

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



## MISOGYNY, HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA – all come from the same place

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The mass killing in Orlando earlier this month has demonstrated that despite greater awareness and visibility of LGBTTQ folk, conscious and unconscious bias, fear and hatred continue to exist. It should not be surprising if we recall that it was only relatively recently that homosexuality was decriminalized here. Sodomy laws are still in place in many parts of the world, especially places where historically non binary gender identities were not criminalized until the arrival of European colonialism and the introduction of laws and cultures that mirrored European Biblical-inspired codes.

For us, though, it is important to remember that homophobia, transphobia and misogyny are consequences of the same patriarchal imperatives, where anything and anyone seen to subvert patriarchal power and privilege is not to be tolerated; must be eliminated; that violence and extreme hatred towards gay folk and people who don't conform to strict gender binaries – female or male -- comes from the same place as violence towards women.

The tragedy in Orlando also demonstrates that the pressures to conform are so great that they can lead to denial and self-hatred. We mourn the loss of the lives of the vibrant folk who were killed in Orlando. And we re-commit to our struggle to eliminate violence against women, a struggle which is about eliminating patriarchy and its hate-filled manifestations.



Filipino youth activists show their hands painted in rainbow colors as they gather in solidarity with victims of the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub

## CENTRE UPDATE



### Summertime Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture

**Monday—Friday—9am—5pm**

**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!

## Next EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August. 6pm to meet, eat, read documents. 6:30pm business meeting begins.

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend and to participate.

## SAWCC Bulletin – submissions 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](mailto: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 is 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 sisterhood, and principles of intersectionality\*, equality, equity, and transparency. As well, material that may violate 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, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.*

## SAWCC's Annual Picnic

This year's Annual Picnic will be held at Long Sault beach on Saturday July 30th, 2016. In case of rain the picnic will be held the next day (Sunday July 31st)

Cost:

For adults \$21

For children aged 14 and under \$16

**Payment deadline: Friday July 15th, 2016**

For more details and to make payments please contact Juvaria at (514) 528-8812 ext 105 or Shipra at (514) 528-8812 ext 106

Buses leaving Namur metro at **9:00AM**



## SAY/JSA UPDATE

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



South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective invites you to our next Young South Asian Women's Support Meet-up! The meeting will be held on **Friday July 8th, 2016 from 6:00—7:30pm** 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 support meet-ups, please e-mail [sawccyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sawccyouth@gmail.com)

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

The Dance Troupe had it's first meeting last week. We are very excited to be collaborating with a dance troupe in Sudan to exchange videos and dance moves :) If you're interested in participating please get in touch with your availabilities. Email us at: [sawccyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sawccyouth@gmail.com) OR call us at: 514-528-8812 ext 105 OR get in touch via Facebook: South Asian Youth (SAY) Collective

## Queer Between the Covers Bookfair

Saturday August 13, 2016

11am to 6pm

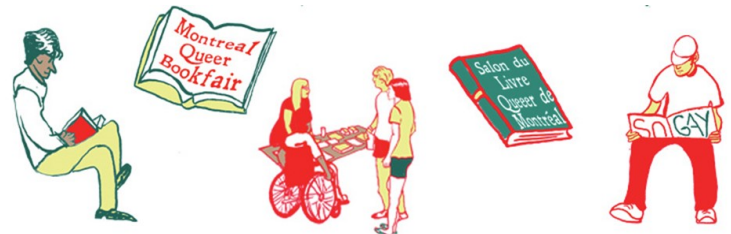
Centre communautaire de loisirs Sainte-Catherine d'Alexandrie  
1700, Rue Amherst

Salon du livre Queer entre les couvertures

samedi le 13 août 2016

11h à 18h

Centre communautaire de loisirs Sainte-Catherine d'Alexandrie  
1700, Rue Amherst



### ◆◆◆◆ ACCESSIBILITY INFO ◆◆◆◆

◆ The event is free and open to all.

◆ The bookfair will be held in a wheelchair accessible space with wheelchair accessible, gender-neutral washrooms.

◆ You can find detailed information about the space physical accessibility and the space location here : <http://tinyurl.com/venueaccessibility>

◆ We will give out free bus/metro tickets, available upon request at the welcome table. Limited quantity, so first come first serve!

◆ There will be a seating area

◆ We will be offering free childcare throughout the day.

◆ Free vegan food and coffee will be served.

◆ We strive to make the bookfair a scent-reduced space to make it more accessible to people with chemical and fragrance sensitivities.

◆◆◆ If you're a smoker, we ask you to smoke in the smoking area which will be 25 feet from entrance, and to wait at least five minutes after you're done before entering the space to « air out » a little bit.

◆◆◆ We ask everyone to refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, essential oils, scented body and haircare products or other scented or chemical products to the fair.

◆ For more information on our commitment to access, you can visit : <http://tinyurl.com/accessibilitycommitment>

\*\*\*\*\* If you have any questions or concerns during the day, we encourage you to go talk to the collective members sitting at the welcome table. Until then, you can contact us at [queerbetweenthecovers\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:queerbetweenthecovers(at)gmail(dot)com)

## SAWCC AGM 2015-2016

The SAWCC AGM was held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June. Morning and afternoon sessions were very well-attended.

A light breakfast was available to start the day off.

The morning session was used to inform ourselves and have a brief discussion about the phenomenon of so-called 'radicalisation' which has become a shorthand term widely used in media and by states to denounce and criminalize people – mostly youth and mostly male who identify as Muslim. SAWCC hopes to put out a statement explaining out critique of the way the term is being used and why its continued usage and the implications of the same are so dangerous, incorrect and inappropriate to do so.

This being our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, later in the morning session we took time to re-evaluate where we are as SAWCC. We drew on retreats and re-visioning sessions that we have held in previous years to see how we have taken up suggestions and actions that were recommended. We noted that we have made some changes in light of them, but that more needs to be done. In order to facilitate greatest participation of all present as well as to be most efficient time-wise, all present were encouraged to submit feedback, suggestions, ideas, etc. on sheets provided to everyone, with headings for various topics.

Lunch time provided a good opportunity for everyone to catch up with one another.

And in the afternoon the business part of the AGM took place. The annual report was read out. This year 3,070 individuals received 13,571 services. The financial statement was presented. It was noted that in addition to our Management Sub-committee we have also struck a Membership Sub-committee to explore membership renewal – involvement, increase, etc., and a Fund-raising Sub-committee to help raise funds to ensure we continue to do what we do even if there are cuts to funding; also to provide better benefits to staff and for our activities. The annual report concluded: *"We can be proud of all we have done this year. Thanks to all who unstintingly gave of their time and energy (including emotional energy) to support one another, and to ensure that SAWCC continues as a vibrant and dynamic organization that works to empower women."*

At the conclusion of the business meeting, this being an election year, the election officers took charge. Nominations for 7 Executive Council (EC) positions had been received by the deadline. The two remaining EC positions were filled by nominations from the floor. The EC for 2016-2018 are:

President:	Indu Krishnamurthy
Vice president:	Sarwat Viqar
Secretary :	Diane Shea
Treasurer:	Vrinda Narain
Program Secretary:	Dolores Chew
Public Relations Secretary:	Natasha D'Cruz
Publications Secretary:	Kakali Biswas
Seniors Secretary:	Jennifer Chew
Youth Secretary:	Rushdia Mehreen

## Volunteer Appreciation Day (by Laura Farnsworth)



Laura Farnsworth BA (Women's Studies) RN (Retired)

On Friday May 27<sup>th</sup> 2016 SAWCC held a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at its Centre on Rachel Street in Montreal. I am writing this to express my Thanks for holding such a warm and heartfelt event!

Several dozen women attended and the atmosphere exuded a oneness with the Universal Sisterhood. It was a very warm afternoon, and even though the heat was welcomed after such a long, chilly winter, we enjoyed a lovely refreshing iced punch while we gathered in the main meeting room.

Once we had all arrived, name tags were put on and we then filed into the next room to enjoy a delicious buffet of traditional South Asian dishes such as rice, vegetable and chicken curries, naan breads and a cooling desert pudding.

After eating, we chatted, listened to music, danced and played games, with some lucky ladies winning coveted prizes!

The event went on for several hours into the afternoon until the last guest left with a smiling face, holding a single red rose given out to each guest.

The message was clear – SAWCC really showed its appreciation and gratitude to all of its volunteers, who willingly give their time, energy and expertise to SAWCC's worthy and essential programs. I think each one of us felt the love and caring – as well as the recognition of our humble contributions to SAWCC.





# Fear and Loathing in Orlando

Jun 14 2016

by [Maya Mikdashi](#)

The drumbeats have started. Almost immediately after a mass shooting that left over fifty people dead on Latin night in a Florida gay nightclub, Pulse, the news shifted to the identity of the shooter himself. As soon as his name and the fact that his father immigrated (long ago) from Afghanistan was announced, the narrative began unfolding as Naeem Mohaiemen put it, on cue: This must be a terrorist attack. This is clearly an ISIS attack, or an attack pledging allegiance to ISIS, or someone who followed a feed of jihadi kittens a little too far down the twitter-hole. It smelled of ISIS, and the smell was coming, radiating off of the race and religion of the shooter. That same day a white man was stopped with a stockpile of weapons near LA Pride, but he was different—he was clearly disturbed—the news never became a narrative and quickly disappeared off our screens and thought pieces.

