



Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

Madeleine

Inside this issue:

Madeleine Parent	1
Centre Update	2,3
Barbaric Cultural Practices	3,4
14, As More Than Just A Number	4-7
Take Back the Night: Speech	5
Calendar	8

A swarming crowd in support of Chantal Daigle's decision to end her pregnancy surrounded Madeleine Parent as she stood in its midst on Parc Mont Royal and delivered a spirited address in support of Chantal Daigle's right to make her choice. That was the first time many members from the South Asian Women's Community Centre, then known as the South Asia Community Centre, who had joined in the march through the streets of Montreal to support Chantal Daigle's decision saw Madeleine in action. That was in 1989. The decision was rendered in favor of Chantal Daigle.

A number of years later in the mid-nineties, Madeleine Parent came to SAWCC. Madeleine had met Shree Mulay, our member, when Shree was the member-at-large on NAC (National Action Committee on the Status of Women) and it was through this friendship that Madeleine joined SAWCC.

Madeleine's personal mission was to bring organizations like ours into contact with and thus become a voice, sharing and shaping the women's movement in Quebec. She believed that we should not only be seen as immigrant women but as integral voices in the women's movement in Quebec. She arranged for Francoise David, at that time the President of the FFQ (Fédération des Femmes du Quebec), to come to SAWCC to meet the Executive Council and members who could attend that introductory meeting.

Madeleine never failed to attend SAWCC's general assemblies and when she was able and her calendar permitted she was always a very welcome presence at our many events and gatherings.

Madeleine was always very active in encouraging younger women to become a part of women's organizations. She realized that here lay the future of the movement.

We miss seeing her with us now but she never forgot the work SAWCC does and in her will left SAWCC a bequest to promote our work which she believed in firmly. We are most appreciative that Madeleine remembered us. She will always be remembered in our midst.

By Jenifer Chew

Madeline Parent was a feminist, labor activist and aboriginal activist among many other titles. While attending McGill university to completed her bachelors in Sociology, she began her fight for justice by becoming a part of a movement for bursaries for underprivileged children. Her fight continued as she tackled labor unions, politicians and fought hard for the rights of aboriginal women. Premier Maurice Duplessis carried a personal vendetta for Parent, arresting her five times.

Madeline Parent passed away the night of 11th March 2012, leaving behind a legacy of a fighter who knew how to make people understand the importance of Unions. Devoting her life to fighting social justice, she was dauntless in the face of authority, keeping her head high and accepting the consequence of her actions.



Qu',9en 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:

- adisun3@gmail.com
- Écrivez - nous à adisun3@gmail.com

CENTRE UPDATE



Centre Hours

Monday & Thursday 9am—9pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday– 9am-5pm

CLOSED from Dec 22-Jan 2

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) to coordinate a meeting!

Shout out to the babies at SAWCC!

We'd like to extend our appreciation to the babies who attend daycare at the centre for gracing us with their wonderful presence. We'd also like to thank Rukshana, Jacqueline, Christian and Sivanesam for their help over the past few months.

Job opportunity!

SAWCC is looking to hire a daycare worker for the upcoming session in January. If you have experience hanging out with babies, playing with teething toys and drawing elaborate modern and abstract art please send your CV and cover letter to mghazala@bellnet.ca by December 5th, 2014 at 5:00pm

Work schedule: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9-12PM (beginning January 6th to March 22nd, 2015) for a total of 9 hours per week, at \$11/hr



Info and call for volunteer English teachers

South Asian Women's Community Centre of Montreal needs volunteer female ESL teachers for small groups of recently arrived women from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, etc. Classes start on January 7.

The session starts January, 2015 and ends 22 March, 2015.

Level One is held 9:30--noon, Monday/Wednesday/Thursday.

Level Two is held 12:30--3 PM, also Monday/Wednesday/Thursday.

Whether you choose to volunteer your time to one class per week or towards more than one, a regular commit-



December 6 commemoration

Join SAWCC as we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the events of December 6, 1989.

The commemoration is organized by L'R and FFQ and will start at 2:00 p.m and end Metro Cote des Neiges, corner Queen Mary and Avenue Gatineau) at 2:45 p.m. There will be speeches from L'R, FFQ and songs.

