

In Montreal on unceded Kanien'kehá:ka [Mohawk] territory



## Further disasters for Québec women

**Further disasters for Québec women -- Lise Thériault, Québec's Status of Women minister says she is "not a feminist"!**

On the eve of 8<sup>th</sup> March, International Women's Day, during an hour long interview with the Canadian Press the Minister on the Status of Women (Condition féminine) claimed she was not a feminist but an "egalitarian". She says her approach to the cause of women is pragmatic rather than theoretical, more down-to-earth rather than activist and more individual than collective.

If we thought we had it bad with Premier Couillard's austerity and neo-liberal policies here's one more nail in the coffin. A Status of Women minister who is ignorant of the definition of feminism; who is blissfully unaware



that her position in government is due to the collective struggles of many women who came before her, and that there is still a long way to go. When asked to name a figure of the feminist movement who inspired her, she could not come up with any! (« S'il y en a une qui m'inspire plus que les autres? À première vue, je vous dirais non ».) She's also very comfortable with cuts to the Council on the Status of Women which had to close its regional offices and the Secretariat for Women, whose budget went from 7.2 million to 5.3 million. She said, "The important thing is to have the money to implement the measures on the ground." (« L'important, c'est d'avoir l'argent pour appliquer les mesures sur le terrain ».)

She describes herself as "self-made" who worked her way up. She's a mother and grandmother. And her advice for women is "You want to take your place? Make your way? Let's go, go!". (« Tu veux prendre ta place? Faire ton chemin? Let's go, vas-y! ».) As she says, she had no diploma and began as a receptionist, then became clerk of advertising and sales director. With her husband she founded a business newspaper in Montreal east in 1990, then founded the Business Women's Network of Montreal and was involved in the Montreal East Chamber of Commerce, whose members at the time were all men and taken in with the tall blonde woman, the "girl in the room". (« grande blonde »; « la fille dans la pièce »).

Apart from other alarming aspects about our new Status of Women minister, is her position on minorities. In language that is familiar to us and not far removed from the PQ's proposed "Charter of Values" which the Liberal government of Couillard is bringing in, in bits and pieces with amendments to various laws, Thériault's comments are presented as being against those who wish to spread misogyny in Québec. She says its about limits imposed on freedom of expression. According to her, the "foreign" speakers, musicians or singers who are considering spreading their misogyny in Quebec will have to review their plans. She says that "freedom of expression" should not become an excuse to tolerate "hate speech against women". The minister says, "We're able to tell people that you are not welcome in Québec."

Well after all that, it is true, she's not a feminist. And that's disastrous for us women!

Information from: <http://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelles/Politique/2016/02/28/005-feminisme-lise-theriault-ministre-condition-feminine.shtml>

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### Qu'en pensez-vous? What do you think?

- Let us know your thoughts about the bulletin.
- Que pensez-vous de notre journal?
- We encourage you to send in your stories and articles for upcoming newsletters in any language by the 25th of every month to:

[sawccbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:sawccbulletin@gmail.com)

- Écrivez -nous à

[sawccbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:sawccbulletin@gmail.com)

## CENTRE UPDATE



### **Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture**

**Monday & Thursday/lundi & jeudi 9am—5pm**

**Monday & Thursday/lundi & jeudi 9am—9pm (as of September 7th, 2105)**

**Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday/mardi, mercredi & vendredi— 9am-5pm**

The Centre is wheelchair accessible

Le centre est accessible aux fauteuils roulants.

### **Volunteers**

If you are interested in helping out at the Centre, please contact Homa (Ext. 102 or [homa@bellnet.ca](mailto:homa@bellnet.ca)) to coordinate a meeting!

## Decolonizing street art



Dear SAWCC members,

I hope you are well.

In December 2015, I had the privilege of meeting Camille Larivée, a queer and feminist street artist based in Tiotia:ke (montreal), and lead organiser of Decolonizing Street Art. If you are not already aware, you can see some of the inspiring, beautiful and fierce work that Decolonising Street Art has initiated, facilitated, and supported by going to the following site: <http://decolonizingstreetart.com>.

“The goal of Decolonizing Street Art is two-fold: to develop a network of solidarity and support between Indigenous street artists; to promote anti-colonial resistance through diverse street art interventions.”

“In the long-term, Decolonizing Street Art is focused specifically on supporting a solidarity network of women-identified Indigenous street artists.”

“The organizing principles of Decolonizing Street Art include opposition to colonialism, capitalism, and all forms of oppression, including but not limited to racism, patriarchy, heterosexism, ableism and transphobia. We organize on the basis of solidarity, mutual aid and support, as anti-colonial street artists and supporters.” (from Decolonizing Street Art website)

As stated on the website, due to the fact that Decolonizing Street Art promotes autonomous street art (which is distinct from public art), it is financially supported by local allied individuals and organisations. It is not financed by government or corporate institutions. As such, financial support for Deconlozing Street Art is an ongoing need, including expenses from last summer's events (which you can learn more about on the website). For more information on supporting, please visit <http://decolonizingstreetart.com/support/>.