Newer reports emphasize that the killer may himself have had same sex desires and perhaps experiences. There is now another layer to this narrative: perhaps the killer was secretly gay and so self-loathing (because of his religion and “cultural” background”) that he walked into a packed nightclub with an assault rifle and shot out his frustration. Again, the cause of his inability to accept himself is the same culprit, Islam and “Muslim culture,” and not, as Lisa Duggan put it, the toxic masculinity that pervades a gun-obsessed and masculinist US security state at a time of war and empire. The United States is in the midst of an election cycle where bigotry, racism, homophobia, transphobia, anti-immigration, Islamophobia, gun-love, imperial hubris, and sexism are political platforms—and political and national culture is not something one can “opt out” or into depending on ethnicity, race, religion, sex, gender, or even “free will.”

There is a fascination with the fate of queer Muslims, and of the “fate” of LGBTQ individuals “in” Islam. Just today, before writing this piece, I rejected emails from three journalists who comments solely on “homophobia in Islam.” I have no problem stating the obvious: Islam is not welcoming to LGBTQ individuals or communities. My problem is that the rest of that sentence—that neither Judaism nor Christianity are—will not be heard or if heard, will be seen as a deluded apology. This fascination with the fate of queers “in” Islam or (slightly more carefully) “in the Middle East” is built on orientalist fantasies of sexual licentiousness and repression. It is coupled with the strategic goals of a devastating war on terror that is being sold to the “civilized” world as a public good in service of human and sexual rights. This package is also built on the good intentions of homonationalist (and homophobic) assumptions that queers everywhere want the same things, face the same struggles (which are solely discrimination based on sexuality) and value their lives and those of their communities based solely through their experiences of their sexuality. But homophobia is not geographically, or religiously, or racially, or class-distributed. It is pervasive, structural, super-structural, hegemonic, invisible, unavoidable. More than anyone else, queers know this. Queers are used to being told they are unnatural, monstrous, and dangerous to “the good life” or the order of things—whether it is science, government, religion, media, or society, or even lovers and friends and families and situations that remind you that you will never be anything other than “different.”

There are no triangles, circles or other geographic shapes that can demarcate a population or religion or phenotype or (gasp) civilization as “the homophobic one.” The sad truth is that homophobia and misogyny are unavoidable global hegemonic forces that shape everyday life. The United States is no exception to this rule. In the past six months over one hundred anti-LGBTQ bills and laws have been tabled and discussed across the United States. These are governmental and structural manifestations of the devaluing of queer life. The most prominent of these laws are all out assaults on trans bodies and their uses of bathrooms. This law will ensure that trans people will experience even more violence and hatred than they already do, and in an already vulnerable space (bathrooms). Queers of color, queer women of color, and trans people of color (especially trans black women) are daily assaulted, killed, incarcerated, criminalized, brutalized, and raped across this country. The criminalization and wholesale removal of homeless populations from our cities also disproportionately targets queers, and those that are most vulnerable, young queers of color. Yet these daily and hourly attacks (often against the more and most vulnerable within the LGBTQ community) rarely inspire national outrage, as Sima Shaksari reminds us. They do not elicit twenty-four news hour cycles or “special programming” on mainstream news outlets.

LGBTQ Arabs and Muslims are being scripted (just as women have been and continue to be) into a discourse that uses their bodies as barometers of how civilized and/or modern our communities are. This is happening when our communities are living through a war on terror that has killed at least one and a half million people, incarcerated and wounded many more. This war on terror has made the hyphen that holds together a “Muslim-American” an oxymoron. The hyphen is a source wonder and suspicion. Moreover, Islamophobia and its twinning with homophobia (they are homophobic, therefore we can be Islamophobic) is a global phenomenon. In Germany, the Netherlands, and many other “secular” European countries, Arab and Muslim immigrants are tested on how homophobic and/or sexist they are during the citizenship application process. Refugees fleeing war-torn Syria and Afghanistan, many of whom are currently sequestered in highly securitized camps across Europe, are spoken of as “dangers” to a European culture of sexual rights and homosexual liberation. Part of their “training” and “screening” includes being watched as they watch videos of homosexuals kissing and female nudity. It is perhaps no accident that in the center of Berlin there is a holocaust memorial dedicated to the queers (and suspected queers) who were detained, abused, killed and moved to concentration camps under Nazi Germany. This memorial consists of a video loop of two men kissing in a park while dressed in clothes from the 1930s. Thus the sins of Nazi Germany and the fears of far right resurgence in Germany are transposed (and erased) onto the bodies of Muslim applicants seeking citizenship or residency or refugee status. The Canadian government has also suggested that when accepting Syrian refugees, the priority would be for (heteronormative) families and gay individuals.

Is this how dehumanized we are, as Arabs and Muslims and as queers, that we are imagined to be individuals who can only be the victims (not for example, producers or leaders or simply lovers) of our communities and our cultures? That the only way to live a valid (and not suspicious) queer life is to “come out” according to an American script that was and is written in the language of class, gender, and race-exclusion? That we are so deeply hated and traumatized (but only by homophobia, for example, not by war or occupation or deportation or anti-immigration election platforms) that we can be separated from our communities, our loved ones, our families, in order to find safety in countries that are waging or enabling war against those very same loved ones? The fantasy here is of an individual who can be removed without being uprooted, who can be “saved” in pieces, and who must not demonstrate fear *for* their loved ones, but only fear *of* them.

The mass shooting in a gay club in Orlando is shocking in its spectacle and terrifying in its scope and in its targeting of Pride Month. For those that sit at that increasingly jagged intersection of Muslim and queer, we look over our shoulder even as we cry in mourning. We do not shed our religions or our races or our nationalities when we enter a gay bar, and we do not and cannot shed our queer selves on demand. We are whole beings that cannot come in pieces unless they are shattered. We cannot shake off any of the communities that made us, and the fantasy

## Fear and Loathing in Orlando (con't)

that we can or should be able to has destroyed many lives, families, and love-stories. We cannot *choose* to unbecome or for that matter, become— nobody can opt out of life-history. We are not sovereign autonomous entities bumping into, or walking past, each other, and as Judith Butler has written, why the hell would we want to be?

Yesterday, today, and in the days that come, we cannot mourn in peace because the drums of racism and Islamophobia have already started. This tune, the stakes of which are familiar, puts us in a place where we have to apologize or explain or disavow the actions of one man with an assault weapon who happens to be a brown and Muslim American, and perhaps even someone who “could not” reconcile his sexual and emotional desires with his religion or culture. But the killer was an American man, from Florida via Queens, and in a statement to the press his father expressed a grudging and smug “tolerance” of homosexuality by stating that humans should not punish each other for the sin of homosexuality because punishment for sin is the purview of God. Tell me, is this sentiment so different from the rhetoric of “love the sinner, hate the sin” that pervades church sermons and political speeches with equal measure across these United States?

Muslims and Arabs and South Asians are an integral part of the LGBTQ community in the United States, just as LGBTQs are integral members of their Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. There is no irreconcilable difference between Islam and homosexuality beyond the fact that all major religions reject and violently condemn homosexuality. This fact has never stopped people of (or born into) all major religions from affiliating with the LGBTQ community. And it has never stopped religious extremists of all religions from threatening and enacting violence towards queer people of all religions. Homophobia is not a slur, it is not exceptional, it is not the same as a hate crime. It is pervasive, internalized, and perverse to the extent that when Arab heads of state that criminalize non-heteronormative sex reach out to the US government (which is currently struggling with 100 different anti-LGBTQ bills and laws) to express their condolences, no one blinks an eye. But we know that violence against queers is violence against queers, whether the boot at your neck belongs to a man with mental problems, a border security guard or a woman delivering a deportation order, a man who is part of a terrorist network, a garden-variety homophobe, a closet case, or a man in some form of state uniform (judicial, police, correctional). Spare us your crocodile tears.

If queer lives matter, they should matter every day, not just on a day when the religion of the perpetrator of an atrocious mass killing serves the purposes of the local and transnational military industrial complex and the war on terror. Where is the outrage against the anti-trans agenda currently being pushed by state and federal representatives? If you care about the integrity of queer life and are outraged by violence and homophobia and the devaluing of queer life—that outrage should be constant. It should not only emerge when the perpetrator of the violence is politically expedient or fits neatly into a war on terror packaging of the world, a world where the clash of civilizations is fought on the surface of bodies already ravaged by heteropatriarchy.

