernize the appearance of the library – from new tables with lockable drawers on the fifth floor of McLennan to the Yeats-quoting glass windows in the Cyberthèque – I wonder if the problem students face when it comes to physically accessing the library collection is ever going to go away.

Following recent changes in policy, the casual shelvers are hired to work after 4 p.m., though not between classes. Staffers have also reported that the stacks branch under Access Services – which had overseen the hiring of new shelvers and student navigators for the last 25 years – is no longer responsible for the task. Rather, Diane Koen, associate director of planning and resources for all 13 branch libraries, has been in charge of the process since September. The move, shelving staff believe, has produced results that are decreasingly attuned to students' urgent needs. For example, experienced shelvers who had previously worked with the per-

manent staff – and thus would have been re-recruited quickly – were not hired when they reapplied this September.

"As you will appreciate, students graduate!" Koen wrote in an email. "They are no longer available. There is competition for all of the student employment and we try to share it around as equitably as possible. Our current cohort consists of experienced and new shelvers."

The rows and many truckloads of unshelved books on each floor in McLennan are but one measure of how the McGill library has been unable to provide timely access to the collections. According to shelving staff, this past April saw a 50 per cent budget cut to stack services. McLennan now has five casual student shelvers, instead of the 15-20 it had before the cut. Meanwhile, the six permanent staff shelvers are stretched very thin over the six floors of the building, especially during exam time, when casual student workers find themselves torn between their commitment to the library and their studies.

Koen added that students had been hired to carry out many tasks: "You may not be aware that the library has significant cataloguing backlogs and it was agreed by everyone that reducing the cataloguing backlog was a priority several years ago. Students are being employed to do a variety of tasks, one of which is shelving, but the cataloguing priority has been an important area for student employment. Some of the funds for student employment are provided by the SSMU Library Improvement Fund, and its committee members are involved each and every

year in various meetings to discuss how these funds are expended."

Koen added that "the number of students we employ at any given time varies according to the workload; it goes up during the semester as exam time approaches."

When asked if the library was aware of the build up of unshelved books, Janine Schmidt, the Trenholme Director of Libraries, responded that "there have been some recent issues with shelving in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library. The matter is in hand with our excellent staff in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library supported by student shelvers."

In response to the claim made by shelving staff that the budget to the stack services had been cut by 50 per cent earlier this year, Schmidt and Koen stated in a jointly written email that, "In general, there has been no reduction in expenditure on shelving across the library. There has, however, been a considerable reduction in the amount of shelving – as you no doubt realize, there has been a huge swing to the use of online resources in all library branches. Our staffs perform many functions. We are shelving fewer items across the system, and our loans of physical materials are also going down."

In light of the \$32 million allocated to the University's library system, I asked Schmidt and Koen to explain how the money had been spent this year. They responded that there have been challenging issues with this year's budget since McGill libraries have also had to

cope with a reduction in the University's endowment, as well as a 1.5 per cent cut in the operating grant. Schmidt and Koen said that the library collection remained a priority.

"The University has made a commitment publicly at all budget presentations that the Collections budget is protected."

They added that the bulk of funds are spent on the journal collection, and that much of the budget is spent on electronic collections; "We have been moving to e-collections in response to student demands. The Library spends almost \$14 million on staff and the remaining funds are spent on refurbishment and facilities."

When I asked if they would encourage students to learn about how the money is spent, both Schmidt and Koen explained that student representatives sit on both the Senate Committee on Libraries and the advisory committees for each branch library where the details of the budget are discussed.

Shelving staff have bemoaned the lack of funds allocated to their operations. "They spent that much money on things like the Cyberthèque and compact shelving," one staff member complained, "but couldn't get a handle on things as basic and simple as this," gesturing toward the stacks of unshelved books in front of him.

And as the unshelved books in McLennan start to resemble a small library by themselves, students should know that a search through the sorting area may be the most fruitful method of finding the books required for their term papers.

Something's rotten in the state of PGSS

Most of us spend little to no time thinking about our graduate students' society because we expect that leadership will carry out its responsibilities in good faith. Yet something is definitely wrong with the state of affairs at the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS). Some members of the PGSS executive, without soliciting feedback from Council, took it upon themselves to produce a 50-page package of vitriol under the guise of "reforming" our national union, the Canadian Federation of Students. In response to this package, distributed across the country with an aggressive missive, the president of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) called our actions "wholly inappropriate" and motivated by "a desire to cripple" a forward-thinking national students' group. Then he asked to be removed from our mailing list. The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) replied that: "While this package of motions is being touted as bringing about democratic reform, the not-so-hidden agenda here is to hogtie the CFS."

Besides jeopardizing the advocacy work that CFS undertakes on behalf of PGSS, the executive has gone one step further and is embarrassing McGill graduates nationally. Given that this institution prides itself on its reputation, what do they think they are doing? How are they forwarding our interests through these actions?

The PGSS executive needs to cease and desist. Start turning to Council for counsel on how to go about engaging with the external world, start practicing consultative democracy rather than acting on personal vendettas, and start doing the jobs we elected you to do.

Grads want to keep their heads down and get on with their work. They want to go to Thomson House to grab a pint, not to hear the latest about the negative reputation our grad society is gaining.

James Wallace

PhD Candidate
Department of History

We all have voces angeli

Re: "Vox angeli?" | Culture | November 19

In the article "Vox angeli," I was misquoted in a statement to the effect that Effusion has a higher status than Tonal Ecstasy and Soulstice.

I was upset and saddened when I read this, as obviously those false remarks could be hurtful for anyone in the two groups mentioned, as well as for anyone in Effusion who could erroneously be assumed to share that opinion. Unfortunately, I cannot refute those remarks with an exact memory of what was said and what was not said, as the interview was a long time ago, so instead let me make clear what I do believe: Soulstice, Tonal Ecstasy, and Effusion all do their thing, and do it quite well. They are all different, but each quite successful, and should celebrate their common love for a cappella rather than try to create and fuel rivalries that can only be detrimental. In a time when we do not receive any school funding, and struggle even to find a rehearsal space, we should be pooling resources, and not talking about one another negatively.

I deeply apologize for what injury this affair may have caused, and hope that the groups continue to collaborate in a spirit of camaraderie.

Michael Dyck

Alumnus 2008
Special student in the Faculty of Arts

Worshipping at the altar of diversity

Re: "Multiculturalism is a sham" | Commentary | November 19

Sana Saeed, what took you so long to say it? Multiculturalism – understood as a means to preserve and protect cultural diversity through state intervention – has always been a sham. Even the patron saint of multiculturalism, Pierre Trudeau, did not actually argue for a culturally relativistic policy. Rather, he saw multiculturalism as a means to integrate Canada's cultural groups. While introducing the policy to the House of Commons on October 8, 1971, he said: "It is vital, therefore, that every Canadian, whatever his ethnic origin, be given a chance to learn at least one of the two languages in which his country conducts its official business and its politics." Although he remarked that "there is no official culture," by insisting on English (and French for Quebec) as an official language, he made it clear that he too believed in the liberal, Anglo-Saxon cultural project. Cultural freedom could exist but it was to be strictly delineated within an English, liberal context. Identity, in Trudeau's eyes, was marked by the "collective will to exist," and not one's origin – and that collective was surely the anglo collective.

I don't believe that there's anything intrinsically wrong with a host society requiring a degree of cultural conformity. All societies do it. There is, however, something disingenuous about worshipping at the altar of diversity and at the same time refusing communion. We should continue to value the various minorities in our midst but must remember that we, as Canadians, have a common cultural project and our own set of values that are worth preserving.

Faiz Lalani

U3 History and Economics

Dr. Cornett: always a hot topic

Re: "The revenge of Doctor Cornett" | Letters | November 9

I am glad that the Commentary piece I wrote last month ("Paging Dr. Cornett," Commentary, October 8) has generated some discussion and that The Daily continues to be a forum where students, alumni, and community members can voice their support for Norman Cornett. Maintaining buzz around his struggle with McGill's administration is a positive step, but it is just the beginning. In the spirit of Cornett's dialogic sessions, I would suggest that McGill open the floor for productive dialogue by screening Alanis Obomsawin's documentary on campus. It would show courage on the part of the administration to face this controversy head-on. Continuing to ignore the issue and hoping it will go away will not work in this case. If I know one thing about Cornett, it's that he doesn't back down easily.

Emily Rose Antflick

BA Honours 2004
Renaissance Jewish Studies

HIV causes AIDS

Re: "Facts is facts?" | Letters | November 19

Daniel Hoops is right in saying that individuals with an immune system that is sufficiently compromised can very well develop AIDS-related illnesses and have sufficiently low CD4+ levels, a state that could be characterized as AIDS. In fact, with the reporting systems in place in the United States, there have been several, though rare, HIV-negative AIDS cases reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). However, when the CDC (and others) looked into these AIDS-like cases that have no detectable HIV, they found that they were nothing like the usual AIDS cases caused by HIV. They don't share the same risk factors usually associated with those who get infected with HIV: injection drug use, prostitution, being a man who has sex with men, et cetera. In fact, these cases were due to other underlying diseases. For example, some cases were reported as AIDS because they were cancer survivors who were on immunosuppressants for their transplants and were undergoing chemotherapy. These individuals would indeed exhibit AIDS-like clinical characteristics, but they would be treated for their underlying diseases that caused AIDS-like illnesses and low immune cell counts, and not for HIV – this condition is called idiopathic CD4 lymphocytopenia (ICL) and is not AIDS. Nobody will deny that there are other conditions that cause immune deficiency and that lead to opportunistic infections much like those suffered by AIDS-patients – but AIDS is caused by HIV, period.

Stephanie Law

MSc II Epidemiology

Re: "Multiculturalism is a sham" | Commentary | November 19

Even the patron saint of multiculturalism, Pierre Trudeau, did not actually argue for a culturally relativistic policy

Faiz Lalani U3 History and Economics

Problems of philosophy

Re: "The patriarchy of philosophy" | Commentary | November 23

What is, to me, the problem in philosophy is not its lack of Continental philosophy or the idea that it "has no real world import." Gold has a point that philosophers seem exceptionally arrogant – maybe this is the point. It's not that all philosophers are arrogant. I think it's that many feel the need to be arrogant about their area of study because it's almost as if studying philosophy requires justification and this justification has to be more than "because I like it." To many, there's something "arrogant and self-righteous" about studying philosophy. But it doesn't have to be like that.

Personally, I can't make any claims about why women don't study or teach philosophy, and it was respectable that Gold didn't make any real claims about this either. But she seemed to have dodged the idea that what draws people (all people) away from philosophy is its branding and the stigma that goes with it. Are all philosophy students arrogant, and in discussing our study of choice, do we really have to be self-deprecating?

Maybe, if our goal is to bring everyone – including women, minorities, and transgendered people – into the discourse, we should be avoiding the arrogant and self-deprecating talk that Gold exercises. And if that's not one of its goals, then maybe we should look at it as a study confined to the privileged and the exclusive. And if that's the case, then I'd be afraid to call philosophy my study of choice.

Aaron Vansintjan

U2 Philosophy and Environment
Former Daily editor

Cor-nett! Cor-nett! Cor-nett!

Re: "The revenge of Doctor Cornett" | Letters | November 9

I have attended several dialogical sessions organized by Norman Cornett, sometimes as discussant and sometimes as a member of the public. I have always been fascinated with his ability to raise difficult issues, and to let the students take responsibility when it comes to choosing their own position. He simply makes available to them a range of positions that they can discuss and critically analyze. So why is McGill not allowing him to continue his great pedagogical mission?

McGill is a great institution, but when it comes to criticizing Israel, academic freedom is greatly reduced. It is no secret for anyone who has followed Cornett's story that what triggered the administration's action was his giving a space for voices that dissented from Israel. Not only to these voices, as he also invited people who defended Israel's colonial policies. But those dissenting voices were credible and visible. That was too much for McGill. When will McGill recognize its error?

Rachad Antonius

Sociology professor
Université du Québec à Montréal

Girl, check yourself

Re: "The patriarchy of philosophy" | Commentary | November 23

I don't know who this "they" is that says "before becoming a columnist, you must first prove yourself to be an exceedingly arrogant and self-righteous tool" but I'm inclined to believe my friends prior to me getting my column back in October 2008.

Sana Saeed

Master's I Islamic Studies
Daily columnist

Oh, how meta

Re: "Say hello to your new public editor" | Commentary | November 23

I was frustrated to find my first column published with a number of syntactic errors and, worse, written in a journalistic voice that did not sound at all like me. An early line read, "I hope the paper's readership will help me to better articulate your sentiments by communicating your feelings about the paper to me." "The paper's readership" replaced my original "you," mangling the sentence grammatically and obscuring the fact that, truly, I write to and for you, the individual reader. The penultimate paragraph, altered to include the awful period/conjunction combination ("... we do not need to shy away from drawing anything...Mafiosi; army medic; et cetera. If we can say it aloud...") an asinine joke-indicator employed by the unsubtle and grammatically lazy, added insult to otherwise bearable injury.

The Daily's four-step editing process, as it relates to an article's content, deserves treatment at greater length in a future column. The problem at hand lies in grammatical editing, and is entirely sympathetic: editors strive to maximize clarity while retaining the author's original content and tone, and cannot always succeed at both. My first column, however, evinces the consequences of editorial overzealousness, and the importance of distinguishing between grammatical error and stylistic preference. Editors: what it is at stake here is the journalistic diversity of The Daily. If articles are edited to suit the stylistic preferences of the 18 members of the editorial staff (four at a time,) then we will end up with a paper filled with pieces that sound like you but have our names on them.

I would also like to fill in an omission made by one of the editors: what read "This year I have read the paper for the topics that stir my interest" should have read "I, like you, have read for the topics that stir my interest." That I hope my column will be relatable to The Daily's readers is, for me and for the column, a hugely important affirmation, which the editor deleted along with those three small words.

Mike Prebil

Daily public editor
U2 History

McGill's skeletons in the closet

Re: "Keep academia out of the war room" | Editorial | November 5

While the McGill administration states that there need not be a ban on military-funded research, they fail to address historical precedence for such a ban. McGill has a dark history of military research. It was involved in CIA-funded electroshock experiments and Gerald Bull, a former McGill professor, was involved in the early development of the "super gun" that was unsuccessfully adopted by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Furthermore, McGill is currently still linked with military funded projects (AQUA: an amphibious autonomous robot, is based on previously DARPA funded research). The change in policy is not necessarily bad, as there can be harmful research from non-military funding sources and beneficial research from military funding. An example of the latter: the U.S. military has become actively involved in ecological conservation research on its bases. Rather than deflect criticism, the McGill administration would serve the McGill community and Canadian society better by demonstrating how the new system will continue to ensure that the research that takes place at McGill benefits society without imperilling it.

Benjamin W. Heumann

B.Sc. '04, M.Sc. '07 Geography

Shoot at the root of the problem

Re: "Gun registry in Conservatives' sights" | Editorial | November 23

We could have saved ourselves a whole lot of trouble if our MPs had only listened to RCMP commissioner J. P. R. Murray when he told them that the numbers used to justify the long gun registry were inaccurate and taken out of context. Unfortunately for us, our MPs had more faith in the powerful anti-gun lobby group than they had in the RCMP.

Albert Einstein once said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Maybe our MPs are insane.

In 1991, Marc Lépine murdered 14 women at École polytechnique. Lépine had a government-issued firearm license and used a legally-bought firearm.

In 1992, Valery Fabrikant murdered four colleagues at Concordia University. Fabrikant had a government-issued firearm license and used legally-bought firearms.

In 2006, Kimveer Gill murdered an innocent student at Dawson College. Gill had a government-issued firearm license and used legally bought firearms.

Instead of asking for more of the same, maybe our politicians should try investing time and money on programs that deal with violence and aggression. Because ignoring the root of the problem isn't doing anybody any good.

Michel Trahan

Verdun

The Daily loves to hear from you. Send us your missives: letters@mcgilldaily.com. Write from your McGill email address, and keep your *billets doux* to 300 words or less. The Daily does not print letters that are sexist, homophobic, or otherwise hateful.

Manifesto for a student movement

Erin Hale
The McGill Daily

The student movement I want will never exist.

The movement would be based on guerilla tactics, direct action, and mass mobilization. Ideas would be spread by word of mouth, DIY campaigning, and most importantly, mass education on important issues like tuition freezes or government policies that marginalize groups of students. Each student union would engage in a series of small targeted projects, like bus passes or student daycare, to improve quality of life. Larger ideal campaigns would have a targeted objective and avoid vague, tokenistic platitudes – less populism and more pragmatic action. Don't like the new dining policy at your university? Call the director and administration ad nauseum to let him know. Don't like the recent provincial tuition defreeze? Strike for a week. Don't like a particular bill in Ottawa concerning student grants and debt forgiveness? Bus people in.

This could sound like a student movement you know, but the difference is this sort of activism would be constant. It would last beyond the first few weeks of term. Everyone would be active. There would be no complacency.

The ideal student movement

would not try to sell its membership anything – no pins, pens, or novelty bags. Promotional items should be found at the dollar store – like Association syndicale de solidarité étudiante's easily made red felt pins. (And what ever happened to armbands?) The movement wouldn't introduce a savings card to track student consumer patterns. It wouldn't try to sell health insurance – even at a low cost – because there would be no large over-arching bureaucracy. If students organized for an ongoing campaign, their unions could form a collective lobbying group, with a skeleton staff to carry out administration and one or two rotating representatives to occasionally bargain with politicians. No fancy headquarters, no professional student politicians, and no special perks – leaders would have to be the most committed to their cause, not the most glory-driven. But this ideal collective would also be open to critique internally and externally, without fear of litigation or Internet-based attacks. It would engage with the media, and open its key policy meetings to the public (like ASSÉ's congress.)

But the student movement will never exist because of the nature of student politics. We're easily corruptible, because like Henry Kissinger said – and I hate to quote him – the stakes are so low.



Sally Lin / The McGill Daily

Where have all the activists gone?

The activist élan of the sixties has all but disappeared

Melissa Wils-Owen
The McGill Daily

On Friday, October 12, 1962, Eve Norton wrote an article for The McGill Daily called "Is Politics Fatal for Femmes?" She wrote, "It is time to earn some respect and the gratitude of our country by showing that we can be trusted to do a dignified competent job in politics. Let's stop hiding in mental laziness behind a stunning feather hat." This feather hat, in 2009, is the complacency that shelters far too many university students from taking action on global atrocities.

Norton's plea was for students to show that we can be trusted

with the responsibility to affect our government's decisions. On the whole, media coverage throughout North America has evolved into a pessimistic, profit-driven distraction. However, the media is not wholly to blame for this "news coverage" since they cover events that resonate with the majority of the population. Canadian citizens can control what the media covers by expressing their interest in the prisoners of war in Sudan, and the genocide in Darfur. Most students have concern for the well-being of others, but have difficulty conceptualizing mass murder when it isn't a local issue and not a popular topic in the media. Does your heart hurt any more when you learn 15,000 peo-

ple have died rather than 12,000? At some point, all large numbers are the same, yet a difference of 3,000 individuals is approximately the number of deaths caused by the 9/11 attacks.

In another McGill Daily article back in October 1962, Herbert Aronoff covered a protest by McGill students against American president John F. Kennedy's newest legislation. Aronoff said, "Large-scale picketing and occasional fisticuffs kept Montreal police busy outside the American consulate yesterday as university students added their voice to public opinion over President Kennedy's order to blockade all arms-carrying ships to Cuba." Looking over articles such as this one, in which McGill students

took strong stances on political decisions, one cannot help but wonder what happened to that burning, jittering desire to take action.

