

QPIRG-McGill Annual Report 2021-2022



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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 dis/ability. 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 formed the following committees: Staff Committee, Rad Research Committee, Popular Education Committee, Finance Committee, Outreach Committee, the Convergence Editorial Committee, and Policy Committee.

Student Board Members

Amanda Chiu
Grey Cooper
Sofia Digironimo
Mateya Garcha
Emma Gurney
Avery Haley-Lock
Andreas Iakovos
Thai Judiesch
Tomo Newton
Hannah Silver
Ella Wischnewsky

Community Board Members

Jessica Szarek

SSMU Rep

none

PGSS Rep

none

Staff

QPIRG-McGill has three core staff members who coordinate the day-to-day operations of the organization. The staff works hard to insure reliability, continuity and skill sharing within the organization. In addition to daily operations, the staff is responsible for programming, finances, outreach, working groups, programs, coordinating resources, volunteers, projects, grant research, and policy development among many other things. The Finance and Administrative Coordinator was Ivory Tong. The Outreach and Promotions Coordinator was Bofta Haile until September 2022, then Nelly Wat since October 2022. The Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator was Sasha Simmons.

This year our part-time staff members were Aishwarya Singh (Resource Centre Coordinator - resigned), Ha Nhuan Dong (Resource Centre Coordinator - current), Sarah Hollyer-Carney (CURE Coordinator), and Maria Radu (Campus Outreach Coordinator). The 2021-2022 accountants were Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp.

In the summer of 2021, QPIRG-McGill hired two Rad Frosh Coordinators: Reem Said and Hyeon Song; and two School Schmool Coordinators: Nelly Wat and Wendy Zhao. We funded two summer research stipends, one for \$3000 and one for \$1500.

QPIRG-McGill structure

Conflict Resolution & Complaints Committee (CRCC)

The purpose of the Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC) is to review complaints entailing decisions made by the QPIRG Board or Staff, or any other internal disputes, which cannot otherwise be resolved. The CRCC holds no regular meetings; it meets only when the need arises and for one training session (which will take place approximately one month after being elected). Decisions of the CRCC are final and not subject to further appeal and can include disciplinary measures outlined in the QPIRG McGill Disciplinary Procedures. The CRCC follows a CRCC policy to address complaints involving QPIRG-McGill members that cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors.

At the Annual General Meeting in April 2021, the following member was elected to the CRCC: Jama Hagi-Yusuf.

Report from the Board of Directors

Overview & responsibilities

The Board of Directors is composed of students and community members who have been elected and committed to planning the direction and development of the organization, fulfilling the organization's financial duties and supporting staff members and their programs.

Timeline of Board responsibilities & actions

Month	General yearly schedule	2021-2022 specific
May	Board training, Summer Research Stipend selection, summer staff hiring	
June		
July		Popular Events Coordinator hiring
August	Rad Frosh & School Schmool	
September		Outreach & Promotions Coordinator hiring, Librarians in Palestine panel, SSMU existence referendum
October		
November		Beverly Bain keynote lecture, submitted Enabling Accessibility Fund application
December	Office closure	
January		Winter board recruitment, Campus Outreach Coordinator hiring, board visioning
February		Resource Centre Coordinator hiring, Social Justice Days, PGSS existence referendum, renewal of SSMU and McGill MOAs
March		
April		Office packing & cleaning

Report from the Board of Directors

Board Training

The board received trainings on the following topics, between May - August 2021 (Facilitators are mentioned in parenthesis):

Accessibility (Katie Jung)
Anti-Colonialism (Amanda Lickers)
Conflict Resolution (Eddie Hareven)
Anti-Oppression 201 (Timaaj Hassen)
HR & Board / Staff Relations (Isabelle Oke)
Consensus-decision Making, Non-profit Legal Responsibilities, QPIRG history & structure (QPIRG staff)

Major Themes/Issues

Following the last year, although restrictions have slightly lifted around COVID-19, it still remained a challenge throughout the year. Although before navigating online spaces and meetings was a learning curve, this year everyone really had a handle on it. The board meetings continued remotely over zoom and we continued to have our event series primarily online with great turnout. However, zoom burnout and general fatigue was prevalent and board numbers continued to dwindle towards the end of the school year with several members resigning or taking leaves of absence throughout the year. We held a board visioning meeting in February 2022 which had excellent turnout, and was a nice opportunity to get to know each other better as we have been missing the casual interactions that are more difficult to have on Zoom!

For the most part we were able to maintain a regular quorum at board meetings to continue

with making vital decisions, but many of our committees and additional planned projects were on hiatus as we focus on the highest priority items. The inconsistency with meeting attendance also made it challenging at times to delegate tasks evenly, however staff were able to step in to support when necessary. Going forward, we are really excited to be moving into a new office space that is much more accessible and to share space with other community organizations.

Committee updates

Radical Research Committee

Rad Research Committee is a committee of board members and other volunteers, that typically meets regularly to support QPIRG's research-related projects and plan events. This committee has been on hiatus during the 2021/22 school year due to low capacity.

Staff Committee

QPIRG's StaffComm is a group of Board members who take on many of the HR-like responsibilities for the organization. As employers of 3 full-time, 3 part-time and many project-specific staff, StaffComm is meant to facilitate easier communication between the Board and Staff. Between the three members, responsibilities are shared throughout the year. Year-long commitments include contract signing, contract renewals, monthly meetings and bimonthly staff check-ins.

This year, StaffComm was normally functioning during the fall semester, but when one of the most active members left to study abroad it

Report from the Board of Directors

became difficult to organize ourselves to have others take over these tasks. Staff members stepped in to help with some of these tasks.

are now many students who have not had the chance to meet us or visit our office due to the pandemic.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee did not meet frequently this year, and instead all budgets and financial decisions were brought to the full board at board meetings when necessary.

