

E D U C A T I O N

FORUM

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light grey trench coat over a dark top and a bright pink scarf, stands outdoors in a park-like setting with trees in the background.

This
changes
everything

Talking climate change
with Naomi Klein

Is it time to rethink your life insurance coverage?



A new way to purchase life insurance.

- ✓ Our online tool is simple, secure, and easy to use.
- ✓ No medical exam required.
- ✓ Premiums as low as \$5.58 a month.

GET STARTED ONLINE.

Go to teacherslife.com or call 1-866-620-LIFE(5433).

Why Teachers Life?

- ✓ We're education community focused.
- ✓ Exclusive membership benefits.
- ✓ Manage your policy online.

Celebrating 75 years serving the education community.

TeachersLife[™]
Life is for living

Contents

36



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM

Articles

7 Can work be safe, when home isn't?

Domestic violence at work

By Suzette Clark

9 A happy 40th birthday to the Educators Financial Group!

The financial institution you never knew you owned

By Randy Banderob

11 Labour of love

How union members helped build Brock University

By Alison J. Rothwell

Features

14 The self-defeating contradictions of austerity/Les contradictions autodestructrices de l'austérité

By/par Kaylie Tiessen & Jim Stanford

20 This changes everything

By Nanci Henderson

24 From vision to practice

By Michael Young

28 Progressive media

By Jason Bremner

Departments

5 Openers/Mot de l'éditeur

By/par Randy Banderob

34 Showcase

By Margaret Mitchell

36 Beyond the classroom

By Ronda Allan

40 Forum picks

45 Last word/Mot de la fin

By/par Paul Elliott

Editor Randy Banderob **Managing Editor** Ronda Allan **Advertising Co-ordinator** Kristina Ferorelli **Copy Editor** Jocelyn Laurence **Translation** Catherine Poézévara and Diane Saint-Pierre **Art Direction and Design** Fresh Art & Design Inc. **Cover photography** Anya Chibis **Editorial Submissions** Unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, artwork, and materials sent on speculation should include ample postage on a self-addressed, stamped envelope **Member** Canadian Educational Press Association; Education Forum (ISSN 0840-9269) is indexed in the Canadian Education Index and available online in the Canadian Business & Current Affairs Database from Micromedia Ltd., 20 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2N8. Tel. 416-362-5211 **Publisher** Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario, www.osstf.on.ca. Published tri-annually. Advertising rates listed in CARD, on OSSTF/FEESO's website www.osstf.on.ca or available upon request **Business Manager** Pierre Côté **Advertising Office** Education Forum, 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Tel. 416-751-8300. Fax: 416-751-3394. GST 107800682. Although advertisements are screened as carefully as possible, acceptance of an advertisement does not imply OSSTF/FEESO endorsement of the product or service. Advertising contracts are subject to cancellation upon receipt of complaints from members **Subscription Rates** One school or calendar year (3 issues): \$15 + HST. Outside Canada: \$20. Single or back issues \$5 + HST. Outside Canada \$6. **Postmaster** Return undelivered copies to 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement No. 40012523. **Submissions** Education Forum, 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Tel. 416-751-8300, Toll free 1-800-267-7867; ronda.allan@osstf.ca.



Printed in Canada by union labour.



EDUCATION FORUM 3



Vesey's Bulbs

FUNDRAISING

EARN 0%
50
FROM EVERY
PURCHASE



- A SIMPLE PROGRAM YOU CAN USE EVERY YEAR
- YOU EARN **50%** ON **EVERY** SALE YOU MAKE
- ALL PRODUCTS ARE GUARANTEED
- AVAILABLE IN FRENCH & ENGLISH
- ALL SHIPPING IS FREE

"This was by far the best fundraiser I have found for our Nursery School. We will do it again and likely each year following! So pleased!"

Jenn Wylie - Durham Nursery School, Ontario

Call or click today to receive your **FREE** Information Kit & Supplies
1-800-363-7333 • www.veseys.com/fundraising

CANADA'S GREEN FUNDRAISER



Your magazine, your stories

Behind the pages at *Education Forum*

In my early twenties I worked at a number of small newspapers and was always surprised that I, as a 20-year-old with relatively little experience, could attend an event, interview a person of interest or even simply formulate an opinion on a subject and whatever I wrote would appear in print for everyone to read.

There were some hard lessons along the way. I once wrote a bloated 1,500-word article about a local retired nun who made oil paintings of the flowers in her garden and my editor made me hack it down to a reasonable 200 words. In 1987 I interviewed a Canadian band that had just cut its first EP and I submitted a fairly dismissive review of its music. You might have heard of The Tragically Hip. And I was once sent out in a blizzard to capture a last-minute picture of the weather before press time and all I could come up with was a shot of a young man riding a unicycle in the snow. I still remember the look of disappointment on my editor's face.

Although I soon left journalism for teaching, I have never lost my interest in storytelling. In this issue of *Education Forum* I became much more involved in the production of some of the stories and in doing so rekindled my old excitement for reporting and writing. Because this magazine is written mostly by our own members, I thought I'd share some of these experiences in the hope it might inspire you to consider contributing.

When the editorial board of *Education Forum* sat down to discuss story ideas and the topic of Educators' Financial Group came up, we all agreed it was high time for an article featuring its services. A classic story idea for any publication is to find a topic that most readers know nothing

about but probably should. Educators' Financial is one of those topics: it is a financial-planning company owned by OSSTF/FEESO. It was also a timely choice because it was kicking off a promotional tour as part of its 40th anniversary. As someone who uses their services I was interested in

media outlets we visited was infectious.

In September Nanci Henderson of District 24, Waterloo asked me if she could write a review of Naomi Klein's new book *This Changes Everything*. I suggested we try to get an interview and do a feature story instead. After numerous phone calls and

Because this magazine is written mostly by our own members, I thought I'd share some of these experiences in the hope it might inspire you to consider contributing.

talking with their President, Chuck Hamilton, and was amazed to learn of its history within OSSTF/FEESO.

When Jason Bremner, a teacher in District 29, Hastings-Prince Edward, came to me with the idea of interviewing Ed Broadbent for *Education Forum*, I thought it was a fantastic idea. When I pitched the idea to the editorial board, they expanded the idea and wanted to see an overview of some of the progressive and alternative media outlets our members might want to explore. This led Jason and me on a two-day tour of Toronto and Ottawa, visiting editors and having them explain how their particular news product fit into the media landscape. In Ottawa at the offices of Press Progress, we sat next to a window facing the Parliament Building talking to Sarah Schmidt, Director of Communications, who repeatedly pointed at it, saying, "That's why we're here." The passion of the people working there and at the other alternative

e-mails we had one hour of her time booked. We met at a small, quiet table tucked away at the back of a diner in Toronto's Roncesvalles Village. After reading the hefty 576-page book, we had both composed a neatly ordered list of questions for Ms. Klein, but our plan seemed to fall away as our conversation deepened and we struggled to touch on as many of her ideas in the short time allotted. Then whittling her responses down to a 2,000-word feature article was more agonizing still.

Deciding what stories would be of interest to our members and then finding writers willing to chase them down is always a challenge. As final deadlines near, I'm never sure we will make it but, like a play in disarray the day before opening night, we know the show will go on, *Education Forum* will get published and it will be worth it. Want to join us on the adventure? Have a story you want to pitch or a resource to review? Please contact me at randy.banderob@osstf.ca. 🐼





Votre magazine, vos histoires

Les coulisses d'*Education Forum*

AU début de ma vingtaine, j'ai travaillé pour plusieurs petits journaux. J'étais toujours surpris, qu'en tant que jeune de 20 ans, ayant relativement peu d'expérience, que je pouvais assister à un événement important, interviewer une personne d'intérêt ou même simplement émettre une opinion sur un sujet et, ce que j'avais écrit, serait imprimé et au vu de tous.

Au fil du temps, j'ai tiré quelques rudes leçons. Une fois, j'avais écrit un article excessif de 1 500 mots sur une religieuse retraitée de la région qui peignait à l'huile des fleurs de son jardin et mon rédacteur en chef me l'a fait raccourcir jusqu'à un nombre raisonnable de 200 mots. En 1987, j'ai interviewé un groupe canadien qui venait juste d'enregistrer son premier album et j'ai soumis une critique plutôt négative de leur musique. Vous avez sûrement entendu parler de *The Tragically Hip*. Et une fois, on m'a envoyé, avant de mettre sous presse, prendre une photo de dernière minute au cœur d'une tempête de neige et tout ce que j'ai réussi à ramener était un portrait d'un jeune homme faisant du monocycle dans la neige. Je me souviens encore du regard déçu sur le visage de mon rédacteur.

Bien que peu après, j'ai délaissé le journalisme pour l'enseignement, je ne me suis jamais désintéressé de la narration. Dans le présent numéro d'*Education Forum*, je me suis davantage impliqué dans la production de certains des articles et, ce faisant, j'ai ravivé mon enthousiasme pour le reportage et la rédaction. Étant donné que ce magazine est composé pour la plupart par nos propres membres, j'ai pensé qu'en partageant certaines de ces expériences, cela pourrait vous inspirer à contribuer.

Quand le comité de rédaction d'*Education Forum* s'est rencontré afin de discuter d'idées d'articles et que le sujet d'*Educators' Financial Group* a été soulevé, nous étions tous d'accord qu'il était grand temps de faire un article présentant ses services. Pour toute publication, une idée d'article classique est de trouver un sujet sur lequel la plupart des lecteurs ne connaissent rien, mais le devrait probablement. *Educators' Financial* est l'un de ces sujets : c'est une entreprise de planification financière appartenant à OSSTF/FEESO. C'était également un choix opportun puisqu'ils étaient en plein lancement d'une tournée promotionnelle dans le cadre de leur 40^e anniversaire. En tant qu'utilisateur de leurs services, je ne demandais pas mieux que de parler à leur président, Chuck Hamilton, et j'ai été étonné de connaître l'histoire de l'entreprise au sein d'OSSTF/FEESO.

Quand Jason Bremner, enseignant du District 29, Hastings-Prince Edward, est venu me présenter l'idée d'interviewer Ed Broadbent pour *Education Forum*, j'ai pensé que c'était une excellente idée. Lorsque j'ai présenté mon argumentaire au comité de rédaction, ils ont élargi l'idée et voulaient voir un aperçu de certains organes de presse progressistes ayant adapté des méthodes nouvelles que nos membres voudraient sans doute examiner. Ceci a entraîné Jason et moi sur un circuit de deux jours de Toronto et d'Ottawa, visitant des rédacteurs qui nous ont expliqué la manière dont leurs produits en matière de nouvelles s'inscrivent dans le paysage médiatique. Dans les bureaux de *Press Progress*, à Ottawa, nous étions assis près d'une fenêtre qui donnait sur l'Édifice du Parlement, nous entretenant avec Sarah

Schmidt, directrice des communications, qui pointait sans cesse dans sa direction en disant : « C'est la raison pour laquelle nous nous trouvons ici. » La passion des personnes travaillant à cet endroit et dans les autres organes de presse alternatifs était contagieuse.

En septembre, Nanci Henderson, district, 24 Waterloo, m'a demandé si elle pouvait écrire une critique du nouvel ouvrage de Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*. J'ai suggéré de tenter d'obtenir une entrevue et de faire plutôt un article de fond. Après maints appels téléphoniques et courriels, nous avons réservé une heure en sa compagnie. Nous l'avons rencontrée à une petite table tranquille à l'arrière d'un café-restaurant de Roncesvalles Village à Toronto. Après avoir lu l'épais livre de 576 pages, nous avons tous les deux composé une liste ordonnée de questions à poser à Mme Klein, mais au fur et à mesure que notre conversation s'accroissait, nous avions l'impression de nous éloigner de notre plan et avions du mal à toucher à autant de ses idées dans le peu de temps alloué. Puis réduire ses réponses à un article de fond de 2 000 mots était encore plus difficile.

Décider quelles histoires intéresseront nos membres puis trouver des rédacteurs prêts à les couvrir présente toujours un défi. À l'approche de la mise sous presse, je ne suis jamais certain que nous y parviendrons. Mais, comme la confusion d'une veille de la première d'une pièce de théâtre, nous savons que le numéro aura lieu, *Education Forum* sera publié, et il en vaudra la peine. Vous voulez vous joindre à l'aventure? Vous avez une histoire à nous soumettre ou une critique d'une ressource à faire? Communiquez avec moi à randy.banderob@osstf.ca. ☞



The survey asked **8,429** respondents if they had experienced domestic violence.



One third said yes.



One tenth of those said it had happened in the last 12 months.



82% of those who had experienced domestic violence said it negatively impacted their ability to do their job.

Almost **40%** of those said the violence kept them from getting to work.



Almost **10%** said they lost their jobs because of it.



Can work be safe, when home isn't?

Domestic violence at work

According to the Department of Justice Canada, Research and Statistics Division, Canadian employers lose \$77.9-million annually due to the direct and indirect impacts of domestic violence (DV), and the costs to individuals, families and society go far beyond that. To support advocacy and improve workplace DV policies in Canada, as well as contribute to the international knowledge base on this issue, Canadian data is urgently needed. Therefore researchers at the University of Western Ontario, in partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), conducted the first-ever Canadian survey on DV in the workplace.

As a member of the CLC, OSSTF/FEESO played a role in shaping and supporting the distribution of the survey. The survey consisted of over 60

questions focused on people's experiences with DV and the workplace, including questions about whether they were personally experiencing or had ever experienced DV and if they knew of anyone at their workplace who was experiencing or perpetrating DV.

This is a ground-breaking survey. It is the first-ever national survey on the impact of domestic violence on the workplace in Canada. It exposes how domestic violence follows people to work, has a significant impact on work performance and, for some people, costs them their job. The labour movement is ready to take the lead and work with employers to ensure people experiencing domestic violence can easily access the help they need in the workplace.

The survey, carried out between December 2013 and June 2014, asked

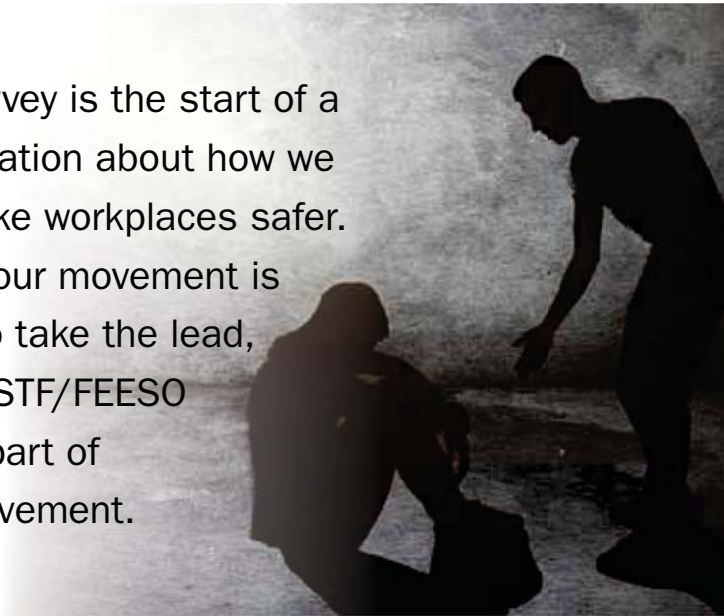
8,429 respondents if they had experienced domestic violence. One third said yes, and one tenth of those said it had happened in the last 12 months.

