

no more potlucks

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# EDITORIAL

We're happy to say we are celebrating our one-year anniversary here at the NMP headquarters. One year of absolutely amazing contributions—thank you to everyone who made this possible.

Merci, sincèrement, à nos contributrices et nos contributeurs de 2009.

If you've missed out on some of the action—not to worry—you can buy your print copies directly from the publishers online.

Also, our Dykes on Mykes podcasts are updated! Thanks Dayna.

In case you are wondering, we chose the theme of WOUND for this special issue as an opportunity to declare our future directions. We're post-wound. By post-wound we mean and strive to get past the discourse of the duped, the victim, the target, to instead incorporate history, struggle, trauma, and resistance into a new political voice. This voice pays respect to the past by showing what we have learned (and continue to learn) and by making use of these new tactics in an embodied, artistic, and experiential way. Think post-wound: think less like the gaping hole from Cronenberg's *Crash*

scenes and more like the scar on Sharon Stone's neck. WOUND as in: injury, a torn surface, an opening into the body. Une déchirure, plaie. It is the path inside, the mark it leaves behind. A scar, gash, lesion, or laceration.

Parlant de gale, Massime Dousset aime les arracher.

Blessure affective : trauma, choc, douleur, offense, affront, torture, détresse, deuil, tourment, angoisse, chagrin, pincement au cœur, perte. À la suite d'une blessure, les mécanismes corporels doivent travailler de concert au rétablissement du corps.

Read as a healing project, Liz Singer explains the process as bittersweet cure: "this video, is where in part, I become able again."

I almost cried when I read Anna Camilleri's piece. I've been thinking about the three lessons she learned from her mother—on repeat in my brain—for the past few days.

Jolene Pozniak writes about Tamar Tembeck's *Auto/pathographies*, a multi-media multi-artist exhibition exploring head-on, the complex nature of illness, its relation to medicine and the body, the role and limitations of empathy, and the notions of normal and healthy.

In *ANPO*, acclaimed documentary maker Linda Hoaglund demonstrates the growing tensions due to Japanese resistance to U.S. military bases, and the cultural legacy of those protests.

In conversation with Kim Sawchuk, Shannon Bell talks about fast feminism, fucking with the signs of aging, and speed and accidents.

Gracia Dyer Jalea and Liz Miller's project *Mapping Memories* invites youth with refugee experience to share their personal stories with a greater public—an opportunity that they are rarely afforded.

Jules Pidduck's *Poly* asks the reader to reconsider the underpinnings of feminism in the context of December

6 1989 events at the École Polytechnique in Montreal, and its memorializing.

In *The Kenney Doctrine: Temporary Workers Trump Refugees in Canada* Harsha Walia outlines the problems with the fundamental realignment in Canadian immigration policy.

Working with “video, poetry, and a queer equation to fathom the uncanny process” Roewan Crowe’s digShift project is drawn from a site-specific artistic exploration and performance of digging into the shifting layers of meaning at an abandoned gas station in Elstow, Saskatchewan.

Aurore nous présente le collectif Urban Porn, qui, à l’occasion du festival de cinéma Pink Screens à Bruxelles, ont fait une intervention DIY agit prop... des touffes en situ !

NMP’s Dayna McLeod chats with cover photographer Ally Picard as she describes her practice, process and the importance of community in her work.

Regular contributor, Nicholas Little’s article addresses the ‘two solitudes’ of French and English.

This month’s *Illustrated Gentleman* by Elisha speaks to our general discomfort for shopping.

Also, be sure to listen to an audio recording and read 3 poems and by Neil Eustache. Amazing.

Special thank you to Miriam Ginestier and all the Meow Mixers for the incredible support at the Meow Mix in

Montreal in December. The funds raised at this event will allow us to live on, for at least another year. If you would like to contribute to NMP, please donate even a small amount. Every little bit helps, and we love bringing you amazing content 6 times a year!

Thank you to copy editors for this issue: Tamara Shepherd, Jenn Clamen, Lindsay Shane, and Renuka Chaturvedi.

Thank you for an amazing year of NMP: m-c MacPhee, Dayna McLeod, Gabriel Chagnon, Fabien Rose, Lukas Blakk, Nicholas Little, Elisha Lim, Mathilde Géromin, Andrea Zeffiro, Jeff Traynor, Deirdre Logue, Allyson Mitchell, Gigi Basanta, Granny Boots, and Kim Sawchuk.

Welcome Momoko Allard—our new publishing assistant!

Be sure to purchase your print copy, or download the PDF. This issue will also be available in the free and open ePub format in the next few weeks. I do believe we are the first arts journal in Canada to offer online, print-on-demand, and soon, ePub, versions of the publication.

You may also subscribe to NMP for a mere 30 dollars a year. When you think of it, this is only 2 dollars and 50 cents per issue. Subscribe now: it’s easy and fast.

As always, do comment on the articles—contributors are always grateful for this. Dear readers, we are still and always committed to bringing forward a wild and wayward magazine bimonthly.

*Mél Hogan*

# DIGSHIFT: A QUEER RECLAMATION OF THE IMAGINED WEST

Roewan Crowe

She's been watching *Unforgiven* for days now, replaying the violence of this western over and over again. She tries to stretch out her body, tough and tight, legs and ankles twisted, her black boots welded together, but her body will not respond. She's been seized tight by the story, held captive by the heroic Western tale. How is it that she finds herself riding through mud and blood and tales of revenge?

The wide horizon has captured her imagination, this line where land meets sky. It flickers open endless possibilities. There in the distance is the legendary rise of John Ford's Monument Valley looming before her. The unyielding masculinity of a towering John Wayne also shadows the land. A stagecoach ride through the infamous canyons and you will surely discover a small community living in fear. A train pulls into town at high noon, hauling in danger down the steel tracks of progress. The expansionist westward movement of empire covers the prairies. Soon guns are the law of the land. Revenge, murder and vigilante justice become facts of life. In this western imaginary, the landscape has been emptied out of its Indigenous first residents, replaced by cowboys and farmers, settlers and Indians. New stories of patriarchal familial succession take the stage.

Captivity narratives fill the land with burning wagons, screaming white women and the cavalry rushing in. Manifest destiny writ large.

This is how the classic Hollywood Western story goes—an enduring myth, some even say history (Walker 2001). The collision of North American colonial history and Hollywood Western narratives created this space. The “classic Western” (Wright 1975) produced this powerful colonial myth that has layered itself upon the land, our bodies, and our collective imaginary. Violence is at the core of these narratives.

*digShift* is firmly located in my “western phase,” in which I explore the imaginary, geographical and cultural landscape that we call the WEST. I am interested in the tactical deployment of self-reflexivity and transformational artistic practices. Living and working in Canada necessitates artistic production and creation that acknowledges the context of colonization in North America. I situate myself within the frame of the traumatic Western narrative as a queer feminist settler who is invested in wrestling with this history. I recognize that the legacy of the West is still replicating itself. I enter into this fatal wounded environment—a violent and xenophobic nar-

native—to explore the possibilities that open up when I inhabit both the story and the form of the Western. I work to subvert, play and reckon with these tales of trauma. This is my artistic resistance.

*digShift* (2007) is a multi-channel video installation. It consists of four large projections: three individual video poems, “Landscape,” “Window,” and “Dig”; and a fourth video projection entitled “*digShift*,” which contains three split-screen poems, entitled “*digShift*,” “Shadow,” and “Inside.” A wall-sized queer equation accompanies the four video poem projections. The video poems are orchestrated to draw the viewer across the darkened space of the gallery, from one video poem to another, to move the viewer emotionally and physically. The videos come on one after another—a slow building until the words, music and image layer each other. The piece takes 20 minutes to view in its entirety. I conceptualize it as “slow art” where you wait for something to happen, not unlike time spent in any rural location on the side of the highway. *Second dig*, an artist chapbook published by *As We Try and Sleep Press*, accompanied the exhibit.

Viewable online at <http://nomorepotlucks.org/article/wound-no7/digShift-queer-reclamation-imagined-west> are three video poems that were projected as part of the installation:

“Landscape”



“Window”



“Dig”



The video split screen poem is excerpted from a collection called *digShift*, from which the title of the show was taken. “Shadow”



The work of *digShift* is drawn from a site-specific artistic exploration and performance where I dig into the shifting layers of meaning at an abandoned gas station in Elstow, Saskatchewan, just 20 minutes southwest of Saskatoon on the Yellowhead Highway (Highway 16). In *digShift*, I work with video, poetry, and a queer equation to fathom the uncanny process that unfolded here. Literally and metaphorically, I dig deep into the personal, historical and environmental layers of the land, to perform a reclamation in collaboration with this wounded terrain. I explore this abandoned landscape to reclaim a personal history, to explore the history of colonization, to map the industrial expansion and the rural decline following it—from railroads to factory farms to oil fields—and to imagine and perform an artistic, land-based reclamation.

Canadian highways are profoundly marked by abandoned industrial landscapes. I was particularly drawn to this station just outside of Saskatoon. For over 15 years, I have reluctantly yet faithfully returned to this site from my past to take photographs, perform, write, theorize, dig and shoot video in an attempt to imagine some sort of meaningful reclamation for this compelling and toxic landscape. Through various media, I engaged with the site to try to understand why this land/memory site has so strongly attached itself to me. As a child, my family lived briefly out back of the gas station in a trailer. It was a typical Saskatchewan story of the poor and working class in the 1960s. My father worked in the potash mine, and my mother worked at the restaurant in the gas station. While this place holds a personal connection for me, it took on a more vivid significance over the years. The gas station came to symbolize the excesses of the West—both the prairie West and the “first world” West—and the processes of colonization, industrialization and environmental destruction.

During my artistic engagement over the years, I tried unsuccessfully to refuse and sever my connection to this place. But as I made art about it I came to understand and accept my responsibility as steward to this site. Over time, with sustained artistic engagement and

“digging,” my final artistic task became clear: I imagined removing the rusting tanks that lay beneath the earth, leaking contaminants into the soil and ground water. After preliminary research and planning, I returned to the gas station in May 2006 to gather more information about who owned the site so I could begin to write grants in order to get the gas tanks removed. When I returned to the site in August 2006 with a plan to present to the small village, I learned that in the 3 months since my last trip, the tanks had actually been removed and the land sold.

The removal of the tanks from this wounded site left me feeling released from my attachment and responsibility. I also felt profoundly hopeful and I had many questions. How shall I understand the process of this project, namely the potential of the imagination to effect real-life transformations? Arjun Appadurai writes, “The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order” (1996). How do we imagine change? How do we make material that which we imagine? How do we think and make hope? Here I turn to Gayatri Spivak, who claims that “an appeal to the imagination is a material practice” (Spivak 2004: 616). Where might I go with my artistic practice if I claimed that it was through artistic imagination and a commitment to sustained artistic process that the tanks were actually removed from the ground? How did my work with the abandoned gas station over the many years, and the art that I created from the site, intervene to transform an abandoned gas station into a landscape of hope and possibility?



The artist thanks Manitoba Art Council, Winnipeg Arts Council, MAWA, Video Pool Media Arts Centre, Plug In ICA, Rebecca Belmore, Nicole Brossard, Jarvis Brownlie, Leah Decter, Nadin Gilroy, Ken Gregory (mixing sound), Garth Hardy (original composition), Faye HeavyShield, and Zab (Equation Design).

Read an *aceartinc.* critical distance essay, "Excavation as Transmutation: Roewan Crowe's digShift" by Heather Milne: <http://www.aceart.org/wordpress/criticaldistance.php?p=652>

Read a review in *Uptown Magazine* by Stacey Abramson: <http://www.uptownmag.com/2007-07-19/page519.aspx>

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Sharpe J., & Spivak, 2002. "A Conversation with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: Politics and the Imagination." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 28 (2): 609-624.

Walker, J. (2001) 'Captive images in the traumatic western: the searchers, pursued, once upon a time in the west, and lone star', in Walker, J. (ed) (2001) *Westerns: Films Through History*, New York: Routledge.

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Transdisciplinary artist Roewan Crowe is energized by acts of disruption and discovery. Her conceptually driven practice explores the multilayered relationships among words, images and experiences of trauma. She has a particular passion for feminist art, creating community and facilitating initiatives in cultural democracy. In 2007 she launched her solo show *digShift*. This multichannel installation of video poems delve into shifting layers of meaning at an abandoned gas station, in an attempt to imagine some sort of reclamation – personal, historical, and environmental – for this compelling and toxic landscape. In May of 2008, in collaboration with *Mentoring Artists for Women's Art*, she curated the *Art Building Community Project*, which launched 10 new works and a weekend symposium. Currently she is working on an arts-based research project entitled, *Feminist Imagination As A Space of Resistance: Artistic Practices Contesting Violence*, which explores the ways in which art creates space for forbidden narratives. She is also working to complete an experimental novel entitled, "Quivering Landscape." She is an Assistant Professor in the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the University of Winnipeg and Co-Director of *The Institute for Women's & Gender Studies*.

*Image Credit: Roewan Crowe*

Contact Roewan Crowe at [roewancrowe@gmail.com](mailto:roewancrowe@gmail.com)

# BEYOND VICTIMISATION: A LOOK INTO THE MAPPING MEMORIES STORIES OF REFUGEE YOUTH PROJECT

Gracia Dyer Jalea and Liz Miller

*Mapping Memories: Stories of Refugee Youth* is a collaborative multi-media project which uses personal stories and a range of media tools (video, sound walks, mapping, photography) to raise awareness around the situation of refugee youth in Montreal. The project is connected to the *Montreal Life Stories Project*, an oral history initiative that is working to collect over 500 life stories of Montrealers who have been victims of war, genocide and other crimes against humanity. *Mapping Memories* invites youth with refugee experience to share their personal stories with a greater public, an opportunity that they are rarely afforded. This project seeks to move beyond the stories of victimization that are so often depicted in mainstream media coverage. Instead, *Mapping Memories* hopes to empower youth with the opportunity to creatively frame and communicate their stories to others, and in so doing, to make personal the refugee experience in Montreal. Furthermore, the project celebrates the strength and determination of individuals who have not only survived experiences of violence and oppression, but who have found ways to transform difficult experiences into opportunities for healing and social change.

In addition to working directly with refugee youth, we have done interviews with artists and educators with

refugee experience who act as mentors to youth. The two interviews that are featured in this article exemplify the work that we have done and demonstrate how women, like Nantali Indongo and Rania Arabi, use their personal life experiences to effect positive change within their respective communities.

To learn more about the project, please visit our website at: Stories of Refugee Youth

<http://storytelling.concordia.ca/refugeeyouth/learn-more-about-project>

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## **Reflections: Interview with Nantali Indongo, co-founder of Hip Hop No Pop and famed Nomadic Massive MC**

On a warm August afternoon, as I sat in her living room, which incidentally also functions as her work space, I quickly came to realise that for Nantali Indongo it is often difficult to separate her work as a community organiser and activist from her music. There are inextricable links that exist between the music that she makes as an MC for popular Montreal group *Nomadic Massive*, the work that she does with *Hip Hop No Pop*, a program

that she co-developed with founder, Maryse Legagneur, which uses hip hop as a means of encouraging critical thinking and media literacy amongst Montreal's youth, and her personal life. It is apparent from our interview that for Nantali, each of these informs and enriches the other. Arguably, each one could not exist without the others.

Over the course of our two-hour interview, it was clear that Nantali is very passionate about both her work and her craft. Her tireless involvement, as she pointed out, is no doubt born out of a sense of urgency that compels her to do her best to make society a more inclusive space for all peoples.

While having been born and raised in Montreal, she has never forgotten the origins and circumstances that brought her parents to Canada: her mother originated from St. Vincent and her father from Grenada. It is evident that her parents, both of whom were influential members of their respective cultural communities and active participants in Montreal's 1960s and 1970s civil rights movement, have strongly influenced her current ambitions. Her parents' commitment to creating more opportunities for marginalised members of society has undeniably made a lasting impression on her. For Nantali, it seems that it is more important and effective for us to concentrate on "sameness as oppose to differences," an approach that she says is upheld and shared amongst her *Nomadic Massive* bandmates.

Nantali spoke eloquently and was well-informed about nearly every subject we discussed, indicating that education also plays a significant role in her life. When asked what advice she would give youth, she simply answered: "Read, Read, Read!"

As a 'non-traditional' teacher, Nantali, through *Hip Hop No Pop* and her music with *Nomadic Massive*, seeks to inspire her students and audiences to develop critical thinking. While she did not mention this explicitly in our interview, it is clear that she sees education as a crucial means through which inequalities and divisions

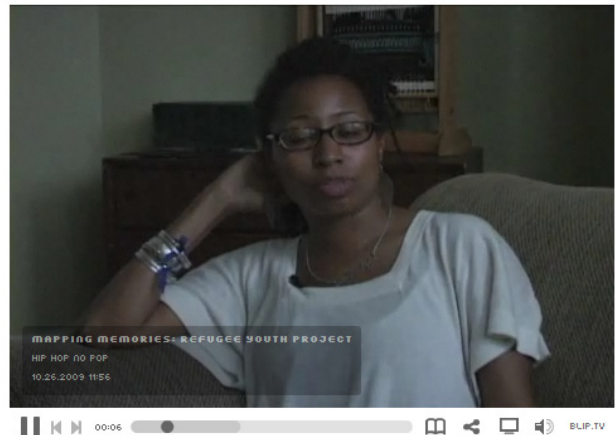
can be deconstructed and eventually rendered obsolete. Next autumn, Nantali plans to continue her own education, with the intention of pursuing a Masters in Education at McGill University.