Board Dynamics

Board dynamics this year were great! Everyone was really positive and got along well, though we missed being in the office together. We welcomed a new member to the board in Winter, and they were a great addition in supporting QPIRG. As always, many of our board members are involved with other groups and social justice projects on campus, and this helped us to stay connected to the overall landscape of organizing happening at McGill. As mentioned, general burnout among boardies along with difficulty finding meeting times that worked for everyone made things challenging, but we enjoyed each other's company when we could be together.

Future Goals

This summer, our main goal is to focus on doing all of the tasks necessary to move into our new office space. We have already begun sorting and packing items in the office, and this will be our primary task in May. We are also looking forward to doing a big push for outreach on campus in September, as there

Report from the staff

Again this year, our work at QPIRG was largely shaped by the ongoing realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts. Our staff have now been working mostly remotely for more than 2 years, and during this time we have had to innovate over and over again to find ways to stay in touch and accomplish all that we need to. During the winter 2022 semester, we finally opened our office to the public again, starting with one day per week. It has been very beneficial to have more time together to discuss some of the big changes happening this year, and we have been happy to see community members come in to browse the library or check out the other resources QPIRG has to offer.

We will be closing the office to the public again from mid-May to mid-June, while we move to our new office space on Parc Ave. After 30 years in the same space, there are many odds and ends that need to be sorted, donated, or packed so this will be a lot of work! It will be worth it though, as we are excited to move into a community office space along with the Citizens Committee of Milton Park and other justice-minded groups. We have been working towards ensuring step-free access to our new office space, and this may take some time to complete but has been a rewarding process so far.

2021/22 was an exceptional year, not only because of the pandemic and the move to a new office, but also because we successfully ran existence referenda with both SSMU and PGSS, and welcomed several new staff members. Due to the low capacity from board members during the second half of the year, many of these tasks became the responsibility

of the paid staff. It was necessary to scale back on some of our usual activities, particularly policy review and the number of public events. Despite the low capacity, we managed to have staff visioning meetings in July and again in December, and this helped us to prioritize and streamline our individual and collective tasks.

In our three permanent positions: Sasha Simmons stayed on for her third year as Working Groups & Community Research Coordinator, and Ivory Tong stayed on for their third year as Finance & Administration Coordinator. Bofta Haile left her position as the Outreach & Promotions Coordinator in September 2022 after more than 3 years, and Nelly Wat has now been in the role since October.

As part-time staff: Sarah Hollyer-Carney was the CURE Coordinator throughout the year and will be ending her role at the end of April. Aishwarya Singh stayed on as our Resource Centre Coordinator during the first semester, and was replaced by Ha Nhuan Dong in February. Maria Radu was hired as our Campus Outreach Coordinator in January, after a vacancy in the position of about 6 months. Our SSMU Popular Education Coordinator this year was Zeke Bertrand.

Our summer staff were Nelly Wat and Wendy Zhao as School Schmoool Coordinators, and Hyeon Song and Reem Said as Rad Frosh Coordinators.

Aimee Louw is our Writing Group Coordinator, a new position created in collaboration with Metonymy Press and the Unruly Writers' Club, from October 2021 to May 2022. This position

Report from the staff

is partially funded by Emploi Québec.

We thank all our volunteers and our Board of Directors, without whom our work would be both impossible and much less enjoyable! Shout-out to our friends at Midnight Kitchen, the UGE, MUNACA, AMUSE, AMURE, AGSEM, Black Students' Network, C-JAM, Queer McGill, the McGill Daily, CKUT, ECOLE, Our Shared Spaces, SACOMSS, SSMU VP External Office, the CSU, the Centre for Gender Advocacy, the Milton Parc Citizen's Committee, and QPIRG-Concordia. We love collaborating with you all and we look forward to continuing to grow and strengthen our relationship in the coming year! <3

Our main goal for the foreseeable future is moving to our new office space and making it hospitable in time for students to return to campus in September. This will be a huge change, and there will be many tasks to do and things to negotiate with our new roommates. We hope to have an outdoor ramp and automatic door opener installed at the space by the end of the summer, as well as accomplishing other interior accessibility renovations. Other goals we intend to focus on during the upcoming year include migrating the library catalogue to a new platform, in-person outreach on campus, developing staff feedback processes, and continuing to build connections with both campus and community-based groups.

In Solidarity,

The Current QPIRG Staff (Ivory Tong, Nelly Wat, Maria Radu, Sasha Simmons, Ha Nhuan Dong, and Sarah Hollyer-Carney)

Popular Education

Rad Frosh

Reem Said & Hyeon Song

Rad Frosh is a three-day orientation weekend for mostly incoming students at McGill organized by QPIRG-McGill. The program is centered on introducing people to McGill and Montreal's vibrant activist communities. In 2021, Rad Frosh started on Friday and ended on Sunday, from August 27 - 29. We had 90 actual participants with 8 facilitators during the weekend programming. Our objective was to offer both a creative and politically progressive orientation to new students, introducing folks to various social, political, and environmental issues, movements, and organizations within our communities at McGill and in Montreal. It was the first in-person frosh since the pandemic started therefore, we included students started McGill in 2020. Our theme for 2021 was "Radical Renewal".