Or are queers only deserving of your prayers when someone even more hated and feared by the United States mainstream kills them?  
*This article is only made possible by long and inspiring, loving, and challenging conversations and silences with Sherene Seikaly and Rasha Moumneh.*

<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/24635/fear-and-loathing-in-orlando>

## In Orlando, as Usual, Domestic Violence Was Ignored Red Flag

By Soraya Chemaly, Rolling Stone  
 15 June 2016

***Omar Mateen had "no record of previous hate crimes" — though that depends how you categorize domestic violence***

Early Sunday morning, Omar Mateen began killing people in what became the worst mass shooting in U.S. history. Authorities will now study what may have made the 29-year-old go to the Pulse gay nightclub with the intention of ending so many lives. The *Washington Post* reported Monday that “although family members said Mateen had expressed anger about homosexuality, the shooter had no record of previous hate crimes.” But that depends on how you categorize domestic violence.

Mateen's coworker, Daniel Gilroy, who requested a transfer so he wouldn't have to work with Mateen, describes him as “scary in a concerning way.... He had anger management issues. Something would set him off, but the things that would set him off were always women, race or religion. [Those were] his button pushers.”

Mateen reportedly beat his ex-wife, Sitara Yusifiy, and at one point held her hostage, but was never held accountable. She divorced him after only four months of marriage, citing his mental-health issues. Her family, she says, had to “pull [her] out of his arms.” She describes Mateen as practicing his religion — Islam — but showing “no sign” of violent radicalism. It's understandable what she means there, but perhaps it's time our society started to think of physical abuse, possessiveness and men's entitlement to act in those ways toward women as terroristic, violent and radical.

As *Huffington Post* reporter Melissa Jeltsen wrote last year, “The untold story of mass shootings in America is one of domestic violence.” According to a conservative estimate by the FBI, 57 percent of the mass shootings (involving more than four victims) between January 2009 and June 2014 involved a perpetrator killing an intimate partner or other family member. In other words, men killing women intimates and their children and relatives are the country's prototypical mass shooters; these killings are horrifyingly common. In fact, on Sunday, while the world watched in horror as news poured out of Orlando, a man in New Mexico was arrested in the fatal shooting deaths of his wife and four daughters.

Even when intimate partners are not involved, gender and the dynamics of gender are salient. According to one detailed analysis, 64 percent of the victims of mass murders are women and children, and yet the role that masculinity and aggrieved male entitlement plays is largely sidelined. Schools, for example, make up 10 percent of the sites of mass shootings in the U.S., and wom-

## Orlando, as Usual, Domestic Violence Was Ignored Red Flag (con't)

en and girls are twice as likely to die in school shootings. Gyms, shopping malls and places of worship are also frequent targets, and are similarly places where women and girls are predictably present in greater numbers.

Homophobia is nothing if not grounded in profound misogyny. Regardless of religion or ethnicity, anti-LGTB rhetoric is the expression of dominant heterosexuality that feeds on toxic masculinity and rigid gender stereotypes. Sunday's mass killing targeted the LGBTQ community — including people who violate gender rules, such as men who are "like women," per Mateen's thinking. What's more, according to several Pulse regulars, Mateen had previously been to the nightclub a number of times, and investigators are also looking into whether he may have been using a gay dating app. It's still unclear why he might have done those things, but at least a few people have said he may have been gay and closeted, potentially adding another dimension to his homophobia.

The club where the shooting took place, Pulse, had been known as a particularly a safe space for queer and trans people of color, groups who are the target of the fastest growing number of hate crimes in the United States. If Mateen's choosing Pulse as a target isn't an indication of aggrieved entitlement and fragile masculinity, I don't know what is. Pledging allegiance to ISIS, as he is reported to have done in the midst of the shooting, while related in many dimensions to this problem, seems more like a symptom, not a cause.

Intimate partner violence and the toxic masculinity that fuels it are *the* canaries in the coal mine for understanding public terror, and yet this connection continues largely to be ignored, to everyone's endangerment. It is essential to understand religious extremism (of all stripes), racism, homophobia, mental illness and gun use, but all of these factors are on ugly quotidian display in one place before all others: at home. If experts in countering violent extremism are looking for an obvious precursor to public massacres, this is where they should focus their attentions.

There are major problems to overcome before we'll see real change, though. First, we need to fundamentally shift how we think about and assess "terror." Just as the public's consciousness has been raised in regards to race, ethnicity and the framing of only some agents of violence as "terrorists," so too should we consider domestic violence a form of daily terror. Three women a day are killed by intimate partners in the United States, and the majority of women murdered are murdered by men they know. There needs to be a dissolution between what we think of as "domestic" violence, traditionally protected by patriarchal privacy norms and perpetrated by men against "their" women, and "public" violence, traditionally understood as male-on-male. Acts of public terrorism such as the one in Orlando Sunday would be less unpredictable if intimate partner violence were understood as a public health and safety issue, instead of as a private problem.

Second, we must address the reasons why many victims of domestic violence are not comfortable going to the police — for instance, the fact that sexual "misconduct" is the second most prevalent form of police misconduct, after excessive force. Additionally, high rates of police brutality, particularly in communities of color, constitute a form of terror. This fact should be inseparable from tolerance for high rates of intimate partner violence in police ranks. Women, and perhaps especially women of color, who might otherwise be able to alert law enforcement about the early signs of violence or radicalization do not currently feel safe or comfortable going to the police.

The third major issue to address is that of violent men and their access to guns. In households where an abusive spouse has access to a gun, women are five times more likely to be killed. And yet, men who violently abuse women they are related to are not barred from owning or buying guns if their domestic violence is never reported to the police or prosecuted. What's more, gun-rights activists are trying to overturn a 1996 amendment to a federal law that says it's illegal for a person who's been convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor to buy or own a gun. And currently people with restraining orders associated with intimate partner violence are only prohibited from owning or buying guns in fewer than half of U.S. states.

Fourth, it's time to correlate the known risk factors for intimate partner killing, determined in what is known as a lethality assessment, to other factors that might help predict who will engage in acts of mass shooting and killing. Given the ridiculous pace of intimate partner and mass shootings, there's no shortage of data to study. We know what behaviors presage men's murdering women and children and then, often, turning guns on themselves. What if those metrics were integrated into models designed to understand and counter what is traditionally thought of as violence extremism? If, as Jelsten pointed out, experts believe that domestic homicides are "the most predictable and preventable of all homicides" then, given what we know about the inciting incidents in most mass shootings, so too are the majority of acts of public terror.

It does not take intensive analysis or complicated transnational databases to conclude that men who feel entitled to act violently, with impunity, against those they care for will, in all probability, feel greater entitlement to act violently toward those they hate or are scared of.

The sooner we start recognizing this fact, the safer not just women, but all of us, will become.

## In defence of Dr. Homa Hoodfar

At our Annual General Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2016, we, the members of Montreal's South Asian Women's Community Centre unanimously expressed our deep concern over the arrest and incarceration of Dr. Homa Hoodfar, a respected academic and scholar and Professor Emeritus at Concordia University in Montreal. Dr. Hoodfar has been arrested and detained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Evin prison in Tehran since June 6, 2016.

It is believed that her detention by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards is a result of a fundamental misinterpretation of her ethnographic research on women in Iran. She has published extensively on diverse topics including poverty, development, women's labor force and political participation, family law, and refugees in many different countries in the Middle East, Canada, and South Asia. She is known for highlighting Muslim women's ability to realize their rights within an Islamic framework, and for her critique of essentializing Western stereotypes about veiling.

Dr. Hoodfar's lawyer has not been granted access to her and she has been denied visits from her family as well as denied medication for a neurological condition. This has raised further concerns for her health and safety.

As a women's organization dedicated to women's empowerment and equal rights we call upon the Canadian government to do everything in its power to ensure her immediate and unconditional release and safe return to Canada. We also call upon all those who work with us and support us to lend their voices to the call for her release and safety.

Montreal  
12 June 2016

## Five Myths About Rape

By Danielle Paquette, *The Washington Post*  
12 June 2016

Stanford swimmer Brock Turner was convicted of sexual assault after he attacked an unconscious woman. But to hear his father and close friends tell it, Turner isn't a rapist, just another college kid who got carried away. Surveys of college students often unearth similar misconceptions. When Oklahoma State University professor John Foubert asks his students if they've ever raped someone, the answer is always no. Change the phrasing, however, and some admit to committing crimes. Ten percent of fraternity brothers in one campus study reported that they'd penetrated a woman without her permission. "They don't see this behavior as rape," said Foubert, who designed OSU's rape-prevention program. "It's not just college students. You hear these beliefs in broader society." Even as the national conversation about sexual assault grows, myths persist. Let's debunk five.

### 1. Rape is primarily a college problem.

Much of the coverage of rape over the past few years has focused on universities. Vice called campus rape an "undeniable, massive problem." The Nation described it as a "crisis." CNBC said college campuses are "one of the most dangerous places for women in America."

It is true that women between 18 and 24 suffer sexual assaults more often than any other group. But young women who don't pursue higher learning are much more likely to be victims. A 2014 study from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (using crime data from 1995 to 2013) found that the rate of rape was 1.2 times higher for non-students than for students. "It seems like these institutions get all the attention, and the other victims are never even talked about," said Claudia Bayliff, a Virginia lawyer who has worked on rape cases for 25 years. "There are race issues here, class issues and media-access issues."

