

EDITORS' NOTE

New Research on Quebec

This special issue of the *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies* (JETS) showcases a range of new, rich interdisciplinary research focused on Quebec. Enclosed you will find four decidedly topical scholarly articles, and a pair of contributions from talented undergraduate students. This collective body of work emerged – following formal presentations, extended discussion, and multiple academic peer review – from the second annual Bishop's University-State University of New York College at Plattsburgh student-faculty “International and Domestic Colloquium on Quebec Studies.” The colloquium, jointly organized and convened by the Eastern Townships Resource Centre (Bishop's) and the Institute on Quebec Studies (SUNY Plattsburgh), was held on the Bishop's campus March 28-29, 2014, and featured thirteen essays, all committed to a fresh examination of Quebec issues.

Scholars and undergraduate students, drawn from Bishop's, SUNY Plattsburgh, Concordia and McGill Universities and the University of York, presented their work and received carefully crafted evaluative commentaries, the purpose of which was to constructively assist each and every colloquium participant in sharpening the focus of their final effort.

We are enormously pleased to now present, in this issue of JETS, the very best professional scholarship and undergraduate papers from the colloquium.

The initial contribution in this volume focuses on issues of central concern in Quebec to academics, practitioners, and the general public alike. Researched and written by Dr. Cheryl Gosselin and Ms. Amanda Pichette, this article examines and explains the pathways chosen by new immigrants seeking to successfully integrate into the English-speaking communities of Quebec (ESCQ). Utilizing what the authors identify as “multicultural common spaces,” this research study effectively demonstrates that the ESCQ – through a shared commitment of institutions and individual community leaders – facilitate the availability of these spaces by Anglophones in the province; spaces that are indeed crucial to nurturing and promoting Quebec identity and civic awareness. The ethnographic basis underpinning this study, based in part on direct interviews, squarely illustrates – given the prevailing challenges that newcomers encounter – the distinct need for multicultural common spaces.

Dr. Paul Zanazanian, in “*History is a Treasure Chest: Theorizing a Metaphorical Tool for Initiating Teachers to History and Opening up*

Possibilities of Change for English-Speaking Youth in Quebec,” presents his work with English-speaking youth in the history classrooms of Quebec schools. He explores the important, but often unanswered, question of how to instill a sense of civic engagement and individual pride in youth from minority populations. He has developed the pedagogical device of history as a *treasure chest* which he illustrates can be used by teachers to help Anglophone students understand their place in Quebec’s past and future society. Through the lens of a *treasure chest* metaphor, teachers can assist students in developing a critical and imaginative approach to history and perhaps foster intergroup dialogue between the two founding groups in Quebec.

Dr. Christopher Kirkey and Ms. Tierney Braden have embarked on an extensive study of a much loved, yet little researched (from an academic, as opposed to a journalistic perspective) Quebec product – ice cider. For approximately a year, the authors have been collecting studies and conducting interviews with producers, distributors and regulators of the industry. Their article entitled, “An Introduction to Ice Cider in Quebec: A Preliminary Overview,” examines the development and production of ice cider in Quebec and as well as a profile of the industry. This review is part of the authors’ forthcoming book in 2015, an effort that promises to be the most comprehensive scholarly examination yet conducted on Quebec ice cider.

Maxime Pelletier’s contribution to this volume of JETS offers a superb examination of (real and attempted) municipal political finance reform efforts in Quebec. Have smaller, more rational-sized political donations – designed to prevent the undue influence of large money contributions impacting electoral outcomes, and potentially the preferences, policies and decisions of elected officials – to candidates (and a few political parties), at a local level in the province, been realized? As Pelletier aptly demonstrates – drawing on a deep reservoir of insightful quantitative data on recent financial contributions – the real issue at stake is not legislative efforts designed to regulate the flow and amount of funding, but instead the stark reality that a statistically insignificant number of Quebecers (less than 1% of voters) actually contribute to municipal electoral races. Why is this the case? “Popular finance is plagued,” Pelletier argues (drawing on the scholarly literature on collective action), “by the fact that it’s very objective – that no single contribution can have a significant impact on the electoral process – creates a strong disincentive for voters to contribute.”

This special issue, we are pleased to note, also features two excellent papers from undergraduate students: Maigan Newson, who is currently a Sociology Honours student at Bishop’s University, and Donald Clermont, who is enrolled at State University of New York

in Plattsburgh (SUNY). In "Homeless in the Streets of Montréal: A Division of Capital and *Habitus*," Ms. Newson delves into the subject of homelessness in Quebec's largest city; Montréal. She examines the number of people who live on the streets, their material conditions and Montréal's commitment to providing shelter and services to the homeless population. The author then explains why certain individuals are likely to be homeless from the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of 'habitus', social and cultural capital. Ms. Newson argues that differences in habitus and capital, which are ways of living from the group perspective, the surrounding physical environment, access to cultural resources, availability of support networks and social status, determine the fate of a homeless individual and whether or not that person is able to successfully re-integrate into society.

Meanwhile, Mr. Clermont explores what is, perhaps, one of the most effervescence times in the history and politics of Quebec: the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s. The author, in his paper titled, "Literary Influences of Negritude and of Decolonization on Quebec during the Nineteen-Sixties," focuses his lens on two global intellectual and social movements during this time which were negritude and decolonization. Through the selected works of Michèle Lalonde, Paul Chamberland, and Gaston Miron, who draw on these movements to articulate their own literary directions, Mr. Clermont illustrates how these two influences motivated Quebecers to assert their national pride and forge a new identity based on their French language and culture.

As guest editors, we trust that you will thoroughly enjoy these scholarly research articles and undergraduate essays. The breadth and scope of original research is especially compelling. Support for the colloquium and this special issue of JETS – which also features a research note from ETRC Archivist, Jody Robinson – was generously provided by the Eastern Townships Resource Centre, the Institute on Quebec Studies, the Quebec Ministry of International Relations and La Francophonie, and the United States Department of Education. Our next Bishop's-SUNY Plattsburgh student-faculty colloquium is scheduled for late March 2015; the best works from that forum will be brought to you next fall.

Christopher Kirkey

Director of the Center for the Study of Canada
and Institute on Quebec Studies
State University of New York College at Plattsburgh

JETS Guest Editor

Cheryl Gosselin

Professor, Bishop's University

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