Thank you!

-farha najah h.

“The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is – it's to imagine what is possible” - bell hooks



## Baby!

Welcome VIVIANE BENEDITA PINTO BIRD

Born healthy and strong on 19 February at 11:05 am at St.Luc's Hospital weighing 3.3 kg (7.3 lbs). She is absolutely perfect in every way.

Announcement sent with much love from parents Madeleine, Roberto and (baby sister) Celeste.



## SAY/JSA UPDATE



Log on to Facebook and check out: Don't Touch Me: An Anthology for more information on our new anthology project!

We also have a NEW group on Facebook, check us out! Search: **South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective**

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South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective invites you to our first Young South Asian Women's Support Meet-up! The meeting will be held on **Friday March 4th, 2016 from 5:30—7:00pm** at 2110 Mackay Ave.

This support space will be FREE and held for women ages 17-30 who identify as South Asian. Meet-ups will be 1.5 hours long at a time that is accessible for as many people as possible. Snacks will be provided.

Our purpose is to create a space to share our story and experiences and offer each other peer support.

If you would like to attend our first support meet-up, please e-mail [sawccyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sawccyouth@gmail.com) by February 15th.

Feel free to check out our Facebook event page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1971589459732171/>

Please email as Facebook attendance will not be taken into account!

We aim to provide safe(r) spaces that are inclusive, anti-racist, sex-positive, and LGBTQ, queer and trans positive.

**NEW:**  
**YOUNG SOUTH ASIAN**  
**WOMEN'S SUPPORT SPACE**

**This FREE space is for:**

- South Asian women
- Ages 17-30 years old
- Peer-to-peer support
- Coming together and sharing stories, struggles and lots of tea!

**E-mail the South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective at [sawccyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sawccyouth@gmail.com) for more information about meeting times!**

**We meet at 2110 Mackay Ave.**

## International Women's Day

**JOIN SAWCC for 2016 International Women's Day events.**

**WOMEN STRUGGLE FOR A BETTER WORLD!**

**for justice, peace, equality, status, prosperity, dignity for all  
and against patriarchy, colonialism, racism, Islamophobia, austerity, capital-  
ism, imperialism**

### **Panel presentation 5 March, 2-5pm**

**Panelists include:** **Lucina Gordon** (Inuit student from Kuujjuaq, Nunavik in northern Quebec); **Marsha Drummond** (a 20-year former employee demanding justice of Serigraphie Richford, which closed its plant in Pointe-Claire, Montreal and relocated to Ohio, USA.); **Mélanie Sarazin** (president of the Federation of Québec Women – SAWCC is part of the federation); **Marta Lucia Gomez** (Human Rights Committee of Latin America); **Jenny-Laure Sully** (fighting deportation of Haitians); **Amélie Nguyen** (CISO – International Worker Solidarity Committee); **Marie Boti** (International Women's Alliance); **Dania Suleiman**, (lawyer interested in reconciliation between religious freedom and gender equality); **Lorraine Guay** (BDS – Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions against Israeli apartheid)

**Rm 1.615, 1515 Ste-Catherine w, (at MacKay) Concordia University (metro Guy-Concordia)**

### **Demonstration 8 March 6pm, Cabot Square (Atwater & Ste-Catherine w; metro Atwater)**

**Organized by 8<sup>th</sup> March Committee of Women of Diverse Origins (WDO) (SAWCC is part of WDO)**  
**[wdofdo.wordpress.com](http://wdofdo.wordpress.com); [wdofdo@gmail.com](mailto:wdofdo@gmail.com); [www.facebook.com/WDO.FDO.Quebec/](http://www.facebook.com/WDO.FDO.Quebec/)**

## **NEXT EC MEETINGS**

### **EC Meeting**

**The February EC meeting will be on Monday March 21st, 2016 at 6pm. All members are welcome to attend.**

Upcoming EC meetings:

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March – 6pm

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April – 6pm

EC meetings are open to all members. Meetings begin informally around 6pm. We bring food to share and catch up. The formal business part of the meeting begins at 6pm. We try to end our meetings before 9pm. EC meetings are a good way to find out more about what we are doing, issues that come up concerning SAWCC and the groups we are part of. It is also a place to have your voice and ideas heard. EC meetings are also a good way to get more involved. We invite members to consider coming forward to serve on the EC. It's always been a great experience for all and contributes to personal growth and confidence.