At 2:45 there will be a march towards the Mont-Royal Chalet and there will be STM shuttle buses available for the march.

At 4:00 p.m. a vigil is organized by the Mobilisation committee of the 25 anniversary of the Polytechnique massacre. There will be speeches from the family members and friends of the victims as well as politicians like Pauline Marois and Manon Massé.



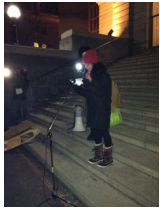
6e Édition des 12 Jours d'Action et 25e de la Tuerie de Polytechnique

La FFQ se prépare avec le comité des 12 jours à la 6e édition des 12 jours d'action pour l'élimination de la violence envers les femmes. Cette campagne sera marquée cette année par les 25 ans de la tuerie de Polytechnique. En plus d'organiser une commémoration, le 6 décembre 2014, la FFQ organise conjointement avec des professeures et des étudiantes de l'Université de Montréal et avec le soutien de l'Institut de recherche et d'études féministes (IREF) et l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir, une journée de réflexion le 28 novembre.

For more info: <http://www.ffq.qc.ca/2014/09/6e-edition-12-jours-daction-pour-lelimination/>

Take Back the Night

Take back the night is an annual event that speaks for women's rights, focusing on women's safety in society. This year, the event was held at Norman Bethune square near Concordia University. The night kicked off with speeches from women of various organizations around Montreal and climaxed with a passionate



speech from the organizers themselves, getting everybody in the spirit to march through the streets of Montreal despite the chilly weather. The crowd of ralliers were mainly students from Concordia and McGill, marching through the streets of Montreal chanting bold and empowering slogans. The march through the streets a claim to the right a woman should already posses; the right to safety in her environment. The rally ended at McGill university, following more speeches and some hot chocolate. The event is seeing its third year now in Montreal, and will hopefully continue in the upcoming years.



Our Condolences

SAWCC extends our deepest sympathies to Ghleema, Madhu and family for the loss of their daughter Alissar Karam. Alissar passed away on November 11, 2014, at the age of 19. Daughter of Gleema Nambiar and Georges Emile Karam, Alissar will also be sadly missed by her brothers, Thaër and Amilqar, her grandmothers Mona and Madhu, her uncles Naji and Gopal and aunt Myrna, along with many other dear relatives from India, Syria and friends around the world. The family received condolences at St-George Antiochian Orthodox Church, where the funeral was also held on Saturday November 15.

SAWCC will be closed for holidays, Christmas and New Year, from 22 December (2014) to 2 January (2015) inclusively.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Barbaric Cultural Practices

From barbaric cultural practices and honour killings to the long gun registry, the feds are turning their backs on women trapped in dangerous situations

November 12, 2014

I had to laugh last week when Chris Alexander, Stephen Harper's minister of citizenship and immigration, barked something about "barbaric acts" being imported into Canada.

Not because I found his proposed Zero Tolerance For Barbaric Cultural Practices Act funny, although it may well top the list of Orwellian names for legislation introduced by the Conservatives.

It's because murdering a woman, whether she didn't have supper on the table after he was out drinking with the boys, whether she talked back, whether she packed up the kids and left, is already against the law in Canada.

Statistics show that these are among the reasons most women who are killed by their partners. They disobeyed. They disrespected. They departed. They "dishonoured."

Femicide is femicide whether you're brown or white.

But not to this government, which sees so-called "honour killings" as somehow different from the 70 or so annual murders of women by their partners here every year. In fact, this is a government not particularly open to women fleeing from gender violence in their home countries.

As Alexander, who as recently as September had deported at least two women into jeopardy, one with a Canadian born daughter, thundered, "With this bill, we would be standing up for immigrant women who have come to Canada for a better life."

Tell that to Jamila Bibi, 63, in Canada since 2006 after escaping accusations of adultery, who was returned to Pakistan where she is now in hiding from what she fears is death by stoning. Or to Winifred Agimelen and her children, who were sent back to

Nigeria, where Boko Haram and genital mutilation await her daughters.

These and other deportations are clear violations of the principle of “non-refoulement,” the so-called cornerstone of asylum and international refugee law. It states that no member country of the UN should send refugees back to countries where they face persecution, danger and/or the loss of human rights.

