

2014-2015

The Year In Review at
QPIRG Concordia

** community * research * resistance **



The Annual Report of the
Quebec Public Interest Research Group
at Concordia

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & CALL TO ANTI-COLONIAL RESISTANCE

QPIRG Concordia acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka people. The Kanien'kehá:ka are the keepers of the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The island we call Montreal, called Tiotia:ke in the language of the Kanien'kehá:ka, has historically been a meeting place for other Indigenous nations, including the Algonquin peoples.

QPIRG Concordia believes it is not enough to just acknowledge the keepers of this land. We encourage everyone to get informed and educated, and to actively resist colonialism and neo-colonialism in the many forms it takes, and in the diversity of forms that resistance can take too. QPIRG Concordia, and its related projects and working groups, are one place to get informed. We would like to highlight the upcoming "Fall Feast: An anti-colonial evening of food, film and resistance" to take place at the Native Friendship Center of Montreal on the evening of November 12. We encourage everyone to get in touch with QPIRG Concordia about anti-colonial and decolonization efforts.

Message from the Board of Directors

This year started with an AGM where 12 board members were elected, 9 of whom were new and had the pleasure of welcoming 2 new board members throughout this year. The board worked to support the staff, the working groups, QPIRG's core projects, and improving the space in general. As part of our work, board members participated in several different committees: Programming and Working Groups Committee; Finance Committee; Policy Development Committee; the Accessibility Committee; and the no-longer-existent Staff Liaison Committee. We helped in the hiring of four new both part-time and full-time staff members this year, many of whom are Concordia students; we are so lucky to have Adrienne, Andrea, Arash, and Cassie as new members of our team!

QPIRG-C staff have kept very busy this year. Our library is finally fully up on the Alternative Library Database thanks to our staffer Elena. Swetha has been putting in long hours to archive Montreal's activist history through the Poster Archive Project. Andrea and Xindi put together a beautiful School Schmool this year which has been garnering compliments far and wide. Through our summer stipend, we were able to support Leah Woolner and PINAY start on an archiving project that will be made available on our website in the future.

As a board, we also have supported the staff in putting on events such as the book launch of "Another Politics: Talking Across Today's Transformative Movements" and Disorientation. We have been involved in the anti-austerity and pro-BDS movements happening at Concordia, and have worked heavily with groups like Solidarity Concordia and SPHR Concordia. We helped in our organization's collaboration with other groups to put on events such as "Leanne Simpson - Islands of Decolonial Love: Exploring Love on Occupied Land," Study In Action, Israeli Apartheid Week, and we want to thank all of the volunteers and co-organizers again for all the hard work that went into these organizing these projects.

Working groups are a huge part of QPIRG-C and we want to recognize all of the amazing things that they have done this year! We have had the pleasure of welcoming 4 new groups this year: the Asian Arts Freedom School, C-Unit (Community-University Talks), Contempt of Court, and Not Fine Concordia. We want to thank all the people involved in the working groups for making QPIRG the activist hub it is.

Thank you so much to the staff this year: Adrienne, Andrea, Amir, Arash, Cassie, Christina, Elena, J., Jaggi, Noah, Swetha, and Xindi. Y'all work so hard all the time to make this organization what it is, we are so proud of what you do and we are so happy to have been able to work with y'all this past year.

Message from the QPIRG Concordia Staff

The QPIRG Concordia core staff works together to maintain QPIRG and nurture its varied projects, groups and initiatives. We have a very busy office space, and we collaborate with QPIRG members, volunteers and allies to ensure that QPIRG is active and accessible to both our community and student membership in diverse ways. This Annual Report as a whole reflects that work, and this short introductory message simply shares some highlights as staff from the past year.

This year was an important transition period for the core staff. Christina Xydous, our Administration and Volunteer Coordinator, left our organization in February, having made important and valuable contributions to QPIRG for three years. We would like to express our gratitude and respect to Christina. We loved her energy, her warmth, her intelligence and her passion about social struggles and fighting oppression. We learned much from her, and we miss her.

Our new core staffer, since May 2015, is Adrienne Pan, QPIRG's new Administration and Communications Coordinator. She is making steady and vital contributions to QPIRG Concordia organizing. One main focus for the core staff, in the months of May and June, and through the summer, was a concerted training period, organized and undertaken together.

With the staff transition, one major challenge this year was maintaining the organization while short-staffed in March and April, as well as focusing on core tasks and responsibilities.

The core staff works hard to ensure QPIRG remains transparent and accountable to its members. This is reflected in our ongoing efforts to provide institutional and financial transparency and accessibility, third party audited financial statements, clear and coherent minutes and documentation, hassle-free opt-outs, an annual report, an updated website and timely e-mail communications, and a constitution and other key documents that are available on our website.

We had a successful board training weekend in the fall and an important organizational visioning process in the summer. We also had supplemental trainings throughout the year. We want to especially acknowledge the time and effort of members of the Staff Liaison Committee this year, especially with the transition period.

We want to acknowledge the contributions of everyone who served on the QPIRG Concordia Board of Directors this year: Alyce, Dan, Farhana, Idil, Jess, Kwaku, Laura, Otto, Sanjeevan, Sarah, Shaina, Shayla, Sophia and Thien.

Day-to-day, we maintained QPIRG as a productive workplace for our very active working groups as well as a welcoming venue for students and

community members. This year we prioritized improving the computers in our space, including buying and installing new machines, as well as making other space improvements.

QPIRG's core projects: Disorientation, School Schmool, the Alternative Library, the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE Concordia), Convergence and Study In Action. We also supported a Summer Research Stipend by PINAY. Each of these projects have separate reports in this Annual Report.

This year, we want to highlight the growth in the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE Concordia) that, ideally, will successfully secure core funding via a fee levy later this fall and become autonomous. As well, the newly named QPIRG Concordia Grassroots Resistance Archive has grown extensively. We were also able to organize American Sign Language (ASL) classes to happen in our space in the summer as well as this fall.

We continue to liaise with QPIRG McGill, and GRIP UQÀM. We value our close relationships with our fellow PIRGs in Montreal, and continue to collaborate with QPIRG McGill in particular on Convergence, School Schmool, the Alternative Library and CURE. On campus, QPIRG Concordia continues to support Fee Levy Advocacy at Concordia (FLAC), and works hard to maintain transparency and accountability to all students by all fee levy groups.

As part of QPIRG Concordia's own commitment to anti-austerity organizing, we have supported Solidarity Concordia's efforts on campus and in the community, as well as support those who have been targeted for their involvement in the student strike of the spring 2015.

All year, we thrive on being able to support general QPIRG programming and co-sponsorships: workshops, book launches, walking tours, bike tours and more. For the staff, some highlights this year include: the Anti-Gentrification Community Bike Tour, the Anti-Colonial Dinner and the ASL classes.

None of our core staff work is done alone. We want to also highlight the contributions of all our part-time, work study and contract employees over the past year: J. Charest (bookkeeping), Amir (off-site tech), Arash (on-site tech), Elena (Alternative Library), Swetha (Grassroots Resistance Archive), Gwen (CURE), Cassie (CURE) and Xindi & Andrea (School Schmool). We enjoyed and continue to enjoy working with you all.

QPIRG is a challenging work environment, and involves a lot of hard work and communications with hundreds of people, but it remains stimulating and satisfying. It's inspiring for us to meet so many amazing students and community members that in so many different ways make important contributions to social and environmental transformation. We are privileged to be able to contribute to social and environment justice in such a way.

Again, we are especially proud of the many new faces that continue to access QPIRG and QPIRG events in the past year, and the support we are able to provide to campus and community social justice initiatives. As staff, we thrive on working in collaboration with curious, engaged and dynamic volunteers, who access our space on a daily basis. We are looking forward to building in the upcoming year.