## When Will Police Stop Killing Our Youth?

**By: Samir Shaheen-Hussain**

(Social-justice activist and pediatric emergency physician)

(an earlier version in French from *Le Devoir* was published in the *Bulletin* in February)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/samir-shaheenhussain/police-killing-youth\\_b\\_8914048.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/samir-shaheenhussain/police-killing-youth_b_8914048.html) Posted: 01/05/2016



"The police become necessary in human society only at that junction in a society where there's a split between those who have and those who ain't got." --Omali Yeshitela, from Dead Prez's "Police State"

Daily in my work in the pediatric emergency department, I see the detrimental effects of various forms of structural violence in our society -- capitalist, colonial, patriarchal, racist, ableist, etc. -- on children and their families.

The tangible impacts stemming from these systemic injustices -- what some refer to as the structural determinants of health -- on people's day-to-day realities compelled me to become actively involved in grassroots movements for social justice, including against police violence and impunity.

When a friend told me that her teenaged cousin, Brandon Maurice, was shot and killed by a Sûreté du Québec (SQ) agent early in the morning of November 16, I was shocked and outraged. Violence resulting in a death in the context of a police intervention -- whether the victim is young or not -- is simply revolting.

### **A lethal police intervention that raises questions**

Brandon was shot and killed not far from his hometown of Maniwaki, which has a population of about 4,000 people and is adjacent to the Anishinabeg (Algonquin) community of Kitigan Zibi, about 300 kilometres northwest of Montreal.

His death went almost completely unnoticed in the media. Yet, a 17-year-old adolescent killed by the police in the context of a banal driving violation is newsworthy, particularly in light of the fact that more than 50 people, most of whom were marginalized, have been killed in police operations in Quebec (and over 150 in Canada) since 2005.\*

That the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) has been mandated to investigate Brandon's death is particularly scandalous. Since investigations of police by police are inherently flawed, there is a serious concern that we will never know what actually happened that night.

Why did the police intervene in the first place? Why did they engage in a car chase? Why did the police officer take his gun out and fire? When Bruno Jolivet, Brandon's uncle, affirms that "We are supposed to have people who protect us, not to kill us!" the underlying question is, "Who will protect us from the police?"

Brandon's killing came as a shock to his family and friends, who described him as a caring and considerate person, and felt that his death was completely avoidable. They have many questions that deserve answers. These answers won't bring Brandon back to life, but their absence will add bitterness and resentment to the mourning process. A truly independent and equitable public inquiry would be a start.

### **Ten years later: The shooting death of Anas Bennis**

By tragic coincidence, Brandon's death occurred almost 10 years to the day after the death of Anas Bennis, a 25-year-old man killed by the SPVM in the multi-ethnic and mixed-class neighbourhood of Côte-des-Neiges (in Montreal) on Dec. 1, 2005. The wounds for one family are barely healing as the nightmare of another family begins.

I was actively involved with the Justice for Anas Coalition during its public campaign (2007 to 2012). The Bennis family was

## When Will Police Stop Killing Our Youth? Cont'd

simply seeking an exhaustive and independent public inquiry to clarify the mysterious circumstances surrounding Anas' killing so that they could mourn his death.

Instead, they were consistently met with contempt and disdain. A coroner's inquiry was finally granted in 2008, following a relentless public campaign. It eventually took place in 2011, but only after the motion by the City of Montreal and the Montreal Police Brotherhood to have it canceled in court was rejected.

However, the coroner's inquiry was a sham. It never questioned the police investigation by the Service de police de la ville de Québec (SPVQ). The police officers involved were never cross-examined about their version of what happened. Furthermore, the coroner didn't consider the potential role of racial and religious profiling to explain the officers' actions.

### Police investigations that are highly criticized

Yet, the process of one police force investigating another has been consistently criticized for its inherent lack of neutrality, accountability, transparency and credibility.\*\*

The code of silence that exists among police forces undermines their investigations and ensures that justice will not be served. The SPVM, SPVQ and SQ are the three police forces in the province of Quebec mandated to conduct investigations when police officers are involved in a civilian death; they are not exceptions to this tendency.

A compelling illustration of this reality is the SPVM investigation into last year's death of five-year old Nicholas Thorne-Belance. Nicholas was in a car being driven by his father, when they were hit by an unmarked SQ vehicle recklessly driving over twice the speed limit.

Initially, no charges were filed against the officer. However, the impunity inherent to this decision outraged Nicholas' family and resulted in public indignation. A mandate to review and expand on the initial SPVM investigation was conferred to an independent committee (without police officers). This resulted in criminal accusations being filed against the offending officer.

Many people think that the creation of the Bureau d'enquête indépendant (BEI) -- announced by the provincial government of Quebec in 2012, but still inactive to this day -- is the answer. However, the BEI has many flaws, including the fact that former police officers will be part of the investigating team.