This year some of the events were:

- BBQ party
- Radical guided tours
- Open-mic concert
- DIY Fair
- Drag Show

Rad Frosh Day 1 began with registration, at the QPIRG parking lot, free of charge. Location was not easy to find, and we had so many wasps, but it went smoothly overall. We processed the campus tour with four student groups, it involved getting to know different services and social movements within McGill, as well as learning urban legends such as the floor girl and MK-Ultra. Afterwards

we gathered for a BBQ in Parc Jeanne-Mance, and participants socialized each other. We spend a very long time there, until the sunset. And we ended the day and skipped the walking up the mountain as we did not have many participants willing to go. For this day, we did not pay anything for our venues.

Rad Frosh Day 2 began with social activism workshops on Zoom, then followed by the lunch meeting at Place du Canada. One of the QPIRG board member was kind enough to prepare a speech of the politics of statues. Then it started raining, but we processed to the radical guide tours, in Milton-Parc to Chinatown. Some were delayed because we had to buy umbrellas, but everything worked out well at the end. We regrouped in Chinatown, and had our supper, and headed to the open-mic concert at Théâtre Sainte-Catherine, with performers from the SSMU Musicians collective. It was a huge success. Some went for a walk in Old Port instead.

Rad Frosh Day 3 started with DIY fare and social activism workshops, and we planned for the picnic at the Parc LaFontaine but it started raining! We communicated with our participants on Facebook, and nobody was lost. We regrouped at McGill to walk to the Art-Making session venue and stopped for supper at Blvd. St. Laurent. We cancelled the movie night because we did not have enough participants, went straight ahead to the drag show. It was the highlight of the weekend and House of Gahd did an awesome job to entertain our students at their bar!

Organizations that contributed to the success of the weekend included Afghan Women's Centre of Montreal, La Cuisine Collective Hochelaga-

Popular Education

Maisonneuve (although their food was not the best!), QPIRG-C, Health Living Annex, OSVRSE and CKUT 90.3 FM, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights McGill, indigenous artist Tanya White, many individual volunteers, facilitators and most importantly QPIRG McGill board members. Rad Frosh is community-driven and supported, and the efforts and love from these groups and those of the past fueled our weekend, and really demonstrated the ways in which communities show up for one another.

Recommendations for 2022 and beyond:

- Trying to minimize renting venues as they are expensive, and we are more used to with hybrid style workshops now
- Recruiting facilitators more efficiently, we started somewhat early and extended our deadline several times but still it was very challenging
- Tasting food before ordering if possible
- Make the campus tour more interactive and interesting, as many found this part tiring
- To have at least one person who knows how to barbecue!
- Strategic inclusion and invitation of youth from local organizations, like Project 10, Asterisk, DESTA, etc. would be great to give opportunities for frosh to mix with other youth and get a feel for what other groups like QPIRG do

School Schmool

Nelly Wat and Wendy Zhao

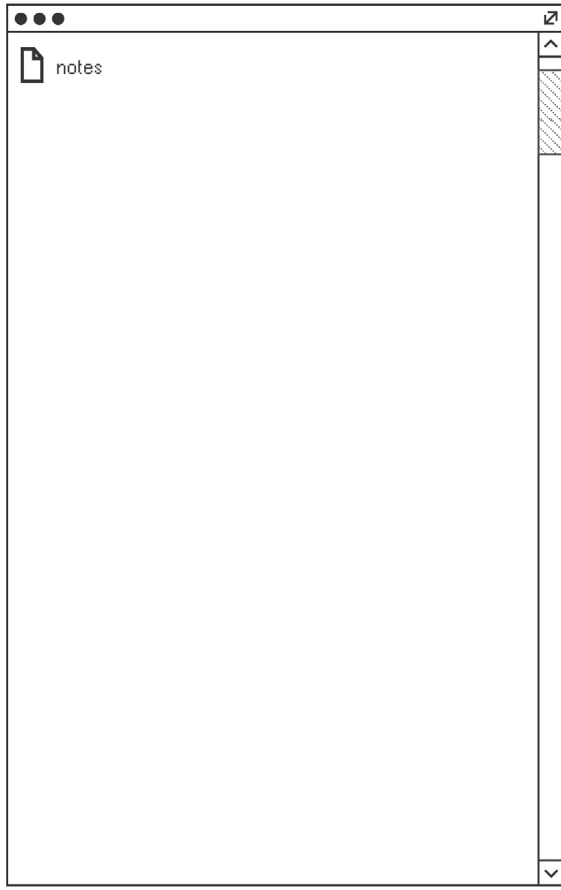
The 2021-2022 edition of School Schmool, the alternative agenda and resource guide



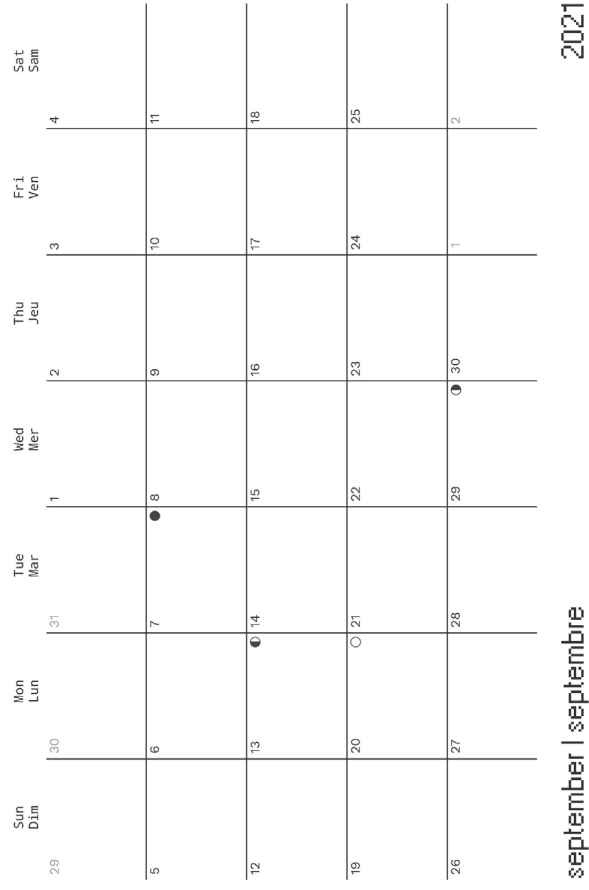
produced each summer as a joint project between QPIRG-Concordia and QPIRG-McGill, was successfully published this year. This year's edition was coordinated by Nelly Wat and Wendy Zhao.