It was a truly inspiring experience to see someone so devoted and passionate about their work. I wish her all the best in the future.

*Interview Conducted: Tuesday, August 11, 2009*

*Interviewer: Gracia Jalea*

*Videographer: Liz Miller, Gracia Jalea*



## **Hip Hop No Pop**

*This video is available online at:*

<http://nomorepotlucks.org/article/wound-no7/beyond-victimisation-look-mapping-memories-stories-refugee-youth-project>

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## **Reflections: Interview with Rania Arabi, writer and YWCA program coordinator**

Rania and I sat down in late October, on the eve of Halloween, in the warm comfort of her Plateau home. For some time we had been talking about filming an inter-

view with her father, who had been forced to leave his home in Jaffa as a child. And in the midst of negotiating all of our schedules we decided that the starting point was in fact Rania's story. So on this late October morning, with a bowl of fresh dates between us, we began what became a two-hour life story interview.

I had met Rania because of her work at the YWCA, where she is in charge of researching and coordinating programs for immigrant women and their children in Montreal. As the co-coordinator of the Refugee Youth working group of the *Montreal Life Stories Project* and the principal investigator of the collaborative media project, *Mapping Memories*, I had contacted Rania to explore how we might collaborate on a future project. A philosophy of the *Mapping Memories* project is to form strategic collaborations with existing support groups for refugee youth to ensure the longevity of the project. Rania and I have been exploring ways to integrate media and digital storytelling into her ongoing work.

We had also decided that in order to understand both the potential of a creative collaboration or a life story, that Rania and the staff of the YWCA would benefit by experiencing first-hand the kind of workshops we have been conducting in refugee shelters and with youth groups in Montreal. By actually going through the process of using new media to tell personal stories, the staff would have a better sense of how these techniques might work with their groups. Furthermore the staff would understand first-hand the transformative potential of this creative process, as well as the vulnerability it entails.

So before our day-long training in digital storytelling with the YWCA staff, Rania and I conducted her life story interview. We discussed at length her identity as a Palestinian woman and her thoughts on the potential of oral history and personal stories to transcend tropes of victimization.

Rania grew up in Kuwait with her three brothers and both of her parents. She moved to Montreal with her family soon after the Gulf War. Rania's father was

forced to leave his home in Jaffa at the age of seven, and during the interview I learned that Rania had also been marked by a traumatic event at the same age:

*"It was during the civil war - and the conflict between the Palestinians and the Lebanese. There were only two Palestinians at my school and we were made fun of. 'You look like Arafat' they would say ... I stayed in that school for ten years and I never asked to be taken out. I don't know why - for some reason I just swallowed it and said - ok, I am going to stand here alone - is there anything wrong with being Palestinian?"*

Rania explained that despite the 300,000 Palestinians living in Kuwait, she still most often felt like an outsider in the country.

Rania's first opportunity to visit Palestine came as a young adult. Interested in the concept of "Homeland," Rania interviewed PLO officials, who had spent years living in exile in Tunisia and were now returning to Palestine. Her research was part of her master's degree in anthropology. During her fieldwork she encouraged her father to return to Palestine. Together they visited the home he had abruptly left as a child: "It was like being with a 7-year-old again. He started crying. He was hugging me and my cousins." Rania and her father conspired to bring a piece of his home back with them - a piece of a window that had framed his childhood bedroom. In discussing the meaning of this encounter, Rania explained: *"He had the privilege of going back and seeing his home and not many people have that. I feel that whenever you go back to a wound or a rupture you face it. It's good that he cried - he is still angry and has things to deal with."*

In discussing the impact of the visit, she explained that her father now has a new set of memories connected to the first place he would call home.

I asked Rania about her relationship to her father's anger and the notion of inheriting trauma. She explained:

"I had a very close and uncomfortable relationship to my father's anger – it's rage – it's beyond anger – it's a cry from the heart that this should not be - how come this is happening - that no-one is caring - and I picked it up... But my duty, my responsibility is to take this and to transform it so that my child doesn't have to carry it..."

She went on to describe her notion of a "sacred wound" that has resonated with me ever since our interview:

"Sometimes what we do with our wounds is hide it and live our lives like victims. But I feel that this is my wound, that I inherited it, and it became a part of me and now what do I do with this wound? Do I scratch it? Do I play with it? Do I try to open it again? Do I tell its story - because it is fun to tell the story - and someone says - oh my god you went through this - confirming the drama and the victimhood or maybe there is a chance to heal, to transform - I am going to use this wound and make a contribution - show the world that wounds can heal."

A few days later, during the workshop with the YWCA staff, Rania used the memory of her visit with her father as the inspiration for her digital story, which she told in the form of a letter to her son. It is powerful and inspiring, much like Rania and the work she does at the YWCA. I look forward to all of our future collaborations.

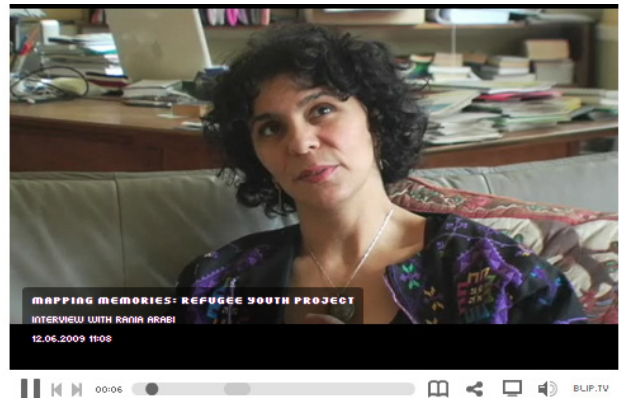
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Gracia Dyer Jalea is a Media Studies graduate student at Concordia University. Gracia has been working with on the Mapping Memories: Stories of Refugee Youth Project since 2008. During this time she has helped to develop two curricula for this project, which focuses specifically on the refugee youth experience in Montreal and which uses photography, video and online digital resources to collect the personal testimonies of youth who have been victims of war, genocide and other crimes against humanity. Prior to this, Gracia developed a photography curriculum for Aboriginal youth in Ottawa as part of Aboriginal Awareness Week 2008. Her graduate work is centered on a photography curriculum that seeks to use photography and written text to give voice to the socio-economic conditions of high school students in Canada.

Interview Conducted: Friday, October 30th, 2009

Interviewer: Liz Miller

Videographer: Liz Miller



### **Rania's Arabi**

This video is available online at:

<http://nomorepotlucks.org/article/wound-no7/beyond-victimisation-look-mapping-memories-stories-refugee-youth-project>

Liz Miller is a documentary maker, inter-media artist, and a professor in the Communication Studies program at Concordia University in Montreal. Miller has developed documentary and inter-media projects with women, refugee youth, senior citizens and a wide range of human rights organizations internationally. Miller is currently on the board of the International Association of Women in Television and Radio and is one of the co-founders of the Concordia Documentary Centre. Her films including *Novela*, *Novela* and *The Water Front* have been exhibited around the world and have been used to impact policy and educational initiatives. *Mapping Memories* is her newest collaborative new media project.

# CYNICAL SNOWFLAKES LAND BURNING SOULS AND OTHER POEMS

*Neil Eustache*

## **Cynical snowflakes land burning souls**

One brother believes he'll find the other dead  
And the other wishes it  
As the father  
Only thinks for himself

We need a new music  
For this kind of understanding  
Cause the same old  
Isn't working any more

Racist dreams  
And the three legged horse will teach us  
Leper masturbations

This new year will bring about  
Cigarettes more booze  
Plans to show our gods  
That we can be vengeful and clear

Oh yea had I forgot that this has happened before  
In a Russians delusions about love and hate

It's so clear  
Watching the most beautiful  
Bomb and kill each other  
We all need something to believe in

More than olive faced genocided ghosts  
Trying to find an exit out this  
Winter cold breeze of lay offs  
Biblical insanity and orange fields

I would love it that someone could explain why...  
We continue to do this to each other  
Is it cause we killed nature and now  
Have nothing better to do

Cynical snowflakes land burning souls  
Hope will come soon  
So get the cross ready children  
To nail that dumbass back up again

Sin and poverty always make the best music

**Do you have to look at me that way...**

Treat me like a dinosaur  
Send this like a miracle  
I have been deluded  
Mind if I forget for a moment  
About the love  
About the now

Cause their thinking again  
About bringing him back  
To corrupt  
To bend spoons

Take my pain away  
Weatherman  
These pills aren't working  
Economist

Can our silence bring about  
Less self importance  
More indifference  
I can taste that bad feeling

That flash back of prayer  
Do you have to look at me that way...  
As if I was the one who  
Created this myth of longevity  
Hold me I need to burn something

**This is supposed to  
not make any sense**

If it wasn't for the blue jay's carcass  
Rotten against the roots of that hushem bush

This tangled web of cross talking  
messages sent to the anti matter of our collective  
Reasons....

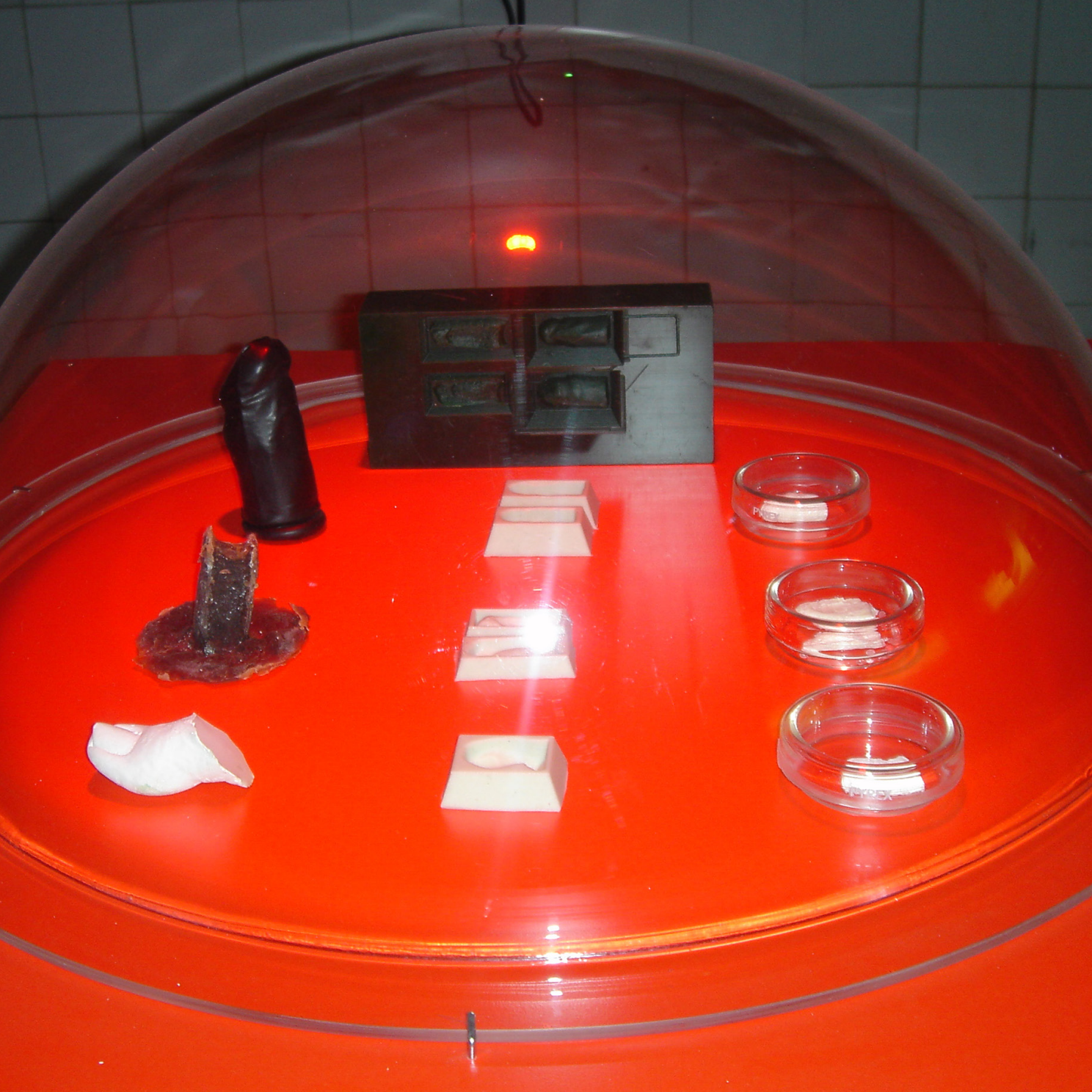
If you have found the key  
To betterment  
Won't you package it  
And sell along the roadside

Like carvers do  
truck stop workers  
and insane middle classed Indians on speed

this is supposed to  
not make any sense  
reservations  
blood quantum  
a black hole

about 100 kms from here  
is the centre of the universe  
and another family is trying  
to pick up the pieces  
of an teenaged boys skull

life is just like that  
real and beautiful





# **HYPERMASCULINITY, AGEING BODIES AND FAST FEMINISMS: AN INTERVIEW WITH SHANNON BELL**

*Shannon Bell | Kim Sawchuk*

**KS: This is Kim Sawchuk, sitting in the kitchen with the lovely and charming Shannon Bell of York University, the author of *Reading Writing and Rewriting the Prostitute Body* and *Whore Carnival* and who's got a third book coming out, a single-authored monograph called *Fast Feminism*.**

SB: I have "FF" branded on my arm. The book ends with FF being branded. Branding for me is about power and ownership. 'FF wanted the actions and the events she'd lived in the now to be always there with her. FF had the letters FF branded onto her right arm, and with this action she owned *Fast Feminism*. *Fast Feminism* has taken forever to come out. I've had more trouble with this book than with any book I've ever written. Perhaps because it is authentically perverse.

**KS: So what is the main premise of *Fast Feminism*, and why is the book called *Fast Feminism*?**

SB: I have been working with the concept of fast feminism for some time, since 2000. Feminism has always been lacking one of my favorite characteristics: hyper-

masculinity. I always think of myself as very hypermasculine, in a muscular femme body. I wanted to bring together unlikely suspects – ground a feminism in previous feminisms, but also in my favorite theorist of all time, Paul Virilio. I wanted to bring feminism together with both speed and his later work, the accident.

I'm claiming that fast feminism really is the accident of Virilio's speed theory. For Virilio, the accident, although an unintended and disturbing consequence, is inherent in, and created by the very technology or system it comes out of. How is *Fast Feminism* both the likely and unlikely accident of speed theory? An accident of any system, whether that system be ecological, technological or philosophical, is the unknown quantity inherent in the original substance. Where is fast feminism inherent in Virilio's speed? Three locations: The fiercely courageous speed style that profoundly critiques the world quickly and breaks intellectual scholarship. The recurrent messianic moment that Virilio never fully hides: "if you save one man, you save the world". And, in Virilio's positioning of the body as the basis of his work: "I am a materialist of the body, which means that the body is the basis of all my work"[1]; "when I talk about speed, I am talking about bodies." [2]

The other hypermasculine work I ground fast feminism in is the pragmatic techno-philosophy of the international cyber-robotics performance artist, Stelarc, who Virilio identifies as a global prophet of posthumanism. There are two aspects of Stelarc's philosophical reflections that directly impact fast feminism. Stelarc always premises his theoretical claims and philosophical pronouncements on his practice. For Stelarc, "the idea is always in the act." New thought is grounded in action and physiology. And, of course for Stelarc the carbon body has been obsolete since the early 70's.

If the body is over, gender is outdated, a worn concept that doesn't match reality.

What happens in the text is an accident of gender in a way, the older female body comes in really strong, because, let's face it, I'm 54 now and fast feminism was first written in my 40s. It covered everything up till then that I'd done. I just kept adding to it. Finally one of the things I had to address was doing performance – nude performance and sexual performance –in an older female body, which I'm really trying to politicize. I'd like to read from that text.

**KS: Why don't you.**

SB: "I'm no novice fast feminist. These days when I do ejaculation demonstrations and nude public performances," and I just did one last week, "what meets the viewer's eye is not just a small, muscular femme body, but an older, small, muscular femme body – a body that's not supposed to be seen. The obscenity is in the showing. Of course, one of my political commitments, having as my modus operandi a politics of affect, is to queer the old female body, to fuck with the signs of aging while presenting them. Gesture, movement, style and body composition meet and meld with age spots, knee wrinkles, and sagging upper arm undercarriage. It doesn't matter how many years one has worked out, or how long and how hard each time, time will get you. Perhaps that is why time is my most worthy and best-

endowed seducer. My mother died with my eyes held by her gaze. Time leaves no gender, no flesh, just pure intensity."

**KS: That's an eloquent reflection on the ageing female body and on witnessing the death of someone you deeply love.**

SB: Although I've worked really hard to redefine an older female body, ageing still gets you. At a certain point you can say, "Yes, that's a very interesting older female body," but it's still an older female body. I messed around with Botox at one time, but now, I find wrinkles on a female face really interesting. Working with the signs and processes of age is political. I'm doing that in *Fast Feminism*.