### Police violence as a public health issue

We must have zero tolerance for police brutality. The price to pay -- human life -- is too high. Economic, political and social realities have tangible impacts on people's health, well-being and dignity. In the United States, the Black Lives Matter movement has forced various actors to more seriously regard police violence as a public-health issue.

This discussion needs to begin here as well, so that the economic and socio-political contexts surrounding police interventions are addressed. Instead of relying on flawed police investigations, our society may actually be able to prevent police brutality by identifying and confronting the conditions that eventually lead to the police interventions in question.

For years, activists opposed to police violence have highlighted how it impacts marginalized individuals and communities. Many advocate disarming police forces outright. In fact, several countries (including England, Iceland and New Zealand) already restrict or prohibit their patrolling police officers from carrying firearms, though they can admittedly still resort to the use of lethal force by other means (batons, electrical impulse devices, etc.).

Meanwhile, radical social-justice activists are imagining community responses that would not resort to the police at all, given that the police force is an institution -- from its origins to the current day -- through which structural violence manifests itself, typically against the most marginalized and oppressed in our society.

At the end of the day, we simply can't accept that people like Anas Bennis, Nicholas Thorne-Belance, Brandon Maurice and too many others continue to die at the hands of the police. Any hope of preventing such deaths will require us to scrutinize the institution of policing. But, more fundamentally, we must oppose the economic, political and social forces that produce systemic injustice and structural violence in the first place.

*Author's addendum: since the initial drafting of this text, 25-year-old Mathieu Lévesque was killed by municipal police in the town of Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. The SQ is "investigating" the incident.*

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The author would like to acknowledge the contributions of Alexandre Popovic, Anne-Marie Gallant, Nazila Bettache and Raven Dumont-Maurice to the development of this piece.

\* Unfortunately, there is no government-compiled data of civilians killed in police operations that is publicly available; grass-roots social-justice groups with limited resources are compelled to do this work instead.

\*\* Among others: Poitras Commission (1999), Taman Commission (2008), Ontario ombudsperson André Marin (2009), Braidwood Commissions of Inquiry (2010), Québec ombudsperson Raymonde Saint-Germain (2010).

## SOMMET des FEMMES



On 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> March a group of women led by Lise Payette has organized the Women's Summit. Some of us remember Ms. Payette, a Parti Québécois Status of Women minister. She was also involved with the documentary *Dispar-aitre* (1989) which raised an alarm about a demographic shift in Quebec away from white francophone Quebecers!

The Summit has been preceded by the launch in Fall 2015 of Lise Payette's manifesto of about 20 pages (*Manifeste des femmes*). It was issued by a collective that included Léa Cousineau, the first woman to chair the Executive Committee of the City of Montreal and Martine Desjardins, university student leader during the 2012 strike.

The manifesto was supported by fifty 'godmothers', including comedian Lise Dion, Mayor of Longueuil, Caroline St-Hilaire, the author Janette Bertrand, actresses Guylaine Tremblay, Sophie Prigent and Michelle Rossignol, the wife of business Mitsou Gélinas, the young author Léa Clermont-Dion, as well as several trade union leaders.

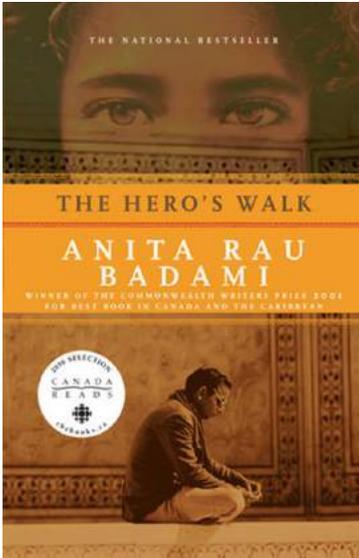
The wording and the ideas in the manifesto are commendable, and the program of the Summit is also good. But the questions we have are why after 3 years (2011-2013) of the Estates-General of women of Québec, which was organized under the auspices of the FFQ, but which was open to all women and all groups, which brought together 1000 women from all over Québec from different walks of life, facing different challenges, in which intense discussions and debates took place, is this Summit happening now? It would seem that individuals who were dissatisfied with the intersectional approach to understanding oppression (to get into a thorough understanding of systemic oppression; that not all women experience the same inequality – that

race, class, ability, age, etc. must be factored in in very real ways; e.g. appreciating and respecting the right of woman who chooses to wear hijab; not to denounce it in a secular fundamentalist way as anti-feminist;) want to hijack the agenda of the future of the feminist movement in Québec.

Unfortunately feminists who are unaware of these on-the-surface somewhat nuanced differences will find the Manifesto and the Summit appealing with its unabashedly feminist message. As well, they have the blessing of large corporations (including those of the Peladeau empire) and have excellent media exposure.