Not that the Conservatives’ proposed legislation comes as a complete surprise. Former immigration minister Jason Kenney slipped dire warnings about “honour killings,” female genital mutilation and “barbaric cultural acts” into the official citizenship guide, while at the same time erasing feminism, unions and LGBT rights from descriptions of our own homegrown cultural practices.

And last year, Rona Ambrose, then minister for the status of women, marked International Women’s Week by following the same script.

“We have been very clear: so-called ‘honour’ killings are barbaric, and like all family homicides, represent a serious violation of Canadian laws,” she said. “We are committed to ending violence against women and girls in all its forms.”

Except they aren’t.

“The federal government does not have either a stand alone policy on intimate partner violence or sexual assault,” noted the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) in a major report last year. “Nor does the federal government have a national action plan to address violence against women. A comprehensive total for federal spending is not possible [to ascertain]... and some expenditures are simply not detailed enough to determine if a particular project or grant is aimed at addressing violence against women.”

(Unsurprisingly, the CCPA is one of the progressive organizations with charitable status in Canada that is getting a going over by Canada Revenue Agency auditors.)

Ever since it came to power, the Harper government has weakened and impoverished resources for women trapped in dangerous situations. There’s no state supported day care or moves toward pay equity to help a woman get on her feet. And shelters are overcrowded and underfunded.

Femicides typically occur when battered women attempt to get away. That’s when they need protection and legal help.

But there’s not a lot to be had any more.

So – bang! – honour crime. White or brown, it amounts to the same thing.

And, speaking of guns, remember that this is the government that abolished the long gun registry, the one the RCMP and Canada’s police chiefs pleaded to maintain – and that likely kept many women alive.

According to a comprehensive RCMP report on the registry, rural women are at particular risk: “For some abused women, threats with hunting rifles was a part of the everyday life, and these firearms played a role in creating a climate of control and intimidation. This ranged from dealing with their partner’s frequent threats of suicide, damage to property or threats to harm her, the children or the pets/farm animals if she should ever leave.”

But dumping the registry was Job One for the Cons.

That despite how, in the wake of the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre of women in Montreal, tightened gun legislation led to the biggest drop in femicides in history. According to StatsCan, the rate plummeted from just over 10 per million population in 1990 to just below six in 1998.

As for being “committed to ending violence against women and girls in all its forms,” there’s that matter of 1,200 murdered and missing indigenous women and girls that the Cons continue to overlook – and the just passed Protection Of Communities And Exploited Persons Act, which strips sex workers of the right to take every precaution to protect themselves from predators. So, yeah, barbaric cultural practices. We don’t need to import them; we have them to spare.

Antonia Zerbisias is an award-winning Canadian journalist. She has been a columnist, reporter and TV host for both the Toronto Star and CBC-TV news and current affairs.

by Antonia Zerbisias

nowtoronto.com

14, As More Than Just a Number

For Genevieve Bergeron, 21

Because you bled one week of every month.
Because you wanted to build bridges and towers.
Because you weren’t at home dusting the den.
Because, for no reason.
Because “The gunman suffered a brutal upbringing”
Because the world has gone mad, gone sad.
Because you were there.

For Helene Colgan, 23

At 5:30, the paper says,
on Dec. 6
he began to roam the halls

hunting humans
with two ammunition belts
criss crossed on his chest;
a semi-automatic,
and a knife
and his eyes – cold
and his hand – steady
And in the paper they quote,
“It was just like Rambo.”
But what would you say, Helene,
if you could say?
Probably just
that it wasn’t fair;
that Rambo
only shot
the bad guys;

that your gunman
was shorter,
much scrawnier,
and no kind of hero.

For Nathalie Croteau, 23

When he spat:
“feminists,”
like a dirty taste
from his mouth
you were the only one who said
‘no’

Take Back the Night : Speech

I took the night bus for the first time recently. Alone. My friend reassured me that she had taken the night bus by herself before, and well...she survived. I would too. At least, I hoped. I was scared beyond belief. Counting the male to female ratio on the bus. Me, one, against seven or eight including the bus driver. The odds were not looking good. You know the moment you suddenly turn extremely religious? I was there.