The article goes on to discuss the merging of McGill students and those of Sir George Williams University to create the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Members of this group picketed at various universities to voice their political opinions. The keyword in this acronym is combined. Many students, and citizens in general, tend to fall into the mindset that they cannot create significant change as individuals. However, the sixties student movement shows that a combination of students fight-

ing for change can be significant enough to change history books. This cooperation should elicit vigour in McGill students for their fellow humans.

In several 1971 issues of The Daily, writers complained about student laziness that came on the heels of the huge surge of activism in the late sixties. Even then, McGill students were disappointed in the decline of political zeal. Now, 28 years later, the fortitude of students has dramatically decreased. There is a disturbing tone of contentedness pervading the present day, which entices a question Eve Norton prodded her fellow students with: "What, to be more precise, is the future of the [students] in the political clubs of McGill University?"

Racism beyond the Roddick Gates

Marguerite Bravay
The McGill Daily

In late March of this year, 23-year-old McGill student Jackie Jones was apprehended by five Société de transport de Montréal (STM) security guards just after entering Peel metro station. The guards approached Jones, who is black, while she was standing at the top of the escalators with a Hispanic male friend of hers. They asked her in French to move out of their way. They became agitated when she asked them to repeat themselves in English.

"They said 'Move now!' and it was a bit aggressive. I listened and was going to move on, but I told them that there is no need for the aggression. At this point they asked for my ID and were going to give me a ticket," Jones told The Daily ("McGill student victim of racial profiling," News, October 26). "When I started to question them about why I was receiving a ticket, one of the guards grabbed my arm and twisted it to my back. They called for three more male security guards, who slammed me onto the ground and handcuffed me." Upon finding her McGill student card in her purse, the STM guards released Jones almost immediately. She subsequently sought assistance from the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) and filed a racial profiling complaint seeking \$45,000 in moral and punitive damages with the Quebec Human Rights Commission. In August, Jones was charged for obstructing the work of civil

servants, and fined \$100. The preliminary hearing of her case was held Wednesday morning at Montreal's municipal court. Now that the legal proceedings have begun, the impact of racial profiling on the McGill and Montreal communities is brought back into focus. While the McGill bubble is often seen as a safe haven, students have a different view of the rest of Montreal. One black student, who wished to remain anonymous, said that she had never experienced racial profiling or any other form of discrimination at McGill, though she explained that "it could definitely happen [in Montreal]".

"[McGill's level of tolerance] can be chalked up to an issue of education," said Melissa Li, a U1 Pharmacology student. "Lack of education entails closed-mindedness, which leads to discrimination and [here at McGill] people are fairly open to differences." Li, who takes the metro every day, told The Daily about another incident of racial profiling she witnessed at Peel station over the summer: "The metro was stalled [at Peel] and there was a homeless black man sleeping on the car. All of a sudden, two intimidating-looking security guards stepped aboard and just sandwiched the man between them, before brutally dragging him onto the platform." Indeed, the STM's rough treatment of minorities has concerned CRARR workers for some time now. "We tend to see cases where STM inspectors overreact, fine and arrest or detain people... because [of] their race," said Adrienne Gibson, a civil rights advocate at CRARR and McGill



Racial profiling might not affect us at McGill, but it's very real in the rest of the city.

Faculty of Law graduate. "[Their] use of force can be excessive and unwarranted." She added that that many young people and minorities don't speak up against the STM, "because they are not aware of their civil rights."

"In some cases, the STM [dis-

courages] people from complaining, telling them they don't have a good case," she elaborated.

Gibson urged all students to stand up for their rights, like Jackie Jones did: "If you feel you've been racially profiled or discriminated [against], make

a complaint... Too many people think that what happens to them is an isolated case." Ultimately, Gibson reminded the McGill community that "there is strength in numbers."

—with files from Stephanie Law

The Choose Life I'd choose

Anti-abortion club should try supporting women for once

Braden Goyette
The McGill Daily

Sitting in on SSMU Council the night Choose Life's club status got revoked made me think about how campus debates often boil down to two sides talking past each other, repeating the same things without much give-and-take.

Here's what I imagine give-and-take could look like, in the University I want.

Choose Life: you want fewer abortions to be practiced.

Speakers from the Silent No More Awareness Campaign said that if they could stop even a few girls from having abortions, that would make their efforts worthwhile.

Why don't you do this in a way that empowers women, instead of degrading them with signs designed to fill them with guilt?

Specifically, by addressing the material conditions that make it difficult for women to keep their babies, by advocating for a publicly-funded national childcare program.

Your signs don't help preg-

nant women keep their babies. Your pamphlets decrying abortion as racist don't do anything to alleviate the deeply entrenched sources of economic inequality that contribute to higher rates of unwanted pregnancy or teen pregnancy among women of colour.

Helping create the political will to form a national childcare program would benefit women from all backgrounds – would enable them to support their families and advance in the workplace – and would be a pro-woman way of helping individuals choose life.

**Tell us what you want,
what you really, really
want.**

**Want to tell us how you feel about
The Daily?**

**Fill out our survey at
mcgilldaily.com.**



Julien Adant & Alexandre Forest
Le Délit

Le problème de la faible proportion de francophones n'est pas nouveau à McGill. Certains y voient la logique expression de la nature de notre université, de son histoire... pas nous! À notre sens, compte tenu de la situation géographique de McGill dans notre province d'irréductibles francophones de l'Amérique du Nord, il est impensable qu'aussi peu d'efforts soient mis en œuvre l'avant afin de favoriser le bilinguisme de manière concrète dans la vie étudiante. À notre avis, la situation actuelle doit changer! Mais n'ayez crainte, nous ne nous contentons pas de nous plaindre: des solutions pouvant concilier les deux solitudes sont à portée de main...

Une seule langue... ça embrasse mal!

L'histoire de l'université McGill est intimement liée à la communauté anglophone de Montréal. Venu faire fortune dans le commerce des fourrures suite à la Conquête, plusieurs britanniques et loyalistes ont eu l'opportunité de prospérer au Québec. James McGill, l'un de ces commerçants, a décidé de laisser sa fortune en héritage pour la création d'une université.

Effervescence intellectuelle de l'université McGill au cours de son histoire a mené à plusieurs découvertes et contributions majeures sur le plan académique, ce qui a participé au développement d'une réputation d'excellence qui se maintient toujours aujourd'hui.

L'université McGill est donc un des établissements scolaires les plus prestigieux en Amérique du Nord, et probablement l'établissement québécois le plus reconnu à l'étranger. Ainsi, McGill, emblème du Québec dans le monde, est un établissement unilingue anglophone. À l'exception de la faculté de droit et bien sûr du département de langue et littérature françaises, l'université québécoise la plus reconnue n'offre pas à ses étudiants la possibilité d'étudier en français.

Le français devrait-il être offert dans tous les programmes?

Il faut rappeler que le français est la seule langue officielle du Québec. Malgré cela, seulement 17,5% des étudiants de

McGill ont le français pour langue maternelle, un pourcentage qui a été en baisse constante au cours des dix dernières années. On peut sans doute prétendre qu'une plus grande place faite au français rapprocherait McGill des Québécois francophones, mais il s'agit de savoir jusqu'où aller pour ne pas toucher les éléments qui sont essentiels à la prestigieuse réputation de McGill.

Qui a de meilleures performances?

Le bilinguisme en milieu universitaire n'est pas une voie inconnue. La plus célèbre institution bilingue est l'Université d'Ottawa, qui s'est auto-proclamée «l'Université canadienne». Tous les programmes de cette université sont offerts dans les deux langues. De par une loi provinciale, l'Université d'Ottawa s'engage à «favoriser le développement du bilinguisme et du biculturalisme» et à «préservier et développer la culture française en Ontario». Tous les étudiants peuvent ainsi compléter leur programme dans la langue de leur choix et le bilinguisme est la norme dans toutes les communications et tous les services offerts par l'université. La dualité linguistique est même encouragée par des programmes d'immersion française au premier cycle et des exigences linguistiques aux cycles supérieures. Une commission

permanente des affaires francophones et des langues officielles, élue par le Sénat de l'université, veille au respect de la mission de bilinguisme de l'université. Malgré un recul continu du pourcentage d'étudiants

Quelle place pour le français?

A plea for reconciliation of the two solitudes

francophones dans l'université, celle-ci entretient tout de même un équilibre qui permet aux deux communautés linguistiques de fréquenter une institution dans laquelle un anglophone se sent aussi à l'aise qu'un francophone.

L'Université d'Ottawa, un idéal inapplicable au Québec et à McGill, êtes-vous tentés de répondre? Pourtant McGill a un joyau de bilinguisme au pied de la montagne: sa propre faculté de droit! En effet, la faculté possède une politique de bilinguisme passif: chaque étudiant se doit de pouvoir comprendre le français s'il est de langue maternelle anglaise et vice-versa. Dès la première année, tous les cours sont offerts dans les deux langues et le choix revient à l'étudiant. Par la suite, certains cours restent offerts dans les deux langues, mais la majorité est proposée dans une langue ou dans l'autre exclusivement. Concrètement, cette politique fait en sorte que l'étudiant peut en tout temps poser des questions, écrire ses travaux et rédiger ses examens en français ou en anglais et ce, peu importe la langue d'enseignement du cours. Le professeur lui répondra dans la langue du cours et les questions des examens seront, elles aussi, dans cette même langue. Qui a dit que les deux solitudes linguistiques étaient vouées à un dialogue de sourds?

Quels sont les effets d'une telle politique sur le corps étudiant? On peut tout de suite confirmer que les résultats sont très positifs! En effet, chaque année, dans le prestigieux palmarès du magazine *MacLean's*, la faculté de droit de l'Université McGill et le Osgoode Hall, faculté de droit de l'Université York à Toronto (unilingue anglophone, évidemment), s'échangent le premier rang des facultés de droit à travers le pays. Mais il y a plus que les résultats. Plusieurs étudiants sont charmés par cette opportunité de prendre un ou deux cours dans leur langue seconde, tout en gardant cette possibilité d'écrire ses examens et de poser des questions dans leur langue maternelle. Cela permet une immersion progressive où l'étudiant est le seul maître de cette progression. La liberté de choix reste totale, un étudiant pouvant réussir à boucler son cursus sans avoir suivi un seul cours en français. Il s'agit, en fin de compte, du meilleur des deux mondes!

guistiques, qui à défaut resteraient isolées. Les quatre universités montréalaises reflètent cette division, chaque communauté linguistique ayant deux universités. Y aurait-il de la place pour une université bilingue à Montréal? Il nous semble qu'à tous points de vue, l'université qui serait la première université bilingue du Québec aurait un avantage significatif sur les autres. Elle serait celle où les deux communautés québécoises (et même trois avec



les allophones) se rencontreraient. De ce mélange des cultures, basé sur un principe d'égalité, naîtrait une dynamique unique à McGill. On pourrait donc croire qu'une plus grande place faite au français pourrait permettre à McGill de se positionner avantageusement comme le carrefour des communautés du Québec et du Canada.

Ces deux exemples où se côtoient français et anglais portent à croire qu'il faut augmenter la présence des francophones à l'Université McGill afin qu'elle soit ce lieu de rencontre pour deux communautés linguistiques vivant dans des systèmes parallèles. Augmenter le nombre de cours en français serait le premier signe à envoyer à la communauté francophone qu'elle est la bienvenue à McGill. Si la majorité des cours de première année, dans tous les programmes, pouvaient être offerts en français, on permettrait aux étudiants francophones de faire la transition entre le cégep francophone et l'Université McGill. De plus, si le tiers des professeurs pouvaient comprendre le français et que l'on indiquait au moment des choix de cours qu'un étudiant francophone pourrait leur poser des questions dans sa langue, on rassurerait encore davantage les étudiants qui osent sortir du confort du système francophone pour tenter l'expérience McGill. À long terme, il serait intéressant de voir McGill se démarquer comme étant le point de rencontre des différentes communautés linguistiques du Québec. ☺

Alexandre Forest est commissaire francophone et Julien Adant est membre de la Commission des affaires francophones (CAF). Écrivez leur à caf@ssmu.mcgill.ca dans la langue de votre choix.



Deux langues pour une expérience... enrichissante!

L'université bilingue est un carrefour où se rencontrent deux communautés lin-

français à McGill

Julien Adant & Alexandre Forest
The McGill Daily

The low proportion of francophones at McGill is not a new problem. Some see this as a normal state of affairs, due to our school's history. Not us. Given McGill's location in this holdout francophone province in North America, it seems unthinkable to us that such lit-

Despite this fact, 175 percent of McGill's students speak French as their mother tongue, a statistic that has steadily decreased over the past 10 years. Undoubtedly, we may presume that a greater emphasis on the French language would bring McGill and Quebec's francophones closer together. However, the question remains: how can this be done without hindering those countless elements that are essential to McGill's prestigious reputation?

their courses in. Thereafter, some classes continue to be taught in both languages, but electives are offered exclusively in one or the other. This policy allows students to ask questions and hand in written work in English or in French, regardless of the class's language of interaction. The teacher will respond in the language that the class is taught in, and exam questions will be formulated in this language as well. Whoever said that both languages were destined to speak without understanding one another?

So how did this policy impact the student body? We can tell you right away that grades weren't affected at all. Every year in *Maclean's* rankings, the distinction of Canada's best law school alternates between McGill's law faculty and its University of Toronto counterpart, which is obviously exclusively anglophone. But the ranking isn't everything. Many students are delighted by the opportunity to take a course or two in their second language, while remaining able to write exams and ask questions in their first language. This allows for a progressive immersion of which the student is in charge. The freedom to choose is absolute: a student can successfully complete his degree without a single course taught in French. This truly is the best of both worlds.

Bringing the two solitudes together

A bilingual university becomes the junction of two linguistic communities that otherwise would remain isolated. Montreal's four universities illustrate this division: each linguistic group has two schools. Shouldn't there be a bilingual university in this city? In our view, the first Quebec university to become bilingual would have a significant advantage over

the others. It would be where Quebec's two communities (three, if you include allophones, or those who speak neither English nor French as their mother tongue) would come together as one. This mix of cultures, while always remembering to recognize freedom of choice, would foster a unique situation for McGill. A larger place for the French language at McGill would allow the University to become an academic centre for Quebec as a whole.

We must increase the presence of francophones at McGill. These examples of English and French in unison lead us to believe that we can make our universities a meeting point for two linguistic communities that live in parallel societies. Increasing the number of francophone courses would be the first sign to the francophone community that they truly are welcome at McGill. If the majority of first-year courses, in all programs, could be offered in French as well as in English, this would ease the transition for francophone students from French-language CEGEPs to anglophone McGill. Second, if one-third of professors understood French, and this were duly noted on their course calendar, francophone students could opt-in as they choose. They would be allowed to ask questions in their mother tongue, again welcoming students too intimidated to burst out of their francophone bubble at McGill. In the long run, it would be fascinating to see McGill become known as the meeting point for all of Quebec's distinct linguistic communities.

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All illustrations by Sandra Płotkowska / The McGill Daily

tle effort has been made to support and expand bilingualism in a concrete way at the University. The current situation must change. Never fear: we're not just going to complain. Possible solutions are close at hand.

An anglophone emblem of French Quebec

The history of McGill University is intrinsically linked to Montreal's English-speaking community. Having come to trade fur following the conquest of this province, many British and United Empire Loyalists took the opportunity to prosper here. One of these merchants, James McGill, had an exceptional vision: he bequeathed his fortune for the creation of a university.

McGill's history is one of intellectual flourishing, leading to many discoveries and major contributions at the academic level. These accomplishments have played a critical role in the development of the school's reputation for excellence, which still stands today.

McGill is one of the most prestigious academic establishments in North America, and probably the best-known Quebec institution worldwide. A symbol of Quebec to the rest of the world, McGill remains an anglophone institution. With the exception of its Faculty of Law and the Département de langue et littérature françaises, the greatest university in Quebec does not give its students the possibility of studying in French.

Why is this option unavailable? After all, French is the official language of Quebec.

Performance anxiety

Bilingualism within the university milieu is not an entirely unknown phenomenon. The most famous bilingual institution, the University of Ottawa, calls itself the Canadian University. By provincial law, University of Ottawa has a mandate to "favour the development of bilingualism and biculturalism" and to "preserve and to develop French culture in Ontario." All students can complete their program in the language of their choice, and the institution offers all communications and services in both languages. The harmonious coexistence of the languages is encouraged through French immersion programs offered at the undergraduate level and through linguistic requirements at the graduate level. A permanent commission on francophone affairs and official languages, elected by the University's senate members, ensures that the University's mission of bilingualism is consistently respected. Despite progressive decreases in francophone registration, Ottawa continues to maintain equality by allowing students from both linguistic communities to feel at home.

Some might argue that the University of Ottawa model is an ideal that can't be applied to McGill or Quebec. It is important to remember, however, that McGill already has its own bilingual gem at the foot of Mount Royal: its very own Faculty of Law. The faculty has a policy of passive bilingualism: each student must comprehend French if English is their mother tongue and vice versa. In first year, all classes are offered in both languages and students can choose which language to take



L'université entre engagement et liberté

Entretien avec Normand Baillargeon, philosophe de l'éducation et libre-penseur, s'il en est.

Stéphanie Dufresne
Le Délit

Philosophe, essayiste, militant libertaire, professeur à la Faculté des sciences de l'éducation de l'Université du Québec à Montréal... la liste des substantifs utilisés pour parler de Normand Baillargeon est longue. Ce dernier a généreusement accepté de partager avec *Le Délit* ses réflexions sur ce qu'est l'université d'aujourd'hui et ce que pourrait être celle de demain.

Le Délit: Vous avez obtenu deux doctorats, l'un en philosophie et l'autre en sciences de l'éducation, et vous œuvrez toujours activement dans le milieu universitaire. Quelles devraient être, d'après vos réflexions et votre expérience, les valeurs cardinales qui sous-tendent l'université d'aujourd'hui ?

Normand Baillargeon: Je suis de ceux qui pensent que l'université devrait être un lieu qui réunit des gens souhaitant consacrer leur existence à la vie de l'esprit, pour paraphraser Humboldt. Ses valeurs cardinales devraient donc être, très précisément, celles de la vie de l'esprit: ce sont des valeurs et des vertus comme l'amour de la vérité, la liberté de penser et de chercher, le respect pour les faits et les arguments, la créativité intellectuelle, l'étude, la connaissance désintéressée et d'autres encore, de cet ordre.

L'université ainsi conçue est cependant –et a toujours été– une institution parasitaire. Elle a néanmoins été plus ou moins tolérée par les institutions dominantes, en partie en raison des retombées de toutes sortes (notamment rentables ou autrement utiles) que peut engendrer la poursuite par l'université de ses valeurs propres.

Il y a donc toujours, et à des degrés divers, une tension entre l'institution universitaire et la société qui l'abrite. Je pense que nous vivons un moment historique, où cette tension est exacerbée et prend des formes inédites. Mon collègue Michel Freitag, qui vient hélas de décéder, décrivait la situation actuelle comme un passage de *l'université-institution* à *l'université-organisation*: cela me semble fort éclairant. L'éducation, la recherche, la vie académique ont ainsi été sommées de s'inscrire dans une logique de rentabilité et d'adaptation fonctionnelle des individus aux exigences de l'économie, toujours données pour indiscutables et décisives. L'université tend ainsi à être de moins en moins définie par les exigences internes de son activité spécifique et de plus en plus par des critères extérieurs à elle. Certains des vocables avec lesquels on parle désormais si souvent de l'université –clientèle, capital humain, compétences, rentabilité, investissements, subventions, etc.– témoignent de la diffusion et de l'acceptation de ces déplorables idées.

