

QPIRG McGill

ANNUAL REPORTS

2015-2016



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About QPIRG-McGill	3
QPIRG-McGill Structure	4
Report from the Board of Directors	6
Report from the Staff	12
Popular Education:	13
CULTURE SHOCK 2014	14
SOCIAL JUSTICE DAYS 2015	15
RAD FROSH 2014	16
SCHOOL SCHMOOL 2014-2015	17
Community Research:	18
CONVERGENCE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL	19
COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY RESEARCH EXCHANGE (CURE)	19
STUDY IN ACTION 2015: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE	20
SUMMER STIPEND 2014: MONSTER ACADEMY	21
SUMMER STIPEND 2014: ACCESSIBILIZE MONTREAL!	22
ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE LIBRARY	
Grassroots Mobilization:	23
Discretionary Funding 2014-2015	24
Co-Sponsorships and Endorsements 2014-2015	26
Working Groups 2014-2015	27
Outreach Report 2014-2015	31
Financial Reports 2014-2015	31

ABOUT QPIRG-MCGILL

MANDATE

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at McGill (QPIRG-McGill) is a resource centre for students and community members working towards social and environmental justice. We strive to engage students in research, public education and action, and to support grassroots activism around diverse social and environmental issues. We seek to build campus-community alliances and inspire social change through inclusive and non-hierarchical approaches.

QPIRG-McGill is opposed to all forms of discrimination on the basis of: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. QPIRG-McGill is committed to engaging in research and action that are rooted in an anti-oppression analysis and practice.

HISTORY

In 1970-71, Ralph Nader, in the US, encouraged the formation of the first two PIRGs by university students and their organizing efforts and structures became the blueprint for the hundreds of groups to follow. By 1973, there were chapters on 135 campuses in 19 states across the US. In Canada, the first PIRG was set up in Ontario during the 1972-73 school year at the University of Waterloo. In Quebec, QPIRG has been an organization at both Concordia and McGill Universities since 1980. However, it was not until 1988 that a referendum was passed at McGill making QPIRG at McGill the first student-funded, autonomous PIRG in Quebec. Now, there are student-funded PIRGs at Concordia, McGill and UQAM.

Over the course of their thirty year development, Canadian PIRGs have diverged in important ways from their US counterparts. Most importantly, they are interested in encouraging grassroots organizing and changing public attitudes, rather than engaging in government lobbying. The PIRGs' mandate has been to provide a structure within which students and community members can develop the knowledge and practical skills needed for activism and community work. By providing a forum and training ground for people to be engaged members of their community, the PIRGs also provide a bridge between academia and organizing, by linking theory and practice. In the last five years, QPIRG McGill has been instrumental in promoting and supporting progressive movements on McGill's campus, through the formation of events like Culture Shock and Social Justice Days. As well, QPIRG regularly collaborates with other campus groups who are working for social and environmental justice.

Since 2001, QPIRG has adopted an anti-oppression framework, seeking to oppose all forms of oppression as they play-out within society at large as well as within our organizing work.

As of 1988, all McGill undergraduate and graduate students are automatically members of QPIRG-McGill and are entitled to all the organization's services by virtue of a refundable semester fee. Community members are eligible for membership if they pay the "community member" fee and complete 15 hours of volunteer work at QPIRG-McGill.

QPIRG-MCGILL STRUCTURE

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD

A volunteer Board of Directors, elected at the Annual General Meeting, runs QPIRG-McGill. The Board is responsible for all the decisions pertaining to the operation of the organization. The Board defines the vision and direction of the organization, allocates the budget, and also organizes independent QPIRG events.

QPIRG-McGill's voluntary Board members gain valuable skills and receive hands-on practical training in running a non-profit organization. This year, the Board of Directors formed the following committees: Accessibility Committee, Convergence Committee, Finance Committee, Outreach & Media Committee, Policy Committee, Popular Education Committee, Radical Research Committee & Staff Committee. The Board also formed an ad-hoc committee to work on Bill 56, Québec's "Lobbying Transparency Act."

STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS

ELLA BELFER
 Melis Cagan
 Leah Paul
 Nate Philip
 Kelly Schieder
 Aishwarya Singh
 Ayesha Talreja
 Fauziat Serunjogi (resigned – Sept 2015)

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS

Kai O'Doherty
 Molly Swain
 Wade Walker (appointed – Oct 2015)
 Emily Yee Clare (resigned – Oct 2015)
 Wai-Yant Li (resigned – Sept 2015)

SSMU REP: BECKY GOLDBERG

Samiha Sharif (resigned – Sept 2015)

PGSS REP: DIEGO SANDOVAL HERNANDEZ

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (CRCC)

At the Annual General Meeting in April 2015, the following QPIRG-McGill members were elected to the CRCC: Kai Cheng Thom, Annie Preston and Becca Yu. The CRCC follows a CRCC policy to address complaints involving QPIRG-McGill members that cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors.

(SOME OF!) OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Anna Vail, Mayson Rain Miller-Thompson, Ali Cem Ertekin, Amedee d'Aboville, Pauline Sarah PFingsten, Samantha Capps, Noelle Dube, Zafer M, Alan Reed, K Wilson, Shea Betts, Dylan Reap, Veronica Bosco, Celia Robinovitch, Shaina Agbayani, Anna Tyshkov, Megan Shanklin, Arabella Colombier, Cath Wang, Vanessa Yan Lee, Leah Paul, Kiera Sheppard, Samia Marshy, Kevin Paul, Irene Dambriunas, Kaya, Emily Sanders, Jaime MacLean, Wade Walker, Grace Face, Rae Dooley, Simmie Steinberg, Sarah Woolf, Lucas Youmans, Dianna Chen, Natalie Liconti, Rhiana Warawa, Blare Coughlin, Tonie Miller, Leslie Anne St. Amour, Sevrenne Sheppard, Celine Garandeau, Alaina Boyle, Kelly Schieder, Rafaella Alegre, Annie Chen, Shannen Ciricillo, Caroline Copeman, Chris Gismondi, Rhiannon Jones, Sarah Mihuc, Ryan Canuto, Leah Paul, Marie Deckers, Allison Jones, Michael Baek, Vita Azaro, Ashley Hobson-Garcia, Erin Strawbridge, Viv Walz, Niyousha Bastani, John Hanchar, Saad Rajper, Allison Ebner, Pouya Behmaram, Christine Avery, Rosemarie Sarno,

QPIRG-MCGILL STRUCTURE

Agatha Slupek, Lucie Lastinger, Nina Hermes, Radney Jean-Claude, Leah Girardo, Chantal Petgrave, Mars Zaslavsky, Cinder Ikeda, Irene Dambriunas, Viola Chen, Dan Wolf, Anne Favory, Caely White, Simmie Steinberg, Hannah Feinberg, Lauren Laframboise, Noah Witte-WInnett, Josh Marquis, Yan Qin, Lindsay Nixo, Tanya Gill, Josh Falek, Coyote, Macho Philipovich, Degane Sougal, Annie Preston, Andrea Figueroa, Jody Beck, Jamie McLean, Elliott Montpellier, Amber Gross, Urooj Nizami, Holly Nazar, Fred Burrill, Cleve Higgins, Delice Mugabo, Lena Palecios, Adrienne Hurley, Michelle Hartmann, Aimee Louw, Al Blair, Jean-Luc St Amour, Shyam Patel, Elizabeth Higgins, Caitlin Manicom, Camillia Elachqar, Simone Lucas, Tyler Lawson, Reilly MacDonald, Aaron Lakhoff, Nicole Ebert, Louise Burns, Noah Eidelmann, Jaggi Singh, Christina Xydous, Otto Buxton, Liam Mayes, Alienor Cambridge-Lemieux, Mutatayi Fuamba, Alex Garcia, Rosalind Wong, Leah Freeman, Bill Van Driel, Amy Darwish, Mary Foster, Anna Pringle, Gwendolyn Muir, Carolin Huang, Amanda Lickers, David Whiteside, Keara Yim, Kota Harbron, Malek Yalaoui, Max Silverman, Noam Lapid, Noe Arteaga Santos, Viviana Carol, Mostafa Henaway, Sarah Malik, Cecilia, Danielle Hollick, Joey Calugay, Josh Pavan, Sheehan Moore, Alex Matak, Cera Yu, Stefan Christoff, Steve Baird, Pei-Ju Wang, Bader Takriti, Clifton Nicholas, Maria Forti, Ted Rutland, Maya Rolbin-Ghanie, Lucy Anacleto, Sam Bick, Noah Bick, Elena Stoodley, Dylan Fishlock, Freda Guttman, Nazik Dakkach, Gretchen King, Simone Page, Allison Figueroa, Joel Pednault, Jon McPhedran Waitzer, Brad Fougere, Cassie Smith, Sofia Fuad, Lina Martin Chan, Sasha Simmons, Caytee Lush, Sarah Mostafa Kamel, Ashley Fortier, Jill Hanley, Guillermo Martinez de Velasco, Edith Lafreniere, Hirut Eyob, Neil Kastro, Mahmoud Abdelal, Paul Di Stefano, Doug Smith, Dror Warschawski, Lara Khattab, Mohamed Elasri, Nadia Kanji, Oula Hajjar, Rémy-Paulin Twahirwa, Rena Saad, Rushdia Mehreen, Yasmeen Daher, Samiha Sharif, Batu Kaya, Melis Cagan, Isaac Stethem, Adrienne Pan, Chalani Ranasinghe, Coco Zhou, Laura Khoury, Nadir Khan, Sajdeep Soumal, Alice Rougeaux, Aidan Gilchrist-Blackwood, Bekah Stroik, Ruthie Wellen, Saima Desai, Stacey Gomez, Parker Finley, Sumaya Ugas, Yasmin Ali, Christian Scott, Emily Yee Clare, Becca Yu, Alaast Kamalabadi, Erik Sin, Anastasia Sylenko, Annie Gaughan, Liam Harper, Danielle Girard, Lucas Charlie Rose, Lee Lai, Morgan Sea

STAFF

QPIRG-McGill has three core staff who coordinate the day-to-day operations of the organization. The staff works to ensure reliability, continuity and skill-sharing within the organization. In addition to daily operations, the staff is responsible for programming, finances, outreach, working groups, coordinating resources, training volunteers, coordinating projects, policy development and grant research among many other things. This year we created a new core staff position and welcomed Amy Darwish as the Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator. Kama Maureemootoo stayed on as the Finance and Programming Coordinator. After two years with us as the Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, Kira Page left the organization, and Raphaële Frigon was hired as the new Outreach and Promotions Coordinator. We welcome Raphaële and Amy to the organization, and we thank Kira Page for all her hard work and dedication over the years.

This year, we had three part-time work-study students: Nina Maness as the Resource Centre Coordinator, Vivienne Walz as the Community-University Research Exchange Coordinator, and Kiera Sheppard as the Campus Outreach Coordinator. The 2015-16 accountants were Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp.

In the summer of 2015, we hired Jaime MacLean and Sara Sebti as the Rad Frosh Coordinators, and Xindi Li and Andrea Figueroa as the School Schmoool Coordinators. We funded two summer stipend projects, Project Talk to Me, coordinated by Elena Stoodley and Kai Thomas, and ACSEXE+, coordinated by Aimee Louw. Jointly with the SSMU, we hired Arabella Colombier to coordinate Culture Shock and Social Justice Days.that cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

BOARD TRAINING AND VISIONING

TRAINING

Training for the 2015-2016 QPIRG Board was held from May 5-10, 2015, and was planned by Kama Maureemootoo and Kira Page, with the support of the outgoing Staff Committee. The training sessions were extensive and lengthy, but most Board members were able to attend most of the sessions, which included: QPIRG history, structure and governance; accessibility at QPIRG; anti-oppression and solidarity-based grassroots organizing; labour relations; decolonization; consensus, facilitation and minute-taking; finances; self- and collective-care and well-being. The training was comprehensive and engaging, which we thank Kira, Kama, Grace, Molly and Cadence for facilitating the training workshops. In January 2016, the Board was also offered a full-day training in conflict resolution, specifically catering to the QPIRG-McGill's Conflict Resolution and Complaints Policy. This training was facilitated by Nat Cohen.