### 2. Rape is about the victimization of women.

Rape often gets lumped into a broader conversation about violence against women, and many of the most prominent victims are female. Before 2012, even the Justice Department defined rape as "the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will."

This obscures something that should be obvious: Rape isn't about gender, it's about power and a particular set of behaviors. These include, according to the federal government's updated definition, "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." This crime can strike men as well as women. Overall, between 5 and 14 percent of rapes are reported by males. According to one study, 44 percent of women and 23.4 percent of men said they'd experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetimes, including unwanted contact. Seven percent of men, meanwhile, report that they've been "made to penetrate" another person. Nearly half of men who reported an assault said their assailant was a woman.

"Men and boys who are victims and survivors deserve our compassion and services just as much as women and girls," said Jackson Katz, creator of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Model, a program that works to educate students about rape. "But when we speak about men as victims of sexual violence, we need to be clear that men are also the majority of perpetrators."

### 3. You can't rape your spouse.

The list of institutions and people who have made this claim is long. It includes the Michigan Court of Appeals, which once ruled that it is not illegal for a man to sexually assault his wife, and Virginia state Sen. Dick Black, who said in 2002, "I don't know how on earth you could validly get a conviction in a husband-wife rape when they're living together, sleeping in the same bed, she's



## Five Myths About Rape (con't)

in a nightie and so forth.”

This election cycle, a lawyer for Donald Trump even claimed to a reporter, “You can’t rape your spouse.” The remark came last July in response to old allegations that Trump sexually assaulted his first wife, Ivana.

But Michael Cohen, a lawyer for the Trump Organization, was dead wrong. It is illegal to rape anyone in the United States, even if you’re married to the victim. And wives do report rape. Ten to 14 percent of ever-married or co-habiting women surveyed by researchers reported at least one sexual assault by a husband.

It’s true that rape of a spouse wasn’t always considered a crime. About 40 years ago, feminists began a campaign to strike down the “marital rape exemption,” a remnant from a time when a wife was considered her husband’s property. Nebraska was the first state to abolish it, in 1976. By 1993, every state had banned sexual assault within marriage. Half, however, still don’t grant married women the same protections that cover single women. And at least 23 states make it more difficult for a wife to accuse her husband of sexual violence. Some require evidence of violent force; some give married victims less time to report an assault.

### *4. You can’t prosecute a years-old rape.*

News outlets often blame statutes of limitations for keeping alleged serial rapists such as Bill Cosby out of jail. How was the superstar able to evade criminal charges? a writer at Mic asked. “The simple answer? Statute of limitations.” In 2014, New York criminal defense lawyer Daniel A. Hochheiser told the International Business Times that “there’s not going to be any criminal charges filed against Mr. Cosby because these cases are all too old.”

But statutes of limitation vary widely among states, ranging from three to 30 years. Sixteen states, including Maryland and Virginia, have no statute of limitations at all. Many states also extend the statute of limitations if new DNA evidence is found. Others are pushing to relax these rules to prosecute sex crimes. California, for example, is moving to ditch its statute, which now sits at 10 years for adult victims. Florida and Oregon recently doubled their reporting windows.

Other states have vowed to end their backlogs of unexamined rape kits, the forensic evidence collected after an attack. Ohio’s Cuyahoga County Sexual Assault Kit Task Force has obtained more than 250 convictions from cases going back to 1993, said Rachel Lovell, a senior research associate at Case Western Reserve University. “Their success illustrates that when rape kits are tested,” she said, “and cases are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted, convictions for old rape cases are very likely.”

There has also been a surge in the number of reports of years-old assaults. A fifth of sexual assaults reported in New York City in 2015 happened at least a year prior to the police complaint, NYPD data showed, stretching back as far as 1975. New York Police Commissioner William Bratton dubbed this “the Cosby effect.” The trend touched other cities, too: Philadelphia authorities observed a 9 percent increase in delayed reports of rape between 2014 and 2015, with the number increasing from 110 to 121. In Houston, it climbed from 76 to 125.

### *5. The rising number of reported sexual assaults represents a crisis.*

In a public service announcement last year, President Obama revealed a startling statistic: “Right now, nearly one in five women in America has been a victim of rape or attempted rape.” One in five women who attended college at some point between 2011 and 2015 said they’d been sexually assaulted, according to a Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation poll.

These numbers reflect a trend that does seem troublesome: More American college students are reporting rapes than ever before. Campus sexual assault reports increased by 25 percent between 2012 and 2013, Department of Education data shows. But advocates say that’s not a bad thing. Rape is a massively underreported crime. Federal researchers estimate that just 34 percent of sexual assaults lead to police reports. So a reporting increase, in some cases, means the criminal justice system is working: Victims are coming forward, and authorities are listening.

“Once you talk about sexual assault and do prevention, that reporting increases,” said Jane Stapleton, who runs the University of New Hampshire’s Prevention Innovations Research Center. “There is absolutely no evidence to suggest the increase in reporting is directly associated with an increase in perpetration.”

<http://readersupportednews.org/news-section2/318-66/37405-five-myths-about-rape>

## A women's rights champion is arrested and jailed. What will Canada do?

Amira Elghawaby

*The Globe and Mail*, Thursday, Jun. 23, 2016

*Amira Elghawaby is the communications director of the National Council of Canadian Muslims*

The first time I encountered Canadian-Iranian anthropologist Homa Hoodfar was during a small, intimate talk she gave to students at Carleton University.

It was the late 1990s, and she was there to discuss her then-recent book, *Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo*.

For a young woman who was raised in Canada, but who visited her parent's homeland of Egypt frequently, Ms. Hoodfar's findings were nonetheless revelatory. Even while I had seen firsthand the full agency of my Muslim relatives in Egypt, I couldn't shake the stereotypes prevalent even then of Muslim women in general as docile, passive actors.

Ms. Hoodfar's anthropological research in Egyptian villages shattered those stereotypes, opening doors to experiences in which women were frequently making deliberate decisions about their and their family's lives, that often covertly co-opted male control. Her research highlighted how women worked effectively within conservative communities, to take positions of authority within the home.

In other words, Ms. Hoodfar, a professor of anthropology at Concordia University, turned misconceptions and assumptions about Muslim women on their head.

So the news of her current imprisonment in Iran struck me as not only unjust, but deeply ironic. Ms. Hoodfar's important work has helped further understanding of Muslim women, including Iranian women. In a widely-quoted 1993 essay, she shows how many Iranian women were in fact robbed of their agency during the rule of Reza Shah when they were forced to de-veil:

"One can effectively argue that such outfits, in the existing social context, contributed to the exclusion of women of popular classes and pushed them toward seclusion, rather than laying the groundwork for their liberation," she wrote then.

Ms. Hoodfar argued that traditional roles and mores in Iran, as elsewhere in the Muslim world, allowed women to function as full, independent members of their own societies. It was the coerced "liberation," that helped encourage male dominance and controls, echoing what other feminists including Indian writer and activist Arundhati Roy have pointed out. "Coercing a woman out of the burka is as bad as coercing her into one. It isn't about the burka. It's about the coercion," said Ms. Roy famously. That a champion of women's rights – including those of Muslim women who want to function within Islamic strictures (as varied and diverse as interpretations of those strictures are) – is in an Iranian prison, is particularly shameful.

It is from this perspective that pressure can be brought to bear on the Iranian government by our elected officials. Under no circumstances should an academic (or anyone else for that matter) be held in an infamous prison without charge or evidence of any wrongdoing.

Moreover, that Iran has detained an academic with an incredible body of work that clearly demonstrates a commitment to the rights and freedoms of women, and in particular, of Muslim women, should be seen as an attack on all women.

Ms. Hoodfar's imprisonment is the latest in a series of such arrests of dual nationals, and analysts have various theories about why this is happening now. Whatever the reasons may be, the federal government must work quickly to secure her release, as she is reportedly in poor health and being denied access to necessary medical care for a neurological condition.

There has reportedly been no contact with Ms. Hoodfar since her detention, by either her family or Canadian officials. As the family prepares to push Stéphane Dion for action Thursday, we are reminded that the government must have better protections for Canadians unfairly held abroad.

Perhaps if Canada adopts the Protection Charter, put forward earlier this year by Amnesty International and the Fahmy Foundation, Ms. Hoodfar's ordeal, and those of other Canadians currently held unjustly abroad – Huseyin Celil in China and Bashir Mak-tal in Ethiopia – would be more quickly resolved.

Canada loses a little bit of its own strength every time one of its own is made to disappear.

## Victory! “Border Security” TV show finally cancelled!

### No One Is Illegal (Coast Salish Territories - Vancouver)

Jun 12, 2016 — Congratulations you did it! “Border Security” TV show finally cancelled!

