

Slavery and McGill University: **Bicentenary Recommendations**

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*We humbly dedicate these Recommendations to the
black and indigenous people who were
enslaved by James McGill*

Anonymous: indigenous child (c. 1768-1778)

Marie: indigenous child (c. 1771 to 1773 - 1783)

Marie Lousie: black woman (c. 1761 to 1765 - 1789)

Sarah Cavilhe / Charlotte / Marie Charles: black woman (c. 1763 - 1809)

Jacques: black man (c. 1766 - 1838)

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INTRODUCTION ONE

Slavery and McGill University: Bicentenary Recommendations

Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, Professor of Art History, McGill University

On 25 May 2020 in Minneapolis, four police officers participated in the on-camera murder of Mr. George Floyd who stood accused of the non-violent crime of passing a counterfeit twenty dollar bill.¹

In 5 June 2020, #Black Lives Matter protestors unceremoniously tore down a public monument to the white British slave trader Edward Colston and rolled the life size sculpture into Bristol harbour.²

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 has revealed how centuries of racial injustice have resulted in stark discrepancies in access to medical care and the catastrophic mortality rates of black people.³

¹ Michael Safi, “George Floyd killing triggers wave of activism around the world,” The Guardian, 9 June 2020 (23 June 2020) <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/09/george-floyd-killing-triggers-wave-of-activism-around-the-world>

Newly released transcripts documenting the interaction between the four police officers and George Floyd in the moments leading up to his death reveal that he told the officers “I can’t breathe” more than twenty times, “only to have his pleas dismissed by Derek Chauvin...who said: ‘It takes a heck of a lot of oxygen to talk.’”

Maanvi Singh, “George Floyd told officers ‘I can’t breathe’ more than 20 times, transcripts show,” The Guardian, 9 July 2020 (date of last access 9 July 2020) <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jul/08/george-floyd-police-killing-transcript-i-cant-breathe>

² Suyin Hayes, “Monuments of Slave Traders, Genociders, and Imperialists are becoming Flashpoints in Global Anti-Racism Protests,” Time, 9 June 2020 (23 June 2020) <https://time.com/5850135/edward-colston-statue-slave-trader-protests/>

Steve Morris, “Edward Colston statue retrieved from Bristol Harbour,” The Guardian, 11 June 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

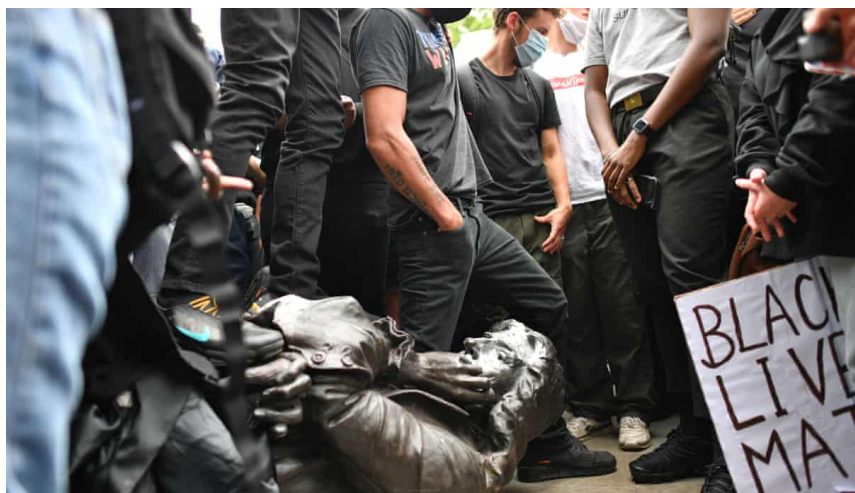
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jun/11/edward-colston-statue-retrieved-bristol-harbour-black-lives-matter>

Bill Brownstein, “Brownstein: James McGill gets his reckoning – over 200 years later,” Montreal Gazette, 16 June 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://montrealgazette.com/opinion/columnists/brownstein-james-mcgill-gets-his-reckoning-over-200-years-later>

³ Ed Pilkington, “Black Americans dying of Covid-19 at three times the rate of white people,” The Guardian, 20 May 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/20/black-americans-death-rate-covid-19-coronavirus>

The identities, lives, and experiences of black people have entered the global public consciousness in a way that I have not witnessed before in my lifetime. The convergence of the above cited incidents and revelations are fueling worldwide protests against police brutality and racial injustice, and heads of state and CEO's of corporations alike are scrambling to acknowledge systemic racism and declaring their



Ben Birchall, #Black Lives Matter Protesters with toppled Edward Colston Statue (2020), photograph

commitments to black communities.⁴ It is, however, telling that it has taken the convergence of what are in many ways unprecedented events to force so many white people not merely to recognize, but to stand up as allies against systemic racial injustice alongside black, indigenous, Latinx, and other people of colour.

In my winter 2020 undergraduate lecture course at McGill University, The Black Subject in Historical and Contemporary Popular Visual Culture, I began by reading out the names of black Americans and Canadians who had been killed by the police. The list was long, but incomplete. I informed the students that, sadly, I could have filled an entire lecture with the names of the black people who had recently lost their lives because of police brutality. My “in memoriam” recitation was a way to alert my students about the urgency of our course content, content that explored how the often violent and denigrating visual stereotyping of black people in western art and visual culture helped to justify the dehumanization of the enslaved within the institution of Transatlantic Slavery. The history of slavery which I examine in the introductory overview below, is one which has been largely and purposefully erased in Canada. Despite its two hundred year history, Canadian academia and the lay public routinely deny or ignore these histories. This academic refusal is performed despite the often obvious, direct, and profound connections between the histories of western universities and Transatlantic Slavery. Such is the case with McGill University. Despite being the direct result of James McGill’s - slave owner and West Indian merchant - £10,000 bequest, McGill University has not acknowledged, critically examined, or redressed these histories and the anti-black, anti-indigenous racism upon which McGill University was founded.