**KS: You're working with yourself as a kind of "figure"?**

SB: I'm working with myself as the heroine, and the fast feminist hero. When FF is there, it's usually all about sex. FF is quite a good sexual adventure. There's also the philosophy of fast feminism. The intro chapter sets those both up: FF's escapades and the linkage between pornography, politics and philosophy. So I'm using Virilio, Levinas and Bataille to situate it, and of course Arthur and Marilouise Kroker.

**KS: What else does the book address?**

SB: The first chapter is on the female phallus and situates it in terms of theoretical work on the phallus, but also the showing of the female phallus. Female ejaculation is linked with the female phallus. I've done a number of different performances and workshops on how to ejaculate, what it is, the power it gives you. Chapter I is quite a lengthy chapter, and it talks about how female ejaculation has exploded into a sub-genre of pornography and is never going to disappear again.

**KS: And you are one of the pioneering – you are the pioneering person...**

SB: Well there's three of us who were female ejaculation pioneers, Deborah Sundahl (editor of *On Our Backs*), Annie Sprinkle and myself. We're all still teaching. I just did a workshop at *Come As You Are sex store* (Toronto).

Now I start off with a 40-minute ejaculation demonstration using sex toys and giving precise technical instruction. I am all about the technology of ejaculation, the power and skill; this has always set me apart from the other teachers.

For me it is an acquired skill that a female body in control can choose to do or not do. The seminar is for men and women; it works really well. I've found that as I've gotten older, the audiences have gotten super-great.

**KS: Enthusiastic? Intimate?**

SB: Enthusiastic and the experience is very cool. I put the speculum in sideways, so you can see the erect female phallus, while I'm masturbating and ejaculating. Sometimes I accidentally ejaculate on their shoes because they are so close; the people attending are really wonderful. So it's always exciting for me to do the workshop.

**KS: Let's go back to the philosophy of fast feminism. If I want to be a fast feminist, what do I have to do?**

SB: It's a fairly open and inclusive category. It addresses people who are in control of their actions, as either dominant or submissive – I actually wrote *Fast Feminism* as something of a submissive. I purposefully wanted to do that, and I'm a pretty good submissive because I'm highly performative. The philosophy then is that the female phallus – and it's a queer phallus – is that part that has been repressed in the female body and female anatomy, but has now been conclusively identified in dissection. I did dissection on the urogenital region of

a female body. You can see the erectile tissue in the genital region, it's really quite amazing. In the next chapter, "The Perverse Aesthetic of an Infamous Child Pornographer: John Robin Sharpe," I covered the one and only artistic merit child pornography trial in the world, which was in Vancouver: the trial of Robin Sharpe. I covered it as a journalist. I also enacted almost everything Sharpe wrote about after hours with Sharpe himself, with me in the position of man and him in the position of little boy. I write about that. Robin actually taught me everything I learned in terms of the techniques of sadism. This is there in the book and that's what kept killing it.

**KS: Killing it in what sense? Because no publishers wanted to touch that subject?**

SB: U of T accepted it. It had gone out to international reviewers and got really good reviews. U of T accepted it at their Friday meeting of their academic editorial board, some 18 people. The president of the press, however, cancelled it on Monday because of the Sharpe chapter. It was the only book he's ever pulled.

What makes the chapter really important, is it's the only place where we hear testimony of the two defense expert witnesses, English professors James Miller (University of Western Ontario) and Lorraine Weir (University of British Columbia). The fourth chapter is a Bataillian piece I did using excerpts of Bataille's writing to feature the women's bathhouses that I've been at in Toronto.

The last chapter, Chapter 5, is a *segue* to my newer work, which is on robotics and tissue engineering. I write about issue-engineering *Two Phalluses and a Big Toe*. In this chapter, I also seduce two of Stelarc's robots – I have sex with Exobot and the Muscle Machine much like Sacher-Masoch in *Venus in Furs*.

I did a tissue-engineering art residency with SymbioticA in the Department of Anatomy and Human Biology at the University of Western Australia, Perth, 2005. Symbi-

oticA was the first research laboratory to allow artists to engage in wet biology practices in a PC2-certified Tissue Culture Laboratory.

My project *Two Phalluses and Big Toe* was part of Tissue Culture and Art Project's Wizard of Oz Programme. As an update of the 'heart, brain and courage' motif in the original, three performance artist-philosophers who desired to grow a new organ did so in Perth: Stelarc worked on his ear; Orlan, her skin; and as for me, I fabricated a phallus or two. *Two Phalluses and Big Toe* relics[3] were shown as part of the Festival Break in Ljubljana in November 2005. *Two Phalluses and Big Toe* implements Martin Heidegger's approach to art as a means of 'revealing' new entities to 'unconceal' truth. [4] It functions as a comment on Lacan's claim that 'no one can be the phallus'[5] by showing that the phallus can be (alive) with no 'one.' It biotechnically realizes Bataille's "Big Toe" as a site of waste and dirtiness and the organ which marks us as human.

One of the phalluses is a female phallus in order to show how similar female and male phalluses are. The female phallus originated from an alginate mold of my 7-inch (17.7 cm) erect internal phallus. It was modeled using dentist alginate mold, shot into my pussy and removed really fast. Using AutoCAD, we reduced the objects in size to 3.5 centimeters.

Then we did a 3-D printing of the objects on a wax block, produced silicone molds from the wax models and made biodegradable polymer structures in the silicone molds. The polymers were removed and kept sterile in an ethanol solution until it was time to seed them with cells in the bioreactor. All three partial life objects were grown from HeLa cells, an immortal cell line originating in 1951 from the cancerous cervical cells of Henrietta Lacks, a 31-year-old African American mother from Baltimore.

If you put something in a bio-reactor, the biggest you can get is 3.5cm because it just breaks apart structurally. A bioreactor functions as a body in which the

necessary nutrients (Fetal Bovine Serum, Dulbecco's Modified Eagle's Medium, penicillin and glutamine) keep the cells alive. The cells adhere to the polymer structures. Rotation of the bioreactor ensures more even cell growth on the polymer structure that over time will biodegrade.

Once the bioreactor started rotating, the spinning made the three organs come together as a neo-sex organ that we've never seen before and that will never be seen again.

### **KS: Has it survived?**

SB: No, and that's the other thing, the core of this little bioreactor was contaminated, the pink medium that turned yellow like urine within a four day period. I've got a whole series of images of the process and demise which I exhibited as documentation along with the relics.

### **KS: Fast feminism is grounded in a praxis of some sort?**

SB: In my practice as a performative philosopher. I don't write about anything I don't do.

### **KS: Also, it's a very interesting take on the idea of experience, which is a feminist category. Again, although you can't ever fully understand the experiences that you're experiencing, trying to write out of that is the challenge. So when you talk about taking Virilio to another object, is 'the object' we're talking about sex and gender?**

SB: Yes. Sex and gender. But I was trying to do something that wasn't obviously sex and gender. Because they become cliché categories as soon as I say them.

I don't know about your experience but – I actually think it's really hard to interest people in gender right now. And gender in a sense is over. But to say it's over,

it's like saying the body is obsolete. I argue, also using Haraway, that gender is obsolete. But it's mostly obsolete for those people who are not persecuted for their gender.

If you are persecuted for your gender, it's not obsolete; it becomes a highly contested category. Having been almost beat up once for being a gay man, and having wimped out and said "No, no, no, I'm a girl," and then it all being okay.... I'll never forget that. I was on that borderline where I could do that, but had I been presenting as any more masculine, I would have been beaten up.

All of a sudden you realize the stakes in gender performativity especially for people not playing the right gender game in a society that expects that you're going to. You can end up dead, really easily if you're in a traditional society, or you can get beat up and killed for not passing as the gender you're living. So I still say that gender is highly contested and politicized.

**KS: I want to go back to that, because there are interesting contradictions or tensions in your work here. You insist on the materiality of the body – and your body – as it changes and shifts right now. At the same time, there's the invocation of Stelarc's work and idea that the body is obsolete. But is it? You've started with this very very very powerful and strong reflection on the processes of aging, in relationship to your own performance and practice, in sex practices. Talk to me about this contradiction. What's the relationship or the tension between the obsolescence of the body, and you and your aging body.**

SB: The real question is, when you bring in age along with the body and gender, how does that manifest as a female body? I think I can answer it now, but I think to really answer that, I would have to really answer that I would have to wait about 15 years because I know something else will shift.

What I notice shifting now is a real embracement by others of what I am doing as a feminist performative sex philosopher in a way that I wasn't happening when I was younger. Honestly, now there's a real embracing by both young men and young women, without any sort of sexual overtones. Regardless of how hot I'm presenting myself, and believe me I'm always presenting myself hot, you're no longer objectified in the same way you were. You get to be idolized a little bit more, for doing so good as an older woman, but you know that's going to drop off.

I'm actually really thinking on it, because I was with my mom as her body was dying.

I was right there and at a certain point gender's not particularly important. As Derrida says, gender breaks away at death – and post-death, it breaks away too. As you're dying... as the body is breaking down, it actually can be breaking down from the inside, gender is just dropped off.

I spent a lot of time – when my mom was in an assisted care place – I spent a lot of time with old people. And women live longer. So all of a sudden, you're with a lot of old women for a long time, and they're in their 80s and 90s. One of the things you really notice is that the fetishization of the female body is gone. It's really interesting to spend time around women at that age and to realize that it's not such a stretch now. The last 15-20 years just went like [snaps] a blink, because we're all so busy and we're all doing interesting stuff. It's really not a stretch to go, "wow, that's going to be me."

**KS: And me, soon.**

SB: Yeah, it's not going to be me down the line, it's going to be me soon. It's odd, because on the one hand, we can keep the flesh body alive longer and all that and enhance it and do all these things. It is obsolete on this hand; on the other hand, as Virilio says, it's the most important object of analysis.

**KS: Sure. Do you want this manuscript to be over? Are you tired of it?**

SB: There's two things: in its new form, I'm not so much tired of it, I'm actually excited by it again because I have this fabulous editor, Erika Biddle, with Autonomedia. She really brought it to life, and it's been all updated, so it's actually current. I'd like it to be out, and I think the irony is that *Fast Feminism* really has taken about 8 years.

**KS: Yeah, exactly. We know how – I know and you know – how the publication process can work. It can be extremely slow. Maybe that's not such a bad thing because it reminds us that it is still part of that moment.**

SB: Yeah, so I'm actually more excited about it now maybe, oddly, than I've ever been – but for different reasons: that it does come out when I'm old, I'm mature, as a mature thinker, like I've got one more year. I'm a total philosopher king. You get to be a philosopher king when you're 55, so yeah... I'm so ready for it! [laughs].

But the other thing is – what I really learned from the book – that I only want to do theory that has got a concrete object. And so I decided that I wanted to start filming, and doing video, and imaging philosophical concepts. I have used Heidegger to shoot 40 days of sunrise and sunset in the Judean desert, Husserl to video caves blindfolded and most recently (just finished last week) Virilio's concept of the Vision Machine to tie a HD videocam on a camel saddle and make the camel the videographer. I am excited about *Fast Feminism* and I think it's time for it to come out ... and I'm actually quite interested in the process – the anger is gone.

**KS: But does it still have its edge?**

SB: It's got a total edge, but it's got a different edge, yeah. I still get angry, but the anger that was initially motivating the text is gone; there's something else.

**KS: It sounds more like it's a reflection on your relationship to feminism over many many years, which I think is beautiful.**

SB: It's true. We've taught feminist theory, we've all probably been hired as feminists: as feminist theorists, as feminist scholars. It's always informed our work, regardless of what that work is, and that's the way it should be.

## References

[1] Virilio says:

The body is extremely interesting to me because it is a planet... There is a very interesting Jewish proverb that says: "If you save one man, you save the world": that's the reverse idea of the Messiah: one man can save the world, but to save a man is to save the world. The world and man are identical...

[T]he body is not simply the combination of dance, muscles, body-building, strength and sex: it is a universe. What brought me to Christianity is Incarnation, not Resurrection. Because Man is God, and God is Man, the world is nothing but the world of Man—or Woman... to separate mind from body doesn't make any sense. To a materialist, matter is essential... I am a materialist of the body, which means that the body is the basis of all my work. [Louise Wilson, "Cyberwar, God and Television: An Interview with Paul Virilio" in *Digital Delirium*, eds. Arthur and Marilouise Kroker (Montreal: New World Perspectives, 1997), 46–7.]

[2] Paul Virilio and Sylvere Lotringer, *Crepuscular Dawn*, trans. Mike Taormina (New York & Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2002), 56.

[3] The Phalluses and Toe relics consist of the original mold of the male phallus (dildo), female phallus and big toe, 3.5 cm 3-D plotter wax molds, negative silicone molds, biodegradable polymer structures, and the two tissue-engineered phalluses and big toe fixed and presented in Petri dishes. The relics were exhibited under a Plexiglas dome. Accompanying the relics were two sets of continuous image loops documenting the tissue engineering process. The first loop documents the process up to putting the Two Phalluses and Big Toe in the bioreactor. The second loop presents the putting of the Two Phalluses and Big Toe in the bioreactor; the contamination of the bioreactor; and the death of the Two Phalluses and Big Toe.

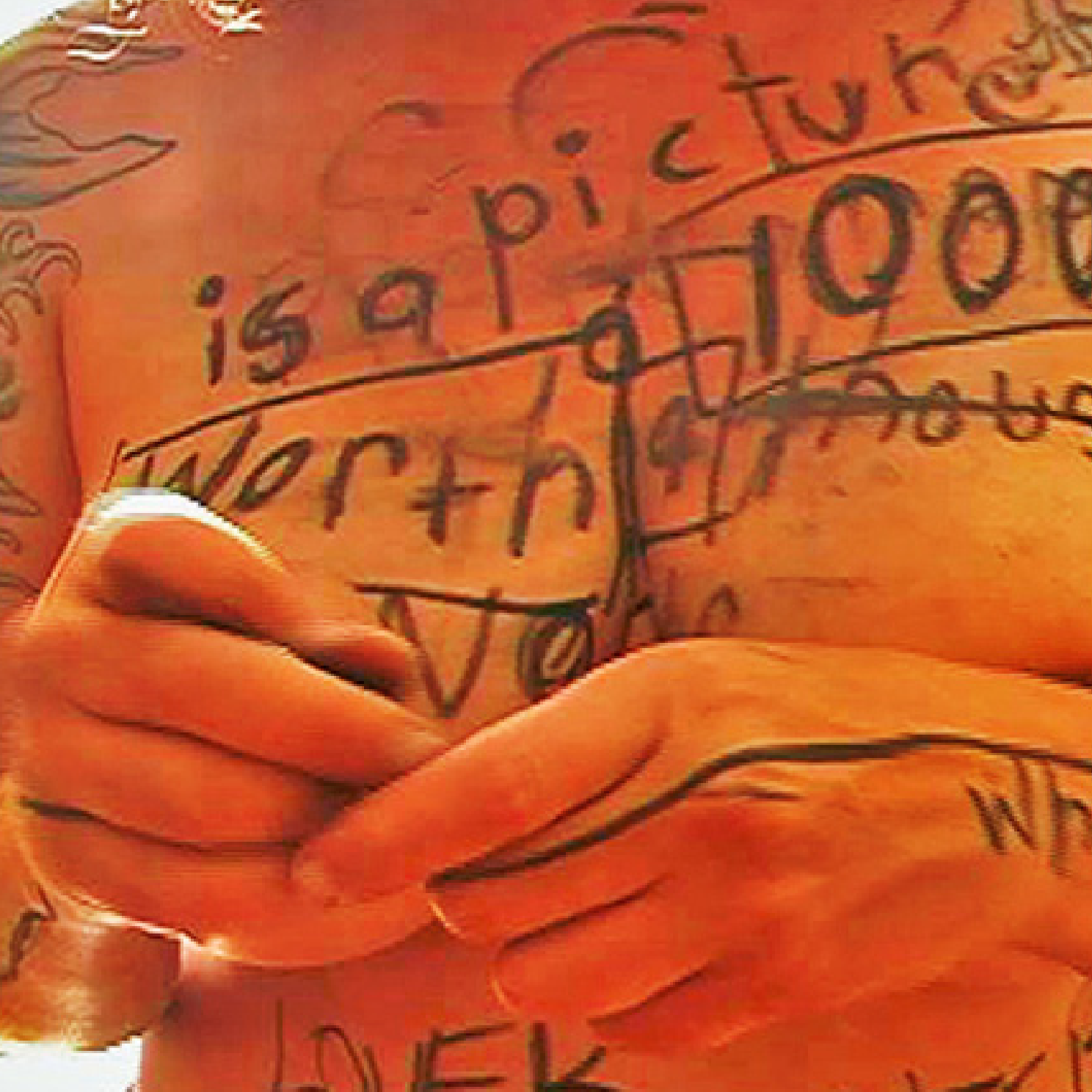
[4] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art" in *Basic Writings*, ed. David F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1993), 165.

[5] Lacan, op. cit., 281–91.

