

In Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) on unceded Kanien'kehá:ka [Mohawk] territory



## Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

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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)



**SAWCC Annual General Meeting on Saturday, June 18th from 10:00 am -1:00 pm. (9:30am registration & light breakfast)**

- Important facts and figures- learn about our great work
- Mingle with us- be informed and become part of this awesome group
- Your voice matters- we want to hear, take part into our decision making



## CENTRE UPDATE



### Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture

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

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

**From July 4th to September 4th:**

**Monday to Friday/ lundi à 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 Juvaria (Ext. 104 or juvaria@bellnet.ca) to coordinate a meeting!

**Annual General Meeting: Saturday, June 18th from 10:00 am -1:00 pm** All are welcome.

## Executive Council Meeting Highlights Meeting of May 16, 2017

- ♦ Sadeqa Siddiqui Essay Writing Contest now closed. Essays received; are being adjudicated.
- ♦ Two successful grant-writing workshops were provided by Mela Sarkar to SAWCCers.
- ♦ Countdown to SAWCC AGM -- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 9am – 1pm – progressing.
- ♦ SAWCC EC votes to join Quebec Community Groups Network.

### **SAWCC Bulletin -- submission guidelines:**

SAWCC members are encouraged to send submissions to the Bulletin, to share items of interest with other members. Send submissions to: sawccbulletin@gmail.com

If using the post send to: SAWCC Bulletin, 1035 Rachel est, Montreal, Quebec, H2J 2J3

Submissions should reach by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Submissions may be original work or reprints (with permission) and can include --

art, reports, photos, information, opinion pieces, short fiction, poetry, announcements, recipes, etc.

Publication criteria are guided by SAWCC's commitment to not negatively discriminate on the basis of physical and mental ability, religion, colour, nationality, age, sexual orientation and identity, caste, and class. Publication is further guided by the feminist ethos of sis-terhood, and principles of intersectionality\*, equality, equity, and transparency. As well, material that may compromise confidentiality of individuals without their consent will not be published.

SAWCC reserves the right to select, reject or edit submissions. When authorship identified, items reflect the views of the authors.

\*Intersectionality -- the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, that create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.



## ACWA 15th Anniversary

## Célébration

15<sup>e</sup> anniversaire des  
Artistes canadiennes asiatiques

## Celebration

15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
Asian Canadian Women Artistsdu 8 juin au 9 juillet 2017  
from June 8 to July 9, 2017Vernissage ouvert à tous le jeudi 8 juin à 18 H  
Opening on Thursday June 8 at 6 PMCheryl Braganza, Whaja Chung Lee, Soon Ja Park,  
Hyun Jou Lee, Ok-Hee Kim, Avy Lie-Loftus,  
Lenore RS Lim, Masako Miyazaki,  
Keiko Sagehashi et/and Ngan Siu Mui.Au Musée des maîtres et artisans du Québec  
615 avenue Sainte-Croix, Montréal  
Station de métro du Collège  
[www.mmaq.qc.ca](http://www.mmaq.qc.ca)  
514-747-7367Culture  
et Communications

Québec



Saint-Laurent

Montréal

CONSEIL  
DES ARTS  
DE MONTRÉALCÉGEP DE  
Saint-Laurent



## CALL FOR ACTION

### Concerning Bill S-3--An Act to amend the Indian Act (elimination of sex-based inequities in registration)

**Bill S-3 re-enacts the hierarchy between s. 6(1)(a) and section 6(1)(c), demonstrating Canada's continuing reluctance to remedy the full discrimination, preferring instead an incomplete piecemeal approach.**

**The current text of Bill S-3 will cure only the discrimination found in the Descheneaux decision and not remove all the remaining sex-discrimination in the Indian Act. This is an abdication of responsibility, forcing Indigenous women and their descendants to litigate each variation of the sex discrimination, as they have been doing for about 50 years.**

**BACKGROUND:** This enactment amends the Indian Act to provide new entitlements to registration in the Indian Register in response to the decision in *Descheneaux c. Canada* (Procureur général) that was rendered by the Superior Court of Quebec on August 3, 2015, and to provide that the persons who become so entitled also have the right to have their name entered in a Band List maintained by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. This enactment requires the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to initiate consultations on issues related to registration and band membership and to conduct reviews on sex-based inequities under the Indian Act, and to report to Parliament on those activities.