In solidarity,

- Noah Eidelman, Finance & Fundraising Coordinator
- Adrienne Pan, Administration and Communications Coordinator
- Jaggi Singh, Programming & Working Groups Coordinator

October 15, 2015

QPIRG Mandate

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at Concordia is a resource centre for student and community research and organizing. We strive to raise awareness and support grassroots activism around diverse social and environmental issues. Our work is rooted in an anti-oppression analysis and practice. We seek to make campus-community links and inspire social change through engaging, inclusive and non-hierarchical approaches.



QPIRG Concordia is committed to being inclusive and accessible to all. We are actively opposed to all forms of discrimination and oppression. QPIRG is a volunteer-driven, student-funded, non-profit organization that is independent from the Concordia administration and student unions. Both students and community members are welcome to make use of our space and resources as well as participate in QPIRG projects.

QPIRG History

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at Concordia has been an important link between campus and the community on issues related to social and environmental justice and progressive social change. From their origins in Canada in the early 1980s, PIRGs have provided a forum and training ground for students and non-students alike to become critical and engaged community participants.

QPIRG at Concordia started in 1981 as a club funded by the student union. QPIRG's popularity grew until a student referendum in 1989 determined that QPIRG would be funded by a student fee levy. In 2010, Concordia graduate students voted in a referendum to become members of QPIRG Concordia as well. QPIRG Concordia is an autonomous group on the Concordia campus, with both student and community membership.

In the 1980s and '90s, QPIRG, like other campus-based social justice groups, was active in solidarity with human rights movements in Central America, campaigns for nuclear disarmament and global peace, opposition to apartheid in South Africa, feminist and anti-racist organizing, GLBT rights, consumer activism, and environmental justice.

Some of the projects and activity of QPIRG in the 1980s and '90s is reflected in the working groups and projects that grew out of QPIRG, including: Right to Move/La Voie Libre; the Popular Film Series (evolved into Cinema Politica); Urgence Manif; Sustainable Concordia; Blood Sisters; Un Juste Café; Santropol Roulant; the Concordia Recycling and Composting Committee; the Vegan Lunch Program (became the People's Potato); Project Take Root (evolved into the Frigo Vert); Action Rebut; ASEED (became Equiterre); and others.



Q-PIRG members
are pro's
dealing with
the issues...

In the late 1990s, QPIRG, like other PIRGs, was active in solidarity with international self-determination and liberation movements, from Latin America to the Middle East to South Asia. This period was also marked by increasing involvement and support with indigenous sovereignty efforts on Turtle Island.

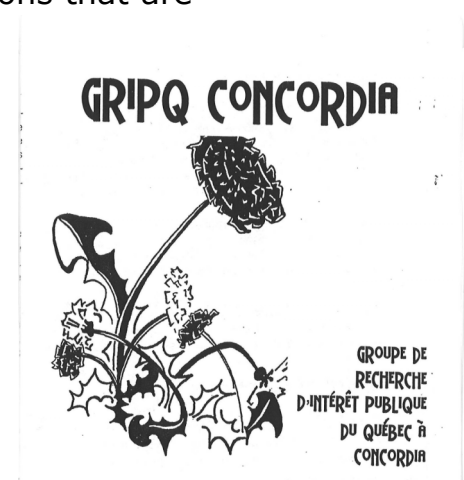
QPIRG contributed to the growing global justice movement of this period, and was associated with demonstrations and popular education work around institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Our programming and working groups also increasingly reflected queer, prisoner solidarity, migrant justice, and trans struggles and self-organizing.

QPIRG Concordia has evolved from its original mandate and projects to include a wide range of community activism and research, rooted in an explicit grassroots, anti-oppression organizing framework and prioritizing consensus-based decision-making. This is reflected in QPIRG's current working groups, our core projects and publications, and our resource library as well as our support for campus and community groups through co-sponsorships, endorsements, and discretionary funding.

In the past seven years, QPIRG has specifically developed a community-based social justice research model through core projects like Study in Action, the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE), and the Convergence Research Journal.

PIRGs were set up as consumer advocacy groups in the United States in the early 1970s, but PIRGs in Canada have operated on a different model. They involve and empower students and the majority of their funding comes directly from students, unlike the NGO model of PIRGs currently operating in the US. Most PIRGs in Canada operate on a consensus decision-making model, and are directed by a volunteer board of governors composed of students and other community members. The diversity among PIRGs reflects the diversity of each group's membership and volunteer board. PIRGs in Canada communicate with each other, especially PIRGs in geographical proximity, but they are ultimately autonomous organizations that are directly accountable to their campus and community memberships.

In essence, PIRGs complement the university experience by linking theory with practice while breaking down barriers and creating links between knowledge work on campus and in the community.



QPIRG Structure

Since 2007 all undergraduate students at Concordia become automatic members of QPIRG Concordia through the 0.31\$ per credit paid with regular school tuition. Since September 2010, all graduate students at Concordia also become automatic members through the 0.50\$ per student per semester paid with regular school tuition. Membership also consists of active volunteers and members of our working groups.

Board of Directors:

At QPIRG, the board plays an integral part within the organization. With regular meetings and active participation in all aspects of QPIRG, board members set the organization's agenda and direction, and support the staff. Members gain valuable experience and training in anti-oppression, how to be an employer, community organizing, and consensus building. A new board is elected during the fall semester at QPIRG's Annual General Meeting (AGM), although new members can join with consensus from the current board at any time there is a vacant seat. The Board of Directors consists of 12 seats – 6 seats are reserved for Concordia student members, and the other 6 are reserved for Community members who may or may not be Concordia students. This reflects our mandate to create campus-community links.

For the year 2014-2015, we were proud to have on our Board of Directors:

Kwaku Adomako, Concordia Student (resigned August 19, 2015)

Shaina Agbayani, Community Member

Otto Buxton, Community Member

Shayla Chilliak, Concordia Student

Alyce Dressner, Community Member

Farhana Jumki Haque, Concordia Student

Idil Isse, Community Member (resigned April 6, 2015)

Jess Mac, Community Member (resigned June 30, 2015)

Laura Macdonald, Concordia Student

Sarah Mangle, Community Member (appointed August 19, 2015)

Thien Viet Quan, Concordia Student (resigned September 16, 2015)

Sophia Salem, Community Member

Sanjeevan Tharmaratnam, Community Member (appointed August 19, 2015)

Daniel Wolfe, Concordia Student

Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee:

At the Annual General Meeting in October 2014, the following QPIRG members were elected to the Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC): **Ian Bradley-Perrin**, **Karina Chagnon**, **Milena Gioia**, and **Cassie Smith** (resigned June 29, 2015). The CRCC follows a CRCC policy to address complaints involving QPIRG members that cannot be resolved by the board of directors. The CRCC can be emailed directly at crcc@qpirgconcordia.org, though for most matters it is best to email QPIRG at info@qpirgconcordia.org.

Staff:

For the year 2014-2015, QPIRG employed a total of 4 (due to a change in permanent staff over the course of this year) permanent staff members, who collectively worked to facilitate the day-to-day operations and coordinate long-term planning and training of the Board.

Our permanent staff people in 2014-2015 were:

Noah Eidelman, *Finance and Fundraising Coordinator*

Jaggi Singh, *Programming and Working Groups Coordinator*

Adrienne Pan, *Administration and Communications Coordinator*

Christina Xydous, *Volunteer and Administrative Coordinator*

In the Fall and Winter semesters of 2014-2015, we were glad to have **Swetha Keerthi** as our part-time Poster Archive Coordinator and **Elena Stoodley** as a part-time coordinator of QPIRG's Alternative Library. We also had **Gwen Muir** as our part-time Community-University Research Exchange (CURE) Coordinator and **Swetha Keerthi** as our part-time Poster Archive Coordinator in the Summer semester. Their positions are supported partially by Concordia's Financial Aid and Awards Office work-study program – a programme which allows groups like QPIRG to hire Concordia students.