⁴ Jason Owens, “Roger Goodell: NFL admits ‘we were wrong’ on player protests, says ‘black lives matter,’” Yahoo! Sports, 5 June 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://sports.yahoo.com/roger-goodell-nfl-admits-we-were-wrong-on-player-protests-black-lives-matter-224540686.html>

Sarah Turnbull, “Systemic racism exist in all institutions, including RCMP,” Trudeau,” CTVNews.ca, 11 June 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/systemic-racism-exists-in-all-institutions-including-rcmp-trudeau-1.4979878>

“As big corporations say ‘black lives matter,’ their track records raise skepticism,” The Washington Post, Business, 13 June 2020 (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/13/after-years-marginalizing-black-employees-customers-corporate-america-says-black-lives-matter/?arc404=true>

These recommendations were produced within the context of my other winter 2020 undergraduate course, a seminar entitled: James McGill was a Slave Owner: Slavery and the History of Universities. As the bicentenary of McGill University approached (2021), it became apparent that McGill's upper administration was not going to capitalize upon this important milestone to strike a taskforce or working group to investigate the university's profound and indisputable historical links to slavery. In recent years, such histories have been rigorously unearthed and interrogated by other universities like Brown, Harvard, and Princeton in the USA,⁵ Glasgow in the UK,⁶ and notably Dalhousie and King's College both in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.⁷ Unlike my class, these other committees benefitted from the official backing of their universities, support which included significant financial and social investments in the processes of research and investigation and the universities' commitments to redress and repair these histories based upon committee findings and recommendations. In the absence of such leadership and support, I took it upon myself to work with my dedicated McGill students – the best of the best - to produce these recommendations.

A class of this nature is obviously not mandatory. Therefore, the nineteen students who enrolled in this class (eighteen undergraduates and one PhD) demonstrated a level of commitment, not merely to academic engagement, but to social justice, far beyond the average university student. Furthermore, completion of their individual and collective outcomes is even more praise-worthy given that they did so in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic through remote supervision.⁸ You will read below, in their own words, what they contributed to and gained from the course (see introduction two).

⁵ Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://www.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/content/Harvard-Slavery-Book-111110.pdf>
https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/
 Sven Beckert and Katherine Stevens, Harvard and Slavery: Seeking a Forgotten History, 2011 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://www.harvard.edu/slavery>
<https://www.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/content/Harvard-Slavery-Book-111110.pdf>
 The Princeton and Slavery Project (date of last access 23 June 2020), <https://slavery.princeton.edu>

⁶ "Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow," 2018, (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/slavery/report2018/>
 Dr. Stephen Mullen and Prof. Simon Newman, Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow: Report and Recommendations of the University of Glasgow History of Slavery Steering Committee, September 2018 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_607547_smxx.pdf

Severin Carrell, "Glasgow University to pay £20m in slave trade reparations,"

The Guardian, 23 August 2019 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/aug/23/glasgow-university-slave-trade-reparations>

Hannah Capella, "Glasgow University's 'bold' Move to pay be Slave Trade profits," BBC News, 23 August 2019 (date of last access 23 June 2020) <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-49435041>

⁷ Lord Dalhousie Scholarly Panel on Slavery and Race (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://www.dal.ca/dept/ldp.html>

Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, September 2019 (date of last access 23 June 2020)

https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/ldp/Lord%20Dal%20Panel%20Final%20Report_web.pdf

King's and Slavery: A Scholarly Inquiry

<https://ukings.ca/administration/public-documents/slavery-scholarly-inquiry/>

University of King's College and Slavery: A Scholarly Inquiry, December 2017, (date of last access 23 June 2020)

<https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/KingsandSlavery-DescriptiveDocument0321.pdf>

⁸ See student analysis of Quebec bills of sale for enslaved people and comparative fugitives slave advertisement analysis: Bills of Sale, <https://www.blackcanadianstudies.com/bills-of-sale/>

To study Transatlantic Slavery is to bear witness to a genocide, a four hundred year history through which white slave owners and other colonialists sought to reduce enslaved Africans, enslaved indigenous people, and their descendants to objects or chattel; literally defined as moveable personal property under colonial laws. The archival documents (like bills of sale for the enslaved and fugitive slave advertisements) and the secondary literature with which the students engaged, were demanding in their historical complexity, but also in terms of the emotional toll of studying sources which exposed the inhumanity of the “peculiar institution,” as slavery was known. As you read this document you will understand why I am extraordinarily proud of these exceptional young scholars.

Just six months away from the beginning of McGill’s bicentenary year (2021), I am hopeful that these recommendations will be carefully studied by many and that our research will shed light not only on McGill University’s profound and undeniable connection to Transatlantic Slavery, but also on the understudied and concealed histories of Canadian Slavery.

It is also my hope that McGill’s upper administration, to whom this document will be sent, will implement these important recommendations. However, this document and our important scholarship should not take the place of the task force which McGill University still needs to strike to complete the years-long investigations of the connections of James McGill and the university which he founded, to Transatlantic Slavery.

INTRODUCTION TWO

Student Leadership, Responsibility, and Institutional Accountability

Christopher Gismondi, PhD Student Art History, McGill University and Student Contributors

Students and faculty at numerous and diverse North American universities are protesting their institution's failures to recognize their engagement with and accommodation of a racism that especially targets Black people. A central demand of these students and faculty members is that their respective institutions examine and acknowledge their connections to slavery, the slave trade, and anti-Blackness.⁹

Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race (2019)

The University has many moving parts as an increasingly corporatized institution: boards of governors, donors, principals, communications departments, deans, chairs, professors, lecturers, administrators, other staff, and graduate student labour (as a non-exhaustive list). Yet the defining population of the university as a temporal milestone and celebrated achievement is the undergraduate student body whose education, mentoring, professional development, and livelihood sit at the centre of the university mandate. The demographic make-up of McGill's student body and the supports available to populations made vulnerable and under-represented have been rigorously examined and found to be wholly inadequate by other authors in this significant report (see section six). The student experience of university for some is a time of independence and social pursuit. For others, the university allows them to actively cultivate and apply critical thinking from so-called higher education and envision as well as advocate for a different present and future that transcend the status quo. It is this student leadership and youth responsibility, one which continuously aims to hold university and government administrations accountable, that I seek to celebrate and outline. The patronizing rhetoric of being "leaders of tomorrow" needs to be undone. Instead, many students are clearly already leaders today and that mindset and philosophy infiltrates every facet of our lives, including the university communities to which we temporarily belong.

This history of student political and social engagement and the accountability of higher education institutions is demonstrated in many University reports on redressing ties to slavery, colonialism, and imperialism. The ground-breaking Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, conceived by Ruth J. Simmons, released their report in 2006 elucidating histories of slavery, its economic connections to universities, and why these institutions are implicated within current debates about redress and reconciliation. Exemplary, in 1786 Brown modeled an abolitionist essay contest after an extremely successful competition at Cambridge University in the year prior.¹⁰ In 1826, Glasgow University students organized an anti-slavery petition soliciting 38,000 signatures and garnering subsequent discussion in British parliament.¹¹

⁹ Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, "Lord Dalhousie Scholarly Panel on Slavery and Race", Dalhousie University, (date of last access 1 May 2020) <https://www.dal.ca/dept/ldp/findings.html>, p.9.