Eighty-two per cent of those who had experienced domestic violence said it negatively impacted their ability to do their job. Almost 40 per cent of those said the violence kept them from getting to work. Almost 10 per cent said they lost their jobs because of it.

Half of those workers who had experienced domestic violence faced some form of that violence at or near work. This can come in the form of harassing e-mails, calls and texts but also stalking and physical violence.

Most of the survey respondents were employed and living in stable housing. This confirms that violence happens to

This survey is the start of a conversation about how we can make workplaces safer. The labour movement is ready to take the lead, and OSSTF/FEESO will be part of that movement.



people from all walks of life, although women, First Nations, Inuit, Métis people, LGBTQ and gender-diverse people reported higher rates of violence.

Just over 40 per cent of those who experienced domestic violence discussed it with someone at work. That means just under 60 per cent did not. Being aware of these statistics is important but not as important as the work that needs to be done to address this issue.

This survey is the start of a conversation about how we can make workplaces safer. The labour movement is ready to take the lead, and OSSTF/FEESO will be part of that movement. This research has identified the scope and impact of domestic violence on workers and workplaces but is only a first step. Immediate next steps include encouraging the use of these results by governments, unions and employers to establish proactive practices

to address the impact of DV at work.

We want to ensure workers who are experiencing domestic violence can access the support they need in the workplace. We need to consider how to negotiate supports—like paid leave for domestic violence—into collective agreements.

We want workers to know they can turn to union representatives for help if they need it. That means we will work to ensure union representatives are trained and equipped to recognize the signs of domestic violence and provide the right kind of support in the workplace.

We will also work to create a work environment where everyone has an awareness of domestic violence, so we are examining workplace-wide training with clear and specific steps to assist both victims and perpetrators.

The Canadian Labour Congress has sent a copy of the survey results to federal

Labour Minister Kellie Leitch. Along with the survey results, a request has been made to convene a roundtable bringing together labour, employers and government to develop concrete solutions.

OSSTF/FEESO has long recognized violence against women is a larger social problem that requires men to take action, to stand up and hold each other accountable for unacceptable behaviour. Our ongoing work with the White Ribbon Campaign is part of our effort to address this important issue. On the 25th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, every OSSTF/FEESO worksite was provided with a poster asking our members to pledge their commitment to ending violence against women.

However, our response to this survey should not only be directed at supporting victims. We need to look at the perpetrators of violence as well. We know men are primarily the perpetrators of domestic violence and sometimes our own silence makes us complicit. This survey provides us with the harsh realities of domestic violence. These results are not simple numbers. They bear silent witness to the victimization some of our co-workers experience.

Male leaders in the labour movement are prepared to have some tough conversations with each other and with our members. This is the only way we are really going to see change. If you signed your name on the White Ribbon Campaign poster this year, read the findings to learn more about domestic violence in the workplace so that together, we can take steps in the right direction. ☺

Suzette Clark is the Director of Educational Services at Provincial Office.

For more information

For this survey, domestic violence was defined as any form of physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, including financial control, stalking and harassment. It occurs between opposite- or same-sex intimate partners who may or may not be married, common-law or living together. It can also continue after a relationship has ended.

www.canadianlabour.ca/sites/default/files/dwork_survey_report_2014_en.pdf

www.congresdutravail.ca/enjeux/violence-conjugale-au-travail

C. N. Wathen, J. C. D. MacGregor, B. J. MacQuarrie with the Canadian Labour Congress (2014). *Can Work be Safe, When Home Isn't? Initial Findings of a Pan-Canadian Survey on Domestic Violence and the Workplace*. London, ON: Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women and Children.





A happy 40th birthday to the Educators Financial Group!

The financial institution you never knew you owned

ON April 19, 1976, at OSSTF/FEESO's annual general meeting, the provincial assembly was brought to its feet with applause as a member, Ian Cameron, was granted a mortgage for his family's new house.

Why was the seemingly simple act cause for such fanfare? Well, first this was the 1970s and at this time, banks saw teachers as financial risks because they were considered seasonal workers. Secondly, the mortgage received by Mr. Cameron and his family was the very first arranged through OSSTF/FEESO's new financial arm, the Ontario Teachers Group. One year earlier, Treasurer Frank Mandeville had overseen the creation of four investment funds for members and their families. Within one year, members

had invested over \$1-million in these funds and almost half that amount was made available to other members in the form of mortgages. With no finders' fees, no front-end or rear-end loading charges and no hidden fees, Mandeville's plan was to offer secure investments and affordable mortgages to all members.

Fast forward almost 40 years and it's a blizzardy morning in Stratford. I find myself trudging through the foot-high snow, my brow whipped with sleet. I wasn't feeling very festive as I approached the huge cruising bus parked outside Stratford Northwestern Secondary School. I was invited to this, one of 40 stops across Ontario, to help celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Educators Financial Group.

Climbing on board I was greeted

warmly and was seated by the electric fireplace to have a chat with Chuck Hamilton, President and CEO of what was once called the Ontario Teachers Group.

"We've been having great success with our district outreach, really getting out to the districts more frequently, presenting at workshops, getting to meet with executives," says Hamilton. "But we recognize there are a lot of members we don't get to talk to or see. So we thought this would be a good way to get to know more of the members of OSSTF/FEESO and meet them face to face. As a membership organization, it's all about connecting with the members."

And that's exactly what this birthday road-trip tour has been about. Educators Financial has been meeting hundreds of

OSSTF/FEESO members face to face at their places of work. Starting in Dryden at the beginning of October and ending in Toronto at the end of November, its anniversary bus set out to travel to 40 cities in 40 days and make stops at over 80 schools.

At this stop in Stratford, a steady stream of members hops on the bus. The first

working with a financial planner. “Ideally we’d like to start talking with clients when they first begin working and definitely when they are three to five years away from retirement, but there are also life-planning stages where we can help: purchasing your first home, getting married, getting divorced, planning for your

survey uncovered some interesting data, including the fact that 60 per cent of retired educators work in some capacity in retirement but only 15 per cent do so for financial reasons. The survey also found that 55 per cent of retired members would advise others to put as much thought into what they plan to do in their retirement



“Ideally we’d like to start talking with clients when they first begin working and definitely when they are three to five years away from retirement, but there are also life-planning stages where we can help: purchasing your first home, getting married, getting divorced, planning for your kids’ education.... Those are times when we can offer advice.”

member who peeks into the bus is Diane Lichty, who doesn’t presently use services offered by Educators Financial Group but she had heard they were coming. Like many members of OSSTF/FEESO, she was unaware her union owned a financial company that not only provided advice free of charge but also offered mortgages and investment funds. “I heard about the bus tour through Facebook and was contacted by a financial advisor,” says Lichty. “We met about a week and a half ago.”

Such quick and personal service is the norm for Educators Financial. With 10 accredited financial planners and four mortgage specialists, Educators Financial eagerly reaches out to all education workers in Ontario and their families.

“We want our financial planners to establish a working relationship with their clients,” says Chuck Hamilton. “Generally they arrange an annual meeting either in a client’s home or at a local office. They ask clients what their pressing needs are and help them to articulate their financial goals and then help them plan to achieve these goals.”

He goes on to explain that while any time is a good time to begin thinking about financial security, there are key times when members should consider

kids’ education.... Those are times when we can offer advice.”

Hamilton believes that because Educators Financial Group is owned by OSSTF/FEESO, it is a natural fit for members. “We only deal with the education community so we understand the specific issues that face them. Sometimes we will know about the issues an educator will face in the future that the educators themselves are not presently aware of. The advice we give is educator-specific and comes with the over 10,000 conversations we have every year with educators. We get them. We understand them. Our financial planners are salaried so our advice is objective. We’re not pushing products. We do have a line of investment mutual funds but we think that’s an advantage for investors because we have a low price and we have a robust oversight system. So rather than have an educator chase the best performing fund each year, we introduce them to funds we manage. We do the research work for our clients to find the best fit.”

In order to better understand its retired members, Educators Financial worked in concert with Alan Roadburg, Ph.D., to conduct a Retiring from Education survey with our retired members. The

as they do planning their financial needs.

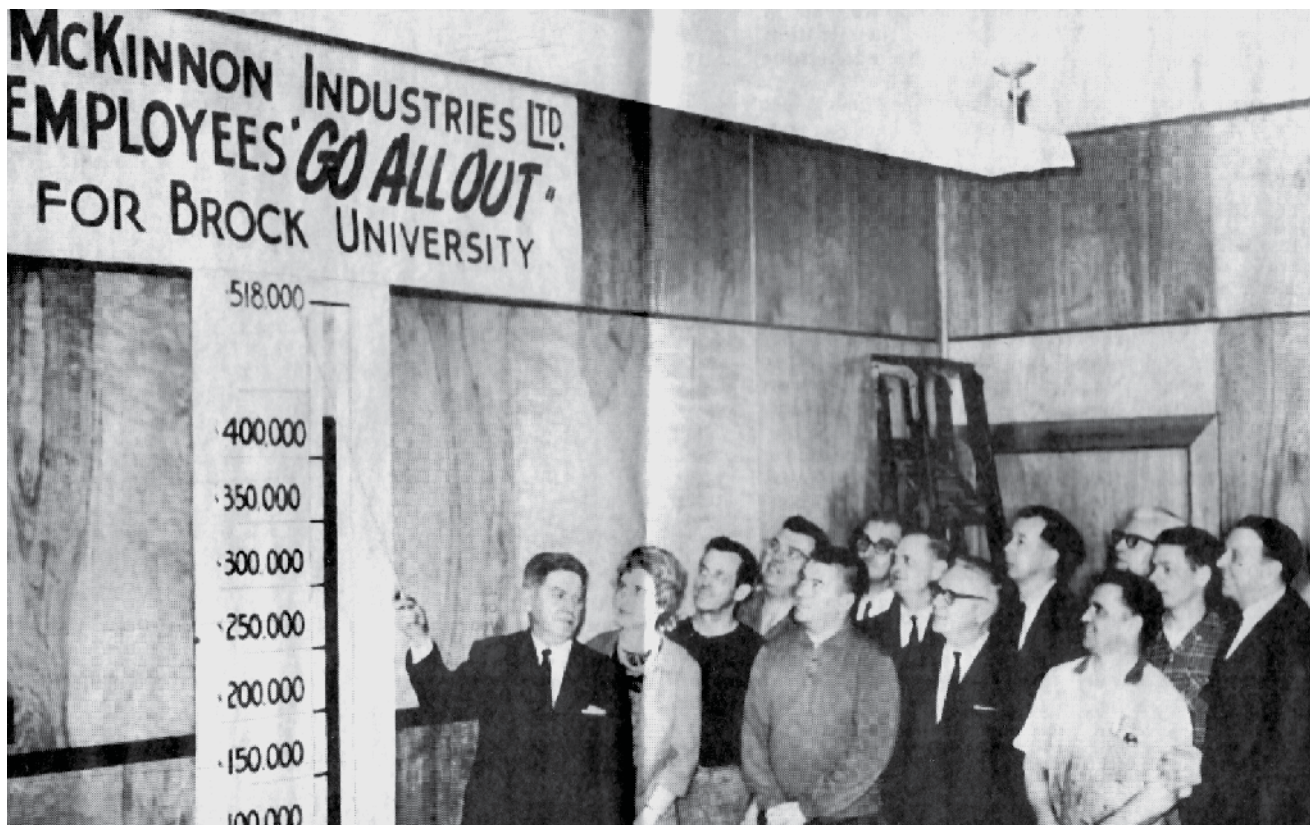
Educators Financial highly recommends Roadburg’s book, *Retiring from Education: Your Key to Retirement Happiness*. If you’re interested, see the review of the book included at the back of this issue.

Finally, when asked his opinion on their 40-day tour, Chuck Hamilton smiles and says, “It’s been fantastic! Our goal has been to raise awareness of our services. It’s pretty hard to miss this bus when it’s parked outside your school. For the people who came out, they get to have a meaningful conversation with one of my financial planners. So we get to build awareness.”

And what surprised him the most? “Oh, how busy everyone is,” he admitted. “I learned how busy educators are before school, at lunch and after school. Rhythm class at Glebe Collegiate before school. Ping-pong club at Longfields Davidson Heights in Ottawa at lunch. Track and field club after school in Brockville. It’s no wonder we have to meet our clients at their convenience. Their work days are very full.” ☺

Randy Banderob is an Executive Assistant in the Communications/Political Action Department and the Editor of *Education Forum*.





Labour of love

How union members helped build Brock University

I often hear how unions are going to be the end of our community: “Unions are bad for our economy.... Unions are ruining public education.” I am a proud union member but when I hear words like this I am, like many, apt to just shrug it off as ignorance. It’s difficult to debate ignorance and at times feels pointless. Ignorance needs education, and as education workers, it is time to speak up and educate. It is time to remind people that unions positively contribute to our community and demonstrate how unions contribute to the enhancement of our economy and nurture public education. This is the story of Brock University.

It began in 1957 in a small kitchen in Thorold, Ontario. Flora Egerter of the Allanburg Women’s Institute was listening to the radio when she heard an announcement by the Ontario government of its

intent to build four new universities in Ontario. At the time, Niagara was booming with industry and growth and Egerter had a vision. She wanted to see a university in Niagara, which would provide post-secondary access for young women in the region and help support working families by providing an opportunity for students to study while living at home.

At first the government was not convinced Niagara was an ideal location. McMaster University was just down the road, and the Niagara region flourished on industrial manufacturing. In World War I, the factories manufactured parts for the war effort and then later, in World War II, the industry doubled to accommodate contracts for the Canadian, British and French governments. Niagara was ideally situated for this sort of manufacturing and so after the war, General

Motors moved into the region, opening up a foundry that became one of the largest components-manufacturers for the auto giant. The industry employed thousands of unionized workers and was the heart of the Niagara economy.

So why would an industrial town like Niagara need a university?

Despite initial misgivings, Egerter didn’t give up. After garnering support from the local community council and industrial sector, she passed a resolution to call for the Ontario government to open a university in Niagara. The Ontario government reluctantly agreed and, in 1957, the Niagara District Joint Committee on Higher Education was formed and a name was chosen that represented the history of the region.

In 1962, the Brock University Founders’ Committee (BUFC) was established,

specifically tasked to create and develop an academic and administrative plan that also needed to include a fundraising strategy to raise the money needed to build the university. Among the members of this committee was the late Lynn R. Williams, a union activist and leader in the region and the man who would later become the first Canadian to head the United Steelworkers of America.