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*Shannon Bell is a performance philosopher, fast philosopher who lives and writes philosophy-in-action. Her five books include Reading, Writing and Rewriting the Prostitute Body (Indiana University Press 1994, Japanese trans.2000), Whore Carnival (Autonomedia 1995), Bad Attitude/s on Trial, co-author (University of Toronto Press, 1997), New Socialisms co-editor (New York: Routledge 2004), and Fast Feminism (Autonomedia 2010). Bell has been researching 'extreme' art for a book Art and Time; this research was funded by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Bell is currently working on video imagining philosophical concepts. Bell is an associate professor in the York University Political Science Department, Toronto, Canada. She teaches modern and postcontemporary theory, fast feminism, cyber politics, politics of aesthetics and violent philosophy.*

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is a picture

worth a 1000

words

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## STEEL AWAY

Anna Camilleri

She is splayed out on the bed wearing a white, mid-thigh slip. Her plunging neckline is trimmed in lace; one strap dangles seductively off of her shoulder. She's projecting herself into existence: *I am here*. Manual exposure: open iris, slow shutter. Smiles coyly. Click. *I am alive*. Parts her lips. Click. *Do you feel yourself dying?* Click.

There are a hundred photographs like this one, different slip, different room, different year, but the same proclamation: I'm so sexy I could kill. My mother used to tell me stories about herself as a young woman, how men called after her on the street, drooled with their mouths agape like panting, circling dogs. How she smiled back, swung her hips with increased commitment. How they wanted her, but would never, ever have her. The magic, the money shot, wasn't in what she showed, it was in what was withheld. *Do you feel yourself dying? Withhold everything. Savour it under your tongue like candy—now it's here, now it's gone.*

After I came out to my mother, I realized that it wasn't my having sex with women that was the bitter pill, it was that I was giving it away. Lesson Number 1: *Withhold. Body or heart, not both.* Lesson Number 2: *You're only as good as your last performance.* And the lesson that was

never spoken, but I heard it anyway: *Your heart hasn't been broken, unless and until it's been done by another woman.*

My mother: goddess, diva, impresario.

My cousin Amanda sounded tentative. "Your mother gave me a tour of the house—it looked pretty much the way I remember it, but then she took me up to the room that had been yours. It didn't look like your room anymore. Has your mother always been a crazy tchotchke collector? Anyway, I saw something that surprised me."

My interest was piqued.

My mother had given me the tour several times—every time I visit in fact, insisting there are new treasures to be seen. She had collected hundreds of Royal Doultons and Cappel di Monte ceramics at yard sales and thrift stores. Even the chipped and cracked ones found their way home with her, where she mixed and matched parts with contact cement, and applied nail polish for a seamless repair. "Good as new," she would declare. As far as I remembered, there was nothing racy in the house—unless you consider porcelain nudes with smoothed-over genitalia racy.

"It was strange that your mother brought me up to your room—I know it hasn't been your room in a long time, but still— She marched me in, and pointed at a picture of you as if was a trophy."

"What picture?" I asked. Amanda wouldn't say. I mentally flipped through my mother's collection of embarrassing photographs featuring me.

*Oh God, that picture ... I'm thirteen and I haven't yet figured out that my hair must not be brushed under any circumstances because it becomes an uncontrollable mass of frizz. I had nothing to do with that hideous fuchsia pink and black plaid dress with the bow at the neck—my mother picked it, of course. She still had dominion over my wardrobe then and*

*confused me for a life-sized doll and not a pubescent girl with low self-esteem and newly minted breasts. My shoulders are rolled in, and I'm wearing two-inch kitten heels that I haven't yet learned how to stand in.*

Amanda continued, "There's nothing wrong with the picture, it just seems, you know, private—not the kind of picture a mother would have on display."

"Oh—"

A new image appears: I am ten years old and my long wet hair hangs like a sheet in front of my naked body. Mother believes that someday I'll treasure this photo in which I have been modeled to look like Lady Godiva. My mother instructs me to stand sideways and tilt my shoulders towards the camera the way the models do. "The sooner you just stand and pose, the sooner the whole thing will be over with." But I've never been very good at doing what I was told. Two years later, my girlhood officially ended on the day I sawed my braids away with a pair of rusty utility scissors.

Despite the fact that I'm ten years older and Amanda's first cousin, she is unwavering. "You have to see it for yourself—just don't tell her I sent you."

I prefer having my parents over for dinner because we actually sit at the table and talk with each other—like normal families do. But normal backfires; conversations often become sparring matches. Still, I prefer it to being in their house—my mother in one room, my dad in another, television droning in the background, radio blaring, water running (the water is always running). But I've accepted my mother's invitation to dinner because I'm on a mission.

While my mother is rinsing the spinach for the fourth time, I climb the stairs to the bathroom. On my way out, instead of turning left, I turn right into the small room that had been mine. My eyes land squarely on the picture. Heat rushes to my hands and face. It's the one that had gone missing.

In the picture, I'm wearing a long black dress with a deep V. One of my legs is hiked up on the back of the couch revealing torn fishnet stockings, the tops of my garters, and just the curve of my ass. Hair fans widely about my face that is full of mischief, or a secret.

When I would reach for one of the items at the back of my fridge—coriander chutney, pickled beets, yogurt about to enter its well-deserved retirement—I would catch a glimpse of this 3x5 print stationed on the fridge door.

My mother had commented on the picture several times, how much it reminded her of herself when she was younger. She had asked me for a copy of it once, and I'd told her that I didn't have the negative, which is true, but I wouldn't have given it to her even if I had. I hadn't wanted my mother to see it to begin with, but I hadn't remembered to remove it before she arrived that first time. Removing it afterward would have been pointless, and I never thought anything more of it.

When the small photograph went missing, I assumed that it had slipped and gotten lodged in the space between the fridge and counter. I simply hadn't gotten around to pulling the fridge out to retrieve it. It would be there when I was ready to see what else lay hidden behind the fridge.

I imagined my mother giving people the tour of the house, and marching them over to the memorial, as I've come to think of it, just as she had done with Amanda. What would they say, what would they think? *Oh, your daughter is a dominatrix, how nice for you. Yes, we can see that she's very well endowed . . .*

I don't really care what they would see, or even think, but I do care that they probably wouldn't know they were seeing a picture of the elusive queer daughter who's been off the family invitation list for twenty years.

When I came into my twenties, and then thirties, my mother was questioned with increasing urgency: *Is your*

*daughter married, dating? Where is she, why don't we see her anymore?* "Oh you know kids today," she would answer vaguely. "They're so involved in their careers."

The 3x5 print had been enlarged to an 8.5x11 copy, laminated, and mounted in a wooden frame with a sun and moon motif at the top. I slip into the bathroom with it and dislodge it from its hideous frame, which is too large to fit into any of the cabinets. Hinges creak open and shut despite my careful movements.

"Are you repainting the bathroom?" My mother hollers up the stairs. "Dinner is almost ready."

I didn't think I'd been very long. "Yeah, just a minute . . ."

I run the taps on full to simulate normal bathroom sounds. Now I have two objects to remove from the bathroom, nowhere to put them, I'm on my mother's clock, and I'm wasting water. I wash my hands just to alleviate my guilt.

Something must be done, and the something will not involve a shouting match with my mother about betrayal and theft and—to add salt to the bitter—just why my lover, who was in the photo that had been on my fridge, has been cropped out.

I slide the picture into my pants, and turn off the taps. I tiptoe back into my old bedroom, slide open the mirrored closet doors, tuck the frame in behind shoe boxes, and then tiptoe back down stairs and take my seat at the table.

Watching my mother in the kitchen has always produced anxiety in me. I have a thing about crumbs and counter tops piled with things. Makes my teeth chatter. The kitchen counters there aren't big, but there's plenty of room, or there would be if every square inch weren't covered with something. I force myself to sit, to not clear the counters of disemboweled vegetables and plastic wrap because laminate from the picture is abrading my skin and inspiring small blisters in places

where blisters generally don't appear. Why I didn't slide the picture down the back of my pants, I can't say. I grab my bag from behind the chair, and make my way toward the bathroom again.

"Where are you going with your bag?" My mother calls out.

"For Christ sake, Mom— I'm bleeding." I bellow down the stairs. "Day 4."

What isn't visible in the stolen picture is this: My lover is at the other end of my boot, devotional utterances spilling from her lips, followed by goading questions about the terrible things she hopes I'll do to her later. I'm not sure when I became aware of the camera, only that I hadn't been for some time, and then when I noticed my friend taking snapshots, I wanted her to record us. I wanted to be seen in that room on that night, so that someday I might remember it. The picture is sexy, but that's not what's remarkable to me, and that's not why it was on my fridge.

I remember how the four of us carried on that night, but we weren't posing for each other, we were being family—without stupid femme in the sheets jokes and diminutive stereotypes— where I could use the word femme as shorthand for heart, mind, spirit, culture, history, blood, spit, sweat, and they would know exactly how I was using the word because none of us needed to be weak in order for the others to be strong.

I lock the bathroom door behind me, tuck the picture into my bag, and zip it shut. This picture, like so much else, I steel away.

*Anna Camilleri is playwright/performer of two one-woman shows, author of I Am a Red Dress: Incantations on a Grandmother, a Mother, and a Daughter, editor of Red Light: Superheroes, Saints, and Sluts, co-editor of Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity, co-author of Boys Like Her: Transfictions (Taste This collective), and writer/director of two CBC radioworks. She's also founding Artistic Co-Director of Red Dress Productions, a not-for-profit arts company that creates and disseminates original performances, and large-scale community-engaged public artworks. Her book works are included in the University of Toronto's Fisher Rare Books Library Queer Canadian Literature Collection, and she has performed and read her work across Canada and the US in theatres, festivals, and universities over the past 15 years, and mostly recently in Belgium. She divides her time between Toronto, and rural Eastern Ontario. Anna's NMP contribution is the title piece for a manuscript of short works she's working on. Her online domain is <http://www.annacamilleri.com>; her production company's blog is at <http://red-dressproductions.blogspot.com>*



# POLY

*Jules Pidduck*

***poly-* pol'i, pol-i'-, in composition, many: several: much: ... affecting more than one part (med)**

## ***Polytechnique – an engineering school in Montréal***

In the early evening of December 6, 1989 my brother Steve called from Saskatoon to tell me there was a gunman on a rampage at a Montréal university. I rushed to switch on the TV, tuning into a torrent of live coverage from journalists posted just outside the École Polytechnique at the Université de Montréal. At first, the information was vague and intermittent, but sometime well into the evening the chilling news began to filter out that the gunman had systematically targeted female students before taking his own life.

In the days and weeks following the shooting at the Polytechnique, I recall a climate of palpable fear and distrust between women and men on the street, on the metro, in cafés and restaurants. Fraught discussions broke out in private among lovers, friends and families – and in public with a series of highly mediated, emotionally-charged debates. For a fleeting and

difficult time, the question of women's changing roles in Québec society took the centre of public debate. An uneasy consensus gained ground that Lépine could be dismissed as an isolated madman; the killer's hatred of women was explained away as the effect of an abusive childhood, the legacy of an Algerian father. Based on dubious pop psychology, this account comfortably located the source of the killer's misogyny elsewhere. Challenging this view, feminists argued that the attack on female engineering students represented a systematic and home-grown misogyny – that this public violence was the tip of the iceberg of an endemic pattern of violence against women.

As a young feminist, I was profoundly affected by the events of December 6, 1989, and by the heated debates that followed. Outraged by the widespread disavowal of the political significance of Lépine's act by political leaders and the mainstream media, I felt a loyalty to a feminist position that this act could only be understood within a framework of gender relations. Yet, I was troubled by the dominant radical feminist position. I sensed that Lépine's actions were related to, but not fully comprehensible within a conceptual framework of systematic male violence against women. Further, I was skept-

tical of this radical feminist worldview that perceives a universal and transhistorical male violence against women as the central structuring dynamic in gender relations. Although I did not dare to say so publicly in the feminist column “Female Persuasions” that I wrote for *The Montreal Mirror* at the time, I found this to be a static and deeply pessimistic view that reifies women’s position as victims of male violence – a perspective that denies the historical and cultural complexities of gender power relations and refuses the possibility of social change.

In short, in 1989 the battle lines were too clearly drawn in the sand. Twenty years later, after a near decade absence from Montréal, I have followed recent public debates about the Polytechnique massacre with deep interest. Released in February 2009, Denis Villeneuve’s film *Polytechnique* renewed public discussion after almost two decades of uneasy silence. Most recently, I followed the commemorative events and media coverage surrounding the 20th anniversary of the Polytechnique shootings. In the spirit of “poly,” I sift through this material, seeking the multiple, composite and polyvalent meanings of this symbolically-charged event.

**Polemic *po-lem’ik*, adj. given to disputing: controversial. n. a controversialist: a controversial writing or argument**

What, then, is the legacy of December 6, 1989? The heated debates that followed the shootings at the Polytechnique were fertile ground for division and blame: Men present at the École Polytechnique that day were accused of being cowards. Feminists accused politicians and media opinion leaders of denying the political, misogynist and anti-feminist nature of Lépine’s crime. Feminists in turn were accused of appropriating a tragic but isolated incident for their own ideological ends.

Aside from a hard-fought system of gun control (now about to be dismantled by the Harper government), the greatest legacy of the Polytechnique shootings was a deep-rooted gendered *malaise* and *mépris* that gave way

to a resounding silence in mainstream Québec society. Aside from a yearly flurry of white ribbons and solemn memorials, this silence has amounted to an effective moratorium on public debate about the difficult questions raised by the Polytechnique shootings. In many ways, feminists have been the keepers of the flame of the memories of December 6, 1989, an event that in these circles has come to represent a frontal attack on the struggle for gender equality and a potent symbol of the endemic nature of violence against women. It wasn’t until the release of the film *Polytechnique* in February 2009 that some of the more difficult aspects of the 1989 attack have made their way back into public debate.

Just before the film’s release, director Villeneuve appeared on the popular talk show *Tout le monde en parle* along with Karine Vanasse, the film’s producer and one of its leading actors.[1] This was one of a series of interviews where Villeneuve and Vanasse explain the conciliatory spirit of the film – what I would call, without irony, its profound humanism. A dramatization of the events of December 6, 1989, *Polytechnique* puts the spectator in the shoes of three students who were present at the engineering school that day: Stéphanie (Evelyne Brochu) who will die under fire from the unnamed gunman; Valérie (Karine Vanasse) who will be wounded in the attack but will survive and struggle to carry on with her life; and Jean-François (Sébastien Huberdeau) who, emotionally shattered by the violence he witnesses, will go on to commit suicide some months later.

Carefully drawn to present different points of view on the shootings, these composite characters do not directly represent actual individuals – although Valérie shares some traits with the survivor Nathalie Provost who courageously tried to reason with the killer, and Jean-François’s fate evokes the story of Sarto Blais, a witness to the Polytechnique shootings who committed suicide some time afterward. Produced in consultation with the families of the victims, and drawing upon extensive interviews with witnesses and survivors,

Polytechnique was for the most part lauded as a respectful, considered and compassionate dramatisation of these horrific events.

The bombastic Richard Martineau, columnist at the *Journal de Montréal*, joined Villeneuve and Vanasse on *Tout le monde en parle* that evening. Interrupting Villeneuve, and Vanasse's protest that *Polytechnique* was not a feminist film, Martineau went on an apoplectic anti-feminist rant, claiming that feminists had appropriated this event for their own purposes. This episode marked a disturbing public clash between Vanasse's and Villeneuve's avowedly non-feminist humanism and Martineau's polemical anti-feminism. Blasting through what could have been a more nuanced discussion about the legacy of the Polytechnique shootings, Martineau, voiced a virulent anti-feminism that is still alive and well in Québec.

While Martineau managed to steal the show that evening, I would argue that it is the retrospective humanist reading on the Polytechnique put forward by the film that is beginning to shape a new consensus two decades later. This humanism deliberately distances itself from feminism and foregrounds men's experience of the event alongside that of women. Louise-Maude Rioux Soucy clearly enunciated this position in the front page story of *Le Devoir* on December 5, 2009: "*Les féministes en ont fait un porte-étendard, les masculinistes, un catalyseur. Vingt ans plus tard, les discours enfiévrés d'hier semblent s'effacer au profit d'une lecture qui, sans nier le caractère misogyne de cet acte barbare, laisse place à une mémoire apaisée. Maturité sociale ou détournement de sens?*"[2]

Soucy's headline, "Cibla des femmes, toucha des hommes?", recognizes the fundamental misogyny of Lépine's gesture, while acknowledging that men were also affected by the tragedy. Even so, the question mark in the headline suggests that there is something tentative about this humanist reading. Indeed, this emerging humanism has not gone unchallenged. UQAM doctoral student Mélissa Blais, who has recently published

a book analyzing 20 years of media reactions to the Polytechnique shootings, critiques the increasing attention given to men's suffering in the wake of this event. Discussing the film *Polytechnique*, Blais objects strenuously to the equal weight given to Valérie and to Jean-François, lambasting the sympathy for male suffering evoked by the young man's tragic end. For Blais, this dramatization "*s'inscrit dans un contexte où les médias et les discours publics ... sont traversés par les thèmes de 'l'homme en désarroi,' de 'la crise des hommes,' de l'échec scolaire des garçons et même du suicide des hommes, un des axes principaux du discours masculiniste.*"[3]

Part of Blais' critique is on target, given that Villeneuve and Vanasse consistently distance themselves from any form of feminism. This gesture by the filmmakers operates, once again, to effectively dismiss feminism as too radical, as having "gone too far." Gabriel Chagnon makes a related, but much more nuanced argument in his piece in the *trespassing 2* issue of *NMP*, suggesting that the filmmakers were far too cautious in their choice to focus so much on Jean-François. Significantly, though, Chagnon attributes this caution to the risks taken by the filmmakers in breaking the troubled 20-year silence surrounding the Polytechnique shootings.