¹⁰ Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race, Brown University, (date of last access 1 May 2020) https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/documents/SlaveryAndJustice.pdf, p. 23.

¹¹ Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow: Report and Recommendations of the University of Glasgow, History of Slavery Steering Committee, Glasgow University, (date of last access 1 May 2020) https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_607547_smxx.pdf, p. 5.

As early as 1827 at Brown University under the president Rev. Francis Wayland, slavery as an intellectual topic worthy of academic inquiry was not stifled, “on the contrary, students were actively encouraged to grapple with the moral and political issues raised by the controversy.”¹² After British abolition in 1833, the Glasgow Emancipation Society organized to end slavery throughout the Atlantic world, particularly the United States with alumni like Rev. Dr. Ralph Wardlaw, John Pringle Nichol, and the formerly enslaved James McCune Smith being prominent advocates.¹³ The lives of university students after their graduations played a prominent role in many reports, like King’s College alumni in Halifax, Nova Scotia recorded as mourning and “lamenting” the loss of black loyalist labourers to Sierra Leone in 1792,¹⁴ or Brown University’s report implicating the Northern students who migrated south to make their livelihoods.¹⁵ These student legacies, either pro-slavery or anti-slavery, warrant broader scrutiny or commemoration respectively, something our humble research was not able to trace. How have McGill alumni used their education after leaving the slave estate turned university campus? (see sections two and three)

Without the institutional support of a steering committee or other high-profile decision-making body, the nineteen students in Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson’s undergraduate art history seminar “James McGill was a Slave Owner: Slavery and the History of Universities” have ambitiously researched and drafted these recommendations. This output happened with the participation of eager students much like other institution’s recommendations,¹⁶ albeit without the financial support, institutional backing, or duration required to do these research projects and documents justice. As Justin Dupuis, Communications Officer stated upon the May 2020 release of the university’s first Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan, the McGill bicentennial is “just around the corner”. However, with the university preoccupied with celebrations rather than much-needed contemplation, investigation, repair, and redress, no serious commitments of time, financial support, and institutional weight have been brought to bear in the commissioning of a thorough official report which could produce clear and detailed recommendations and a timeframe of required implementation.¹⁷

A class like this is indescribably valuable and essential for students to develop and apply their critical thinking and challenge their conception of what a university was, what it is today, and what these institutions can become. The students who willingly participated in this seminar and researched and wrote these recommendations, led by Dr. Nelson, should be celebrated for their commitment to step outside of the neat confines of undergraduate academia and into their valid role as peers and colleagues seeking changes in the university, student culture, and broader discourse on Canadian history. Co-authors and contributors Lucy Brown, Simone Cambridge,

¹² Slavery and Justice, Brown University, p. 30

¹³ Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow, Glasgow University, p. 6.

¹⁴ Karolyn Smardz Frost and David W. States, King’s College, Nova Scotia: Direct Connections with Slavery, University of King’s College, (date of last access 1 May 2020), <https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/KingsSlaverySmardzFrostStates.pdf>, p. 45.

¹⁵ Slavery and Justice, Brown University, pp. 25-26.

¹⁶ Slavery and Justice, Brown University, pp. 4, 106, 107; Report on Lord Dalhousie’s History on Slavery and Race, Dalhousie University, pp. 7, 19-21; see the 2007 undergraduate seminar taught by Dr. Sven Beckert, “Harvard and Slavery: Initiative on Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery”, Harvard University, (date of last access 1 May 2020), <https://www.harvard.edu/slavery>.

¹⁷ Justin Dupuis, “McGill rolls out first Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan,” McGill Reporter, 14 May 2020, (date of last access 17 May 2020), <https://reporter.mcgill.ca/mcgill-rolls-out-first-equity-diversity-inclusion-plan/>.

Roxanne Cornellier, Jane O'Brien Davis, Ellie Finkelstein, Denisa Marginean, Colin McCrossan, Sam Perelmuter, Bella Silverman, and Alison White shared some of their reflections with me:

- As individuals seeking post-secondary education, we already represent a privileged group, therefore it is important to understand what and whose histories were integral in our access to education. Without understanding McGill's colonial legacies, we run the risk of perpetuating these legacies in our lives at McGill and after leaving. (O'Brien Davis)
- Dr Nelson's university course was important to me because it was the first opportunity during my four years at McGill to directly engage with the problems concerning race and James McGill's legacy. I and other students have discussed these issues amongst ourselves but not in an academic setting. The course shifted my understanding of McGill's legacy because I was able to learn about the lives of people enslaved by McGill. This course has also demonstrated that it is possible to address James McGill's history in the classroom and use it to open up students' minds to the current difficulties experienced by racialized students. (Cambridge)
- Growing up in Montreal as an anglophone I had always felt frustrated with the Quebec education system in how they censor their curriculum, especially as it pertains to history. Prior to my final year of high school, I had almost exclusively learned French Quebecois history. I felt as though I had been cheated by the Quebecois school system as I knew almost nothing of greater Canadian history or world history. However, it was only when I got into university that I began to realise how a lot of what I had been taught had been propagandistically chosen to paint Quebec society in a positive light. I began to question what I had been taught throughout elementary and secondary school. This skepticism was only further developed by taking this particular course taught by Dr. Nelson. (White)
- I am so thankful that this was the class I took in my final semester at McGill. I have never been more passionate and invested about the work, time, and effort put into any course before. The challenge of measuring up to the level of significance and diligence that a class like this requires was the most valuable aspect I took from it. (Finkelstein)
- Professor Nelson pushes her students to question how enslaved people felt and to reflect on the lengths they had to go to both mentally and physically to achieve freedom. As art history students, most of the research we do throughout our degree is based on scholars' work and pre-existing theoretical frameworks. Therefore, we often learn about histories through an already curated lens. Professor Nelson's classes, and her "James McGill was a Slave Owner" class in specific, emphasized the need to examine all archival evidence – both the broad and specific – to, as cohesively as possible, understand the experiences of enslaved people and the horrors they went through. By examining the details of their lives, we can piece together how enslaved people coped, resisted, and lived. (Silverman)
- I feel really lucky to have been able to take this course and be a part of this project. Before the course, I knew that James McGill was a slave owner, but not much else. Throughout the class I learned not only about the lives of some of the individuals McGill enslaved – Sarah, Marie-Louise, and Jacques – but also about the power of art/historical research and interpretation. This class changed my perspective about what's possible with research and collaborative writing, because we were not producing research for some academic vacuum, but for a public audience. We worked to generate education and engagement with the full history of McGill. This class really pushed me to think about

what we could do with this history beyond just writing essays for a grade – this project means something more. (McCrossan)