In July 2015, we were fortunate to have an Emploi Québec grant which allowed us to hire **Cassie Smith** (also a Concordia student) as our Community-University Research Exchange (CURE) Coordinator on a six-month contract.

In May 2015, **Andrea Figueroa** joined the QPIRG team as our summer *School Schmool* co-coordinator, working on the *School Schmool* organizer in partnership with QPIRG McGill. Through a grant from Canada Summer Jobs, We also got to continue working with **Elena Stoodley** as our part-time Alternative Library coordinator.

QPIRG was supported by an external bookkeeper, **J. Charest**, a member of the Concordia community. In addition, QPIRG systems received the support of our network administrator and computer technician, **Amir Al-Shourbaji**, as well as our on-site IT coordinator, **Arash Aslani**.

Conflict Resolution Complaints Committee (CRCC)

The purpose of the Conflict Resolution/Complaints Committee 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 is voted by the QPIRG Concordia membership at the Annual General Meeting.

This year's CRCC committee participated in a conflict resolution training provided by Nathalie Cohen, a former QPIRG Concordia staffer. Otherwise, this year, as in previous years, there were no complaints to the CRCC, either formally or informally.

This year's CRCC (2014-15) was comprised of Ian Bradley-Perrin, Karina Chagnon, Milena Gioia, Taylor Lewis (appointed September 2, 2015), and Cassie Smith (resigned June 29, 2015).

QPIRG Concordia Board Committees

QPIRG Concordia's core Board committees are Policy, Finance, Programming & Working Groups and Staff Liaison, as well as the newer Accessibility Committee. QPIRG Board members, in conjunction with staff members, are active on the core committees (staff do not participate in the Staff Liaison Committee directly).

The **Policy Committee**, both through meetings, and through discussions at the board level, overviews QPIRG Concordia practices and guidelines, and when necessary, modifies and creates new policies. This year's policy priorities for QPIRG Concordia included looking more closely at accessibility and accessibility. The Policy committee in 2014-2015 was comprised of Shayla Chilliak, Alyce Dressner, Farhana Haque, Sophia Salem, and Thien Viet Quan and was coordinated by Christina Xydous (until February 2015) and Adrienne Pan (from May 2015).

The **Finance Committee** has the mandate is to give direction to financial decisions, advise the board on financial matters, develop transparent and accessible financial practices, and maintain a more in-depth understanding of QPIRG's financial position than is possible at the general board level. This year, the Finance Committee helped to oversee QPIRG's budgeting process and budget review. The Financial Reports section of this Annual Report provides information about our Financial Statements as well as our Audited Statements. The Finance Committee in 2014-2015 was comprised Shaina Agbayani, Otto Buxton, Shayla Chilliak, and Laura Macdonald and was coordinated by Noah Eidelman.

The **Programming and Working Groups Committee** has the joint responsibility for undertaking and supporting QPIRG programming initiatives, as well as supporting QPIRG's core projects and working groups. Some highlights from this year's programming are included in the next section. Aside from QPIRG Programming, we supported the multifold organizing,

events and projects undertaken by our 30 working groups, which are too numerous to list in this Annual Report. QPIRG Concordia's office space and related resources are an important and ongoing source of support of the diverse activities and organizing of our working groups. The Programming and Working Groups Committee in 2014-15 was comprised of Shaina Agbayani, Jess Mac, Sophia Salem, and Thien Viet Quan and was coordinated by Jaggi Singh.

The **Staff Liaison Committee** (SLC) plays a crucial role in maintaining good communications between staff and board. This work is a less visible but integral part of board contributions to QPIRG. The SLC took on tasks such as conducting check-ins with core and part-time staff, coordinating staff evaluations for core and grant-based staff, initiating staff appreciation efforts, and generally maintaining positive relations between employees and the employer. The SLC committee played an important role during the core staff transition this year, and was quite active this year. This year's Staff Liaison Committee was comprised of Otto Buxton, Shayla Chilliak, Alyce Dressner, and Dan Wolfe, with support from Kwaku Adomako and Laura Macdonald.

The creation of our **Accessibility Committee** has been one of the ways QPIRG has tried to center accessibility and issues of access in the work that we do. Although accessibility has – and continues to be – a priority at QPIRG, and we are continually working to try and make our space and our work as accessible as possible. One of the accomplishments of the committee this year was to finish and publicize the Accessibility Policy that is now posted on our website in both English and French. The Accessibility Committee in 2014-2015 was comprised of Shaina Agbayani, Otto Buxton, Jess Mac, and Sophia Salem and was coordinated by Noah Eidelman.

This year was quite active for CURE, especially since the hiring of a second CURE Coordinator, via a Quebec employment grant, in July. CURE outreached to new community groups, as well as faculty and students. We created updated materials to better outreach for the project, and completed updates to the CURE website. We had a strong presence during recent orientation activities, including many announcements in classrooms. We also presented “Community-based social justice” workshops during the year. Many Concordia students have reached out to us due to these concerted outreach efforts, and several students were able to successfully undertake research with community organizations. A new CURE Concordia initiative is the organization of Radical Research Week, to take place this fall between November 9-12.

Importantly, CURE Concordia successfully obtained more than 1000 undergraduate signatures (in just three days) in support of a core funding via a fee levy. CURE Concordia is planning to go a referendum of undergraduate students in late November. If CURE Concordia succeeds, it will become autonomous of QPIRG Concordia, but will still maintain a partnership.

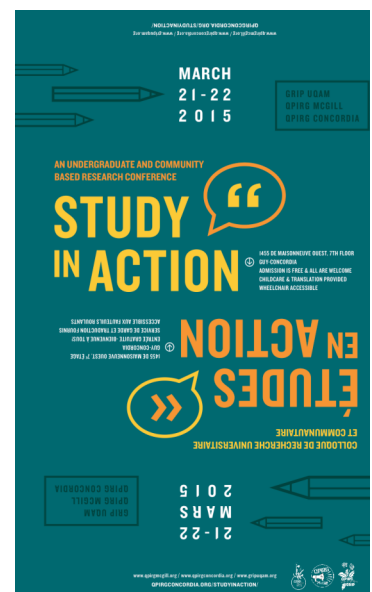
(This year CURE Concordia was coordinated by Concordia students Gwen Muir (Work Study) and Cassie Smith (Subvention Salariale), with the active support of Jaggi Singh as Programming and Working Groups Coordinator.)

Study In Action: An Undergraduate Conference Linking Students with Community Activism

Study In Action is a core project of QPIRG Concordia and QPIRG McGill, and promotes community-based social justice research on campus and in the community. This past year, we were also joined by QPIRG UQAM who will be continuing on as a partner to the conference! The aim of the conference is to provide an opportunity for students and people outside the academic community to come together to work on and discuss approaches to social and environmental justice, while creating a forum to highlight undergraduate research.

The ninth annual Study In Action Conference was held at Concordia University in Montreal on March 21 and 22, 2015, with an opening panel co-presented with Hip Hop Week at McGill University on March 19, followed by a weekend of workshops and panels at Concordia University on March 21 and 22.

This year, the conference featured workshops and panels on a wide range of topics, with presentations from undergraduate students as well as members of a number of community groups.



Over the course of three days, there was an opening panel (co-presented as part of Hip Hop Week), two full conference days of panels and workshops with over 30 speakers, and a closing panel.

This year's opening panel was a co-presentation with Hip Hop Week at McGill. The panel, "Fight the Power: A Panel on Hip Hop, Activism and Revolution," focused on ways in which Hip Hop has been a major mode of expression for marginalized communities. African-American and Latino artists used it to advance the Civil Rights movement and to highlight the disproportionate levels of violence and poverty that affected their communities as a result of racism; since then, artists of different communities have used rap to project their conflicts to engaged audiences around the world. Each of our panelists were 'hip hop activists', and discussed their work, in an effort to illuminate the ways rapping and music can serve as activism at both the global and community level. The panelists were: Bambu (Native Guns), Yes McCan (Dead Obies), Audrey Hudson (OCAD University), Dalton Higgins (author of Hip Hop World), and Dan Parker (local singer, rapper, activist, and educator); the panel was facilitated by Habib Siam.