The story ends with me getting home safe. Nothing happened. I send my usual "I am home" text to my friend, which is essentially me confirming that I am alive. I survived. This is what shocked me. I realized that I live in a society in which I needed to confirm my existence every time I come home late. I had never questioned this before. I subconsciously accepted that it was the normal thing to do. That violence was inevitable and I had to be prepared for it.

I am joining you here today to question this. Why should violence against women be a fixed, "inevitable," entity? We need to challenge the views of society, of our parents, our families. By accepting the fear to travel alone and the fear of the night, we are accepting that gendered violence is unalterable. Perpetuating fear is in its way a form of violence. Women should not be taught to be afraid.

We need action. The government must not merely pass resolutions, but implement them. The South Asian Women's community center sees many cases of rape and abuse. The center now 33 years old, has produced several generations of women who have attended this event. And we have seen progress, but not enough. We must strive for more.

We must fight against the governments that racialize us and essentialize us, making us victims without agency and reducing us to groups of "barbaric cultural practices." That a woman cannot work on the streets of Montreal without feeling afraid is a barbaric situation! That our native sisters are subjected to violence and murder in Canada, while the governments do nothing about it; that is a barbaric situation!

Recently, students in Kolkata, India joined together to protest the assault on a student on university campus, which the authorities converted into a 'blame the victim' situation.

From Kolkata to Montreal we must recognize that this mindset should not be tolerated! Violence against women is not a fixed entity. It is one that can be changed. And today, we marched together to attest that we are not afraid. We WILL see change.

By Adithi Sundarakrishnan and Dolores Chew

You said, "We aren't.
Not the kind who protest
in the streets."
Probably your last words
Probably not quite true
Not the kind who protest in the streets
But in the classroom.
The kind who would challenge,
the kind who would speak up;
try to save thirteen women
and herself
when everyone else
had lost their words.
Brave Nathalie
in coffin #8.

For Barbara Daigneault, 22

Later, they talked about the men
and the guilt
He was smaller than me,
I could have jumped him.
Could have
Should have
Would have
Could have been the hero
Should have hit, kicked,
slugged him hard,
sprayed a fire extinguisher
in his eyes.

Would have, if only
I'd thought of it in time.
Could have bashed his teeth out
Should have thrown him through
the wall.

For Anne-Marie Edward, 21

21 is very young
only 17 + 4.
21 should be camping in the Gatineau
Backpacking, hitchhiking,
meeting the man of her dreams
21 drinks cold coffee and works
late into the morning, on drafts
of a paper
she really should have started
last month.

21 drives with her music
turned up loud
and worries where
she's going
with this life of hers
and whether or not
she can pay off
the phone bill
21 thinks often of a house
in a quiet neighbourhood
and a wedding dress

with a nice head piece
or veil
not too fancy,
and not too soon,
but not so very far off either.

For Maud Haviernick, 31

(Quotes taken from the Ottawa
Citizen)
"The man who killed 14 women
on Wednesday had trouble relat-
ing to women and
couldn't
keep a steady relationship."
"No way,"
you might say.
"Well, then... it's okay.
Was he beaten as a child?
In high school, was he wild?
Was he reckless? Was he tough?
Did he just need more love?
Or was he bullied?
Did they taunt him?

Did they taunt him?
 Did they pants him?
 Did they punch him?
 Did his mother make him bad?
 Was she absent? Was his dad?
 And how is it no one saw it?

no one caught it?
 no one thought it?"

"He had difficulties in expressing his need to love and be loved. He was a very troubled individual, who suffered a brutal upbringing."

"No way,"
 you might say,
 "well then...
 it's okay."

For Maryse Leclair, 23

It didn't seem any different
 when his alarm went off
 at 6:30
 like every morning
 just like it does
 every morning
 And when your father
 read the newspaper,
 put on his uniform-
 when he secured his gun
 in the leather holster,
 how was he to know
 he would walk
 through his daughter's blood
 towards her killer
 lying shot through the head
 in a third floor classroom?
 All in a days work.
 All in a days work.
 All in a days work.
 Not today.