- Arriving at McGill as a freshman from the USA, I think there was a general sense from me that I would remain detached from the school, the city, and Canada itself. I felt as though I was only there to learn, and that years later, when I received my degree, I would return to the USA to then put my education to use and begin my life. But of course, this was short-sighted to think that I could live in one place for four years and somehow remain distanced, and in many ways, this course made this particularly evident. I had become inextricably tied to Canada, Montreal, and McGill, and with that came the sense of responsibility to become involved in not only what made it so important to me but its shortcomings as well. It was impossible to remain passive, and I had to participate in this class to research and acknowledge McGill's, Montreal's, and even Canada's history and relationship with slavery. (Brown)
- The majority of our learning experience at McGill University is spent separating ourselves from the institution and focusing on larger or even more specific questions. Having the possibility to be in a direct conversation with our place of learning is far more engaging. It poses real-life questions about what we can contribute to society and its institution. My previous conception of the university as an abstract entity or a means to an end is no longer palpable. Every institution, not just McGill, has a specific history and goals to achieve that, often if not discussed openly, does not intertwine in our own. This course was instrumental in solidifying this understanding for me. (Margeian)
- This seminar means a lot to me because as a Canadian McGill student what we were studying and confronting is the history of my country and my school, though it is not the history that you typically learn. Social justice is something I am passionate about so taking classes with Dr. Nelson has been really eye opening and inspiring, especially this seminar which was a smaller class and more intimate setting where we could delve deeper into these subjects. I feel that it is incredibly important to learn this history of Canada and the Transatlantic World especially in our current context because it gives me the knowledge and ability to speak out when people say things like “oh that’s the USA’s problem, we don’t have racism in Canada, we had the Underground Railroad we didn’t participate in slavery” and so on. On multiple levels I feel that I have an obligation to speak up on these issues and this seminar pushes me to fulfill that obligation and say “actually that’s not true” but also to share what I have learnt about James McGill, the history of Canada, and the transatlantic slave trade with my friends, family, fellow McGill students. (Perelmuter)
- For me, Professor Nelson’s classes opened up a new way to do research and informed a way to look at people’s lives from angles that are not presented to us in mainstream culture. Her students are pushed to question historical and current societal frameworks and to push beyond the ways in which we are conditioned to learn and understand the world. My classes with Professor Nelson were by far the most impactful courses that I took at McGill. The ways in which she pushes her students to probe and not accept face values is invaluable and is the way in which all classes at McGill should be conducted... Rigorous scholarly practice and engagement allows students to research and understand details of lives that are often hidden/omitted from mainstream education systems. By delving into the lives and histories of enslaved people, we are attempting to empower them as individuals and see them for what they were: humans. Mainstream history classes

tend to overlook the details of oppression experienced by any population. By nature of extracting the details of someone's life and contextualizing it within the place and time they lived, we are able to better understand their coping and resistance methods, thereby breaking the bounds of racism and oppression inherent within mainstream education systems. (Silverman)

- It is important that we understand the impacts of colonialism on McGill campus and in general, so when interacting with other students and individuals in the McGill community we understand the barriers some face, and how and why it is important to actively create space for these individuals... I have learned that without Transatlantic Slavery the higher education system in what we now know as North America would not exist. I am challenged in my conceptualization of McGill as "strong education institution," since it is clear that we are lacking in so many ways. (O'Brien Davis)

This course has demonstrated the importance of historical investigation for understanding the contemporary problems we have not yet confronted. The students who participated in this course extended themselves beyond the usual "keen" pupils of the McGill student body to implicate themselves and these uncomfortable histories of their chosen university.

- My understanding of what a university is and does is now more informed by the history of slavery on which many universities, including McGill, are built. What a university is doing to subvert their legacy of slaveholding is now more important to me. I ask questions like - how is my university honouring the enslaved on which its foundations are built? Rigorous scholarly practice and engagement can expose and contextualize complex histories like those of McGill by constantly calling attention to these histories and ushering them into public discourse. If complex histories are kept in public and scholarly discourse it becomes difficult to ignore and erase. (Cambridge)
- Historical investigation has now been framed to me as not only the telling of stories of past, but in the carving of a way forward... Once these stories are heard, we can work to move forward to create a McGill that exists in reparation of its past... Creating a welcoming campus that doesn't deny its history of upholding white supremacy is a potential output of these histories being told... My conception of a university as exclusively for education has been challenged, I now understand how large institutions such as McGill play into the larger provincial/national context... How legacies of colonialism connect large education institutions across North America. (O'Brien Davis)
- Professor Nelson's class "James McGill was a Slave Owner," exposed the underlying colonial frameworks and dimensions of all universities. Essentially, this class demonstrated how ingrained racism and colonialism is within our institutions and the ways in which current frameworks continue to perpetuate oppression, hierarchal systems, racism, and sexism. In universities, much of the systems in place aim to sustain white supremacy and the subsequent marginalization of black and indigenous people of colour. These systems are often covert and so embedded within our psyche that [white] students do not even realize their complicity. This class informed its students that every institutionalized structure within society is built on racism and the oppression of black and indigenous individuals. Moreover, it revealed that this is not only a systemic issue, but it also relates to the content professors/teachers choose to teach and the ways in which information has been curated in general. (Silverman)