School Schmool began as a bi-annual publication in 1994, which put together articles, group profiles, and practical resources into a guide for students, especially those interested in social and environmental justice. School Schmool was brought back in 2006 as a resource guide and academic planner, and has since been an ad-free, corporate-free, agenda-with-an-agenda, connecting the McGill, Concordia,

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and greater Tioh'tiá:ke communities. This year's theme is FLUIDITY. As the pandemic has deeply integrated us within the digital world, the fluidity offered by virtual spaces can be both liberating and unsettling. We asked our contributors to examine fluidity in its many forms--as social change, invisibility, accessibility, freedom, invasion, and more--and explore which we must enact in our communities and which we must reject. We encouraged our contributors to re-
envision our physical and virtual worlds as unfixed in false barriers of access, power, and narrative.

We continued to provide fair compensation to the contributors of this edition, giving

honorariums to new content published in the agenda based on last year's rates. We continued to reach out to BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disabled contributors to prioritize their work. We received funding from the Sustainable Action Fund (SAF) at Concordia, the Concordia Student Union (CSU) Special Project Funding, and Midnight Kitchen. The remaining expenses were covered by QPIRG-McGill and QPIRG-Concordia.

We also continued to print the agendas on recycled paper with local printer Katasoho, who has been printing our School Schmools for over a decade. This year, we elected to print 1200 copies, 600 copies more than last year to

Popular Education

ensure that we could distribute as many copies as possible. We distributed copies among student groups at McGill and Concordia, and at a few independent bookstores and community locations on a by-donation basis.

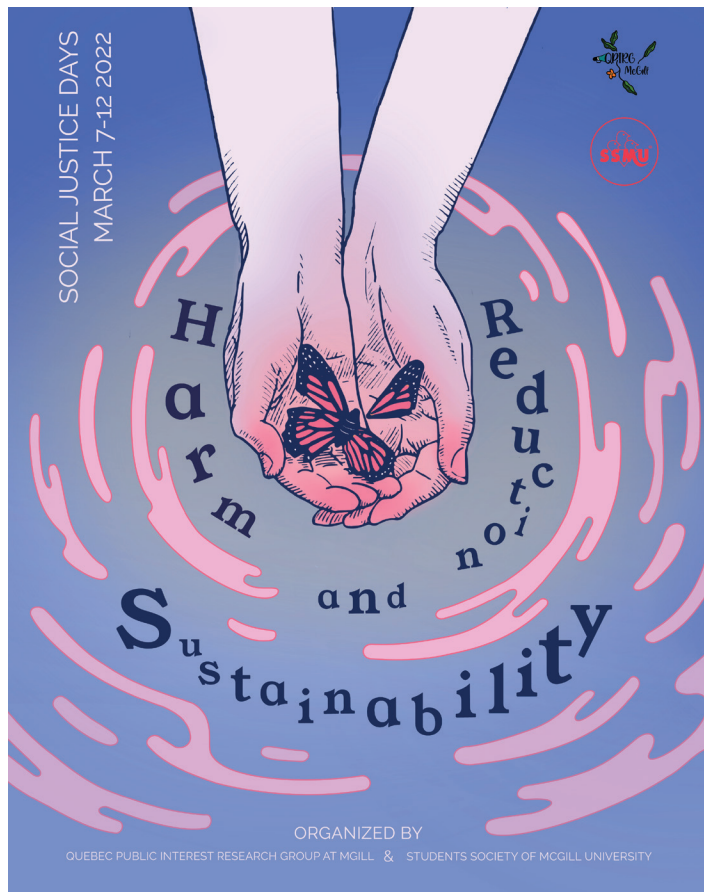
We would recommend future coordinators to keep record of donations, as it was pointed out during the funding application process that we consistently fail to keep track of donations from year to year. We would also recommend printing fewer copies to reduce waste, given that we have at least 100 issues left undistributed every year, and to strive to distribute as many agendas as possible in September. We will also update the School Schmool website with this year's edition.

Social Justice Days

Nelly Wat

This year, QPIRG-McGill organized Social Justice Days in an online format to ensure that workshops would be accessible to all in spite of the pandemic. This year's SJDs were organized by the staff, Zeke Bertrand (Popular Education Coordinator), volunteers, and board members. This year, we recruited several volunteers who assisted in the planning and facilitation of the event series, and some later continued to take on important roles at QPIRG! We additionally commissioned Arusha Bruns to design a poster for the event series.

The theme of this year's Social Justice Days was Harm Reduction and Sustainability. Initially, the PopEd Committee envisioned one keynote and a



few small workshops for this year's event series. Given that the keynote speakers we reached out to were either unavailable or beyond our budget, we decided to instead organize SJDs around several smaller online workshops, allowing for a greater variety of topics that would appeal to a wider range of audiences. As usual, we worked with a variety of speakers, artists, and local activists.