The conference consisted of the following presentations by undergraduate students and community groups:

- "From the Ground Up: Making the Environmental Movement a Real Threat"
- "Facing Islamophobia in Contemporary Quebec: From Nationalism to Identity Politics"
- "This is Real Violence: Understanding Austerity in Practice"
- "Beyond Intersectionality 101: Women resisting racialized, gendered and sexualized violence and marginalization in transnational perspective"
- "In Whose Interest? Levelling Critiques at International Development, Voluntourism, and the Community Sector"
- "Highways to Hell (and Back): Indigenous Women, Indigenous Children, State Violence and Resistance"
- "Climate (In)Justice: Prisons, Policing, and Marginalized Identities"
- "Radical Theory and Praxis: Rethinking the Foundations"

The closing panel for this year's Study In Action conference was titled "When You Say You Love Me: Black Girls, Public Schools, and State Violence" and featured speakers d'bi young anitafrika, Nantali Indongo, Rachel Zellars, and Frances Waithe. This panel was centered on the experience of Black girls within the Canadian education system and discussed: the policing and construction of their femininity, their experiences of suspension, expulsion, and punishment, the emotional violence inflicted on Black girls, and the gendered results and implications of these experiences. As mothers, educators, performers, storytellers, and artists, the panelists spoke both to this experience and to the alternatives they have built themselves—from d'bi young's work with the sorplusi method, to the alternative schools run through DESTA and the Green School, and to the feminist work of "Hip Hop No Pop".

More information is available on the Study In Action website (www.qpirgconcordia.org/studyinaction) along with a full schedule of events, information on student and community group presenters, and details about presentations.

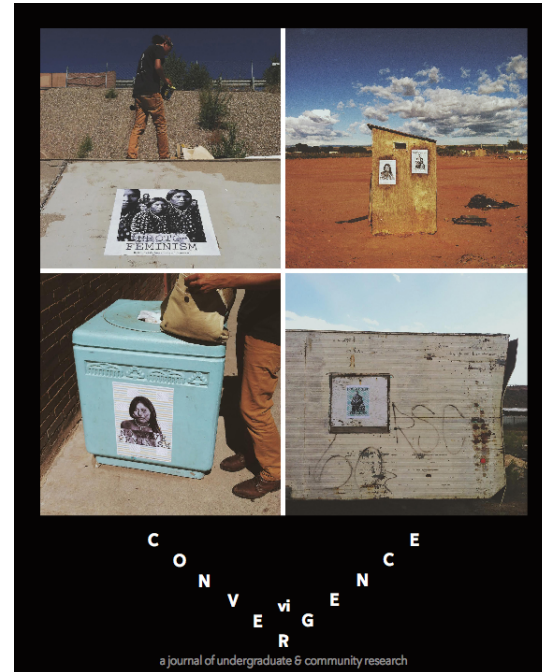
(The organizing committee for Study In Action was comprised of Eloïse Daigle, Noah Eidelman, Andrea Figueroa, Kristin Li, Danie Martin, Kama Maureemootoo, Kira Page, Farin Shore, Addison Woolsey, Christina Xydous, and Becca Yu)

Convergence Journal of Undergraduate & Community Research

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: <http://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 #5 included:

1. Asking for It: Critiquing Sexual Rhetoric on the Political Left and Moving Beyond the Sex-Positive/Negative Binary; by Kai Cheng Thom
2. Words are Stories: Reading Indigenous Women's Writing on Body and Land; by Alisha Mascarenhas
3. "Saving" the Child: The Genocidal Connections Between Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and Contemporary Foster Care; by Molly Swain
4. Window Seat: Looking Out from the Margins at Quebec's Anti-Charter of Values; by Delice Mugabo
5. Analysis d'un fragment du discours identitaire québécois: Répresentation de l'Autre et orientalisme; by Francis Dolan
6. Artwork Showcase (with contributions by Dan Buller, Jess Mac, K. Kersplebedeb, Mohamed Thiam, Zola, Jenny Galewski and Matt Corks, all part of Art Against The Charter)
7. Consensus and the Commons: Healthy Alternative Governance Processes Resisting Erasure by Global Capitalism and Colonialism; by Robin Reid-Fraser
8. Seeing the Forest for the Fags: Reimagining Sustainability as a Queer Project; by Cameron Butler
9. Voluntary Standards are Smoke Screens: The Case of Pacific Rabiales Energy in Colombia; by M'Lisa Colbert
10. Rad Enough: How-Anti-Capitalist Roots Shape the Actions and Identity of the Midnight Kitchen; by Brooke Nancekivell



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 both Convergence #5 and Convergence #6.

School Schmool Alternative Agenda



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 anti-authoritarian, 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!

(The 2015-2016 edition of School Schmool was coordinated by Andrea Figueroa and Xindi Li)

Disorientation

This year's alternative orientation program, **DISorientation**, took place from September 21st-25th. DisOrientation is a week of events which focus on a wide range of the topics and issues at the heart of QPIRG's social and environmental justice mandate, and offers new and returning students, as well as community members, an introduction to social and environmental issues as well as a window into the types of events, resources, and volunteer opportunities they can access throughout the rest of the year.

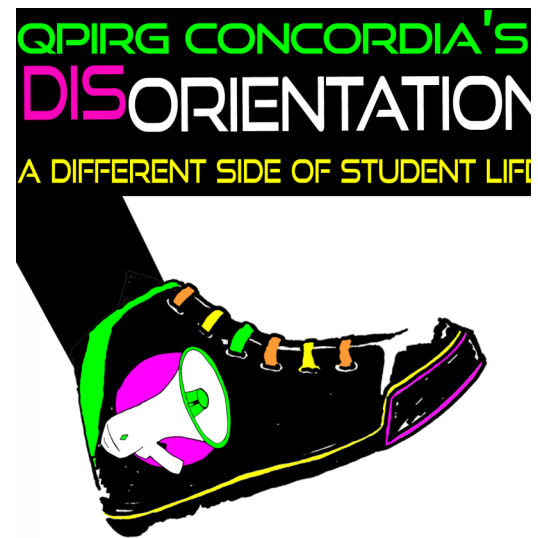
The schedule featured a number of events including workshops, a film screening, a radical history tour of Concordia's downtown campus, an outdoor tabling fair, and a bike tour. The events were all popular and the feedback from the week was very positive. More than two hundred people participated throughout the five days of programming, which took place on the downtown Concordia campus.

The workshops given as part of Disorientation this year were:

- * Solidarity Not Charity: Activism in Montreal
- * Community-Driven Social Justice Research
- * Consent Workshop (presented by the Centre for Gender Advocacy)
- * Visualizing Resistance: Feminist Art and Collective Organizing (presented by members of WSSA Concordia)
- * Re-appropriating Indigenous Identity (presented by Clifton Nicholas)

Other highlights from this year's Disorientation included:

- * a tabling fair at which a number of fee-levy groups on campus came together to highlight the numerous activities they do and issues they organize around
- * a radical history tour of Concordia's downtown campus, during which past and current social justice struggles at Concordia were highlighted
- * a bike tour of parts of downtown and Montreal's Southwest neighbourhood which focused on gentrification (and anti-gentrification), past and current social justice struggles, and some of the community organizations in St-Henri, Little Burgundy, and Pointe-St-Charles
- *The launch of this year's edition of Convergence community research journal



Other QPIRG supported Initiative and Projects

Beyond our six core projects, up to thirty working groups, board committees and ongoing programming, QPIRG Concordia also supports various initiatives and projects. We highlight three of them here:

Grassroots Resistance Archive

Since 2009, QPIRG Concordia has stored posters, flyers and publications that have been produced or posted in the space. The project has evolved and developed, with the crucial support of QPIRG Concordia staff, interns and volunteers. From storing posters and flyers into boxes, the project has become more organized; we have:

- organized the boxes of posters and flyers stored over the years;
- created a filing system with categories;
- created and maintained a website (<http://qipirgconcordia.org/posterarchive/>);
- created and updated a digital archive; maintain a physical archive (with map cases in the QPIRG C space).