Yet by collapsing the film's treatment of male suffering into a sympathy for the masculinist movement – a radical fringe group who have recently celebrated Marc Lépine as a hero on the internet – Blais leaves no space for a nuanced understanding of men's roles as victims and witnesses of violence. For Blais, the filmmakers' choice to open the dramatic scope of suffering to the experience of men somehow takes something away from the female victims, and from feminism. But is suffering a zero sum game? Does the inclusion of male perceptions of the Polytechnique shootings mean that something is lost for feminism, and if so, what?

Part of what is at stake here are the sharply drawn lines of polemical public debate. By placing male experience at the heart of the public memory of the Polytechnique massacre, filmmakers and journalists mark this tragic



event as a common legacy that need not necessarily divide us neatly along gender lines. At the same time, this shift, in some ways problematic, challenges a persistent radical feminist line about male violence against women by rescripting and nuancing the set roles of male aggressor and female victim.

### **polyseme a word with more than one meaning**

December 4-6, 2009 marked “*La tuerie de l’École Polytechnique 20 ans plus tard : les violences masculines contre les femmes et les féministes*,” a major feminist conference at the Université de Québec à Montréal. I attended the conference hoping to understand how Québec feminists perceive the Polytechnique shootings 20 years later. I also wondered whether, with the benefit of hindsight, this event might be seen by feminists as polysemic, as having multiple meanings.

The conference marked a gathering of the clans, a unique meeting for intellectuals, artists and feminist activists, including many women who work in front-line services for women who are victims of male violence. Very few men and a large number of women of different ages from different parts of Québec were in attendance. The audience was large and diverse, yet intensely present—one could hear a pin drop in the plenary sessions, appropriately held in the UQAM auditorium named in honour of pioneering Québec feminist Marie Gérin-Lajoie. I sensed a deep desire to listen, to exchange, and to work through the implications of the Polytechnique violence. Generally speaking, the viewpoints expressed at the conference tended to confirm a radical feminist analysis of violence against women, and divergent viewpoints were rare.

At the core of the agenda were the ways that the collective memories of the Polytechnique shootings are closely intertwined with the story of Québec feminism. It was as if, by some demonic slight of hand, the feminist movement was put on trial after December 6, 1989. French feminist Florence Montreynaud (author of *Le*

*XXe Siècle des femmes*) made the timely comment that “le féminisme n’a jamais tué personne.”[4] Meanwhile, eminent feminist historian Micheline Dumont presented a portrait of 20th century anti-feminism in Québec, as a reminder that backlash did not begin with Lépine.[5] This was one of many references to how feminism has been set back by the anti-feminist backlash that followed Lépine’s act. Yet the very success of this conference was a reminder of the resilience of feminist thought, of its power to move people, and to create the possibility for alternative knowledges that contest comfortable public consensus. A vivid example is the tireless work by feminists to make visible the connections between social inequality and gender violence. On December 6, this conviction was enacted at an event organized by the Fédération des femmes du Québec, where some 500 participants enacted a human chain commemorating the 14 victims of the Polytechnique shootings in the Parc Émilie Gamelin.

If feminism represents the power of critical thought, its resilience lies in a capacity to renew itself through divergent opinions. One this note, one of the most interesting conference presentations was by Francine Pelletier, former editor-in-chief of the feminist magazine *La Vie en rose*. [6] Evoking the lingering silence around this event, Pelletier asked why the “first explicit sexist crime in history” has proven so painful for Québécois society. She went on to argue that the 1989 shootings represented a “loss of innocence” for Québec society – “*qu’il a cassé quelque chose de profond dans notre propre perception de nous-même*.” Pelletier described a central Québécois mythology, where the *Révolution tranquille* of the 1960s represents a break with a past marked by English oppression and control by the Catholic Church. Since that time, she suggested, all of the misery and backwardness of the Québécois people is seen to give way to a new era of progress, where Québec emerges a modern, social democratic society. Within this popular narrative, feminism was embraced as a struggle for gender equality equated with progressive social change. The symbolic weight of Lépine’s crime, then, was to target “the most visible sign of progress, women in public

positions of authority.” For Pelletier, Lépine set out to stop progress itself in its tracks.

Pelletier also made the controversial point that the radical feminist framing of this event as part of a continuum of violence against women overshadowed the specificity of Lépine’s crime. As a public and explicitly political crime, the Polytechnique shootings stand apart from other forms of violence against women that take place most often in private (in the family), most often involving people who know one another. Stressing that it was crucial in 1989 for feminists to make the link between Lépine’s public violence and other forms of violence against women, Pelletier proposes two decades later that we might also distinguish this crime as an explicitly political anti-feminist act with wide repercussions not only for feminism, but for Québec society in general.

**polyglot (Gr. polyglottos–glotto, tongue)  
in, of, speaking, or writing, many languages**

Twenty years after the shootings at the Polytechnique, I find myself, perhaps by some accident of fate, teaching at the Université de Montréal. Every time I see the silhouette of great tower of the pavillon Roger-Gaudry just in front of the old Polytechnique building and its shiny new “green” building incarnation, I am reminded of the horrific events of December 1989, and of the bitter controversies that followed. Yet this monument on the Montréal skyline also attests to the historical significance of the Université de Montréal as a francophone institution of higher learning. Along with Laval, Université de Montréal is one of the oldest and most prestigious institutions where Québec’s sons and daughters learn to take their place as leaders of this society as lawyers, doctors and engineers. Now as I set out to introduce feminist and queer thought into the Communication department curriculum, I feel an everyday affinity with the events of December 6, 1989. Despite the flurry of white ribbons dutifully worn on each anniversary, I am confronted daily with the sluggish and uneven rhythm of change in this conservative

and rigid institution – and indeed in a broader Québec society that we can celebrate for its many progressive qualities.

Twenty years ago I might have been more critical of the film *Polytechnique*, and of the creeping humanism that it has helped to usher into public discourse about the Polytechnique shootings. But after discussing the film with 50 undergraduate students who, like the participants of the recent feminist conference, were burning to come to grips with what had happened that cold day in December 1989, I can also attest to the power of this humanist discourse to open up different identifications, different ways to remember and to understand otherwise the Polytechnique shootings. In order to commemorate, understand and move on, what we need is polyvalent public discussion and careful analysis to renew our understandings of the significance of the cruel events of December 6, 1989.

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*photo by Jules Pidduck*



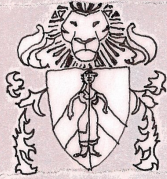
# STICK IT IN

*Liz Singer*

The timing of this project was perfect. In these days each breath was inhabited by shattered shards of glass and the invisible bleeding didn't seem like it could ever stop. What had burned out my heart and pinned my body to barbed wire spikes became enveloped in a struggle to say and then that struggle wrapped itself together and set down on fine but shaky bread stick legs. This video, is where in part, I become able again.

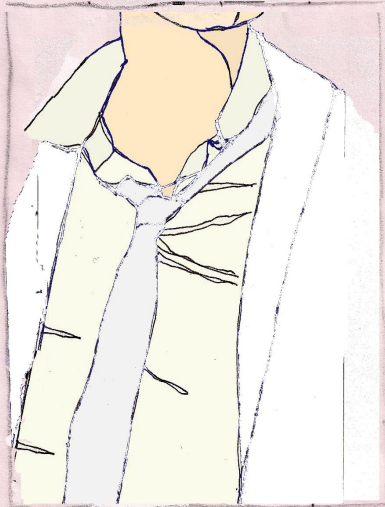
Access Video on NMP: <http://nomorepotlucks.org/article/wound-no7/stick-it>

*To date, Liz Singer has made twelve short films in a variety of genres including documentary, experimental and experimental narrative which have screened in numerous national and international film festivals. Liz has worked on several commissioned projects for artists including the activist teachings of renowned performance artist Guillermo Gomez Pena and Kirk Read the extraordinaire performance artist and author of How I Learned to Snap. Liz has sat on juries and done film festival programming in Toronto. Recently, Liz has been teaching and doing some movie making in San Francisco but will return to the big smoke this January.*



# The Illustrated Gentleman

disha



## In the changeroom

I was shopping with my dad in a Montreal chain. "But these are men's clothes," he said in a pained voice, "I don't understand what you would want with them."

We drifted through the store in our private griefs. By the time the store clerk approached me, I was alone in the men's section. I was self-conscious enough — the men and women's sections were totally segregated, with even separate entrances. But she put me at ease. "Great choice of vests," she said sincerely as I tried it on with a black satin tie and black velvet pants.

"It's pretty gender divided in here isn't it?" I said. She looked at me.

"They explicitly forbid me from modeling men's clothes," she confided. "I get less of a staff discount on men's clothes. I'm not even allowed to wear a tie. But the worst thing is," she whispered, "the other staff. I've heard them freak out just because a guy wanted to try a pair of heels." We looked at each other sadly.

I thought she was terrific. Nevertheless, my defenses were up, and I started to put things shyly back on the shelf.

## Pearls

From Men's Style, Russell Smith

- A jacket will always make you feel more confident than a sweater.
- Increase the spread in your collar and you will suddenly look a little more dashing.
- When in doubt about your own taste, buy expensive and conservative — and dressy. It is much easier to go wrong with casual clothes.
- Minimize the keys in your pocket.
- French cuffs are the poor man's sports car, a stellar luxury for a small price. They make you feel rich and powerful, even when you are not.

# THE ILLUSTRATED GENTLEMAN

*Elisha Lim*

Elisha's previous NMP comic strip *100 Butches* has been bought by Alyson Books New York, who publish seminal work like *Heather Has Two Mommies* and a lot of gay smut. *100 Butches Volume 1* will come out in April 2010, and she's thrilled to bits to be touring with Michelle Tea on her annual American reading tour *Sister Spit*.

Her new strip, *The Illustrated Gentleman*, is an illustrated series of dandies, butches, fags and any queers obsessed with men's clothes. It is a work in progress and she would love to hear new suggestions for the subtitles or layout.

*Elisha came out late. When she was 26 she broke up with her fiancé and moved to Berlin, which started a sharp learning curve of lesbian squat houses, queer trailer parks, transgender pride parades and an Ethical Slut reading group. She came to terms with her butch identity and draws a comic tribute to a lifetime of butchness from Singapore to Toronto. It has been featured in magazines in Australia, England, Austria and the U.S. and will be published as a graphic novel in April 2010. You can check out more of her beautiful comics here: [www.newhearteveryday.blogspot.com](http://www.newhearteveryday.blogspot.com)*

# SPEAK WHITE

*Nicholas Little*

A few months ago, while answering guys' questions in a local bathhouse for the AIDS Committee of Ottawa, a man I guessed to be in his late 70s stopped by my room to say hi and see what I was up to. Wearing dark, boxy, wraparound sunglasses – entirely unnecessary in the already dim sauna – and dress pants with a button down shirt that made him look like Yves Saint-Laurent circa 1975, he certainly stood out from the other men roaming around in their threadbare towels. He spoke entirely in French, which is not unusual as about a quarter of the guys I chatted with were Francophones.

As is often the case (and one of the reasons I enjoyed the work so much), he was happy to find a good listener and went from one story to the next, most of them about what it was like coming of age in 1950s rural Quebec and how he got from that place then to an older gentleman in the baths in 2009.

He told one story about working as a federal civil servant in the English-dominated office culture of the 1960s. He said his boss put a sign outside his office reminding employees that they were welcome to speak any language they liked in their own office, but that they would only speak English in his. "Si jamais je m'adressais à lui en français, il me disait : Speak white!"

That caught me off guard. His boss had ordered him to 'speak white'? I'd never heard the phrase and I didn't understand what he meant. So I asked. And he explained to me in French that growing up he had frequently been told by Anglophones to 'speak white'.

The phrase puzzled me. It seemed to suggest race, not language. Language has traditionally been a bone of contention in Quebec history. Culture and religion too. But race? While race is certainly a contentious subject in Quebec today, I was surprised that it might have been as important four decades ago.

"No, it wasn't so much race," he told me. It was a bit of everything. While the phrase itself is thought to have been borrowed from the southern United States, it was apparently used almost as a catch-all rebuke against anything not Anglo, not white, not born-and-bred. He said it could be used not only against French speakers (though it mostly was), but against anyone speaking something other than English. It could be used against immigrants but also against fifth generation Canadians who, nevertheless, seemed 'other'. He told me that as a grown man and young professional he was told to 'speak white' at work as often as at the grocery store.



The earliest recorded use of the phrase was supposedly in the Canadian Parliament of 1899 as Henri Bourassa was booed by English-speaking Members of Parliament while attempting to address the legislature in French against the engagement of the Dominion in the Second Boer War.

That bathhouse conversation fascinated me. Anyone who has lived in or loved Quebec can probably relate to the fact that its complicated, conflict-ridden evolution is both part of the fascination and the frustration. I was amazed that what this man described as a common command had never been mentioned by any Francophone friends in all the years I'd lived in Quebec.

So I began asking Quebecois pals about it and, each time I did, their eyes would widen knowingly and they'd say, "Yes, I know that phrase." Most people said it would be unusual to hear it today, but it still seemed to carry a legacy and a history and a potency.

One friend told me that part of the potency for her was a poem written by Michèle Lalonde in 1968, invoking the phrase as a collective complaint against the English. In 1980, Pierre Falardeau and Julien Poulin made a short film for the National Film Board, featuring Canada actress Marie Eykel reciting Lalonde's poem. The film is posted below and the English translation of Lalonde's poem follows.

I wondered whether I was a naive oddball for not knowing this part of Quebec history or whether a story that clearly holds a lot of weight for some people had somehow slipped under the collective radar. Spending six years with a Francophone boyfriend taught me that, just as many wounds are silently remembered by queer people (missing generation of men, anyone?...), so too is this true of any marginalized group.

Are people today still told to 'speak white'? Or have Quebec and Canada truly changed in the 40 years since that man worked in a 'speak white' government office? I decided to ask a Francophone co-worker at the AIDS

Committee of Ottawa her opinion. Frédérique Chabot grew up in Montreal before moving to Ottawa in her mid-twenties to study and find work.

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**Nico: Fréd, how does a concept like “speak white” play out in the life of a young French woman whose daily life is mostly spent in an Anglo world?**

Fréd: I am not from a generation that was ever told to “speak white”, but does that mean that I never get told to do so in more pervasive ways? Absolutely not. It is still something that connects me to my fellow Quebecois because we share a similar bitterness about how we are made to start in life at a lower standpoint. It is certainly a command that is felt when I interact with Anglophones. That openly racist command is never uttered anymore. But the fact that I still feel like I am asked to conform to certain Anglo standards in a subdued and often unconscious way makes it more difficult to even name the discomfort I feel as a French woman who prides herself on having a foot in both the English and French worlds.

I feel like I am making the most out of the fact that I am lucky enough to live in a city where two cultures and languages coexist. It made it possible for me to understand two very different worlds. But I still feel like one of those two worlds is considered of lesser value.

**Nico: So what has replaced “speak white” in contemporary Quebec and Canada? How does it play out today?**

Fréd: In comments such as "You're quite cool for a French girl". People think they are complimenting me when saying that. In reality, they are telling me how profoundly ingrained it is that French people are evaluated according to English standards of what is needed to succeed in the world. Or when they say, "You have

good style for a French girl," which speaks to how, as a French person, as soon as I walk in, an image is projected onto me. It is an image of the unfortunate, ugly, style-less, slightly clueless, "Queb". And it speaks to the fact that they celebrate how I transcend my Frenchness because I don't fit the mold of what they think a Quebecois looks like.

While it seems pretty silly to get hurt by comments about clothes or how I carry myself in my social circle, it highlights how "French-ness" is not celebrated and how good it is to grow into a less French person. I am celebrated for how good my spoken English is and how, because of it, I can pass as "not French" upon first sight. Then add to that English friends lovingly making fun of my accent and laughing all together about how funny some French people sound when they attempt to speak English. They try to include me in the laughter as if I too get the joke since I am not considered to be "just French" anymore. I find myself feeling bitter about how us French, we always switch to English to accommodate an English person, even when there are ten of us in the room. Or how people don't understand that we'll never be able to perfectly reproduce some English sounds because they simply don't exist in our language.

**Nico: In 2005, soon after her appointment as Canada's 27th Governor General, Michaëlle Jean claimed that the time of the 'two solitudes' had passed. She argued that "[t]oday's world ... demands that we learn to see beyond our wounds, beyond our differences for the good of all."**

Fréd: I am always amazed at how these two cultures are still so secluded from one another, each camp having a clear picture of what the other is. But it is a picture that is rooted in nothing but the history of hierarchy between Anglos and French on this continent. Is it recognized that up until the 1960s, our level of education was lower than that of African Americans in the United States? No. They easily name how African Americans were oppressed, but it is still not named that we too

come from such a place. It is not named that, as a group, we young Quebecois have to negotiate this reality as a part of our script. That we have to grow out of our own feeling of inadequacy. That we have to negotiate our entry into an Anglo world without wanting to reject that which is considered a less valuable part of our identity (despite that it's at the core of it!). So speak white. Act white. You'll be celebrated for starting from an unfortunate place but managing to grow out of it.