This year's Social Justice Days were held on Zoom from March 7-12. All of our events were well attended! We organized 3 panels and 6 workshops, for a total of 9 events:

- Harm Reduction and Drug Way Resistance 101
- Environmentalism Beyond Green Capitalism (Uneven Earth)

Popular Education

- The Labour Crisis at McGill (MUNACA)
- unPAC Healing the Past Now: Building Sustainable Futures (Pan-Asian Collective)
- Building Care into Anti-violence Advocacy that Sustains Us (Students for Consent Culture Canada)
- Embedded: Creating boundaries within interwoven communities
- Supporting Prisoners and Parolees in their Transition as Returning Citizens
- Harm Reduction in Health and Social Services: A Panel Discussion (Face à Face, Head and Hands)
- Conflict & Crisis De-escalation

Moving forward, we would like to allocate more time for the promotion of events by making more decisions earlier on in the planning process, particularly the selection of a poster artist. We would also like to run the PopEd committee year-round, with monthly meetings in the summer, to make organizing an event series in the fall easier.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers and everyone who supported our PopEd committee for making this year's Social Justice Days a success! We look forward to working with you all again next year!

Community Research

Community-University Research Exchange

Sarah Hollyer-Carney

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. I was hired as QPIRG-McGill's CURE coordinator in the Summer of 2021 and worked with cohorts of student researchers in the Fall 2021 and Winter 2022 terms.

I first attempted to secure funding or course credit to compensate participants in the program, but this effort was ultimately unsuccessful. The term progressed with researchers continuing the work of the previous years' cohort with the Milton Parc Citizens' Committee (MPCC) on their public consultation for the use of the decommissioned site of the Royal Victoria Hospital.

When MPCC was contacted by the Kanien'kehaka Kahnistensera (Mohawk Mothers) about the potential presence of unmarked graves on the site, the Winter 2022 cohort began researching this instead. Researchers have conducted primary and archival research at the direction of the Kahnistensera through the framework of Community-Based Research (CBR). While recruitment for the project in the Fall term had a lower number of respondents, the Winter term project had around 30 total respondents

with between 5-10 actively participating at a given time.

In the upcoming year, this research project will continue with new and returning researchers under the new CURE coordinator. I will be continuing to assist with organizational and research tasks on this project during the transition period and beyond.

Summer Research Stipends

Sasha Simmons

One way in which QPIRG-McGill carries out its mandate to support community-driven research is through the provision of summer research stipends. The stipends consist of grants to fund projects that align with QPIRG's social and environmental justice mandate, are grassroots in focus, local in scope and long-term in their impact.

QPIRG-McGill was able to provide two summer research stipends this year- one for \$3000, and one for \$1500. We were excited to support the Black Healing Centre collective with some of the initial research and fundraising tasks in their plan to open a physical space for Black healing in Montreal. Our second stipend went to Brianna Cheng to support the creation of resources for organizers hoping to resist the gentrification of Chinatown in Montreal.

For the 2022 year, we are happy to be able to offer two stipends of \$3000. This change is in response to learnings from previous years, where we have noticed that the projects who are awarded smaller stipends sometimes have difficulties in being able to prioritize completing the project by the end of the summer.

Community Research

Black Healing Centre

Samanta Nyinawumuntu

Hello QPIRG McGill,

First, I would like to start by saying thank you again for awarding me the 2021 summer research stipend. I felt really supported by Sasha and Sarah throughout the summer and for that I am very grateful.

June 2021

Tasks completed:

- Logo design completed
- Built the BHC website
- Recruited two folks to help me start to do the Mental Health research
- Contact the Black Community Resource Centre to partner with them to give 5 seniors a 5 week drama therapy workshops.
- Hired a Black Drama therapist
- Launched our website
- Started registrations for the Drama therapy workshops.

Tasks in my application that were not completed:

- We were unable to start doing grant research, because we did not have capacity and we wanted to focus on starting the research and building a brand for our initiative online.

July 2021

Tasks completed:

- We filmed the docuseries (MY) Black Mental health with 15 various Black participants from montreal. We broke the docuseries into 4 themes



to have different perspectives on the experiences of Black Mental health.

- The themes were Black Parents, Artists, Healers, and Youths.
- We were able to give an honorarium with the stipend to a Black Videographer to help us film the docuseries.
- We also started our Drama therapy workshops with 6 seniors from the Cotes Des Neige Neighbourhood.
- We reached out to a coffee roaster here in Montreal called Semila who works with local coffee farmers in Rwanda to start collaborating with them for our fundraiser campaign in October 2021 and to also work with them when the centre opens.
- We finished our annotated bibliographies for our two research papers on the Mental health Status of Black Canadians and the importance of safer spaces in healing and liberating marginalized communities.

Community Research

- Started to plan our August Exhibition to premier our research and our docuseries (MY) Black Mental Health.
- Attend a month long Yes Montreal Canva Model business bootcamp.
- Started meeting with a business coach

Tasks in my application that were not completed.

- Again because of our lack of capacity and prioritizing creating a foundation for us we were unable to start doing grant research in July as well.

August 2021

Tasks Completed:

- Finished our Seniors Drama Therapy workshop. And received good feedback from all of the participants.
- Finished first drafts of our two research papers
- Found a place to host our exhibition
- Invited various Mental Health advocates and Black Led organizations such as DESTA, Black Healing Fund, Vicky, Black Mental Health Connections and The Lavender Collective to participate on a panel to talk about the services they offer and how they envision the future of Black Mental Health.
- Started to work with Black therapist and came up with a plan for the programs that we will be offering at the Black healing Centre once it is open next year.
- We finished editing our Docuseries
- We hosted our Exhibition and panel at the Ausgang Plaza.
- Over 60 people attended the exhibition.
- We finished our research papers.