VISIONING

Unlike the previous year, this year we did not have a Board visioning with the outgoing Board and the incoming Board. We strongly recommend that this not be the case in the future though, and that every year, the incoming Board has a visioning session with the outgoing Board so as to ensure the continuity of projects, institutional memory and established priorities. The Board visioning was held in November 2015, and was facilitated by former Board member and current CRCC member, Annie Preston. All three core staff were present, along with the majority of the Board.

The visioning began with an overview of recent history of QPIRG-McGill from 2010 onwards, which was a stressful time for the organization and that led to the burnout of the Board and staff, with many of them leaving the organization. In the summer of 2013, Kira Page and Kama Maureemootoo were hired as the new full-time coordinators which brought renewed energy to the organization. Over the past couple of years, QPIRG-McGill worked on rebuilding its capacity as an organization and multiple visionings and work plans for the future were carried by the Board and Staff. These included: focusing more on community engagement and organizing and conducting less campus-based work; addressing outreach and imaging of QPIRG-McGill on campus; focusing on capacity building through volunteer integration within the work at all levels of the organization; prioritizing accessibility; addressing gendered and racial dynamics as they have historically structured the work of the organization; reworking our policies, particularly the hiring and equity policies; focusing on the long-term sustainability of the organization, which also led to the referendum for a fee increase in the winter 2015.

Once we had discussed the recent history and priorities of QPIRG, the Board and staff discussed the current state of the organization. This included recognizing and naming (visible and invisible) structures, people, programming and organizing cultures as they influence and shape QPIRG-McGill. We conducted a SWOT analysis in order to assess our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to the organization. Some strengths identified were: the deep commitment and hard work of the full-time and part-time staff, strong organizational structures and policies, and access to a fairly large and stable source of funding. Some weaknesses identified were: our tenuous relationship with the SSMU, unequal distribution of labour on the Board, difficulty engaging community members, staff sustainability and burnout, and the inaccessible and ableist nature of staff and Board positions, commitments, and responsibilities. The opportunities that we identifies that can be tapped into include: accessing the organization's institutional memory, building more relationships with community organizations as allies and inspirations from whom to learn, and using the exceptionally underutilized Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC). Some threats to QPIRG-McGill that were identified include: the student fee opt-outs, the upcoming referendum and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) negotiations with McGill University, increasing conservatism/Islamophobia/racism on campus, and our tenuous relationship with the SSMU and the challenges that poses to our campus mobilizing and organizing. The Board had a preliminary discussion about QPIRG's relationship with the SSMU, and strongly recommends that this be flagged as a point of discussion moving forward, for the incoming Board, particularly for the 2016 summer collective.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

Part of the visioning process also included discussions about our “dream organization.” We identified 4 categories that allowed us to dream our ideal organization: infrastructure, funding/resources, relationships, and Board/staff practices. In terms of infrastructure, it is our goal to eventually have a wheelchair accessible space with large meeting rooms, and that is centrally located. When it comes to resources, we want to have more stability in our access to government funding, and to be able to rely more predictably on our sources of income. Ideally, we also want to have clearer agreements with the SSMU, less restricting agreements with McGill University, and we want to strengthen our ties with other Montreal organizations, especially francophone ones. Part of this process also allowed us to identify that we need to define Board and staff roles and responsibilities more clearly (so that the division of labor is fair and accessible to community members, especially), and we need to ensure working conditions that reflect our commitment to accessibility and anti-oppression. We also had discussions about the need to have clear institutional history of the organization in different media formats. These are all goals that the Board has identified as short and long-term priorities for incoming board members to continue to work towards over the next several years.

The last part of the Board visioning was to determine concrete ways to address what we considered our more realizable goals in the short- to medium-term based on our capacity and the resources available to us. Amongst others, we decided to clarify the relationship between Board members and working groups, try having a higher number of meetings and visionings, revising the training material for the incoming Board. Many of these proposals are discussed in greater lengths in other parts of this report.

OUR BOARD, OURSELVES

The 2015-16 Board of Directors was comprised of a group of passionate and critical-thinking individuals. After the 2014-15 Board had extensive discussions and reflections on institutional racism, whiteness and gender practices within QPIRG and within the Board, special effort was made to better recruit marginalized voices within the Board composition. This year’s Board was comprised of a majority of women and femmes of colour. While these were positive steps, we believe that there is still much work to be done and that the Board, and QPIRG in general, must not be complacent around issues of race and gender, but work even harder to address and reflect on these subjects within the organization. There are still many marginalized identities that are not represented in the composition of the Board of Directors. Most of the Board is financially secure, able-bodied, and many are students and/or under the age of 25. This year, all community members were previous McGill students, demonstrating our lack of ability in integrating Montreal community members in our decision-making processes. It is recommended that future Boards have in-depth discussions around systematic oppressions within the organization that dissuade particular individuals from applying and remaining in QPIRG.

In terms of dynamics, there was a lot of discussion about unequal division of labor and work on the Board. Specifically, some Board members were more involved and more present around QPIRG than other members. Additionally, it was often the same people taking on tasks. There are, perhaps, three different reasons for this imbalance: first, Board members expressed the need for more practical training, particularly in terms of their roles, expectations and responsibilities; second, Board members did not seem aware of the time and energy commitment that comes with occupying a Board position when they first apply; third, several community members have full-time jobs and may not be able to come to meetings and other Board activities as regularly as student members. It can therefore be difficult for community members to remain on the Board and actively participate in the running of the organization. It is recommended that more discussions and reflections are held about how to make the Board a sustainable and accessible environment for members, especially community members. One suggestion was that perhaps there could be different roles for Board members, with varying levels of commitment for each role, but this has yet to be developed and tried.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

This year, we tried keeping tabs on all the Board tasks by having a “tasks list” at each of the Board meeting. While this helped to keep track of all the tasks, it did not address the imbalance in Board labour. We also had a couple of collective cleaning days at the office, which although successful (and fun!) did not see the attendance of all the Board members. As a Board, we realized that there are rarely opportunities for us to come together and get to know one another outside of organizing settings. There were many proposals for resolving this, such as having weekly Board hangouts, and dinners. It was difficult to find a time when the group could be together, so these were not so well attended, but we do recommend to future Boards that that make time for socializing together, as this considerably improves Board dynamics and relationships.

Another ongoing issue on the Board has been around Board initiatives and staff initiatives—most of QPIRG’s initiatives are bottom-lined by the staff. It is essential that Board functions are clearly outlined, especially during Board recruitment for the next year (thinking about what this means for community vs. student members). Several responsibilities of the Board, such as reworking policies, updating documents and coordinating committee work, were not being fulfilled unless they were being coordinated by the staff. We suggest that future Boards have a board member be responsible for each committee and thus take on the tasks of organizing meetings and setting agendas.

There were great discussions around accessibility in its various forms within the Board. One of the main issues was the length of Board meetings (usually 2-3 hours) and the burnout that results from. There was a proposal to have shorter meetings each week instead, and perhaps have group dinners during these meetings. This discussion occurred at the end of the year, so there was little time to actually implement the ideas. Hopefully, the next Board can adopt these new ideas into their meetings! We also made sure that we had snacks and food at all our Board meetings, and we recently acquired fidget toys for the office!

Like most years, there were also different power dynamics at play on the Board. Returning Board members, for example, have more knowledge of the organization and the functioning of the organization, thus creating a knowledge gap between then and incoming Board members. We suggest that special attention be paid to that, and that this be addressed from the get-go.

A recurring concern over the past year has been our relationship with the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU). Our relationship with the SSMU is largely dependent on the composition of the executive council, which changes from year to year. This, in turn, impacts our ability to plan and execute our core projects with the SSMU (Rad Frosh, Culture Shock and Social Justice days). In the past year, we have had our funding from the SSMU for these programs cut by more than 50%, and the SSMU nearly ended our working relationship altogether less than a month before Culture Shock. This has been a source of stress for the Board and the staff who had to creatively trouble-shoot the issues and find immediate solutions to still keep our core programming (the Concordia Student Union funded the Culture Shock keynote, for example). We suggest that the next Board addresses the issues with working with the SSMU at the earliest in the summer so that QPIRG can plan the upcoming year ahead of time and make provisions to fulfill its mandate as needed.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

ACCESSIBILITY

Increasing the accessibility of QPIRG's space, events, and work has been an increasing priority in recent years. During the summer of 2014, QPIRG hired an Accessibility Policy Researcher who produced a report of QPIRG's accessibility measures along with recommendations to be integrated in every level of QPIRG's organizing. Last year, we changed the lighting in most of the rooms in the QPIRG office to non-fluorescent lighting, we instituted a scent-free policy for the QPIRG space as well as for all QPIRG events, and we strived to ensure that all public QPIRG events were held in wheelchair-accessible spaces, and prioritized the inclusion of thorough accessibility information in promotional material for events. In February 2016, the Accessibility Committee coordinated a QPIRG Board visioning only to discuss accessibility. We are presently working towards making our library material more accessible, thanks to Nina Maness, our Resource Centre Coordinator, and all the Library Committee Volunteers. During our visioning, we have identified short- and long-term goals for increasing the accessibility of QPIRG. Below is what we expect to achieve over the next few months:

- Revamping the website and ensuring that it is up to accessibility standards, including screen reader usability
- Completing the full Radical Accessibility Audit Project assessment of the QPIRG space
- Creating explanatory signage to encourage wider usage of our fidget toys and interactive signal badges, as well as more widely advertising our scent-free space policy
- Solidifying our Discretionary Funding Policy with regards to requests for events up flights of stairs or otherwise significantly inaccessible
- Discussing the possibility of creating an Accessibility Fund for organizations to apply to in order to fund the development of a more accessible space, project, and/or event
- Drafting an accessibility policy in collaboration with the Policy Committee
- Offering an accessible event planning and overall accessibility workshop to all working groups at the start of each year
- Bringing more non-fluorescent lighting into the space, so that every room can be adequately lit without use of the fluorescent overhead lights
- Providing an accessible facilitation training for the new Board
- Ongoing Board discussions about ways to make Board and Staff positions more sustainable, including discussing the possibility of having varied Board positions with different time commitments
- Conducting outreach to groups with various access needs, to collaborate in assessing how our space and events - as well as greater community ones - might be made more accessible to them
- Standardizing the application of text-based accessibility guidelines to all posters and other promotional materials issued by QPIRG and its working groups and committees
- Standardizing accessibility information provided across all print and online outreach materials

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

STAFF

CORE STAFF

This year, as a result of winning a fee increase last winter, QPIRG-McGill was able to hire a third core staff. Using feedback from the Staff Committee visioning held in May 2015, we decided to create a position that prioritized the two areas least addressed by the current staff positions: Working Groups, and the various community research projects run by QPIRG-McGill. The creation of this third full-time position allowed for the restructuring of all three full-time positions, with the hopes that a broader distribution of labour would lessen the persistent trend of excessive overtime for full-time staff.

The position of Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator was thus added as a third full-time position, and Amy Darwish was hired to fill the position in August 2015. Amy's wealth of knowledge on community organizing within the city, her thoughtfulness and vision have been instrumental in helping to establish the newly-formed Radical Research Committee, as well as working towards strengthening relationships between QPIRG-McGill and our working groups.