Impacted families, human rights groups, and cultural producers advocating for the cancellation of the “Border Security” reality TV show are celebrating a victory with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) agreeing to end its involvement in the controversial show! The federal Privacy Commissioner made a decision this week calling on CBSA to end its involvement in the reality TV show that films vulnerable migrants and citizens being interrogated, detained and deported. The Commissioner found that CBSA broke the law by participating in the show’s production, violating key provisions of the Privacy Act. In light of the Commissioner’s recommendation and massive public pressure, CBSA has agreed to end its involvement in the show.

The privacy complaint was brought by the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) as part of the Cancel Border Security Campaign on behalf of Oscar Mata Duran, who was removed to Mexico following a CBSA raid of his workplace in 2013. “I feel happy that my complaint proceeded and was successful after three years. I am grateful to everyone who fought for the rights of people like me. I am hopeful that Canada will be more accepting of migrants and refugees. I would love to be back. We are people seeking better and safer lives and should not be treated as illegal,” says Oscar Mata Duran.

At least seven other men at the construction site were also unconsensually filmed and deported following the raid. “This is actually difficult news for us to hear given all the hardship our family suffered,” says Diana Thompson, an Indigenous mother whose husband Tulio Renan Hernandez was filmed and deported to Honduras after the raid. “CBSA should never have been involved with a show that exploits families pain in the first place. We are grateful for all our supporters that stood with us for three years.”

Ms. Thompson authored a petition that garnered 25,000 signatures and forced the episode of the raid off the air. She was joined by 90 human rights groups including Amnesty International, Idle No More, Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian Bar Association as well as 250 cultural producers asserting that deportation is not entertainment.

“The Border Security show represents and exploits the dehumanization of people that happens at our borders and in the immigration system. Thanks to ten of thousands of people who signed petitions, revoked their consent to be filmed, attended rallies and shared their stories, CBSA has now agreed to end their participation in this unethical show. We continue to hold CBSA accountable for their daily violence against migrants and refugees,” says Sozan Savehilaghi with No One Is Illegal and the Cancel Border Security Campaign.

Adds Shireen Soofi, member of End Immigration Detention Network, “While this is critical recognition of the misconduct by the CBSA in their treatment of migrants, we must not lose sight of the continued injustices against migrants like Oscar who are held in detention for months or years without charge. In 2015 there were 2,458 migrants detained in Canada for 232,266 days, and 93 percent of refugee claimants were held without any allegations of causing a threat to public safety. The detention of migrants is unjustifiable and we must end immigration detention.”

“This decision is an important recognition that everyone has human rights regardless of immigration status,” said Alejandra López Bravo from Sanctuary Health. “Unfortunately CBSA continues to act unfairly off camera with migrant workers who grow our food, raise our kids and build our cities, and families continue to live in fear of accessing basic services such as health, education and workplace safety. That needs to change too!”

Zool Suleman, legal counsel for Mr. Mata Duran, notes, “CBSA needs independent public oversight NOW not tomorrow. The TV show producers should be ashamed. Both CBSA and the producers need to publically apologize for their conduct.”

As part of the Cancel Border Security Campaign, over 250 actors, directors, screenwriters, authors, producers, and musicians also released an open letter challenging the show’s ethics on informed consent. According to author Naomi Klein, “This recent news is a victory for political organization and just plain human decency. At a time when migrants are losing their lives in staggering numbers, and our governments fail to respond to this epic crisis, now is no time to turn deportation into entertainment.”

“This show is predicated on making entertainment out of real migrant suffering while globalization and superpower proxy wars have forced more migrants than ever before to seek refuge. It is only surprising to us that it has taken CSBA so long to join artists and migrants across this country in publicly acknowledging how deeply wrong-headed this show really is,” adds award-winning artistic director, actor and playwright Marcus Youssef, who is also involved with the Cancel Border Security Campaign.

In his decision, the federal Privacy Commissioner found that the “consent” the CBSA relied on to justify the disclosure of people’s private information was grossly insufficient. “[I]n large part due to the context in which filming occurs, individuals are not providing full and informed consent to the disclosure of their personal information, as would be required by the Act,” he wrote. “[I]ndividuals from countries with different legal systems may feel that they have to comply with uniformed individuals and have no choice but to sign documents presented to them. Moreover, individuals being detained or facing the prospect of deportation may not be in the best frame of mind to provide informed and free consent.”

In Mr. Mata Duran’s case, he was not asked for his consent until well after the filming had taken place. Confused and scared about what would happen to him, he signed the consent form without reading it. He was never given a thorough explanation as to how the footage would be used’.

“This decision should sound the death knell for the unfortunate trend of treating law enforcement as if it’s Hollywood entertainment” said Laura Track, counsel with the BCCLA. “Deportation is not entertainment, and neither are the stops, searches or arrests of people by police in similarly vulnerable situations. The Privacy Commissioner has said that people cannot provide free and informed consent in these kinds of circumstances involving fear, coercion and an extreme imbalance of power. We expect law enforcement across the country to heed these findings and commit to focusing on their responsibility to keep communities safe, not exploit them for for-profit ‘entertainment’.”

Deportation is not Entertainment video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxSNaVVQkYE>

Cancel Border Security campaign: <https://noii-van.resist.ca/?cat=59>

## Alzheimer's & Dementia

Alzheimer's Dementia Affecting More Women than Men: Becoming a "Women's Disease" in more ways than one...

SAWCC volunteer Laura Farnsworth, BA Women's Studies, RN (Retired), Nursing Instructor (Retired), presented an information/educational session on Alzheimer's Dementia at the Centre on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

Most of us have heard the word Alzheimer's used here and there, and perhaps some of you may have, unfortunately, had some experience with it in your own lives. But – medically speaking – what is it?

Alzheimer's disease was first identified in 1906 by Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a German psychiatrist and neuro-pathologist.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that damages and eventually destroys brain cells. This leads to memory loss and changes in the ability to think, and other brain functions.

Progressive means that it becomes worse over time, as more brain cells become damaged and eventually die. Progression & Life Expectancy varies: can span from 3 to 20 years; average span of disease is between 8 to 12 years. Currently at this time, there is no cure. It is a fatal, terminal illness --meaning that a person will eventually die from it.

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia. There are many different types of dementia caused by several kinds of diseases. Dementia is an overall-general term for a loss of mental functions, caused by physical changes in the brain, resulting in brain cell death.

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia, resulting in 60% to 80% of cases.

A person with Alzheimer's dementia may experience symptoms that include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. These may become severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. The person may also experience changes in mood or behavior.

Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are NOT a part of normal aging.

Do we know what causes Alzheimer's?

Scientists believe that for most people, Alzheimer's disease is caused by a combination of genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors that affect the brain over time.

Diagnosis: Unfortunately, no single test can tell if a person has Alzheimer's disease.

Making the diagnosis can take time. The process involves medical history, mental status exam, physical exam, laboratory tests and psychiatric & psychological examinations to rule out depression and/or mental illness.

The Alzheimer Society of Canada tells us there are ten (10) major warning signs of Alzheimer's disease:

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Vision & judging Distance problems
- New problems with words – in speaking & writing
- Misplacing/Losing things & inability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgement



## Alzheimer's & Dementia (con't)

- Withdrawal from work or social activities

Alzheimer's can be described as a series of stages:

- Early (Mild)
- Middle
- Late
- End of Life

Can Alzheimer's be prevented?

There are no guarantees, but healthy lifestyle choices will help keep your brain as healthy as possible as you age. The human brain is one of your most vital organs. It plays a role in every action and every thought. Just like the rest of your body, it needs to be looked after!

Healthy Aging – How to do it:

- Challenge yourself – take courses, learn a language!
- Be socially active
- Follow a healthy diet
- Be physically active
- Reduce stress
- Protect your head – wear helmet when biking
- Make healthy lifestyle choices – stop smoking!
- Do your brain a favour – volunteer!

What are the causes?

The causes are not specifically known. But research points to several probable & some possible risk factors.

Risk Factors – what are they?

- AGE – The risk for Alzheimer's doubles every 5 years after age 65
- SEX: BEING FEMALE – At the age of 65, women have a 1:6 chance of developing Alzheimer's, compared to 1:11 chance for men.
- Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Depression
- Cognitive (Mental) inactivity or low education
- Physical inactivity
- Unhealthy diet
- Severe brain injury
- Not enough Vitamin D or B12
- Exposure to pesticides & heavy metals
- Genetic factors such as an inherited risk of Alzheimer's disease

Statistics

## Alzheimer's & Dementia (con't)

In 2011, 747,000 Canadians were living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. That's 14.9% of Canadians 65 and older.

By 2031, if nothing changes in Canada, this will increase to 1.4 million.

### WOMEN BEARING MORE OF THE ALZHEIMER'S BURDEN

### MOTHERS, WIVES, GRANDMOTHERS, SISTERS, FRIENDS... THE 72%

Did you know that women represent 72% of Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease? Why? Because women live longer than men and AGE is THE BIGGEST RISK FACTOR!

However, as scientists look into the increased risk of Alzheimer's in women, they are finding there may be other contributing factors to the disease beyond longevity.