For Anne-Marie Lemay, 27

You were just an Everywoman.
 Nothing personal, Anne-Marie.
 You were Everywoman
 who turned her back,
 Everywoman who wouldn't let him
 buy her a drink,
 take her home,
 take her in his arms.
 Everywoman on the street
 wearing a business suit
 and heels
 Each one he thought
 was laughing at him.
 If he'd known you were one woman
 One woman who liked
 to ride her bicycle in the spring,
 who sometimes woke up
 late at night
 with cravings for sea food,
 who wore red
 Converse running shoes,
 who liked to bake
 and sometimes

liked to hike...
 But it was nothing personal,
 Anne-Marie

For Sonia Pelletier, 28

Your body was found underneath a cafeteria table,
 trying to hide
 just like you used to duck behind the sofa,
 conceal yourself in the closet
 with your feet in a pair of boots
 and a jacket wrapped tight around you
 Ready or not
 here I come
 like you used to hide your tooth brush
 so when eight thirty came
 and you wanted to stay up
 you could waste time
 searching,
 then ask for a glass of water,
 another kiss goodnight,
 one last hug.
 Exactly like they told you to do
 in event of an earthquake.
 "Sit in a doorway,"
 they said,
 "or under a table.
 While the floor shakes
 and the drywall cracks
 around you
 you should be safe there."

For Michelle Richard, 21

Sort of like grade school picks
 for baseball,
 or a dance with the boys on one side
 and the girls
 on the other.
 And for awhile you thought
 it was a joke,
 some trickster;
 some friend of someone's
 making an ass of himself
 because it was the last
 day before Christmas exams
 and time
 for some fun.

For Annie St-Arneault, 23

On Thursday night
 they brought in
 the maintenance crew
 to paint over the bullet
 holes;
 repair the walls and
 ceilings;
 scrub away the
 blood and bits.
 And Friday morning,
 were you to walk through,
 you'd never guess.
 You'd never even guess.

For Annie Turcotte, 21

Probably not how you imagined
 your funeral
 On an icy day with
 3000 plus in attendance
 And 14 hearses
 gliding past
 with white numbers on their sides
 and all in a row
 1 and 2, 3, 4
 And a sunken-cheeked woman on the
 street corner
 holding her daughter's hand
 and 5, 6,
 7, 8
 and the daughter not understanding
 9, 10, 11,
 and
 12
 13
 14
 saying to her mother,
 'Why are you crying,
 if you didn't even know them?'

For Barbara Marie Klueznick, 35

A three page letter,
 dated, 'Wednesday'
 signed, 'Marc'
 meant to explain
 meant to make it
 make sense
 and we could call him crazy,
 and try to forgive
 and we could call him 'full of hate,'
 and hate him right back
 and we could fall to the ground
 and cry ourselves to dehydration
 and we could start a candlelight vigil
 and we could be afraid
 and we could learn self defence
 and practice kicking a man in a marsh-
 mallow suit
 and yelling the word 'no'
 We could, and we will
 but it will never
 bring you back

For Maryse Laganiere, 35
and the flags flew
at half mast
and the city was in shock,
and the country
and the men
were afraid
for their lovers

wives
daughters
and the streets
were a little quieter
while your family
and your sisters
looked everywhere
for why's.

Taken from: <http://annahumphrey.com/blog/?p=161>



The South Asian Women's Community Centre's

Year End Party 2014



On Saturday December 13th, 2014
From 12pm - 4pm
At 419 St Roch (near Parc Metro)
Centre William Hingston
This event is a potluck -
people are welcome to bring a dish to share



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

33 years of sisterhood, strength, struggle and success 1981-2014

www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca

Dec 2- Session on Breast Cancer
(1030am- 12pm)

Dec 6- Commemoration day (2pm-
4pm)

Dec 9- Session on beauty tips
(1030am- 12pm)

Dec 13- Year End Party! (12pm-
4pm)

2 Déc- Session d'information sur le
cancer du sein (10h30—12h)

6 Déc- Commemoration de 25e de
la Tuerie de Polytechnique

9 Déc- Session d'information sur les
astuces de beauté (10h30—12h)

13 Déc- Fête annuelle de la fin d'an-
née (12h-16h)

Center is closed from Dec 22 to

Jan 2

Le centre sera fermée du Déc. 22 au

Jan 2

December 2014

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 			