All posters (QPIRG Concordia, Working Groups, Community Groups) have been digitalized. Flyers are stored physically, but could be digitalized in the future. The project has grown significantly, and recently took on an official name: The QPIRG Concordia Grassroots Resistance Archive.

The Grassroots Resistance Archive maintains physical and digital copies of the organizing by QPIRG Concordia, QPIRG Concordia Working Groups and allied Community Groups, though preservation of posters, flyers and publications (as well as banners, and potentially buttons, stickers and patches). We aim to provide easy public access to social justice archival materials. We want to retain a memory of social struggles of the past, and ensure that these materials can be used again, and be relevant, to current struggles.

This year the Grassroots Resistance Archive has been coordinated by Concordia student Swetha Keethri, with the active support of Vince Teetart and Jaggi Singh.

Fee-Levy Advocacy at Concordia

QPIRG Concordia continues to actively participate and contribute to Fee-Levy Advocacy at Concordia (FLAC) that brings together more than 15 campus-based fee-levy groups. Last year, we successfully won a referendum and defeated an attempt to undermine the autonomy and funding of fee-levy groups. This year, we have actively outreached together on-campus, co-organizing community tabling fairs at Bethune Square, the Hall Building, the JMSB Building, the EV Building, as well as Loyola. We collaborate together to promote Concordia community via the ConcordiaCommunity.org website. Fee levy groups also collaborate together on a common opt-out period, and support each other via trainings and policy.

Solidarity Concordia

QPIRG Concordia has taken clear stances against the policies of neo-liberalism and austerity, by both federal and provincial governments. Our main contribution to anti-austerity organizing has been through Solidarity Concordia. We made an active contribution to a one-week Teach-in against austerity, and we continue to contribute to Solidarity Concordia efforts, especially in support of students facing tribunals. During the summer, QPIRG participated actively in the re-visioning and structuring of Solidarity Concordia, and will be contributing to efforts this fall, including protests and potential strike actions.

QPIRG Concordia Summer Research Stipend

This year QPIRG Concordia was able to provide a research stipend to a project proposed by PINAY, described below:

Founded in 1991, PINAY is a grassroots organization dedicated to empowering and organizing Filipino women, particularly domestic workers, in their struggle for basic rights and welfare. The Institutional Memory Project will document and preserve PINAY's organizational history in the form of a digital archive. Making this history available for a greater audience benefits those who can learn from PINAY's grassroots activism and places PINAY within the larger context of social justice movements in Quebec. As PINAY continues to fight for fair treatment and equal rights for domestic workers, it is important to have an institutional memory the organization's successes and failures, as well as the experiences of its members as migrant and immigrant women workers.



The research stipend was coordinated by Leah Woolner.

QPIRG Concordia Programming and Working Groups Event Highlights (2014-2015)

(Note: this is not a comprehensive list of events, initiatives and projects organized, co-organized, co-sponsored, endorsed or supported by QPIRG Concordia, just some selected highlights.)

- Panel: Perspectives on Racism, Colonialism, and Police Violence (October 21, 2014)
- Justice for the Victims of Police Killing Coalition Annual Vigil (October 22, 2014)
- FALL FEAST: An anti-colonial evening of food, film and resistance with Denise Jourdain, Kanahus Manuel & Clifton Arihwakehte Nicholas (November 6, 2014)
- Triple-Launch for Three Prison Justice & Prison Abolition Publications: CERTAIN DAYS 2015: Land, Nature, Earth Liberation; SCAPEGOAT Issue 07: Incarceration; UNDOCUMENTED: The Architecture of Migrant Detention (December 4, 2014)
- International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers (supported by QPIRG Concordia) (December 17, 2014)
- Stopped by the police? Know your rights! A free concert with David Rovics, workshop & discussion on protests, tickets and your rights (January 12, 2015)
- Islands of Decolonial Love: Exploring Love on Occupied Land
A Presentation by Leanne Simpson (January 29, 2015)
- Prisoners Dilemma? Prison-Based Resistance and the Diffusion of Activism in Palestine, a presentation by Julie Norman (January 30, 2015)
- Radical Walking Tour of Concordia University (February 2, 2015)
- Teach-In: Against austerity, in support of a general strike, towards Spring 2015, organized with Solidarity Concordia (February 2-7, 2015)
- ANOTHER POLITICS: Talking Across Today's Transformative Movements , with Chris Dixon (February 11, 2015)
- Discussion: Resisting Gentrification in Downtown West (February 17, 2015)
- Forum & Demonstration: BUILDING THE WORLD WE WANT! By Women of Diverse Origins (March 8, 2015)
- Israeli Apartheid Week (March 8-17, 2015)

- Art Exhibition: Visualizing Palestine / The Art of Nidal El-Khairy (March 9, 2015)
- Panel/Community Dinner: Indigenous Resistance to Colonialism & Racism, with Glen Coulthard & Budour Hassan (March 12, 2015)
- STUDY IN ACTION! Undergraduate and Community Research Conference (March 21-22, 2015)
- AGAINST RACISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA: Gathering to oppose the demonstration of PEGIDA Quebec (March 28, 2015)
- Students & Workers United Against Austerity - Downtown West Gathering (May 1, 2015)
- Montreal Anarchist Bookfair (May 23-24, 2015)
- American Sign Language (ASL) courses at QPIRG Concordia (June-August 2015)
- Pervers/Cite: The Underside of Pride (August 6-16, 2015)
- Rage & Love/Amour: Qouleur 2015 (August 12-23, 2015)
- Queer Between the Covers Bookfair (August 15, 2015)
- Re-appropriating Indigenous Identity, with Clifton Nicholas (August 17, 2015)
- DISORIENTATION 2015: A different side of student life! 12 events over 5 days! (September 21-25, 2015)

and much much more!

Discretionary Funding and Endorsements:

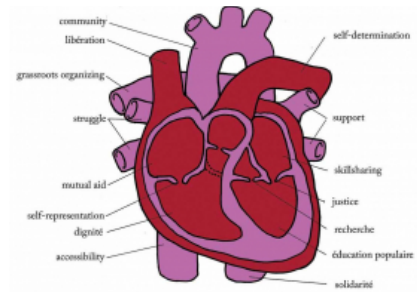
In addition to working group budgets, every fiscal year QPIRG creates a discretionary fund that is open to student and community initiatives that promote social justice in a variety of formats, from conferences and guest speakers, to demonstrations and radical art projects. This discretionary fund is accessed by making an application to the Board of Directors. The standard application form is accessible on the website (qpirgconcordia.org). Groups whose initiatives fall within the parameters of QPIRG's mandate generally receive between \$50 and \$375 per application and, if a group has more than one initiative throughout the year, it can re-apply for funding as new ideas take root. From October 2014 to September 2015, the Board of Directors made discretionary decisions usually once per month, allocating roughly \$375 per session.