For us, one of the issues is that it fails to engage with minority women and women of linguistic minorities. The fact that it is happening on a weekday, which precludes the participation of working women is also telling.

## Canada Reads 2016



### Anita Rau Badami - Congratulations

Congratulations to Anita Rau Badami, whose novel "The Hero's Walk", published in 2001, has been selected as one of the five contenders in the Canada Reads contest conducted by the CBC. Rau Badami received the Commonwealth Best Book Prize in the Canada/Caribbean Region on its publication among other international awards.

Quoting from the CBC site, "The Canada Reads 2016 books are all about transformation and second chances, including stories of migrants, immigrants and others who are choosing – or forced - to make major changes in their lives." Further details can be obtained by visiting the [cbc/books/canadareads](http://cbc/books/canadareads) site. The debates will begin on March 21 and run till March 24, 2016.

"The Hero's Walk" will be defended by Vinay Virmani, himself a writer and actor.

Anita has been a guest at the South Asian Women's Community Centre some years ago and lives in Montreal. The other contenders are Laurence Hill, Tracey Lindberg, Saleema Nawaz who now resides in Montreal and Michael Winter.

#### Excerpt from *Hero's Walk*:

It was dusk by the time they got a bus to the beach. They made their way to the same secluded spot at which they had scattered Maya's ashes. The tide was coming in, curling waves lapped against their feet, and seagulls swooped and pecked at drying seaweed left on the sand. Further down, pariah dogs leapt at an upturned boat, trying to get at something dangling from the high side. Sripathi walked across the wet, squelching sand until he reached the water. With a sense of déjà-vu, he emptied the ashes and watched as they mingled with the waves. Poor Ammayya, what a long, unresolved life she had lived, he thought regretfully. He went back to the cluster of mossy rocks where he had left Arun and sat down beside his son. They stayed there until the moon appeared, a silver semicircle ringed with concentric rainbow light. It would be sunny tomorrow. In the thick darkness the sea was luminous, a body of motion, living, mysterious, beautiful. "You go home if you want to, Appu," said Arun, his arms locked around his raised knees on which he rested his chin. "I want to watch the turtles coming in." "How do you know that they will be here today?" "A few arrived yesterday and usually the rest follow soon after." "I'll stay with you," said Sripathi after a moment's hesitation. He had lived all his life beside this same sea, and he had never spent an entire night watching it as it poured over the sand and sucked away, leaving a wavering lace of froth that it retrieved almost immediately. The moon rose higher in the sky, the beach emptied slowly, and one by one the last of the vendors turned off their Petromax lanterns and left. Now all they could hear was the susurrating of the wind in the brief stand of palm trees behind them. Suddenly, out of the sea, a dark form detached itself and staggered slowly up the damp sand. And another and another. Dozens of them. No, scores. It seemed to Sripathi that the beach itself had risen up and was rippling away from the water. "Can you see them?" whispered Arun. As if the turtles would be scared off by his voice when they carried the thunder of ancient waters in their small, swivelling heads. They poured across the sand, wobbling and swaying, a humpbacked, crawling army drawn by some distant call to the shore on which they were born fifty, one hundred, two hundred years ago, to give birth to another generation. Across the water line they surged, each an olive-green dune in slow motion, until they were well out of reach of the waves. They stopped one by one and began to dig cradles for their eggs—their thick stubby hind legs powerful pistons spraying sand into the air—grunting and murmuring, moaning and sighing as they squatted over the holes and dropped their precious cargo. Arun leaned over and whispered, "Each of them lays at least a hundred to two hundred eggs, Appu." Sripathi nodded, too moved to comment. How many millennia had this been going on? he wondered, humbled by the sight of something that had started long before humans had been imagined into creation by Brahma, and had survived the voracious appetite of those same humans. In the long continuum of turtle life, humans were merely dots.

Soon the turtles were done and began to churn up the sand again, covering the holes, tamping them down tight, with slow, deliberate movements. And then the swaying trudge back to the gleaming sea. Sweeping their hind legs to erase every trace of their arrival, as meticulous as spies in foreign lands. "See how cunning they are," whispered Arun again. "They are making sure predators don't find their nests by following their footprints." The last of the turtles disappeared into the waters as silently as they had arrived. They would never see their babies hatch, would not return for one full year to lay another batch of eggs at the edge of the sea that had been there longer than even they had. Their young might live or die. The eggs they left with so much care might yield another generation of turtles—or not. Sripathi thought about the chanciness of existence, the beauty and the hope and the loss that always accompanied life, and felt a boulder roll slowly off his heart.

(c) 2000 by Anita Rau Badami

## Lise Thériault, le féminisme et le dictionnaire

**Lise Thériault, ministre de la Condition féminine, ne se dit pas féministe. Oui, vous avez bien lu.**

Lise Thériault, ministre de la Condition féminine, ne se dit pas féministe.