- Prior to taking this class, I never particularly thought of myself as having an impact as a student. In my mind, my role as a student was to produce papers that reiterated what we had learned in class. However, throughout this class I repeatedly felt as though I was contributing something. From transcribing a bill of sale of an enslaved person to researching important sites in Montreal's slave history, I never felt as though I was being spoon fed information to regurgitate in papers or on exams. Moreover, my view of McGill as an unchangeable institution has changed. While yes it is impossible to change the school's historical ties to slavery, I now understand how the school can actively acknowledge and work towards reparations, starting with funding academic initiatives that research the history of slavery in the Canadian context. Where the school allocates research funding is one of, if not the most important indicator of what they value. (White)
- From this experience, I have learned how to be more creative and resourceful in the actions that I take to a task at hand. I have gained new perspectives on institutional racism, how to better deal with bureaucratic systems, and how to make every detail count towards my goal. This class has taught me to look at my position in the university from a bigger picture. (Finkelstein)
- Before this class, I did not know my own power and authority as a student. I knew already that the choice of courses and the professors I selected to teach me was incredibly significant to who I was going to become at the end of each semester. What I did not know, and I do now, is the influence of us, the students, in that transformation, the power in asking the right questions and going down rabbit holes even if we do not know what they will become. It strengthens the idea that higher education is not about attaining a perfect A record, but rather to contribute and produce work that challenges you, and that makes you feel fulfilled in the end. (Marginean)
- Studying the details of enslaved people's lives and other oppressed people allows us to understand, and subsequently refute, the power structures that have been in place for centuries. We must study this information to properly grasp our place in the world and then use this knowledge to inform change. It is imperative to understand history before going forward and implementing change, to ensure that we do not make the same mistakes again. (Silverman)
- Before the class, I saw my role as a student as that of a receptacle where information is deposited and absorbed. Now, I see my role as student as more collaborative, in which to engage with discourse and complex histories. My perspective of scholarship as a vehicle of social responsibility and change has transformed by contributing to issues that affect my life as a black student and actively engaging with McGill's legacy of slavery. (Cambridge)
- As soon as I was involved in the course, it was strangely liberating to realize that I had the right to influence my education and the institution. That being a student was a reciprocal relationship, rather than a larger university imposing itself on me and my other classmates. It felt as though it was my duty to understand and educate myself about my environment. That as a student, I was not only here to learn and absorb my education but reconsider, reformulate, and create something new from it. It is for this reason that I am incredibly grateful for having been allowed to participate in Professor Nelson's course, not only for all that I learned through the process of researching Transatlantic Slavery but also for being given the chance to influence McGill University. I realized that I had just as much power over my education and life as the institutions around me. (Brown)

- The role of the student at the university is in understanding how access to education and success in education are privileges not all have, and how you can use your privileged voice to uplift others...By using the McGill name to further ourselves in academia and other professional endeavours we are benefiting from colonial and white supremacist legacies. However, by educating ourselves about these legacies we can challenge them and use our privileged position to create a future at our university that exist in reparation to its colonial past. (O'Brien Davis)

Like many other aspects of Canadian history or global issues, younger generations are taking up the torch to redress issues we have inherited from those before us.

- This is our work because we have this opportunity that doesn't come every semester or every year...This is our work because we are living in a moment where reconciliation, reparations, and affirmation of past colonial injustices are on the upswing. These histories are also coming to the forefront, and how in the moment do we act so that these legacies don't continue to be perpetuated. (O'Brien Davis)
- The established Quebec and Canadian narratives are stories with a strong saviour complex. We are taught that we were the safe haven for the enslaved who were brave enough to escape through the Underground Railroad. That, as a progressive utopia, we stand in stark contrast with our more conservative southern neighbours. However, this class has not only helped me see that this overarching narrative is wholly false, but it has helped me develop a new anti-racist filter for the new information I intake. That is to say, not only has it corrected the past information I had been given, but it has allowed me to develop a new skeptical lens as I continue to take in white-centered history that is actively promoted and taught. It would not be an overstatement to say this course has changed my worldview. (White)
- My role as a student in this class was to use my position as a way to critically challenge McGill's authority, autonomy, and legacy on the issue of their history with slavery. My work in this class has empowered me to look at the greater scope of things and identify how I can apply myself in a way that is progressive, valuable, and beneficial to my cause. (Finkelstein)
- Being passionate about social justice, in times like these in the past (though there hasn't really been anything *quite* like this) I have felt like there was nothing I could do, but this seminar and the classes I have taken with Dr. Nelson are important to me because they allow me to share knowledge and feel like there is something valuable I can do to help fight for what I believe in and stand for. Additionally, producing a report to be published and sent to McGill administration in the context of my studies in a university course, this seminar helped show me how academic scholarship can push forward change regardless of if the institution is supportive or not. It was exciting to be a part of a group working towards a goal larger than ourselves and to see the discomfort that it caused in the institution. McGill may be slow or resistant to change but this seminar showed me what you can begin to accomplish by forcing these conversations to be heard and in that way motivates me to continue learning, speaking out, and pushing to be heard. (Perelmutter)
- It, in a small way, will help to change people's perspectives about James McGill, the university, and Canada. Dr. Nelson guided our class with her expertise and help, challenging us to reimagine ourselves not just as students but people who have power together to combat anti-black racism, systems of oppression, and settler colonialism with

the knowledge we learned and the skills we gained. I have been inspired to start a similar project in the 90% white community where I live now just outside Philadelphia. Here, like at McGill and in Canada, the history of slavery has been erased for centuries. That erasure stops now here and at McGill. Dr. Nelson's class, teaching, and scholarship has been integral to my growth as a thinker, student, community member, and individual. (McCrossan)

- I have never given much thought to how universities were founded or how they gained their reputations. This course was personally eye-opening because I learned that a lot of universities and colleges across the world and more specifically in Europe, United States and Canada have profound ties with the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It is shocking to realize that most of these universities fail to acknowledge their history and make reparations. McGill University is one of those academic institutions who still refuse to take action and acknowledge that its founder, James McGill made his reputation and fortune through Transatlantic Slavery and by enslaving black and indigenous people in Montreal. As a student of McGill University, I felt that it was my duty to research those legacies and the university's history of exclusion and to present how they still affect and influence the present. (Cornellier)

The call to fill the gaps in national narratives, historical redress, systemic racism, inequality, and inaccessibility have recently taken centre stage. The current context of disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on communities of colour are compounded by increasing economic hardship as well as continued racist violence and police brutality. The untimely deaths of Jamal Fancique, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Eishia Hudson, George Floyd, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, Chantel Moore, Tony McDade, Rhia Milton, Dominique Fells, Rodney Levi, Ejaz Choudry, Andres Guardado, and too many others have galvanized widespread support to confront white-supremacy - including its many institutions - and address longstanding discrimination including anti-black and anti-indigenous racism.