In addition to discretionary funding, groups will sometime ask for QPIRG's endorsement of their event or project, meaning that they are seeking political support and help with promotion through our networks, rather than financial support. Below is a list of some of the groups who received discretionary support or endorsements from QPIRG in the past year:

- **Migrant Justice Documentary** (endorsement)
- **McGill Students in Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights** (discretionary)
- **BDS referendum campaign** (endorsement)
- **Anakbayan Montreal film screening and panel discussion** (discretionary)
- **HMTiles Festival / Studio XX "Conversation on Afrofuturism"** (discretionary)
- **To Change Everything pamphlet** (discretionary)
- **Qouleur** (discretionary)
- **Reseau de la Commission Populaire** (discretionary)
- **Cordillera Peoples Support Group** (discretionary)
- **Projet Bleu** (discretionary)
- **Event for PoC/mixed/indigenous folks with white family/caretakers** (endorsement)
- **Media Action Research Conference** (endorsement)
- **Solidarity Across Borders zine, "Beyond Austerity"** (discretionary)
- **Visibility and Violence in Late-Capitalist Digital Democracy** (discretionary)
- **Status 4 All march** (discretionary)
- **Black Canadian Studies Association (BCSA)** (discretionary)
- **Art & Anarchy 2015** (discretionary)
- **Aklas Rise Up Magazine** (discretionary)
- **The 25th Anniversary of the Occupation of Kanehsatà:ke** (discretionary)
- **Demilitarize McGill** (discretionary)
- **Aamjiwnaang Solidarity Toxic Tour** (discretionary)
- **Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Student Society (Sacomss)** (trainings)
- **Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (with Mike Jackson)** (discretionary)
- **"Debriefing Elsipogtog: The Anatomy of a Struggle" launch + fundraiser for Annie Clair's legal defence** (discretionary)
- **Concordia University Community Lecture Series on HIV/AIDS** (endorsement)
- **Land Defender Fundraiser Dinner** (discretionary)
- **Third Eye Collective trainings on transformative justice** (discretionary)

Working Groups 2014-2015:

Working Groups are the heart of the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at Concordia in Montreal. They are small groups of volunteers who organize around a specific issue, idea, project, or campaign. Groups usually organize around ongoing or long-term issues, though some focus on a particular time-sensitive theme or topic. QPIRG supports Working Groups with use of our space and resources, staff guidance, as well as an annual budget. Internally, we distinguish between Solidarity Groups, who are supported by QPIRG Concordia but do not receive a budget, and Working Groups who receive a budget.



The following were working groups at QPIRG Concordia during the 2014-2015 year:

Accessibilize Montreal!

Accessibilize Montreal! aims to make Montreal a more accessible place in every way: from the mindsets and interactions between Montrealers to the infrastructure that surrounds us. By holding workshops like Why Accessibilize Montreal, and Gender; Disability and Sexuality: Real Talk with Accessibilize Montreal, we challenge mainstream perceptions of disability, and through advocacy and direct action we protest transit and systemic discrimination. Join us in our movement beyond ableism and a respect of diversity!

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1300

Anti-Canada Committee

The Anti-Canada Committee works to undertake popular education activities and actions to raise awareness and oppose Canadian colonialism and neo-colonialism, specifically within the context of the upcoming 150th Canadian confederation celebrations to take place in 2017 (the 150th anniversary of the 1867 Confederation). Already, the Canadian government has started a multi-million dollar campaign to whitewash Canadian colonialism in the lead-up to 2017. 2017 itself will be full of activities from coast-to-coast to “celebrate” Canada. Our committee, in a modest way, wants to counteract that mainstream propaganda by organizing and supporting popular education activities that focus on resistance to Canadian (and Quebec) colonialism, capitalism and racism.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$700

Asian Arts Freedom School

The Asian Arts’ Freedom School is a community-based popular education collective whose mission is to use the creative arts and anti-oppressive methods to bring together racialized, Indigenous, mixed-race, and People of Colour identified individuals in order to build solidarity and share practical skills for organizing, peer support, art creation, and survival.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$250

C-Uni-T (Community-University Talks)

Community-University Talks is a collective of students, teachers, 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 in which the diversity of experiences and strengths of Black communities are centred.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$250

Certain Days Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar Collective

The Certain Days Political Prisoner Calendar Committee works to support, educate about and fundraise for political prisoners through the production of a yearly calendar. The calendar is a project produced by organizers in Montreal and Toronto, with the support of 3 political prisoners in upstate New York. We work with an anti-imperialist, anti-racist, feminist, queer and trans positive perspective to help free our movement's political prisoners.

Solidarity Group; no budget from QPIRG Concordia

CIEM (Colectivo de Inmigrantes Españoles en Montreal)

We are a group of immigrants from Spain and Spanish descended individuals & friends in Montreal who raise awareness against the current worldwide neoliberal establishment and its pro-austerity policies. We also collaborate with migrant justice groups in Montreal aiming to improving their status and rights.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$100

Collectif opposé à la brutalité policière (COBP)

Le Collectif Opposé à la Brutalité Policière (COBP) est un groupe autonome qui regroupe des personnes victimes, témoins et/ou concernés par la brutalité policière et tout abus perpétré par la police. Le COBP a pour but non seulement de dénoncer les harcèlements, violences, intimidation, arrestations et abus de pouvoirs policiers et d'informer les gens sur leurs droits face à la police, mais aussi de soutenir les victimes en les aidant par exemple à porter plainte en déontologie et à faire face à des accusations abusives.

2014-2015 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$350

Contempt of Court/Outrage au tribunal

The Contempt of Court legal clinic is an initiative by and for activists whose mission is to support those having to deal with the legal system as a result of political activity or actions that fit within our principles. Our work is grounded in solidarity and is complementary to work of other support and legal defense groups and initiatives. Whether it's through our monthly or bi-monthly clinics, individual support or workshops on specific legal charges, we seek to recognize activists' legal experience and want to pool our shared experience with the judicial system, be it theoretical or practical. Our goal is to contribute to a shifting of the balance of power with regards to the judicial system that isn't simply on a case by case basis. Join us if you are facing charges or looking to file a complaint or would like to share your own experience or support.

2014-2015 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$250

Convergence des luttes anticapitalistes (CLAC)

La Convergence des luttes anticapitalistes – Montréal est un espace de convergence et de coordination pour le milieu anticapitaliste radical de la région de Montréal. La CLAC a le mandat de porter publiquement le discours anticapitaliste par l'organisation de diverses campagnes et manifestations, dont la mobilisation anticapitaliste du 1er mai à chaque année. La CLAC se conforme à un mode de fonctionnement antiautoritaire et adhère aux principes de l'Action Mondiale des Peuples. La CLAC est un espace explicitement anticapitaliste, antipatriarcal, antiautoritaire et anticolonialiste.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1200

Cordillera People Support Group

We are in the process of exploring the interests, needs, and experiences of indigenous Filipinos in the community and their general and specific issues close to them. Our objective is to gather information on issues of their concerns and share experiences between each other. Later on, we can develop participatory action based research and unite on what actions we can take that are needed to change our common issues.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$550

L'école-libre radicale de Mtl Rad school

The Rad School provides a space for children to pursue their own interests, explore at their own pace and participate in a democratic community. They are encouraged to learn what they are passionate about, to explore, question, discover and grow! This working group is focused on making student centered learning available to everyone, freedom in education for all!

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$100

Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition (IWTSHRC)

The Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition is an Indigenous collective. We organize within an Indigenous feminist and Two-Spirit framework. We work in collaboration with Santé Publique and are cleared to distribute harm reductive materials in Tiotia:ke (Montreal). Examples of harm reductive materials include needles, straight shooters, and other materials for safer drug use. We also distribute sexual health materials such as pregnancy tests and safer sex materials.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1500

Justice for the Victims of Police Killings

The Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition brings together directly affected families and friends of the victims of police killings, as well as their allies. Our main goals and purpose as a coalition are to remember the victims who lost their lives due to police violence, impunity and abuse; and to support their families and friends in any way we can. The Coalition follows from years of struggle and support for the families and friends of police killing victims. The Coalition currently involves the family members and friends of Anas Bennis, Claudio Castagnetta, Ben Matson, Quilem Registre, Gladys Tolley, Jean-Francois Nadreau and Fredy Villanueva, all of whom died as a direct result of police actions and interventions. We continue to reach out to family and friends of other victims of police killings.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$950

Mad Pride Collective

We're a fabulous collective by and for folks identifying as mad, sad, crazy, hyper-emotional, mentally ill/different, psychiatric survivors/consumers and/or questioning. We meet regularly for mad hangouts and support groups, we have a mental health distro and we participate in /give workshops on radical mental health.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$450

Montreal Anarchist Bookfair Collective

The Montreal Anarchist Bookfair and month-long Festival of Anarchy (May 2015) bring together anarchist ideas and practice, through words, images, music, theatre and day-to-day struggles for justice, dignity and collective liberation. The Bookfair and Festival are as much for people who don't necessarily consider themselves anarchists, but are curious about anarchism, as they are spaces for anarchists to meet, network and share in a spirit of respect and solidarity. All are welcome.