The *Descheneaux* decision of the Quebec Superior Court considered the registration provisions of the *Indian Act* (the "Act") that continue to unfairly discriminate against Indian ("Indian" means a person registered or entitled to be registered as a status Indian under the (Indian) Act) women and their descendants and limit their ability to pass on Indian status, as compared to Indian men and their descendants.

The former Conservative government filed an appeal of the decision in *Descheneaux*. After the election of the Liberal majority, the appeal was withdrawn and on August 11, 2016, and Canada announced its official response – a two-staged approach that would: 1) Focus on the elimination of known sex-based discrimination in the Act's registration provisions, including those raised in *Descheneaux*, through legislative amendments; and 2) Provide for a collaborative process with First Nations and other Indigenous groups to examine broader issues related to Indian status and Band membership, with a view to future reforms.

Regardless of whatever amendments are made post-*Descheneaux*, the bigger issue will remain – that the *Indian Act* continues to violate the Indigenous right to self-determination. Whether in 1985, or 2010 or 2017, these piecemeal amendments have simply been corrections to bring the Act in compliance with the *Charter*. Canada's mandate has never been self-determination-focussed. In light of Canada's commitment to reconciliation and Nation-to-Nation relationship building, as well as implementing United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, there will need to be a shift in the conversation. Rather than continuing to plug the leaks in the sinking ship that is the *Indian Act*, Canada must engage in full consultation and develop an exit strategy from the business of determining who is and isn't entitled to be legally recognized as a member of an Indigenous community.

**CURRENT STATUS & CALL FOR ACTION:** On May 17th **Bill S-3 was amended in the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples**, against the wishes of the Government of Canada. Senator **Marilou McPhedran introduced a motion** to amend that would have the effect of putting Indian women and their descendants and Indian men and their descendants born prior to April 17, 1985, and patrilineal and matrilineal descendants born prior to April 17, 1985 on the same footing, and to make them all eligible for registration under s. 6(1)(a) status. This solution to the sex discrimination has been dubbed "6(1)(a) all the way."

**[Send a letter to federal Ministers encouraging them to support Indigenous women's equality and the 6\(1\)\(a\) all the way amendment!](#) Template letter, etc. at:**

**<http://fafia-afai.org/en/send-a-letter-to-federal-ministers-encouraging-them-to-support-indigenous-womens-equality-and-the-61a-all-the-way-amendment/>**

Special testimony by Dr. Pamela Palmater, Chair in Indigenous Governance, Department of Politics & Public Administration, Ryerson University, on December 5th, 2016.

“As an Individual

[Witness speaks in Mi'kmaq] Pam Palmater. I'm from the sovereign Mi'kmaq Nation on unceded territories in Mi'kma'ki.

I want to thank you for allowing me to come today to speak to some of my concerns with Bill S-3. First, I think it's important to acknowledge that we're on Algonquin territory. Second, we're here today for the efforts of indigenous women who have continued this battle for many decades, like Mary Two-Axe Early, Jeannette Corbiere Lavell, Yvonne Bédard, Sharon McIvor, Sandra Lovelace, and now the second generation of litigants fighting for gender equality for indigenous women, including Jeremy Matson, Lynn Gehl, Nathan McGillivray, and of course, Stéphane Descheneaux.

My primary concerns will be laid out in the submission that is being handed out.

The most important one is that Bill S-3 does not address all known gender discrimination. It doesn't. You've heard from other witnesses who have given very specific examples. My examples are not exhaustive, but they include grandchildren who trace their descent through Indian women who married out pre-1951, the illegitimate female children and their descendants who trace descent from Indian men born pre-1951, and also the differentiation and hierarchy that was created between paragraph 6(1)(a), the male category, and paragraph 6(1)(c), primarily the female category. They have come to be known as the “real Indians” and the “wannabe Indians”. In fact, 6(1)(c)s are the same in descent; they just happen to be indigenous women and their descendants.