- In the immediate context, this course has illuminated the historical context and oppressions that created the white supremacist society that exists today. It has created a historical understanding of anti-black racism and highlighted how it continues to be perpetuated. Specifically, this class highlighted how legacies of anti-black racism are, and always have been, present in Canada. (O'Brien Davis)
- In the context of the suffering of black people and people of colour from COVID-19 and police brutality, it is only ever more important to engage with histories of Transatlantic Slavery and anti-black racism in Canada. Today's disproportionate harms and deaths of black people and people of colour are rooted in these histories and it is only by first seeking to understand them can we move towards change. To have studied histories of anti-black racism in Canada and the Transatlantic World in this course has allowed me to connect today's social and political events to broader historical processes around the world and better inform my friends and family members about the mass injustice experienced by black people and people of colour. (Cambridge)
- I am very grateful to have taken this class prior to the recent social uprisings in Canada and the United States as a response to the murder of George Floyd, as it prepared me to engage in important discussions regarding the police and medical reform that the current climate has exposed the need for. More than ever I have been able to engage in difficult

race based discussions with the fellow white people around me that I believe would not have been open to those discussions prior to these national protests. I observed it myself, when I had first started the course, I tried to engage my family in a discussion about McGill's history of being built upon slave based capital. In response, I got a cold "this isn't something to talk about at a family dinner". However, the current climate has made these discussions rightfully inescapable. No longer can they be dismissed in the name of comfortable family dinners. (White)

- I feel incredibly fortunate to have taken the classes that I did with Professor Nelson. The information I learned from her directly informs my current activism and the ways in which I have approached the current climate in relation to black people, COVID-19, and police brutality. I could list all the vital things I learned in Professor Nelson's classes, but I think what is more pertinent is the ways in which I will take the knowledge she imparted and use it to direct my life's path. Due to the content, I learned in her classes and my personal belief systems, I aim to be a supportive figure, not only for black and indigenous folks, but all marginalized individuals who have been hurt by systems of white supremacy and capitalism. My intention is to uplift these people's voices and fight alongside them, both for their equality and the formation of a just society. We have a lot of work to do, but I am confident that our generation has the power to inform change and hopefully make this world a better place for all its inhabitants. Racism is not determined by geographical locations and is not contained by borders. Racism is ingrained within [white] people's unconscious, it is a prejudice that knows no bounds and is responsible for the formation of all long-standing structures and systems of power. It is time now to confront this ugly reality and make a change from the inside-out. Thanks to Professor Nelson, I feel equipped to aid in this world-shift. (Silverman)
- Nothing is separate from each other, especially in the study of Transatlantic Slavery. The course clearly shows the anti-black domino effect that such internalized histories can do in places like Canada and the U.S. Therefore, to see that same effect happen in real-time makes the work we produced have a lot more urgency, especially in the light of our university's lack of proper response and even acknowledgement of the situation. As a white student, it also means to be able to have conversations on the situation without fear or ignorance. It made me more receptive to the work of black activists and turned me towards abolition. The course gave us a willingness to learn because we, now more than ever, understand the deadly and even genocidal impact of anti-black racism. (Marginean)
- Additionally, the use of fugitive slave advertisements, "James McGill was a Slave Owner" underscored the importance of sustained and collaborative resistance as catalyst for change. Today, this resistance can be seen through the ongoing protests denouncing police brutality and anti-Black racism in North America. (O'Brien Davis)

In recent memory I have seen McGill students organize around a variety of issues, holding the administration to an accountable ethical standard which they shamefully fail to meet again and again. This should be no surprise in a province and student movement like that of Québec which famously defeated provincial tuition hikes amidst ongoing austerity.¹⁸ Since then, McGill's active student body advocated for the divestment of fossil fuels amidst the climate

¹⁸ Maude-Emmanuelle Lambert, "2012 Québec Student Strike", *The Canadian Encyclopedia. Historica Canada*, 5 February 2014, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/quebec-student-protest-of-2012>.

crisis,¹⁹ an indigenous studies minor, a university wide land acknowledgement, and moving the Hochelaga rock monument,²⁰ Black Lives Matter vigils,²¹ changing the “Redmen” athletic name,²² a comprehensive sexual assault policy,²³ mental health support for students,²⁴ divestment and sanctions of Israeli apartheid,²⁵ Wet’suwet’en solidarity demonstrations,²⁶ and participated in the global climate strike “Friday for Future” with an estimated 500,000 filling the streets of Montréal.²⁷ Similarly to McGill’s continued legacy of student activism, Brown’s report included student pressure for redress after an anti-black opinion editorial was published in the *Brown University Herald* in 2001.²⁸ The Dalhousie report also revealed that the impetus for their publication came from a hostile environment of anti-blackness which students were resisting around 2013 and 2015.²⁹ It is the incredible advocacy work like this which comes from grassroots efforts of black, indigenous, and other students in solidarity which demonstrates the application of knowledge and critical thinking into action. Moreover, these commitments and organizing happen in tandem with school responsibilities, family obligations, paid work, moving away from home, creating community, and a variety of other financial, social, and psychological obstacles.

Dr. Nelson’s students have crafted a number of public facing projects from primary source archival research such as an exhibition with transcriptions of bills of sale for enslaved people in Québec,³⁰ a free accessible online walking Slavery Tour of Montréal,³¹ and journal articles on comparative fugitive slavery advertisements spanning Canada, the Caribbean, and

¹⁹ Franca G. Mingnacca, “Tenured McGill Prof Resigns Over University’s Refusal to Divest from Fossil Fuels”, *CBC News*, 14 January 2020, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/mcgill-university-professor-resigns-amid-refusal-to-divest-1.5426979>.

²⁰ Allan Downey “Guest Editorial: Indigenizing McGill”, *KANATA*, vol. 8, (Winter 2015), pp. vii-ix; Jaya Bordeleau-Cass and Nicolas Mangien “Executive Coordinators”, *KANATA*, vol. 7, (Winter 2014), pp. iv-v; Taylor Rusnak and Andrea Palmer “The Hochelaga Rock”, *KANATA*, vol. 5, (Winter 2012), pp. 13-15.

²¹ Shrinkhala Dawadi, “Black Students’ Network holds vigil in memory of Michael Brown”, *The McGill Tribune*, 7 December 2014, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.mcgilltribune.com/news/black-students-network-holds-vigil-memory-michael-brown/>.

²² Jessica Deer, “Not your Redmen’: Students hold rally to protest McGill University team name”, *CBC News*, 31 October 2018 (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/mcgill-redmen-team-name-protest-rally-1.4885697>; Ned Blackhawk “Guest Editorial”, *KANATA*, vol. 5, (Winter 2012), pp. 10-13.

²³ “Revised Policy Against Sexual Violence Now in Place” *The McGill Reporter*, 28 March, 2019, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://reporter.mcgill.ca/revised-policy-against-sexual-violence-now-in-place/>.

²⁴ Rine Vieth, “I am not Your Canary” *The McGill Daily*, 17 September 2019, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.mcgilldaily.com/2019/09/i-am-not-your-canary/>.

²⁵ Saima Desai, “McGill undergraduates vote to support BDS movement”, *The McGill Daily*, 23 February 2016, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.mcgilldaily.com/2016/02/mcgill-undergraduates-vote-to-support-bds-movement/>.