Solidarity Group; no budget from QPIRG Concordia

Montreal Childcare Collective

The Childcare Collective offers strategic childcare in response to the fact that childcare is frequently overlooked and underappreciated. We aim to assist parents, caregivers, youth and children, including but not limited to low-income communities, non-status and immigrant communities, communities of colour, and queer and trans communities.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$550

Not Fine

Not Fine Concordia aims to provide a safe, anonymous, non-judgmental and non-oppressive space for students to discuss their experiences with mental health. We want to increase awareness about campus and community resources, and fill the gap in service by connecting students to one another, and providing space for us to support each other.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$175

Open Door Books Montreal

The Open Door Books (ODB) collective is part of an informal network of Books to Prisoners programs throughout North America. ODB seeks to support and work in solidarity with imprisoned people. We believe that prisons and the (in)justice system act as institutions of social control and oppression, further targeting marginalized people as a result of patriarchy, racism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, disableism, and colonialism.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1450

Prisoner Correspondence Project

The Prisoner Correspondence Project is a collectively-run initiative based out of Montreal, Quebec. It coordinates a direct-correspondence program for gay, lesbian, transsexual, transgender, gendervariant, two-spirit, intersex, bisexual and queer inmates in Canada and the United States, linking these inmates with people a part of these same communities outside of prison. In addition, it coordinates a resource library of information regarding harm reduction practice (safer sex, safer drug-use, clean needle care), HIV and HEPC prevention, homophobia, transphobia, coming out, etc. The project also aims to make prisoner justice and prisoner solidarity a priority within queer movements on the outside through events like film screenings, workshops, and panel discussions which touch on the broader issues relating to criminalization and incarceration of queers and transfolk.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1700

Oouleur Collective

We are a grass-roots collective of artists, performers, writers and political activists based in Montreal, Quebec who have decided to volunteer our time and energy to bring awareness of racialized queer identities and experiences to the wider public. We work to bridge the gaps between communities and create an open space for voices that all too often go unheard.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1000

Queer Between The Covers

Queer Between the Covers is a volunteer collective that promotes and provides access to queer materials in Montreal. We organize an annual queer book fair, which attracts hundreds of people, and assembles both local and out-of-town authors, zinesters, independent bookstores, publishers, and community groups. The collective also runs a queer book/zine distro and organizes smaller queer-lit events.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$900

Re-Con

Re-Con is a prisoner-initiated re-integration program created in 1999. The group is made up of people serving a life sentence at the Federal Training Center in Laval, formerly incarcerated members now serving their sentence on parole, and outside volunteers. It is Re-Con's main goal to establish links between prisoners and the community after a long period of incarceration and isolation. We aim to diminish the effects of institutionalization through personal development workshops and by introducing those incarcerated to community resources which may help them re-integrate into society upon their release from prison. To this end, weekly meetings that take place both inside and outside the prison focus on exploring the various services, resources, and networks available outside the prison walls.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1600

Sidetracks

We are a superstar screen-printing team of volunteers whose mandate is to make screen-printing accessible to projects and organizations working for social change. Sidetracks was born out of the Ste-Emilie Skillshare and works to uphold its mandate.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1000

Solidarity Across Borders

Solidarity Across Borders is a Montreal-based network engaged in the struggle for justice and dignity of im/migrants and refugees. We are comprised of migrants, immigrants, refugees and allies, and come together in support of our main demands: the regularization of all migrants living with precarious status (Status for ALL!), an end to deportations and detentions, and the abolition of double punishment of migrants with criminal records. We are actively building a "Solidarity City" campaign, which aims to build networks of solidarity and mutual aid within the city of Montreal as well as demanding that essential services be accessible to 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 pity or charity, but rather solidarity and mutual aid.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$1300

Soundteam/Équipe Sonore

Équipe Sonore/Soundteam provides sound services for Montreal area community groups that cannot afford to pay professional rates. We build, maintain and operate P.A. systems for community events, rallies, conferences and performances. We also strive to disseminate and democratize the technical knowledge of audio production systems. Our purpose is to support people's grassroots initiatives and act in the interests of communities and their struggles for economic and political justice.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$500

Ste Emilie Skillshare

The Ste-Emilie Skillshare is a community art space devoted to empowerment, self-determination and collective liberation. It is a space run by and for people who are trans, two-spirit, queer, Indigenous and/or people of colour* and friends. As a collective of activists and artists, we work within an anti-oppression framework toward social and economic transformation. We share skills and resources to create art in the spirit of self-representation and revolution.

Solidarity Group; no budget from QPIRG Concordia

Women of Diverse Origins (8th March Committee)

Women of Diverse Origins is a grassroots anti-imperialist women's network that organizes public events particularly around International Women's Day, to educate and discuss the links between global policies and the situation of women locally, share experiences of struggle and mobilize against injustice and for the right of all to live with dignity.

2014-15 budget from QPIRG Concordia: \$875

Draft Financial Statements - Unaudited

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT:

October 2014 – AUGUST 2015

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FISCAL YEAR END IS AUGUST 2015

REVENUES:

Concordia Student Fees	224,565	
Interest Revenue	0	
Programming Revenue	2,500	
Miscellaneous Income and Donations	0	
Alternative Resource Publication	3,600	
Study In Action 2015	800	
Employment Grants	11,507	
TOTAL REVENUES:		<u>242,972</u>

EXPENSES:

Working Groups		<u>17,882</u>
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Projects

Orientation, Programming and Accessibility	8,631	
External Discretionary Fund	3,775	
Community-University Research Exchange (CURE)	867	
Alternative Resource Library	589	
Volunteer Training and Support (Board)	1,822	
Summer Stipend Program	3,000	
Advertising and Promotions	762	
Study In Action	2,332	
Publications	6,257	
Internal Initiatives (Misc.)	0	
Total Projects		<u>28,035</u>

Permanent Staff Expenses

Salaries	95,027	
Mandatory Employment Costs	10,573	
Staff Well-Being Fund & CSU Health Plan	4,118	
Vacation Pay	0	
Total Permanent Staff Expenses		<u>109,718</u>

Grant Staff Expenses

22,860

Administrative & Operational Expenses

Board Elections	688	
Employer and Staff Expenses	426	
Campaigns and Referendum	0	
Bookkeeping and Audit Expenses	7,035	
Computer Technical Support	3,616	
Photocopies & Office Supplies	5,770	

Communications Expenses	2,753	
Rent and Electricity	40,253	
Space Improvement and Maintenance	1,755	
Legal & Professional Fees	500	
Administrative Fees	699	
Insurance	1,035	
Refund Fees	60	
Petty Cash Short/Over	2	
Suspense	0	
Total Administrative & Operational Expenses		<u>64,592</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES:		<u>243,087</u>
NET PROFIT/LOSS		<u><u>-115</u></u>

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

Summary

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of
QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA) which comprise the statement of financial position as at August 31, 2014, and the statements of changes in net asset, operations and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. These procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA) as at August 31, 2014, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

APSV Chartered Professional Accountants inc.