In October 2015, Kira Page resigned from her role as Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, and Raphaële Frigon was hired as the new Outreach and Promotions Coordinator. We thank Kira Page for her endless hours of work and dedication that were so essential to keeping the organization functioning. Despite being hired and trained almost immediately before the beginning of Culture Shock, Raphaële's immense experience with outreach, her enthusiasm, and skills allowed her to expand and refine QPIRG-McGill's outreach and programming efforts, and to continue to grow QPIRG-McGill's volunteer base. Kama Maureemootoo stayed on for another year as Finance and Programming Coordinator. Kama's hard work, patience, and extensive organizing experience have been crucial to a smooth transition at the office, and to the integration for our two incoming staff members. Kama has also actively worked on designing the new budget after we won the levy fee increase, and has been creatively fundraising throughout the year.

PART-TIME STAFF

Jaime MacLean and Sara Sebti were hired Rad Frosh Coordinators in the summer of 2015. They both worked diligently and collaboratively to ensure the success of Rad Frosh. Sara and Jaime carefully implemented recommendations from previous years' Rad Frosh Coordinators, and they were also successful in implementing the recommendations from QPIRG's accessibility researcher. This year's Rad Frosh was particularly challenging because of the tenuous relationship with the SSMU and the budget cuts, but despite setbacks and obstacles, the Rad Frosh Coordinators worked together with the Core Staff, volunteers, and the greater community and rose to the occasion.

Viv Walz was hired this year as the CURE Coordinator. Viv is extremely self-sufficient and has a great deal of knowledge about CURE and community-based research. Through consistent coordination with Board and staff, she was able to successfully outreach to McGill students, to maintain and coordinate projects, and coordinate with QPIRG-Concordia.

Kiera Sheppard was hired this year as Campus Outreach Coordinator, a new work-study position. She worked closely with the Outreach and Promotions Coordinator to advertise and plan events this year. Kiera was also a central part of the Popular Education Committee and the Outreach Committee. She worked especially hard on the Culture Shock and Social Justice Days event series, and has been self-directed and creative in helping create a stronger social media and on-campus presence for QPIRG.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

Nina Maness stayed on for another year as the Resource Centre Coordinator. Nina made the sure the library ran smoothly, she diligently completed ongoing tasks such as ordering new books and materials, assisting library users, coordinating volunteers, managing the resource center budget, etc. She also took on two exciting major projects: she helped set up a network for alternative librarians in Montreal, so as to increase capacity and allow a greater flow of ideas, and she also started planning the "AudioZine Project," which involves creating audio book versions of popular zines, which is extremely relevant to QPIRG's growing prioritization of accessibility. Nina has helped the QPIRG library grow so much through the past couple years and will be greatly missed as she graduates and moves on to other horizons! We thank her immensely and we wish her the best.

Arabella Colombier was jointly hired with the SSMU as Culture Shock and Social Justice Days Coordinator. She worked closely with the Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, as well as the Campus Outreach Coordinator, and was also a key member of the Popular Education Committee. Arabella has proven herself to be a strong and organized event planner, and has helped make both Culture Shock and Social Justice Days a success.

Xindi Li was hired this year as School Schmool Coordinator. Xindi worked alongside Andrea Figueroa, who was hired by QPIRG-Concordia, to create this year's School Schmool agenda. Xindi reached out to local artists and activists for content, and designed the layout of the agenda. This year's School Schmool was a wonderful compilation of many forms of media from comics to articles. Xindi was self-directed and helped create a beautiful final product, both visually and functionally.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE STAFF COMMITTEE

Overall, this year was marked by less staff over-work than prior years, largely due to the creation of a third full-time staff position, which has also allowed the organization to increase its capacity to train and recruit volunteers. The increased budget from the referendum also allowed QPIRG-McGill to secure a healthcare stipend for its part-time staff members. We recommend that the programming changes that had been made to address staff overwork in years prior, such as the shortening of Culture Shock and Social Justice Days, and the decision to not participate in Study in Action, be maintained, and that the incoming Board continue to pay close attention to the issue of overtime within the organization.

Rad Frosh this year was characterized by an intense amount of overwork, and stress for the staff members involved, which has been a consistent and recurring issue. We recommend that if funding and capacity is available, additional part-time staff be asked to spend hours assisting with Rad Frosh, or that Board members be even more strongly encouraged to take a more active role in coordinating and assisting with logistics from the get-go.

One of the largest and ongoing issues that emerged in the restructuring of the full-time staff positions and the hiring processes is the inaccessibility of these positions. Beyond the fact that our office is physically inaccessible, full-time staff members have rarely, if ever, worked at QPIRG-McGill for more than a few years. Late night and weekend hours are relatively frequent, and the positions can be incredibly strenuous. As part of the ongoing process of increasing the accessibility of the organization, the job contracts and expectations of employees must be reconsidered, and future staff committees must think seriously about the kinds of accommodations and restructuring that will be necessary in order to ensure that stable full-time employment is accessible to more individuals in the future. While this year's Board and Staff Committee have begun this process in conversation with staff members, it is imperative that the incoming Board continue to prioritize these conversations.

It was brought up that while it is valid that members of the Board are often busy, when they don't take on or complete tasks, these tasks often fall upon the staff who now have to deal with them on top of their regular work. Moving forward,

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

the Board (especially as an employer) should be more mindful of this dynamic and take more initiative in the execution of tasks and communicate clearly with the staff when their capacity is limited.

While a third position definitely did lessen the amount of work for each staff member, it did also create many other tasks and projects. Moreover, there was also some concern over the distribution of work between the positions, since many of the tasks can easily be distributed to one or more full-time staff members. We recommend that there be a staff visioning wherein staff committee and staff go through each of the job descriptions and work out if there are particular projects that need to be limited and/or what job responsibilities can be moved around, in order to proactively address overwork and to better distribute labour between the full-time staff members. Staff visionings should definitely be a regular practice so to make material changes to the amount and type of work that staff are doing if it is necessary.

With all part-time staff positions there is a consistent negotiation of division of labour with full-time staff. Often full-time staff become de facto supervisors of part-time staff, although this is not part of their job requirements. It is the recommendation of Staff Committee that there be greater Board involvement and awareness of the activities and responsibilities of part-time staff. This will also help the Board to facilitate the division of labour between staff. The Board is the employer of both part-time and full-time staff and should not rely on full-time staff to fill that role.

This year the staff evaluations took the form of a conversation about each staff's work, moderated by staff committee, as opposed to anonymous feedback from each individual board member as had been done in prior years. Staff committee noted the major/common points and communicated them to the staff individually. Throughout this conversation we stressed that the board give feedback that is actually relevant to the staffs' positions and responsibilities. This allowed the staff to obtain constructive feedback. We recommend that next year's staff committee develop mechanisms to solicit feedback from and for part-time staff, and from volunteers as well.

WORKING GROUPS

Working groups have historically been the heart and soul of QPIRG, engaging creatively with issues and working on important grassroots projects of social and environmental justice resistance- this year was no different. This year, for the first time QPIRG-McGill had the resources to hire a Working Groups Coordinator. We are grateful to Amy Darwish for taking ownership of this part of QPIRG's mandate, and for actively working to build more sustainable, ongoing and supportive relationships between QPIRG and the working groups.

This year, QPIRG has 13 active working groups, as well as 1 solidarity group. Our solidarity group is the Monster Academy. QPIRG's 2 new working groups are: Skátne lonkwatehiahróntie' and Third Eye Collective. Our 11 returning working groups are the Barrier Lake Solidarity, Community-University Talks, Demilitarize McGill, How!! Arts Collective, Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition/Reclaim Turtle Island, KANATA, Lakas Pag-gawa, Prisoner Correspondence Project, Solidarity Across Borders, Tadamon! and the Temporary Agency Workers Association. For more information on specific working groups and their projects, please see the "Working Groups Reports" section of this document.

Our working and solidarity groups have been active both on campus and in Montreal throughout the year. Many of them engaged with our popular education and community-based research mandates by participating in QPIRG event series like Rad Frosh, Culture Shock, and Social Justice Days. For Rad Frosh, the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition/Reclaim Turtle Island facilitated workshops on "Struggles Against Capitalist Colonialism: How Indigenous Feminisms Will Save the Earth and Destroy the State" and "Decolonizing Harm Reduction"; and Demilitarize McGill gave a tour on "Demilitarize McGill: War, Colonialism and the University."

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

As part of Culture Shock, Tadamon! facilitated “Syria: Beyond and Behind the Refugee Crisis”, examining the popular struggle and the context behind mass displacement in Syria. Solidarity Across Borders also held a reggae dance party fundraiser in support of an undocumented woman’s efforts to regularize her status. During Social Justice Days, the Temporary Agency Workers Association presented a workshop on forms of creative organizing among immigrant workers, while the Howl Arts Collective organized a panel discussion examining art as resistance and the Prisoners Correspondence Project held “Art Inside/Out”, a vernissage of art and letters members who are incarcerated.

Each of our working groups has been highly active in terms of their visibility, mobilization, research and action throughout the year. In the future, QPIRG-McGill hopes to better showcase our working groups projects and events on an ongoing basis. The Board and staff also hope to explore the possibility of providing additional resources, such as a policy bank, facilitator repertory, or ongoing trainings, as identified in consultation with working groups. A first working group dinner and discussion was held in early February which, though sparsely attended, allowed working group members to provide important input about resources, training, and support that would be beneficial in their day-to-day work. Communication between working groups and the board remains an area for improvement. A recommendation going forward is to remain clear with board members about their responsibilities as working group liaisons, as well as to establish clearer expectations around communication between working groups and QPIRG.

RADICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

This year marked the formation of the new Radical Research committee, replacing the pre-existing CURE Committee. The committee, which included board members and volunteers, was responsible for organizing the Radical Research Days event series, presenting on the Community-University Research Exchange and QPIRG-McGill’s other research initiatives to both first-year students and several academic departments, and envisioning the direction of QPIRG-McGill’s radical research work. This year was marked by much larger-scale outreach about the research component of QPIRG-McGill’s work, and subsequently much more interest in the CURE program by students on campus than has been seen in recent years. In addition, the decision to organize an ongoing series of workshops, rather than participating in the Study in Action conference, allowed the committee to reach more individuals and to organize with greater flexibility over the entirety of the winter and spring.

RADICAL RESEARCH DAYS

This year, the newly-created Radical Research Committee made the decision to organize a recurring workshop series over the winter semester. Events included “Research in Action” and “Research in Rez” workshops, which explained the concept of community-driven social justice research, and a panel on the difficulties of doing research in and about Palestine as a part of Israeli Apartheid Week. The series also included a “PCParty”, organized with the Prisoner’s Correspondence Project, where participants answered research requests from prisons. The final event of the series was an Audit-A-Thon, co-organized with QPIRG-Concordia, where participants completed accessibility audits of various locations around McGill and Concordia campuses for the Radical Accessibility Audit Project (RAAP). Events were relatively well-attended, and succeeded in reaching individuals who were not already familiar with QPIRG-McGill. All in all, the Radical Research Committee structure provides a great way to connect and strengthen the work that volunteers, staff, and board members are doing on QPIRG-McGill’s various research initiatives.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

RAD FROSH

This year's Rad Frosh was coordinated by Jaime MacLean and Sara Sebti, who worked relentlessly to plan an accessible and engaging Rad Frosh. The theme of this year's frosh was "Fall out of Orbit." Rad Frosh was a wide collaboration with many campus groups and Montreal organizations that allowed the participants to experience a meaningful introduction to the campus and to Montreal. Amongst the many events were a concert, a poetry reading, workshops, tours, an outdoors movie screening, a BBQ and a dance party. The coordinators worked really hard to make their events as accessible as possible; this included having events in wheelchair accessible spaces, providing ramps if the venue was not accessible, enforcing QPIRG's scent-free policy, having alcohol-free events, and using Interactional Signal Badges throughout the duration of the weekend. Many of the Rad Frosh participants became active QPIRG members. More on Rad Frosh can be found in the staff report section.