A problem that also causes gender discrimination is with Bill S-3. They've now included even more complex differentiation in terms of categories. You have proposed paragraphs 6(1)(c.01), (c.2), (c.3), and (c.4). This also disproportionately impacts the descendants of Indian women who married out. Here's the problem with that. There is no legal or policy justification on behalf of Indian Affairs to have everyone identified in this way.

Programs and services are addressed through contribution agreements based on a membership or the status Indian registry. They never have to record whether you get health, if you're a 6(1)(a), (b), (c), (d) (e), (f), or 6(2). There's no justification for it, so then what's the alternative reason for it?



What it does is it places a scarlet letter on women and their descendants for having committed the sins of marrying out, having had illegitimate children, or worse, being born female. That's a scarlet letter that doesn't attach to Indian men and their descendants who have married out and have intermarried for many successive generations.

The other issue is the hierarchy of Indian status between subsections 6(1) and 6(2), those who can pass on status and those who can't. Those in the “who can't” section are somehow seen as defective and cannot pass on their status to others. It disproportionately impacts indigenous women, the children of unwed Indian mothers who cannot name the father, or who will not name the father because of the reasons that

LEAF annotated, and also when fathers deny paternity or when they refuse to sign application forms. INAC has given the power to Indian men to have an impact on the children of indigenous women in this way. Last is the denial of compensation to women who have suffered discrimination for so long.

Bill S-3 also does not provide adequate protection for membership. You'll recall that pre-1985, Indian status and membership is synonymous. Even after Bill S-3, it will only be synonymous for Indian men, not for Indian women. Bill C-3 didn't provide those protections, and now Bill S-3 doesn't provide those protections.

The constitutional protection for gender equality is just that. Section 15 of the charter is equality for men and women. Subsection 35(4) of the Constitution, for anyone who wants to exercise aboriginal treaty rights, must be guaranteed equally between men and women. Article 44 of UNDRIP [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People], which this government has said it's going to implement, also says there's equality between men and women. There is no legal option to negotiate, consider, consult, or agree our way out of gender equality. If you look at the traditional laws of indigenous nations in this country, I have yet to find one in all of my research that promotes gender inequality.

Canada cannot proceed to phase two without addressing all gender inequality. It acts as a legal prerequisite. You cannot talk to our first nations without our indigenous women and their descendants there. It is unconstitutional. It violates all of our traditional laws, and it would act as a legal barrier to even starting the conversation in phase two. Bill S-3 also needs to be accompanied by funding for first nations. You'll know that INAC has set aside millions of dollars for itself to deal with Bill S-3 applications, but it didn't set aside a single cent for first nations to deal with this at the community level.

Canada obviously failed to engage in any sort of legal consultations by its own admission.

The impact of Indian registration, as we discussed, is very serious. It's not just about programs and benefits; it's a root cause of murdered and missing indigenous women. It's lack of access to elders, language, ceremonies, and even access to powwows. There are powwows children cannot attend unless they have a status card, no matter how they were raised or whether they were raised in a first nation community.

It also won't address any of the pending litigation. Sharon McIvor's litigation is still outstanding. The Descheneaux cases are still in the hopper. There are Lynn Gehl's, Jeremy Matson's, and Nathan McGillivray's cases, and the Canadian Human Rights Commission has many. And of course, there's the Bill C-3 class action that was brought about because of gender discrimination.

My recommendations, very quickly, are for paragraph 6(1)(a) all the way. Every indigenous man and woman who had children prior to 1985, married or not, should all get the same kind of status so that indigenous women and their descendants don't have to wear the scarlet letter of paragraph 6(1)(c). You need rightful compensation for those who have been knowingly denied gender equality since 1982. For pre-1982, Justice said that's a barrier; there have been legal consultations.