In the USA, of the 5 million people living with Alzheimer's, 3.2 million are women.

In the USA, 60% of all Alzheimer's caregivers are women.

Women in their 60's are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's than to develop breast cancer.

There is a lot that is not understood and not known, as to why women are developing Alzheimer's more than men. MORE RESEARCH IS NEEDED!

As women, what can we do?

- Inspire women to be politically active in the issues that affect their lives
- Make sure politicians pay attention to women's lives
- Examples of actions:
- Lobby for change – such as for paid caregiving allowance for caregivers caring for Alzheimer's patients.
- Demand support for preserving the health of women and women caregivers: financial, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social.

### SOURCES:

Alzheimer Society of Canada

Government of Canada – Health Canada

Shriver Report: USA Maria Shriver – A Woman's Nation takes on Alzheimer's USA.

June 2016

Laura Farnsworth BA (Women's Studies), RN (Retired)

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## An Open Letter to the All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Divorce Laws

By Mariya Salim on 13/05/2016

*As the debate on banning Triple Talaq in India is again making news, Mariya Salim reminds the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) members that they need to take the side of the aggrieved and support the ban.*

Dear Members of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB),

Two days ago I was sitting with the vice principal of the all girls' school I attended as a child in Kolkata. She told me how she was aghast at the request of one of the prospective students' mother to not disclose her educational qualification in front of her husband, when they come for a formal interview for admission. She had a masters in psychology from Aligarh Muslim University. "He thinks I have only studied up to class 10. If he finds out, he will divorce me," she said.

While the aftershocks of the opposition to the Shah Bano case continue to haunt Muslim women in the form of the Muslim Women's bill, as an Indian Muslim woman and a student of Islamic feminism and Human Rights Law I am amazed that little has changed since 1985 as far as the involvement of an organisation of your repute in matters concerning rights of Muslim women in India is concerned. Fully aware of the fear of many, including me, of mistaking the demand of codification with that of a demand of unification, I believed that educated members of the board would stand for and with Shayara Bano and her gender and demand that 'Triple Talaq' needed to be banned, made unlawful!

Muslim women are expected to live and abide by religious norms and their conformity to religious values is viewed as a basis of judging the identity of their community as a whole, as discussed by Zoya Hassan in her book, *Forging Identities: Gender, Communities and the State in India*. More often than not, they are discriminated against by patriarchal codes of religious laws and expected not to rise against the status quo in the name of protecting community identity. This community identity has emerged as a formidable force and what is evident today is a tension between two fronts: the male dominated Muslim leadership's desire to ensure that rights remain in the domain of a 'collective communal existence' and not a 'function of democratic citizenship' on one hand, and the demand for rights and justice for women on the other. Thus, in the wake of the rising political right and communal tensions and lynchings, the uncodified Muslim Personal Law in India – which deals with issues such as marriage, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, succession, adoption and custody of children – has become a vital symbol of minority identity, the defense of which – right from the overturning of the Shah Bano judgement – has resulted in the subordination of Muslim women in India to the perceived interests of the Muslim community. The tussle between enactment of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by the political right, governing heterogeneous communities as one, on one hand, and the insistence on maintenance of status quo, fearing the loss of their religious identity, by male leaders of the religious minorities on the other, has left Muslim women as the worst affected.

Shayara Bano, like her predecessor, Shah Bano has approached the apex court demanding the protection of a right which is not only constitutionally guaranteed to her, but for those opposing her, including the AIMPLB, it is imperative to know that her demand is not Unislamic at all. The board which claims to be the protector of Muslim Personal law (MPL) in India, and which is now going to be party to the case and contest her claim, should have done enough earlier to ensure that women like Shayara did not have to face what they are facing in the first place. Your claim that Muslims are content with the Shariah as it is practiced in India today has no basis, with no data to prove this claim. On the contrary, the Bhartiya Muslim Mahila Andolan's (BMMA) study, under the leadership of its founders Zakia Soman and Dr Noorjehan Safia Niaz, covering 4,500 women across ten Indian states is proof enough that Indian Muslim women are demanding a codification of the largely uncodified body of Muslim laws in India. With over 80% respondents saying there needs to be a reform in the current MPL, over 75% also believed that the age of marriage for girls should not be on attainment of puberty but should be eighteen years and above, contrary to what you have been supporting. Over 80% of those surveyed were of the opinion that adoption should be made legal under MPL. Organisations like BMMA are also oblivious to the fact that their demand for reforms may be wrongly misappropriated by the political right, the ruling BJP, and thus is very vocal in clarifying that codification in no way is a demand for UCC. For instance, while the study shows that out of all the women surveyed, 92.1% were in favour of a total ban on the 'Triple Talaq/oral divorce', the solution suggested was in the form of 'Talaq-e-Ahsan' to be the alternative, with majority of those surveyed wanting arbitration to be mandatory before divorce.

If the divorce to Shayara Bano is declared illegal, will it be a defeat for the community? Or is the worry more about Muslim men not being able to unilaterally divorce their wives as and when they wish to?

BMMA, in its draft Muslim Family Act calls for a complete ban on 'Triple Talaq' (Oral repudiation of marriage by merely pronouncement of the term 'Talaq' or divorce thrice by the husband) and calls for only the 'Talaq-e-Ahsan' method of divorce. I have had the chance to compile case studies of women from across the country who have been divorced unilaterally by their husbands, sometimes even on the phone and thus am aware of ground realities of this evil myself. BMMA seeks a complete ban

## An Open Letter to the All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Divorce Laws

on 'Triple Talaq' and provide relief to specially women belonging to poor economic backgrounds. You at the AIMPLB on the other hand, refuse to take a firm stand on the issue. Thus, while you recommend the 'Talaq-e-Ahsan' method described above, in your model '*Nikahnama*', the husband is 'instructed' to merely 'avoid' using the 'Triple Talaq' method of divorce. The board insists that the 'Triple Talaq' method is not a legal evil but merely a social one and hence does not call for a complete ban.

Maintenance of status quo in the name of not interfering in the 'divine', even though the *Shariah* as practiced in India is man-made law, has been the stand taken by the AIMPLB whenever confronted by issues which directly affect Indian Muslim women. Women organisations like BMMA among others have been extremely vocal in their stand on Muslim women rights and when one compares their work with all male led organisations like yourself in furthering the rights of Muslim women, there is little doubt as to who should lead the movement for reform in the Muslim community.

Please stand with the aggrieved, not against them.

Sincerely,

*Mariya Salim*

An Indian Muslim Woman standing firmly in solidarity with Shayara and her cause.  
<http://thewire.in/35547/an-open-letter-to-the-all-india-muslim-personal-law-board/>

Love Poem (By Smita Vir Tyagi)

*(Taken from the publication: Desilicious. Available at the SAWCC library)*

firm walled chest  
pressed into her back  
face fanning her nape,  
stray hair lightly rising  
to the rhythm of breath.  
solid,  
gentle on her chest;  
a length of leg curved behind hers

thigh to thigh, knee to knee  
foot curled into smaller foot,  
two 's's snuggled into shape

deeply restful,  
quiet, unmoving,  
crisp, crimped sheet  
telling the story of sleep.



## Let's Talk About Sex

Each month we will be including content about sexual health in the bulletin. If you have specific areas of interest or questions email the SAY collective at [sawccyouth@gmail.com](mailto:sawccyouth@gmail.com) and we will try to accommodate as many requests as possible!

This month: **CONDOM COMEBACKS**

*(Adapted from the Head and Hands Sense Project Peer Education Training Manual, with input from TeenTalk MB)*

Q – Don't you trust me?

A – Yep, I trust you not to put us at risk for infection.

A – I do trust you, but either of us could be infected and not know about it. It would be much easier for me to relax and enjoy myself if I didn't have to think about HIV or other STIs.

Q – You were carrying a condom with you? You were planning to seduce me!

A – You're right! Just call me safety boy /safety girl . . . always ready for action.

A – I always carry one with me, just in case, because you never know what could happen.

Q – I can't feel a thing when I wear a condom.

A – Well you won't be feeling MY thing without a condom!

A – Move over here, sexy, and I'll make sure you feel something.

Q – C'mon, I know I'm clean. I haven't had sex with anyone for months.

A – Without a condom I won't be helping you change that.

A – You can't know that you're STI free unless you've been tested at a clinic.

Q – Condoms are uncomfortable and tight.

A – They blow up to the size of my head. You're not that big.

A – So is delivering a baby.

Q – That's insulting! Do you think I'm a diseased dirtbag?

A – Nope, that's not what I meant. But do you know how common STIs are? I just don't want to take any chances.

A – That's not what I said or implied. These viruses don't care how many lovers you've had. They just want a way inside your body. I don't have sex without condoms so I won't have to deal with them.

Q – Condoms kill the spontaneity.

A – So does this argument. I don't do penetration without a condom and lube, end of discussion.