SCHOOL SCHMOOL

This year's School Schmool was designed by Xindi Li and Andrea Figueroa. Xindi and Andrea collaborated with many artists, from Montreal and beyond, to create an edition that, for the first time, was printed in 3 different colours! Andrea and Xindi took into consideration the feedback from previous years and integrated these into the design of this year's agenda. School Schmool was distributed on the McGill and Concordia campuses, as well at different Montreal community organizations. More about School Schmool can be found in the staff report section.

CULTURE SHOCK

This year's Culture Shock was held between Nov 5-8, 2015, and was planned around the theme of visionary fiction! We thank the Culture Shock coordinator, Arabella Colombier, the full-time staff and the volunteers on the Popular Education Committee for their hard work that ensured the success of this year's Culture Shock. Culture Shock provides one of the rare spaces on the McGill campus where conversations happen around anti-racism and decolonization. Many of the events were also closed and were Indigenous and POC-only spaces—which is extremely rare and very much needed on campus. Workshops panels and talks were on different topics that included anti-Black racism, queer and Black womanhood, the Syrian "refugee crisis," femme of colour art and resistance, and the keynote featured a conversation between Toronto-based theatre director, Nikki Shaffeeulah and Walidah Imarisha, co-editor of *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*. The keynote event, "Seers, Time-Travellers, and Intergalactic Trouble-Makers: A Keynote on Radical Organizing as Science Fiction," was held at Centre Culturel Georges Vanier with the co-sponsorship of the Concordia Student Union (CSU). All the events were very well attended. More on Culture Shock can be found in the staff report section.

SOCIAL JUSTICE DAYS

This year's Social Justice Days was held between Feb 11-14, 2016 and was planned around the theme of Art and Resistance. We thank the Social Justice Days coordinator, Arabella Colombier, the full-time staff and the volunteers on the Popular Education Committee for their hard work that ensured the success of this year's Social Justice Days. The event series was well-attended and thought-provoking, with events on and off-campus. This year also, we concluded Social Justice Days with The Self-Love Cabaret Performance night featuring queer and trans artists of colour.

QPIRG-MCGILL BOARD REPORT

ISRAELI APARTHEID WEEK 2016

This year marked the 11th year of Israeli Apartheid Week Montreal, which took place between March 14th - 23rd. There were panels, screenings, daytime workshops, solidarity servings and an "Artists Against Apartheid" concert. The speakers included Badee Dwaik, who is a co-founder of Human Rights Defenders and based in al-Khalil (Hebron) in Palestine; Kezia Curtis, a member of Black Lives Matter Detroit and went to Palestine in the past year; and Professor Nahla Abdo, an Arab feminist activist and scholar who gave a talk on the Western feminist discourse on Palestinian women's struggle and the responses to such discourse by Palestinian women political activists.

DIRTY RIVER & BODYMAP MONTREAL DOUBLE BOOK-LAUNCH WITH LEAH LAKSHMI PIEPZNA-SAMARASINHA!

On October 22, 2015, we hosted author and poet Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha for a double book launch of her latest poetry collection, "Bodymap," and her memoir "Dirty River: A Queer Femme of Color Dreaming Her Way Home" The event was held at Centre Culturel Georges-Vanier and was very well attended. Local poet, Kai Cheng Thom, opened for Leah, and we collaborated with the Concordia Coop Bookstore to organize this event, which was followed by a book signing. Leah also ran a writing workshop, "Survival as Choose Your Own Adventure: A [closed] Writing Workshop for 2QTPOC' at McGill University on Oct 23.

CONTEMPORARY POETICS OF TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOR WITH STAR AMERASU AND CHRISTOPHER SOTO

On April 16, 2016, we are hosting "Contemporary Poetics of Trans People of Colour" a series featuring workshops, performances, readings and conversations between Christopher Soto (aka Loma) and Star Amerasu. The events will take place at articule, artist-run centre and will feature a workshop by Star Amerasu, "Trauma Through Performance: Exploring Ways to Turn Trauma into Artistic Expression," a workshop by Christopher Soto, "The Emotional Labour of Narrative Poetry," and a reading and performance night followed by a Q&A, "Contemporary Poetics of Trans People of Color"

QPIRG-MCGILL STAFF REPORT

STAFF REPORT

This year has been a really exciting year for us, staff at QPIRG-McGill! First of all, thanks to winning the fee increase referendum in the winter of 2015, we have finally managed to create a 3rd full time staff position. This has been a dream for the organization for many years that witnessed tremendous amounts of staff burn-out and turn-over. The position created is that of the Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator, whose mandate is to primarily coordinate the community-based research programs of QPIRG-McGill, and to act as a liaison, resource person and support for working groups. In addition, this position also requires certain administrative tasks that have been transferred from the two other positions.

Amy Darwish joined the QPIRG team in August 2015 as the Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator. Kira Page, our superstar former Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, resigned in September 2015 after being offered a position at the Centre for Community Organizations (CoCO)! We miss Kira, but we are so very proud of her and we are eternally grateful for everything she has given to the organization over the years. In October 2015, we hired our new Outreach and Promotions Coordinator, Raphaële Frigon. Kama Maureemootoo stayed on as the Finance and Programming Coordinator for a 3rd year.

We have been working toward consolidating our IT resources. In November we migrated from a institutional server to our own email platform. We also now have an off-site back up consisting of 90 000 files, spanning 25 years of electronic archives. We are revising our phone systems, and hope to purchase new computers soon.

This past year has been interesting: we have been adjusting to the new dynamics of being 3 core staff in the office, learning to get to know each other and work with each other, and definitely learning so much from each other! On the whole, the workload has felt lighter, and the amount of overtime considerably reduced. We look forward to re-evaluating our positions and job descriptions during our annual staff visioning in the month of May; now that we have completed a full-year together, we hope to be able clarify our respective tasks further and finding better ways of supporting each other in executing QPIRG's mandate.

The Fall was a period of changes and adjustments, but we successfully worked together to coordinate Rad Frosh, plan Culture Shock, organize a book-launch with Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, conduct hiring processes, run the Popular Education and Rad Research Committees, plan Working Groups Selection and training, update our policies, organize Board training and visioning, and run the daily tasks of the office. The winter felt calmer and we focused our work on building the internal capacity of the organization as well as running our regular popular education and research programs. In the past year, we have also offered our support through training and workshops to many QPIRG-McGill working groups, as well as Montreal organizations including CKUT, SACOMSS, The McGill Daily, ECOLE, articule, Aids Community Care of Montreal (ACCM), Community Engagement Day, Midnight Kitchen and the Union for Gender Empowerment.

We were extremely lucky to have a team of kind, supportive and passionate individuals sharing our workspace: Kiera Sheppard (Campus Outreach Coordinator), Viv Walz (CURE Coordinator), and Nina Maness (Resource Centre Coordinator). Nina will be leaving the team after two years with us and we thank her deeply for her endless dedication, her inspiring work, her leadership, her laugh and fierce fashion! We have also been lucky to work with Sara Sebti and Jaime MacLean (Rad Frosh Coordinators), Xindi Li and Andrea Figueroa (School Schmool Coordinators), Arabella Colombier (Culture Shock and Social Justice Days Coordinator), and Stephen Kamp and Dan Lacroix (our bookkeepers). Our work is, of course, made all the more interesting thanks to our volunteers and our Board of Directors who bring so much fun and smiles in our everyday life! And shout-out to our friends at The Midnight Kitchen, the UGE, MUNACA, AMUSE, AMURE, Black Students' Network, SPHR, CKUT and QPIRG Concordia! We love collaborating with you! <3!

QPIRG-MCGILL STAFF REPORT

We look forward to spending a 2nd year together, to working towards strengthening the internal and external capacity of the organization. Some of our plans include rebranding our image on campus, strengthening our relationships with working groups, seeking more varied sources of funding, prioritizing volunteer recruitment and training, revamping the office in the summer, having an endless supply of cookies around the office, and posting more Instagram pictures of us posing as squirrels!

In solidarity,

Amy Darwish, Raphaële Frigon & Kama Maureemootoo

QPIRG-MCGILL STAFF REPORT

CAMPUS OUTREACH COORDINATOR - KIERA SHEPPARD

Overall, outreach was very successful this year. We had high attendance at most of our events and volunteer trainings and lots of engagement on social media.

In promoting our popular education events, we encouraged volunteers to link our events to the organization and promote awareness about QPIRG. We attempted to familiarize volunteers with all branches of QPIRG so they were able to talk about the organization as a whole. Promoting the library and the CURE program on the main Facebook page also helped link the work we do back to the organization. We hope to continue to familiarize students with QPIRG and the work we do as our existence referendum approaches in 2017.

Having a Campus Outreach Coordinator this year meant more active engagement on social media and a lighter workload for the External Coordinator. The Campus Outreach Coordinator helped manage Facebook, Twitter and Instagram promo and explored new outreach strategies. Having a staff member entirely dedicated to outreach allowed us to benefit from more outreach opportunities and develop new ideas for the future.

Winter Activities Night was a huge success. We had a lot of people sign up for our listserv and recruited several new volunteers. It was important for us to lay out how to talk about QPIRG and make sure that all people tabling were familiar with the various ways to get involved with us. We recommend having trained volunteers table at more events like Activities Night.

One challenge this year was coordinating with the library promo. Next year, there should be clearer communication with the library to avoid library events and promotion overlapping with other branches.

Next year, we suggest creating an outreach committee (organized by the Outreach & External Coordinators) in the fall. This committee would aim to engage more people in the conversation about QPIRG's outreach and allow non-board volunteers (specifically returning volunteers) to contribute in meaningful ways. It would also allow us to expand outreach beyond regular social media updates, etc..

We also suggest doing more outreach during Rad Frosh. This year, some of the facilitators strongly encouraged students to sign up for the listserv and get involved with QPIRG and that made a huge difference. Next year, we think it would be beneficial to encourage all facilitators to emphasize QPIRG as an organization.

We are very excited to see what more we can do with the Campus Outreach Coordinator position and an Outreach Committee next year!

POPULAR EDUCATION

SCHOOL SCHMOOL - ANDREA FIGUEROA AND XINDI LI

School Schmool has come out again for another amazing school year and has made its way across Concordia and McGill campuses as well as various locations in Montreal. The agenda dates back to 1994, beginning as a bi-annual publication that brought together group profiles, articles, and practical resources of use to all students, especially those interested in environmental and social justice issues. It was resurrected as an agenda and resource book in the summer of 2006, and has been connecting together the Concordia, McGill and Montreal communities ever since.

The 2015-2016 edition of School Schmool has three sections. The Issues section this year is divided into “101” (introductory, more explanatory articles) and more in-depth articles, which features pieces on a wide variety of topics from an overview of the Black Lives Matter movement to a critique of marriage equality. To keep track of your busy schedule and important dates, there is The Agenda section – this year with 13 comics from various artists at the beginning of every month! Finally, if you are looking to plug into some organizing in Montreal, there is The Groups & Resources section where you can read about different local organizations working on a wide range of different issues. Also included in that section is a resource list providing key phone numbers and websites to projects and services mentioned in the articles, including abortion resources and a listing of antiauthoritarian, people of colour, and Indigenous spaces in the city.

In an effort to take into account different ideas, suggestions, and requests for changes to the agenda that we’ve gotten over the past year, this year’s School Schmool was done using “perfect binding” (similar to most books) rather than spiral binding. The agenda is also larger than in previous years and there is also more space for notes this year - in fact, there’s a space for notes at the end of every week! This year’s School Schmool also includes a 13th month so that people who use it as their agenda do not get stuck without an agenda while waiting for next year’s School Schmool to come out!