My last word to you is that if we do not address gender discrimination now, in all likelihood, it won't happen. In phase two, they want us to deal with aboriginal treaty rights, nation to nation, getting rid of the Indian Act, and the minister has said that her standard for that is absolute consensus. There will never be, in the history of humanity, consensus on gender equality, but that's the law of the land.

Thank you.

Sources: <http://www.mandellpinder.com/descheneaux-v-canada-2015-qccs-3555-case-summary/>  
<http://fafia-afai.org/en/send-a-letter-to-federal-ministers-encouraging-them-to-support-indigenous-womens-equality-and-the-61a-all-the-way-amendment/>

## Results: Sadeqa Siddiqui Essay Writing Competition

We are very pleased to let you know that the results of the first Sadeqa Siddiqui Essay Writing Competition will be announced at our AGM on June 18, 2017.

At this time too, the names of our hardworking judges will be disclosed.

Thank you to all contributors along with the contestants who have made this possible.

## Important initiative -- ALLIANCE FOR PLURALISM IN SOUTH ASIA

On 3<sup>rd</sup> June, in Montreal, a group –individuals and some representing organizations, gathered to discuss the current situation in South Asia and similar developments in Quebec, Canada, USA and other parts of the world. They included members of SAWCC. They came together in recognition of the reality that forces of sectarianism and religious nationalism dominate the lives of many in the countries of South Asia with fearful and fatal consequences and that it is a matter of great urgency that those who are very concerned about this, work together to support those in South Asia who are struggling to uphold secularism and democracy. Some ways of doing this would be to publicize what is going on there and taking supportive actions here.

They acknowledged that what is happening in South Asia was not unique to the region. In Quebec and Canada and other parts of the world, there are also reactionary, populist forces using wedge issues to generate fear and hate in the service of political agendas. The core issues are not always identical, but there is a commonality that is often predicated on racism, ethno-nationalism, religious bigotry and intolerance. And unfortunately they feed off each other. E.g. religious nationalists in India find supporters among xenophobes in the USA.

Those gathered decided to take up the challenge in a variety of ways as an alliance with a basic platform of unity in support of pluralism in South Asia.

Info: [alliance.for.pluralism@gmail.com](mailto:alliance.for.pluralism@gmail.com)

## Board of the Quebec Women's Federation (Fédération des femmes du Québec)

Des nouvelles de l'AGA

Au Cégep de Maisonneuve, les samedi 27 et dimanche 28 mai dernier, dans le cadre de leur assemblée générale annuelle, les membres de la Fédération des femmes du Québec se sont entendues sur une série de principes importants, ont élu un nouveau conseil d'administration et ont réitéré leur engagement pour un mouvement féministe pluriel, solidaire et inclusif de toutes les femmes.

Appui au projet de loi C-16

En AGA, nous avons adoptée la proposition suivante :

"Considérant la violence et la discrimination vécue par les femmes trans et le besoin de lancer un message clair de respect et d'inclusion;

Considérant l'approche intersectionnelle de la FFQ et son objectif d'atteindre l'égalité pour et entre toutes les femmes;

Considérant l'importance de la protection de la Charte comme une première étape nécessaire pour contrer la haine basée sur l'identité ou l'expression de genre."

Projet de recherche sur la mise sur pied d'une coalition féministe pancanadienne

Depuis avril dernier, la FFQ a entrepris une recherche pour Condition féminine Canada sur la possibilité de mettre en place une coalition féministe pancanadienne. Le but de cette recherche est de faire une recension des coalitions féministes ayant existé au Canada, mais aussi de produire un rapport final recommandant un modèle de collaboration féministe à mettre en œuvre. Cette coalition serait à l'image de la défunte coalition du National Action Committee on the Status of Women, et s'inspirerait du Groupe des 13 québécois.