**Nico: It is as a gay man that I relate to your description of the daily pressure to renounce what is at the core of your identity in order to gain entry into a more privileged world. I often struggle to resist cynicism because of it. I have to work at cultivating hope because I want to realize my dreams despite that daily pressure.**

Fréd: Do I sound bitter? That's not how I feel at all times. I also enjoy navigating my two worlds, one of them being at the core of who I am and having defined how I tackle the world. But I took this opportunity here to name all of this and to be angry because this dynamic so often goes unnamed in everyday life.

The racism I feel is not as openly expressed as it once was. There is much more space for young English and French people to interact, which is a good thing. There is now much more space for French people to exist - we have access to education, white collar jobs, money, all of those things. So the situation is better than it was in previous generations but there is still a lot to work on. The task is to make it a space in which we are celebrated because we are French, not despite it.

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Italian-Quebecois journalist and playwright Marco Micone wrote a critical response to Michèle Lalonde's poem. Entitled "Speak What?", it suggests that Francophones have now replaced Anglophone dominance in Quebec, and that allophones (who speak neither English nor French as a first language) now find themselves under the Francophone thumb. Micone's recrimination includes:

*Speak what  
comment parlez-vous dans vos salons huppés  
vous souvenez-vous du vacarme des usines  
and of the voice des contremaîtres  
you sound like them more and more*

*Speak what now  
que personne ne vous comprend  
ni à St-Henri ni à Montréal-Nord  
nous y parlons la langue du silence  
et de l'impuissance*

*... imposez-nous votre langue  
nous vous raconterons la guerre, la torture et la misère  
nous dirons notre trépas avec vos mots  
pour que vous ne mourriez pas*

*... speak what  
nous sommes cent peuples venus de loin  
pour vous dire que vous n'êtes pas seuls.*

Of course, there is only one group that has ever truly "been alone" here. Which reminds me of a research project I did one summer with Inuit elders in Nunavik, arctic Quebec. The oldest generation in the small village I visited tend to speak Inuktitut amongst themselves but a mix of English and Inuktitut with their children. When their children went to school in the 1970s, they were typically speaking Inuktitut at home with their parents but had to attend school in English, leaving them somewhere in between. And the newest generation typically

speaks a mix of Inuktitut and English at home with their parents and grandparents and attend school in Inuktitut until second grade, when they must choose whether to continue their education in either English or French. As one elder put it to me: "We have created a generation that speaks three languages poorly but has no mother tongue. Imagine lacking the safety of knowing that, in at least one language, you can describe both the world around you and the world within."

**Speak White**  
**Michèle Lalonde**

Speak white  
il est si beau de vous entendre  
parler de Paradise Lost  
ou du profil gracieux et anonyme qui tremble  
dans les sonnets de Shakespeare

nous sommes un peuple inculte et bègue  
mais ne sommes pas sourds au génie d'une langue  
parlez avec l'accent de Milton et Byron et  
Shelley et Keats

Speak white  
et pardonnez-nous de n'avoir pour réponse  
que les chants rauques de nos ancêtres  
et le chagrin de Nelligan

Speak white  
parlez de choses et d'autres  
parlez-nous de la Grande Charte  
ou du monument à Lincoln  
du charme gris de la Tamise  
de l'eau rose du Potomac  
parlez-nous de vos traditions  
nous sommes un peuple peu brillant  
mais fort capable d'apprécier  
toute l'importance des crumpets  
ou du Boston Tea Party  
mais quand vous really speak white  
quand vous get down to brass tacks  
pour parler du gracious living  
et parler du standard de vie  
et de la Grande Société  
un peu plus fort alors speak white  
haussez vos voix de contremaîtres  
nous sommes un peu durs d'oreille  
nous vivons trop près des machines  
et n'entendons que notre souffle au-dessus des outils

Speak white and loud  
qu'on vous entende  
de Saint-Henri à Saint-Domingue  
oui quelle admirable langue  
pour embaucher  
donner des ordres  
fixer l'heure de la mort à l'ouvrage  
et de la pause qui rafraîchit  
et ravigote le dollar

Speak white  
tell us that God is a great big shot  
and that we're paid to trust him  
Speak white  
parlez-nous production profits et pourcentages  
Speak white  
c'est une langue riche  
pour acheter  
mais pour se vendre  
mais pour se vendre à perte d'âme  
mais pour se vendre

ah !  
Speak white  
big deal  
mais pour vous dire  
l'éternité d'un jour de grève  
pour raconter  
une vie de peuple-concierge  
mais pour rentrer chez nous le soir  
à l'heure où le soleil s'en vient crever au-dessus des ruelles  
mais pour vous dire oui que le soleil se couche oui  
chaque jour de nos vies à l'est de vos empires  
rien ne vaut une langue à jurons  
notre parlure pas très propre  
tachée de cambouis et d'huile

Speak white  
soyez à l'aise dans vos mots  
nous sommes un peuple rancunier  
mais ne reprochons à personne  
d'avoir le monopole  
de la correction de langage

*dans la langue douce de Shakespeare  
avec l'accent de Longfellow  
parlez un français pur et atrocement blanc  
comme au Viet-Nam au Congo  
parlez un allemand impeccable  
une étoile jaune entre les dents  
parlez russe parlez rappel à l'ordre parlez répression  
speak white  
C'est une langue universelle  
nous sommes nés pour la comprendre  
avec ses mots lacrymogènes  
avec ses mots matraques*

*speak white  
tell us again about Freedom and Democracy  
nous savons que liberté est un mot noir  
comme la misère est nègre  
et comme le sang se mêle à la poussière des rues d'Alger*

*ou de Little Rock  
speak white  
de Westminster à Washington relayez-vous  
speak white comme à Wall Street  
white comme à Watts  
be civilized  
et comprenez notre parler de circonstance  
quand vous nous demandez poliment  
how do you do  
et nous entendez vous répondre  
we're doing all right  
we're doing fine  
we  
are not alone*

*nous savons  
que nous ne sommes pas seuls.*

Voir: [http://www.onf.ca/film/Speak\\_White](http://www.onf.ca/film/Speak_White)

*Court métrage réalisé à partir d'un poème de Michèle Lalonde, créé en 1970 à l'occasion de de la première Nuit de la poésie à Montréal. Le texte se déroule sur un montage de photos chocs appuyées d'une trame sonore suggestive, dans un film dénonçant l'impérialisme économique et culturel des classes dominantes.*

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*Nicholas Little is an Anglo-Albertan who decamped to Montreal sometime in the late nineties "to learn French and be gay". He then moved to Ottawa, Ontario, where he was an HIV outreach worker in bathhouses, bars and online chat rooms for several years. In 2008 Nicholas helped found POWER (Prostitutes of Ottawa-Gatineau Work Educate and Resist), an organization of current and former sex workers advocating for recognition of their labour, Charter and human rights. Nicholas recently moved again - this time to the UK. You can follow his blog at <http://www.ickaprick.com>*

# LA TOUFFE : NATURE OU CULTURE?

Aurore

Médusés, amusés, titillés ou tout simplement muets, les usagers de la gare bruxelloise du Congrès ont été mis, sans avertissement préalable, face à la collection très pop de touffes customisées exposées, en plein cœur de station, par le collectif lillois Urban Porn (lien : <http://erelevilstyle.free.fr/wordpress/>) à l'occasion du festival de cinéma Pink Screens sur les genres et les sexualités (lien : [www.gdac.org](http://www.gdac.org)).

Il faut dire que, biberonnées à Annie Sprinkle, élèves de Marie-Hélène Bourcier, contributrices de Fuck my Brain! dans le sacro-saint cadre parisien de l'EHESS (École des hautes études en sciences sociales), les Lilloises en ont dans le crâne et dans la culotte. Et en plus, elles aiment la touffe. « Et vous, vous la préférez comment? demandent elles. Punk ou rasta? Frisée ou nature? »

Derrière cette invitation en forme de jeu, le projet « culture touf » ou l'idée, toute simple, de recueillir des photos de touffes de tous genres, à plumes, à accessoires, nues ou à poil, pour les exposer, in situ et sur la toile. Une action ludique symbolique du travail d'Urban Porn, qui aborde l'activisme queer par le biais du jeu, de l'agit-prop joyeuse et du « Do It Yourself » sexuel.

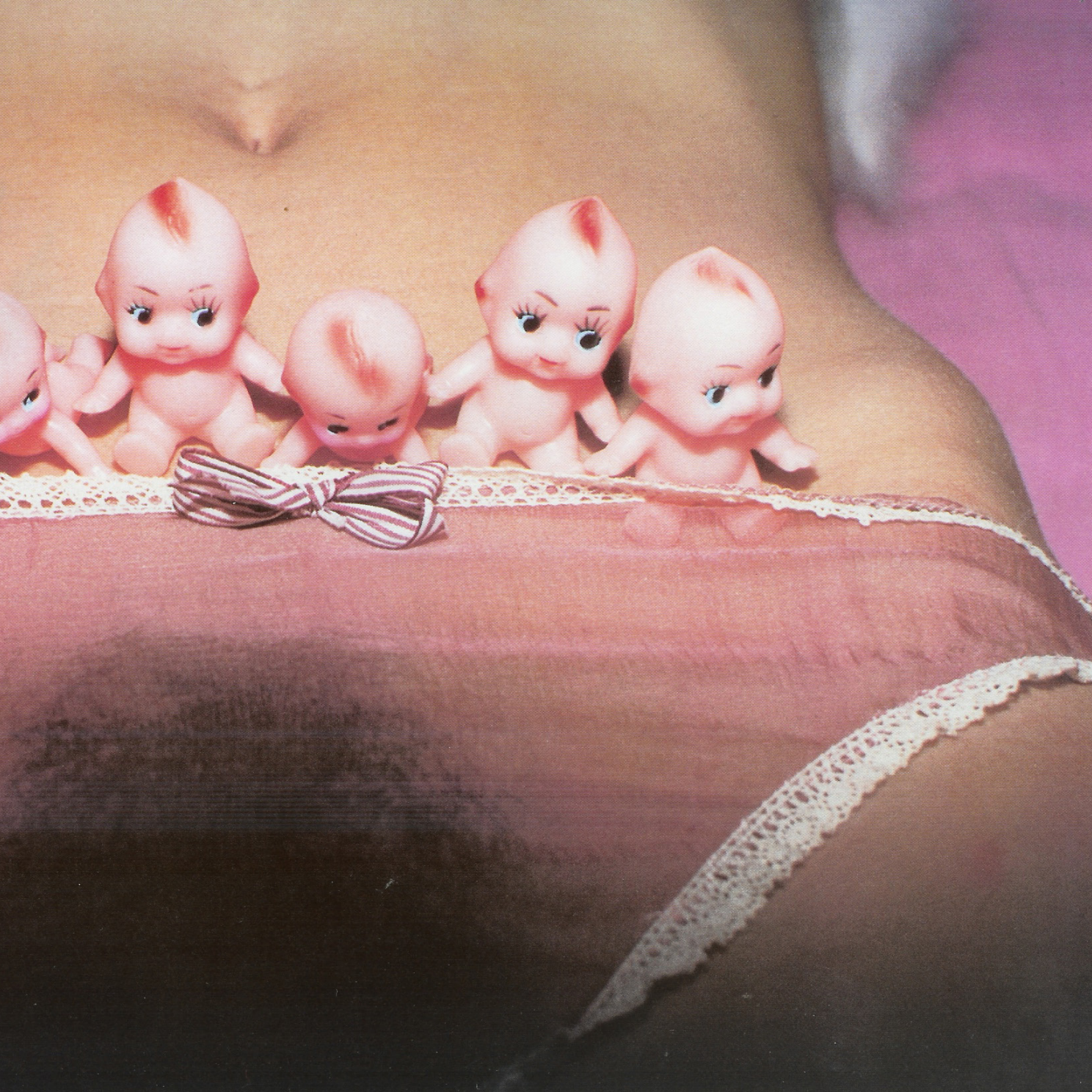
Par là, Urban Porn propose une manière sexo-ludique de réfléchir à l'appropriation du corps, aux représentations du sexe, au plaisir de soi, prolongée au sein d'ateliers bricolage à l'ambiance un peu réunion Tupperware. L'occasion de discuter styles et accessoires, de bomber un peu le lit et de décorer sa bite de petits volants roses.

Pour l'imaginer, rien de mieux que de fermer les yeux et d'écouter le petit reportage sonore, réalisé au plus près du poil pour Bang Bang, l'émission queer hebdomadaire de la radio publique belge (podcasté sur <http://podcasting.rtbf.be/previsu/index.htm?th=&key=PU-BANG&abo=1>).

Intéressé(e)? Urban Porn recueille toujours des photos de touf en tous genres à [urbanporn@gmail.com](mailto:urbanporn@gmail.com).

*Aurore est programmatrice pour le festival de cinéma bruxellois Pink Screens qui, depuis déjà huit ans, explore et déconstruit genres et sexualités avec bonheur et impertinence. Elle collabore également à Bang Bang, une émission hebdomadaire sur les cultures LGTB diffusée tous les dimanches soirs sur Pure FM, une radio publique belge. À cette occasion, elle farfouille du côté intello-pop des filles qui aiment les filles et fait partager, pour son plus grand plaisir de geek, sa fascination intarissable pour les nombreux aspects queer des nouvelles technologies. Dans ses temps libres, elle prend un air sérieux, met une veste et va gagner de l'argent dans un bureau situé dans un grand cube en verre avec vue sur un échangeur d'autoroute.*









MONSTER FROM UNDER THE SEA

SECRET

# **AUTO/PATHOGRAPHIES: RE-CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH REPRESENTATIONS OF ILLNESS**

*Jolene Pozniak*

*Summer exhibition at the Kunstpavillon, Innsbruck Austria. Curated by Tamar Tembeck and presented in conjunction with the International Fellowship Programme for Visual Arts and Theory at Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen.*

The stark white walls of the Kunstpavillon Innsbruck took on a distinctly clinical feel with this summer's exhibition *Auto/pathographies*. A multi-media exhibition, *Auto/pathographies* brought together work by 10 international artists, who explore the complex and multi-faceted nature of illness. Through photography, video and performance, the artists investigate processes of transformation that occur for those affected, directly or indirectly, by disease. As part of a curatorial residency with the Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen, curator Tamar Tembeck drew from interdisciplinary approaches that address body politics, the politics of sickness and the politics of (self)representation as a means of examining illness and identity as both an affirmation of one's existence and the acceptance of one's inevitable mortality.

Inherently autobiographical in nature, autopathographical representations expose illness and suffering — ultimately private and personal experiences — as an as-





sersion of one's agency in the face of often debilitating circumstances. As such, many of the works function to disrupt viewer expectations of the sick body by revealing the subject's active construction of identity rather than the passive acceptance of an assumed role. According to Tembeck, "Viewers are typically torn between embracing or refusing empathy towards the image and towards the subject depicted. In this way, autopathographic works raise significant ethical questions that pertain to viewers' responses and responsibilities in the face of images of suffering" (Tembeck, 2008). Simultaneous processes of living and dying confront viewers in this collection of works, which articulate experiences of physical illness and pathos as poetic, absurd, traumatic, documentary, constructive and destructive.

Exhibited for the first time in Austria, Tembeck's exhibition featured selected works by contemporary artists based in Canada, the U.S., Britain and Austria. Thanks to the generosity of the Jo Spence Memorial Foundation, the exhibition includes rare work by the late British photographer, who died in 1992 from leukaemia. Besides the UK, Finland and Austria are the only countries so far to exhibit *The Final Project* series by Jo Spence and Terry Dennett.

After a breast cancer diagnosis in 1982, Spence began to use Camera Therapy as a strategy to process her personal battle with cancer and to create further dialogue around patients' rights. In work such as *Cancer Sisters* (1982-83) from *The Cancer Series*, Spence employed her familiar photographic language, documentary style, and use of tableaux as a tool to process, reflect on, and communicate her experience with breast cancer and her subsequent lumpectomy. Using the clichéd female gender stereotype as her model, the artist created a series of tableaux where she marked and mutilated Barbie-like plastic dolls to address issues of clinical objectification. By marking a doll's breast with a black 'X', shaving off her hair, or cutting off a breast, Spence commented directly on her own encounters as a breast cancer patient and the loss of bodily ownership often experienced during treatment.

*Cancer Sisters* calls into question gender politics, representations of the female body and the stigma attached to breast cancer surgery, where the consequences are commonly concealed by prosthetics and regrettable silences. This notion is exemplified by Audre Lorde who argues, "the expectation that women will hide their deformity and cover it up with a prosthesis makes it impossible for one-breasted women to identify with each other and come to terms with their new bodies" (quoted in Dykstra, 1995). Subsequently, the photographer-activist Matuschka also used her practice as a means to challenge the stigma of illness in her autopathographic work *Beauty Out of Damage*, published on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine* in August, 1993 (ibid). The photograph shows Matuschka in a white dress designed to reveal the scar from her mastectomy. By photographing herself in this way, Matuschka, like Spence, makes visible the private, often concealed effects of breast cancer in an attempt to normalize illness and challenge singular notions of female beauty.