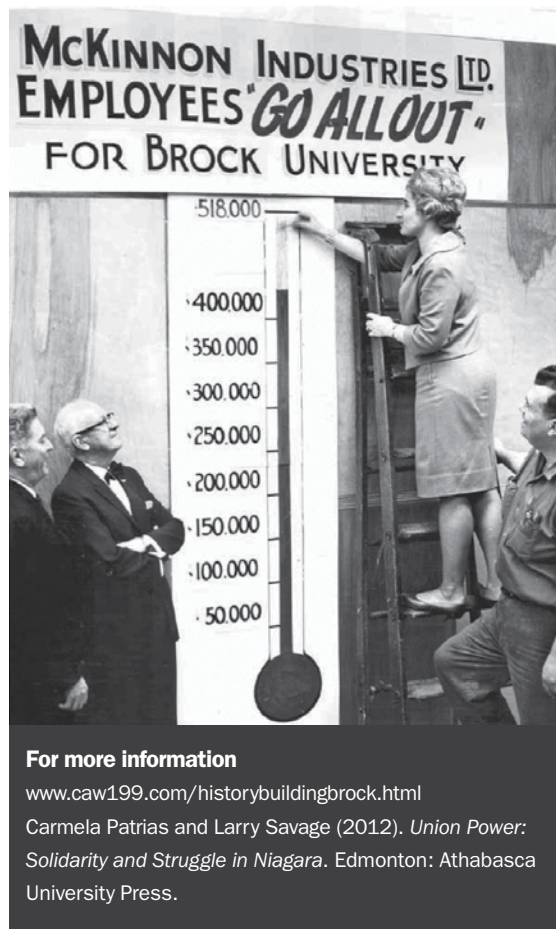
On November 22, 1962, the BUFC held a dinner and invited local industry leaders to persuade them to make contributions towards building Brock University. Labour leaders voted unanimously in favour to ask their members for a voluntary contribution towards the fund. Leaders asked for the equivalent of one day's pay per year to be taken through payroll deduction. Their goal was \$1-million. In 1962, \$1 was equivalent to roughly \$8 today, and a full day's pay for a working family was a substantial amount. However not a single member hesitated.

Union employees believed in working together as a community to provide otherwise inaccessible educational opportunities for the local youth. Within five years, the labour movement surpassed its goal, raising \$1.4-million, a hefty sum by even today's standards. Their donation totalled 25 per cent of the overall campaign proceeds. McKinnon Industries, UAW 199 (UNIFOR 199), a General Motors subsidiary, raised \$518,000, the single largest donation to the fund.

One of these supporters was the father of Welland MP Malcolm Allen. A McKinnon Industries employee, his father did not hesitate at the chance to help raise money for the development of a local university. "At that time it was unheard of for the son of a factory worker to attend university or college. University students were children of lawyers or doctors. We didn't have that opportunity until Brock University opened up. This university allowed us to have a chance at a different life, something we never dreamed of before."

When Brock University opened in

1964, 100 students registered. Today, more than 18,000 undergraduate and graduate students populate Brock's hallways and classrooms in pursuit of their dreams. On campus, there are five labour unions representing over 5,000 members, and Brock University is one of the largest employers in the Niagara Region.



Lynn R. Williams was appointed to the first Board of Trustees at Brock University in recognition of the dedication and commitment he and the labour movement made towards investing in Brock, the community and future generations. His voice represented that of the working women and men of the region who all had a vested interest in seeing Brock succeed.

Labour support for Brock University did not end with this single donation. Today, UAW 199 (UNIFOR 199) offers its members 28 scholarships to attend a post-secondary institution in Canada, and specifically offers two bursaries for students at Brock University. Through negotiations, they also offer a

tuition-assistance program to aid students from falling too deeply into debt, with the average tuition cost of an undergraduate degree now a staggering \$30,000 to \$40,000.

Sadly, as you roam the crowded corridors of Brock University, there is little to actually remember those who were responsible for building Brock. Flora Egerter, recently commemorated in the renaming of a road on the campus, is barely mentioned in Brock's history, and the contributions made by union workers, until a recent plaque commemoration, were all but forgotten.

There is no Niagara labour representation on the Board of Trustees and the only names you can find commemorated in the halls and annuals of Brock are those who have made corporate tax-deductible donations to the university and whose names, like effigies, adorn buildings. Nowhere are the names of the union workers who donated their hard-earned income to the building and the very existence of the university that now stands as a beacon for the Niagara Region.

In 2014, Brock University celebrated its 50th anniversary. Famous authors, actors, athletes, politicians and entrepreneurs all had their start at Brock University. It is a thriving legacy founded on the shoulders of one woman who had a vision and the union workers who helped to build it.

I'm not sure why, as a society, we seem to revel in the worst or see only the negativity that touches our daily lives. Perhaps I am too optimistic, but if we all look beneath the topsoil of our daily struggles, we will see the seeds of all that we have built together and the strong interwoven roots that hold up our foundation, inspiring us to have a vision for a stronger, united future. ☺

Alison J. Rothwell is the Vice-President of District 35, Universities and Colleges (Brock University Support Staff), and is currently completing her Master's thesis in Critical Disability Studies at Brock.



surveying member participation

The 2014 Annual Action Plan established the creation of a survey to determine the levels of participation in Federation activities of members of equity seeking groups. Based on the survey conducted in 2010-2011, the Equity Advisory Work Group has prepared the new survey that will be used to collect data to guide further initiatives to promote equity and inclusion in Federation activities. The survey will be released in three phases.

phase 1
mar.-aug. 2015

Survey AMPA members, Provincial Council, standing committees, work groups and Leadership

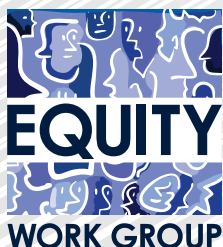
phase 2
oct.-nov. 2015

Survey District and Bargaining Unit Executives and councils

phase 3
dec.-jan. 2016

Survey an online sample of the entire membership

The Equity Advisory Work Group will present an interim report to AMPA 2016 and recommendations to the June 2016 Provincial Council



THE SELF-DEFEATING CONTRADICTIONS OF AUSTERITY

A more thoughtful response to economic turmoil

By/Par Kaylie Tiessen & Jim Stanford

Austerity: it's a nine-letter word that has largely come to define Canada's fiscal response to the financial meltdown and recession. But for economic policy experts from across the political spectrum, it has increasingly become a four-letter word as many economists and analysts acknowledge austerity is doing more harm than good.

The unprecedented downturn of 2008-09 threw governments into large deficits. This was not surprising. After all, deficits are created automatically when unemployment rises and incomes and spending decline. Those cyclical deficits are appropriate and even helpful. They assist in sustaining spending power even as the private sector is gripped by recession.

/CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Austérité est un mot de neuf lettres qui, pour une grande part, en est venu à définir la réaction fiscale du Canada à la crise financière et à la récession. Mais pour les experts en politique économique de toute tendance politique, il devient de plus en plus un mot de trois lettres – à mesure que plusieurs économistes et analystes reconnaissent que l'austérité fait plus de mal que de bien.

Le ralentissement sans précédent de 2008-2009 a accablé les gouvernements de lourds déficits. Cela n'avait rien de surprenant. Après tout, les déficits sont automatiquement créés lorsque le chômage augmente et que les revenus et les dépenses diminuent. Ces déficits

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY TREMMAGLIA

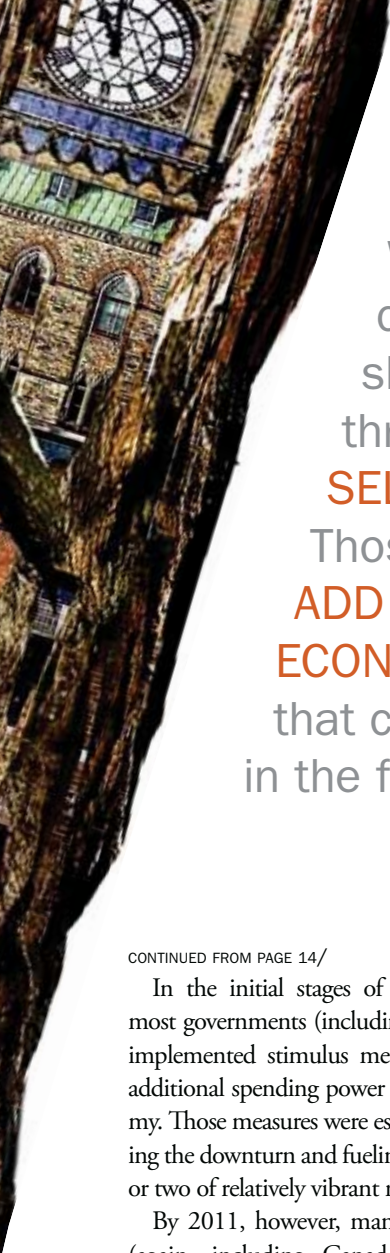
SUITE À LA PAGE 17/

LES CONTRADICTIONS AUTODESTRUCTRICES DE L'AUSTÉRITÉ

Une réaction plus sensée à la crise économique







When the deficit was caused by an economic slowdown, trying to solve it through spending cuts is a **SELF-DEFEATING STRATEGY**. Those cutbacks actually **ADD TO THE UNDERLYING ECONOMIC WEAKNESS** that caused the deficit in the first place.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14/

In the initial stages of the downturn, most governments (including in Canada's) implemented stimulus measures to inject additional spending power into the economy. Those measures were essential in arresting the downturn and fueling an initial year or two of relatively vibrant recovery.

By 2011, however, many governments (again, including Canada's) had taken their foot off the stimulus gas pedal and slammed it firmly on the fiscal brakes. Significant cutbacks in public-sector programs, employment and investment were engineered, all in hopes of eliminating deficits and stopping the rise of public debt.

However, when the deficit was caused by an economic slowdown, trying to solve it through spending cuts is a self-defeating strategy. Those cutbacks actually add to the underlying economic weakness that caused the deficit in the first place.

At best, austerity swims against a strong economic tide. The savings of every spending cut are partly squandered due to falling income and sales-tax revenues resulting from the loss of public-sector jobs and public programs. At worst, severe austerity can make matters worse by tipping the economy back into recession. That's exactly what has happened in

hard-hit parts of Europe, where it is now universally accepted that severe austerity after 2008 was an enormous policy error.

Proponents of austerity have long touted a balanced budget as a cure-all for a jurisdiction's economic woes. Economic growth too slow? Slay the deficit and the economy will soar back to life. Job creation tepid at best? Slay the deficit and watch the unemployment rate shrink. Business investment lagging expectations? Balance the budget and entrepreneurs will be clambering over the Ambassador Bridge.

In reality, austerity is more complex and destructive. Advocates of austerity generally dislike public-sector activity at the best of times. They ignore the reality that government programs and employment are important contributors to economic growth. So when government spending shrinks or slows, the broader economy will tend to do the same. Economists call this negative spillover effect "fiscal drag." It can produce even slower economic growth, slower employment growth and erode the quality of life due to the neglect of essential public services.

According to the most recent Statistics Canada data, government spending on programs and investment at all three

levels of government has declined by almost three percentage points of Canada's GDP since Spring 2009, the peak of the short-lived stimulus effort. The IMF estimates a multiplier effect on government programs of about 1.5, meaning that every dollar in government programs generates a total of \$1.50 in GDP, thanks to the spillover and responding effects that are set in motion by government spending. Think of the jobs created, for example, when teachers spend their salaries on basic consumption goods. By this measure, austerity since 2009 has knocked 4.5 points off Canada's GDP—three points of spending cuts times 1.5, equal to almost one percentage point per year.

Little wonder, then, that Canada's economy has performed so poorly in the last few years. We've been passed by other countries, including the U.S., which have been more concerned with job creation than the pursuit of balanced budgets.

Unless Canadians can convince their governments to change direction, more restraint lies ahead. Ottawa's program spending stands to shrink by another half point of GDP by 2019. Ontario, meanwhile, is planning on a painful freeze in nominal government program spending, which would cut spending as a share of GDP by almost two points by 2018.

In short, austerity can do more damage than the disease it is trying to cure. The U.S. experience provides an example of how things could have been different. There, the government has tolerated much larger deficits and adopted other unconventional job-creation measures (like quantitative easing in the banking system). Yet the U.S. economy has steadily gained steam in recent years, leaving Canada in the dust. Its deficits are larger and its debt much higher, yet it is creating new jobs at a faster pace, generating new incomes. The deficit is falling rapidly as a happy consequence.

The U.S. has created an average of well over 200,000 jobs per month over the last year. Its economy grew at an annualized rate of five per cent in the third quarter of 2014, far faster than Canada's. Yes, their deficit is larger. But the government, like Canada's, can finance those deficits at record

/CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



cycliques sont appropriés et même utiles. Ils aident à alimenter le pouvoir d'achat même quand le secteur privé est plongé dans la récession.

Aux débuts du ralentissement, la plupart des gouvernements (dont celui du Canada) ont mis en place des mesures de relance afin d'injecter un pouvoir d'achat additionnel dans l'économie. Ces mesures étaient essentielles pour arrêter le ralentissement et alimenter une année initiale ou deux de relance relativement dynamique.

Or, rendus en 2011, de nombreux gouvernements (y compris encore celui du Canada) avaient relâché la pédale d'accélération des mesures de relance et avaient appuyé fermement les allègements fiscaux. D'importantes compressions de programmes dans les secteurs public, de l'emploi et des investissements ont été toutes conçues dans l'espoir d'éliminer les déficits et d'arrêter l'augmentation de la dette publique.

Toutefois, lorsque le déficit est causé par un ralentissement économique, essayer de le résoudre par des réductions des dépenses est en soi une stratégie autodestructrice. Ces compressions intensifient, en fait, la faiblesse économique sous-jacente qui a causé, en premier lieu, le déficit.

Au mieux, l'austérité va à contre-courant d'une forte vague économique. Les économies de chaque réduction des dépenses sont partiellement dilapidées en raison de la baisse des revenus provenant de l'impôt des particuliers et des taxes sur les ventes résultant des pertes d'emplois dans le secteur public et des programmes publics. Au pire, une austérité draconienne peut aggraver la situation, en la faisant rebasculer vers une récession. C'est exactement ce qui s'est passé dans des régions durement touchées de l'Europe, où il est désormais universellement admis que l'austérité draconienne après 2008 s'est avérée être une énorme erreur politique.

Les adeptes de l'austérité ont longtemps prôné que l'équilibre budgétaire est le remède universel aux difficultés économiques des juridictions. Une croissance économique trop lente? Éliminez le déficit et l'économie montera en flèche. Au mieux, une création d'emplois modeste?

Éliminez le déficit et voyez le taux de chômage reculer. L'investissement des entreprises inférieur aux attentes? Équilibrez le budget et les entrepreneurs se lanceront à l'assaut du pont Ambassadeur.

En réalité, l'austérité est plus complexe et destructrice. Même en période de prospérité, les défenseurs de l'austérité, de façon générale, n'aiment pas les activités du secteur public. Ils ignorent que les programmes gouvernementaux et l'emploi contribuent grandement à la croissance économique. Par conséquent, lorsque les dépenses du gouvernement diminuent ou ralentissent, l'économie au sens large aura tendance à faire de même. Les économistes appellent ces retombées négatives « le freinage fiscal ». Il peut produire une croissance économique encore plus lente, freiner la croissance de l'emploi et détériorer la qualité de vie en raison de la négligence des services publics essentiels.

Selon les données les plus récentes de Statistique Canada, les dépenses publiques en programmes et en investissement aux trois paliers du gouvernement

ont baissé de près de trois points de pourcentage du PIB du Canada depuis le printemps 2009, le sommet de l'effort de relance de courte durée. Le FMI estime un effet multiplicateur d'environ 1,5 sur les programmes gouvernementaux, ce qui signifie que chaque dollar des programmes publics génère un total de 1,50 \$ en PIB, grâce aux retombées et aux incidences de dépenser à nouveau qui sont déclenchées par les dépenses publiques. Pensez, par exemple, aux emplois créés, lorsque les enseignants dépensent leur salaire pour acheter des biens de consommation de base. Par cette mesure, depuis 2009, l'austérité a fait chuter le PIB du Canada de 4,5 points, trois points de compression des dépenses multipliés par 1,5, ce qui équivaut à près d'un point de pourcentage par an.