Vous avez bien lu.

On a déjà vu un ministre de la Science ne pas croire à l'évolution. C'était à Ottawa, et il avait été nommé par un chef de gouvernement qui ne croyait pas à l'utilité du gouvernement. Au Québec, on a aussi déjà vu, et on voit encore, des ministres de l'Éducation confier leurs enfants au système privé et des ministres de l'Environnement qui n'éteignent pas les lumières en sortant d'une pièce.

Mais une ministre responsable de la Condition féminine qui ne se dit pas féministe, ça, c'est du nouveau. Pourrait-on vérifier la position de Gaétan Barrette sur l'homéopathie, juste au cas? Je commence à être inquiet.

Telle l'acériculteur diabétique ou le camionneur qui ne voit pas l'importance de passer son permis de conduire, Lise Thériault déclare à qui n'en revient pas de l'entendre qu'elle est «beaucoup plus égalitaire que féministe». «Beaucoup plus égalitaire que féministe.» Ici, le cordonnier proverbial n'est pas seulement mal chaussé: il ne semble carrément pas saisir le concept de «chaussure». Si on ne le surveille pas, il risque de sortir avec des abat-jour aux pieds. Qu'est-ce que le féminisme? Pour le savoir, ouvrons un dictionnaire. Et pour être certain de ne pas avoir un point de vue trop partisan, allons-y avec un dictionnaire au nom masculin, le *Robert*:

**« FÉMINISME [feminism] n.m. — 1837 ; du latin femina — Attitude de ceux qui souhaitent que les droits des femmes soient les mêmes que ceux des hommes. »**

Quelle partie de cette définition met mal à l'aise Lise Thériault? Le fait que *Féminisme* soit un nom masculin? C'est plus ironique qu'autre chose.

Pour une ministre responsable de la Condition féminine, la question «Êtes-vous féministe?», c'est la case «FREE» au milieu de la carte de bingo. Tu n'as pas besoin de penser, tu réponds «oui, évidemment», et tu mets ta pinouche sur la carte. Se planter avec cette question, c'est comme réussir à se faire une entorse lombaire en jouant à la pichenotte: il faut pratiquement faire un effort. Pour une politicienne qui a été récemment victime d'un double standard après avoir pleuré en public et qui est régulièrement la seule femme assise à une table où se prend des décisions importantes, pour une femme d'affaires qui a dû affronter pendant des années le regard et les commentaires de centaines de croûtons en vestons, son refus de l'étiquette de féministe a des allures de syndrome de Stockholm.

Si c'est le patriarcat qui vous empêche de parler, Madame Thériault, clignez des yeux trois fois rapidement, on va vous envoyer de l'aide.

Autre réponse surréaliste à une question simple: y a-t-il une des grandes figures du mouvement féministe qui a été pour elle un modèle à suivre? Après un moment de réflexion, la ministre y est allée de cette perle: «S'il y en a une qui m'inspire plus que les autres? À première vue, je vous dirais non».

Misère... Même «Lisa Simpson» aurait été un meilleur choix de réponse que cette variante de «J'aimerais bien vous dire, mais je n'en connais aucune. Mettons... la première députée? Jehanne... Benoit... c'est ça?»

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Lise Thériault semble être de celles et ceux qui considèrent le féminisme comme une lutte du passé. Et mettons que c'était vrai (ce ne l'est pas!), qu'est-ce que ça changerait?

L'esclavage, c'est pas mal terminé en Amérique du Nord. Je n'hésiterais quand même pas à me qualifier d'antiesclavagiste si on me posait la question. Je ne niaiserais pas autour du pot en me prétendant «beaucoup plus pro-liberté qu'anti-esclavage». Peut-être n'aime-t-elle pas l'attitude de certaines personnes rattachées au mouvement féministe. Mais encore une fois: et alors? Il y a dans le mouvement fédéraliste des gens idiots, des crinqués qui dépassent les bornes, des Sam Hamad, et, elle le montre bien, des ministres qui ne savent pas de quoi elles parlent. Leur existence ne change rien au fédéralisme en tant que concept. La partie difficile, ce n'est pas censé être de décider si on est d'accord ou pas avec l'idée même du féminisme. C'est d'agir en conséquence.

Or, on comprend bien en sous-texte de l'article de la journaliste Jocelyne Richer que Lise Thériault considère que si les femmes ne sont pas dans les postes de pouvoir, c'est parce qu'elles ne se grouillent pas assez le derrière. Et la ministre n'a pas l'intention de faire grand-chose, à part dire «Vas-y ma belle, t'es capable!» aux femmes qui pensent se présenter aux élections. C'est la politique de la bine d'encouragement sur l'épaule.