Moving Forward:

We published our research papers on our website blackhealingcentre.com, and we shared most of the docu series on our Youtube channel and the full version on our Patreon to help us continue to raise startup funds.

Our focus for fall 2021 is to collaborate with other organizations and to search and apply for grants to help us open next summer. We will also be planning out our winter and summer activities throughout the fall.

We also applied to become a working group at QPIRG-McGill to be able to apply for grants.

I started this on my own but we are now a collective of 6 Black folks who are working on this initiative.

Thank you again for helping us do the research we needed to do this summer and for believing in our abilities to bring it to life.

With appreciation,

Samanta Nyinawumuntu and the BHC Collective

Community Research

Beyond Survival: In Defense of Montreal Chinatown

Brianna Cheng

“Beyond Survival: In Defense of Montreal Chinatown” is a research project which explores gentrification and anti-Asian racism in Montreal’s Chinatown. The title of the project takes issue with recent news discourse about whether Chinatown could “survive” the supposed “new wave” of anti-Asian racism, as well as the sudden drop in tourism, brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. In reality, Montreal Chinatown has long been struggling to survive due to racism, gentrification, displacement, and neglect. “Beyond Survival” seeks to make visible these interrelated threats and imagine what Chinatown would look like if we imagined a future beyond its survival. My project takes the form of a website, including an interactive map which outlines significant locales in the history of Chinatown, with a focus on sites that are tied to histories of social (in)justice, race, class, and resistance.

Throughout the summer, I completed a wide range of research tasks to make my project as accessible as possible. I continued adding locations of interest and fleshed out existing data points, such as the Guy Favreau Complex, which prompted the bulldozing of two Chinese churches, a school, several small Chinese businesses, the Wong Wing Food Products factory, and twenty dwellings. I attempted to curate a list of community safety resources for Chinatown residents and Asian-identified folks in Montreal which did not require police

forces, while also researched the state of Indigenous-Asian relations in Chinatown. My work was heavily inspired by the work of the Chinatown Working Group and other Asian activist organizations—past and present—which have been committed to working against gentrification and anti-Asian racism in Chinatowns across North America. My website is still a work in progress; there is so much to add, revise, and build. Inevitably, I hope my project will play a role, no matter how small, in creating a radical Chinatown beyond survival. I am indebted to QPIRG McGill, whose Summer Research Stipend allowed me to continue my research project, and for providing me support along the way.

Community Research

Resource Centre/Alternative Library

Ha Nhuan Dong

Before staff turnover

Events

Panel Discussion on Archival Work, Information Access, and Cultural Production in Palestine
October 5th, 2021 6PM

This discussion was inspired by the work of Librarians and Archivists with Palestine, and their generous gift of the Brooklyn box set to the QPIRG-McGill Resource Center. The box set contains visual texts and art objects made after a delegation of members returned from Palestine in 2013. It was designed to document the trip and share some of what was learned about libraries, archival work, popular culture, and access to information in the region. It also includes publications and other materials rarely seen outside of Palestine. In this online panel, panelists are asked to touch on topics like the theft of Palestinian books and cultural production; barriers to literary, archival, or information work in the region; people's artistic and archival practices intended to oppose apartheid. We will also be displaying some of the contents of the Brooklyn box set. Panelists are: Nayrouz Abu Hatoum, an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Concordia. Dr. Hatoum's research explores visual politics in Palestine and the Israeli state, and focuses on people's place-making and dwelling practices in the contexts of settler colonialism and military occupation. Diana Keown Allan,

an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Institute for the Study of International Development at McGill. Dr. Allan is a filmmaker and is the creator of the Nakba Archive in Lebanon. The Nakba Archive is an oral history collective which has recorded over 650 video interviews with first generation Palestinian refugees in Lebanon about their recollections of life in Palestine and events that led to their displacement. Maggie Schreiner is the Archivist at the Brooklyn Historical Society. She has previously held positions at New York University and the Queens Memory program at Queens Library, and is also a long time volunteer at Interference Archive. Maggie's work focuses on supporting movements for racial and economic justice through liberatory memory work, and documenting community history through collaborative and post-custodial approaches. She holds an MA in Archives and Public History from New York University and a BA in Central European Studies from McGill University.

Book purchases

- Inside This Place, Not of It: Narratives from Women's Prisons
- Black Racialization and Resistance at an Elite University
- Missing Daddy
- Other books from Metatron press

After staff turnover: Until Apr 27, 2022

Operation & Management

Volunteer coordination

- Volunteer Information Package
- Volunteer Masterplan (Streamlined management process)

Community Research

- Recruitment of 15+ flexible volunteers
- First in-person orientation at office on April 3rd 2022
- Weekly tasklists
- Volunteer food budget

Document digitization

In an effort to streamline library user experience, the following documents were digitized:

- Membership Registration form
- Checkout Sheet
- Contactless Delivery Request form
- Suggest a Purchase form

All accessible via new linktree: https://linktr.ee/qpirgmcgill_library

Promotion & Communications

Instagram

- Changes:
- Bio revamp: Make info more straightforward + concise.
- Account name (from @alternativelibraries to @qpirgmcgill_library) (coming soon)
- Maintaining ≥ 1 post/week.
- First Instagram reel: ~3,000 views.

Email & Google Drive

- Old email & Google Drive: library.qpirgmcgill@gmail.com
- Redirect incoming communications to new email
- Put up notice of new email by using the out-of-office reply function
- New email & Google Drive: library@qpirgmcgill.org
- Catch up with unanswered communications before staff turnover
- Archive old works of previous coordinators by linking old Drive to new Drive

Linktree

- New and more structured linktree: https://linktr.ee/qpirgmcgill_library.