Il n'est donc guère étonnant que, depuis quelques années, l'économie du Canada ait obtenu de si piètres résultats. Nous avons été dépassés par d'autres pays, dont les É.-U., qui se sont souciés

SUITE À LA PAGE 19/

Lorsque le déficit est causé par un ralentissement économique, essayer de le résoudre par des réductions des dépenses est en soi une **STRATÉGIE AUTODESTRUCTRICE**. Ces compressions **INTENSIFIENT**, en fait, **LA FAIBLESSE ÉCONOMIQUE SOUS-JACENTE** qui a causé, en premier lieu, le déficit.



TREETOP TREKKING

BY ARBRASKA



TAKE CLASS TRIPS TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL!

WE MEET MANY
CURRICULUM
EXPECTATIONS

5 LOCATIONS
BARRIE
BRAMPTON
GANARASKA
HUNTSVILLE
STOUFFVILLE

TREETOPTREKKING.COM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16/

low interest rates. If anything, there is a strong case for more borrowing to support infrastructure investment, so long as interest rates are near zero and private business investment remains so sluggish.

Here in Ontario there are finally some hopeful signs on the economic horizon. The lower dollar and the booming U.S. economy will both stimulate demand for made-in-Ontario exports—everything from manufacturing to tourism. Increased production and sales at Ontario firms, along with more and better jobs, will generate higher revenues for the provincial government, revenues that will go directly towards reducing the deficit and paying for the public services all Ontarians rely on.

And Ontario need not rely on economic growth alone to boost revenues. The provincial government should also consider targeted tax measures to reverse the budget cuts of the last two decades. A recent estimate by economist Hugh Mackenzie reveals that in 2013, tax cuts since the mid-1990s undermined provincial revenue by almost \$19-billion. Returning the corporate income tax rates to previous levels, or raising gas taxes, perhaps as part of a long-delayed carbon-tax policy, could raise needed funds necessary to support public-sector investment.

The policy and the ideology of austerity have lost considerable traction in the last couple of years. More progressive policies such as infrastructure investment, sustained program spending, and tax measures where necessary would be timely and more effective in addressing both the fiscal and social challenges facing Ontario. As Ontario's government thinks about how to manage its finances, it would be wise to consider all the options. ☞

Kaylie Tiessen is an economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Ontario Office, researching labour markets, provincial budgets and the value of public services.

Jim Stanford is an economist with Unifor, Canada's newest union. He writes about economics for *The Globe and Mail* and appears regularly on CBC *The National's* *Bottom Line* panel.

Follow them on Twitter at @KaylieTiessen and @JimboStanford.



d'avantage de la création d'emploi qu'à l'atteinte de budgets équilibrés.

À moins que les Canadiennes et les Canadiens ne réussissent à convaincre leurs gouvernements à changer de direction, plus de restrictions nous attendent. Le programme de dépenses d'Ottawa fera baisser le PIB d'un autre demi-point d'ici 2019. Pendant ce temps, l'Ontario prévoit un pénible gel de la dépense nominale des programmes gouvernementaux, ce qui réduirait les dépenses par rapport au PIB de près de deux points d'ici 2018.

En bref, l'austérité peut causer plus de dommages que le mal qu'elle essaie de guérir. L'expérience américaine fournit un exemple de la différence que cela aurait pu faire. Là-bas, le gouvernement a toléré de plus grands déficits et a adopté d'autres mesures inhabituelles de création d'emplois, comme (l'assouplissement quantitatif du système bancaire). Jusqu'à présent, l'économie américaine a pris de l'élan avec régularité ces dernières années, laissant le Canada se faire distancer. Son déficit est plus important et sa dette plus élevée, cependant il crée de nouveaux emplois à un rythme plus soutenu, générant ainsi de nouveaux revenus. Le déficit s'amenuise rapidement, une heureuse conséquence.

Les É.-U. ont créé en moyenne plus de 200 000 emplois par mois au cours de l'année dernière. Leur économie a augmenté à un taux annualisé de cinq pour cent au cours du troisième trimestre de 2014, de loin plus rapide que celui du Canada. Oui, leur déficit est plus gros. Mais le gouvernement, comme celui du Canada, peut financer ces déficits à des taux d'intérêt les plus bas. Au contraire, de solides arguments justifient d'augmenter les emprunts pour soutenir les investissements en matière d'infrastructure, tant que les taux d'intérêt avoisinent zéro et que les investissements dans le secteur privé continuent de stagner.

Ici en Ontario, il y a enfin certains signes d'espoir économique qui pointent à l'horizon. Un dollar faible et l'économie américaine en expansion permettront de stimuler la demande des exportations de produits fabriqués en Ontario, depuis le secteur manufacturier jusqu'au tourisme.

Ramener les taux d'imposition du revenu des sociétés aux niveaux précédents ou augmenter les taxes sur l'essence, peut-être dans le cadre d'une politique sur les émissions carboniques reportée depuis longtemps, pourrait mobiliser les fonds supplémentaires nécessaires **POUR APPUYER L'INVESTISSEMENT DANS LE SECTEUR PUBLIC.**

Une production et des ventes plus élevées dans les entreprises ontariennes, s'accompagnant d'emplois plus nombreux et meilleurs, généreront des revenus plus hauts pour le gouvernement provincial, revenus qui serviront directement à réduire le déficit et à payer pour les services publics auxquels s'attendent tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes.

Et l'Ontario ne doit pas dépendre uniquement d'une croissance économique pour stimuler les revenus. Le gouvernement provincial devrait également envisager des mesures fiscales ciblées en vue d'annuler les compressions budgétaires des deux dernières décennies. Une estimation récente de l'économiste Hugh Mackenzie révèle qu'en 2013, les réductions d'impôt depuis la moitié des années 1990 ont amoindri les revenus provinciaux de près de 19 milliards de dollars. Ramener les taux d'imposition du revenu des sociétés aux niveaux précédents ou augmenter les taxes sur l'essence, peut-être dans le cadre d'une politique sur les émissions carboniques reportée depuis longtemps, pourrait mobiliser les fonds supplémentaires nécessaires pour appuyer

l'investissement dans le secteur public.

La politique et l'idéologie de l'austérité ont perdu considérablement de leur popularité depuis quelques années. Des politiques plus progressistes, comme les investissements en matière d'infrastructure, des dépenses de programme soutenues et des mesures fiscales là où c'est nécessaire, seraient opportunes et plus efficaces pour relever à la fois les défis fiscaux et sociaux auxquels l'Ontario est confronté. Alors que le gouvernement ontarien réfléchit à la manière de gérer ses finances, il serait judicieux d'envisager toutes les options. ☞

Kaylie Tiessen est économiste au Centre canadien de politiques alternatives et effectue des recherches sur les marchés du travail, les budgets provinciaux et l'importance des services publics.

Jim Stanford est économiste chez Unifor, le plus récent syndicat au Canada. Il écrit des articles sur l'économie pour *The Globe and Mail* et il fait régulièrement partie du groupe d'experts de *Bottom Line* à l'émission *The National* de CBC.

Suivez-les sur Twitter à @KaylieTiessen et à @JimboStanford.







THIS CHANGES EVERY THING

Talking climate change with Naomi Klein

By Nanci Henderson

I am not a climate-change activist. When I suggested reviewing *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein, it was because the book was written by the same woman who awakened our global consciousness with *No Logo* and *Shock Doctrine*. I should have known before opening it that her latest book would aptly articulate in its opening pages my own cognitive dissonance around issues of personal consumption, social justice and climate change. Fortunately, Randy Banderob, editor of *Education Forum*, and I had a chance to sit down and ask her some questions on behalf of our membership.

NANCI: California is in the grip of a three-year drought and this week, Buffalo received its annual forecast for snow in one day. Climate change?

NAOMI: It's difficult to point to any one event and say this is climate change. Warming temperatures and events that would happen anyway are intensified by climate change. Climate change isn't causing the drought; it's intensifying the drought and its impacts. It's not that a storm wouldn't happen anyway. A phrase that gets used a lot is that the dice are being loaded. A real turning point in North America was Superstorm Sandy when New York City had to shut down. One headline declared, "It's Global Warming, Stupid!" That unlocked something in us and I think more people are now making the connections between extreme weather and climate change.

PHOTO: ANVA CHIBIS



NANCI: Obviously *This Changes Everything* is meant to be a clarion call to the world on climate change. Just how bad is it?

NAOMI: I start the book with quotes from some of the most conservative state institutions on the planet like the World Bank and the International Energy Agency. These are institutions associated with the establishment and they are saying if we stay on this course, temperatures will warm to a level that is incompatible with civilization. That is the road we are on. If we think about different kinds of crises that humanity has faced before, such as the prospect of nuclear annihilation, this is an existential threat. If we warm temperatures four to six degrees it isn't at all clear we can survive. All of the climate models break down and things go non-linear. Specifically, we're talking about many coastal cities and countries disappearing, as well as widespread crop failure. Particularly terrifying about this crisis is that unlike previous crises that humanity has faced, the only one you could point to that puts as many people simultaneously in danger is the threat of nuclear war.

NANCI: I came to your book pretty ignorant, so I could relate to the opening where you talk about different people's approaches to not facing climate change or the fear of not even wanting to mentally go there.

NAOMI: Well, that's great because I think the book is very much addressed not to people who deny climate change, because I don't think I'm going to change their minds, but people who are in that state of simultaneously knowing and not knowing or who actively look away. A lot of us are aware of the extent to which we suppress this knowledge and the age of online news makes us hyper-aware. You know, when you are sifting through a bunch of headlines online and one of them is about some celebrity sex scandal and another one is about melting ice caps and you're like, hmmm, and then click on the scandal. What scares me most is not anything in those climate models. I find them scary but I find crop failure scary. I find rising sea levels scary, but what scares me most is not what the earth will do, but what we humans will do in the face of that.

My last book, *The Shock Doctrine*, was about some horrific examples of how our economic system is built to take advantage of crisis and disasters. It's that collision between heavy weather and a brutal economic system that encourages profiteering. I think we'll see increasing racism, fortressing our borders and scapegoating. That's why I spend a lot of time in the book talking about how we need a shift in values and world view, because that is the part of this crisis that is scariest.

NANCI: Are you advocating for something where the progressive side uses the shock doctrine or sees this crisis as an opportunity to institute changes to the way society is structured?

NAOMI: The book is absolutely about how progressives should respond to crisis. *The Shock Doctrine* is not just about responding forcefully to crisis. Of course we should, because crises are messages. They are powerful signs telling us that there's something broken in our system. If Wall Street melts down, it's saying, "Hey guys, you need to fix this. It's unstable." And if we're seeing more natural disasters, that's telling us there's an underlying problem.

The Shock Doctrine was never saying it is wrong to have a forceful response to crisis. It was about a particular strategy of harnessing crisis to override democracy and to push through very unpopular policies that politicians wouldn't be able to push through otherwise. I call it a people's shock, where we respond to a very real crisis by actually trying to solve the underlying issues. The irony of *The Shock Doctrine* and these tactics is that the so-called solution is often proposed and pushed through by the right to make the underlying problem worse. For example, after Hurricane Katrina there was a crisis born of heavy weather and infrastructure and the Republican response to that was well, let's do away with the public sphere, let's drill for more oil in Alaska and build more refineries on the Gulf Coast to fuel the climate crisis. At the time, I thought that it's amazing the left won't talk about climate change. We're so afraid of being seen as opportunistic that we go mute during crisis, particularly during a natural disaster, where lives are being lost.

NANCI: Is there a gender element at play in our view of the natural world? Is this a deeply ingrained historical narrative?

NAOMI: There's never been a non-gendered view of the natural world because ancient societies have always seen the earth as female or feminized. The idea of the earth as mother, provider and creator of life is probably the oldest idea of fertility. A counter narrative emerged in the 1600s of the earth as something to be conquered and where man was the engineer of the earth. The earth was then cast as a prone woman and a lot of the Francis Bacon quotes I have in the book also characterized the earth as feminine, but the earth was essentially a chained woman who was being dominated by men. What's important to understand about this extractivist world view is that it's a dominance-based logic. It's the idea that one can totally dominate nature and people and then extract what we need from them in a non-reciprocal way. It doesn't require consent. This is at the heart of the industrial project and I think at the heart of what we need to change.

NANCI: It was also central to the frontier narrative, expansionism and the Gold Rush era, so it's woven throughout history and it gets remodelled with each generation, despite being essentially the same tale.

**WE'RE SO AFRAID
OF BEING SEEN AS
OPPORTUNISTIC
THAT WE GO MUTE
DURING CRISIS,
PARTICULARLY DURING
A NATURAL DISASTER,
WHERE LIVES ARE
BEING LOST.**



NAOMI: It is, and I think this idea runs deepest in settler colonial states like Canada, the U.S., Australia and New Zealand because the idea of the boundless frontier that could be extracted endlessly was so core to our national narrative. I don't think it's a coincidence that Canada and Australia are the biggest climate criminals at the moment and Stephen Harper and Tony Abbott get along so well with the G20.

NANCI: Are the environmental and labour movements at odds with one another?

NAOMI: They shouldn't be. We have this dichotomy where the union leadership in Canada understands there are way more jobs in a transition to the next economy than just defending the current resource-extracting status quo. Mark Lee, one of the directors of the Climate Justice Project at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives of British Columbia, has done excellent research on this. Mark looked at the Northern Gateway Pipeline and how many jobs would be created by that \$5-billion investment and compared this to how many jobs would be created in transit, energy efficiency and renewable energy. The numbers show that if the money were invested in those sectors, there would be seven to eight times more jobs than if the same amount were invested in oil and gas. Pipelines are the worst of all because they're temporary construction jobs. Moreover, the union leadership understands their members are best positioned to get new green jobs because it's the same skill set. There's some retraining, but they need pipe fitters and engineers and these are the same tradespeople who would be losing their jobs in oil and gas.

NANCI: What do you think is getting in the way of that message with labour?

NAOMI: I think labour is so under siege here. Intellectually we understand, but a few jobs in the hand are easier to fight for than many more jobs that don't yet exist. The issue is that labour movements can't win that battle on their own. Labour can't transform the entire national debate. For that you need a broad-based social movement that includes other stakeholders like students, women and Aboriginal groups alongside labour. This is why the book is ultimately about how climate can form the basis for building that social movement, because I don't think there is real hope without unions. Unions understand there are so many more jobs in a clean transition but they are still fighting for jobs moving dirty oil across the country.

NANCI: Private- and public-sector unions rely on pension plans to provide workers with a secure future. How does their investment play out in a world experiencing climate change?

NAOMI: There has been an incredible movement since I've been writing this book that was spreading quickly and I had to keep updating the numbers and that's the fossil-fuel divestment movement, which really didn't exist three years ago. Now it is in half a dozen countries, hundreds of campuses, faith organizations, non-profits, foundations and universities. They question the ethics of where public and private-interest institutions invest their money. Universities and foundations are being forced to ask themselves if where they invest is aligned with their values. This is a familiar question and we've had lots of debates about various kinds of unethical investments.