Cette transformation de l'institution s'est en outre accompagnée d'une véritable métamorphose de son fonctionnement interne: l'université se gère de plus en plus comme une organisation, avec des principes administratifs et une bureaucratie qui conviennent peut-être à l'entreprise qu'elle est en voie de devenir, mais qui souvent la conduisent à des pratiques qui sont aux antipodes de ce qu'exigerait l'université-institution.

Pour ce qui est de mon expérience personnelle, dont je ne peux absolument



Grant Hutchinson

La New School for Social Research, un avant-goût de l'université rêvée?

pas dire qu'elle soit généralisable, je dois avouer avec tristesse et regrets avoir souvent vu ces valeurs de l'université dont j'ai parlé être malmenées au sein même des lieux où elles auraient pourtant dû être défendues. La pénétration des ennemis extérieurs dans l'université a ainsi été facilitée par la présence en son sein d'ennemis intérieurs.

LD: Lorsqu'on parle de remodeler les universités, les débats reviennent inévitablement à la question du financement, et plus particulièrement du sous-financement actuel du réseau universitaire. Plusieurs solutions sont à l'ordre du jour: hausse des contributions étudiantes, dons privés, financement public... Laquelle de ces alternatives (ou quelle combinaison) vous semble idéale ?

NB: Chomsky a écrit quelque part –je le paraphrase– que la manière dont vit l'université telle que je l'ai définie au sein d'une civilisation est une mesure de son avancement. J'en conviens. Et je pense donc que nos sociétés se doivent d'offrir à ceux et celles qui le souhaitent (et qui ont le talent pour le faire) la possibilité de se consacrer à la vie de l'esprit librement et sans entraves, notamment économiques, pendant quelques années ou durant leur vie entière. Ce principe peut se réaliser selon diverses modalités, je suis ouvert à la discussion et à l'examen de diverses formules; et je ne me sens d'ailleurs pas compétent pour me prononcer plus avant. Mais ma préférence *a priori*, ou de principe si l'on préfère, va à un financement public qui garantisse à tous l'accès à l'université, sans barrière autre que le talent.

LD: Les universitaires sont fréquemment accusés d'être enfermés dans une tour d'ivoire, d'être déconnectés du monde réel. Y croyez-vous? Devrait-on chercher à réorienter les études et les recherches universitaires afin d'accroître leur utilité, leur impact sur nos sociétés ?

NB: Devant une accusation de ce type, il faut faire très attention et se demander: qui la lance? Au nom de quoi? Et surtout: quel est ce monde «réel» dont les universitaires seraient déconnectés?

Parfois, je le crains, c'est simplement et platement celui des intérêts dominants au sein de notre société, et si les universitaires sont accusés de tous les maux, dont celui de frivolité, c'est pour ne pas s'y intéresser d'assez près –entendez: les servir avec suffisamment d'empressement. Or, le faire équivaldrait souvent pour les univer-

sitaires à trahir leur mission propre en ce qu'elle a d'unique.

Par sa nature même, le travail universitaire tel que je le conçois en est un de synthèse, de réflexion, d'analyse désintéressée, et il peut tout à fait avoir l'air (et même, disons-le: être) déconnecté, à tout le moins de certaines préoccupations immédiates. Mais c'est aussi là sa richesse et c'est aussi par là qu'il arrive, parfois, que l'université apporte ses contributions les plus importantes et les plus spécifiques, notamment à la résolution de problèmes pratiques ou immédiats. En ce sens, ma préférence de principe va à une université qui assume sa position parasitaire en mettant de l'avant ses valeurs et finalités propres, de sorte que je me méfie de tout détournement qui voudrait sans plus de qualification accroître son utilité, sa capacité à résoudre des problèmes sociaux.

Je pense que nous sommes déjà allés beaucoup trop loin en ce sens et qu'une réflexion collective s'impose d'urgence sur ce que nous demandons à l'université, en particulier sur la place de la formation professionnelle en son sein. C'est pour cette raison que mon collègue Jacques Pelletier et moi avons réclamé, jusqu'ici sans succès, la tenue d'états généraux de l'université.

J'ajouterais aussi que les universitaires, en raison des immenses privilèges qui leur sont consentis, ont à mon avis le devoir de rendre à la société quelque chose qui soit universitaire, à savoir ce travail de réflexion, de création, qui permet de penser les problèmes sociaux et autres dans la longue durée et avec un certain recul.

LD: Parallèlement, on constate dans les dernières années une tendance vers l'instrumentalisation du savoir, où les études et la recherche devraient être utiles à «l'économie du savoir». Que pensez-vous de cette tendance ?

NB: Elle est bien réelle et le plus souvent déplorable. Cependant, la gravité et l'impact de la situation varient selon les secteurs universitaires concernés, au point de défier toute généralisation. Dans mon domaine, l'éducation, cela signifie que l'on a accordé un troublant privilège à un certain type de recherche, subventionnée, au détriment de la transmission d'un héritage intellectuel important (celui de la pédagogie, de la philosophie de l'éducation) et de son enrichissement, toutes choses que l'université (et elle seule) peut et doit accomplir. Ces recherches subventionnées, par ailleurs, ont parfois eu bien peu de valeur; mais elles étaient subven-

tionnées! De plus, les orientations de la recherche tendaient à être définies par des «besoins» sociaux, et donc par l'État et les organismes subventionnaires. Le résultat, selon moi, est plus que douteux, sur à peu près tous les plans.

LD: Question «Carte blanche»: si on vous confiait la mission de reconstruire le modèle universitaire contemporain à neuf, sans aucune contrainte financière ou institutionnelle, quelles en seraient les composantes principales ?

NB: Je vais répéter ce rêve un peu fou que j'ai déjà avoué et qui ne coûte pas cher. Cette idée est reprise du philosophe et universitaire libertaire Paul Goodman (1911-1972). Envisagée dans le long terme, la crise actuelle de l'université n'est qu'un épisode de plus dans le conflit qui l'oppose à son environnement, que j'évoquais plus haut. Or, à divers moments de son histoire depuis le Moyen Âge, qu'ont fait certains universitaires et certains étudiants quand la forme prise par l'université ne leur convenait plus du tout? Ils ont fait sécession. Et c'est souvent à travers cette dissidence que l'université a trouvé de quoi se régénérer. De telles sécessions ponctuent l'histoire de l'institution. La dernière et la plus célèbre en date est celle de la création de la New School for Social Research, de New York, née de la sécession de professeurs dissidents de Stanford et Columbia.

«Faisons-le une fois de plus», suggérait Paul Goodman en 1962. Je reprends son idée et j'imagine au Québec une cinquantaine de professeurs et quelque trois cents étudiants et étudiantes fondant un institut universitaire voué à *studium generale*, à l'abri du contrôle extérieur administratif et bureaucratique, dans le but de fonder une véritable communauté intellectuelle.

Bien des questions concrètes restent sans réponse, j'en suis conscient, et il faudra leur répondre. Elles concernent notamment le financement de cette communauté, ses ressources matérielles et humaines –bibliothèque, locaux, équipement, personnel– et sa relation aux institutions officielles devant garantir aux étudiants et étudiantes qu'ils pourront obtenir des diplômes reconnus. Mais il me semble que ces problèmes ne sont pas insurmontables, d'autant plus que les universités, le ministère et la collectivité ont tous un intérêt, pour des raisons diverses, dans la poursuite et le succès d'une telle expérience. ☉

Liberating the classroom

The Indyclass collective develops a model for more applicable learning

Shayla Chillak, Cleve Higgins, Nat Marshik,
Taylor Lewis
Daily Writers

Indyclass was started in the fall of 2008 by a group of students who wanted to change the way our education worked at McGill, and who decided to make this a reality by starting a class that we would run ourselves. We received course credit by applying individually to independent study courses in our departments, but the bulk of the class happened collectively. In our class sessions – which technically never showed up on the University's paper trail – we developed a collective syllabus on prisons, our shared topic of interest. Class members took turns choosing readings and facilitating discussions each week. The result was an empowering space for learning, in which we created a sense of shared responsibility and non-hierarchy. The collective, collaborative set-up made things more unpredictable and ad-hoc, but also more rewarding, because there was a sense of participation

and commitment from all of us.

The class was an opportunity to connect ourselves, as students, with groups in Montreal doing prisoner solidarity work. This is different from typical classes at McGill, which prioritize the perspective of the distant, objective analyst. We often read and engage with theories, but seldom with the struggles, movements, and campaigns happening right now, all around us. By starting our own class, we were able to learn what we wanted, in a way that was relevant and connected to our politics and commitments outside of school. This year we have become a working group of QPIRG-McGill, joining them in making more links between students and community groups committed to social and environmental justice.

Collectively organizing a class with a group of like-minded individuals also meant that we could encourage and be supportive of one another, in conscious opposition to the competitive, individualistic academic culture that seems to otherwise prevail at McGill. We all believe that learning should be motivated by engage-

ment, responsibility, and pleasure, not stress, guilt, and deadlines. It was inspiring for us to be able to put this into practice by figuring out new ways of learning, and also new ways of relating to each other in the process. These are lessons and relationships that have carried on well beyond the end of that semester.

Our experience with the class raises some fundamental questions about the organization of the University as we know it. If we can run our own classes as students, do professors always need to have the central authority roles that they currently occupy in most classrooms? What happens to tuition fees once more of our learning is self-directed? The viability of Indyclass suggests that collective self-organization can and should play a larger role in the general operations of the University. The implications are perhaps even broader, as we might apply the principle that in education, as in all walks of life, we are most engaged when we are motivated not by deference to authority, but by a sense of responsibility to one another and to ourselves.

If you're interested in starting an Indyclass, let us know. As a working group of QPIRG-McGill, we're encouraging students to start their own classes, and supporting them along the way as much as we can. It can take a while to get a group together to organize a class, define the topic, find professors to supervise, and do enough background reading to create an outline of the syllabus. To give enough time for this preparation we suggest starting to talk to friends now about doing a class in the fall semester of 2010, and working on it over the summer so you're ready to start in September. Good luck, and we hope that you can have as much fun with it as we did.

Cleve Higgins, Shayla Chillak, and Nat Marshik are all recent graduates of McGill, and Taylor Lewis is finishing her last semester. The Indyclass Collective can be reached at indyclass@gmail.com, and more information is available at indyclass.wordpress.com.

Profs need more street smarts

There's a serious disconnect in the education of education

Kady Paterson
The McGill Daily

The Faculty of Education is one of the only schools on campus aimed at providing students with job-specific training and in-field experience. Despite the faculty's focus on practical teaching, however, its classes are failing our future teachers.

Education students take courses in multiculturalism, inclusivity, and evaluation (test making). These classes only outline problems – they don't provide solutions. Telling future educators that they will have to deal with racism, ableism, and homophobia in their classrooms is all well and good, but professors fail to provide solutions for these problems.

Our professors are highly educated, many of them in the process of conducting studies and writing books. They are intelligent and accomplished in their fields. It's sometimes not easy to catch the biggest problem with the faculty – professors and teachers simply do not have the same profession. If the two jobs were the same,

then education profs would be able to interact with us as fellow teachers. Too often, though, they are fundamentally removed from the real world of teaching. Many education professors have not taught in an actual classroom in years. No amount of academic study can replace time in the classroom, planning real lessons, and teaching children. After now getting a taste of teaching through my first of four field experiences, it is easy to see that we are not being taught the right things.

We, as future teachers, are graduating blind. Students aren't seeing the whole picture, which is especially detrimental to first-time teachers. If you have the luck (or misfortune) of being placed in mainly private or well-kept schools during your field experience, you're in for a drastic shock when it comes time to teach in an urban public school.

The schools found in places like Parc Ex and the South Shore have different populations than the ones often found in richer neighbourhoods like Westmount. Having higher amounts of immigrant children in a school, or those from lower

income families, completely changes the school's dynamic. Though never a rule, kids who grow up in wealthier neighbourhoods, who often have the advantage of parents who can afford to be involved in their children's schooling, are likely to be easier to manage in the classroom. Schools in wealthier areas typically have better behaved children with more stable backgrounds. A teacher who is used to dealing with this type of school and is then hired to a school in a "rougher" area can face a pedagogical culture shock. Even within a typical public school, the differences between teaching remedial and gifted classes are significant.

After seeing the public school system from the other side of the desk, it is easy to notice the drastic differences between children. One of the first things I was told after arriving at my placement was that every child has a story, and that I needed to learn them and know them.

Never was this detailed in my first-year education classes, which were supposed to prepare me for my field experience. It was a shock. The other

major shock I received had to do with the educational policy we have been learning at McGill all along, referred to as the "reform."

The reform is an evolutionary step of the Quebec Ministry of Education, Leisure, and Sports (MELS), a new wave of teaching practices that aim to create student-centred learning environments.

Teachers are now asked to commit 32 hours a week to the school, as opposed to the previous 27. These hours are in addition to the large amounts spent out of the classroom, preparing lessons and marking tests.

Classes are also now being created as multi-levelled, including students of a wide array of capabilities. In the past, schools consisted of more streamed classes, separating students by ability. The multi-level inclusive classrooms described by the reform add more obstacles in the paths of already overworked teachers. Having less variety in academic capabilities in the classroom allows teachers to specialize their plans to fit the students. The reform's demand of ultimate inclusivity restricts the ability of teachers to spe-

cialize their programs to fit students, as they now must cover a wider range of abilities with the same resources.

To someone like myself, who is from outside the province, the practices set by the reform seem logical and beneficial to the education of future generations.

However, working teachers, even those who have only been teaching for five to 10 years, are upset. The reform requires a change to the majority of current teaching practices, something not easy for the older generations.

Although we were warned about the reform, we aren't warned about the resistance present in many staff rooms. How could we have been, when many of our professors haven't been in a classroom in over 10 years?

McGill needs to institute a policy of teaching us more about what and whom we will be teaching. Academic learning is useful as a base, but we need teachers who know what we are dealing with and can provide the support we need in both the classrooms we learn in and the classrooms where we teach.

Vous êtes des hamsters

Philippe Morin
Le Délit

Oui, le sport est un sujet léger qui se prête merveilleusement bien aux divagations. Mais il existe un sport sérieux, un sport pour intellectuels: le cyclisme. Pierre Foglia a raison: le cyclisme est l'essence de la vie.

Les cyclistes professionnels sont les descendants des gladiateurs romains. Il y a quelques années, j'ai assisté au *Giro*, le Tour d'Italie. Incroyable. Les cuisses des coureurs sont des pièces de viande. Vous savez, ces jambons que les Espagnols font sécher pour faire du jambon cru, c'est ça une cuisse de cycliste. Mais en plus musclé. Il n'y a rien de plus impressionnant qu'un cycliste avec des jambes de 50 lbs et des bras de 10 g. tirant sur son guidon à s'en faire exploser les veines du front. Certains sont des génies. Des Albert Einstein du pédalier. Le poulx de Miguel Indurain, quintuple champion du Tour de France, était de 28 pulsations par minute. Le vôtre est trois fois plus rapide.

Enfants, les futurs coureurs se font diagnostiquer: «Tu es capable, si tu persévères tu iras loin dans la vie.» Ils se mettent à y croire. Ils s'embarquent. Ils s'entraînent sans semaine de lecture. Mais un élément fondamental distingue le cyclisme du sport. Le cyclisme tue. Généralement on fait du sport pour le plaisir, pour être en santé. Or, ce n'est pas pour la santé que l'on s'entraîne à devenir cycliste professionnel. En fait, les cyclistes—ces êtres surhumains conscients de leur alimentation, entourés des meilleurs entraîneurs et nutrition-

nistes— ont une espérance de vie significativement *inférieure* à la moyenne. Parmi les coureurs du Tour de France entre 1970 et 1998, dix sont morts avant 45 ans d'un accident vasculaire. Ça, ils le savent tous.

Mais ils persèverent. L'objectif: la gloire. Une vie familiale? Impensable. Un engagement réel dans la communauté? Plus tard, à la retraite. L'important est de briser les records. Coûte que coûte.



Julie Leroux / Le Délit

J'ai perdu à tout jamais ma naïveté lorsque Geneviève Jeanson a avoué s'être dopée dès l'âge de 16 ans. Elle a menti. Mais au-delà de la tricherie, ce qui est fondamental et ce sur quoi il faut se pencher, c'est la logique qui sous-tend ce sport. Avancer. Être le meilleur. Se démarquer. Tout sacrifier. Peut-être qu'autrefois les véritables génies se distinguaient; maintenant, ils sont des milliers à se sacrifier pour la course. Leurs exploits sont grandioses. Vitesse moyenne de Lance Armstrong en 2005: 41 km/h, Alpes et Pyrénées incluses. La dernière fois qu'il a enseigné à un enfant à rouler à vélo? Jamais. Plus longue étape du Tour: 482 km (remportée par Robert Jacquinot avec un temps de 20 heures 16 minutes et 26 secondes). Ils roulent mais ne vont nulle part.

Le monde académique actuel est comme le cyclisme. Malade de sa propre logique. Vous êtes au bac. Votre seul objectif: avoir les meilleures notes pour entrer à la maîtrise. Vous êtes à la maîtrise. Votre seul objectif: publier pour avoir des bourses pour aller au doc. Vous êtes au doc. Votre seul objectif: publier pour avoir un poste de professeur. Vous êtes professeur: publier pour avoir des subventions. Une roue sans fin.

De 1998 à 2008, il s'est publié au Canada 414 248 articles scientifiques. Génial. Mais à quoi sert cette connaissance? À aller plus loin. À «briller parmi les meilleurs». Pendant ce temps, 7% des Canadiens ont de la difficulté avec tout matériel écrit. Ici, à l'université, on invente, on progresse. Mais combien d'entre nous contribuons à aider les millions d'analphabètes qui vivent dans notre ville, sur notre planète? On est trop occupés, il faut publier. ☹

Thou shalt understand equity

Western religious studies neglects Judaism and Islam, lacks comparative lens

Mallory Bey
The McGill Daily

As an Honours Western religious studies student about to finish my degree, I've come to the conclusion that after 60 credits of RELG, I only understand Christianity. I've somehow avoided two of the three Abrahamic religions over my four and a half years. I can't say that this isn't entirely my own fault, but the lack of comparative courses among the three major faith systems is startling.

McGill's religious studies program is broken up into two main streams: Eastern and Western. While the Eastern section focuses on the intricate connections between Hinduism and Buddhism, the Western side is almost entirely centred around Christianity. Out of 30-odd courses offered to me, over two-thirds are focused on Christianity. Out of 16 faculty members, only four do not specialize in Christianity. Birks's resident comparative religions professor Arvind Sharma estimates that 12 of the 16 are Christians.

Now that I'm almost done here, I have the tools to analyze religious systems, but only Christianity as my raw material. It's not like I've taken leaps and bounds to avoid Islam and Judaism. Currently, Western religious studies offers a single 200-level course dedicated to the basics of all three Abrahamic religions. The general

feeling in the faculty is that creating another course focused on Christianity, Judaism, and Islam would result in a reductionist view of each.

Professors in the faculty are defensive of the Western side of the program, and insist that its itinerary is one with a wide spectrum of choice. Students interested in Jewish or Islamic studies are free to study these traditions in their corresponding independent faculties and transfer the credits toward their religious studies degree.

The problem is that the nature of the program inhibits the comparison of the three. "The whole thrust of inter-religious dialogue is problematized by scholars because it's such a sensitive issue," says early Christianity professor Ian Henderson.

Henderson speaks of the Jewish and Islamic studies programs as "founded on...a real need for something that wouldn't be reducible to comparison." The ties among the three faculties, he states, are "closer than they have ever been," but adds that much of it "is just friendship" of the faculties that has developed over years of discussion at a level reserved for people with more than one Ph.D. "Comparative religions has a problem, since you have to have at least one and a half Ph.D.s," Henderson says.