**Fédération des femmes  
du Québec**  
Égalité pour toutes, égalité entre toutes  
FFQ en BREF - Bulletin des membres



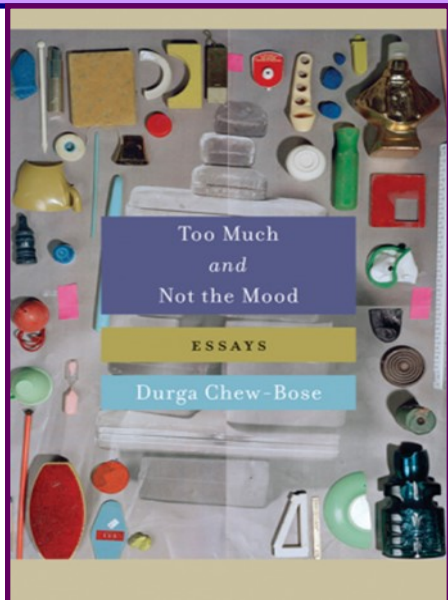


Notre nouvelle agente de recherche, Marie-Anne Casselot, consulte plusieurs groupes féministes canadiens, nationaux et provinciaux, dans l'objectif d'établir s'il existe un intérêt et un besoin pour une telle coalition. Cette coalition viendrait concerter les luttes féministes au pays, partager les expertises et les informations entre les groupes, développer des analyses féministes et agir en tant que comité conseil pour le gouvernement canadien. Cela permettrait aussi de mobiliser et de porter des activités de recherche et de revendications avec une perspective féministe au niveau national, et ce, en plus d'être un projet porteur de leadership collectif. Autour d'une dizaine d'entrevues ont été réalisées, en date du 6 juin 2017, et plusieurs autres s'en viennent.

Si vous ou votre organisation, êtes interpellées par ce projet, n'hésitez pas à contacter Marie-Anne à l'adresse suivante : [recherche@ffq.qc.ca](mailto:recherche@ffq.qc.ca).

[www.ffq.qc.ca](http://www.ffq.qc.ca)

## SAWCC daughter



SAWCC daughter, Durga Chew-Bose, will be reading from her book *Too Much and Not the Mood* on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm at the bookstore,

Drawn & Quarterly,  
211 Bernard, between Jeanne-Mance and l'Esplanade.

Durga will read at SAWCC later this year.



## Member news

Dolores Chew has been elected to the Board of the Quebec Women's Federation (Fédération des femmes du Québec) for another 2-year term.

## SAWCC Open House– May 26, 2017



*Congratulations*



**Centre Communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques**

South Asian Women's Community Centre, 1035, rue Rachel est, 3ième étage, Montréal, QC H2J 2J5

Phone: 514-528-8812  
Fax: 514-528-0896  
E-mail: sawcc@bellnet.ca

36 years of sisterhood, strength, struggle and success 1981-2017

[www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca](http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca)

June 6 - Information session on "Security in the Metro Station"  
June 13 - Recipe Exchange  
June 18 - Annual General Meeting  
June 20 - Information session "sécurité incendie"  
June 27 - Women's Group Activity  
June 30 - EID PotLuck

6 juin - Session d'information "Sécurité dans la station de metro"  
13 juin - Échange de recettes  
18 juin - Assemblée générale annuelle  
20 juin - Session d'information "sécurité incendie"  
27 juin - Activité de groupe féminin  
30 juin - EID Dîner causerie

## June 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6  Information session	7	8	9	10
11	12	13  Recipe exchange	14	15	16	17
18  Annual general meeting	19	20  Information session	21	22	23	24
25	26	27  Women's Group Activity	28	29	30  Pot Luck	

## Membership Renewal

Please renew your SAWCC membership to ensure you get all the mailings and can participate fully in the organization.

Changes to your information (address, phone number, etc. email, etc.)? Download the membership form from our website, insert the correct information and send it along with your membership dues.

<http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca/EN/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Membership-form.pdf>

Please mail cheque to: SAWCC, 1035 Rachel est, Montréal, Qc., H2J 2J5.

Make cheque payable to: "South Asian Women's Community Centre".

Indicate in the note section: "membership".

Making a donation to SAWCC at the same time? Donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax-deductible receipt. If including a donation indicate as well the amount towards "donation".

### Membership dues:

\$15.00 (for salaried)

\$7.00 (for non-salaried)