Resource Development

New resource additions:

- Sexuality and its Discontents: Meanings, Myths & Modern Sexualities by Jeffrey Weeks
- Black Racialization and Resistance at an Elite University by Rosalind Hampton
- States and Women's Rights: the Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco by Mounira M. Charrad
- The Sceptical Feminist: a Philosophical Enquiry by Janet Radcliffe Richards
- the essential difference edited by Naomi Schor & Elizabeth Weed
- Gender and Our Brains: How New Neuroscience Explodes the Myths of the Male and Female Minds by Gina Rippon
- Glitch Feminism: a Manifesto by Legacy Russell
- Inside This Place, Not of It: Narratives from Women's Prisons edited by Robin Levi & Ayelet Waldman
- Missing Daddy by Mariame Kaba, illustrated by bria roya
- Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World by Tyson Yunkaporta
- positions: asia critique Journal from Duke University Press (Vol 27, no.1 (Feb 2019): the end of area: biopolitics, geopolitics, history)

Database and catalogue system

- Keep track of database revamp within Alternative Libraries network.

Seasonal Projects

- Move out cleaning
- Packing and sorting materials with volunteers.

Grassroots Mobilization

Discretionary funding

One way in which QPIRG-McGill supports grassroots organizing is by providing funding for smaller-scale, non-institutional projects and initiatives.

An annual budget is set aside each year by the QPIRG-McGill Board of Directors to fund such external projects. Campus and community groups are encouraged to submit requests for goal-oriented events that align with our mandate, up to a maximum of \$250.

Date discussed	To/Event	Amount
14/09/2021	Gaydies Night	\$150
07/10/2021	Borderlines of the Mind podcast	\$175
07/10/2021	Making Drugs More Accurate campaign (CSSDP)	\$200
07/10/2021	Disability Injustice, Patient Advocacy panel	\$210
07/10/2021	Medical Herstory Racism in Medicine event	\$210
07/10/2021	Radlaw H&C Project	\$250
04/11/2021	Mobilizing for Milton Parc	\$250
04/11/2021	Yellow Door Benefit Dinner 2021	\$175
04/11/2021	Vogue Workshops	\$180
15/12/2021	printempserable.net	\$100
15/12/2021	SAB migrant detention support	\$250
07/02/2022	Solidarity Against Authoritarianism in Asia	\$150
07/02/2022	Movement Lawyering	\$250
07/03/2022	Immigrant & Refugee Health Panel	\$250
07/03/2022	Young Roots Farm & Wilderness Camp	\$250
07/03/2022	Musing About Menstruation	\$250
07/03/2022	BIPOC Queer Trans Community Market	\$250
07/03/2022	Colourism Support Space	\$250
21/03/2022	Occupy McGill	\$250
04/04/2022	Fairy Creek art show	\$250
04/04/2022	Journée mondiale pour la justice climatique	\$250
04/04/2022	Palestinian Youth Movement	\$250

Grassroots Mobilization

Co-sponsorships

Event	Date
Black Healing Centre's Exhibition & Community Forum	04/08/2021
Stand with the Wet'suwet'en protest - Divest McGill & Indigenous Students Alliance	18/11/2021
Toronto Queer Film Festival screening of "North by Current"	07/02/2022
Hongkongers at McGill film screening - "Revolution of the Times"	21/03/2022
Israeli Apartheid Week	21/03/2022

Endorsements

Project/Event/Campaign	Date discussed
Anti-Gentrification Town Hall	02/06/2021
Petition for McGill to Divest from Israeli Institutions	02/06/2021
Petition for Online ATIP's for Prisoners - John Howard Society	04/08/2021
AMUSE Petition for Harm Reduction in Residence	04/08/2021
Being Black @ McGill workshop series	07/10/2021
Black Mental Health Connections Racial Profiling Study callout	07/10/2021
CLAC Wet'suwet'en Solidarity Protest	04/11/2021
CKUT Referendum Yes Committee	11/11/2021
ERDSC Referral Services fee	11/11/2021
Research Group on Health & Law seminar	18/11/2021
DECRIMINALIZATION DONE RIGHT. A Rights-Based Path for Drug Policy - National Civil Society Drug Policy Platform	25/11/2021
Cinema Politica film screening - "No Visible Trauma"	21/02/2022
Palestine Solidarity Policy - SSMU referendum winter 2022	15/03/2022

Outreach Report

Outreach

Maria Radu & Nelly Wat

The Outreach team (Outreach and Promotions Coordinator and Campus Outreach Coordinator) are responsible for: volunteer and campus outreach; the promotion of QPIRG events, research and funding opportunities; and events and opportunities from QPIRG's working groups and affiliated organizations. With the return to in-person teaching and in-person/hybrid events on campus this year, such as Activities Night in the fall, we continued to focus on online modes of outreach, due to the uncertainty between waves of COVID and significantly reduced in-person engagement across campus. We relied heavily on social media, cross-promotion with our friend organizations, and our biweekly email newsletter to circulate promotional materials. For this reason, the presence of QPIRG on campus, particularly among students who came to McGill in the last two years, has dwindled significantly.

Despite our reduced physical presence on campus, our Popular Education programming continues to be an effective way of familiarizing students at McGill with QPIRG as an organization and bringing in volunteers. In collaboration with our Resource Centre Coordinator, who has been developing a volunteer guide and training program, we hope to expand our volunteer base and to bring more people into active roles at QPIRG this year. We also look forward to welcoming volunteers, community members, and new

friends of QPIRG to our new accessible office space at 3516 Av du Parc.