Surtout pas de quotas, pas de lois, ni de contraintes. «Elle croit à l'“individu” qui décide de “prendre sa place”.»

Lise Thériault est ministre du Statu quo, du Faudrait-pas-trop-brusquer-les-choses et du Ça-changera-quand-ça-changera. C'est

## **Lise Thériault, le féminisme et le dictionnaire (cont)**

ce qu'on attend d'elle, dans ce gouvernement qui préfère les ministres bons soldats, même s'ils ne connaissent rien, à ceux qui risquent de demander mieux pour ceux dont ils ont la charge.

Je suis féministe. Ce n'est pas un mauvais mot. Il n'y a pas de quoi avoir un petit régurgé surette en le disant. Je suis féministe, parce que c'est, citons encore une fois le *Robert*, l'attitude «de ceux qui souhaitent que les droits des femmes soient les mêmes que ceux des hommes.»

Vous devriez essayer ça, un jour, Madame Thériault. Ça ne fait presque pas mal.

## **Group 13 response to Québec's Status of Women Minister's "Not a feminist" and related comments.**

### **We are working to achieve equality for all women, and you, Madam Minister?**

Montreal, March 1, 2016 - Following the remarks of the Minister of Women, Lise Thériault, to the effect that she does not consider herself a feminist, Group Thirteen, a collective of 21 women's groups and groups working at the provincial and regional level for women's rights, wishes to react.

This confession is accompanied we think by a stereotypical and pejorative vision of feminism. Indeed, the minister portrayed feminism as a past fight and prefers to say "egalitarian", rather than feminist. It is useful to remind Ms. Thériault that feminism in its simplest definition is "the attitude of [those] who wish that women's rights are the same as those of men." It is disturbing to think that the minister responsible for the Status of Women has a great ignorance of the feminist movement and the important role it has played and continues to play today to ensure real equality for all the women. "Every woman has the freedom to say feminist or not, of course. However, it is expected that the Minister of Women, recognize achievements that Quebec women have made through and with the women's movement," says Diane Matte of the Concertation of struggles against the sexual exploitation.

### **The feminist movement, a social transformation engine**

The feminist movement has for years made collective requests to open the way for more women. Think of the struggles for the right to open and free abortion, to counter violence against women, pay equity and access to well-paying jobs, to counter sexism or racism in institutions and laws, to obtain a universal childcare system, among others.

The feminist movement that we represent is present throughout Quebec, we are engaged spaces for many feminists, we are places of welcome and listening for many, we are spaces for organization and collective action. Places by and for where we compare our visions, ideas and where we act to transform society. We are an active and strong movement that opposes the austerity measures that produce, reproduce and create inequality. We are behind the campaigns #AgressionNonDénoncée and #OnVousCroit and we are at the heart of the issues when it comes to sexual exploitation of teenage girls, as seen recently. Our relevance is widely demonstrated.

### **Feminism for the benefit of the whole society**

We respond to Minister Thériault's "Let's go, go" by saying "until all women are not free, we will be marching/demonstrating." While it is important to recognize that feminist movements have led to progress and that we find women in spheres of society from which they were previously excluded, it is essential to continue our work, because we must leave any women behind. We do not accept a society that offers equality only for some.

"Government action must consider the situation of women in all their diversity and address the inequalities experienced by them in particular according to their ethnic origin, their income, their education, their age, their orientation and identity sexual, their functional limitations and their regional realities," says Mélanie Sarazin, president of the Fédération des femmes du Québec

## Group 13 Cont'd

The role of government is to set up in its political, economic and social vision, a vision which aims to eliminate systemic barriers that prevent the full participation of all women. To put a few women in leadership positions, and say to women "you too can" and dismissing out of hand that feminist analysis by pretending that economic policies are neutral and technocratic, does not bring down barriers. To be in favor of the status quo, to let inequalities widen, is to deny the rights of women.

We invite Madam Minister to meet with us. We are available to explain how feminism helps us to understand the negative impact of austerity measures on women, how cuts to the Council on the Status of Women, community groups, programs and public services affect achieving equality. "We are experts in recognizing hate speech against women. Of feminist models that inspire us, we have a head full and we also encounter them every day. We are willing to inform her in her new role as Minister of Women," concludes Ms. Sarazin.

source:

Cybel Richer-Boivin, FFQ

514-717-4847

The Group of Thirteen, formed in 1986, is a coalition of 21 groups and groups working at the provincial and regional level in areas as diverse as employment, immigration, health, disability, accommodation for victims of domestic violence as well as living abused women multiple social issues, support for women dealing with prostitution, access to rights, the place of women in politics, justice, etc.