However, Spence's photographic techniques changed dramatically after her diagnosis with terminal leukaemia in 1990. Working together with Terry Dennett, Spence's series *The Final Project* marked a departure from a more overtly political aesthetic to a psychological and emotional exploration of her own mortality. Using mirrors and layered images, Spence borrowed techniques from realism, Magic Realism, and fantasy to create *PhotoFantasy* — a strategy that produced an aesthetic that could better convey her experience of leukaemia in light of the disparity between her self-image, as affected by her illness, and her "healthy" physical appearance (Dennett, 2001).

*The Decay Project/15th October, 1984* is a montage of a decaying surface layered onto Spence's body, photographed for *The Cancer Project*. Like a headless mug shot, Spence holds a card with the date on it, conjuring up associations with criminal line-ups, or specimens tagged for experiment. The black background highlights her naked figure, which bares the real scars of her lumpectomy surgery and the superimposed scars

of decay. The image evokes the discomfort and clinical objectification that often comes with being a patient, whose sick body is repeatedly examined, photographed and labelled. Much of her work from *The Final Project*, 1991-92 marks a dramatic shift toward directly confronting her mortality. In *Decaying Face*, for example, the artist layered images on top of an earlier self-portrait, thus echoing the transformation that the artist herself was facing. Spence gazes upward, as if catching a glimpse of death.

As the artist's condition worsened, her work from *The Final Project* became less about confronting death and more about practicing it (Dennett, 2001). In *Embalming*, *Spence Egyptian* and *Mummy Doll*, Spence borrowed from ancient Mexican and *Egyptian* funeral rites and traditions to create her own "pre-death fantasy funeral" (ibid). In *Mummy Doll*, Spence has photographed a number of objects reminiscent of the Mexican Day of the Dead ritual. A distorted image of a glass vase containing traditional symbols of death — a taxidermied bird, dried branches, and a mini coffin equipped with mummy doll sitting erect. As in *Spence Egyptian* or *Untitled* from *The Final Series*, Spence used dolls or images to represent herself in these pre-death fantasy funerals. Here, the mummy doll stands in for the real Spence, and by performing death, Spence affirms her life and autonomy in spite of her imminent mortality (Tembeck, 2009).

While autopathographical works also exist in relation to the viewer's response — as a means of addressing or problematizing the politics of the body — Tembeck's curatorial inquiry of representations of illness extend to include relationships between healthy and sick individuals. Christina Lammer's video installation *Empathographies* (2009) conveys illness from the Austrian clinician's perspective by asking the question, "What does it mean to be a patient?" Moving away from the autobiographical perspective of illness, the video explores relational pathography: a relationship between a sick and a healthy person, which in this case exists between the patient and clinician. The viewer stands before two

televisions placed side-by-side. On one screen, medical professionals are interviewed individually and given the opportunity to answer Lammer's question. Each interview takes place in an empty room, the doctor's presence illuminated against a muted, dark background. Only Lammer's voice is heard and, like the viewer, she occupies a position of observation. In a slippery reversal of roles, the doctor is now the subject of inquiry — a figure of authority in an uncanny examination situation. Among Lammer's subjects are a plastic surgeon, an oncologist, a general practitioner, a radiologist and an ear, nose & throat specialist, all of whom maintain different patient-practitioner relationships — a product of both personality and specialization. For example, the radiologist answered Lammer's question by simply stating that a patient is a sick person, a response perhaps not so unexpected from a professional trained to target disease in a precise and isolated manner.

While the viewer is in the position to observe and judge the clinicians in their relational pathographic role, their answers reveal more about the scope of the medical system than they provide insight into the clinicians' capacity for empathy. This becomes evident in the blinking mosaic of white coats and black backgrounds on the second television screen; it is a piecemeal effect of differing viewpoints and experiences, which become more or less indiscernible. These individuals become boxed-into an undifferentiated category called clinician. A mix of undulating voices echoes the sentiments of the Austrian healthcare system, foregrounding the politics of disease, and a tendency to reduce both patient and clinician to singular and over-simplified categories.

Visualizing the patient from the clinician's perspective raises questions about relational pathography with regard to issues of patient autonomy and the construction of identity, projected or otherwise. At the crux of this installation, however, is an honest curiosity about the politics of medicine, the politics of disease, and the role of patient-clinician relationship in determining the course of both.



The limitations of empathy are explored by different means in the work of American artists Tina Takemoto and Angela Ellsworth, causing the viewer to question the extent that one can participate — as a healthy person — in the experience of illness. After Ellsworth's diagnosis with Hodgkin's disease in 1993, the artistic partners began their explorations into the politics of disease with *mag(in)ed Malady*.

In an 18-minute video loop comprising three videos, the viewer witnesses moments of pain, frustration, strenuous work and struggle in an attempt to explore the limits of empathy. *Arm's Length* (1998, 7 min) documents a performance by Takemoto, where she tapes five matches to her right arm and proceeds to light them. The burns were an attempt to mimic the effects of Ellsworth's chemotherapy treatments, and as a result, Takemoto sustained 3rd degree burns. In another effort to explore pathos and to approximate the experience of cancer treatments on the body, Takemoto performs a wall-climbing exercise up and down a 25-foot wall, while boiling, slicing and bandaging eggs in reference to wounds on the body. The act is both absurd and endearing, and ultimately fruitless in communicating the physical, emotional and psychological processes of burning, scarring and healing that resulted during Ellsworth's chemotherapy.

The struggle, hard work, and systematic rigor involved in the process of sickness and healing is also addressed in *Caffeine and Carotene* (1997). This 6-minute video documents a laborious performance that took place over three days, involving more than 900lbs of carrots. While observing this bizarre act with vegetables, coffee and medical tubing, one hears the mechanical murmuring of an exercise bicycle, which is attached to a juicer. Ellsworth and Takemoto create a spectacle that is part mad-science lab, part circus, part factory-line as they meticulously work away to juice, bag and label their concoctions. Here, the artists are not merely participants, but active agents in the functioning of this system. They are part of the mechanism that circulates the treatment through IV bags of carrot juice and medical

tubing. Discarded piles of carrot mulch are bandaged, bagged and stamped with the words “pre-existing condition”. The procedure and treatment regimen is nothing short of exhausting, and despite the absurdity of this performance, a sense of crisis and necessity transforms it into a compelling act about the impossibility of communicating the experience of illness.

Carl Bouchard's video *Mille Excuses (So Sorry! Es tut mir Leid, 2005)* also attests to the limits of empathy in the patient-doctor, artist-viewer relationship. Having undergone five rectal surgeries between 2005-2006, Bouchard questions the degree to which healthcare professionals and gallery visitors can identify and empathize with the pain and vulnerability that is part of the experience of surgery. Lying back in a dental chair, the viewer is invited to witness Bouchard's dental surgery, the closest equivalent to the painful process he experienced during his anal surgeries.

In a textual re-telling of his rectal surgeries, Bouchard describes the procedure, the pain, and the trauma he incurred. By sharing his surgical experience with the reader, Bouchard underscores the loss of control and power experienced within the actual medical context; he allows the reader/viewer access to a situation where his permission was previously disregarded. As Bouchard describes in the accompanying text, “While waiting outside the operating room what should I see, nerves already on edge, but two student nurses. Their nervousness and furtive glances in my direction informed me. Accomplices. They knew I was next, they knew why I was there, and they knew what they would see.”

Staring into the screen, sounds of the equipment accompany a close-up view of Bouchard's mouth being probed with metal instruments. A dental dam obscures our view of Bouchard, creating the dehumanizing effect of a barrier that separates the problem and the patient, as a private matter becomes a public spectacle. By permitting the viewer's presence, however, Bouchard reasserts his agency and maintains the autonomy he was denied during his surgeries.

The expectations surrounding patient behaviour are addressed, to different degrees, in Chantal DuPont's *Headstrong All the Way Round* (2000, 30 min). In a poetic narrative of physical and emotional transformation, DuPont expresses her experiences as a cancer patient undergoing treatment. After a breast cancer diagnosis in 1999, the artist began radiotherapy treatments, which resulted in the loss of her hair. With the intimacy of a diary, the video is presented as a timeline, but one that avoids a linear narrative. Her journey weaves across past and present, combining imagination, memory, and the weightiness of reality throughout her process of sickness and healing, of hair loss and eventual re-growth.

In an act of defiance, she refuses the role of the patient patient. DuPont sheds her wig and proceeds to pull out her remaining hair, expediting this side effect of the radiotherapy. Closing her eyes, she blows the fluffy tufts of hair to the wind and embarks on her journey.

DuPont's work is poetic, whimsical and playful to an extent that might even be considered inappropriate given the circumstances, given her role as a patient. But perhaps it is this juxtaposition of the gravity of the situation and the lightness with which she creates that results in such a soulful piece. Floating in between memories, she says, "I have the feeling I'm off to the front with a somewhat bald head for a breast-plate — and why not? — my forehead for a banner. MADAM, YOU'LL PROBABLY LOSE IT ALL, EVEN YOUR EYEBROWS AND EYELASHES. Well then, I'll be headstrong: in the depths of my gaze, my eyes will stay wide open right to the end of the road."

Her bald scalp becomes both a canvas and a metaphor for her journey. Using a tiny red wagon to cart various objects — toys, plants, fruits — across her head, she invites the viewer along as she indulges in an exploration of childhood memories, traversing moments of hope, desperation, exhaustion and triumph.

Tembeck's ambitious curatorial project culminates in a thought-provoking exploration of the politics of medi-

cine and the body, issues of control and agency, and the limits of empathy that exist in the relationship between sick and healthy individuals. The artists in the exhibition rely on their artistic practice to question the politics of illness and to explore the transformations that occur in identity and body.

*Auto/pathographies* confronts the viewer head-on with illness, posing a challenge to the privileging of the healthy "normal" body, which renders disease invisible. Tembeck's selection of works collectively disrupts viewer expectations of the patient as victim, underscoring the power of visibility to avow identity and affirm one's life by evincing one's mortality.

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#### Image credits

1. Takemoto Tina, *Angela Ellsworth, Arm's Length*, 1998, 7m00s (performance document). Courtesy of Angela Ellsworth & Tina Takemoto.

2. Jo Spence, *Cancer Sisters*, 1982-83 *From The Cancer Project*, 4 photographs, 10x15cm, Gallery View, Tamar Tembeck.

3. Carl Bouchard, *Mille Excuses / So Sorry*, 2005 DVD, 20m00s, Jo Spence / Terry Dennett, *Portrait Skull*, from *The Final Project*, 1991-92, Lammer, Christina, *Empathographies*, 2009, Video installation 2 DVDs, 5- and 20-min loops, Gallery View, David Steinbacher.



*Jolene Pozniak works as a freelance writer and editor in Canada and Austria. She has written on the contemporary visual arts, film, and cultural theory – specializing on issues of multicultural politics in Canada and abroad. Pozniak was the co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of the magazine Locus Suspectus and a graduate from McGill University's M.A. program in Art History and Communications.*



**ANPO**



1959-8

1960-2



# ANPO

*Linda Hoaglund*

On November 8th, tens of thousands of demonstrators gathered in Okinawa to protest U.S. plans to relocate a Marine Corps air base to the emerald waters of Oura Bay. Construction of the base would destroy a coral reef sheltering the bay and threaten the critically endangered Okinawa manatee, a gentle creature integral to Okinawa's environment, culture and history. Many also fear the relocated base would increase the number of murders, rapes and assaults that have plagued towns near other U.S. bases. Although the relocation was negotiated in 2006, the newly-elected Japanese ruling party is reconsidering the agreement, even suggesting the base be relocated outside Japan. This unexpected groundswell of opposition to a previously negotiated deal threatens one of America's most important strategic relationships. The U.S., afraid that allowing Japan to renegotiate the terms could open up a deeper review of America's military presence in the country, is sticking to a hard line and insisting the base be built. The protesters are vowing to prevent it.

Born and raised in Japan, Hoaglund is uniquely qualified to tell this story. The majority of her work has dealt with translating the subjective experience of Japanese culture to the Anglophone world. She has subtitled over 200 films, and *Wings of Defeat*, her previous documentary about Kamikaze pilots who survived WWII, received international critical acclaim. Her director of photography is Yamazi Yutaka, one of Japan's most accomplished cameramen who also filmed the 1960 protests against U.S. bases as a student. Playing a key advisory role is Dr. John Dower, Professor of History at MIT and author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Embracing Defeat*, the definitive study of postwar Japanese culture and politics.

*Linda Hoaglund was born in Japan, the daughter of American missionary parents, and raised in rural Japan where she attended Japanese public schools. A graduate of Yale University, she was a bilingual news producer for Japanese television between 1981 and 1987. In 1987 she joined an independent American film production company as a producer. Since 1996, she has subtitled 200 Japanese films. She recently produced and wrote the feature documentary film, *Wings of Defeat*, about Kamikaze pilots who survived WWII. *Wings of Defeat* was screened at numerous international film festivals and broadcast internationally, including on the PBS series, "Independent Lens" in May, 2009. It received the 2009 Erik Barnouw Award from the Organization of American Historians. Currently she is directing and producing a new feature documentary, *ANPO*, the story of resistance to U.S. military bases in Japan and the cultural legacy of those protests. It is scheduled for completion in 2010.*

# DU BON GOÛT

*Massime Dousset*

- Hey! Chus là! Chus là! Ça va? Tu permets que je m'assoie, juste là, à côté de toi? Ish... c'est mouillé, mais bon, qu'est-ce que tu veux? C'est ça qui arrive quand on passe tout le party à finir les verres des autres quand ils regardent pas, à chiquer des chandelles pis à écrire son nom sur les murs avec du crémage à gâteau, en ajoutant des « I love you » partout... Le jour se lève, la place se vide, pis on n'a même pas eu le temps de parler à qui que ce soit, sinon à l'autre tata qui sait à peine compter jusqu'à dix, tsé celui qui est tout le temps là, tu sais c'est qui, chus sûr: On est quand même mieux ici que dans maison, hein? Bercés par le ti-bruit du filtreur d'la piscine, le cul dans l'herbe trempe. Ouain, ça fait quand même pas mal de rosée pour... quoi? quatre heures et quart, quatre heures et demie du mat? Ça a peut-être à voir avec le réchauffement... Anyways. As-tu remarqué qu'on est arrivé en même temps? Gen était dans l'portique avec son gâteau trois étages ben rose ben bleu, un diadème en carton dans bouche, et toi qui voulais l'embrasser comme il faut faire, et moi qui m'essayais aussi avec autant d'ardeur, et elle, la pauvre, qui se démenait tout sourire, la bouche pleine de carton recyclé et de suc' blanc. T'avais l'air tendu en tout cas... C'est juste sa fête tsé, pas son enterrement... faut pas capoter. Anyways... je suis content de voir

que t'as trouvé le moyen de te détendre, t'es même drôlement relâché. Ça me donne le goût en maudit de t'pincer les joues pour te réveiller, un peu comme ma mère me faisait quand j'étais flo. Mais j'vas me retiendre, j'vas me retiendre. D'ailleurs, si tu me permets une remarque maternelle, calice mon gars, t'as vraiment raté ton makeup. C'est quoi ces grosses lignes roses? T'aurais pu l'étendre un peu au moins. Bon, une ligne de couleur, ça peu ben paraître, même sur tes grosses joues de trucker, mais là, DU TEXTE! C'est comme pas subtil. Eh... t'avais pas ça en arrivant? Tu t'es mis ça vite fait dans salle de bain? Tu trouvais que t'attirais pas assez l'attention de même du haut de tes six pieds? Bon, qu'est-cé que t'as écrit, t'as mis I LOVE... euh... tourne donc ta tête, je vois pas le reste du texte qui descend dans ton cou. Alors? Tu te tournes? Bon, si je te retourne moi-même la tête d'abord, comme ça, yuck... c'est gras! Bon, ça dit I LOVE... CÉLINE. Hein? Céline? C'est con, je n'ai pas croisé de Céline à soir? Il y avait-tu une Céline dans place? Ah! À moins que tu voulais dire « Céline Dion : est trop bonne c'te tounelà, a chante ben en viande à chien! » ou ben encore « Louis-Ferdinand Céline : mon voyage au bout de la nuit, c'ta souère que m'a le faire! » Pouhahaha! Franchement, c'est pas clair mon gars... Tsé, une petite explication entre parenthèses, même dans un cou, ou un astérisque qui renvoie à une note en bas de la cuisse, ça fait la job. Sinon on comprend pas ton concept, pis t'es encore plus isolé dans le party. D'ailleurs, tu ne portais pas un pantalon en arrivant? C'est quoi? T'as eu chaud? Assez chaud pour en plus enlever tes sous-vêtements? Tsé, c'est pas hygiénique dans l'herbe comme ça, on sait pas quelles bébites extrêmement résistantes aux insecticides pourraient venir te croquer les parties... En tout cas, c'pour toi. Hey, j'voulais te dire, ça me fait vraiment du bien de te parler : j'ai mal au ventre depuis tantôt, pis comme t'es relax comme un tas, ça me fait le plus grand bien. Je sais, tu dois penser que j'ai encore abusé de la boisson, mais non, à soir, c'est pas le fond de daiquiri aux fraises à Gen que j'ai siphonné dans les toilettes, suivi de la larme de cognac que j'ai léchée

d'un verre terminé et la demi-queue chaude de Molson Ex qui traînait qui m'ont rendu gaga. Ben non, c'est les maudites peanuts au barbecue qui passent pas. Avant, j'étais une vraie éponge, mais à c't'heure, je succionne la vie des gens à place. Bouhahaha! Ben non, c't'une blague! Pour vrai, maintenant, je mange des protéines au lieu de boire. J'me mets en shape comme ça, ça me donne du guts, personne me fait peur sur mon rush de protéines, personne me dit quoi faire. J'ai lu que c'était plus facile à digérer les protéines de viande que celles dans les plantes, mais Geneviève, elle avait juste des peanuts à me donner, et c'était pas la peine d'insister, elle avait J-U-S-T-E des peanuts. J'te regarde là... as-tu eu un accident de vélo récemment? T'as une belle grosse gale mature, là, sur le genou. Ché pas si tu savais, mais j'ai toujours envie de les arracher moi les gales, chus comme ma mère là-dessus, c'est pas de ma faute, j'ai été éduqué d'même. Faque je te l'arrache? Je ne suis pas un expert, mais je pense qu'il faut vraiment le faire. Ça fera pas trop mal, t'inquiètes... ah... voilà... C'est fait! C'est fini! Ah mais... ouille! Ça saigne beaucoup plus que je pensais... Ça te dérange-tu si je nettoie ça à ma manière? Hein? Oui? Non? Qui ne dit rien consent, n'est-ce pas le plus vieux des dictons? Bouge pas d'là, je me lave la langue et je reviens...