Ongoing projects & future goals

A project that we would like to carry forward from previous coordinators is the user manual for the QPIRG website. This year, we hired Koumbit to resolve a hack on our website, which compromised the functionality and security of our website, as well as our online presence. In addition to cleaning up the hack, Koumbit deleted unused, outdated, and abandoned pages that were leaving our website vulnerable to security breaches. We have also worked on improving our search engine optimization (SEO) and redirecting people from social media to our website to increase our online visibility. A user manual would ensure that the QPIRG website is maintained properly and regularly to prevent future security issues, even in the event that the Outreach team is unavailable, and to make technical tools and jargon more accessible.

One long-term project that we have carried forward from last year is the development of QPIRG's official style guide, which we hope to consolidate and complete in time for the "relaunch" of QPIRG on campus this coming fall. This style guide will contain guidelines for graphic materials, language and tone, and anti-oppressive terminology for current and future coordinators, volunteers, and staff at QPIRG to ensure visual consistency across all platforms. In addition, our new logo, designed last year, has finally been implemented across all platforms and will be used consistently in all our future materials. We hope to produce

Outreach Report

new promotional materials such as stickers, bookmarks, and other “merch” for QPIRG in the future to increase our visibility on campus.

We hope that the convenient location of our new office and the relaunch of QPIRG on campus will increase the visibility and reach of our organization, working groups, and programming, despite whatever challenges we may continue to face in the years to come!

Financial Report

Finances

Ivory Tong

As the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to fluctuate, we have had to incorporate more flexibility into our budget to be able to adapt to changes in the situation. Exceptionally this year, funds also had to be allocated towards moving costs. Although running a surplus two years in a row allows us to have extra expenses without cutting programming, vigilance is always necessary to stay on top of our finances, especially our accounts payable. I look forward to using the experience I have gained this year to continue supporting QPIRG's programming, and meet the needs of both students and the community.

The 2019-2020 year ended with a surplus originally stated to be \$38,362.00, since revised to \$31,952.00. In the financial year ending August 31, 2021, we had a surplus of \$9,792. Our plans to use this surplus include purchasing extra laptops for remote work, purchasing more outreach materials (such as banners, tents, megaphones, etc.), and an organizational retreat for board and staff. This surplus has also allowed us to disburse more money to the community in the form of increased summer stipend amounts, and supplementary working group funding.

Unfortunately, as staff capacity has been limited by working on existence referenda and now, preparing to move spaces, we have been unable to realize some of our other surplus spending plans. The Finance Committee was

also affected by a lack of capacity, and did not functionally exist separate to the Board of Directors this year. I am grateful to the Board for participating as a whole in such essential functions as assembling our budget, and reviewing it mid-way through the year. Potential tasks for the Finance Committee next year include improving areas for improvement identified by the auditors, and publicizing our discretionary funding opportunities.

Importantly, we completed our audit dated Aug 31, 2021. Our audit was conducted by an independent auditor's office, APSV Chartered Professional Accountants inc., by Caroline Pombert and Mélanie Desmarais-Senéal. Working with Caroline and Mélanie was a great experience and we thank them for their patience and hard work. The report outlines our major financial policies and shows that while QPIRG is at low risk for fraud overall, we still have improvements to make in terms of documentation and monthly follow-ups. Our totals from last year had to be recalculated to be more accurate. Their full breakdown can be found after this report.

Other updates from this year:

Using our surplus, we were able to offer supplementary funding to working groups last August, and increase the overall amount allotted to working groups for the 2021-22 year. However, as more working groups than expected applied to QPIRG, we were unable to fund any of our working groups in full. Working group finances continue to be an area for improvement, as some groups do not use their

Financial Report

entire allotted budget, and others struggle to find more funding.

Continuing from last year, the costs of programming were significantly cut after the beginning of the pandemic. Out of our event series this year, only Rad Frosh featured in-person events, and thus we continued to save money on venue costs, food costs, etc. As we transition back to in-person meetings, we expect programming costs to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Although we ran two existence referenda this year, costs related to campaigning were minimal. This was because most of our campaigning occurred online. Furthermore, the Students' Society of McGill University reimburses successful campaigns up to \$300.00, which we utilized to save money on our referendum.

As we continued to primarily work from home this year, we continued to save money on office supplies, office repair and maintenance, and photocopying. We will continue with a new budget line, created last year, to partially reimburse the cost and maintenance of personal computers.

As is the case every year, we apply to employment-based grants through government funding bodies, namely the Young Canada Works (YCW) and the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) programs. For our summer 2021 jobs, we received two YCW grants, one for Rad Frosh, and one for School Schmool. The Rad Frosh position was funded at 70%, and the School Schmool position was

funded at 100%. We did not receive a CSJ grant. We also worked with Emploi Québec this year to fund our Writing Group Coordinator at 80%.

We also received two grants from the Enabling Accessibility Fund - Youth, part of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), to work on accessibility improvements for our new office space. One grant, for \$10,000.00, is for the materials and labour to build a ramp, making the ground floor accessible to mobility aid users. The second grant, for \$7,719.00, will be used for miscellaneous accessibility improvements, as well as the automatic door opener for the ramp.

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. For us, this amounted to a total of \$32,770.00 for the 2021-2022 year. We do not predict a change in this unless there are active opt-out campaigns or other forms of organized backlash, which we haven't seen much of over the last few years.

Our accountants are Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp, whose diligence and knowledge is greatly appreciated, and they do so much for the financial health of QPIRG-McGill. Our deepest gratitude to the many groups and organizations with whom we collaborated with this year, or supported us in various ways, including but not limited to: The Students' Society of McGill University, Midnight Kitchen, the Union for Gender Empowerment, Queer McGill, AMUSE, QPIRG-Concordia, and many others.





2021-2022