Alliance shelters 2nd step for women and children victims of domestic violence

Concertation of struggles against sexual exploitation (KEY)

Documentation Centre for Adult Education and Women (CDEACF)

Council response to women's access to work (CIAFT)

Federation of single-parent and stepfamilies Quebec (FAFMRQ)

Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ)

Federation of shelters for women

l' R of Quebec women's centers

Grouping houses for women victims of domestic violence

Regroupement québécois des CALACS (assistance centers and the fight against sexual assault)

Relais-femmes

Network lesbians Quebec (RLQ) - Quebec Lesbian Network

A network of regional women's groups in Quebec

## Our deepest sympathies

*We have just heard the sad news of the death of Twareque Ali, husband of our SAWCC member Fauzia. We extend our deepest sympathies to Fauzia and the family at this sad time.*

The following is from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Concordia University site:

<http://www.concordia.ca/content/shared/en/news/artsci/math-stats/2016/01/28/in-memory-of-syed-twareque-ali.html>

### **In Memory of Syed Twareque Ali**

Posted on January 28, 2016

It is with profound sadness that we report the death of our colleague Professor Syed Twareque Ali on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 whilst on an academic visit to Malaysia. He is survived by his wife Fauzia Begum, their son Syed Furrokh-Nabeel Ali (Samira Karim), and grandson Syed Aydin Karim Ali.

Twareque completed his doctoral studies in mathematical physics at the University of Rochester in 1973. After periods of research and teaching in ICTP Trieste, University of Toronto, UPEI, and ITP Clausthal, Germany, he joined the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Concordia University in 1981. He was promoted to full professor here in 1990.

Twareque pursued research in many areas of mathematics, mostly in analysis, functional analysis, and quantum mechanics. He published his work with numerous scientists around the world in over 120 research articles and in a number of books. He was always studying and preparing lectures, now wavelets, now differential geometry, now group theory. His presentations were structured, lucid, interesting, deep, and, before the fashion of electronic displays, by means of perfectly clear handwriting on the blackboard.

He was not inclined to profess an overt teaching philosophy but an observer might infer that it was 'empowerment through mathematical understanding'. He was himself impressively erudite with an eclectic taste that included history, philosophy and literature, and the mastery of at least five European languages in addition to Bengali and Hindi, and some Farsi and Arabic.

He was extremely generous and engendered enormous affection in his students and colleagues. He had an amusing story or anecdote for almost every occasion – often related to other mathematicians he knew from his extensive travels – and had a repertoire of funny jokes that naturally prompted his distinctive laughter.

His inspiring presence and cheerful demeanor will be sorely missed by us all.

Centre South Asian  
communautaire des Women's  
femmes Community  
sud-asiatiques Centre



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### MEMBERSHIP FORM APRIL 1, 2014 - MARCH 31, 2015

**Members:** There are three categories of membership:-

- (a) **Full members:** Any woman, aged 18 years or over, resident in the Greater Montreal area, but specially of South Asian origin, who agrees with the objectives stated in the letters patent and adheres to the by laws, may become a full member, and shall have the right to vote three (3) months after becoming a member, and she may stand for office after at least one year of becoming a member. Any non resident full member is not eligible to stand for office, but will be eligible to vote in person
- (b) **Affiliate members:** Any Individual who does not meet the above criteria may become an affiliate member. Affiliate members shall not have the right to vote, nor shall they have the right to stand for office.
- (c) **Honourary members:** Any woman rendering outstanding service to the organization can be nominated by ten (10) voting members of the organization who shall send the nomination to the executive council at least sixty (60) days before the annual general meeting. The executive shall circulate the nomination to the membership with the notice of the Annual general meeting. Honourary membership shall be given by two-thirds majority vote at a properly convened annual general meeting of the members. Honourary members shall have the right to vote and the right to stand for office.

#### PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Name: -----

Address: -----  
-----

Postal code: -----

Phone (work): -----

(home): -----

Country of origin: -----

No. year in Canada: -----

Female: ----- Male: -----

I would like to be informed of the following activities of the South Asian Women's community Centre:

Language classes: \_\_\_\_\_

Pot-luck lunches: \_\_\_\_\_

women's income-generating co-op: \_\_\_\_\_

drop-in activities: \_\_\_\_\_

films: \_\_\_\_\_

workshops: \_\_\_\_\_

meetings: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to offer my services to South Asian women's community centre (Some areas of volunteer work: phone-tree networking; translation/interpretation; teaching; visiting house-bound women; escorting women who cannot speak English or French to doctors, hospitals, etc.; helping summer day-camp counsellors. Writing and working on **Shakti**, quarterly publication of the organization.

#### **Please list areas of work you are interested in:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Languages spoken:

Mother tongue: \_\_\_\_\_

Other-languages: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Membership fee:**

\$15.00 for salaried people \_\_\_\_\_

\$ 7.00 for non-salaried people \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