NANCI: How are teachers and educational workers uniquely positioned to be a benefit to the environmental movement? When our members read this, they're going to wonder what they can do. Is there a particular niche role?

NAOMI: One of the problems with the climate debate is it's been hyper-specialized. It's very wonky on different levels because of the denial movement. Scientists feel they need to qualify just to keep themselves from getting attacked and they become less and less intelligible to regular people. High school teachers, more than university professors, know how to make information understandable. It needs to be much more interdisciplinary too. Educators are wary of getting into a deep discussion about climate change. It is not just a job for the chemistry teacher or the environmental-club supervisor either.

NANCI: I have to tell you your book hooked me at the beginning. I knew very little about climate change. It hasn't been my issue and then as I got into *This Changes Everything*, it began to take root in my psyche as my issue.

NAOMI: Well, that's so good because honestly, my single goal for this book is to speak to people who don't feel like it's their issue, because the other thing we didn't even talk about is the public sphere, defence of the public sphere, and that's really key right now. If we're going to deal with climate change, we need a public sphere.

Nanci Henderson is a teacher at Cameron Heights C.I. in District 24, Waterloo and is a member of the provincial Communications/Political Action Committee.

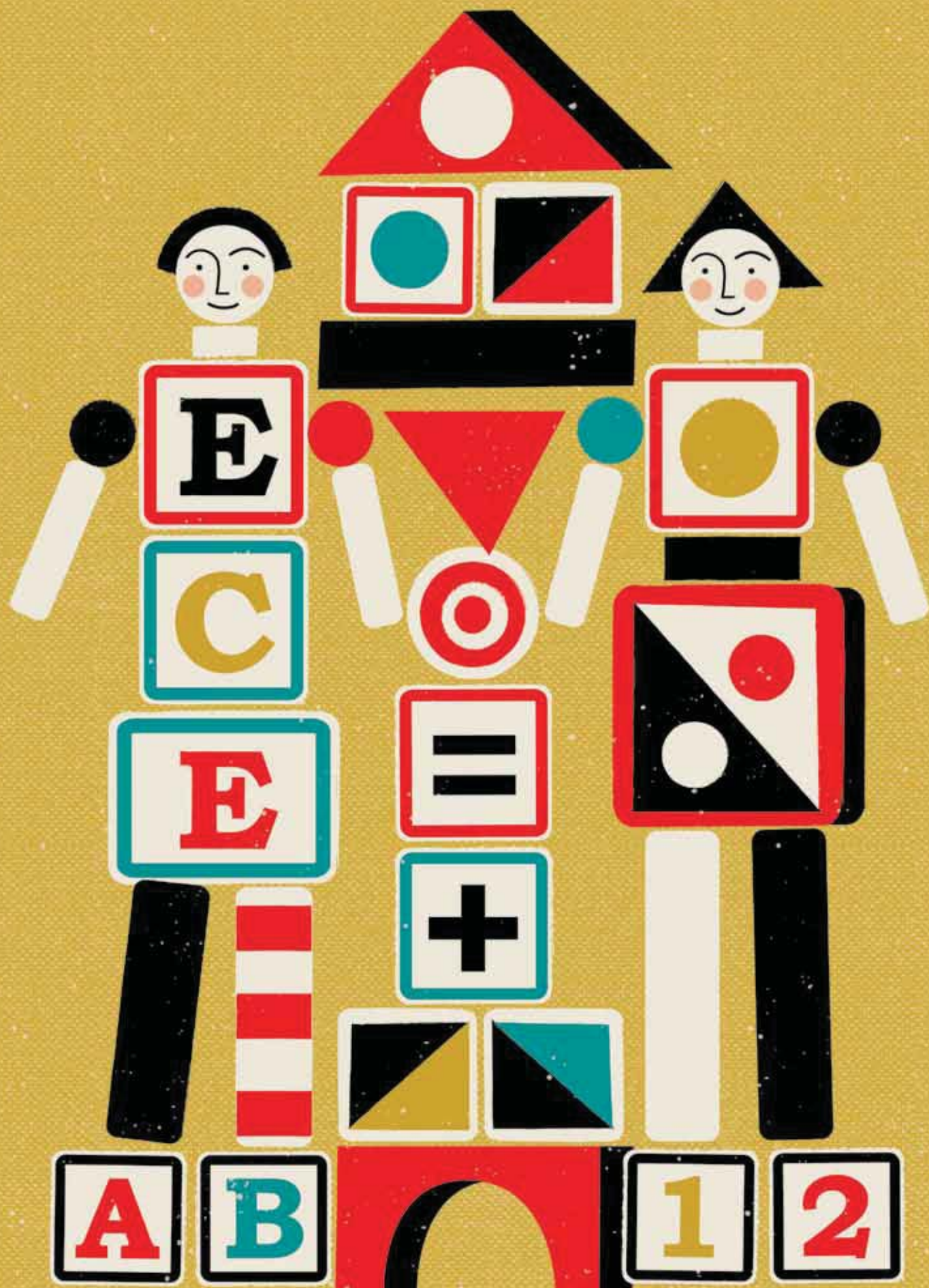


WIN A SIGNED COPY OF *THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING*

Naomi Klein kindly signed five copies of her book, *This Changes Everything*, and we're giving them away to readers who complete a brief online survey. Follow the link www.surveymonkey.com/s/osstfforum and answer a few simple demographic questions and you will be eligible to win a copy. All information will remain anonymous and confidential. Help us make *Education Forum* your favourite education publication by telling us a little about yourself.

Closing date for the survey March 31, 2015.





FROM VISION TO PRACTICE

ECEs and the early-learning program

By Michael Young

In the fall of 2010 the Ontario government launched a full-day Kindergarten program that fundamentally changed the delivery of early learning in the province. The program mandated not only the delivery of full-day learning in both Junior and Senior Kindergarten but also the creation of early-learning classroom teams comprised of a certified teacher and a registered Early Childhood Educator (ECE). More than 20 OSSTF/FEESO Bargaining Units represent those ECEs in school boards across the province.

Charles Pascal's 2009 report to the provincial government, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, is widely seen to embody both the vision and the blueprint for Ontario's early-learning program. Now in its fifth year, the program has been fully rolled out in every publicly funded school board in the province, and Pascal is almost unreserved in his enthusiasm for what the initiative is achieving.

"As of September 2014, 250,000 kids are getting provincially supported full-day kindergarten," he

says, "and that's an amazing accomplishment, not only from an educational perspective but also from a social, economic and political perspective. Some have called this the most important transformation in education in Ontario in a generation. And the early research suggests that when kids have two full years of Junior and Senior Kindergarten, the advantages in terms of cognitive gain and social/emotional gain are really quite remarkable."

Local OSSTF/FEESO leaders who represent Early Childhood Educators echo much of that enthusiasm. But they are also acutely aware of the challenges that arise when the mandated role of the ECE is not fully supported by a school board or a principal, or even by the teacher with whom the ECE is partnered.

Tracey Marshall is president of the ESSP/RECE Bargaining Unit within OSSTF/FEESO District 18, Upper Grand, and represents Early Childhood Educators employed by the Upper Grand District School Board. She's very clear about the value of the full-day

“IT’S AWESOME TO SEE WHAT THE



BRING TO THE CLASSROOM.”

Kindergarten program but she’s also quick to point out that things don’t always function the way they’re meant to.

“If you go into a full-day Kindergarten classroom that’s working the way it should, what happens in there is absolutely incredible,” says Marshall. “It’s awesome to see what the ECEs bring to the classroom. They’ve studied child development and they have an expert understanding of factors that affect the social and emotional well-being of the kids. When it’s working well it’s really good, but there are still too many issues that diminish the effectiveness of the program.”

Those issues generally centre around the extent to which the role of the Early Childhood Educator is understood and embraced by school-board administrators and principals. Charles Pascal believes that, in most instances, things are working as they are supposed to, but he acknowledges problems do exist. “What I’m hearing and seeing more often than not is that teachers and ECEs are working the way I had envisioned,” says Pascal. “That is, they are bringing equal but different things to the table, creating something larger than the sum of their parts. It’s also fair to say that in some settings, where there isn’t as strong a leadership at different levels within a school board, there are some Early Childhood Educators who are treated as less than equal.”

Unfortunately for Early Childhood Educators and the local OSSTF/FEESO leaders who represent them, situations in which the role of the ECE is treated as less than equal are widespread enough to demand a great deal of attention and generate some serious concerns. Marshall points out that the perception of the ECE’s role and the resulting classroom dynamic can vary dramatically, even within a single school board. “In our board we have some classrooms that are working really well,” she says, “and then we have other classrooms where the ECE is just doing photocopying and running around for the teacher and toileting kids.”

We might be tempted to assume these kinds of problems rest with the attitudes of individual classroom teachers, but what’s mostly at play here is the extent to which principals and school-board administrators understand and support the role of the ECE. And local OSSTF/FEESO leaders feel some board administrators don’t provide adequate communication and support to ensure early-learning teams within the classrooms function as they were intended to.

OSSTF/FEESO District 2, Algoma ECE President Kim Mantulak represents Early Childhood Educators at the Algoma District School Board, and she’s dubious as to whether even some board administrators fully understand how early-learning teams are meant to work. “I am not sure the board shares our understanding of the ECE role,” says Mantulak, “and we would like to see the administration be more proactive in trying to ensure both the ECEs and the teachers understand how the teams are supposed to function.” She notes that, contrary to Charles Pascal’s vision of ECEs bringing “equal but different” skills to the table, past job postings in her board have portrayed the duties of the ECE as merely supportive, creating the false impression of a clear hierarchy within the classroom.

Marshall cites a similar kind of frustration in District 18. “The board should have our back, because we’re not asking for anything that isn’t supposed to be part of the program already,” she says, “but we’ve had to fight for basic recognition for ECEs as an equal partner on the classroom team.”

This basic recognition of the ECE’s role as “equal but different,” as opposed to assistive or subordinate, is an essential first step for the program to function as it was envisioned. But even once that recognition is established, early-learning teams still need support to establish productive and effective working relationships in the classroom. OSSTF/FEESO’s Education Services Department has created an Early Learning Team Workshop designed in part to address the roles and responsibilities within the early-learning team and the creation of a solid professional relationship.

Jeff Barber, President of OSSTF/FEESO District 28, Renfrew, arranged for that workshop to be presented to early-learning teams at the Renfrew County District School Board and he’s very positive about the results. “The workshop is extremely valuable,” he says. “It initiates a conversation that really needs to be had, and it’s been very successful here. People who’ve participated in that workshop have had significantly fewer problems within their teams.” But Barber also points out that the workshop would not have been nearly so effective if it had not been attended by both the ECEs and the certified teachers with whom they work. Kim Mantulak from District 2 helped develop the workshop and has presented it in Renfrew, but when she presented it in her own district, her board did not arrange for teachers to attend. “It was a bit like preaching to the choir,” says Mantulak, “because almost all the ECEs are already accustomed to working in teams.”

However, for both ECEs and certified teachers, the full-day Kindergarten classroom is a different kind of working environment than either profession had encountered prior to the launch of the early-learning program. It’s a setting that requires significant and constant collaboration, and in almost any other working environment it would be a given that members of a team who need to work so closely together would have the opportunity to plan the daily execution of that work. But ECEs are hourly-paid employees, and they are allotted no preparation time at all, let alone any joint planning time with their early-learning team partners. It’s just not part of the funding provided



by the Ministry of Education, and every local OSSTF/FEESO leader we spoke to cited this as a major problem. “The lack of common planning time is a serious detriment,” says Jeff Barber. “ECEs just can’t be as effective during the school day when they don’t have the opportunity to co-ordinate with the teacher.”

Martha Hradowy of OSSTF/FEESO District 9, Greater Essex, who represents ECEs employed by the Greater Essex County District School Board, sees the lack of planning time not just as a detriment to the program but as fundamentally unfair to the ECEs. “They’re expected to program-plan, work with the curriculum, assess students—they’re essentially expected to do all of the same things a teacher is expected to do in terms of preparing, planning, maintaining daybooks—all of those things—but there is no additional funding for that, and therefore no time built into their day. I know some school boards have found creative ways to give their ECEs a minimal amount of prep time throughout the week but without funding for it, it’s never going to be sufficient.”

Even within a single school board, the provision of time to ECEs for planning or other professional activities can vary dramatically between schools. Jeff Barber of District 28 notes: “Some principals have been very creative in finding ways to release the teacher and the ECE on occasion to work together—an afternoon here or there, or some in lieu time so ECEs can attend staff meetings or meet with parents. But none of that is built into the work week in any recognized way, and it’s inconsistent across the board.”

Creativity also figures into the way boards deal with the issue of class size, and that also results in inconsistencies in the delivery of the program. The Ministry of Education insists boards maintain an average class size of 26 for the full-day Kindergarten program, and any class of 16 or more must have an ECE in the classroom. But it’s not uncommon for a board to manipulate those numbers to minimize staffing of the full-day Kindergarten classroom. A school that has 75 Kindergarten students, for example, might divide those students into three classes of 30, 30 and 15. The average class size is still less than 26, but only two of those classes are large enough to require an ECE in the classroom. The board is saving the cost of hiring one ECE, but 15 students in that one school are not receiving the full benefit of the full-day Kindergarten program. Similarly, boards will combine Senior Kindergarten classes with Grade One classes in what’s commonly referred to as an SK-1 split just to keep the number of Kindergarten students in a single class below the threshold for placing an ECE in the classroom. And so again, students in these split classes are missing out on the early-learning program as it was envisioned.

Charles Pascal is not a proponent of most arguments for

smaller class sizes, but he is sympathetic to concerns about boards manipulating class-size averages to avoid hiring ECEs for every classroom. “Our report recommended the value of having a certified teacher and a registered Early Childhood Educator working together,” he says. “It’s always advantageous to have that ECE working with the certified teacher in the classroom, and the numbers should try to accommodate that.”

Pascal is also very much aware of the other challenges that have arisen since the full-day Kindergarten program was introduced, but he stresses the importance of placing these issues in perspective vis-à-vis the size and complexity of the program. “We have to understand that for a transformation this substantial and this complex, it’s still very early. When you’re trying to change behaviours, when you’re trying to ensure you’ve got great local leadership in every elementary school and every board in the province, and when you’re trying to form new dynamic rela-

“ECEs JUST CAN’T BE AS EFFECTIVE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY WHEN THEY DON’T HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CO-ORDINATE WITH THE TEACHER.”

tionships between outstanding Early Childhood Educators and certified teachers, that’s complex work. It’s a big job.”

OSSTF/FEESO’s local leaders would probably not disagree, but four years into the program they’d certainly like to see the Ministry of Education take a more proactive role in the direction given to school boards regarding program implementation and class size, and in the provision of adequate funding for ECE planning time and professional development. Under normal circumstances, some of these issues might have been addressed and resolved by now through collective bargaining, but the last round of negotiations was rendered meaningless by Bill 115, and ECEs around the province have now been waiting for a very long time to have their concerns addressed at the bargaining table.