APSV Chartered Professional Accountants inc.¹

Montreal, February 26, 2015

¹ By Caroline Pombert, CPA auditor, CA

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
REVENUES		
Students fees	229 061	229 655
Grants - Summer employment	21 759	20 935
Interest and other revenues	189	2 290
	251 009	252 880
EXPENSES		
Salaries and fringe benefits	120 894	117 187
Working groups and projects costs (note 3)	52 619	46 956
Rent	37 509	44 038
Taxes and permits	7 214	10 537
Office expenses	6 072	2 863
Professional fees	5 482	8 429
Equipment rental	5 256	5 058
Telecommunications	2 931	2 787
Retreats and meetings	2 005	3 319
Insurance	1 253	960
Depreciation of fixed assets	1 041	1 055
Bad debts	825	185
Interest and bank charges	526	630
Advertising and promotion	359	1 041
Electricity	-	1 267
	243 986	246 312
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	7 023	6 568

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)

CHANGES IN NET ASSET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2014

	2014			2013
	Invested in fixed assets	Internally restricted (note 6)	Unrestricted	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	2 844	10 341	55 988	69 173
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	(1 041)	-	8 064	6 568
Net restriction of the year	-	35	(35)	-
Acquisition of fixed assets	265	-	(265)	-
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	2 068	10 376	63 752	69 173

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	97 662	73 153
Reserved cash - external projects	18 313	4 164
Grants receivable	4 702	1 447
Accounts receivable	4 595	3 255
Prepaid expenses	244	244
	125 516	82 263
RENT DEPOSITS	3 240	3 240
FIXED ASSETS (note 4)	2 068	2 844
	130 824	88 347
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 5)	36 315	15 010
Accounts payable - external projects	18 313	4 164
	54 628	19 174
NET ASSET		
INVESTED IN FIXED ASSETS	2 068	2 844
INTERNALLY RESTRICTED (note 6)	10 376	10 341
UNRESTRICTED	63 752	55 988
	76 196	69 173
	130 824	88 347

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)

CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2014

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
	\$	\$
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess of revenues over expenses	7 023	6 568
Non-cash item		
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>1 041</u>	<u>1 055</u>
	<u>8 064</u>	<u>7 623</u>
Net change in non-cash working capital items		
Grants receivable	(3 255)	15 298
Accounts receivable	(1 340)	2 102
Prepaid expenses	-	(3)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	21 305	(9 852)
Deferred revenues -external projects	<u>14 149</u>	<u>(1 459)</u>
	<u>30 859</u>	<u>6 086</u>
Cash flows from operating activities	<u>38 923</u>	<u>13 709</u>
 INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Investment in fixed assets and cash flows used in investing activities	<u>(265)</u>	<u>(221)</u>
 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS INCREASE	38 658	13 488
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>77 317</u>	<u>63 829</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR	<u><u>115 975</u></u>	<u><u>77 317</u></u>
 Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash on hand and reserved cash - external projects.		
Cash	97 662	73 153
Reserved cash - external projects	<u>18 313</u>	<u>4 164</u>
	<u><u>115 975</u></u>	<u><u>77 317</u></u>

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

1- GOVERNING STATUTES AND PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA) is a not-for-profit organization and was incorporated under Part III of the Quebec Companies Act on May 5, 1992.

It is exempted of income taxes.

The objectives of the organization are the following:

- to contribute to social progress in Quebec and to encourage students to act as responsible citizens;
- to promote amongst other things, social justice, a healthy environment, participatory democracy, and governmental and corporate responsibility;
- to carry out projects related to research, education and social action;
- to promote active participation of more people in the democratic functioning of the organization;
- to develop, encourage, and coordinate the Quebec PIRG (Public Interest Research Group) movement;
- to receive donations, bequests, and other monetary contributions of similar nature, in securities or real estate, and to administer these donations and contributions; to organize membership campaigns with the goal of fundraising for the financial needs of the organization;
- to not undertake activities except for activities that are not-for-profit and without the intention of monetary gain for the organization's members;
- to use all profits or other organizational surpluses to facilitate the accomplishment of these objects;
- to do all that is pertinent and necessary for the promotion and achievement of these objectives.

2- ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts recorded in the financial statements and notes to the financial statements. These estimates are based on management's best knowledge of current events and actions that the organization may undertake in the future. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revenue recognition

Contributions

contributions restricted for future period expenses are deffered and are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Students fees

Membership are recognized as revenue proportionately over the period they are effective.

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

2- ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Contributed supplies and services

The organization recognizes contributed supplies and services when the fair value of these contributions can be reasonably estimated and if it would have had to otherwise acquire these supplies and services for its normal operations. In such cases, the contributed supplies and services are valued at fair value.

Fixed assets

Fixed assets are recorded at cost and are depreciated on a declining balance basis over their estimated useful lives at the following rates :

	<u>Rates</u>
Computer equipment	30%
Furniture and fixtures	20%

Financial instruments

The organization initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value. They are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost consist of cash, reserved cash and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost consist of accounts payable.

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

3- WORKING GROUPS AND PROJECTS COSTS

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Workstudy	14 613	10 963
Alternative Resource Publication	4 253	5 041
Prisoner Correspondence Project	3 633	1 899
Q-team	2 591	925
External Disc Fund	2 545	3 473
Central Programming	2 490	2 503
Summer Stipend-SAB Guide	2 351	200
Study in Action	2 349	4 703
Re-con	1 798	1 395
Convergence	1 708	22
Open Door Books	1 620	1 785
CLAC	1 599	572
Solidarity Accross Borders	1 280	1 300
Co-sponsorships	1 081	873
Dignidad Migrante	1 007	255
Summer Stipend	931	-
Montreal Sound Team	841	1 595
Rad school	800	42
Justice for Victims of Police	619	472
Resource Library	535	1 476
Alternative Orientation	500	497
C.U.R.E	471	325
Childcare Collective	471	324
Calendar Commitee	431	278
Mad Pride Montreal	409	300
Life after life	300	
Women of Diverse Origins	254	
Accessibility	250	180
APAM	250	
Collective Against Police Brutality	167	-
Anti-Colonial Solidarity Collective	151	1 100
Accessibilize Montreal	123	
IWTSHRC	71	
Ste Emilie Skill Share	58	1 414
Autonomous Social center	28	900
CIEM	20	
M.U.R.	16	274
Qouleur Qollective	5	
People's Commission Network	-	988
Summer Stipend-Anti-Gentrification	-	559
Association Liberté Expression	-	300
Termite Collective	-	58
Right to the City	-	3
Pros and Cons	-	(38)
	<u>52 619</u>	<u>46 956</u>

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

4- FIXED ASSETS

	2014		2013	
	Cost	Accumu- lated depreciation	Net book value	Net book Value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Computer equipment	45 458	43 998	1 460	2 083
Furniture and fixtures	4 396	3 788	608	761
	<u>49 854</u>	<u>47 786</u>	<u>2 068</u>	<u>2 844</u>

5- ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Accounts payable and accrued charges	29 974	10 116
Salaries and vacation	-	134
Government remittances	6 341	4 760
	<u>36 315</u>	<u>15 010</u>

6- RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

The board of directors decided to allocate a total amount of \$ 10,376 for working groups in 2014-2015. Those nets assets cannot be used for another purpose unless duly authorized by the board of directors.

7- COMMITMENTS

The organization has entered into a long-term lease agreement for the rental of office space expiring in September 2019. The total rent is adjusted annually based on price consumer index as per Statistic Canada. The organization also entered into a lease for equipment rental which call for monthly payments of \$ 399, expiring in December 2016.

Minimum lease payments for the next years are as follows :

	\$
2015	36 407
2016	39 347
2017	38 176
2018	36 960
2019	38 500

QUEBEC PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (CONCORDIA)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2014

8- FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Credit risk

failing to discharge an obligation. The financial instruments that potentially expose the organization to credit risk are accounts and grants receivable. Grants receivable are analyzed on an ongoing basis to ensure their renewals.

9- COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The presentation of certain accounts of previous year has been changed to conform with the presentation adopted for current year.