A – It doesn't have to be that way. I've got a condom right here in my pocket (nightstand drawer, fishbowl on the shelf, bin by the bar) and the lube comes in these handy individual use packages. We're ready to go!

Q – Just this once!

A – Once is all it takes.

A – The risk just isn't worth it to me.

## Let's talk about Sex

Q – I'm a virgin.

A – I'm not. This way we'll both be protected.

Q – I don't have a condom with me.

A – I do.

A – I guess we'll have to postpone until we get some!

Q – I won't have sex with you if you're going to use a condom.

A – Fine, there are plenty of people who will.

A – Well, why don't we have sex some way that's safe without it — get your hands involved, use your imagination!

\*\*\*\*Come visit the SEX Box at SAWCC in the Youth Space. We have lots of literature as well as a variety of condoms (internal and external) and lube\*\*\*\*

## Hillary Clinton's Nomination: A Victory for White Feminism

June 8, 2016 • Jessie Daniels

Hillary Rodham Clinton is the presumptive Democratic nominee for President of the United States. This achievement is being heralded as a victory because she has broken the glass ceiling for all women. But her victory is really a win for white feminism. Clinton's campaign is a boon to white feminists who want to see themselves represented in the highest office in the US and want to read into that a symbol of progress for all women, but what has gone mostly unacknowledged is that the group who benefits most from her candidacy is white women. It is white women who will benefit most from a Clinton presidency.

Indeed, if her inner circle of 2016 campaign advisors is any indication of who she will appoint once in office, it is mostly white men, a few white women, and one or two women of color that she will bring with her.

Some people on the left have critiqued her corporate-themed version of feminism, including just some of this run-down on Clinton's résumé to date (which I mentioned when she announced):

Despite trumpeting her work on behalf of "mothers and children," she and her husband worked to reduce federal assistance to women and children living in poverty. In her book, *Living History*, Clinton touts her role: "*By the time Bill and I left the White House, welfare rolls had dropped 60 percent.*" This 60% drop was not due to a 60% decrease in poverty. Instead, it was a reduction in federal benefits to those living in poverty, many of them working poor, like those employed at Wal-Mart.

Clinton sat on the board of Wal-Mart between 1986 and 1992, where she says she learned a lot from Sam Walton, and she remained silent while the corporation fought the unionization of its workers.

In Michelle Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow*, she notes that it was Hillary Clinton who lobbied Congress to expand the drug war and mass incarceration in ways that we continue to live with today, and that have a significantly more harmful impact on black and brown people than white people. According to The Drug Policy Alliance, people of color are much more likely to be stopped, searched, arrested, convicted, harshly sentenced and saddled with a lifelong criminal record due to being unfairly targeted for drug law violations. Even though white people and people of color use drugs at about the same rates, it is black and brown people's bodies that continue to fuel the machine of mass incarceration.

As Secretary of State, Clinton left a legacy that included both a hawkish inclination to recommend the use of military force coupled with "turning the state department into a machine for promoting U.S. business." This does not bode well for black and brown people in other parts of the world, since the US is not likely to attack Western Europe under a (second) Clinton presidency, but some region of the world with people who do not have light-colored skin tones.

## Hillary Clinton's Nomination: A Victory for White Feminism (con't)

As author Naomi Klein noted last night on Twitter, Hillary Clinton is a plutocrat and there's little joy in her victory for those who are critical of the damaging elite interests she represents.

And, indeed, the presumptive nominee for the Republican party is an overt, vulgar racist who is appealing to disturbingly wide swaths of the American populace. But note how whiteness operates here: the overt racism of Trump is upstaged by the white feminism of Hillary, in NY Daily News covers and in headlines throughout the news cycle, and we're all expected to cheer. In large measure, it's Trump's style that so many on the right are drawn to and so many on the left are put off by. When was the last time you heard "vulgar" as a term discussed by the mainstream press?)

Here in the US, we prefer our racism to be less vulgar, hidden in the passive voice of public policy, and administered politely by a white woman.

Hillary Clinton's form of feminism is the latest iteration in a long history of similarly situated white women here in the US and within colonialism, as I've chronicled in the trouble with white feminism series. Her presidency may, in fact, be better for the US than a Trump presidency. It's hard to argue otherwise. But make no mistake: Hillary Clinton's presidency will not decenter whiteness any more than a Trump presidency would.

Hillary Clinton's nomination as the democratic party candidate represents is a victory for white women and a particular kind of white feminism that universalizes white women's experience. If that's what you're celebrating, then have the clarity to acknowledge that. If you're voting for Hillary, then acknowledge that you're voting for her hawkish war record, her Wal-Mart board membership, her dumping people off of welfare rolls, her fondness for incarceration as a solution to social problems she helped create, her war on drugs. Just don't ask me to celebrate – or vote – with you. This is the worst of all possible worlds, and the choice between Trump's vulgar, overt racism and Clinton's polite, public policy racism is no choice at all.

[www.racismreview.com/blog/2016/06/08/hillary-victory-white-feminism/](http://www.racismreview.com/blog/2016/06/08/hillary-victory-white-feminism/)

## LOOKING AT POVERTY AS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

**Basic income: New life for an old idea**

*A combination of economic uncertainty and political possibility is giving new life to an old policy idea*

By Solomon Israel, CBC News Posted: Mar 09, 2016

In Ottawa, a federal MP is [pushing for government research on the subject](#). Ontario's provincial budget announced a pilot program to try it out. In Quebec, a cabinet minister has been assigned to study the topic.

The mayors of Calgary and Edmonton are both on board. And the Manitoba Liberals [are promising their own trial](#) if they win the April 19 provincial election. Basic income is capturing political imaginations in Canada.

Also known as guaranteed minimum income, universal income, guaranteed annual income, or a negative income tax, basic income is a social policy that would supplant various welfare programs by providing a baseline amount of money to all citizens, regardless of whether they work or meet a means test.

The idea is far from new, and it has even been tried in Canada before, [in the town of Dauphin, Man.](#), during the 1970s. Google Trends, which tracks the volume of inquiries on the Google search engine, shows [an increased number of searches for "basic income"](#) and related terms in the past three years — and especially in recent months.

A world without guarantees

Evelyn Forget, a professor with the department of community health services at the University of Manitoba who researched the Dauphin experiment, recently testified before federal pre-budget hearings on the topic of basic income. She says the idea's resurgent popularity may have to do with an uncertain global economy.

"I think we've seen a huge increase in precarious employment," says Forget. "Looking forward, I think people are concerned about increasing mechanization of jobs ... I think part of it is the need to set up social programs for a very different kind of labour force than existed in the past."

Dissatisfaction with the way current welfare programs are administered might also be leading to renewed interest in basic in-

## LOOKING AT POVERTY AS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION (con't)

come, says Forget.

"The nice thing about a guaranteed income is ... it offers to low-income families the same kind of privacy that the rest of us take for granted when we fill out our income tax or interact with the system in one way or another."

Advocates of a basic income say it could be more effective at addressing poverty than current welfare programs. (Jonathan Hayward/The Canadian Press)

Former senator Hugh Segal says he has been interested in basic income since 1969, when he heard about the idea at a Conservative Party policy conference.

He agrees that the idea has been resurgent in the public consciousness lately, citing "the need to do something different and better" than current poverty-reduction efforts, which he describes as "freezing people in poverty, not liberating them from poverty."

Primarily, Segal believes a renewed understanding of demographics is behind the new rise of basic income.

"People are looking at the various demographic and other pressures on the healthcare system," says Segal, now master at Massey College in Toronto. "Dealing with poverty is one way to take some of the pressures off that system."

New government, new policies

A new government might be another reason that people are willing to entertain the basic income idea. At the party's 2014 policy convention, the federal Liberal Party adopted [a resolution to create a basic annual income](#). Liberal-appointed Senator Art Eggleton recently put forward a motion calling on the federal government to sponsor a pilot project to study the idea.

"Given the past federal election, you see a completely different mood in Canada now," says Basic Income Canada Network chair Sheila Regehr, whose organization advocates for a basic income.

"I think a lot of people have been interested, but lying low — and it's just bubbling up now, all over."

Regehr says an increasing number of people have declared their support for basic income via the Basic Income Canada Network website recently. She's also seen more interest from potential volunteers.

Not just politicians

It's not just politicians and policy wonks who are interested in basic income. The idea has also found traction among the tech crowd, in Silicon Valley as well as closer to Canada.

Paul Vallée is the founder and CEO of Ottawa-based Pythian, an IT management firm. He also sits on the board of the Basic Income Canada Network, and advocates for the policy. He says his peers in the tech world are particularly keen on basic income. "Anybody who's involved in computer science or information technology at all is essentially in the business of replacing people with software," says Vallée. "I want to feel like my work is building towards a future vision for our society that is positive and constructive."

Charles Lammam, director of fiscal policy at the Fraser Institute, co-authored a paper highlighting some of the practical challenges of implementing a basic income program. Lammam says the idea of basic income appeals to players across the political spectrum. But, he warns, that may be because it's still a nebulous idea — so it's easy for thinkers of all political stripes to imagine the program structured in a way they like.