Yet at an undergraduate level, one does not need to be a scholar in each of the three traditions in order to compare

their intrinsic similarities. The point of any BA is to come out of it with a survey of what interests you, and then move on from there. The concerns that courses on Jewish and Islamic faiths would reduce Jewish and Islamic cultures to their religious practices is not an excuse, especially when the two faculties feature specialized streams on the specifically religious aspects of each.

Why is it that Eastern religions are so deeply involved in comparison? Sharma states that it is natural for Eastern religions to be taught in tandem, since "before the influence of modernity, multiple religious affiliation was the norm in the East" whereas "the idea of exclusive religious identity is very Western."

"The academic study of religion arose in the West, so it inherits the division of secular and cultural," says Sharma, insisting that "the distinction between religion and culture is Western and Christian." Rather than focus on the three Abrahamic religions, the comparative aspect of the faculties falls between East and West. This only exacerbates the fact that religious studies as an academic discipline is ethnocentric and based on a Christian worldview.

Essentially, students' lack of awareness about the plurality of faculties involved in the discipline of religious studies and the ease of transferring credits between the three faculties is the problem. Christine Porterfield, the current president of the

Religious Studies Undergraduate Society, expressed that she can "see how [religious studies] could be seen as a Christocentric program, but if students are careful to build something, we have the means, we just have to plan it very carefully."

The deficiency of inter-Abrahamic courses offered in combination with a lack of publicity for such courses have left me and many Western religious studies BA-holders with little knowledge about Islam and Judaism at the end of 20 courses. The few comparative courses offered are often based on links between early Judaism and Christianity, rather than contemporary or thematic connections. "Perhaps," Porterfield states, "if we could take themes about these religious communities today, and build courses based on that, it would be beneficial." Attempts have been made to create these courses under generic titles, yet the content is largely Christian.

Comparison of any religion, admittedly, involves hard work. But such background knowledge leads "almost overwhelmingly to a solid basis of comparison" says Sharma. Even though the academic study of religion is a creation of the Christian West, this doesn't mean it has to remain exclusive. Sharma concludes, "Having recognized that the distinction [of religion and culture] is Western, you could argue that it need be extended to other religions."

Sustainability enlightenment

David Gray-Donald
The McGill Daily

Are academics effectively adjusting what and how they teach in order to address the sustainability problem? At McGill the answer is inconsistent, even though nearly all academics agree that there is a serious problem. Some academics are staring sustainability in the eye, such as those of the School of Environment and those teaching green chemistry. Individuals in other areas of study – such as management, civil engineering, and history – are also taking it upon themselves to explore sustainability issues. What is lacking from an ideal McGill is a universal recognition of the problem that would necessitate concerted attempts to enlighten students in a sustainability sense.

Overuse and misunderstanding of “sustainability” as a term is one of the reasons it needs to become a larger part of this university’s curricula. Briefly, sustainability is about the air, soil, water, habitat, biodiversity, genetics, waste, and energy on earth collectively tied together then multiplied by factors of inequity and human nature all confounded by climate change. Many departments do not examine their relation to these issues in depth, leaving students confused and apathetic to the supposed problem of sustainability.

What do the high-ups in the McGill

administration have to say about this? Dean of Science Martin Grant recognizes that there is a problem that must be remedied, but believes that people will, as he puts it, “vote with their feet.” In other words, if people see this as a problem, they will go into a program through something like the School of Environment or they will pursue research opportunities on their own accord. Deputy Provost Morton Mendelson has expressed similar views.

The main flaw with their stance is that students’ passions and worries are seldom identical. While I would love to study organismal biology my whole life, the future of this planet concerns me much more than how rabbit digestive tracts work (their tract is really cool). Students often choose to study what they are passionate about, and rightfully so. But how can they know how to link that to the serious problems in the world if they aren’t shown the problems? The trouble is that departments often become so focused on their area of study that they fail to show students how they fit into the bigger picture. McGill should actively make students aware of where their studies are currently located within the enormous problem of sustainability.

Telling students about grave problems sounds fairly simple and harmless, but, as Mendelson made clear at the ReThink 2009 Conference, “[McGill admin] do not force anything down people’s throats.” Try getting a BSc, BASc, BEng, or BCom

without having calculus savagely forced down your throat. Do we not jam the general chemistry down the throats of chemists? Basic English into English majors? Is it such a bizarre idea that undergraduate students have some enlightenment as to sustainability issues in their field? It isn’t a matter of forcing anything down any throats but of exposing receptive ears and minds to the realities of the system they seek to explore.

The fall-back argument of administrators like Mendelson is that it isn’t the responsibility of the institution to drive this enlightenment. Instead, they say, this drive must be fostered by each individual department. While it is true that the faculty or principal cannot dictate and monitor what is taught in every department, they do control a huge amount of funding and can exert significant influence through its distribution. Also, it is hard to believe that departments are allowed to be entirely self-defined and there is no established definition of their place in the greater context in academia at McGill and beyond.

So, the future. The Sustainable Projects Fund is a big step forward, especially for students already passionate about sustainability. Hopefully it will catalyze a shift to a culture of sustainability. Unfortunately, the intellectual realm of McGill, which hides from disruptions under the guise of academic freedom, where convenient, may choose to change little. If it chose to change, what would it look like? Lectures

within departments could show the context of the study. A course such as “Climate Change for Arts (or non-science) Students” may be helpful, since most people have a horrible understanding of the problem, the challenge, and the future brought on by climate change. Faculty-specific material could be made part of existing courses, or new courses on sustainability could be required. But that sort of enlightenment sounds too much like “forcing down the throat,” and McGill is probably decades away from such changes, given the administration’s current attitude.

While most people will admit there is a problem, I, along with many others I have spoken to, want a McGill where people actually do what is in their power to address problems and resist the lazy temptation to think of it as someone else’s domain.

An unfortunate trap some fall into is that this is just another problem where interest groups are making noise to secure funding, or that sustainability excludes issues such as disease or race. This is a misunderstanding. Any conflict or disturbance that threatens the integrity of the earth in supporting recognizable life is a sustainability problem.

Look out for a formal survey on this subject in the winter and a quick informal survey this Monday and Tuesday in one lucky department. If McGill is unwilling to change through helpful encouragement, maybe it will choose to move through shame.

Decolonize your education

Scholarship should be an anti-imperial force

Braden Goyette
The McGill Daily

How is the logic of imperialism still present in our university structures?

If this question lost you, let’s back up.

Empire, explains Roland Sintos Coloma of the University of Toronto’s Ontario Institute for Studies of Education, manifests itself on two levels. “One is the imposition of Global North or metropolitan ontologies, epistemologies, materials, and meanings,” he said in an interview with The Daily. “The second would be the use or the control and the extraction of Global South resources, labours, and bodies for Global North use and desire.”

“For me those two are intertwined at present, and these two processes get operationalized through political, economical, socio-cultural techniques, that include the government, media, business, and education,” Coloma added.

In academia, the assumptions we work off of too often privilege a Western perspective, but they seem so basic to us that they go unquestioned. The fact that we engage with the category of empire relatively little in most fields of study is already indicative of fundamental problems with the way we learn.

As a result, our lines of questioning often do not taking into account the legacy of European and American colonial domination that has shaped relations between the Global North and South, as well as relations between disenfranchised peoples and elites within settler nations like Canada and the U.S. In other words, we’re ignoring factors that have profoundly influenced and continue to influence people’s lives.

“It’s some kind of amnesia – but I think it’s also an abdication to our responsibility to really contextualize our field in our work as academics,” Coloma remarked.

A number of student groups already function on this kind of understanding – groups like the Community-University Research Exchange, for instance, include in their mandate the operating principle that “the University is an institution which maintains systems of privilege and oppression around race, class, and neocolonialism.”

The lack of a postcolonial studies department at any Canadian university – or, perhaps more disconcerting, the lack of indigenous studies departments at many Canadian universities, including McGill – are indicators of this problem.

But while the process has been lengthy,

interest in developing an indigenous studies program at McGill has been building steadily, according to McGill professor T’hoahoken Michael Doxtater, director of the Faculty of Education’s Indigenous Studies in Educational Learning and Teaching.

He pointed to networks of scholars and students forming in different departments as indicators that we may be moving toward having this kind of program. “We don’t really need to reinvent anything here,” Doxtater explained. “There are models that exist, that function quite well for years – some of these models are appropriate for a university like McGill, with so many varied interests.”

Doxtater argues in his article “Indigenous Knowledge in the Decolonial Era” that we’ve moved out of the colonial and postcolonial eras into the *decolonial* era.

The indigenous studies that Doxtater envisions makes connections between a number of anti-imperialist struggles over the past 15 years, as well as in a more historical context. “Since the break-up of the Soviet Union the whole era has been about decolonizing societies – Hong Kong, South Africa, the Sudan...all kinds of examples in the world where the colonizers leave – and

then what? You have a lot of social problems, political problems,” he explained. Such a program would emphasize putting indigenous scholars at the forefront of the discourse.

The 21st century university should be a site of decolonization.

Coloma sees students and professors being able to realize this goal in a number of ways – first, to bring analysis of their complicity in imperial and colonial projects to fields like political science and economics, even to “business schools and schools of public health, where this sort of analysis is definitely needed.”

Second, we need “to have more courses that are very explicit about addressing colonialism and imperialism but also have it be integrated in existing courses,” he said. “And three, to have a continuous engagement by the University with communities at large – with diasporic communities, within Canada, but also being mindful with our relationships abroad.”

Decolonial scholarship, Doxtater said, is “much more inclusive and much more humanity-based, rather than Others talking about Others.... In the past people have pretty much ignored our scholars. It’s time we’re included in the discourse.”

Rêveurs du décloisonnement

Nos facultés, dans leur enseignement et financement, sont-elles trop isolées les unes des autres? Entretien avec Daniel Weinstock, philosophe et éthicien.

Éléna Choquette
Le Délit

Toute la gamme de problèmes avec lesquels la société québécoise se doit de jongler ne peut être exclusivement pensée à l'intérieur d'une seule discipline universitaire. Pour arriver à la meilleure décision possible, il faudra réunir ingénieurs, citoyens, anthropologues, comptables et écologistes autour d'une table de délibération. À toute problématique complexe, aucune solution simple.

Si chacun s'en tient aux outils et limites de son cadre professionnel, une solution consensuelle ne sera pas forcément facile à trouver. Il s'agit plutôt pour les uns de comprendre la vision du monde des autres, d'entrevoir leurs perspectives et réflexions, et de pouvoir intégrer la discipline de chacun à l'intérieur de la discussion. Sans quoi les délibérations pourraient rester de magistraux dialogues de sourds...

L'Université, de par sa mission institutionnelle et historique, ne devrait-elle pas garantir à ses diplômés un minimum de culture générale, condition *sine qua non* à la résolution de ces problématiques sociétales? Même si l'université menace de se transformer en grande école technique compartimentée, on peut se permettre de rêver une autre université.

Des études trop pointues

«Peut-être est-ce aberrant pour les bachelaurés d'exiger de ses étudiants qu'ils accumulent soixante-douze crédits dans une même discipline», lance Daniel Weinstock, directeur du Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal et professeur titulaire au département de philosophie. «On outillerait nos étudiants bien mieux, en fait, si on leur faisait faire un peu moins de crédits à l'intérieur d'une même discipline.»

Notre société ne serait-elle pas bien mieux servie si nos futurs statisticiens, neurologistes et autres spécialistes avaient la chance de suivre des cours d'éthique, par exemple?

N'est-ce pas aussi regrettable que les facultés de droit et de médecine n'exigent pas de leurs étudiants qu'ils aient reçu un autre diplôme, à visée éducative plus générale au préalable?

La réalité institutionnelle des étudiants à la Maîtrise et au Doctorat est un peu la même; la compartimentation des disciplines universitaire est chose

rigide. En sa qualité de directeur du Centre de recherche en éthique de l'UdeM, le professeur Weinstock explique qu'on en fait voir de toutes les couleurs à ces étudiants qui souhaiteraient opter pour la multidisciplinarité.

De l'inertie

Se dresse d'abord sur leur chemin ce que Weinstock qualifie de «résistances intellectuelles». Ces résistances émanent notamment de la part de certains professeurs qui sont identifiés par Allan Bloom dans son *Essai sur le déclin de la culture générale* comme «des spécialistes, que ne préoccupent que leur propre domaine, qui ne s'intéressent qu'au progrès de ce domaine, et ce, dans des conditions qui leur sont propres». S'ils ne veulent ni se marcher sur les pieds, ni faire éclater des rancunes dont les origines oscillent entre jalousie et amour de leur discipline, ils se doivent néanmoins de convaincre l'opinion publique, les médias, les contribuables et autres bailleurs de fond que leur domaine est roi parmi tout ceux auxquels l'université fait place. «Les programmes entrent en concurrence, et en contradiction les uns avec les autres», note M. Weinstock.

Le problème est d'autant mieux enraciné que la rémunération des professeurs aux études supérieures se chiffre en fonction du nombre d'étudiants qu'ils recrutent. En conséquence, chacune des thèses transdisciplinaires potentielles pose le (étonnant) problème de la comptabilité. S'il est possible de financer son centre de recherche qui rassemble des intellectuels de différentes disciplines, le professeur admet qu'il rencontrera plus de résistances bureaucratiques s'il voulait décerner des diplômes multidisciplinaires. Et ce, essentiellement parce qu'on ne saurait à quel département attribuer le recrutement du doctorant, entre les mains de quel professeur remettre la supervision de l'étudiant, et quel salaire attribuer. Bref, «nos institutions universitaires sont devenues excessivement lourdes, avec des incitatifs pervers qui, bureaucratiquement, font en sorte qu'on ait du mal à les contourner. Il devient ainsi de plus en plus complexe de se doter des outils intellec-

tuels nécessaires pour faire face aux problématiques de façon adéquate.»

Des palliatifs

Pour ceux qui considèrent qu'il est dommage qu'il faille renoncer à la culture générale et se tourner vers une spécialité qui comporte au moins un programme obligatoire et une perceptive de carrière, il existe tout de même quelques solutions, partielles à tout le moins. Il existe d'abord à l'Université Harvard, un ensemble de cours généraux (*core*) à l'intérieur duquel l'étudiant inscrit à n'importe quel baccalauréat se doit de pêcher le tiers de ses crédits. L'histoire, la philosophie et la science font partie des disciplines que le bachelier n'aura d'autre choix que d'avoir effleuré à un moment ou un autre pendant son bac. Il existe également des centres de recherches pluridisciplinaires, comme celui que préside Weinstock, qui ajoute à l'institution universitaire un caractère évolutif. Il devient alors possible d'articuler et de désarticuler des

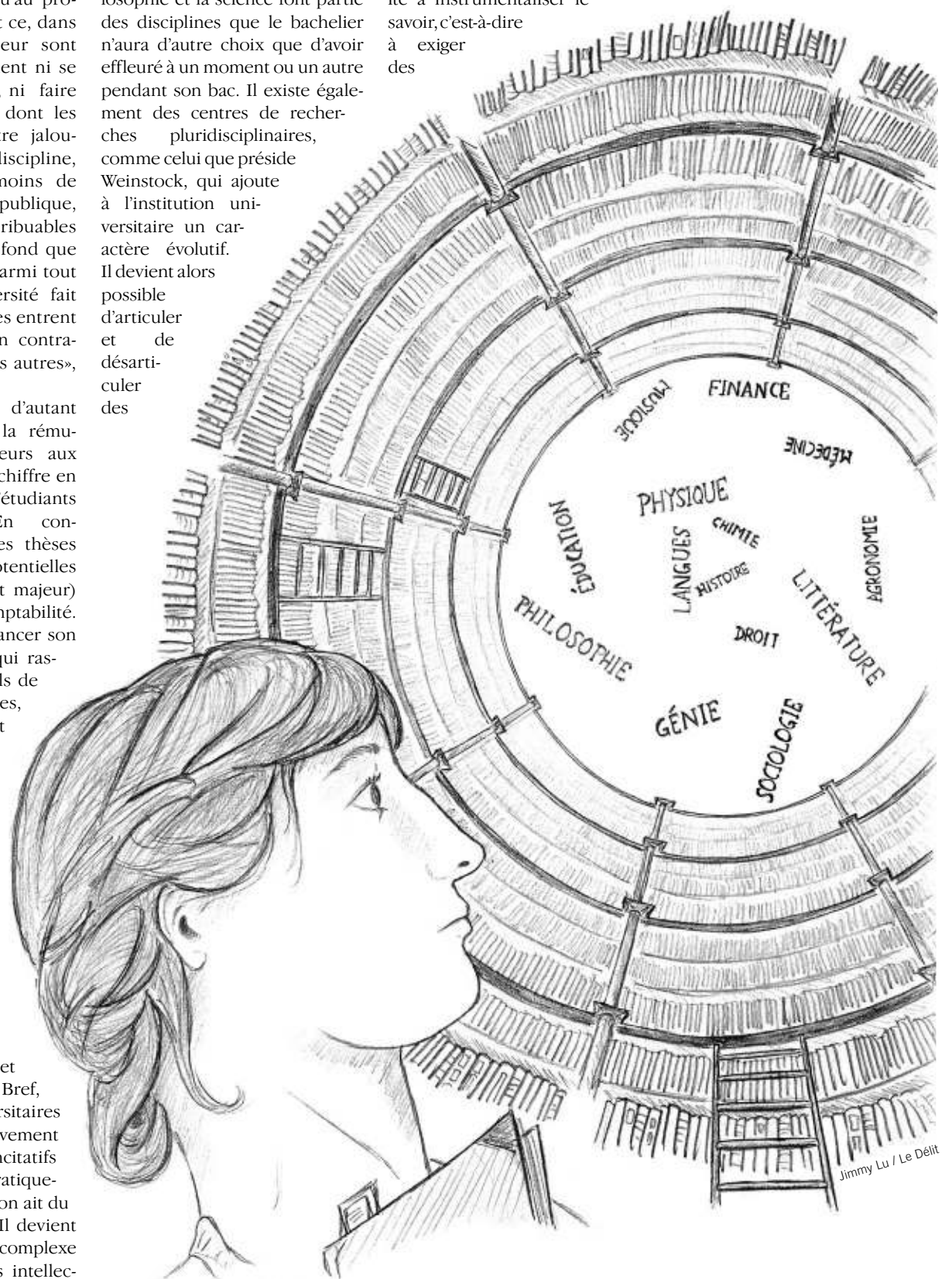
sujets de séminaire, à la convenance des chercheurs, invités et post-doctorants, pour contrebalancer la tendance à la surspécialisation absurde, celle qui déshumanise l'universitaire et le confine à sa tour d'ivoire.

Et de l'espoir

Quoiqu'il s'explique historiquement –les pères des sciences sociales ont écrit les grandes lignes de leurs disciplines respectives– le cantonnement à une seule discipline est «une idée relativement nouvelle», rappelle le professeur. Et ce n'est pas pour autant une raison pour s'y confiner. «J'espère qu'on va se rendre compte qu'il y a une limite à instrumentaliser le savoir, c'est-à-dire à exiger des

tâches trop précises, d'une perceptive trop étroite, de nos étudiants et chercheurs.» Tout le monde gagne à ce que soient forgés des esprits plutôt que des techniciens, d'autant plus qu'il y a un risque énorme à «vouloir transformer les universités en de grandes écoles techniques». Tous les problèmes un tant soit peu complexes doivent être considérés par des intelligences larges, multidimensionnelles.

Tout cela nécessitera assurément beaucoup de développement et de temps avant de prendre corps. On a besoin de rêveurs pour faire avancer la cause. Dommage qu'ils fassent peur aux conseils d'administration. ☉



Jimmy Lu / Le Délit



Students die-in to protest military recruitment on campus, January 2008.