However these issues are addressed—either through bargaining or through regulation and proper enforcement by the government—the positive transformation Charles Pascal envisioned for early learning in Ontario will not be complete until the role of the Early Childhood Educator is recognized, valued and supported in every elementary school in Ontario, both in theory and in practice. ☺

Michael Young is an Executive Assistant in the Communication/Political Action Department at Provincial Office.



progressive media

Finding a voice

By Jason Bremner

It can be a frustrating endeavour to read the news these days. The endless stream of stories and viewpoints that feel uninformed, unrepresentative or even flat-out hostile to the average education worker are more prevalent. There is already plenty of discussion about right-wing media, what it does and who it represents. It certainly doesn't feel to most of us that there are many voices out there speaking a language or following a point of view we can gravitate towards or get behind.

The truth of the matter is that shopping for media is really like shopping for clothes. While there may be 20 different clothing stores in your local mall, there are really only three or four different clothing companies that provide them all with inventory. The hegemony is subtle but encompassing.

Media is no different. Local newspapers, magazines and television can trace their ownership back to a handful of media outlets and the same, though less subtle, corporate dominance is ever present. The message that progressive thinking and those who support it are a minority of left-wing wackos is all too easy to find. So where does that leave us? With a federal election on the horizon and media outlets busily splitting wood to stoke their fires for the upcoming spectacle, it is increasingly easy to not pay attention. But it is more important than ever that we don't look away.


There are voices out there, some new and some not, that education workers can look to for information, viewpoints, representation and a feeling there is a community of progressive-thinking people who have developed a community of progressive-thinking media. Imagine your best *X-Files* voice: "The truth is out there."

ILLUSTRATION: MATTHEW BILLINGTON





To be attacked by
Sun Media means
Press Progress is making
a difference.

Name: [Press Progress](#)
Primary presence: [Online](#)
Logo: 

If you want to make any socially progressive person look pained, you need only mention these two words: Fraser Institute. With countless studies about education and social policy in Canada, the Fraser Institute and a number of other conservative think tanks supply policy ideas and “research” to the right wing. That being said, it is good to know the Fraser Institute has a left-wing counterpart, the Broadbent Institute.

In 2013, the Broadbent Institute created Press Progress and the political landscape of the Internet has not been the same since. Press Progress is a non-profit, net-present communications outlet that keeps an eye on the various right-wing think tanks by examining their methodology and ideology. It also keeps an eye on Parliament Hill and has a mission to shed light on the words of non-progressive politicians so they can be tested against the facts.

The most remarkable thing about Press Progress is that it works in real time. If it gets said on the Hill in the morning, Press Progress is on it that very same day. It delivers short, digestible stories accompanied by accurate facts and with a wonderful edge that puts a smile on

your face. It is a difficult line to walk, but its pitch-perfect, edgy tone makes it a wonderful respite from constant worker-bashing stories in the mainstream media. It has a skewer for anyone who challenges democratic renewal, fair practice and good research.

A Sun News political commentator once reported, “Press Progress just ran a story about this, so now the left-wing media has its marching orders.” When asked about this, Sarah Schmidt, former editor and current Director of Communications of Press Progress, replied, “We measure our success through shares and hits and, maybe more importantly, whether the opposition notices what we are doing.” Well, it noticed, and to be attacked by Sun Media means Press Progress is making a difference. Its successful effort to be the first voice responding to many new issues, along with a quieter focus on breaking new stories in the battlefield of Canadian politics, makes Press Progress an excellent place for education workers to get connected. Self-described as “a little scrappy player trying to punch our way up” seems an understatement of the heavy hands this group brings to the ring.

“We often ask ourselves, ‘What would Ed Broadbent think?’” says Schmidt, “and we use his ethical standards and his tenacity as our guiding principles. Be factually correct, be positive, be constructive and be feisty.” These are

all ideas we should stand behind. Press Progress is one of the best and most vocal sentinels of progressive values out there right now and if it sounds like something you would connect with, you should give it a shot.

Name: [CCPA's The Monitor](#)
Primary presence: [Print](#)
Logo: 

If Press Progress is the new kid on the block, then the CCPA's *The Monitor* is the stalwart veteran of progressive media. For the last 20 years, *The Monitor* has been one of the premier sources of economic and political perspectives, North American research and philosophical thought on the progressive movement. Originally conceived as vehicle to bring people to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, *The Monitor* has been successful in its mandate, as its two-decades-long history shows.

The Monitor is a magazine for those who like to read. The articles are highly detailed, in-depth and offer a wealth of information and analysis. If you wish to do battle with right-wing policy, be it economic, social or political, *The Monitor* is your armoury. This publication is for the patient person who is in for the long read. The content, however, remains fact-driven, easily digestible and highly useful in the defence of progressive social policy and economics. *The Monitor* is in many ways the king of content.

Paid for by its supporters, it remains advertisement free. This adds to the accessibility of its content. For some, *The Monitor* can be imposing and appear as a great wall of text, but it is undergoing some major cosmetic changes and updates under the new editor, Stuart Trew, in preparation for a relaunch. From 10 issues a year to six, a facelift that will include infographics and 50-plus pages of the top-quality content it is known for are just the beginning. *The Monitor* is currently developing its online presence and is looking to branch out and become part of joint stories and ventures with other progressive publications and media sources. There is now an online database of previous issues as well as selections



from the current issue. *The Monitor* will stay true to its print roots and continue to focus on its in-hand publication but it has never been easier to access the vast and varied content for which it is known.

For the education worker, *The Monitor* provides classroom reading packages available by topic list. It will put together a selection of articles around a particular topic and send them to you. In the larger scope, progressive people will find plenty of spears and chain mail for the battlefield of debate. They will also find critical thought on progressive policy, critiques and dissections of problems in regressive thinking and a new, improved and expanding publication ready for another 20 years.

Name: *Our Times*

Primary presence: [Print](#)

Logo: **OUR TIMES**

If *The Monitor* is a veteran on the scene of progressive media, then *Our Times* is the loving grandparent, keeping the hearth warm and reminding us of who we really are, where we came from and what is really important. In its 33rd year of publication, *Our Times* has held true to its original goals and founding principles. Started by first-generation Italian immigrants in Toronto who were unable to find a voice that represented their concerns, they spoke out on their own. Construction workers, artists, poets, a priest and other everyday people felt a need to speak out about safety in their workplaces, health issues related to their work, social justice and the treatment of workers around them. Personal concerns became community concerns and *Our Times* became the vehicle that allowed those voices a common ground to air those concerns. As a federally incorporated non-profit organization, *Our Times* continues with a staff of two-and-three-quarters people, keeping the grassroots of labour and social justice alive so they can stay green and keep growing.

As many other media are focused

outwards, *Our Times* looks into labour and social justice and lets its readers do the same. The publication consists almost completely of submissions by workers and readers. *Our Times* holds true to the idea that all work, including creative and artistic work, is valuable work and workers of all sorts are artists in what they do. To this end, the magazine still publishes poetry that examines the world of the worker, whomever they are and whatever they do. The poetry sits side by side with its Working for a Living series, an ongoing collection of day-in-the-life short stories of modern workers of all kinds.

Much like *The Monitor*, *Our Times* is building its web presence with the goal of creating a labour community hub online to better reach out to younger people and bring them in to share and continue building the rich relationships it has worked so hard to maintain. *Our Times* is willing to be a mentor to new writers and the education community would benefit greatly from sharing our perspectives and

planting seeds here. It is very easy to feel disconnected from the greater labour community when you are immersed in your own work. The executive editor of *Our Times*, Lorraine Endicott, offers these guiding principles for the magazine: "We must celebrate working people and elevate their presence in society. We must promote unionism because everyone deserves a good wage, and promote the public good by valuing working people as a whole." Sounds like it's time for education workers to dust off their pens and start writing!

Name: [Rabble.ca](#)

Primary presence: Online

Logo: **rabble.ca**

It is difficult to know where to begin when describing [Rabble.ca](#). Founded in 2001 as part of the Quebec protests against the third Summit of the Americas, [Rabble.ca](#) was born on the web and has grown up to create one of the most diverse, active,

How to access these four alternative media outlets?

Press Progress: With a strictly online presence, you have to visit them at [www.pressprogress.ca](#). Once there, you can subscribe for weekly e-mail updates, like them on Facebook and follow them on Twitter.

CCPA's The Monitor: For a monthly donation to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives you will be automatically signed up to receive *The Monitor* mailed to your home. Donations can be as low as \$3

a month and can be made at [www.policyalternatives.ca](#).

Our Times: A yearly subscription to *Our Times* can be yours for \$25. Go to its website at [www.ourtimes.ca](#) to subscribe online.

Rabble.ca: Visit [www.rabble.ca](#) and explore its site. Click on "Alerts" to receive regular e-mail updates on a variety of topics. You can also subscribe to its weekly podcast.



informed and growing collectives in progressive media. Rabble.ca has many components and all together they can be overwhelming to the uninitiated.

The main website has the feel of a traditional newspaper. Medium-length articles span social justice, progressive politics and current news items that touch the realm of progressive thinking. The next tab of the website will take you to Babble. Babble is a threaded discussion area dedicated to one of the great Rabble.ca principles: as long as the issue exists, the discussion continues. Rabble.ca works to ensure the website is interactive by its nature. A third tab will take you to the Podcast Network. The web allows people to voice opinions and thoughts and put them up for discussion and Rabble.ca serves as a hub for progressive folks to access a wide range of podcasts on pertinent topics. It was the first podcasting network in Canada and is still one of the best. Rabble.ca is also home to a large collection of progressive bloggers and maintains a page for progressive and

social-justice media as well.

Rabble.ca might be best described as a meeting ground for many voices to discuss what is going on in Canada, but there is more yet. Discussion without action makes no progress. The site also hosts an activist toolbox that helps people turn their ideas and discussion into action that can make a difference.

Being net-based, Rabble.ca responds quickly to breaking issues and news. It creates original material, accepts submissions and aggregates reporting, and it does this with a small staff. The goal is to give its users the tools to engage with issues and to create an intense but inviting environment for voices of progressive people. As a non-profit, it has sustaining partners, accepts donations and uses non-invasive advertising to keep the community humming along. Like *Our Times*, *Rabble.ca* is a community that is made better by every voice. Education workers will find diverse resources, sounding boards and a community of progressive ideas to contribute to and gain from. Meagan Perry,

editor-in-chief at Rabble, invites you join "the house of many voices."

Getting in touch with progressive media is not hard. There are many voices and sources on the landscape. It just means finding something that appeals in terms of available time, values and interests. From these four offerings, there is a diverse collection of strengths and appeals and hopefully something to help everyone to build a connection to progressive thinking. With one of the most important federal elections in recent memory on the horizon, information is one thing each and every person must not be without. Included here is a sidebar containing contact information for each of these media sources and how you can become part of their respective communities. Remember, we are not alone! ☺

Jason Bremner is a teacher in District 29, Hastings-Prince Edward. He is the former chair of OSSTF/FEESO's Communications/Political Action Committee and is a recipient of the Wendell Fulton Award for Political Action.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

4-day Alternative Dispute Resolution Workshop

Learn to resolve disputes while preserving relationships



"Applicable to both my work life and personal life. Instructors and coaches were superb! Role plays were comfortable and non-threatening."
- Alison Wallace, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

Toronto: April 14-17
May 26-29
Ottawa: March 3-6
October 27-30

The skills learned will help you improve your negotiation skills in emotionally charged and difficult situations, mediate disputes among administrators, teachers, parents, and students, and create a positive environment within your school or place of work.

1.800.318.9741 | adr.ca | contact@adr.ca





**I LOVE MY
FREEDOM
TO READ**
whatever I want!

**J'AIME MA
LIBERTÉ
DE LIRE**
ce que je veux!

SEMAINE DE LA
FREEDOMLIBERTÉ

TO READ WEEK FEBRUARY 22-28 FÉVRIER 2015 D'EXPRESSION

BOOK AND PERIODICAL COUNCIL | FREEDOMTOREAD.CA | #FTRWEEK | @FREEDOM_TO_READ



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Illustration, Franke James 2014

Book and
Periodical
Council

Through car windows

Scenes of the Maritimes interpreted through textiles

Margaret Mitchell was born and raised in the London, Ontario area and studied clothing and textile design at Western University. She lived in England, Japan and Korea before moving to Peterborough in 2005 to teach at Peterborough Collegiate. She now teaches fashion and visual arts at Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School.

The works presented here are from a larger series completed during a year-long sabbatical. The images are all developed from photographs taken through car windows on a family trip to the Maritimes. The clarity and the mood of the final pieces shift to reflect the perspective of different family members at different points on the journey. Mitchell's textile background is evident in her use of hand embroidery or machine sewing and fabric dyeing. ☺

1. *Tree on the Trans-Canada*
2. *Gathering Storm*
3. *Service Station on the 401*
4. *View of the Lake 1*
5. *View of the Lake 2*
6. *The Bridge to New Brunswick*
7. *Leaving London*



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



The Canadian Canoe Museum

A hands-on interactive experience

P addling on a beautiful, still lake is a peaceful experience. The sun starts to rise in the distance and all around you are the echoing sounds of calling loons as your paddle breaks the surface of the water. What can add to this wonderful experience is knowing you had taken part in building this vessel and carving the paddle being used to make the journey happen.

Kayaking and canoeing are ancient modes of transportation, surpassing all others except travelling by foot. In fact the canoe and kayak have a long and interesting history and are of major significance to Canadians. The Canadian Canoe Museum is a unique national heritage site that has an exceptional collection of canoes, kayaks and paddled watercraft. It's a family-friendly museum with more than 100 canoes and kayaks on display. The museum also offers interactive, hands-on galleries, a scavenger hunt, model canoe-building and a puppet theatre for children. Through inclusive, memorable and engaging exhibits and programs we can share the art, culture, heritage and spirit of paddled watercraft in our communities.

Located in Peterborough, the museum's holdings number more than 600 canoes, kayaks and paddled watercraft. The collection includes pieces the origins of which span the country from coast to coast and represent many of the major watercraft traditions of Canada.





Voyageur canoe

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM



The museum's artifacts range from the great dugouts of the First Nations of the Pacific Northwest to the singular bark canoes of the Beothuk of Newfoundland, from the skin-on-frame kayaks of northern peoples from Baffin Island in the east to the Mackenzie River Delta in the northwest to the all-wood and canvas-covered craft manufactured by companies with names like Herald, Peterborough, Chestnut, Lakefield and Canadian. Over the years, paddled watercraft from as far away as Paraguay and the Amazon have

the first of which was signed in 1923. Students carry out a simulated treaty negotiation, playing the roles of First Nations and government agents. (Grade 10: Canadian History since World War I; Aboriginal Peoples in Canada; Grade 11: Current Aboriginal Issues in Canada; Grade 12: Aboriginal Governance: Emerging Directions.)

In Kayak Discovery, students working in small groups are given an introduction to the idea of kayak-building as a community task in traditional Inuit

tour of the beautiful and historic Otanabee River, followed by soapstone carving. Students have the unique experience of paddling a 26-foot north canoe or *canot du nord* that is a replica of the canoes used in Canada's fur trade. Students also learn about voyageur history and First Nations' roles in the fur trade.