"Part of the reason for why there is agreement is that people don't spend too much time going into the details of what they mean." [www.cbc.ca/news/business/basic-income-interest-1.3479079](http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/basic-income-interest-1.3479079)

**[SAWCC will be hosting an information session on a basic guaranteed income proposal put together by a coalition of Québec anti-poverty groups. Watch upcoming *Bulletins* for details.]**



## SAWCC PRESENTS ON INTERSECTIONALITY TO I'R

Our Youth Program Co-coordinators, Naila Alidina and Harleen Bhogal, did a magnificent presentation on "Intersectionality" at the panel at I'R (le regroupement des centres des femmes du Québec) AGM on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June. SAWCC, who is a member of I'R had been invited to make this presentation. I'R has been struggling with this issue for a long time. Member women's centres, particularly in the regions of Québec, where the populations are more ethnically homogeneous have not been able to understand as well the need for an intersectional approach to feminism. I'R has been working to ensure that all the member women's centres get a better understanding of this. And in this connection, SAWCC as a minority women's centre in Québec had been invited to present.

Harleen and Naila were very much appreciated and applauded by the 300-400 participants from Montreal and the regions. Both of them did a very good job in conveying our message to all. Many among the audience requested them to send their text to them so that they can use it for reference. They both made us proud with their presentation as well as the way they answered the questions, despite the fact that they both felt a bit nervous, as non mother tongue French speakers, in an almost 100% francophone environment.

### I'R presentation notes

Following are the general notes that were used to respond to questions at the panel presentation at le regroupement des centres des femmes du Québec.

#### Présentation

##### **Presenter son interpretation de l'approche intersectionnelle (ou ce qui pour elle est plus avantageux pour les femmes)**

Recognizing the ways in which we each experience the world is coloured by the various parts of our respective identities.

Lorsque nous parlons de l'intersectionnalité, nous parlons de savoir comment toutes nos formes d'oppression et de privilège travaillent ensemble, pas séparément, pour former notre expérience. Notre race, l'ethnie, le sexe, l'appartenance religieuse, pays d'origine, langues parlées et langue maternelle, l'orientation sexuelle, la classe socio-économique, et de la capacité et de l'incapacité, toutes nos identités travaillent ensemble pour façonner l'expérience unique de chaque personne. Quand on parle de l'oppression, cela signifie que, par exemple, une femme qui est musulmane pakistanaise, ne connaît pas le sexisme et le racisme différemment ou pièce par pièce, mais elle est victime de discrimination parce que sa féminité, sa religion et sa race sont tous travaillent ensemble pour créer un genre très particulier d'oppression dans notre société

The example of the term honour violence is an important one. The term is used very loosely to describe many instances of violence that occurs in south asian communities. It generalises and erases the particularities of each person's experience. We often see this occur. In our communities there is a recognized silence around difficult topics such as violence, but there is an added difficulty of living in places where we also struggle with the language, where we also struggle because we experience violence at the hands of the state. Using the term honour violence is an example of this violence that further oppresses women and silences their experiences. It erases their experiences.

L'exemple de la violence d'honneur terme est important. Le terme est utilisé de façon très lâche pour décrire de nombreux cas de violence qui se produit dans tous les communautés, c'est utilisé par des avocats, les travailleuses sociales, les procureurs, les profs, les psychoéducatrices, et plus en plus quand on parle en particulier des communautés d'Asie du Sud. Il généralise et efface les particularités d'expériences de chaque personne. Souvent, nous voyons cela se produit. Dans nos communautés il y a un silence autour de sujets difficiles reconnu: tels que la violence, mais il y a une difficulté supplémentaire de vivre dans des endroits où nous luttons avec les difficultés de langage, où nous luttons et vivons la violence aux mains de l'État. Utilisation de la violence d'honneur terme est un exemple de violence qui opprime les femmes et silence leurs expériences. Ils effacent leurs expériences et se compliquent comment elles vont demander et recevoir les services qui ne sont pas encore violentes, et qui sont égales.

Intersectionnalité n'est plus un débat. Ce n'est pas un concept nouveau, et en fait, l'intersectionnalité est la raison pour laquelle notre centre existe, et existe depuis 35 ans. L'oppression que nos femmes sont confrontées est particulière à toutes leurs identités et donc leurs besoins sont différents. On ne parle pas "olympics d'oppression", mais plutôt de comprendre que si votre féminisme est pas anti-raciste, anti-colonial, etc, votre féminisme exclut les groupes de femmes dans notre société.

**Expliquer brièvement si selon elle, cette approche favorise la division du “Nous femmes” (categorisation ou hiérarchisation entre les femmes)**

Not at all. It brings a broader understanding of diverse experiences and allows us to ensure that spaces are safe and representative of the diversity in the feminist movement.

En lisant cette question on a pensé que c'était une blague. Ce n'est pas la façon de comprendre l'intersectionnalité! La hiérarchisation entre les femmes existe déjà. Il y a un grand écart salariale pour entre les femmes Latina et les femmes qui sont pas Latina. On peut voir l'écart salarial entre les femmes noir et Aborigène et les femmes blanches. On peut regarder combien des positions au parlement sont données à les femmes de couleur. Comment est-ce que on traite le statut de la citoyenneté à des personnes de couleur. On peut parler de la violence. Les femmes de couleur, les femmes qui ne sont pas hétérosexuelle, les femmes trans, et les femmes handicapées expérience de plus de violence.

La société a déjà créé une hiérarchisation entre les femmes, et pour comprendre cette réalité notre féminisme doit donner l'espace aux femmes qui sont encore plus marginalisées par le racisme, homophobie, islamophobie, etc. Ça c'est une approche intersectionnelle, et si on ne donne pas cette espace, on n'est pas en traine d'être inclusif, mais on va effacer les expériences et identités des femmes dans nos mouvements. L'intersectionnalité, alors, donne plus de compréhension sur comment créer des programmes et approches qui sont représentatif de la diversité dans le mouvement féministe.

**Expliquer brièvement si cette approche conduit à une secondarisation de la lutte au patriarcat parmi toutes les oppressions vécues par les femmes**

No. Patriarchy manifests in different ways and if we don't recognize the various manifestations as they relate to various oppressions we experience then we aren't really fighting patriarchy, we are prioritizing the oppressions of some women over others and that's oppressive in itself (THIS is what causes the 'hiérarchisation entre les femmes'). When one person's experience is not taken into consideration, when the experiences of a majority are used to generalise.

Le patriarcat manifeste différemment et si nous ne reconnaissons pas ces différentes manifestations et la connexion entre l'oppression des tous les femmes, alors on nous ne combattons pas vraiment le patriarcat, mais seulement le sexisme contre les groupes de femmes sélectionnées, et comme ça on donne la priorité à certaines femmes et pas des autres. On ne peut pas généraliser les expériences. C'est cette priorisation qui est oppressif, et crée la 'hiérarchisation entre les femmes'.

**Dans votre mot de la fin, on vous demande ce qui d'après vous (suite à l'échange auquel vous aurez participé) qu'elles devraient être la ou les prochaines étapes pour poursuivre la réflexion dans notre réseau.**

- Adopter une base d'unité qui contient une acknowledgement d'une approche intersectionnelle, une reconnaissance de l'importance de reconnaître que le mouvement féministe doit prendre en considération une multitude d'expériences si le mouvement est vraiment pour toutes les femmes.
- Veiller à ce que toutes les voix sont offertes l'espace et le temps approprié
- Prioriser conversations (et critiques) autour de l'intersectionnalité pour montrer les nombreuses années où ce dialogue n'était pas présente.
- Parlez des conséquences de ne pas tenir une approche intersectionnelle (l'aliénation, le manque de ressources appropriées ...)
- Donnez l'espace, de la voix et de ressources pour les femmes qui sont directement touchées par les problèmes sociales (ex. L'espace pour les femmes LGBTQ à parler et à lutter contre l'homophobie, l'espace pour les femmes de couleur pour la lutte contre le racisme, l'espace pour les femmes trans pour diriger les mouvements trans).
- Travailler de façon continue à rendre le mouvement féministe aussi accessible que possible à toutes les identités dans notre société.

## Welcome to summer camp!

This year's summer camp has begun! We would like to welcome our counsellors and counsellor in training: Ishini Fernando, Moonisha Gobinathan & Fatema Amirali. We're looking forward to a fun-filled summer!



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

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July 5—Info session on Tenant's rights (10:30AM)

July 12—Info session on Security in the metro (10:30AM)

July 19—Info session topic TBD

July 26—Info session on Children with special needs (10:30AM)

July 30—Annual picnic at Long Sault Beach

5 juillet—session d'information sur les droits du locataire (10h30)






12 juillet—session d'information sur la securite dans le metro (10h30)

19 juillet—session d'information sujet a determine (10h30)

26 juillet—session d'information sur les enfants avec des besoins speciales (10h30)

30 juillet—Pique-nique annuel au Plage Long Sault

## July 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 	27	28	29	30 
31						