Stephen Davis / The McGill Daily archives

Don't sell our integrity

Nikki Bozinoff
The McGill Daily

In a November 23 interview with *The Daily*, Principal Heather Munroe-Blum shrugged off the fact that her administration is determined to remove sections of McGill's research policy that require transparent reporting on all research receiving military funding.

"We have so many protocols that govern the ethics of the research that we do, that this would take the onus off of us to review our own research proposals," she said.

It may shock readers to find, however, that no framework currently exists for ethical review of the harmful applications of research – for example, weapons development associated with thermobaric research, which does not involve humans or animals.

Both Munroe-Blum and Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) Denis Therien have obscured our request for reporting on harmful applications, through their contention that research receiving military funding should not be singled out.

"It is a wrong equation to say that military-funded is harmful and non-military funding is okay," said Therien at the Senate meeting on November 4, in which the proposed policy was discussed.

While Demilitarize McGill does feel that military research merits increased scrutiny – it is, after all, one of the only institutions in our society explicitly intended to be harmful to human life – for the purpose of this policy, we are interested in an ethical review process for, or at the very least transparent reporting on, any research with directly harmful applications.

Demilitarize will be the first to point out that McGill's policy on military-sponsored research had a number of flaws, including the fact that it only applied to researchers receiving direct support from military agencies. If this were the administration's main concern, however, we would expect that they work with interested stakeholders to strengthen these sections, rather than remove them completely.

It appears, however, that the administration's main concern lies in remaining attractive to potential investors and competitive with respect to other research-intensive universities. Demilitarize recognizes that McGill's chronic underfunding is a serious problem, but we demand that the University not cash in our ethics for research dollars.

Our requests, while portrayed by the administration as unnecessarily bureaucratic, are actually in line with existing ethical review processes. We are asking that research with harm-

ful applications be subject to the same sort of ethical review processes required of research involving humans or animals.

In our proposed amendment, we recognize that researchers can never be aware of all the possible applications of their research, and specify the more reasonable expectation that they must be aware of all potentially harmful applications by agencies that support the research. This expectation is based on a section in the policy preamble that states: "individual members of the University community are best positioned, through special knowledge, to be aware of...the consequences of [their research]." Demilitarize McGill is also opposed, for obvious reasons, to the insertion of a section which allows for directed, anonymous research sponsorship.

In her defense of military research at McGill, Munroe-Blum continues to emphasize research on more benign themes such as prosthetics and medicine, while willfully ignoring the numerous examples of military funding and collaboration for projects related to explosives in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Since 2002, professors from the Shock Wave Physics Group, including David Frost and Andrew Higgins, have received funding from the Canadian military, and have worked in collaboration with the U.S. military on these projects.

There are multiple pieces of convincing evidence indicating that the research done by professors at McGill is contributing to the development of new thermobaric weapons for use in Afghanistan and Iraq. The principal and the rest of the McGill community have to stop ignoring this situation and confront its ethical implications, and a policy requiring the evaluation of research with potentially harmful applications is a necessary step in this direction.

It is important to highlight that McGill's policy on research receiving military support, while not perfect, is unique in Canada, and came about due to sustained student opposition to weapons-related research, including a six-day sit-in in administrators' offices in 1987. The *Daily* editors were right in pointing out the irony of a policy that prohibits McGill students from travelling to areas deemed dangerous, yet allows research contributing to this very political instability. McGill's proposed policy is short-sighted, and research with harmful applications currently taking place on campus contributes to the perpetuation of global hierarchies of power and inequity.

It is interesting to note that the first iteration of a global framework on the ethics of human research – the Nuremberg code – did not come about until 1947 and was in response to the horrendously unethical research

undertaken by the Nazis during World War II. In Canada, it wasn't until the seventies that the Medical Research Council of Canada (currently known as CIHR) developed guidelines for research involving human subjects.

It is unsurprising that McGill administrators are weary of a policy that could place restrictions on academic freedom, just as they must have been prior to the widespread adoption of policies requiring ethical review of research involving human subjects. It is clear to members of Demilitarize McGill, however, that research with harmful applications, like weapons research, should not be conducted at publicly funded institutions.

Given its policy precedents, McGill is well-placed to lead the movement for transparent reporting on and ethical evaluation of research with harmful applications. Either that, or we look back on this moment, shrug, and reason that we were acting "in-line with our sister institutions."

Nikki Bozinoff is a former *Daily Science and Technology* Editor. She received a 2009 QPIRG McGill Research Stipend to review research policies across Canada. She is currently a community member of Demilitarize McGill: demilitarizemcgill.wordpress.com

Just do it

Le Délit a discuté avec Charlie Twitch, fondateur et rédacteur en chef de *Fatigue*, un magazine d'art qui remet à plat les conventions du genre. Réflexions sur le rôle de l'artiste et la place de l'art dans l'éducation.

Mai Anh Tran-Ho
Le Délit

Le Délit: Tu portes plusieurs chapeaux: tu fais de la musique, tu écris, tu t'appelles Tyler Campbell mais aussi Charlie Twitch?

Tyler Campbell: J'ai pris conscience qu'au lieu d'essayer de réussir en tant qu'artiste seulement, il me fallait trouver un emploi comme tout le monde afin de financer tous ces projets. I'd run into trouble every once in a while when they would do background checks at jobs because I was drawing penises and vaginas on everything. Separating the two allowed me to really elaborate on myself, in my ideas, without worrying what people think.

LD: Tu étais présent à Expozine il y a quelques semaines, une foire annuelle pour petits éditeurs, bandes dessinées et fanzines. Peux-tu nous parler de ta revue, *Fatigue*?

TC: C'est difficile en tant qu'artiste amateur de montrer ses œuvres à différentes personnes et de gagner leur intérêt. *Fatigue* is giving a forum for their work which I feel is helping them a lot. L'idée est de ne pas offrir que du texte ou que des images, mais toujours penser à attirer l'œil du lecteur. I obviously take advantage of it as well: I put my work in there all the time and I get really good feedback from it and hopefully the other artists are getting some too.

LD: Comment as-tu trouvé les moyens financiers? Pour la création du magazine, as-tu appris sur le tas?

TC: J'en ai d'abord discuté avec mes amis et j'ai partagé avec eux ce que je pensais être une bonne revue. J'ai lu beaucoup de revues de Montréal, j'ai regardé

ce que les autres faisaient. You just do it. It's not a matter of how you do it, it was just a matter of "Do I have the money for it? Who's going to help me with it?" And then you go.

LD: Qu'est-ce qui distingue *Fatigue* des autres magazines?

TC: Ce qui m'importe c'est la façon dont chaque morceau est placé avec les autres. You want to open the magazine, get into it, and really stay in that headspace. I find that with a lot of

«Je pense qu'il est nécessaire que les ressources ne soient pas illimitées parce que ça oblige les artistes à produire par eux-mêmes.»

art magazines you end up reading them on the toilet once in a while or when you're on the bus. We don't treat it like something that's worth any money. Le magazine est divisé en trois thèmes. I'm trying to make each section as complete as possible. I like to have one piece of writing, some paintings, and some photography in each one so people will get used to this idea that art is not just visual, it's also something you read. I'd like the magazine itself to be a piece of art that people take seriously rather than just something that they refer to once in a while.

LD: Quelle est l'idée derrière le nom *Fatigue*?

TC: It pretty much comes from being tired of the way the art world works and the way everything ends up being focused on one goal: on making money and being successful. More so being famous than a respected artist. I notice that some articles don't really criticize the artists. They don't necessarily praise them,

but it's so neutral that you don't know what to think yourself because they are not giving you any information.

LD: Tu dis vouloir donner sa chance à tout le monde, mais dans notre société où nous sommes tous plus ou moins artistes, plus ou moins écrivains, ne serait-ce qu'avec un blog, quelle est la différence, si différence il y a, entre un vrai artiste et un «artiste»? Est-ce qu'un mot comme «engagement» peut définir l'art et l'artiste?

TC: I really think that what's important when making art, and pretty much anyone would say so, is that you should not suffer while making art. It should come first before everything else and you should enjoy doing it. Parfois, nous recevons des œuvres bien faites, structurées, mais elles n'ont rien d'attirant, rien qui engage le lecteur. A bit of you has to go into it. It should be because you have no choice and you wake up in the middle of the night with an idea that's just eating away and you have to write it down, otherwise you will never forgive yourself.

LD: Quelles sont les études que tu as faites?

TC: I studied fine arts at Dawson College. I had some trouble at school, so I didn't continue, but I definitely want to go back to school. School is not something everybody is good at. I'm maintaining a normal day job, and I set myself up with projects when I have

a lot of personal time. I'm having a lot more fun. I don't have homework, but give myself deadlines for things that will mean something to me in a few years.

LD: En ce qui concerne l'art, qu'est-ce que l'école apporte ou non selon toi?



Jesse Allaire for *Fatigue*

TC: A l'école, on n'apprend pas seulement des techniques élaborées, mais plutôt on se mouille avec des affaires qu'on n'apprend pas toujours par soi-même. School is great for networking. Lorsque tu fais preuve d'intérêt, les professeurs peuvent t'aider pendant et après tes études. Ils peuvent t'introduire dans le milieu. School is very important. I don't suggest everybody try doing without it because a lot of times people don't respect you as much, not having a formal education, and it doesn't matter how much you've read or done because a lot of time they need that in order for you to get a foot in the door.

LD: Quels sont les lacunes dans le système éducatif?

TC: The biggest problem is that education is directed toward 50 per cent of the population. The other 50 per cent either really struggles and gets through, or not. It's not because they don't know how to do it, but because the effort they put goes into different places, and they end up running into brick walls.

LD: Quelle serait alors l'université rêvée pour toi?

TC: Smaller classrooms. It's better when you can interact with the teachers on a smaller level.

LD: Crois-tu que la société devrait aider l'art? Je pense plus précisément à la position du gouvernement conservateur par rapport à la culture.

TC: Il y a trop de choses qui sont étiquetées comme étant de l'art. Je ne suis pas pour les réductions de budget dans la culture, mais je pense qu'il est nécessaire que les ressources ne soient pas illimitées parce que ça oblige les artistes à produire par eux-mêmes. When it's too easy for people to get money, art loses its value. A lot of artists don't get grants and they have to survive. We don't necessarily need the government to hand the money to do art on our own. x

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4873 boul. St-Laurent

Down with departments

Divisions in academia don't match up with contemporary problems

William M. Burton & Braden Goyette
The McGill Daily

The current structure of the humanities and social sciences in academia doesn't adequately address the real and pressing problems our world faces – problems that cross academic lines and demand an interdisciplinary approach. These divisions of knowledge block people from connecting their studies to

social and political issues.

While there's much to be said in favour of traditional academic disciplines, it still seems irresponsible that our educational institutions churn out career academics who specialize in obscure, often fruitless subject matters.

The pressing questions that one field of study might lead a student to ask will often require knowledge currently managed within another department. Problems in religious studies, to name just one example, might

require a background in political science in order to be discussed and resolved in a contemporary context.

Area studies and interdisciplinary programs are a move in the right direction, toward the holistic education that's necessary to apply what we learn to the world outside of the ivory tower. But these programs are not enough.

What's needed is a compulsory interdisciplinary education where students would learn to

connect the disparate academic disciplines in order to address intersectional problems. Issues surrounding traditional topics like sexual diversity and race, as well as other contemporary concerns like water and energy, demand this interdisciplinary approach: they need to be deconstructed from as many angles as possible.

We have two proposals that will enable the University to better equip students to deal with today's multifaceted problems.

In their second or third year, students should choose an interdisciplinary field – like post-colonial or sexual diversity studies or food politics – and elaborate a project which they will work on in their third or fourth year, after getting a theoretical grounding in the subject. Alternatively, students could design a minor around a particular contemporary problem that they wish to address, and take courses that best prepare them to approach it.

Les savoirs comme un «tout»

Les programmes universitaires devraient miser davantage sur l'interdisciplinarité

Amélie Lemieux
Le Délit

Je vous invite, l'espace d'un instant, dans l'imaginaire de l'étudiante caméléon que je suis. Je dis étudiante caméléon, car mes intérêts sont loin d'être limités à une seule discipline: l'histoire de l'art m'intéresse pour sa part interprétative, la sociologie percute mon sens des statistiques, l'éducation me donne espoir, la littérature nourrit mes rêves et la traduction me ramène sur Terre. J'envisage de peine et de misère l'autonomie absolue de chacune de ces disciplines. Je trouve qu'une mineure et une majeure n'étanchent pas non plus ma soif de savoir; du moins, pas selon ma conception utopique du premier cycle d'université.

Peut-être ne suis-je pas la seule

«Hors de ma vue, curriculums trop bornés!»

à être de cet avis, mais je me lance: la multidisciplinarité devrait occuper une plus grande place en milieu universitaire.

Jose donc imaginer un type différent de formation à l'université: un baccalauréat au cours duquel l'étudiant développerait sa connaissance d'un maximum de domaines. Il suffirait de 120 crédits pour satisfaire les dif-

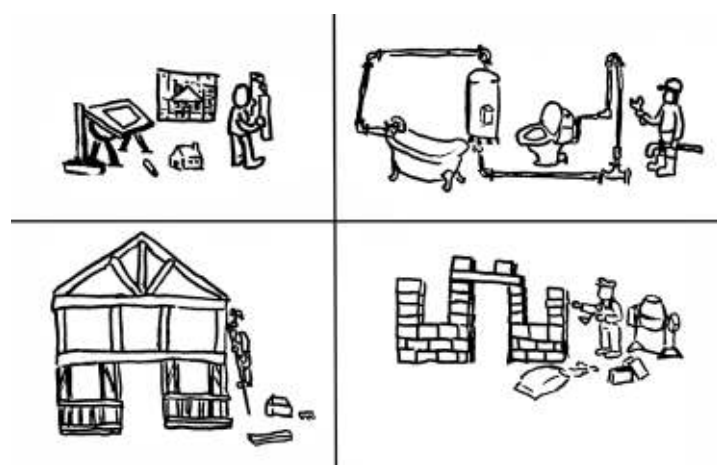
férents types d'intelligence de cet étudiant. Ainsi, à la fin de quatre ans d'université, il aurait acquis à des connaissances personnelles en matière d'éducation, de médecine, de sciences politiques, de littérature anglaise, de traduction, de sciences sociales et de communication, par exemple. Bref, cet apprentissage lui léguerait une banque de principes qui ne limiteraient pas les horizons de cet humain en quête de savoir.

Je ne songe pas au concept de cette formation multidisciplinaire uniquement par soif de savoir: il m'arrive aussi de douter de l'efficacité d'une formation centralisée et hyperspécialisée quant à son incidence sur l'épanouissement de l'être humain. Ce scepticisme surgit lorsque, entre autres, je vois certains spécialistes de la santé se montrer trop arbitraires dans leurs jugements. Il ne faut pas néces-

mérées dans un livre de biologie moléculaire.

À l'heure actuelle, bon nombre d'apprentis médecins, généticiens, biologistes devraient approfondir leurs connaissances en termes d'enjeux éthiques, philosophiques et sociaux. Pour en témoigner, je suis tombée cette semaine sur l'entrevue d'un professeur de biochimie à Paris VI, Gilbert Béréziat, qui a curieusement donné raison à ma conception multilatérale de l'éducation: «Il faudrait développer la pluridisciplinarité. Je ne comprends pas qu'aujourd'hui un étudiant en sciences n'ait plus aucun cours de littérature, et inversement. Je propose que pour les trois premières années, on crée des universités où toutes les disciplines soient représentées, afin de permettre aux étudiants de les suivre aisément», a-t-il dit lors de son entretien avec France-Soir. La littérature elle-même n'est pas à isoler: elle est indissociable de son contexte historique, sociopolitique, éthique, et j'en passe.

Pour illustrer mon propos selon lequel une éducation complète serait nécessaire, je vous renvoie à l'exemple de l'ingénieur, de l'architecte ou du contacteur: comment peuvent-ils penser implanter arbitrairement un système hydro-électrique sur un territoire nordique sans d'abord connaître les enjeux éthiques et historiques de la population qui l'habite? Vous pouvez aussi bien prendre un laissez-passer double pour: «Conflits d'intérêt – le spectacle».



Vincent Bezaul / Le Délit

On ne peut pas aller très loin avec une seule spécialité.

Il faut que vous sachiez que les théories relatives à mon utopie ne datent pas d'hier. Abdelkrim Hasni, professeur en didactique des sciences à l'Université de Sherbrooke, en retrace les débuts: «Au Québec, la question de l'interdisciplinarité dans l'enseignement est à l'ordre du jour depuis les années 1980», alors que le Conseil supérieur de l'éducation a publié un rapport qui recommandait que «chaque élève arrive à mieux comprendre les liens qui existent entre tous les apprentissages qu'il réalise». À mon avis, cette approche éducative a tout pour perdurer et, avec un peu de volonté, on saura peut-être mettre sur pied une faculté autonome, celle du savoir.

Tout compte fait, j'en reviens à cette question: les thèses à nature holistique ont-elles leur place au

sein des études de premier cycle à l'université? Maintenant que vous m'avez lue, la réponse s'avère évidente. Seulement, il faut voir si le projet éducatif de l'université va de pair avec cet objectif; ensuite, il faut s'assurer que les méthodes utilisées pour atteindre cet objectif sont convenables.

Loin de moi l'idée de lancer des idées complètement folles et sans fondement, mais, malgré ma conviction de la nécessité d'une éducation universelle, j'ai la forte impression que mon plan souhaité restera une utopie. J'aurai beau militer avec ma pancarte «Hors de ma vue, curriculums trop bornés!», je suis consciente que ce projet aura de la difficulté à prendre vie, à moins d'un miracle de l'Immaculée Conception qui, elle, aurait foi en la multidisciplinarité menée à son paroxysme. ☹

Where is creative writing at McGill?

Professors share their views on the other side of writing culture

Frances Kim
The McGill Daily

Over the past several years, students in the English department have seen a decline in the number of creative writing courses that are regularly offered, largely due to a series of budget cuts enforced by the provincial government. Particularly in the last four to five years, such courses have started to trickle away, with only one course per year alternating between poetry writing and playwriting. But why is it that every time a budget crisis comes along, creative writing is one of the first subjects to be cut?

Professor Brian Trehearne, who has previously taught creative writing, cites the lack of personnel hired specifically to teach creative writing as the

main reason. Professors like Trehearne and Thomas Heise, who have taught creative writing courses in the past, were hired as specialists in Canadian literature and American literature, respectively. As such, creative writing classes have been introduced as “add-on courses” and are thus seen as less significant compared to the required courses that fulfill the department's main programs.

Among English students, opinions are divided. On the one hand, there is a small group that believes that McGill should implement a creative writing program for the many students who are interested in pursuing writing for a living after graduation. Trehearne points out, however, that a creative writing program “will never happen in the foreseeable future because it will cost a lot of money that

the University simply doesn't have.” On the other hand, the larger, majority group believes that the department does not necessarily need an entire creative writing program, but rather a stronger presence with a more consistent number of courses offered every year.

“I think that there are a lot of creative writing programs out there and if we wanted to go into a specifically creative writing-oriented program we could have gone to any number of other universities,” says Matthias Lalis, a U3 English Literature major. He explained that it was beneficial for him not to learn writing as a craft but rather as an analytical tool to use for literature, something that he believes not a lot of creative writing programs would teach.

Trehearne agrees with the majority, adding that “the ideal likely solution would be some-

thing like three to four creative writing courses per year, spread out across the three streams in the department.... For me, I think it's possible for McGill to mount more creative writing courses than it does. I'll say that quite bluntly. I don't think the political will has been there to make that happen and I believe it should happen.”