POPULAR EDUCATION

CULTURE SHOCK - ARABELLA COLOMBIER

Collaboratively produced by Culture Shock Coordinator Arabella Colombier, along with QPIRG staff Kama, Raphaële, Amy and Kiera, and the popular education committee.

An event series on anti-racism, migrant justice and indigenous solidarity, Culture Shock seeks to bring together racialized communities to engage in dialogue about issues relevant to their lives, as well as to allow non-members who do not belong to these communities to learn more about decolonization, migrant justice and anti-racism in Canada and beyond. Every year, QPIRG and the SSMU bring panels, workshops, film screenings and fundraiser parties to McGill students and the broader Montreal communities as part of the Culture Shock programming.

This year we had 6 workshops and a keynote address over the course of 3 days. Additionally, we co-presented a dance party with Solidarity Across Borders and the keynote address with the Union for Gender Empowerment.

- Writing Ourselves Into Existence: On Navigating Black Muslim Somali Womynhood:
- CLOSED Workshop and Mini Zine Launch
- Oh Canada, Our Home on Native Land: Discussing Decolonization
- Organizing at the Intersections of Black Lives Matter & Gender Justice
- Envisioning Futures, Imagining Possibilities: Women of Colour Media Makers In Conversation
- Syria: Beyond and Behind the "Refugee Crisis"
- Culture Shock and Trans/Formations co-presentation with Joshua Allen: A World Without Cages: Reimagining Gender, Abolition & Resistance.
- Reggae Dance Party Fundraiser
- Seers, Time-Travellers, and Intergalactic Trouble-Makers: A Keynote on Radical Organizing as Science Fiction
- The Old Stories Project/Science Fiction Story Surgery

With the exception of the final workshop, everything was well attended, particularly the keynote address with Walidah Imarisha. Reception towards Culture Shock events was very positive; in particular, many people who attended closed workshops expressed their gratitude for such space. We should continue to have such workshops and make more of an effort to promote such events by focusing on better targeted outreach.

Most difficulties were technical, and some workshops ran over time. There were some concerns regarding the gender dynamics among people leading the workshops. Thus I recommend that we communicate more directly our anti-oppressive mandate, as well as provide other technical and pragmatic issues for people to consider when planning and preparing for an event.

Additionally, both the popular education committee and the Culture Shock Coordinator position did not start until a few weeks before the event. This meant that QPIRG staff planned the main events and booked the spaces, while the rest of us focused mostly on promotion. In an effort to distribute the work more evenly, to include more voices in the planning process, and to provide the opportunity for committee members to gain experience, I suggest that both the hiring process for the CS Coordinator and the popular education committee start earlier.

We could not have pulled off Culture Shock without the support of organizations such as the Concordia Student Union, Midnight Kitchen, the Union for Gender Empowerment, the SSMU, QPIRG-Concordia, the IGSF, MUNACA, and AMUSE.

For the full report from Culture Shock 2015, please see the 2015-2016 binder!

POPULAR EDUCATION

SOCIAL JUSTICE DAYS - ARABELLA COLOMBIER

Collaboratively produced by Social Justice Days Coordinator Arabella Colombier, along with QPIRG staff Kama, Raphaële, Amy, Kiera, and the popular education committee.

Intended to stimulate an alternative political culture in the McGill community and beyond, Social Justice Days is an event series with workshops, discussions, film screenings, and social events engaging local and global issues. Social Justice Days testifies to the diversity of critical political engagement on the McGill campus, and offers students concrete opportunities to get active in their global community. Social Justice Days is co-organized by the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill and the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU).

Our theme this year was Art & Resistance. We want to draw attention to artistic/alternative ways of organizing as well as creativity and art as a form of resistance in itself. We had 7 workshops, and a vernissage for the Prisoner Correspondence Project, followed by the Self-Love Cabaret. Additionally we co-promoted the Annual Montreal Memorial March to Honour the Lives of Missing and Murdered Women.

- DIY Urban Planning: Art-based Solutions for a Non-accessible City
- Art Speaks Louder Than Words: Building Immigrant Worker Power through Creative Organizing (TAWA)
- Am I Rad Enough? Getting Started in 'Radical' Organizing Spaces
- Creating Media, Creating Change: A Panel feat. We Are Fine and Morgan Sea
- Art as Resistance: A Panel Discussion (How!)
- Rojava: The Revolution in Northern Syria
- Curatorial Visit of Repérages ou À la découverte de notre monde ou Sans titre
- Annual Montreal Memorial March to Honour the Lives of Missing and Murdered Women
- Art Inside/Out: PCP Vernissage
- Self-Love Cabaret

All events were well attended, with the exception of the two events preceding the Self-Love Cabaret (which was very well attended) presumably due to it being the coldest day of the year. Most difficulties encountered were technical. We should provide microphones for speakers because it is difficult to hear in the SSMU rooms.

In the planning process, we encountered difficulties in trying to assess the event proposals and the people/groups/organizations that submitted them. I suggest that we make our decision process shorter by explicitly asking people to submit information about their positionality, understanding of anti-oppression, etc. to better inform our decisions. I suggest that we create a toolkit (maybe including workshops) to give to people presenting advice on 1) how to incorporate QPIRG's anti-oppressive mandate into their workshop 2) practical and technical considerations for preparing for a workshop/panel/presentation/etc.

For the full report Social Justice Days 2016, please see the 2015-2016 binder!

POPULAR EDUCATION

RAD FROSH - JAIME MACLEAN + SARA SEBTI

Rad Frosh is a three day alternative orientation program for new undergraduate students at McGill, organized by QPIRG-McGill every Summer. This year it was held from Friday, September 4th to Sunday, September 6th and we had 117 froshies and 25 facilitators participate in the program. Our goal was to introduce students to McGill and Montreal with a focus on community engagement, social justice, and creating safe(r) spaces, in order to provide a welcoming alternative to the other frosh programs on campus.

Our theme for 2015 was “Fall Out of Orbit”, inspired by speculative fiction that looks to a radical future. We wanted to hold community events that would bridge the community-campus divide and create more accessible spaces. Bursaries were available again this year, in order to make Rad Frosh more accessible.

This year some of the events held were:

- Poetry Launch and Performance Night
- Radical Campus Scavenger Hunt
- Open Mic Night at Cafe L’Artere
- Dance Party at NDQ
- Hike up Mount Royal
- DIY Fair
- BBQ in Parc Jarry
- Film Screening with Cinema Out of the Box
- Benefit Concert at Bar Le Ritz
- Workshops and Tours

The first day of Rad Frosh was a new event that was a collaboration with community members, Kai Cheng Thom and Emily Yee Clare, who were launching their chapbook “Giving Birth to Yourself: Poems for Combat”. We held an evening of performances at CEDA in Little Burgundy which was very well attended by both frosh participants and community members - full to the 250 person capacity of the room. The event featured performances by Kai Cheng Thom, Malaika Aleba, Kim Ninkuru, Elena Stoodley, and MC’d by Kama la Mackerel. Similar to last year, we held a meet and greet for frosh participants prior to the evening event.

The second day of Rad Frosh involved programming that has been traditionally part of Rad Frosh: a breakfast in the morning, the Radical Campus Scavenger Hunt, a block of workshops where participants could choose to attend one of nine workshops, an open mic night at Cafe l’artere, and a dance party at Notre Dame des Quilles (NDQ). A few amazing Board members built ramps to use at NDQ, as the venue has one step up into the bar and a few steps inside, in order to make it a more accessible space; these were discarded afterwards by the bar without consultation.

The third and final day of Rad Frosh was busy! As in previous years, there was a hike up Mount Royal and the Do-It-Yourself Fair, followed by lunch, another block of workshops, and then tours. This year we held a barbecue in Parc Jarry, an event that happened in 2014 as well, with a film screening with Cinema Out of the Box (a bike-powered film projection project from the Art History and Communication Studies Department at McGill). Lastly, the weekend closed with a Benefit Concert at Bar ‘le ritz’ with performances by Hua Li, Marshia Celina, Tshizimba, and tina-hanäé - who are all wonderful artists who were wonderful to work with! Proceeds from the door at the concert were 440\$, and went to the Qouleur Qollectif, a Montreal artists’ collective.

Food for our events in the SSMU Building was prepared and provided by the Midnight Kitchen, a collective on campus

POPULAR EDUCATION

who has been an incredible partner to us over the years, and came through for us again this year. Other groups who we worked with included: CKUT 90.3 FM, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights McGill (SPHR), the Black Students' Network (BSN), the McGill Daily, the Prisoner Correspondence Project, Demilitarize McGill, Sidetracks Screenprinting Team, the Flat Bike Collective, Metis in Space, Metonymy Press. Rad Frosh is truly a community effort and we could not have organized this event without the participation of these campus and/or community groups and more, as well as countless individuals.

Recommendations for 2016 and beyond:

- Support from the QPIRG Board of Directors: it is vital, especially during the month of August, that Board members be prepared to show up to help Rad Frosh. There are lots of physical things that need to be done, from tabling for registration on campus to preparing frosh bags, and it is impossible for the Coordinators to do it all. There will be a negative impact on the program if the Board members do not help with these things, as the Rad Frosh Coords will have to do them, taking time away from other tasks. This was a recommendation in the 2014 report as well, and part of this issue is that Board members are still new to their positions, maybe haven't yet done Board training, and don't understand the importance of their role.
- Keep thinking about and expanding on accessibility - the 2014 Coordinators did a bunch of things to get this going, we tried to build on that, and there's more that can be done. We think that it is important to continue to include non drinking events, keep using accessible spaces, think of ways to integrate everyone into activities - we could have integrated children into our community event on Friday night and been explicit about that (possibly having more parents attend, instead we just offered childcare with 48 hours notice) and integrating accessibility into our events instead of just offering tools to make them more accessible (ie. childcare and ASL translation were offered with notice, but we could have taken a more proactive approach), and we could have talked about interaction signal badges more throughout the weekend. We didn't have accessibility info up as early as we could have - we tried for a minimum of 7 days notice, but could have finished this earlier.
- We had really great facilitators this year, possibly because of two factors: we did two nights of training (adding more workshops: Harm Reduction, a longer Anti-Oppression workshop, and more emphasis on our expectations for facilitators) and decided to only accept 25 - 30 facilitators (out of the 50 plus applications we received). In previous years only a few
- Applicants have been rejected, which would have resulted in a 2 froshies per facilitator ratio that may have detracted from the focus of facilitators, which is to support the participants. We recommend that next year's coordinators take these measures, even though it takes more time, to select facilitators and to hold that second night of training.
- This year we had a last minute idea to include folks who had applied to be facilitators, but been rejected, in a Logistics "L" Team, in order to have more volunteers throughout the program and include everyone who wanted to be involved. We started working on this in the two weeks before Rad Frosh, and didn't have enough time to properly coordinate it. Maybe it's not even worth it to have more hands around, but if you can recruit people specifically for this early on it would probably go better. Rad Frosh facilitators sign up for tasks to help throughout the weekend, but the program might run smoother if there are additional volunteers, who do not also have the responsibility of supporting participants.
- It was really great to integrate community members into events, it resulted in more attendance from community members in a really great way (without detracting from it being a space for the frosh participants), we were lucky enough to have community members approach us and ask to be involved - we included an open call for participation from community members in our call for workshops and facilitators, etc, not sure if anyone got in touch with us because of that, but maybe it is a useful thing to say openly
- Continuing to provide bursaries remains an important part of Rad Frosh, but it's still difficult to encourage participants to contact us about bursaries. Maybe a simple form on our website would be better, instead of requiring people to get in touch with us directly.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

WORKING GROUPS AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH - AMY DARWISH

A core component of QPIRG-McGill's work involves supporting grassroots organizing and connecting students to struggles beyond campus gates. Two ways in which this work takes place is through its working groups and community research programming, which provide campus and community groups with access to funding, training, resources and research support that would otherwise be difficult to access.

The Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator position is new this year, created in the wake of the 2015 fee-levy referendum to direct more resources and capacity to previously overlooked aspects of QPIRG-McGill's mandate. To this end, my work this year has centered around building QPIRG-McGill's community-driven research programs and providing resources, training and support to working groups.

We were very lucky this year to work closely with QPIRG-McGill's working groups, providing funding, assisting with event promotion and logistics, and offering administrative and institutional support. In February 2016, we held a first Working Groups Dinner and Discussion, aiming to provide working group members with a space to share information, learn about each others work, and also provide input as to what kind of workshops and trainings could best support their day-to-day work. Future dinners will take place on a quarterly basis, remaining informal in order to give working group members a chance to build solidarity with each other, without overburdening them.

Some of our projects over the coming months include compiling a policy bank and a repertory of facilitators, so that working groups may be better able to access trainings around anti-oppression, accessible events, consensus-based decision-making, conflict resolution and working with the media. We hope to create more visibility for working groups through greater social media promotion and perhaps by collaborating with the McGill Daily to create a monthly feature showcasing their work. More work will also be done to clarify the board liaison role, which has shifted somewhat this year, and to establish better guidelines surrounding follow up with working groups.

This year, we have also worked to build momentum around QPIRG-McGill's community-driven research programs. Central to this work has been the establishment of the Radical Research Committee, who have been involved in conducting outreach for the CURE program, facilitating workshops and presentations, and organizing research justice events on and off-campus. Committee members brought a great deal of energy, enthusiasm, and excellent snacks to all aspects of the organizing process. In October, they coordinated a launch of this year's edition of the Convergence Journal, featuring food, presentations from contributors, and opportunities to learn more about QPIRG-McGill's research justice programs.

Committee members also participated in organizing this year's Radical Research Days, a series of events aiming to highlight grassroots knowledge work. The series kicked off on January 28th with Research in Action!, a workshop aiming to introduce participants to the basics of research justice and to community-driven research programs at QPIRG-McGill. On March 9th, a (PC)Party was also held in collaboration with the Prisoner Correspondence Project, where participants responded to research requests sent by prisoners. The Radical Research Committee also collaborated with this year's Israeli Apartheid Week, organizing a panel on March 19th entitled "Research in Palestine: the Challenges of Doing Research "In" and "On" Palestine", featuring Norma Rantisi (Concordia University), Andrea Miller-Nesbitt (Librarians and Archivists to Palestine), and Sawssan Kaddoura (Under the Olive Tree, CKUT Radio). More recently, participants listed to a presentation by Accessibilize Montreal's Paul Tshuma and collected detailed accessibility information about QPIRG-McGill and the Leacock Building at the Radical Accessibility Audit-o-Thon, co-organized on April 1st with CURE Concordia and Accessibilize Montreal. Though attendance was modest in some instances, all events succeeded in drawing very engaged participants, highlighting QPIRG-McGill's community research projects, and connecting more students to the CURE program. Next year, we hope to start planning the series earlier in the year and leave more time between events,

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

in order to allow for better promotion and to avoid over-stretching committee capacity.

We have also focused more closely on conducting outreach and building the visibility of the CURE program at McGill this year. Working closely with CURE Coordinator Vivienne Walz, Radical Research Committee members offered class presentations, facilitated a Research Action in Rez info session at Douglas Hall, and presented at an ECOLE Research Symposium and at the Faculty of Dentistry. Thanks to these efforts- and most especially to Vivienne's tireless work- the CURE program has expanded significantly over the past year. Since January 2016, 7 new CURE projects have been established, with several more in the works. In the coming months, we hope to focus on building relationships with faculty departments and professors in order to establish more CURE options in course curricula and potential classroom collaborations. We will also be renewing our outreach efforts among community groups to generate more projects for the fall.

In closing, I'd like to thank my co-workers Kama, Raphaelle, Vivienne, Kiera, and Nina, as well as QPIRG's board members, working group members, and volunteers. This work would not be possible without your mutual support, posi vibes, well-coordinated outfits and projects. I look forward to providing oreo cookies all meetings and more movement support in the year to come.

THE COMMUNITY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH EXCHANGE (CURE) - VIVIENNE WALZ

The Community University Research Exchange (CURE) is a program that brings together grassroots community groups with radical mandates and research needs, and McGill students interested in doing meaningful community driven research. In my role as the CURE Coordinator, I reach out to community groups to explain how CURE works and how it can support their research needs. I also do outreach to students to spread awareness about CURE as an opportunity to gain experience in research for credit or extracurricularly. I work closely with the Radical Research Committee at QPIRG McGill to do student outreach and host events, I coordinate with the CURE Concordia Coordinator to maintain the website, manage student applications and plan collaborative events, and I work closely with the Community Research and Working Groups Coordinator in all aspects of the job. Since I started with CURE in mid October 2015, we have signed on 7 McGill students to various projects. The seven projects are:

- Tobias, working on Accès aux soins en avortement pour les personnes trans* au Québec with Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances;
- Tristen working on Louise Norton Langdon Little: Herstory in Montreal (191719) with Third Eye Collective;
- Ellen working on Les rouages du système de déontologie policière au Québec et ses impacts concrets with the C.O.B.P. (Collectif Opposé à la Brutalité Policière);
- Tracey and Vivien working on the Mailroom Law Project with the Prisoner Correspondence Project
- Ryan working on Radical Activism in Canadian Prisons with the Prisoner Correspondence Project
- Bavna working on Building Networks of Food Solidarity with Solidarity Across Borders

Four agreements are also in the works, where we are waiting to officially receive back the agreement forms but have verbal confirmation from both student and community group. We also worked with community groups and CURE Concordia to create 9 new projects. Some projects are posted on the website, some already have students signed on, and some are still being finalized. A lot of energy was also spent on updating existing projects, namely the COBP and PCP projects. Communicating regularly with Cassie, the CURE Concordia Coordinator was essential for outreach to community groups.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

The overall dynamic of the team I work with is really positive and definitely a strength of the CURE program. We were able to promote CURE through 4 collaborations with the Rad Research Committee in the Winter semester of 2016 (Research into Action!; the PCP(arty): Supporting the Prisoner Correspondence Project through Radical Research; Israeli Apartheid Week Panel on the Challenges of doing research in Palestine and on Palestine; the Radical Accessibility Audit-o-thon). The Rad Research Committee members came together at each event to get snacks, do promotions and facilitate events.

Our most significant collective outreach effort was for the Research into Action! event held on January 28, which about 10 people attended. We also had a second iteration of this event, called Research in Action in Rez (held on March 8). In December 2015 we presented at the Faculty of Dentistry's Division of Oral Health and Society and at ECOLE's midyear Applied Student Research event. We also did nine classroom announcements in social justice oriented, First year, and research based classes in January and February 2016. We had two meetings with Anurag from the Social Equity Diversity Education office and one meeting with Christian from ECOLE to discuss how we can potentially collaborate. As the year is winding down, we are wrapping up with our events and doing some general outreach to students about considering a research for credit CURE project next year through listservs.

One challenge that I faced this year was adjusting to the position. It took me a couple of months, but I was able to start back in January with a clear work plan, and I was able to coordinate CURE with a lot of energy. Having the Rad Research Committee's support was essential, and planning events in advance (ie at the very beginning of the term) was important for decreasing stress levels and managing time.

The sometimes conflicting timeframes of community groups and university students have also been challenging. By this I mean that sometimes students want to do a CURE project before the end of the semester, which means that their timeline is in terms of weeks and not over several months. Community groups might not always have the capacity to get students started on projects. Negotiating this can be challenging but I think that taking the time to make a proper agreement and get to know each other will pay off for both researcher and community group in the long run. In the future I will make an effort to communicate the long timeline, check in with groups about their capacity and availability, and encourage students to apply early when possible.

What I would like to do this summer is to meet with Faculty advisors and do more outreach to professors and administrators. This way we can reach more students and give more support and structure when students would like to pursue a CURE project for credit. In terms of direct outreach I would also like to organize a classroom announcement schedule, a couple of tabling events in McLennan Library and at Activities Night, and another intro to rad research event. I'd also like to organize something with Community Engagement Day. Over the summer I would also like to take the time to meet with community groups to set up more CURE projects.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

CONVERGENCE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL

This year, two volumes of Convergence were published (Volume 5 in March 2015 and Volume 6 in September 2015). Convergence #7 will be ready for publication in September 2016. The contents of all issues of Convergence can be viewed at: convergencejournal.ca

Convergence is a joint core project by both QPIRG McGill and QPIRG Concordia. This year, Convergence was primarily supported by members of QPIRG McGill, with financial support from QPIRG Concordia.

The contents of Convergence #6 included:

1. There is Power in a Union: Building Solidarity Against the Casualization of Labour at McGill; by Josh Pavan and Sheehan Moore
2. Buying Jets and Cutting Services: Making the Links Between Austerity and Militarism; by Mona Luxion
3. From Hoodlums and Vagrants to Squeegee Kids and "Ethnic Gangs": Policing Disorder in Public Space and the Historical Context of Police Brutality in Montreal; by Madde Halupka
4. Prison "Rehabilitation": Another Form of Punishment and Control; by The Termite Collective
5. Talk to me: Black Voices on the Canadian Prison System; by Maria Elena Stoodley and Kai Alexander Thomas
6. Islamophobia: Comparison Across The Western World; by Samiha Sharif
7. Racing/Erasing a People: The Role and Consequences of Racialized Métis Legal Identity; by Molly Swain
8. Allyship in Environmental Movements: Lessons from Clayoquot Sound and Athlii Gwaii; by Clare Heggie
9. Should I or Shouldn't I? Conflict Between Moving to a Culturally Mixed Neighbourhood and Fear of Being a Gentrifier; by Amal Kenshil
10. A Community Study of the Existing Food System in Parc-Extension; by Shariss Ostrager, Rabab Wali, Lara Schwarz, Nisrine el Amiri, Zarin Tasnim Haque, Chris Ricci
11. Making Our Movements and Spaces Accessible for Children and Parents/Caregivers; by The Childcare Collective
12. Equality-Promoting Models of Parental Leave: Achieving Equality of Freedom; by Nichole Spadotto

Artwork by: Radical Indigenous Survivance and Empowerment (RISE), Johnny Forever, Kandis Friesen, Swarm, Kerri Flannigan, Nidal El Khairy, Pascha Morrow, LOKI, Laura Sirois, Artivistic Collective

Kristin Li was responsible for the coordination, editing, layout and design of Convergence #6.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

RESOURCE CENTRE COORDINATOR - NINA MANESS

In my role as resource centre coordinator, my focus has been on recruiting and training volunteers as well as increasing the library's presence on campus through outreach and events. I have also focussed on knowledge sharing and training of the other alternative librarians.

Volunteers:

The library currently has 10 active volunteers. Every weekend, 4 students from the McGill Masters in Information Studies volunteer to catalogue library materials. During the week, volunteers participate in the library committee, library maintenance, zine club, and outreach events.

Library Committee:

The library committee has been meeting biweekly and attendance has been consistently around 3-6 people. The committee has taken a leading role in collections development, planning the zine club, and organizing outreach.

Outreach:

The library tabled at several events such as Winter Activities Night and Social Justice Days. At these events, we handed out zines and information about the library to promote awareness of the library and provide the community with radical literature.

Zine Club:

The zine club has met 3 times. We are focussing on zines that are interactive. Members come, do an activity with the zine, and discuss their thoughts/ideas about the zine.

Collections Development:

The library is devoting a large portion of it's \$2000 to increase our fiction section with a focus on books written by WOC. We have also purchased zines from Expozines and other events. All purchases are voted on and approved by the library collective.