²⁶ Kate Addison, “Divest McGill holds rally protesting invasion of Wet’suwet’en territory”, *The McGill Tribune* 18 February 2020, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <http://www.mcgilltribune.com/news/divest-mcgill-holds-rally-protesting-invasion-of-wetsuweten-territory-021820/>.

²⁷ Michael Leger, “Protesting on Parc: Montreal’s Friday for Future”, 1 October 2019, (date of last access 20 May 2020), <https://www.mironline.ca/protesting-on-parc-montreal-friday-for-future/>.

²⁸ *Slavery and Justice*, Brown University, p. 59.

²⁹ *Report on Lord Dalhousie’s History on Slavery and Race*, Dalhousie University, p. 19.

³⁰ Publication forthcoming 2020; See student analysis of Quebec bills of sale for enslaved people and comparative fugitives slave advertisement analysis: *Bills of Sale*, <https://www.blackcanadianstudies.com/bills-of-sale/>

³¹ Publication forthcoming 2020.

Europe.³² Most notably, these students have applied this research on slavery in Canada, the birth of the Transatlantic World, and higher education's intrinsic ties with Transatlantic Slavery and settler colonialism to their own alma mater in these recommendations for addressing and redressing James McGill's violent legacy (see sections two, three, and four).³³ These students chose to tackle this challenging - often traumatic - subject matter, demanding research expectations, and the process of transforming their findings into innovative publicly-disseminated research. With a variety of choice at McGill for undergraduate seminars, we need to applaud the students who sought to do something different, meaningful, and impactful with their labour, insight, and research rather than pursue an easy alternative. Critiquing James McGill's direct slave ownership, trade revenue, and its financial legacy is a worthwhile and indeed, urgent pursuit for bright young minds and established scholars alike.³⁴

³² Publication forthcoming 2020; Fugitive Slave Advertisements, <https://www.blackcanadianstudies.com/fugitive-slave-advertisements/>

³³ Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013); "Land-grab universities: Expropriated Indigenous land is the foundation of the land-grant university system", *High Country News*, (date of last access 1 May 2020), <https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities>.

³⁴ "Context", *Legacies of British-Slave-ownership*, (date of last access 1 May 2020), <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/project/context/>.

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INTRODUCTION THREE

A Brief Overview of Canadian Slavery

Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, Professor of Art History, McGill University

The Montreal Gazette issued its first newspaper on 25 August 1785.³⁵ That the first fugitive slave advertisement appeared the following month by 29 September 1785, demonstrated the local white settlers' knowledgeable use of print technology to perpetuate the colonial racial order through which their ownership of black people was justified and secured.³⁶ Indeed, across the Americas, printers became key allies of slave owners, disseminating advertisements that sought to entrench their right to hold certain populations in bondage and to criminalize people on the basis of racial identity and supposed racial inferiority (fig. 1).

Transatlantic Slavery was unlike any other form of slavery. While ancient practices of slavery were often based upon xenophobia, class antagonisms, war, or cultural and regional animosities, Transatlantic Slavery was based upon the idea that biological human differences – race - could be organized and evaluated within a hierarchy with Europeans the unquestioned ideal. While the indigenous populations of the Americas were sometimes enslaved, black Africans were the only population that was always deemed

fit for perpetual bondage. Transatlantic Slavery transformed Africans into property across a succession of interconnected moments: first as captives on the marches to the West African coast, then as cargo held in the bowels of disease-ridden slave ships during the Middle Passage, and finally as units of labour and objects to be auctioned or sold in the Americas.

Slave owners controlled every aspect of the lives of enslaved people, dictating where and how they lived, where they went and for how long, what they wore, when they woke up and slept, what and how much they ate, and the duration and type of labour. In Canada, this often meant a combination of domestic, outdoor, and explicitly agricultural labour the details of which

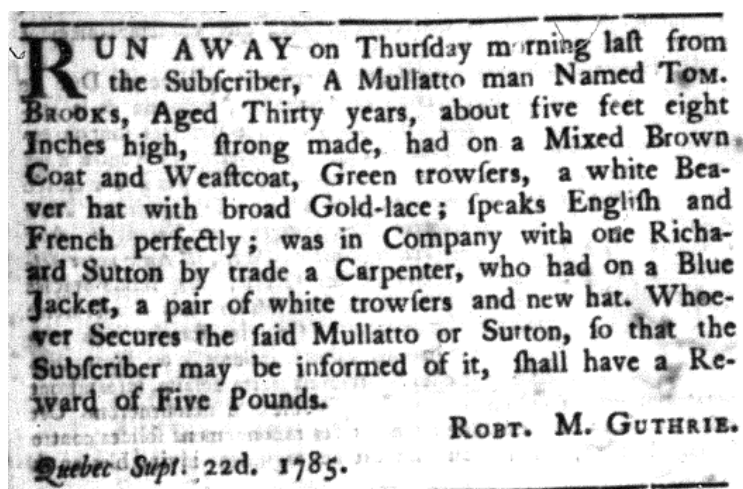


Figure 1: Robt. M. Guthrie, "Run Away on Thursday morning last," Montreal Gazette, no. 6, Thursday, 29 September 1785, p. 4; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

³⁵ The French printer Fleury Mesplet initially published the Montreal Gazette. Moving to Montreal from Philadelphia, he first published a French-language paper on 3 June 1778 called Gazette du commerce et littéraire. Later renamed Gazette littéraire du district de Montréal, the publication ceased in June 1779. With his death on 24 January 1794, his widow continued publishing the paper until 13 February. Edward Edwards, Montreal's postmaster, resumed the publication on 3 August 1795.

Frank Mackey, Done with Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal 1760-1840 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), pp. 312-13.

³⁶ Robt. M. Guthrie, "Run Away on Thursday morning last," Montreal Gazette, no. 6, Thursday, 29 September 1785, p. 4; transcribed in Frank Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notice," Done with Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal 1760-1840 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), p. 328.