The Department of French Language and Literature, by contrast, has a much stronger creative writing scene within its curriculum. While it has always held a strong presence within the department spearheaded by Professor Yvon Rivard (now retired), last year a new program called Les études pratiques et littéraires (“Practical and Literary Studies”) was introduced, in which one to two creative writing courses must be held every year. Interestingly, this new

stream treats writing as a “writing culture.” It does not simply focus on the form of creative writing itself. Courses also deal with history, philosophy, defining the nature of writing and literature, and even information about the editing and publishing fields. Professor Alain Farah, who has since taken Rivard's place, has emphasized that the stream, in essence, tries to define what it means to be a writer through awareness of writing as a part of a collective whole.

In comparison, the English department's programs are determined by its streams of literature, drama and theatre, and cultural studies, making it difficult for creative writing to be given precedence. It is clear then, that what McGill's English department needs is a stronger and more definite presence of creative writing.

Liberal arts, liberal integrity?

Syllabuses should be reviewed by departments

Rhea Pavan
The McGill Daily

McGill's name is synonymous with "world renowned" and "top-10 university." Students come from all over to learn and better themselves through McGill's high standards and demand for quality. It's shameful then that McGill's largest faculty should have the most lax practices when it comes to academic integrity.

The Faculty of Arts – usually associated with innovative teachers, debate-filled conferences and readings piled sky-high – encompasses subjects that range from the major to the seldom heard-of. The difficulty, however, with almost-endless subject matter is balancing an academic syllabus with a unique learning approach.

There are arts courses that replace traditional textbooks with compiled excerpts from mass media outlets, and although this draws subjects



Olivia Messer / The McGill Daily

from abstraction into reality, some texts – like op-ed columns from the *New York Times* – are hardly appropriate academic bases. Academic journals, old texts, and literary theories aren't always the easiest to swallow, but

they validate a field's content. And without a basis in academia, courses become superficial portrayals of their topics, something especially true of social sciences. Compared to mathematical complexities of engineering or

the ever-experimenting Faculty of Science, the nature of arts is more flexible, but that doesn't mean it shouldn't value fundamental scholastic study.

Another fallback of arts courses lies in the one-sidedness of opinions presented. Professors seem to put on blinders and teach only select arguments. While one viewpoint may be more widely held, ignoring its counterargument still hinders learning. If you don't know much about the topic at hand, you won't know you're being taught biased information. Furthermore, if professors don't adhere to proper research standards or represent partial viewpoints, what example is this setting for students?

It forces us to wonder whether course content is actually inspected before it is approved. Are department heads really signing-off on one-sided, opinion-based courses? And who is responsible for monitoring professors' quality of teaching? With regard to content, each course should be critically evaluated and

moderated by its department.

Creativity and academia don't have to be mutually exclusive. Some courses can and do function through student-directed learning – one of the best courses I ever took was one in which mid-semester, the class got to vote on what aspect of the course we wanted to learn more about. McGill is also great for "breakthrough academia": professors who study fields they've "invented" by bringing together subjects that aren't conventionally handled together. Some of the best-taught courses come from professors genuinely interested in exposing students to a new area of study, and presenting it in a way that is relevant, while firmly based in academics.

Although Arts can't have the same criteria as other faculties, its beauty stems from the fact that it's not an exact science. All the faculty needs is careful course monitoring. Let the Arts building, the most iconic structure on campus, sincerely reflect the integrity of McGill University.

Copenhagen, close to home

McGill panel discusses climate change on the eve of pivotal summit

Devon Willis
The McGill Daily

In the heart of paper season, Climate Action Montreal and the McGill Environment Students' Society hosted "Canada and Climate Change: Epic Fail?" a panel discussion about Canada's role in climate change, and the upcoming climate negotiations in Copenhagen from December 7-18. Climate Action Montreal is a group of youth from all parts of Montreal, including McGill, Concordia, and Dawson College. Present at the event were 100 students from the three schools.

The panel featured Shannon Walsh, director of *H2Oil*, a new documentary about the tar sands; NDP Deputy Environment Critic Nathan Cullen; Dr. Catherine Potvin, professor in McGill's Department of Biology and member of the Panamanian Delegation to Copenhagen; and Andrew Cuddy, McGill student and member of the Canadian Youth Delegation to Copenhagen.

Potvin spoke about the history of the climate change negotiations, beginning in 1992 with the founding of the Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). While the UNFCCC set the stage for concerted action on climate change, it was not enough. The Kyoto Protocol was introduced in 1997, with a target (five per cent), a reference emissions level (1990), and a period of commitment (2008-2012). However, Cuddy noted, Canada is the only developed country of 38 that ratified Kyoto that does not plan to meet its emissions targets, "breaking two domestic laws."

Kyoto also does not include the United States, Brazil, China, and India, so "what Kyoto can do is only limited," said Potvin. There is the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (AWG – LCA), from which a new treaty should emerge. Though the Kyoto process has been slow, after African delegations walked out at the Barcelona round of talks in frustration in November, the EU took on emissions targets of 20-30 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, and Australia 25 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. Canada maintains a target of just three per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, while the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report indicates that a reduction

in emissions of 25-40 per cent from industrialized countries is necessary to prevent dangerous climate change.

Cuddy spoke about climate justice, emphasizing that it is not just people in countries far away from Canada that are being affected by climate change – "indigenous peoples in Canada are being affected." An intern at the Pembina Institute in Ottawa, Cuddy explained that a recent Pembina Institute-David Suzuki Foundation report shows that under current government targets, GDP would grow 2.2 per cent per year between 2010 and 2020, while a plan to reduce emissions by 25 per cent under 1990 levels by 2020 would lead to GDP growth of 2.1 per cent per year. Further, 90 per cent of revenue raised by carbon tax in Alberta would go back to that province, which would still have the highest GDP, and Alberta and Saskatchewan would remain the fastest growing economies.

Walsh spoke about the tar sands, a carbon-intensive project consisting of an excavation the size of Florida in Alberta, using large amounts of water and natural gas to separate the oil from the sand. Toxic tailing

ponds in the tar sands can now be seen from outer space, and the project has been blamed for rising rates of rare cancers in the indigenous community of Fort Chipewyan in northern Alberta. This is an immense problem. "If we all stopped driving our cars in Canada – all of us – we still couldn't meet Kyoto," Walsh exclaimed. She called the audience to action: "At what point will you act – when you can't turn on your tap...? We're in a certain state of emergency here.... It's time for us to take the lead." Her statement was timely, as McGill students demonstrated against the tar sands on Wednesday, November 25.

Cullen framed his discussion of indigenous peoples of Canada with the statement that 35 per cent of his constituents are indigenous. "The trees are all dead [from the pine beetles], the salmon are not returning, things have changed fundamentally, and they are terrified," he said. He also stated that Canada has a sullied international reputation for obstructing the negotiating process.

Cullen recalled having a conversation with a French diplomat at COP13 in Bali, when

the diplomat realized that he was Canadian, took two steps back, and stated he had to go. "It was the first time in my life I've been embarrassed of being a Canadian." Further, the Commonwealth has recently discussed removing Canada as a result of our unwillingness to fight climate change.

These kinds of events are invaluable – and oftentimes rare for McGill students who have packed schedules. The University I want allows for students to balance their academic responsibilities and interests with the life of a passionate and engaged citizen.

Devon Willis is a U2 Political Science and Environment student, and a member of the Canadian Youth Delegation to Copenhagen. You can read the rest of this article at mcgilldaily.com. Make sure to follow Andrew and Devon's blog from the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen. No Tar Sands in Montreal demonstration: Monday, November 30, Sherbrooke and McGill College, 12 p.m.

Go see *H2Oil* December 4 at Cinema Parallel (3536 St. Laurent).

L'envers du rêve: McGill, l'Oxford du Canada?

Pour bon nombre d'étudiants, l'expression «Université rêvée» évoque d'emblée les grands noms prestigieux des universités de l'Ivy League américaine ou du «Oxbridge» britannique. Sous des dehors idylliques, ces institutions cachent néanmoins un revers à leur brillante médaille.

Xavier Plamondon
Le Délit

Le *Times Higher Education* – QS a récemment publié son classement annuel des meilleurs établissements d'éducation supérieure. Les mcgillois ont eu raison de se réjouir de l'excellente performance de leur université qui s'est hissée au 18e rang mondial. Seulement, un doute persiste. Même si l'on considère McGill comme la meilleure université au Canada, peut-elle vraiment rivaliser sérieusement avec les grandes de ce monde, telle Oxford?

Il est d'abord intéressant de noter que le système de sélection des futurs étudiants est très différent d'un établissement à l'autre. Alors que le processus d'admission pour Oxbridge (Oxford et Cambridge) requiert des tests d'entrée correspondant au programme d'étude désiré ainsi que plusieurs entrevues s'étalant sur quelques jours, le processus d'application mcgillois paraît d'une incroyable perméabilité. Environ la moitié des candidats à McGill voient leur demande d'admission honorée, alors que cette proportion oscille généralement entre 10% et 30% pour Oxford, dépendamment des programmes. Pour la Faculté des Arts, aucune lettre de motivation n'est nécessaire, alors que cette dernière pourrait aider l'administration universitaire à sélectionner des candidats en tenant compte de leur personnalité et de leurs intentions.

Une autre différence peut être notée au niveau des performances académiques requises. À l'exception du cas des Canadiens anglais, il est relativement facile d'être accepté à McGill. Prenant l'exemple du Baccalauréat International, sur une note maximale de quarante-cinq, McGill exige un minimum de trente-deux alors qu'Oxford en demande au moins quarante. Ainsi, le processus de sélection de McGill paraît bien accessible, même si les attentes académiques une fois admis se montrent à la hauteur d'une grande université.

De plus, une grande différence peut être observée au niveau du

fonctionnement académique. À McGill, les cours d'introduction (200-level) sont donnés à plus de 300 élèves à la fois (parfois même jusqu'à 600 étudiants!), et la seule approche personnelle possible prend place durant les conférences, lorsque le cours en offre. Si certains professeurs sont accessibles et disponibles, d'autres le sont beaucoup moins. Il y a donc peu d'homogénéité dans le corps professoral: bien qu'il compte de nombreux professeurs internationalement reconnus, plusieurs ne justifient leur présence qu'à des fins de recherches, pas forcément pour l'enseignement. À Oxford, le nombre d'étudiants par classe dépasse rarement la trentaine. Ce qui est caractéristique de cette institution, c'est son système de Colleges. Rassemblant 500 étudiants en moyenne, ils constituent le

Plusieurs quittent l'université avant la fin de la première semaine de cours!

centre social et académique de la vie universitaire. Leur petite taille rime avec petite bureaucratie, et approche personnalisée, malgré la grande taille de l'université. Aussi, les séminaires permettent aux étudiants de discuter de façon hebdomadaire, souvent en tête-à-tête, parfois en compagnie d'un autre étudiant, avec leurs professeurs, qui sont bien souvent des leaders mondiaux dans leur domaine d'enseignement. L'approche éducative est ainsi beaucoup plus personnalisée et conséquemment, la réussite académique de l'étudiant, facilitée.

Un autre élément qu'on ne peut éviter d'aborder est le prestige indétrônable de l'Université d'Oxford. L'institution séculaire a produit douze Saints, vingt-cinq premiers ministres britannique, plus de trente leaders internationaux (incluant Bill Clinton et l'activiste birmane Aung San Suu Kyi) ainsi que des dizaines que grands penseurs et philosophes tels que Thomas Hobbes et

Jeremy Bentham. Même si McGill a aussi formé un certain nombre de personnalités qui se sont démarquées dans différents domaines et qu'elle aussi, jouit aujourd'hui d'un certain prestige, Oxford se positionne définitivement dans une catégorie à part.

La rançon de la gloire

Jusqu'à présent, plusieurs diraient qu'Oxford semble être un établissement extraordinaire et que chaque université de ce monde devrait atteindre son niveau de rigueur académique et de support professionnel. Seulement, il y a un revers à cette médaille. Tout d'abord, il est à noter que le système d'études supérieures britannique est traditionnellement peu flexible. Ainsi, lorsqu'un étudiant est admis dans un cadre disciplinaire, il est hors de question d'y déroger. De plus, même si un certain nombre de programmes combinent différents domaines d'études (tels que *History and English*, ou bien *Philosophy, Politics and Economics*), la majorité des programmes se limite à une seule matière; prendre des cours hors-programme n'est pas chose aisée. De son côté, McGill offre un niveau inégal de souplesse pour une université de calibre international. Le système de *Major*,

Minor, *Honours* et d'*electives* permet à l'étudiant qui n'est pas nécessairement certain de ce qu'il désire étudier d'explorer une vaste sphère de champs d'intérêts avant de déterminer sa spécialisation.

Ensuite, il est pratiquement inutile de préciser que le cadre institutionnel d'Oxford est relativement conservateur, ce qui est compréhensible de par sa fierté en termes de valeur historique et patrimoniale. Cependant, l'administration semble toujours privilégier les traditions plutôt que les valeurs progressistes de la société britannique actuelle. Mais qu'en est-il des étudiants? Traditionnellement, la grande majorité provenait de familles anglo-saxonnes nanties, appartenant aux hautes classes de la société. Toutefois, un système de bourses et d'allocations a été mis en place au cours des dernières années afin d'aider les étudiants britanniques provenant de milieux plus modestes. De plus, plusieurs œuvres de philanthropie, comme les *Rhodes Scholarships*, permettent au corps étudiant d'être plus diversifié en donnant la chance aux *best and brightest* du monde entier de venir compléter leur éducation à Oxford sans tenir compte de leur situation financière ni de leur nationalité.

Enfin, un étudiant à Oxford doit s'attendre à une charge titanesque de travail. Chaque semaine, il doit lire plusieurs ouvrages en entier (souvent écrits par leur propre professeur ou tuteur, alors imaginez la pression!), écrire quelques essais d'une dizaine de pages et assis-

ter aux cours et aux séminaires. D'anciens étudiants racontent qu'il est impossible de graduer de l'université sans avoir surmonté au minimum un *burn-out*. Au moins, les rumeurs racontent que le principe du «*work hard party hard*» y est bel et bien respecté. À McGill, la charge de travail est exigeante sans être exagérée. L'éducation y est davantage axée sur la compréhension que sur le par-cœur.

En bout de ligne, l'étudiant choisira une école qui lui correspondra dans sa philosophie d'éducation, soit, mais aussi dans sa philosophie de vie. Sa décision sera intimement liée à ce qu'il a l'intention de retenir de son expérience à l'université. Tout le monde n'est pas fait pour l'approche académique d'Oxford: plusieurs quittent l'université avant la fin de la première semaine de cours!

Alors non, McGill ne peut rivaliser avec Oxford. Et ce, tout simplement parce qu'elles sont incomparables. Ce classement ne signifie rien: il serait ridicule de se contenter de la performance académique de leurs étudiants en guise de comparaison car toutes les universités adoptent différentes approches quant à leurs méthodes d'enseignement. Mais justement, en quoi consiste cet éducation? S'arrête-t-elle seulement aux livres et aux conférences, ou bien comprend-elle également les expériences attachées aux activités parascolaires et différents clubs étudiants? Comme le dirait Oscar Wilde, tout ce qui vaut la peine d'être appris ne peut être enseigné. ☺



Xavier Plamondon / Le Délit

Respect the names we want

Preference policies are ineffective and damaging

Quinn Albaugh
The McGill Daily

McGill has a propensity for using legal names in as many circumstances as possible, including class lists, McGill ID cards, and McGill email addresses. This policy has disproportionate effects on trans people, though it's not exclusively a trans issue. While I can understand why the University would want to use legal names on official documents or in dealing with other organizations, particularly to avoid legal issues, to use the same name consistently in all circumstances, and to avoid bureaucratic confusion, I don't understand why McGill cannot adopt better policies for its own internal use.

I have experienced many of these problems first-hand. For example, although McGill allows students to enter a "preferred name" on Minerva, only one instructor in one of my classes has ever acknowledged my preferred name. All my other instructors and TAs have taken attendance using my legal name only. There is also the requirement that legal first names appeared before preferred names on class lists. This encourages instructors to read legal names rather than preferred names. If my legal name weren't on the class lists, this wouldn't even be an issue. However, I'm somewhat grateful that my "preferred" name doesn't immediately out me as trans, which is a particular danger for this policy, since someone with a "male-gendered" legal name but a "female-gendered" preferred name - or vice versa - could be instantly outed on class lists.

In contrast, McGill ID cards are a mixed bag. For one thing, there is no explicit gender marker on

them, which actually makes them somewhat progressive. However, since the University automatically puts legal names on the cards when issuing them and generally doesn't allow students to change their names without documentation of a legal name change, they can't really serve as a reliable piece of identification for trans people in transition, particularly when interacting with various parts of the University. For example, just a few days ago, I went to McGill Health Services to pick up some documents from my doctor. My doctor left the package for Quinn, but the receptionist automatically asked for my McGill ID card, which left me in a position of explaining why the names don't match. Though I left with the documents in the end, the receptionist was clearly reluctant to hand them over. Furthermore, the lack of preferred names on ID cards prevents trans people from using them as identification in other contexts when they might not be able to use a state-issued ID - a lost opportunity for McGill to become a pioneer

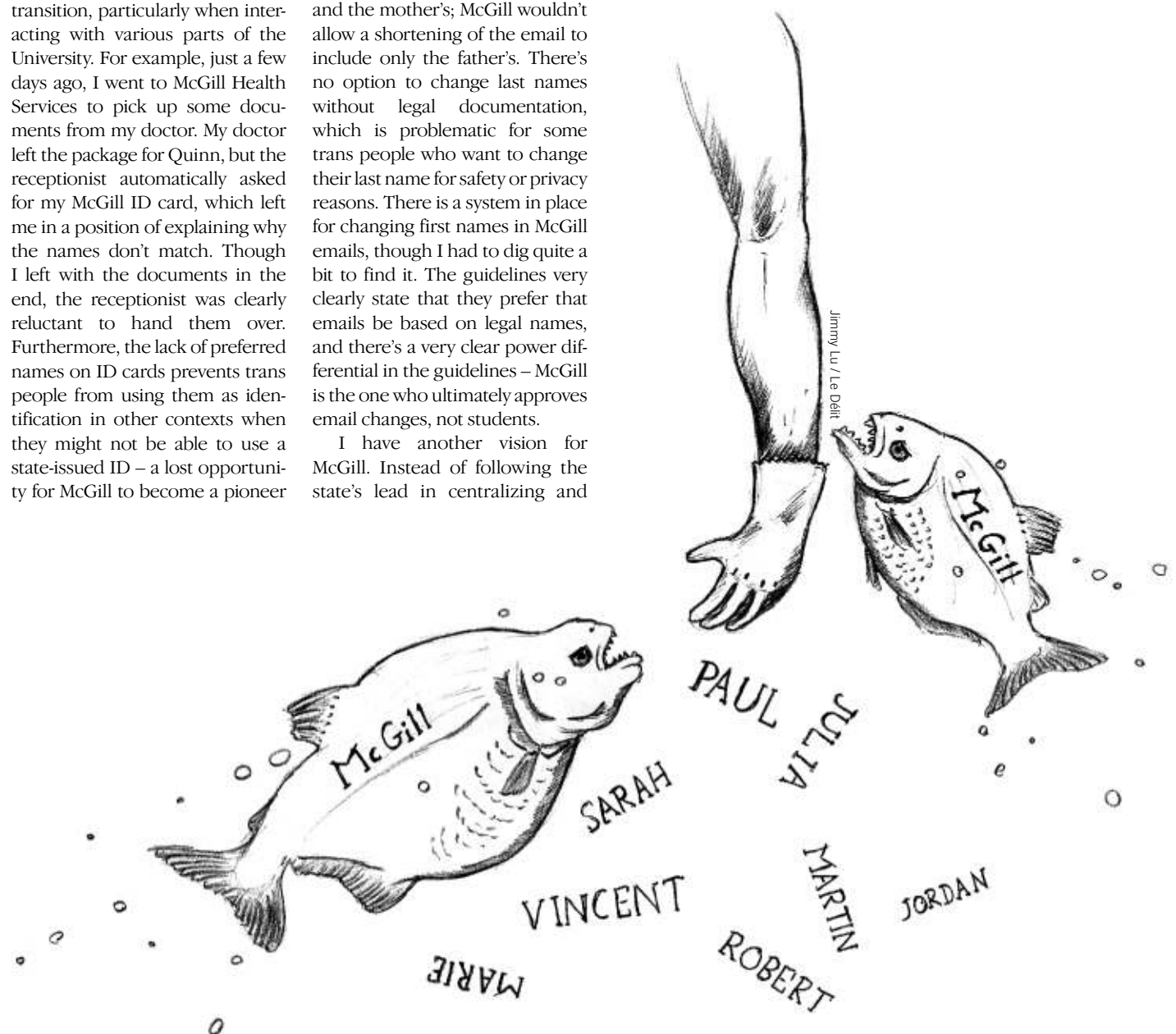
on trans issues.