Catalogue

The library catalogue (PMB) is now fully functional and an accurate representation of our book collection. All of our membership is in the catalogue. While there are still some bugs in the system, it is functional for basic circulation and searching materials. The zine, DVD, and serial collections need considerable work still.

Training

I have developed an in depth training manual for PMB and held 3 training sessions with the heads of the other alternative libraries (the UGE, QPIRG-C, and the Labour Library). I have also been providing support and advice to members of the QPIRG-C Library and the Labour Library.

Accessibility Audiozine Project

The QPIRG-M Resource Centre hopes to create its own audiozine project with recordings of zines on accessibility, ableism, and disability. We've created a proposal, recruited volunteers for recording and website development, and two zine artists have expressed interest in contributing their works to the project.

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

SUMMER STIPEND 2015: ACSEXE+ - AIMEE LOUW

Project Description

ACSEXE+ is a community research and bilingual blog about sexuality and disability in Quebec. It consists of original articles, interviews and sex-ed tips and resources. Part sex-education, part storytelling, part qualitative social research, it brings together the perspectives and experiences of diverse Quebecers and research into difficult questions to create a positive conversation based on the assumption that disabled people have a lot to share and learn from each other about our sexualities. Topics covered range from barriers to dating, consent in relationships, self-confidence, stereotypes, accessibility and dating.

The target audience is firstly, members of disability and Deaf communities in Quebec, and secondly, the broader community in Quebec and beyond.

This is a project that was started in collaboration with the FQPN and Accessibilize Montreal, and co-coordinated by me, Aimee, in Winter, 2014. It then carried on in Summer, 2015, due to the granting of a \$1500 QPIRG McGill Summer Stipend.

Project timeline:

June: Granted stipend, meeting and communication with QPIRG McGill board

July: research, writing, translating, posting material

August: research, writing, translating, posting material

Note: Each post takes approximately 20-25 hours to research, write, and format, and then 4-5 hours to be translated and edited.

Progress on the Summer Stipend project:

I researched, wrote and had translated 6 blog posts and continued to promote the project and raise awareness of the discussion around sexuality and disability/ access on social media and at the Semaine Citoyenneté et handicap à l'UQAM on December 1, 2015.

Three posts (in French and English) have been made public:

<http://acsexe.tumblr.com/post/122874130531/2-artistes-et-activistes-descendent-les-escaliers#notes>

<http://acsexe.tumblr.com/post/125463472776/black-block-letters-cure-ableism-ableism-stamped>

<http://acsexe.tumblr.com/post/127577412711/what-better-thing-to-do-on-a-tuesday-afternoon>

Three posts have not yet been made public. This is due to a few reasons.

The major reason: I began grad school in September and most of my energy had to be directed at schoolwork and adjusting to being back at school, with all the access-advocacy labour it brings

Translating took more time than presumed

Collaborating with multiple organizations and individuals adds time and layers of necessary consent and communication - especially with citing previously published material

The remaining posts will be aimed to be made public this spring.

Outcomes:

community-building, high interest level among disability community in Montreal; discussion of sexuality and disability in QC; positive feedback in person and on social media

Outreach - Organizations involved:

- Accessibilize Montreal
- FQPN

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

- Deliciously Disabled (based in Toronto)
- Cory Silverberg, co-author of *The Ultimate Guide to Sex and Disability*
- Rose centre

Obstacles:

physical accessibility and transit was a barrier to meeting other people (contributors, collaborators at the FQPN); stress around elongating timelines; translation; time and energy required to promote blog

Future of the project

The blog is ongoing, with the FQPN collaborators posting transcribed radio emissions of the show: *Ça vaut le détour*. The FQPN and I are also seeking funding for continuation of the project, and are planning to create a more detailed and accessible website.

I will be presenting ACSEXE+ at the Annual Sexuality Studies Association meeting to be held May 29-31, 2016, as part of the Congress of Arts and Social Sciences Meetings (www.congress2016.ca) in Calgary, Alberta. This will allow me to share the project with a Canada-wide association, learn from other sexuality researchers and educators, and bring attention to accessibility/ disability within a generalized sexuality studies association.

Deep gratitude to QPIRG McGill for their interest and support in the project.

SUMMER STIPEND 2015: PROJECT TALK TO ME: COLLECTING OF BLACK INCARCERATION STORIES IN CANADA - MARIA ELENA STOODLEY AND KAI THOMAS

“Talk to me” is an effort to make heard the voices of black people who have been incarcerated in Canada. All the silence that surrounds incarceration--the unspoken shame and violence, the stories untold--is a toxic wound in society that profoundly affects everyone. Our work centres the experiences and the stories of black people because black communities are the ones we are most intimately involved in, and also because the experiences of black people and every other minority group in this nation are of crucial importance to understanding this society and of envisioning how we can make it better. For example, black people along with indigenous people are the two most overrepresented demographics in Canadian prisons.

This element can't be dissociated from our history as a community. Some say that when a loved one is serving time, all of their loved ones are doing time as well, emotionally. We don't know what the future has in store for us, but we know that we have to make sure future generations know our stories and have the opportunity to work on different avenues towards liberation. If we address these issues in the present, we have the opportunity to break a heavy taboo that divides us. This is history-building and writing by the ones who live it.

We are creative human beings, full time students, workers, and so we have begun “talk to me” in our spare time by collaborating with networks such as DESTA to reach out to and record the testimonies of several participants who were formerly, or are currently incarcerated. We contextualized this audio with some research on statistics and demographics and transformed it into a short radio-art piece that has been aired on community radio, and shared at related workshops. With this foundation, we are in the process of expanding the pool of participants as well as the scope of the research in order to create a community and a more comprehensive audio and written document that will aid in educating, mobilizing, and organizing around the issue of incarceration in Canada.

This project has been on going at a slow pace since fall 2014. We were able to complete an 18-minute sound art piece. This work represents a connection with the participants who expressed a desire to explore certain topics we touched on. These topics include: the justice systems and its flaws; the conditions of black people in jail; the impact on the community outside of prisons; and recommendations on what can be done better and differently.

The second part of our project will take part in a podcast format. This requires managing a website, editing the audio material, scheduling recording sessions with the participants, researching the prison industry and theories of race and

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

incarceration. We also want to air the testimonies on various community stations and thus we will have to organize with radio station hosts.

We met twice a week in Desta's office and waited for calls. Some from inside made the connections for us and mentioned to people that they could call us during these time slots. The conversations were recorded on my (Elena) personal recorder, by a microphone to pick up the room sound and one on the speakerphone of the telephone. We both edited the recordings and placed them on the mixcloud account.

With the budget received from QPIRG McGill's Summer stipend, we were able to secure an honorarium for both main facilitators as well as a collaborator who had more access than us to potential participants because they live or have lived that reality and were close with our collaborator. We also sent money to 3 participants who were incarcerated, paid the telephone bill of the centre we were working with, Desta, which rose due to our phone calls from the participants inside. We decided to give in donation the remaining budget to Desta that we didn't have the opportunity to spend.

For the second part of our project that was funded by QPIRG McGill we completed 7 new interviews. We did a follow up with participants that were incarcerated after our first encounters with them. We spoke to the entourage of incarcerated people. We played segments on community radio and gave an interview to CBC radio's Daybreak. We facilitated a listening session followed by a group discussion at Desta about black incarceration. This event was attended and the perspective of seeing themselves as part of the solution was the direction the conversation took. This project is for members of the black communities to open doors on the unsaid in order to find ways, together, to keep these doors open, for good. To see each other as the solution, as allies, as a support group.

I, Elena, will soon have a meeting with Desta to plan the continuation of this project and how to make more self-managed by people who know the reality of prisons and make sure that the material will be heard behind bars. I have found a team of radio hosts who have a strong listenership inside and they are waiting to meet us to see how we can collaborate.

Having more participants would be a great turn out and also being able to visit the ones who gave us so much of their time and stories. This project can generate hard emotions and I, Elena, personally learned that self care is crucial in order to remain efficient. Receiving personal stories needs training, a profound understanding of power dynamics and know when we can't cross a personal line. A study of personal trauma should not be a study, it should be an act of resistance, of community building and of history preservation. I think we achieved all that and there is definitely a beautiful potential to this project if our lens of non-incarcerated people step away from it while giving the space to individuals who will know what this project should say.

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

DISCRETIONARIES 2015-2016

QPIRG-McGill funds action-oriented research that supports our mandate of social justice and environmental activism, we provide several avenues for securing funding and support, enabling a diversity of groups and actors to participate.

Each year, QPIRG-McGill's Board of Directors sets aside an amount of money to fund external projects. Campus and community groups are encouraged to apply to this discretionary fund when planning any goal-oriented social justice and/or environmental events. The maximum for any request is \$250.00

DATE	To/EVENT	AMOUNT
June 11, 2015	• Unceded Voices: Anticolonial Street Artists Convergence	• \$200.00
	• Visibility and Violence in Late-Capitalist Digital Democracy	\$250.00
	• Why we need warrior societies	\$225.00
	• Head & Hands Fundraiser	\$225.00
	• Ensemble Contre la Charte Xenophobe	\$125.00
July 9, 2014	• QTPOC Zine Distro	\$150.00
	• The Affirmations Coloring Book	\$100.00
	• Picnic against Borders and in support of the Awan Family	\$150.00
	• Qouleur	\$150.00
	• Les Maisons Transitionnelles (O3)	\$200.00
August 27, 2014	• A qui la ville? website	\$250.00
	• ECOLE anti-o workshops	\$100.00
	• Solidarity with Elsipogtog	\$100.00
	• Demo in solidarity with migrant strikers	\$200.00
	• Pervers/Cité keynote panel	\$350.00
October 6, 2014	• "Captive revolution" book launch	\$175.00
	• Commission populaire sur la répression politique	\$50.00
	• Truth hurts with Aamer Rahman	\$250.00
	• Migrant temp work Radio project	\$150.00
October 21, 2014 >>>> b	• Fundraiser for solidarity across borders	\$45.00
	• Mois contre les prisons	\$55.00
	• SPHR - Remi Kanazi talk	\$150.00

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

CO-SPONSORSHIPS, ENDORSEMENTS AND CAMPAIGNS- 2015-2016

Throughout the year, QPIRG-McGill also provides logistical, promotional, and administrative support to a number of events. Below is a list of the projects, actions, and campaigns we've endorsed or co-sponsored this year.

- Promoting Accessibility Through the Law: A Talk by Me. Melanie Benard and Laurence Parent- May 30, 2015
- Status for All March- May 31, 2015
- Media Action Research Conference- July 30-August 3, 2015
- Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners- August 13-14, 2015
- Uncdeded Voices: Anticolonial Street Artists Convergence- August 14-23, 2015
- CKUT Fall Referendum- Vote Yes
- CKUT Thursdays A(live) Concert Series
- Concordia HIV/AIDS Lecture Series
- Austerity, Land Rights, and Indigenous Struggle: A Talk by Lee Maracle- November 5, 2015
- South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective Anthology Project
- Crowdfunding for Hassan Diab
- In the Shadow of Borders: Film Screening and Discussion- December 10, 2015
- In the Courts and in the Streets: A Radical Law Forum- January 30, 2016
- Israeli Apartheid Week 2016- March 14-23, 2016
- Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar
- CHOMP! Food Politics Bite Back- March 30-April 1, 2016
- Rap Battle for Gender Freedom- April 9, 2016
- Montreal Monochrome-April 21-23, 2016

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

WORKING GROUPS - 2015-2016

ABOUT WORKING GROUPS

Much of QPIRG-McGill's mandate is carried out through its working groups- autonomous collectives and organizations that undertake research and action around a wide range of social and environmental justice issues. Each year, QPIRG-McGill selects a number of working groups and offers them a budget, trainings, administrative and promotional support, as well as access to QPIRG space, facilities, and resources.

For more information about working group projects, actions and events, please check out their annual reports in the Year-End binder.