*Massime Dousset écrit à temps perdu des nouvelles et de la poésie. Il prône avant tout la dislocation de banalités en objets étranges et ludiques. La plus grande partie de son travail s'envole sous forme de courriels à une amie ou de commentaires sur Facebook. Le reste dort en boule dans les drafts de son G-mail pour ne s'épanouir que très rarement au sein d'une publication. Ses plus récents projets publiés sont le livre d'artiste et recueil Quatre fables : Une + Une + Une + Une (autoédition, 2002), et une suite e-épistolaire orageuse en six courriels sans réponse, « Matte furoncle », « Ribs de velours », « Yuri le vitreux », « Mini bean », « Lèche-tes-tiches » et « Memouache », parue dans le fanzine Feelings (autoédition, 2006). Une version antérieure de « Du bon goût » a été lue devant public à Montréal en 2007, de même qu'un poème sur l'alcool intitulé « Les caresses internes ».*

# ALLY PICARD AND THE EMOTIONAL RELAY

*Ally Picard | Dayna McLeod*

Ally Picard extends to us moments in time that describe community, identity, love, tenderness, glamour and raw experience in her photographs, blurring the borders of the personal, public and private with ease and an expectation of trust. Her work features friends and subjects in everyday moments that are both staged and unrehearsed, candid and dressed up, vulnerable, guarded, intimate, honest: ultimately, playful and fun. Preparing for a move to Portland from Brooklyn, Ally describes her practice, process and the importance of community in her work.

**DM: Can you talk about your practice – what you're interested in, what you look for, how you approach a project? Where does the work come from?**

AP: I always come back to storytelling in the end. No matter the medium, whether artistic or academic, it all boils down to that. Photography gives me the ability to suggest stories and worlds with greater complexity than anything I have ever committed to paper. In my candid work, the emphasis is on witness and documentation. I'll approach a project with an expectation of the general tone that will result, but without imposing a narrative. In my staged portraiture work the emphasis is still on narrative, but no longer is there a specific

personal experience to record – the scope is more general, but also more open to specific direction.

My work comes from a desire to create tiny photographic revelations – of some small truth of a subject's experience. This is where the bloodhound in Bloodhound Photography comes from – bloodhound as detective. I am interested in using intuition and empathy to seek out hints at larger truths, and using the creative eye to communicate what I find.

**DM: Can you talk specifically about your different projects? Where did The Ethical Butcher come from? What were you interested in when you started, and how did your approach change?**

AP: The Ethical Butcher is my partner, Berlin Reed. The photos in that series were driven directly by what he was looking for: documentation of his craft and process as a butcher, writer and promoter of sustainable meat consumption. As well as being a frequent subject in the candid work from my daily life, he is also featured in I Trust Slow Jams, another ongoing subject-driven project. Slow Jams began a year and a half ago, when Berlin and our friend Darrelle Vary began hormone replacement therapy as a part of the gender transition they



were each going through. They had approached me together shortly before beginning HRT and asked that I document the physical changes that would occur. That project ended up not only documenting their changes, but it also documented the rapid change in my photographic style and technique.

One of the projects I did last spring was a series titled *What the Day Leaves*, in which five subjects invited me into their respective homes to photograph them before they left the house for the day, and again when they returned. What resulted was not quite what I had predicted, even though I knew going in that I would inevitably be surprised. In the end, I was left trying to understand what made a series "successful" or not, and re-thinking the methodology of the project, as though it was a behavioral experiment that needed re-tooling. In these very deliberate series, I often feel like a behavioral scientist, or perhaps an emotional scientist – setting out to document and record honest and personal emotional reactions and how they are constantly changing and overlapping. But most of my work leaves aside any imposed framework, expectation or prediction. I'm most comfortable as the creative documentarian.

**DM: What is your interest in staged portraiture? How does this differ from your candid documentation work?**

AP: I feel that the candid style gives me the opportunity to see experience on the personal, micro level that is easily paralleled to the universal; the staged style gives me the opportunity to see the macro level of experience – the grand narrative or allegory. The staged portraiture is also a place for playfulness and exploration of ideas and aesthetic boundaries that the more documentary work does not allow. The *House of Trisha* series is a great example of this. The work becomes large and hyper-theatrical, to the point where characters are caricatures. The biggest difference between the two styles is the depth of emotional relay. Feeling can be conveyed through staged portraiture, but on a more blunt level, as though through a megaphone. In candid

portraiture, where my heart lies, the emotion conveyed has a wider range and allows for subtleties of intimacy and expression. It makes a deeper connection with the viewer due to the personal, "real" nature of the source.

**DM: What does your practice look like?**

AP: As a self-taught photographer, my practice feels like a constant education built on refining style and technique, experimentation, seeking out knowledge and new experience. I'm at my best when there is no break between projects, and I often juggle short and long-term projects simultaneously. Day-to-day shooting is equally important to my practice, and continues amidst the more defined and coordinated shoots.

**DM: How do you approach your subjects?**

AP: Most of my subjects are friends or acquaintances, and approaching them is easy. A call for volunteers generally elicits more than enough responses. But in the last year I've been pro-actively approaching people who I find engaging – either based on their unique external presentation or for the work they make or do. Additionally, the more work I do, the more requests I receive for collaborations or simply to be one of the faces in my body of work.

Living in Brooklyn I am joyfully surrounded by so many fascinating subjects, and the connections we make in these sessions almost never end there. This facilitation of connection is one of the most enriching aspects of my photographic practice.

**DM: How do you collaborate with your subjects? What is this relationship like?**

AP: Collaborations can be completely different depending on the subject and the intended result. Working with visual or performance artists is generally the most dynamic kind of collaboration. They often come into a shoot knowing what kind of artistic direction or aesthetic they want. What follows is usually debate and





compromise to maintain a balance between their vision and mine, almost always resulting in something more exciting than anticipated. That type of collaboration is an artistic relationship, as though between colleagues. Even when a subject comes to a shoot without this specific vision, I still feel like there is collaboration on a more subtle level. What they give me and how I choose to capture and frame it – their experience through my representation – is collaboration. This is the subject-witness relationship.

**DM: How are you reflected in your subjects' portraits?**

AP: The intimate tone that I cultivate in my work comes from the resilient vulnerability I feel in the world, and the never-ending attempt to connect in that honest space. Photography is where I manifest my desire to see and be seen genuinely and deeply. It's where I can reach between the subject and myself, between the subject and the viewer. Most of the art I create comes from a desire to honor the role of bearing witness to others.

**DM: How does gender and sexuality factor in your work?**

AP: I think that where gender and sexuality are located in my work depends on perspective. My intention is to photograph the people in my life and community- our normalcy, art, bodies, joy- our present and our everyday. The fact that I live, work, and love within a queer community results in a body of work that is filled with an array of subjects who are primarily queer and/or gender non-conforming. To someone outside of that community, the non-normative genders and sexualities represented may appear to be the focus, but I would say that that is a focus chosen by the viewer. A lot of contemporary queer photography aims to show queer bodies and queer lives with the specific intention of creating visual representation in a world where we are still largely marginalized, and I am proud to add my work to that representation. But with the exception of the I Trust Slow Jams series, which specifically examines





gender transition, my work is not focused on gender and sexuality. The focus is always on the communication of personal and honest emotional experience, and the celebration of that.

**DM: How do you take a photograph? What is the process? How do you know when the work is done? What do you look for?**

AP: When working with a subject, I find that the two biggest elements in creating the image are finding the light, and finding the emotional moment. A lot of time is spent creating the right connection with the subject, waiting for the point at which they start to relax and give me what I need. This act in itself is always fascinating – exploring how long it takes for the intimacy to emerge, be it over short or long periods of time. Years ago I attempted this type of experiment using polaroids of friends taken in 15-minute intervals in an intentionally vain attempt to capture the effects of the passage of time. I am still drawn to portrait series that are taken over specific intervals of time – What the Day Leaves was a recent exploration of that idea.

I shoot with a Canon Rebel, and spend about 2-5 hours on a shoot in post-production, depending. Sometimes I'll think I know when the image is "done", and go back to it six months later and re-edit it entirely differently. Mostly it's a simply intuitive decision, when I believe that the image will communicate the feeling that I originally intended.

**DM: What are you working on now?**

AP: I'm relocating from Brooklyn to Portland, Oregon in March, so most of my energy and focus right now is going into that. But photography definitely factors into my preparations. I'm researching the photography scene in Portland, preparing ideas for new photo projects and artistic salons. From what I can tell, Portland is a great city to be a working artist in, and my sights are set on that. I'd like to think that I help create or at least reflect community with my work, but in truth, photog-

raphy also helps me create a community for myself. It gives me a reason to connect and collaborate with people that I might not know how to reach otherwise. I am working on a portrait series that will begin upon my arrival in Portland, and will facilitate the creation of new connections, both friend-connections and artistic collaborations and relationships. I'm also in the process of setting up a solo show in Brooklyn for early February, which will be a selection of my work over the last two years, and in some ways a visual summary of what my life has been here.

*Alison Picard is a Brooklyn-based photographer, multi-media artist and performer whose focus is centered on narrative; framing new ones, revealing existing ones, and honoring the power in relating each other's experiences through witness and collaboration. Her work over the last four years consists of staged portraiture, collaborative conceptual series, promotional photography, and candid documentation that serves as an ongoing collective archive for a community of young artists. <http://www.bloodhoundphotography.com>*



# THE KENNEY DOCTRINE: TEMPORARY WORKERS TRUMP REFUGEES IN CANADA

*Harsha Walia*

What does the murder of a 24-year-old woman, found with blows to her body and a bullet in her forehead in Mexico, have to do with Canada's immigration system? To refugee advocates it represents the system's fundamental failure to uphold the rights of asylum seekers: the 24-year-old victim and her mother and sister had twice sought refuge in Canada from the druglords who are believed to have killed her upon her deportation.

Immigrant rights activists are concerned by a pattern of tighter controls, increased deportations and inflammatory anti-immigrant posturing over the past year that further erodes the myth of benevolence in Canada's immigration policy. According to figures obtained by the Canadian Press, deportations from Canada have skyrocketed 50 per cent over the last decade, with approximately 13,000 deportations annually. By August of 2009, over 9,000 people had already been deported this year. In October, executive director of the Canadian Council of Refugees Janet Dench told the *Globe and Mail*, "This totally contradicts people who continue to say in the media that claimants are never deported from Canada. The reality is that this is a daily business, a daily experience that claimants are very routinely removed from Canada."

The growing difficulty asylum seekers face in Canada is evident in a series of recent immigration changes. Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism Jason Kenney's annual report shows a decreasing "target" of 11,000 people in the number of accepted asylum seekers and sponsored family members. Parliament's citizenship and immigration committee recently voted six to five to establish a refugee appeal division, with all five oppositional votes cast by Conservative MPs. Kenney has imposed visa requirements targeting refugee claimants from Mexico and the Czech Republic by suggesting they are "system-abusers," while announcing a biometric plan for all visa holders. In April 2009, Kenney oversaw the largest immigration raid in recent Canadian history, during which Canadian Border Services Agency officers stormed farms, factories and homes to detain over 100 non-status workers in Ontario. Kenney has justified the current month-long detention of 76 Tamil asylum seekers in B.C. by suggesting they are possible security threats.

As successful refugee claims have fallen, temporary worker programs have proliferated across the country. More people are now admitted to Canada under Temporary Employment Authorizations than as perma-

nent residents. In B.C., the number of migrant workers has doubled over the past five years, spurred on by a construction boom, the upcoming 2010 Olympics, trans-provincial transport of the Alberta tar sands, and exponential growth in the mining industry.

In October 2009, the federal government proposed major changes to Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program. Although the government asserts that these revisions "strengthen protection for temporary foreign workers," migrant rights activists say these changes will work against the interests of those whom they purport to protect and have organized a national day of action for migrant workers on December 2. One regulation limits most workers to a term of four years, after which a six-year ban will be imposed before workers can return to Canada.

According to Chris Ramsaroop, a member of Justicia for Migrant Workers, Canada's increasing shift to temporary worker programs has far-reaching negative impacts. Based on a decade of work with migrant workers in Ontario's agricultural sector, he explains that exploitative conditions are endemic to such programs: long hours, low pay, lack of basic health and safety standards, denial of basic entitlements such as unemployment benefits and social assistance, and constant fear of deportation by employers.

Under the Security and Prosperity Partnership Agreement, the governments of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico are eager to increase their reliance on temporary worker programs. Citing labour flexibility, the U.S. government has pointed to Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program as the model to implement.

Ramsaroop remarks that although the rapid expansion of temporary worker programs is a recent development, "Canada's reliance on indentured, exploited, and racialized workers is nothing new. We have historically built labour forces where some workers are provided with rights while many are not."

For groups like Justicia for Migrant Workers and No One Is Illegal, the ballooning numbers of temporary workers alongside the plummeting numbers of permanent residents and refugees is no coincidence. "It is not in the Canadian state's or Canadian corporate interests to deport all racialized migrants; it needs a pool of labour that is hyper-exploitable," states Harjap Grewal, a long-time migrant justice activist. "Migrant worker programs, in contrast to permanent residents, legalize the foreign-ness of people of colour."

By decreasing the number of permanent residents Canada can uphold the ideology of White Canada, while ensuring that their role in the economy as cheap labour is filled by migrant workers who are as expendable as tissue paper."

Grewal's accusation of mounting government racism towards immigrants has been echoed by advocates across the country, especially during Minister Kenney's reign. Kenney has made a series of inflammatory comments including that Canada needs to get tough on immigrants who do not speak English or French, that he will not tolerate immigrants who do not integrate, and that multiculturalism doesn't mean "anything goes."

Not one to limit himself to empty rhetoric, Kenney introduced a new citizenship guide in November. According to "Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship," the obligations of citizenship include getting a job and not engaging in barbaric cultural practices such as spousal abuse, genital mutilation or honour killings. The latter section is accompanied by an image of a woman wearing a hijab.

"This jargon is fundamentally rooted in racist ideologies," says Nassim Elbardouh of No One Is Illegal Vancouver. "Kenney is appealing to public fears of immigrants by casting them as un-Canadian and relying on Hollywood stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims, rather than a systemic and universal analysis of gender violence." Elbardouh contends that despite its political expediency, Canadian authorities' have actually failed to

address women's issues; for example their lack of response to the alarming numbers of murdered and missing women, disproportionately Indigenous.

Notably omitted from the Guidebook's section on equality is any mention of the rights of lesbian, gay and trans people. Pivotal moments in Canadian immigration history - such as the Komagata Maru ship incident where 376 Indian migrants were denied entry - are also glaringly missing. Kenney's response to such criticisms has been that owing to space constraints, not everything could be included.

The guide does manage to make ample room for Canada's military history in the "Defending Canada" section, including a recruitment advertisement: "serving in the regular Canadian Forces is a noble way to contribute to Canada and makes an excellent career choice." For activists like Sarah Bjorknas with the War Resisters campaign, this emphasis on militarization in the guidebook links domestic immigration policies to aggressive foreign policies. According to Bjorknas, "The existing biases of the Conservative Party towards wars and occupations has encouraged Kenney to politically influence immigration policy and further an atmosphere of fearful jingoism both at home and abroad."

As examples of the ways in which Canada's foreign policy is influencing immigration policy, she notes Kenney's labelling of Iraq war resisters as bogus refugee claimants, the barring of British Member of Parliament George Galloway because of his opposition to Canada's role in Afghanistan, and Kenney's cutting of language-training funding to the Canadian Arab Federation due to the organization's involvement in pro-Palestinian efforts. "That Prime Minister Harper does not appear to put any restraints on Kenney's public commentary tells us that he is free to spread the party line on what Canada's role in the world should be," adds Bjorknas.

Outraged by this fundamental realignment in Canadian immigration policy, activists across the country have been mounting campaigns to counter the message of Jason Kenney with their own message: *Deport Jason Kenney! Status for All!*

*Article reprinted from Rabble.ca with permission from Harsha Walia.*

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