Another aspect of this system affects McGill emails, which is problematic not just for trans people, but for anyone who uses a name that doesn't match *exactly* with what McGill has in its records. I have a TA who has a traditionally Spanish legal name, including both the father's family name and the mother's; McGill wouldn't allow a shortening of the email to include only the father's. There's no option to change last names without legal documentation, which is problematic for some trans people who want to change their last name for safety or privacy reasons. There is a system in place for changing first names in McGill emails, though I had to dig quite a bit to find it. The guidelines very clearly state that they prefer that emails be based on legal names, and there's a very clear power differential in the guidelines - McGill is the one who ultimately approves email changes, not students.

I have another vision for McGill. Instead of following the state's lead in centralizing and

standardizing names, McGill should develop more progressive name change policies. I suggest revising class lists so that they no longer require legal first names - only preferred first names, establishing the option to use preferred names on ID cards and allowing, at the very least, sensible changes to last

names, such as choosing one last name in McGill emails when, legally, one has more than one. Finally, McGill should make these policy changes public, both to educate people about trans issues and to make their current policies more accessible to students.



Une université ne doit pas s'occuper seulement de science, ni seulement de lettres, ni seulement de théologie, ni seulement de connaissances abstraites ou expérimentales, morales ou pratiques, métaphysiques ou historiques, mais de tout savoir. Elle EST en effet le siège réservé à cette vaste philosophie qui embrasse toute vérité, les situe en leur lieu propre et enseigne la méthode à suivre pour atteindre chacune.

John Henry Newman

Early education counts

The struggles of setting up the preschool you want



Montessori preschools allow for the natural growth and personal development of each child.

Courtesy of Kelly Symons

Kelly Symons
Daily Writer

One year ago, on October 1, 2008, Miss Kelly's Daycare and Preschool opened its doors. I had no experience. My business partner had no experience. We wanted to start a business that would allow us to pursue the things we wanted to do.

I wanted to keep going to school, but I needed to find a spot for my daughter. I could have looked for work. I could have taken another full-time job and given up on the dream of pursuing music theory. Either way I needed a spot for Frida, and nothing was available.

We bought a duplex. We opened a preschool. We struggled. We almost folded last winter, but we stuck it out. That's the secret – persistence. Things have steadied somewhat. But the adventure continues.

This has been an incredible year. I've managed to stay in school and maintain my grades, and I started, set up, and continue to manage and run a Montessori preschool. Because of this, my daughter, Frida, is getting the

care I want her to have while I'm in class pursuing my dream of becoming a music theorist.

It's not always easy. Ours is a Montessori preschool, so it's more expensive than other places. We have two excellent educators on staff. We have 13 children at the moment, some part-time, some full-time. There are limitations to running a private daycare and preschool out of a private home, so we are now looking for ways to expand.

One of the biggest challenges was finding the right staff. We got lucky. Our guide and her assistant together make an incredibly professional team, deeply loved by the kids. Even our current substitute is top-notch. Finding such wonderful people to help has been awe-inspiring and motivational. It's motivated me to continue. I see the results in the kids, and I know that what we're doing is important.

It has been a challenge financially. I went into significant debt. We came close to throwing in the towel. Persistence is what counts. Things are going in a clearer direction now. I am so glad I did this. I took a chance on life and my dreams.

The kids are what's so

amazing. Each child is different from the next. Each comes with their own challenges and interests, their own uniqueness. We've been able to work things so that this is a cohesive group. We see developmental progress in all of the children at different levels. I love seeing these kids everyday. It is about as close to magic as anything I've imagined.

It's also been wonderful for my daughter – the best gift I could have given her. She has regular social interactions and clear direction from our guides. She has learned so much about taking care in her environment, and participating in a group, and about the things she really wants to do. She's a happy kid. Confident, able.

Education is so important. I see pitfalls in the standard government-sponsored educational system. It's a good system, but I think some aspects are a bit outdated. I've discussed this with other parents, and our educators. I did a radio interview in which I discussed this with home-schoolers.

The idea of not imposing anything on a child, of allowing the child to follow their own

developmental instincts, is key. One of the aims of a Montessori approach is to provide the child with what they need for their personal development. In turn this will provide society with what it needs. I believe this absolutely.

This allows children to be who they really are, and to think for themselves. I don't think enough people think for themselves in today's society. I don't think we encourage that as much as we could in our current system.

The system imposes a set of standards that must be met in order to proceed to the next level. Sometimes if a child excels in some areas, but not in others, she is held back from her natural growth. At that point education becomes a negative thing.

The Montessori approach strives for something else. The intention is to allow the child to follow their own instincts. If they really want to develop math skills, they can focus on that. They don't have to work on vocabulary; they can focus on math. This way they can fulfill their need where that is concerned. When they are ready, they can move on to something else.

This creates a positive educational experience, and a positive system. It might be wise to evolve our current system in that kind of direction. Perhaps we can find a way to pay more attention to individual students, to identify their interests, and encourage their growth along those lines, instead of forcing them to conform to something they may not agree with, or be ready for.

I don't think most preschools are like that. Some of the stories I hear indicate a lot of conformity is required. Timed activities and group activities, in which the child has very little say in how their day is spent. One of the reasons we'd like to expand is to make this alternative approach available to more children and families.

Since getting involved in this, I have become much more interested in the future of education. I would like to make this kind of education more available to more children and families. I would like to create something that is more appealing to trained educators who are seeking opportunities to work in a Montessori environment. I am definitely optimistic about the future, and I am having quite a lot of fun right now.

Redmen, Donjons et Dragons

Si notre université rêvée se doit d'être tournée vers l'avenir, un soupçon de tradition médiévale ne lui ferait pas de tort. Notre collaboratrice vous propose de visiter le lieu d'apprentissage et d'épanouissement amélioré que serait le McGill moyenâgeux.

Anabel Cossette-Civittella
Le Délit

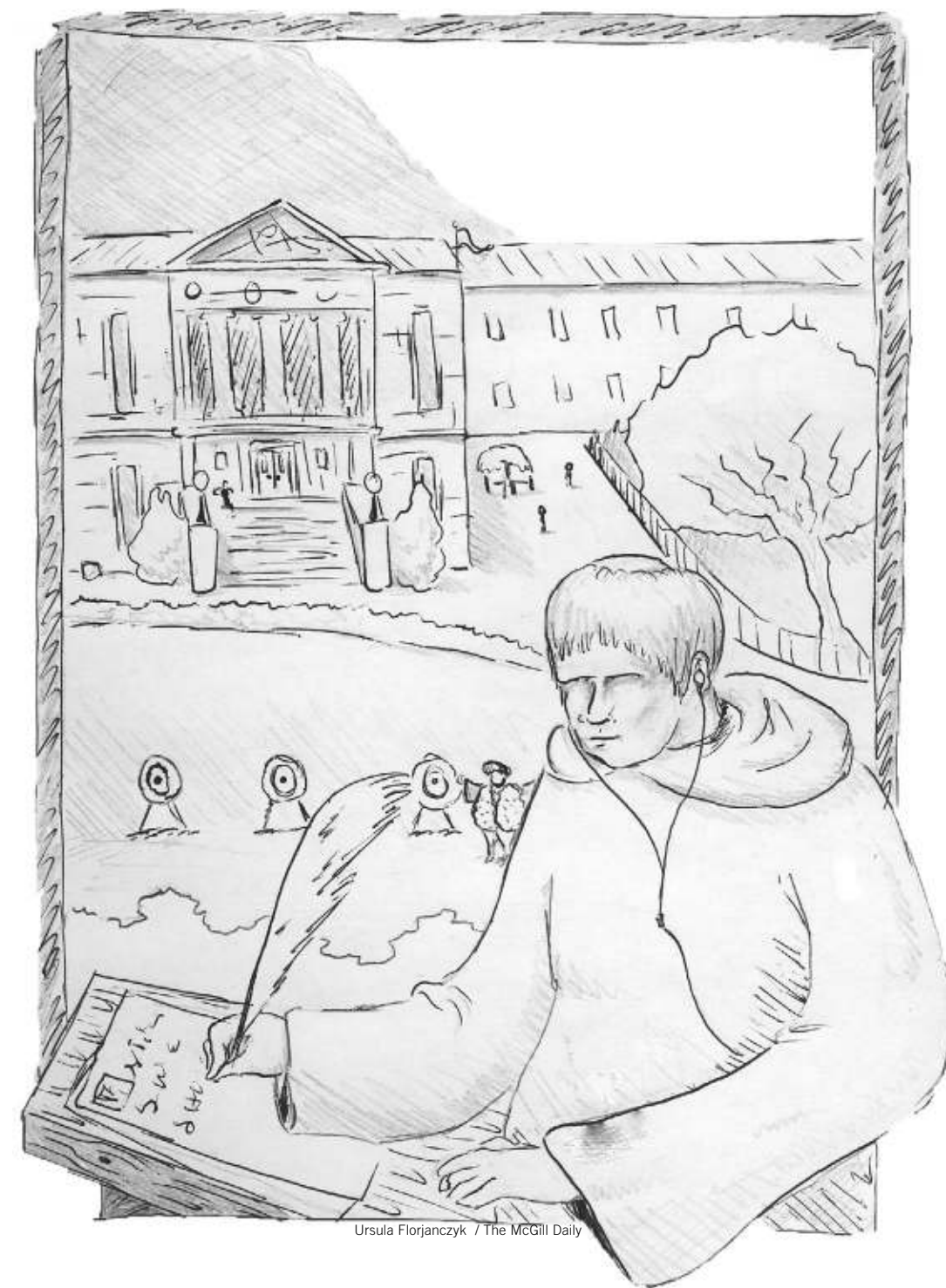
L'œil vif, la paupière aux aguets, le verbe prêt à être dégainé... Le chevalier de notre temps n'est autre que l'universitaire occupé qui arpente sans relâche les murs de l'Université. Fantômes et idéalisation du Moyen-Âge sont choses courantes ces jours-ci, alors pourquoi ne pas continuer sur cette voie et bâtir une université qui répondrait aux besoins de tous les maniaques de jeux de rôle médiévaux, de toutes les princesses dans l'âme et de tous les merlins refoulés?

Autant certaines pratiques moyenâgeuses encore utilisées aujourd'hui dépassent depuis longtemps leur date de péremption, autant d'autres aspects oubliés de la vie médiévale devraient revenir en force. En fait, l'université idéale doit s'inspirer du Moyen-Âge de manière critique afin de concilier valeurs traditionnelles et modernité.

McGill, université fortifiée

Le sceau de la poste en témoigne, votre demande d'admission a bien été reçue, étudiée et acceptée. Une compétitivité incomparable paraît à l'horizon: le pire est à venir. Vous savez que vous aurez à affronter le grand monde dans peu de temps; vous savez que vous aurez à affronter des étudiants aussi qualifiés que vous, qui possèdent les mêmes ambitions que vous et ont plus ou moins les mêmes habiletés. Votre avenir dépend de qui se présentera, mais aussi de qui vous évaluera et de la manière dont on le fera. À la manière des seigneurs médiévaux, les examinateurs ont droit de vie et de mort sur les étudiants plein d'espoir se présentant en entrevue.

L'université fortifiée de McGill (appelons-la «La Rouge») ne laisse pas passer ses portes à qui le veut: ses dirigeants sont fiers de répéter que seule l'élite y a accès. Mais n'est-ce pas un peu prétentieux? Quitte à être différente, l'Université devrait repenser ses comités d'entrevue et ses critères d'admission et envisager un retour aux bonnes vieilles traditions. Je propose donc que les postulants se présentent à



cheval dans une arène et charger à grands cris leurs rivaux en les pointant de leur lance, le but étant de s'embrocher mutuellement. Le premier au sol n'est pas admis par le comité de sélection qui observe le spectacle du haut d'une estrade, emmitoufflé dans une cape d'hermine et de renard. Le courage, la vaillance, le sang-froid et même la témérité seraient enfin pris en compte lors de la sélection des bons et loyaux chevaliers destinés au service de la ville fortifiée. De plus, les combats où le gagnant demeure facilement identifiable régleraient les problèmes d'objectivité lors des entrevues.

Par dépit ou jalousie, ou tout simplement parce qu'il y a véritablement prétention, McGill est souvent regardée d'un mauvais œil par les étudiants extérieurs. Est-ce que McGill se fait délibérément plaisir en perpétuant la maxime latine: «diviser pour mieux régner»?

Les initiations sont un bon moment pour sentir les tensions qui existent entre les universités de Montréal, la forteresse Rouge au centre du tumulte.

D'ailleurs, les initiations de beuverie (ou beuveries d'initiation, c'est selon), ne peuvent que nous ramener aux tavernes crasseuses et puantes du

XII^e siècle. Et s'il y a un aspect que l'on veut oublier du Moyen-âge, c'est probablement celui-ci. Les initiations devraient plutôt se dérouler à la manière d'une cérémonie où on construit des liens de personne à personne, entre seigneurs et futurs chevaliers. Les liens vassaliques dans l'Europe occidentale du XI^e siècle se nouaient par l'hommage et la foi, valeurs supportées par une fidélité réciproque. Cette technique, employée par les anciens pour adouber les nouveaux étudiants, aurait nettement plus de poids que de simplement défilé dans les rues en beuglant vous-savez-quoi.

McGill, cour lettrée et délicate

L'université idéale devrait aussi valoriser ce qui manque cruellement à tous les étudiants de ce monde, la patience et la lenteur. En fait, le temps est une denrée rare dans la société moderne et l'université devrait se donner pour mission de «ré-enseigner» l'art de prendre son temps. Si les professeurs pouvaient enfile la soutane et enseigner à la manière des moines moyenâgeux (pour qui la vie était une interminable réflexion sur la brièveté de l'existence sur terre), bien des aspects de la vie universitaire s'en trouveraient améliorés. Adieu Internet dans les cours, adieu les étudiants qui savent tout trop vite, adieu la folie du *Gross Personal Average* (GPA)... Les notes de cours ne seraient données qu'en latin ancien et la plume et l'encre redeviendraient les uniques outils de l'étudiant. Enfin, renaîtrait de ses cendres le véritable désir d'apprendre qui trop souvent déserte les salles de classe.

Si les croisades n'ont semé que désastre et désolation, elles ont tout de même apporté des changements appréciables à l'Europe occidentale: l'amour courtois est parmi ceux-là. L'université idéale, en adoptant des valeurs médiévales, ne devrait surtout pas négliger cet aspect hautement essentiel qui semble un peu oublié par les temps qui courent. Exit l'agenda, la Bible de l'étudiant sera *Le Roman de la rose*, code de l'amour courtois rédigé au XIII^e siècle. Les passages tels que «Sers et honore toutes les femmes; / Peine et travaille à les servir» ou «Et si tu entends quelque médisant / Qui aille méprisant les femmes, / Blâme-le et dis-lui de se taire» devraient naturellement apparaître en gras et plusieurs fois soulignés.

Le Moyen-Âge est une période particulièrement sombre de l'histoire de l'Europe occidentale. Pourtant, plusieurs petits détails repêchés de cette époque sauraient faire avancer la société moderne, ne serait-ce que l'amour courtois et la patience monastique. Bien entendu, les croisades universitaires, dans cette lutte acharnée pour reconquérir le tombeau prestigieux de la réussite, complètent le tableau médiéval de notre université moderne. ☉

Rethinking safety

SACOMSS urges university to change its attitude surrounding sexual assault

**Lendon Ebbels and
Maha Hussain**

The McGill Daily / Daily Writer

For many, physical safety seems like a pretty straightforward issue. We would probably agree that our community members shouldn't be forced to contend with physical attacks. But what if someone asked you this: should we be able to go wherever, whenever, with whomever, wearing whatever, without risking physical attack? What about verbal attacks? Catcalls? You might, at the very least, think a bit harder about your answer.

These things happen on a regular basis, and as a result, the onus is placed on us to "be careful" and "exercise personal responsibility." We accept this as our responsibility and put up with it. We change our behaviours to feel less "at risk." And when we refuse, we are told – and indeed, tell ourselves – that we could have done something differently.

Let's rethink where safety comes from.