BARRIERE LAKE SOLIDARITY

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$2,000

We are a network that supports Barriere Lake, an Algonquin community four hours north of Montreal, which has been asserting their decisive role in determining what logging and other activities take place on their traditional territories. This means the community being able to continue to practice and protect their way of life and language, and to contest impositions by governments and resource extraction companies. We do campaigning to build support for the community and provide various other forms of assistance to community efforts.

C-UNI-T (COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY TALKS)

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,400

C-UniT is a multidisciplinary collective of students and community members committed to the pursuit of accessible education informed by anti-colonial and critical race discourses. Our mission is to create spaces for dialogue between members of the Montreal Black community and members of the McGill community, in which the diversity of experiences and strengths of Black communities are centered.

DEMILITARIZE MCGILL

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,500

Demilitarize McGill is a campaign aiming to interrupt the University's history of complicity in colonization and imperialist warfare by ending military collaboration at McGill. We are students and community members who use research, popular education and direct action to impede military research at McGill. We strive to be anti-hierarchical, anti-oppressive, and self-critical in our organizing. We welcome new members, new ideas, and any questions you might have!

HOWL ARTS COLLECTIVE

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$250

Howl! arts collective is a Montreal-based collective of cultural workers, artists and activists working for social justice via artistic expression.

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND 2-SPIRIT'S HARM REDUCTION COALITION

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$2,000

IW2SHRC, a subsidiary project of Reclaim Turtle Island, is an Indigenous collective that provides free harm reductive resources, referrals and services to Indigenous peoples in Montreal. We also produce media which explores the intersection between land violence and Indigenous bodies. Reclaim Turtle Island is an NDN run independent media project that focuses on land reclamation in the context of restoring Indigenous nationhood while fighting settler colonial occupation through resistance to resource colonialism and environmental violence.

KANATA

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$325

KANATA aims to improve relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in North America through research and knowledge advocacy, both in the academic community and in the public realm. KANATA is a McGill-based student community that explores, shares, and provides learning opportunities for anyone interested in Indigenous Studies. One of KANATA's primary activities is the development and production of a student-led annual interdisciplinary academic journal.

LAKAS PAGGAWA (LABOUR POWER)

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,650

Exploitation does not stop at permanent residency. The immigration sponsored children of former migrant workers (LCP) are joining the work force in Canada. They have become a new source of cheap labour for the Canadian capitalist class. Where will their future take them as they struggle for the economic well-being of their families? Lakas Pagawa will pool together young Filipino workers and provide them the venue and resources to start the fight back. Social transformation not integration is the fighting call of the day!

MONSTER ACADEMY

SOLIDARITY GROUP

MONSTER ACADEMY: Free Mental Health School for Montreal Youth is a social justice-oriented workshop series designed to provide accessible, anti-oppressive mental health skills training to youth aged 16-25.

THE PRISONER CORRESPONDENCE PROJECT

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,900

The Prisoner Correspondence Project is a collectively-run initiative in Montreal, Quebec. We coordinate a direct-correspondence program for gay, lesbian, transsexual, transgender, gendervariant, two-spirit, intersex, bisexual and queer prisoners in Canada and the United States, linking them with non-incarcerated members of the same communities. We are always looking for new non-incarcerated folks to become penpals and get involved with organizing the project! If you are interested, please email us: info@prisoner Correspondence Project.com.

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION

SKÁTNE IONKWATEHIAHRÓNTIE'

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$500

Skátne ionkwatehiahróntie' is a youth-led grassroots program dedicated to sharing sexual and reproductive health teachings through a cultural land-based framework and artistic interpretation, geared toward young families, expectant parents, and youth thinking of starting families under the age of 25, including non-biological, non-nuclear as well as two-spirited and LGBTTIQQA caregivers.

SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$400

Solidarity Across Borders is a Montreal-based network engaged in the struggle for justice and dignity of immigrants and refugees. We are comprised of migrants, immigrants, refugees and allies, and come together in support of our main demands: the regularization of all non-status people (Status for All!), an end to deportations and detentions, and the abolition of double punishment of migrants with criminal records. We the beginning stages of building a "Solidarity City" campaign – which includes access to all essential services, such as health care and education, for everyone regardless of their immigration status. Some of us have direct experiences with the immigration and refugee system; some of us come from immigrant backgrounds; all of us organize as part of a collective struggle for justice and dignity. For us, there is no such thing as "illegal" human beings, only unjust laws and illegitimate governments. We organize not on the basis of charity, but rather solidarity and mutual aid.

TADAMON!

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,575

Tadamon! (Arabic for "solidarity"), is a Montreal-based collective which works in solidarity with struggles for self-determination, equality and justice in the 'Middle East' and in diaspora communities in Montreal and beyond. Tadamon strives for a world in which every human being is free to live and flourish in dignity and justice.

TEMPORARY AGENCY WORKER'S ASSOCIATION (TAWA)

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$2,000

The Temporary Agency Workers Association is a workers collective actively engaged in mobilizing temporary agency workers to unite against workplace injustice. TAWA works to end unfair temporary agency practices and ensure quality workplace standards that foster respect, equality, and security for temporary agency worker communities.

THIRD EYE COLLECTIVE

QPIRG-MCGILL ALLOCATED BUDGET: \$1,575

The Third Eye Collective is an intergenerational grassroots collective led by female-identified people of Black/African origins dedicated to healing from and organizing against intimate partner violence, state, and institutional violence against us.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

FINANCIAL REPORT - KAMA MAUREEMOOTOO

The year 2015-16 has been an interesting year for QPIRG-McGill'S finances, with good news and not-so-good news. First of all, we completed our audit dated Aug 31, 2015. Our audit was conducted by an independent auditor, Mr Denis Larouche (CPA, CA), who confirmed that our finances were in order and healthy. We ended the financial year 2014-15 with a deficit of \$207, which is excellent given the numerous budget cuts that we experienced in 2014-15, and the many unexpected expenses we had to incur.

Working on the 2015-16 budget has been thrilling, and I want to extend my gratitude to the Finance Committee and the Board who supported me in working through the new budget. The increase in the levy-fee has allowed us to increase our annual revenue by \$90,000. While this may seem a lot of money at first sight, it should be noted that this amount represents the costs of inflation over the past three decades when our costs kept rising, but our revenues remained the same. Thus, the increase in our revenues primarily allowed us to restore our programs where they would and should have been as opposed to expanding organizationally.

The increase in revenues was distributed in the following areas:

- First of all, we restored all our previously reduced budget lines, namely the Summer Stipends, the Working Groups Finances, the Library expenses and the Community Research Expenses;
- Secondly we addressed the need for more staff to be able to run our operations in a sustainable way: we created a new full-time position, the Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator and we created a new Work Study position, the Campus Outreach Coordinator. We also budgeted more work hours for the Rad Frosh and School Schmoool Coordinators and for the first time, we introduced an alternative health insurance plan for our part-time staff;
- We also increased our budget lines for Outreach and Promotions, Accessibility, Office Supplies and Repairs, Discretionary Requests, Board and Staff Training and Volunteer Appreciation.

The financial challenges we faced in 2015-16 include:

- Our program finances for Rad Frosh, Culture Shock and Social Justice Days have been considerably reduced after the SSMU cut their funding towards these programs by more than 50%. This has been extremely challenging because these budget cuts were communicated to us a couple of weeks before the start of these event series, while most of the expenses had already been incurred, which added a considerable amount of stress to our work. We tried our best to fundraise, looking into new and creative sources of funding: collaborating with the Concordia Student Union for Culture Shock's keynote, for example, allowed us to reduce our deficit for this program. In working on next year's budget, it would be ideal to have clear communication lines with the SSMU regarding the type of support they might want to offer (or not) for our co-presentations, and that these conditions be articulated early in the summer so that we can work on the budget accordingly.
- As is the case every-year, we apply to employment-based grants through governmental funding bodies, namely the Young Canada Works and the Canada Summer Jobs programs. While we habitually receive two Young Canada Works grants, this year, we obtained only one of these grants, and the grant that we were allocated has also been reduced. We are presently in communication with La Fédération des Chambres du Commerce du Québec about potentially increasing the grant, but they communicated to us that this might be hard because of their own budget cuts. In the meantime, we have applied to the Fonds to Solidarité-FTQ and we are waiting to hear back from this application, as well as the

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Canada Summer Jobs. Over the next few weeks, the Board will be meeting with the Finance Committee and the Finance Coordinator to conduct a budget review to plan the summer, which may prove to be challenging, particularly for the Rad Frosh program. Looking towards the future, we will need to find creative ways of securing grants and allocations that are less dependent on government decisions. While this work has been outlined as a priority in previous years, the Finance Coordinator has been unable to fulfill this mandate due to lack of capacity.

- Our opt-outs are fairly standard and stabilized at approximately 10% of the student population, as has been the case over the past couple of years, and as has been the case for most campus groups. For QPIRG, this amounted to a total of \$27,188 for the year 2015-16. We do not foresee an increase in this amount unless there are active opt-out campaigns against QPIRG or any other form of active back-lash against the organization.

Our accountants for the year 2015-16 were Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp, whose diligence and patience is deeply appreciated, and without whom none of this work would be possible. Gratitude to the numerous groups and organizations we collaborated with us in the past year and who supported our organization: Student Society of McGill University, Concordia Student Union, Midnight Kitchen, Union for Gender Empowerment, Queer McGill, AMUSE, AMURE, MUNACA, QPIRG-Concordia, Institute for Gender and Feminist Studies (IGSF), Simone de Beauvoir Institute, articule, and the First People's House.

- Kama Maureemootoo, Finance and Programming Coordinator

FINANCIAL REPORTS

QPIRG-McGill BUDGET

	Budget 2015-16
Revenues	
Student Levy	296,200
QPIRG Events	9,000
Working Groups	1,500
Workstudy	10,800
Radical Frosh	5,500
Radical Frosh Registration	5,000
Revenue from Misc sources	
Gov't Grants	19,854
School Schmool	2,500
Fundraising	
Miscellaneous	
Interest Revenue	150
Photocopy Revenue	500
TOTAL REVENUE	351,004
Administrative Expenses:	
Rent	22,680
Office Supplies	2,000
Repairs & Maintenance	1,350
Bank Charges	560
McGill Admin Fee	750
Opt out refunds	32,750
Photocopies	3,681
Audit	2,700
Legal	1,000
Accounting	3,073
Telephone & Fax rental	3,620
Insurance	3,342
Postage	150
Late Fees	100
Emergency Fund	
Incorporation	39
Total Administrative Expenses	77,795

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Programming Expenses

Accessibility Expenses	1,000
Elections	750
Board and Staff Training	2,500
Board and Staff Appreciation	1,400
QPIRG Events	14,000
CURE and Convergence	1,450
Discretionary	7,800
Library	2,500
Translation	300
Promo Materials	1,500
Summer Stipend 1	3,000
Summer Stipend 2	3,000
Radical Frosh Programming	11,500
School Schmool	5,000
Working Groups	16,000
Total programming expenses	71,700

Payroll

Internal Coordinator	39,858
External Coordinator	39,858
Research Coordinator	35,824
Intern	10,920
Work Study Library	8,229
Work Study CURE	8,229
Work Study Campus Outreach	8,229
HRDC Summer Position	2,634
Rad Frosh Coordinator	11,520
School Schmool Coordinator	5,280
YCW Fall Coordinator	
Provincial Source Deductions	14,044
Federal Source Deductions	3,955
QHSF	
CSST	1,348
CNT	
QPIP	
Health Insurance	7,426
Bonus	1,500
Total payroll	198,853

*Petty Cash Short/Over**Write Offs**Suspense**Depreciation* 400**TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES** 348,748**NET PROFIT/(LOSS)** 2,255.95