In Canoe Literature, students learn about the centrality of the canoe to Canadian cultures and how they clearly portrayed in numerous works of art and literature. Students see Canada through



There are many workshops offered by the museum for the general public as well as educational programs for students.

helped the museum expand its reach and scope to include international examples.

There are many workshops offered by the museum for the general public as well as educational programs for students. The programs are directly linked to most courses in the Ontario curriculum through the unique lens of the canoe and its cultures. Rooted in the principles of experiential education, participants learn through song, story, role-play, adventure, carving, making, baking and imagining. Interactive, hands-on, inquiry-based learning with a cross-curricular First Nations emphasis is also accessible for students with special needs and different learning styles.

The programs include Treaty Canoe, an introduction to the historical treaty process based on the Williams Treaties,

cultures where different members play distinct and crucial roles. (Grade 9-12: Visual Arts; Grade 9: Native Studies; Grade 9-12: Canadian and World Studies; Grade 9-12: Business Studies; Grade 12: Health and Physical Education.)

Full-Size Paddle Carving involves a one-day paddle-carving program for youth ages 15-18. Soapstone Carving is a hands-on experience carving soapstone in the context of the Arctic Galleries and Inuit artifacts. Loon Carving uses a 4 x 6 inch block of soapstone to create a silky smooth sculpture in the iconic loon shape. (Grade 9-12: Arts; Grade 9-12: Visual Arts; Grade 9: Native Studies; Grade 10: Civics and Citizenship.) Watercolour Painting offers an exploration of painting techniques. (Grade 9-12: Visual Arts.)

Voyageur Canoe provides a four-hour

the eyes of explorers, prospectors, First Nations peoples, fur traders and even modern-day recreational canoeists. (Grade 9-12: English.)

Finally, Sleepover at the Museum is an adventurous evening of learning that features any two programs from the list above.

The museum also offers a wide variety of adult workshops and new classes are added every year. Whether you're interested in woodworking, weaving, leatherwork, sewing or simply learning a new skill, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Visit www.canoemuseum.ca to find the hours of operation and details on the workshops. For more information on how the educational programs connect to the secondary curriculum, e-mail education@canoemuseum.ca or call 705.748.9153 extension 203. ☞

Cc



Castle

directcu is now offered by



tandia[™]

cooperative banking

(formerly Teachers Credit Union)

Lower rates. Higher ceilings.

5-Year Low Rate Mortgage

Today's rate: **2.79%***

Finding the right mortgage is key to realizing your dreams of home ownership. Start living that dream with our exclusive 5-year Low Rate Mortgage of 2.79%* – which is one of the best rates you'll find. Tandia's DirecTCU[™] members can also enjoy the benefits of our 10-month payment plan, and payment relief can be arranged during unexpected income interruptions. So go ahead, dream a little bigger. With rates this low, you can. Apply online at directcu.ca.



directcu[™]

cooperative banking for educators

*This fixed annual percentage rate (APR) assumes no fee(s) apply. Legal and appraisal fees would increase the APR. Interest is calculated half-yearly, not in advance. Applications are subject to credit approval and some conditions apply. Rate is subject to change and offer subject to end without notice. DirecTCU is a division of Tandem Financial Credit Union Limited operating as Tandia. [™] DirecTCU is a trademark of Credit Union Central of Canada and is used under license.

directcu.ca
1.800.598.2891

Keeping you in the loop

Reviews, conferences, PD opportunities and other items of interest

BOOK REVIEWS

Paul Has a Summer Job

by Michel Rabagliati

Drawn and Quarterly, 2002

160 pages, \$26.95

Reviewed by Stephen Wilson

Coming-of-age stories are filled with clichés—find identity, experience love, reflect—yet they remain popular in English courses because of how easily readers relate to the characters, plots, conflicts and themes. A lesser-known example of such a story is Michel Rabagliati's *Paul Has a Summer Job*, a graphic novel originally published in French.

As a graphic novel, the story appeals to readers who, through Rabagliati's vivid sketches, can visualize the titular character's challenges and triumphs as he progresses through his 18th year, first as a high-school dropout, then as a factory labourer and finally to his summer as counsellor at a camp for troubled kids. Here, Paul learns about himself through others, including fellow counsellors and the children he supervises. Lessons such as relationships, dealing with authority and overcoming fears serve as potential springboards for discussion.

To engage readers, Rabagliati uses a shock-and-awe style that includes profanity and sexual content (limited to the simple line drawings of comic strips) that mimics the mindset of a teenager. The im-



ages and text also reflect anger, tenderness and accomplishment. If used in a classroom, previewing the text is important. The cartoon penises (yes, there are multiple ones) should not be a reason to shelve the book. It is heart-warming, comical and a celebration of Québécois culture.

Paul is an entertaining choice for struggling readers who are also coming of age—clichés and all.

Stephen Wilson is a teacher in District 6B, Superior North, and is a member of the Communications/Political Action Committee.

Paul a un travail d'été

de Michel Rabagliati

Pastèque, 2005

160 pages, 24,95 \$

Critique de Stephen Wilson

Les histoires qui racontent le passage à l'âge adulte sont pleines de clichés—trouver son identité, connaître l'amour, réfléchir—pourtant elles demeurent populaires dans les cours d'anglais parce que les lecteurs s'associent facilement aux personnages, intrigues, conflits et thèmes. Un exemple moins connu d'une telle histoire est *Paul a un travail d'été* de Michel Rabagliati, une bande dessinée

initialement publiée en français.

En tant que bande dessinée, l'histoire plaît aux lecteurs qui, par les dessins saisissants de Michel Rabagliati, peuvent visualiser les défis et les victoires du personnage principal alors qu'il traverse sa 18^e année, d'abord comme décrocheur au secondaire, puis comme travailleur en usine et finalement comme moniteur d'un camp d'été pour enfants en difficulté. Là, Paul apprend à se connaître au travers des autres, dont ses collègues moniteurs et les enfants qu'il supervise. Des leçons comme les rapports avec les autres, les problèmes face à l'autorité et le dépassement des craintes servent de tremplins potentiels pour les discussions.

Pour intéresser les lecteurs, Michel Rabagliati utilise un style choquant et stupéfiant qui inclut des grossièretés et un contenu à caractère sexuel (limité aux simples tracés de dessins de bandes dessinées) qui imite la mentalité d'un adolescent. Les images et le texte reflètent également la colère, la tendresse et la réussite. Il est important de donner un aperçu du texte à l'avance, si on l'utilise en classe. Les pénis dessinés (oui, il y en a plusieurs) ne devraient pas être une raison de mettre le livre de côté, car celui-ci est réconfortant, comique et fait l'éloge de la culture québécoise.

Paul est un choix divertissant pour les élèves qui ont du mal à lire et qui approchent de l'âge adulte—clichés et tout ce qui s'en suit.

Stephen Wilson enseigne au District 6B, Superior North, et est membre du Comité des communications/action politique.

The Dirty War: The making of the myth of Black dangerousness

By Charles C. Smith

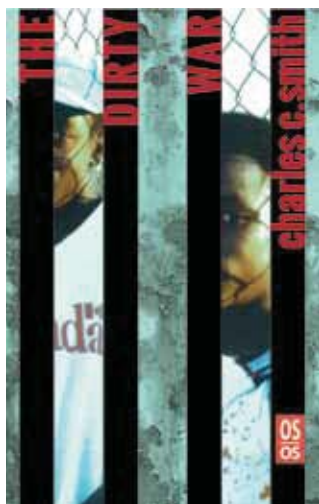
CCPA, 2014

129 pages, \$20.00

Reviewed by Eunice O'Mahony

Charles C. Smith's compelling, prescient and poignant account of the plight of Blacks in North America, specifically

Canada, is a must-read for everybody connected to the delivery of education in this country, including administrators



and policy-makers. Given the relatively recent events in Ferguson, Missouri, it behooves every one of us to read this book and, more importantly, to act.

Even though densely packed with statistics and data gleaned from hundreds of studies and inquiries, Smith has written an accessible book that weaves a credible narrative of profoundly embedded and completely normalized racism—specifically Black racism.

The image of the violent and anti-social Black is nourished by a steady diet of Black negativity in our media. Reality police shows, the news, reports of crime etc. serve to maintain the myth of Black dangerousness and its corollary, Black non-humanness, hence the collective blindness to Black oppression. The numbers speak for themselves. Up to 22 million Blacks perished during the slave trade and hundreds of millions perished during colonization. Where is the global indignation? Our prisons, school suspension/expulsion lists and poverty indices are unjustly over-populated by Blacks.

Smith posits this has been engineered to the point of becoming a standard in Canadian society. By highlighting

society's compliance in accepting this stereotype and its inertia in dealing with it, Smith has elevated the discourse to a level that can only generate positive reaction and change.

Eunice O'Mahony is from District 12, Toronto, and teaches at Central Toronto Academy. She is also a member of the Provincial Human Rights Committee.

Indivisible: Indigenous Human Rights

Edited by Joyce Green

Fernwood Publishing

240 pages, \$20.00

Reviewed by Daniel Stevens

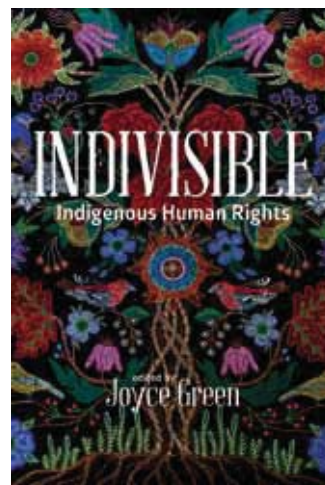
Indivisible: Indigenous Human Rights is a well-researched, well-paced book that highlights some of the socio-economical issues faced by the Indigenous people of Canada.

It provides a strong, concise breakdown of historical facts and clarifies current human-rights issues. The book outlines the difficulties faced by Indigenous groups that are striving to reassert their independence in a colonialized, settled Canada. It clearly articulates how Canada creates false fronts of multicultural acceptance on the international stage that actually breach international law.

The book brings to light the various hidden agendas of the Canadian government when dealing with its Indigenous populations. It supports its arguments with current census data, court cases and international comparisons of people who are advocating for Indigenous rights in settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

Indivisible explains how the historical nature of legislation was and is currently not a means of securing rights for its Indigenous peoples but a means of maintaining colonial control over them. It highlights how the Canadian government has failed to provide adequate restitution for what was unlawfully taken from Indigenous groups in Canada such as their culture, land, language and dignity.

Indivisible is a great read for anyone who is looking for a book that is willing to explore the deeper, darker implica-



tions of Canada's very complex relationships with its Indigenous people.

Daniel Stevens is a Co-operative Education teacher at Northern Secondary School within the Near North Board and sits on OSSTF/FEESO's FNMI Workgroup. He has also worked as a Special Representative for the Chiefs of Ontario and for le Ministère de l'éducation on various occasions. He is a member of Nipissing First Nation.

Tax Is Not a Four-Letter Word:

A Different Take on Taxes in Canada

Edited by Alex Himelfarb and Jordan Himelfarb

Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013

304 pages, \$29.99

Reviewed by Del Jones

Imagine—a feel-good book about paying taxes. That may be a bit of an overstatement but *Tax Is Not a Four-Letter Word* is an interesting read and one that should be mandatory for all progressive-minded Canadians. Readers will come away with a basic understanding of how taxes and attitudes about taxes have shifted over time. They will also come to appreciate





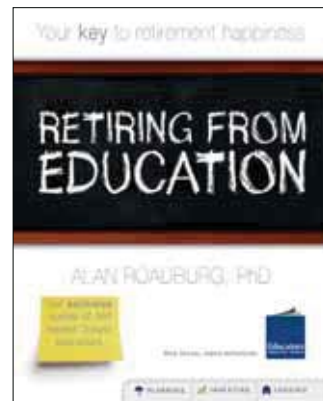
why it is time for a new and rational conversation about taxes and our future.

The book includes an introduction by the Himelfarbs followed by a series of essays from a number of prominent Canadians including Jim Stanford,

Hugh Mackenzie, Stéphane Dion and Trish Hennessy. The authors effectively trace the shift in Canadian attitudes towards paying taxes while illustrating the success of the right wing in disconnecting the payment of taxes from the benefits received by citizens. Ultimately, the book challenges the accepted belief that all taxes are bad by clearly pointing out the high cost of tax cuts, mainly that tax cuts have resulted in the loss of significant benefits for most Canadians.

Tax is Not a Four-Letter Word is a book that convinces readers it is time to change the conversation from tax cuts at all costs to a rational discussion including an open and honest debate about the future of our country. This is a conversation that is long overdue.

Del Jones is a teacher in District 26, Upper Canada, and a member of the Communications/Political Action Committee.



Retiring from Education: Your Key to Retirement Happiness

By Alan Roadburg, Ph.D.

Life After Work Press, Second Edition
208 pages, \$20.00

Review by Vanessa Woodacre

Retiring from Education: Your Key To Retirement Happiness is a book applicable to not only educators but all who are contemplating retirement. It is the advice you can enjoy and revisit as needed throughout your career.

Dr. Alan Roadburg's views of retirement are thorough and accessible. It's a blend of informational text and deeply thoughtful sociological theory as well as practical applications. Theories surrounding retirement happiness are explained through a collage of conversations woven as a backdrop to a central story.

The information provided in Roadburg's book is based on a survey of 300 educators and is divided into three main sections in direct response to information gained from the survey.

One of the key elements of retirement happiness, he explains, may in fact be our view of it. One of the first elements of the book is to dispel the myth that retirement is a withdrawal from work and from life and a move into old age—a traditional view of retirement. Roadburg sees planning for retirement as a means of redefining and rebranding retirement



PRINCIPALS—TEACHERS—EDUCATORS A CHANCE TO WORK & EXPLORE IN CHINA!

The Canadian Trillium College (CTC) is a certified Ontario secondary school program in China, offering Chinese students the opportunity of acquiring credits for an OSSD. To do this we need motivated and Ontario qualified Principals, Vice-Principals and classroom teachers of:

- ESL, (Levels 2–5)
- Intermediate & Senior—English, Mathematics, Business, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Studies & Social Sciences
- Courses vary for each school

CTC has five campuses located in mainland China: Shanghai; Nanjing; Quanzhou City (across from Taiwan); Jinhua (close to Hangzhou); Taiyuan.

Terms: Competitive compensation (CND\$) and paid: return air, private furnished accommodation, medical insurance assistance and more.

This is a very unique opportunity for retired educators, newly qualified educators and educators on "funded leaves" to experience an ancient culture and dramatic changes of China.

You can visit our website at: <http://www.ctc-school.com>

APPLY NOW!

Forward resume and cover letter to:

Supervising Principal The Canadian Trillium College, Toronto Office:

Tel: 416-763-4121 • Fax: 416-763-5225 • dmfolz@hotmail.com



to match today's retirees and their needs and wants. He goes on to explain some of the keys to retirement happiness should in fact be planning your life goal in tandem with your financial goal.

Whether you are at the beginning of your career, in the middle or already retired, this book is invaluable. It can help you start to decide what kind of life after career you are looking for and how best your financial goals can be oriented to support your plans.

Vanessa Woodacre is a teacher in District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge.

CONFERENCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

March 5, 2015

Suicidal or Self-Harming?
Assessment and Treatment of
"At Risk" Teens

Lyle S. Hallman Faculty of Social Work,
Kitchener, ON

This workshop will help participants learn to recognize the signs of suicidal and self-harming behaviours in adolescents, how to engage with the teen and their peer network and understand crisis intervention strategies. To register online, go to www.legacy.wlu.ca/page.php?grp_id=1690&p=26598.

March 10–11, 2015

It Matters To Us: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools Conference
Faculty of Education, Western University
London, ON

The London Area Truth and Reconciliation Committee, in collaboration with local educational and community partners, will be hosting an education conference. Our objective is to provide educational opportunities that foster dialogue, reconciliation and relationship-building between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in our local communities. For more information or to register, go to www.learningtoendabuse.ca/it-matters-us-transforming-legacy-residential-schools.

March 26–28, 2015

World Congress of Modern Languages
Collaborating across Languages and
Borders conference
Sheraton on the Falls,
Niagara Falls, ON

Be part of the most exciting event of the year for teachers of second languages. Topics include multilingualism, cultural interaction, language acquisition and class management. The conference will include two symposia by the European Centre for Modern Languages and the Canadian Centre for Studies and Research on Bilingualism and Language Planning. For more information, visit www.caslt.org/conference15/conference2015_en.php.

April 9–10, 2015

Association for Special Education
Technology
Spring Conference


Sheraton on the Falls,
Niagara Falls, ON

ASET's seventh annual conference will begin with a vendors' showcase, followed by a meet and greet. Friday's conference will include an inspirational keynote address by Alvin Law, followed by a variety of relevant and informative breakout sessions. For more information, visit asetontario.ca.

April 23–24, 2015

Ontario Business Educators'
Association Spring Conference
The Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport,
Toronto, ON

The OBEA is proud to offer a wide variety of workshops covering all areas of business studies with a focus on financial literacy, SHSM, technology and teaching strategies. Apply for PD funding from your administration and your federation. For more information, visit www.obea.ca.



Stressed, Tired or Depressed?

Take the time to start FeelingBetterNow®.


Find out about your emotional and mental wellbeing. Take the online FeelingBetterNow® mental health assessment test.

Completely confidential and anonymous.

Medically approved tools for you and your doctor. Visit *your* FeelingBetterNow® site and follow the simple instructions.


You are not alone. We can help.

feelingbetter now


OTIP RAE0

feelingbetternow.com/otip

This program is offered to OTIP and Teachers Life members as part of their LTD benefits plan.


TEACHERS LIFE
Ready For Life

feelingbetternow.com/teacherslife

Dedicated Family Law Lawyers

At Fine and Associates, we are committed to helping our clients obtain the best possible resolution to the challenges often faced by individuals during a Divorce, Separation, or when dealing with other difficult Family Law matters.



We will protect your rights!

- Separation Agreements
- Property Division
- Child Support
- Spousal Support
- Divorce
- Divorce Mediation
- Collaborative Law
- Domestic Abuse
- Father's Rights
- Child Custody
- Visitation Rights
- Mediation/Arbitration
- Prenuptial & Marriage Agreements
- Restraining Orders



Fine & Associates PC
FAMILY & DIVORCE LAWYERS

1120 Finch Avenue West, Suite #601
Toronto, ON M3J 3H7 T 416.650.1300

Call us for your free phone consultation.

www.torontodivorcelaw.com

Forum picks

May 7–9, 2015

Ontario Association of Physics

Teachers Bridging the Gap conference
University of Guelph, Guelph, ON

This year's conference theme looks at bridging the gap between K–12 teachers and post-secondary educators. Workshop proposals are being accepted now. To submit a proposal or to register, visit www.oapt.ca.

June 22–25, 2015

Canada International Conference on
Education

University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

The Canada International Conference (CICE) is an international refereed conference dedicated to the advancement of theory and practices in education. The CICE promotes collaborative excellence between education academicians and professionals. Submissions are accepted in English and French. The aim of CICE is to provide an opportunity for academicians and professionals from various educational fields with cross-disciplinary interests to bridge the knowledge gap, promote research esteem and the evolution of pedagogy. CICE 2015 invites research papers that encompass conceptual analysis, design implementation and performance evaluation. This conference covers a wide range of topics concerning teaching and learning. For more information, visit www.ciceducation.org.

July 20–24, 2015

All Things Marine Summer Course
Huntsman Marine Science Centre
St. Andrews, NB

All Things Marine, a hands-on marine experience for teachers, families and friends. Join us as we explore the unique and diverse environment of the Bay of Fundy. What we catch and collect is what we will study! The all-inclusive course fee of \$670 includes four-night dorm accommodations, meals, boat and lab fees, aquarium admissions and taxes. For more information, visit www.huntsmanmarine.ca or call 506-529-1200. ☎





Last word

by Paul Elliott, President

Mot de la fin

par Paul Elliott, président

Striving for a sustainable society

OSSTF/FEESO's Common Threads project

IN 2002 OSSTF/FEESO created a progressive curriculum program that had its genesis within our international solidarity outreach into South America. The program, identified as Common Threads, offers our members the opportunity to travel abroad and conduct research that results in the creation of new curriculum on critical issues. The first five projects dealt with important themes that resonated with our students and were directly related to the outcomes and expectations as identified by the Ministry of Education in a variety of curriculum documents. The initial project focused on the sweatshops of Guatemala and was followed by HIV in South Africa, the world water crisis with a focus on Chile, food security in Brazil and finally First Nations, Métis and Inuit issues. Each of these curriculum documents provide an opportunity for direct engagement by our students in the issues they will face locally, regionally and globally. Each project has drawn direct relationships between activities and decisions made locally and the impact they may have halfway around the world. Our next Common Threads initiative will focus on sustainable societies with research that includes the countries of Norway and Venezuela.

As we explore the concept of sustainability, the global impact of all we do economically, environmentally and socially cannot be ignored. It has become increasingly apparent that as the world shifted to a global economy, our interdependence environmentally and socially, not just within our regional boundaries but globally, has become increasingly important. As neo-liberal governments continue to push for more and more free trade agreements, our interdependence will become even more paramount as we see the thirst for the world's resources, such as oil, wood, minerals and water, exponentially increase. As manufacturing shifts to developing countries, the scale of their industrialization and the number of their workers will dwarf what we witnessed in Europe and North America, and as the middle class of China and India begin to emerge,

Lutter pour une société durable

Projet *Common Threads* d'OSSTF/FEESO

EN 2002, OSSTF/FEESO a créé un programme d'études progressif qui tire son origine de notre approche de solidarité internationale en Amérique du Sud. Le programme, connu sous le nom de *Common Threads*, donne l'occasion à nos membres de voyager à l'étranger et d'effectuer de la recherche dans le but de créer de nouveaux programmes d'études sur des enjeux primordiaux. Les cinq premiers projets ont porté sur des thèmes importants d'intérêt pour nos élèves et qui étaient reliés aux résultats et aux attentes décrits par le ministère de l'Éducation. Le projet initial était axé sur les ateliers clandestins au Guatemala; suivi par le VIH en Afrique du Sud, la crise mondiale de l'eau centrée sur le Chili, la sécurité alimentaire au Brésil et les questions relatives aux Premières Nations, aux Métis et aux Inuits. Chacun d'eux favorise un engagement direct de nos élèves sur les questions auxquelles ils seront confrontés à l'échelle locale, régionale et mondiale. Chaque projet a établi des liens directs entre les activités et les décisions prises au niveau local et les répercussions qu'elles peuvent avoir de l'autre côté de la planète. Notre prochain *Common Threads* sera axé sur les sociétés durables avec une recherche dans deux pays, la Norvège et le Venezuela.

En étudiant le concept de durabilité, on ne peut pas ignorer les répercussions mondiales de tout ce que nous faisons sur le plan économique, environnemental et social. Il est de plus en plus évident qu'alors que le monde s'est tourné vers l'économie mondiale, notre interdépendance à la fois environnementale et sociale revêt une importance, non seulement dans nos régions, mais ailleurs dans le monde. À mesure que les gouvernements néolibéraux continuent à faire pression pour plus d'accords de libre-échange, notre interdépendance prendra beaucoup d'ampleur, car nous assistons à une augmentation exponentielle de la demande pour les richesses mondiales, comme le pétrole, le bois, les minéraux et l'eau. Avec le déplacement des industries manufacturières vers les pays en développement, leur industrialisation à grande échelle et le nombre de leurs travailleurs surpasseront ce que nous avons constaté en Europe



so too will the thirst for consumer products and the thirst for resources to slake that thirst.

Linked directly with this global economic shift is the global environmental impact. And as we have witnessed with the unmet targets of reducing carbon emissions around the globe, economics has trumped environmental concerns at every turn. Naomi Klein's most recent book, *This Changes Everything*, clearly outlines that short-term thinking and the denial movement will not generate the commitment we need to sustain the world as it is now, and as we approach the tipping point of drastic climate change ever more quickly, the time to act decreases at an exponential rate.

Another warning was sounded in 2005 with the release of Jared Diamond's book *Collapse*. Diamond described the historical and pre-historical incidences of societal collapse but also issued a warning that our failure to address environmental issues and our insatiable consumption will impact us on a global scale and cause irrevocable damage. As much as Diamond focusses in his book on the collapse of societies due to environmental issues, we cannot continue to limit our focus and ignore the ultimate failure of capitalism to achieve our goal of maintaining a fully functioning society for the next millennium. Too often issues of sustainability become focused on sustainable resources, sustainable environments or sustainable economies. Each on their own is important, but more important is how each should be viewed as components of a sustainable society.

As we witness the growing importance of economic development, it becomes clear it is accomplished at the expense of the climate and our social values. Governments cannot overlook their responsibility to their citizens and ensure resources, the environment and the economy all support a sustainable society.

Over the past few months, members of OSSTF/FEESO have explored approaches taken to achieve and maintain social justice, equity, fairness and democracy through two different approaches by Norway and Venezuela that make use of their abundance of fossil fuels. In both cases the development of the petroleum industry was viewed through the lens of sustainability but with the ultimate goal of how this development could be used for long-term social sustainability. But the use of a single fossil-fuel resource may not be enough, and the environmental impact may very well limit their sustainability from a climate-change perspective. It cannot be denied that short-term solutions to economic, environmental and social issues will not be sustainable if they do not have the goal of building a sustainable society.

If the time, effort and money that are currently being used on a single pipeline in Canada could be used towards expanding the conversation and creating a vision of a global sustainable society, we may have the opportunity to reverse the current trend. But it will take commitment from every sector, including the labour movement, governments and business, to stop this slide to the tipping point of drastic climate change and refocus on a sustainable society. ☺

et en Amérique du Nord et, à mesure que la classe moyenne chinoise et indienne émerge, il en sera de même des produits de consommation et de l'avidité pour les ressources.

Ce changement à l'économie mondiale est lié à l'incidence sur l'environnement. Et comme nous l'avons constaté avec les objectifs non atteints de réduction des émissions de carbone dans le monde, la science économique a pris le dessus sur les préoccupations environnementales. Le plus récent ouvrage de Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*, expose qu'une réflexion à court terme et un mouvement de contestation ne produiront pas l'engagement dont nous avons besoin pour soutenir le monde tel qu'il est à présent et, comme nous approchons encore plus rapidement du point de non-retour du changement climatique drastique, le moment d'agir diminue très rapidement.

En 2005, avec le livre de Jared Diamond, *Collapse*, on a lancé un autre avertissement. Jared Diamond a fait ressortir les fréquences préhistoriques et historiques de l'effondrement des structures sociales, mais il a aussi prévenu que notre inaction et notre consommation insatiable nous affecteront sur la scène mondiale et causeront des dommages irréparables. Autant M. Diamond met l'accent sur l'effondrement des sociétés en raison des problèmes environnementaux, autant nous ne pouvons pas continuer à nous borner et à ignorer l'échec du capitalisme pour atteindre notre objectif de maintenir une société entièrement fonctionnelle. Les problèmes relatifs au développement durable se consacrent trop souvent aux ressources, aux milieux ou aux économies durables. Séparément, chacun de ces facteurs est important, mais leur perception en tant qu'éléments d'une société durable l'est encore plus.

Alors que nous saisissons l'importance croissante du développement économique, il apparaît qu'il se fait au détriment du climat et de nos valeurs sociales. Les gouvernements ne peuvent pas négliger leurs responsabilités et doivent veiller à ce que les ressources, l'environnement et l'économie appuient une société durable.

Depuis quelques mois, des membres d'OSSTF/FEESO ont examiné les méthodes adoptées pour atteindre et maintenir la justice sociale, l'équité, la justice et la démocratie grâce à deux approches différentes de la Norvège et du Venezuela qui profitent de leur abondance de combustibles fossiles. Dans les deux cas, le développement de l'industrie pétrolière a été envisagé sous l'angle de la durabilité, dans le but de l'utiliser pour la viabilité sociale à long terme. Mais l'utilisation d'un seul type de ressources en combustible fossile peut s'avérer insuffisante et l'impact environnemental risque de limiter sa durabilité du point de vue du changement climatique. Il est indéniable que les solutions à court terme aux problèmes économiques, environnementaux et sociaux ne seront pas viables si elles ne visent pas à bâtir une société durable.

Si le temps, les efforts et l'argent consacrés à l'heure actuelle à un seul oléoduc au Canada pouvaient être utilisés pour soutenir le dialogue et créer une vision d'une société durable à l'échelle globale, nous pourrions avoir la chance d'inverser le cours actuel des choses. Mais il faudra un engagement de tous les secteurs pour enrayer ce glissement vers le point de non-retour du changement climatique drastique et pour attirer à nouveau notre attention sur une société durable. ☺

Enjoy a healthier retirement!

Teachers...



Join RTO/ERO and access Canada's **largest** voluntary group insurance plan for retired educators and educational support staff.

Benefits

- Group and individual insurance plans, including travel
- Active social network
- Dedicated travel agency
- Award-winning quarterly magazine

Attend a
Retirement
Planning
Workshop
for your chance
to win a
FREE iPad Mini!*



À votre service...pour le soin de votre avenir.

THE RETIRED TEACHERS OF ONTARIO
LES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS
RETRAITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

Here for you now ... Here for your future.

www.rto-ero.org/join-us
1-800-361-9888

Sign up for a
**Retirement Planning
Workshop** near you:



www.rto-ero.org/rpw-schedule-list

*We value your privacy. Your information will remain within RTO/ERO and will never be sold. iPad Mini courtesy of RTO/ERO. At each of the workshops, one attendee will be selected by random draw to win one (1) Apple iPad Mini (approx. value \$329.00). Correct answer to skill testing-question required. No purchase necessary. Chances of winning iPad Mini will depend on the number of attendees at the specific workshop. iPad Mini is a registered trademark of Apple Inc. Apple is not a sponsor of, nor a participant in this promotion.

MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS BENEFITS



**OSSTF members get up to
50% off home insurance**

You will enjoy big savings when you purchase both your car and home insurance from OTIP. It's just one more reason why it feels good to belong.



Call 1-844-234-6847 or visit
otip.com/osstf to complete a quote

This is a one-time discount (of up to 50%) and is only applicable to new multi-line home and auto policies underwritten by Traders General Insurance Company, part of the Aviva Insurance Company of Canada. OTIP and Aviva have the right to withdraw this offer at any time. Must reside in Ontario to be eligible for this discount.



OTIP RAE[®]