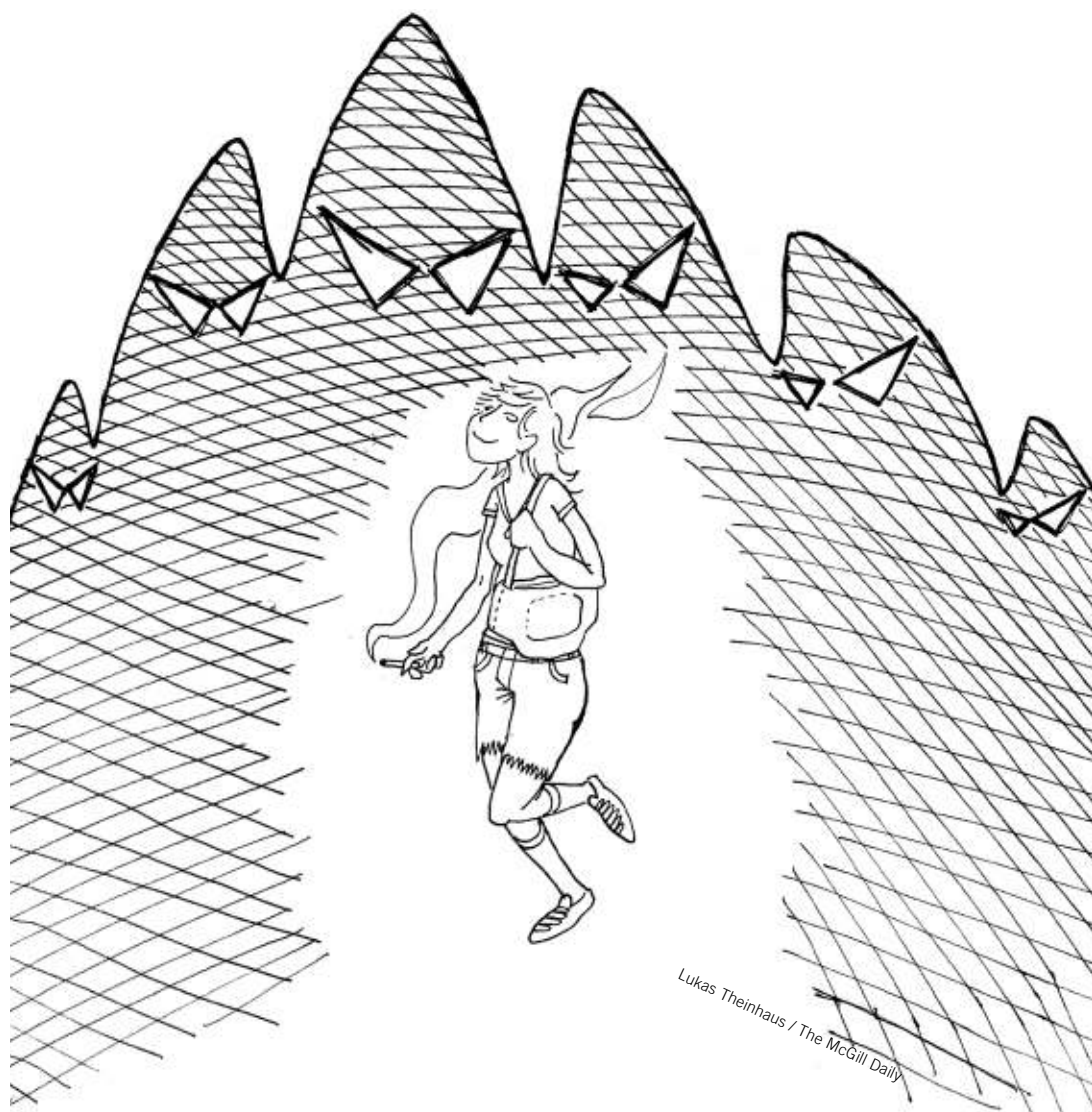
So many of us have come to equate safety with restricting our movements ("I'm starving, but I'd be crazy to walk to the dépanneur at this time of night"), or altering our routine ("I used to love that place, only I don't go anymore, because I heard someone got attacked in front of there"), or policing our wardrobes ("This is my favourite top, but I know I'll be catcalled if I wear it, and I'm too tired to deal

with that"). These have become rational choices, but they place the burden of avoiding assault squarely on the survivor. What about the perpetrator? When we talk about preventing sexual assault, too often the conversation devolves into what the person on the receiving end could have done to stop it. Discussions of few, if any, other crimes focus so relentlessly on what the perpetrator could have done to avoid it, rather than on the perpetrator's actions.

It's immensely difficult to even begin to imagine what a world without sexual assault would look like. Indeed, some of our services – for example, our Support Groups branch and Crisis Intervention helpline – exist precisely because this world is yet to be achieved. But some of them, like our Outreach branch, which gives workshops on sexual assault awareness, healthy relationships, and personal boundaries in high schools and youth organizations throughout Montreal, are working every day to get there.

As SACOMSS volunteers, what we do know is that creating a world free of sexual assault does not begin with the survivor. Sexual assault is systemic, and it will not end with any amount of being careful and taking measures of personal responsibility. The university we want is one that recognizes this as well.

The Centre is committed to a pro-survivor stance – supporting, believing, and not judging the experiences of the people



that utilize our services. Safety isn't just physical: it's emotional as well. We can all help to achieve a safe space in our interactions with each other.

If we want McGill to be safe, the answer doesn't lie in demanding that people change behaviours to which they are perfectly entitled. The answer lies in not assaulting people. You are entitled to go to the dep if

you're hungry. You're allowed to visit the places you want to visit. You should wear the clothes you love. If someone is physically or verbally harassed while doing any of these things, the fault lies with the perpetrator – not with the person on the receiving end. Your body is your own: nobody has the right to take that autonomy away from you.

Ideally, we envision a world

free of sexual assault. Until then, let's challenge the mentality of self-blame, as well as the misguided notion that the responsibility for being safe is ours alone. It's not.

Lendon Ebbels and Maha Hussain are SACOMSS' external coordinators. SACOMSS can be reached at 398-8500 or in room B-27 of the Shatner building.

«Ce sur quoi je veux d'abord mettre l'accent avec force, c'est l'urgente nécessité que les universitaires prennent conscience de ce contexte d'intérêts économiques et politiques dans lequel leur rôle de professeur et de chercheur est imbriqué. La conduite de l'autruche serait la pire manière de répondre à ce défi. On ne peut plus échapper à ce fait: des forces économiques et politiques qui dépassent l'université ont défini pour elle le rôle actif qu'elle doit remplir comme facteur de production, comme créateur et diffuseur de capital de connaissance. Ignorer ce fait amène à faire le jeu des divers pouvoirs et des différents rapports de pouvoir dont la connaissance et l'université sont l'enjeu.»

-Guy Rocher, sociologue "Re-définition du rôle de l'université".
Un article publié dans le livre sous la direction de Fernand Dumont
et Yves Martin, L'éducation 25 ans plus tard et après ?, pp. 181-198.
Québec: l'Institut québécois de la recherche (IQRC), 1990, p.10

L'école de la vie

Ou quelques pincées de sucre pour adoucir l'amertume universitaire.

Julie Côté
Le Délit

Lecteurs adorés, vous avez cru ne jamais plus avoir l'occasion de me lire dans les pages du Délit ? Je le pensais aussi, du moins jusqu'à il y a cinq minutes. Vous vous dites aussi que le titre de cette chronique est douloureusement quêtaine? J'en suis donc ravie! Je ne vous décris pas le bonheur que j'ai à écrire une chronique dans ce numéro conjoint avec le Daily, ce numéro unique dans l'histoire du Délit/Daily. J'en suis d'autant plus heureuse que je m'appête à quitter McGill dans les prochaines semaines et que le sujet, l'université que l'on

veut, ne saurait mieux tomber. Ceux qui m'ont lue la semaine dernière me savent déjà très critique face à l'éducation que j'ai reçue à McGill. Je m'adoucirai un peu cette fois, remerciez la pinte de stout que je bois en vous écrivant ce mot doux. À quelle université est-ce que je rêve, comparses mcgillois? Bon, sincèrement, en ce moment, je rêve surtout à «pas d'université du tout», comme vous tous, sans doute. Mais quand je repense à ce qui crée en moi une certaine animosité, je revois les enseignements prodigués sans conviction, les travaux rédigés juste parce qu'il le faut, les cours où on doit simplement répéter l'opinion du professeur pour s'en tirer avec une bonne note.

J'aurais aimé sentir que les cours que j'ai pris ont été donnés avec passion pour la matière. Même si c'était le cas parfois, je ne serai certainement pas de ceux qui affirmeront avoir ressenti cette passion dans la plupart des cours suivis.

J'ai plutôt envie de rapeler aux professeurs et aux dirigeants de l'université que leurs étudiants, encore plus à McGill qu'ailleurs, étaient il y a une quinzaine d'années tout juste des enfants avides d'apprendre, qui ne pouvaient attendre la prochaine journée de classe, qui étaient effrayés à l'idée même de rater une journée d'école. Cette affirmation est peut-être une généralisation un peu grossière, mais

je me la permets. Quand on se fait répéter des années durant que McGill est la crème de la crème des étudiants au pays, on aimerait y croire, le sentir dans l'éducation prodiguée. Pourtant, combien de fois ai-je eu l'impression qu'une matinée passée à lire tranquillement à la maison m'apprendrait plus que deux heures de bourrage de crâne à McGill? Trop souvent. Et combien de fois ai-je eu l'impression que les travaux que je rédigeais n'avaient aucune autre utilité que celle de m'obtenir des crédits? Je continue à croire que les dissertations emmerdent tout le monde, de la personne qui l'écrit à la personne qui la lit et la corrige. Et c'est sans mentionner que la

rédaction de dissertation n'est pas une preuve d'intelligence ni même une compétence qui permette de décrocher un emploi plus facilement. Pourtant, dans le modèle actuel, le bon étudiant est celui qui sait rédiger des dissertations. Trouvez l'erreur.

Mon université rêvée, chers lecteurs, serait celle où la réflexion n'aurait pas de limite, où l'on ne craindrait pas de tout remettre en question, quitte à sortir du cadre. En fait, il est surtout là mon problème, le cadre. Est-ce que je crois pour autant que ces changements se produiront? J'en doute. Et c'est pourquoi je me réjouis d'en avoir fini avec mon bac. L'université m'a appris que l'enseignement, c'est à moi de me le prodiguer. À nul autre. ☉

Doctor-schmoctor



The budget bon-vivant

Justin Scherer

Anyone who has ever tried to make a doctor's appointment at the McGill Health Clinic knows how difficult it can be. Appointments are booked weeks in advance. The drop-in clinic is usually full before it even opens, and students lucky enough to get an appointment sometimes see only a nurse rather than a doctor. The people working at health services are no doubt working as hard as they can, but health services simply does not hire enough staff to satisfy student demand, especially during cold and flu season. At present, the clinic employs fewer than 20 doctors for a student body of over 34,000. With only one doctor for every 2,000 students, it is no wonder that appointments are hard to come by. Lowly undergrad that I am, I have neither the administrative clout nor the knowledge of the health care system to fix this problem myself. And so, what I offer to you today are two delicious immune boosting recipes to keep you all healthy and happy during the holidays.

1. Tomato soup from scratch:

This recipe is cheap, healthy, and almost too delicious to handle. Not to mention, of course, that garlic and tomatoes are great for the immune system.

INGREDIENTS

One package of ripe cherry tomatoes, two cans of whole plum tomatoes, three cloves of garlic (minced), one package of basil, about half a baguette (preferably stale, but fresh will do), lots of olive oil.

METHOD

Start by preheating the oven to 350 Celsius. Separate the basil leaves from the stalks, loosely chop the leaves, and finely mince the stalks. Put the cherry tomatoes in a bowl with about a quarter of the basil and one clove of minced garlic, drizzle with olive oil, and mix it all around. Next, place the cherry tomatoes on a baking sheet in the oven with all of the garlic and basil. This will intensify the tomatoes' flavour.

In the meantime, heat a few tablespoons of olive oil in a large saucepan or thick-bottomed pot and add the rest of the garlic and the basil stalks. Sauté until the garlic is lightly browned, and pour in both cans of tomatoes, and add one can of water. Break up the tomatoes with a spoon, bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes.

While the soup is simmering, cut the bread into approximately two-inch-long pieces. After the 10 minutes, add the remaining basil and the bread to the pot. By this time, the cherry tomatoes should be

bursting from their skins. Scrape them and all the delicious liquid in the pan into the soup. Leave the soup on low for another few minutes until the bread has dissolved somewhat and the whole thing is thick. Serve piping hot.

2. Apple cinnamon yams:

An apple a day keeps the doctor away, plus the beta carotene in the yams is good for you.

INGREDIENTS

Yams (the orange ones; sweet potatoes are white in colour), 3 tablespoons butter/margarine, cinnamon, grated apple (firm Granny Smith apples work really well), a splash of milk if you like it smooth, optional brown sugar for those of us with a sweet tooth.

METHOD

You can heat the yams in the oven in tin-foil for an hour on 375 Celsius to soften them up, but that takes forever, so I usually microwave them for between five and 10 minutes (depending on the size of the yam). It makes no difference whether you peel them before or after. Grate the apple using a normal cheese grater. The recipe is very simple. Add everything together, mash until desired consistency, and enjoy.

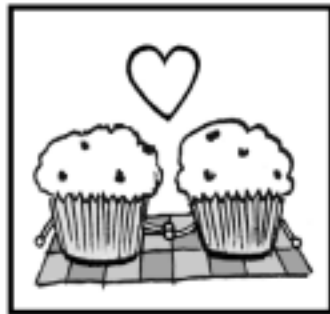
LA MISSION FONDAMENTALE DE L'UNIVERSITÉ

Le trait caractérisant le mieux l'activité universitaire dans l'ensemble de [s]es missions - recherche, formation scientifique ou professionnelle - est le style de réflexion qui consiste à aborder tout sujet, toute question sous un angle qui mette en lumière leur substance réelle et leur sens au-delà des apparences s'offrant au premier regard, souvent superficiel. S'il en est ainsi, le style de pensée propre à l'université et le type de formation qui en découle consistent à porter la réflexion aux confins de la connaissance, à cet extrême point du savoir où il devient possible à l'esprit de saisir les connaissances en leur jaillissement, de s'interroger sur leurs fondements théoriques et sur leur évolution, d'en explorer les applications et les incidences sur la vie de tous les jours; et grâce à ces démarches de la pensée, soit de redonner au savoir constitué sa valeur originelle, soit de la renouveler et de la prolonger par l'intervention.

Commission d'étude sur les universités, Rapport du Comité de coordination, Gouvernement du Québec, 1979, p.16

Locavore Latkes

Organic Campus provides healthy, local food for students



Friends
with food

Sophie Busby & Olivia Hoffmeyer

We wanted to make a seasonal dinner for our friends with food that we bought locally – really locally: a tall order with the limited opportunities for year-round, organic food on campus. So we looked for produce that was in season, available at local farms, and easy to find. After rallying the troops and making the trek, we decided to stop by the Shatner building on our way home on Monday to see what Organic Campus had to offer.

At the Organic Campus stall, we met Matthew Hawco, the group's general coordinator. Here's what we found out about the initiative: Organic Campus currently operates four days a week, Monday to Thursday, from 12 to 5. On Monday they were stationed outside, but now that it's getting colder, you can find them in the lobby of Shatner.

The group has come a long way. In past years, you would have to pre-order your food. Now you can pick up whatever produce and freshly baked goods suit your fancy on the day you shop. Having received a grant from Generations Pact, the group now has big plans for the future. They want to

open up a storefront in Sadie's Corner in Shatner. Along with a counter and rolling grill, they hope to acquire a commercial fridge, allowing Organic Campus to increase the variety of products available to students on campus.

Organic Campus gets most of its produce from Glen Robertson Farm in Ontario, about an hour and a half away from Montreal. Visiting their stall is just one of the ways to eat locally during the winter season. Hawco recommended that students check out McGill's Food System Project and read the labels on the produce in your grocery store ("grown in" means that it was actually grown in Canada whereas "produced in" means that that's only where the packaging took place). His current favourite seasonal dish is Brussels sprouts with sage butter, which sounds delicious to us.

For now, with limited space and the ground frosting over, there isn't a lot offered in terms of variety at Organic Campus. Until we see greater sustainable changes made to the University's food systems, we've got another seasonal recipe for you to try.

Classic Latkes

Since potatoes were Organic Campus' veggie of choice, latkes were our dish of choice. Here is a classic no-fail recipe. Just don't be grossed out by how much oil you use. It's part of their charm. This is a ratio recipe, so double as you see fit. We made about five times as much and over 10 people were very, very full.

- 3 medium-large potatoes, peeled and grated
- 1 onion
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup flour
- salt and pepper to taste
- Canola oil (varies for every pan and every latke)

This recipe is a lot easier if you have a food processor that has a grater widget. If not then you'll have to do this by hand, which takes considerable time. Peel and grate your potatoes. Dice your onions. Mix potatoes, onions, egg, flour, and salt and pepper. Pour about a centimetre of oil into a frying pan. Let it heat up. Spoon in latkes. Fry them until one side is crispy. Flip and do the same to the other side. Transfer to a plate or baking sheet that has a paper towel on top (like with bacon, you want to soak up some of the oil). Repeat until you've cooked all the potato mixture. Add oil as you go along. They won't cook right unless you have a gruesome amount of oil.



Photos by Richard Muller for The McGill Daily



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la source (sauf dans le cas d'articles et d'illustrations dont les
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francophone (CIPUF).Publier un journal francophone à McGill? À chaque semaine?
Ce serait "Mission impossible" sans l'apport de nos précieux col-
laborateurs. Pour ce dernier numéro de la décennie, Le Délit tient
à remercier tout ceux qui ont mis l'épaule à la roue au courant de
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The library bathroom I want

Not enough shit-lit in the McGill book repositories

Charles Knox
The McGill Daily

There are a lot of gripes these days with the McGill library system. Too many **talkie idiots** who don't work. Too **loud**. Books are **too hard to find** or are not findable. Frustrating security guards who steal my bottles of Coke when-all-I-want-is-a-little-pick-me-up. However, these problems aren't my biggest concern nor my biggest problem with the library. No, my biggest problem with the library is its lack of good poop literature.

At home, whilst I produce coprolitic masterpieces, I am treated to reading all sorts of delightful things. At my humble commode, I have a great selection of things to read. Such literary fecal treats are: a copy of *Watchmen*, two *Schott's Miscellanies*, a few old *Economists*, a number of **J. Crew catalogues** which turn up at my

place sporadically addressed to, I assume, the previous occupants, a film magazine or two, an old *Vice*, another music mag, and the *pièces de sbitistance*, a tattered and incredibly over-read copy of *Vice's Do's and Don'ts* book. Now, I know what you are thinking: **how spoiled this guy is to have such a well turned out poo-library**. Of course, you're right.

Which brings me back to my most pure-ious gripe with McGill's libraries, and now that I think of it, McGill as a whole's toilet system. Damn the books: give me some available **ass-produce** literature other than the most recent Sean Turner quotation. I call on the readers of The Daily to protest at the doors of the most important administration building, until my demands (and, I assume, now your demands) are met. To paraphrase Patrick Henry, some American guy, give me pooping literature, or GIVE ME DEATH!

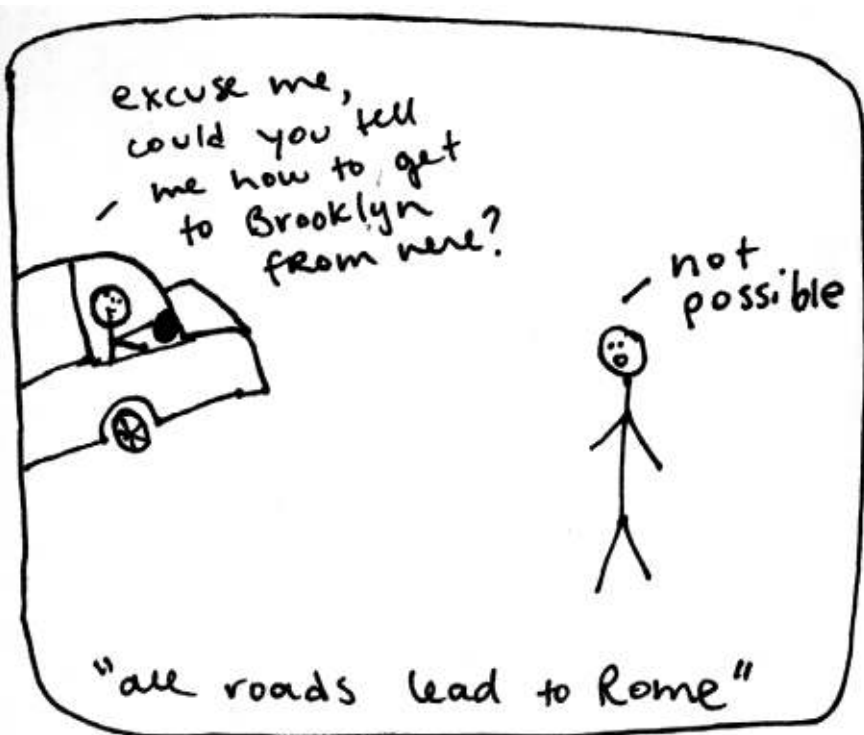


Olivia Messer / The McGill Daily

The Throbbing Ivory Tower does not have enough light reading for the crapper.

The directions we want

The horse we want



Mallory Bey / The McGill Daily



Owen Kirby for The McGill Daily

Thanks to all our contributors & readers this semester!
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comics, fake news, Fucks these, et cetera:
compendium@mcgilldaily.com.
See you in January!

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