Figure 2: James Crofton, “RUN-AWAY, from James Crofton,” *Quebec Gazette*, 14 May 1767, vol. 124, p. 4; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

placed for him on 14 June 1790 in *The City Gazette*, Charleston, South Carolina stated that the “negro man” had been granted “a ticket from 15th to the 17th of May, whereby he was permitted to pass to Mr. Crosskey’s plantation, over Parker’s ferry, and to return.”⁴⁰ However, just as in tropical regions where plantation slavery dominated, the mobility of enslaved black people was constantly regulated and under surveillance by whites in northern sites of Transatlantic Slavery. The Montreal vintner, James Crofton’s fugitive notice for “a Mulatto Negro Slave, named Andrew,” explained that the Maryland-born man was “supposed to have with him forged Certificates of his Freedom, and Passes” (fig. 2).⁴¹

Abhorrently, slave owners even sought to control the reactions and attitudes of enslaved people to their labour. As Charles Joyner has demonstrated,

“Slaveholders’ intervention in the bodily appearance of their slaves could even extend to expectations about gesture, movement, and general demeanor – how slaves reacted when spoken to, how they walked, where they directed their gaze, whether they appeared content. Though he liked being kind to ‘his people,’ Robert F. W. Allston, a South

were often noted in slave sale advertisements.³⁷ Slave owner control of the enslaved implied control of movement. As David Waldstreicher has explained, “Written passes allowed slaves and servants, unlike the serfs of old, to move over large areas in the service of their masters’ interest.”³⁸ For instance, in South Carolina when the enslaved man called Castalia was granted a pass, it stated precisely the parameters of his movements temporally and regionally.³⁹ The fugitive slave notice

³⁷ See the descriptions of enslaved labour in the transcribed slave sale and fugitive slave advertisements in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notice,” pp. 307-40.

³⁸ David Waldstreicher, “Reading the Runaways: Self-Fashioning, Print Culture, and Confidence in Slavery in the 18th c. Mid-Atlantic,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* (April 1999), p. 262.

³⁹ Jacob Cass, “ABSENTED himself from his present master,” *The City Gazette*, Charleston, South Carolina, 14 June 1790; transcribed in Thomas Brown and Leah Sims, *Fugitive Slave Advertisements in The City Gazette, Charleston, South Carolina 1787-1797* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015), pp. 43-44.

⁴⁰ Cass, “ABSENTED himself from his present master,” *The City Gazette*, Charleston, South Carolina, 14 June 1790; transcribed in Brown and Sims, *Fugitive Slave Advertisements*, pp. 43-44.

⁴¹ James Crofton, “RUN-AWAY, from James Crofton,” *Quebec Gazette*, 14 May 1767; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notice,” p. 315.

Carolinian with a great many slaves, declared that he ‘*imperatively require[d] of them...cheerfulness in their work, wherever and whatever it is.*’⁴² (italics mine)

African cultural and spiritual practices and languages were often prohibited or policed and community rituals like scarification and teeth filing banned within one generation. Slave owners even sought to control the intimate and sexual lives of the enslaved, often separating families as punishment⁴³ or forcing the sexual coupling of males and females to create new enslaved offspring through the practice referred to as “breeding”.⁴⁴

At a fundamental level, slavery was designed to tear black families apart. From the moment slave traders forced people onto slave ships in Africa and throughout every moment of sale and exchange in the Americas and elsewhere, whites rarely acknowledged or prioritized the preservation of African and African American (continental) family and kinship bonds. African names were amongst the first things to go once captives landed in the Americas. New first names were imposed along with the family name of the slave owner. The objectification of the enslaved was also sustained through the notation of first names *only* in a host of documents in which the enslaved were listed as property: like plantation ledgers, wills, estate inventories, and fugitive slave advertisements.⁴⁵ Some documents, like slave sale or auction advertisements and ship manifests, did not list names at all, but instead described the sex, age, body type, skills, and health of the enslaved (fig. 3).

	Names	Sex	Occupations	Condition
	Men			
	Tom	M	Carpenter	35 Years on the Estate
	Tommy	C	D ^r	born on the Estate
	Billie	C	D ^r	D ^r
	Yoko	C	D ^r	D ^r } middle aged
5	Guy	C	D ^r	D ^r
	Wile	C	D ^r	D ^r
	Quajoe	C	Mason	D ^r } a mulatto boy
	Tommy	C	D ^r	born on the Estate
	Buckingham	C	D ^r	D ^r } middle aged
10	Pleasant	C	D ^r	D ^r
	Spurtington	C	Carpenter	D ^r } about 35 Years of Age
	Milkie	M	D ^r	35
	Roger	C	D ^r	30
	Wile	C	D ^r	25
15	Bob	C	D ^r	M. Mulatto about 30
	Bob	C	Blacksmith	D ^r } 30
	Harry	C	Doctor	about 55
	Daisy	C	Driver	D ^r
	Quajoe	C	D ^r	D ^r
20	Simsy	C	D ^r	D ^r } from 30 to 55
	Jock	C	D ^r	D ^r
	America	C	Field	
	Bristol	C	D ^r	
	Cambridge	C	D ^r	
25	Dick	C	D ^r	
	Deffera	C	D ^r	
	George	C	D ^r	
	George	C	D ^r	
	Little George	C	D ^r	
30	Guy	C	D ^r	
	Hercules	C	D ^r	
	Harold	C	D ^r	
	Jacky	C	D ^r	
	John	C	D ^r	
35	Jacob	C	D ^r	
	Jeffamy	C	D ^r	
	James	C	D ^r	
	Jeffrey	C	D ^r	
	Andrew	C	D ^r	
40	My Lord	C	D ^r	
	Mais	C	D ^r	
	Merryman	C	D ^r	

Figure 3: A List of Negroes on Hope Plantation in St. Andrews (1788), paper, 32.39 x 20.3 cm., ST West Indies Box 3(1), Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA.

⁴² Charles Joyner, Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), pp. 52-53; cited in Shane White and Graham White, “Slave Hair and African American Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” The Journal of Southern History, vol. 61, no. 1 (February 1995), p. 49.

⁴³ David J. Herring, The Public Family: Exploring its Role in Democratic Society (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), pp. 8-13; Damian Alan Pargas, Slavery and Forced Migration in the Antebellum South (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 9.

⁴⁴ Charmaine A. Nelson, Slavery, Geography and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal and Jamaica (London: Taylor and Francis, 2016), pp. 250-52.

⁴⁵ Waldstreicher, “Reading the Runaways,” p. 249; Nelson, Slavery Geography and Empire, p. 292.

The extreme, sadistic control of the enslaved caused Orlando Patterson to describe slavery as a form of “social death,” a life in which the enslaved were strategically cut off from their ancestors and their descendants, and through which social access was dictated and controlled by their owners.⁴⁶ But slavery was not merely brutal on a social level, but inarguably lethal on a physical one. For instance, Marcel Trudel’s pioneering research has determined that 3,604 enslaved people of both indigenous (*panis*) and African origin lived in New France by 1759, with 52.3 percent residing in or near Montreal.⁴⁷ Of the almost 4,000 enslaved people, 1,132 were classified as “Negroes”.⁴⁸ More than a quarter (1,068) were owned by the merchant class, but the gentry, governors, notaries, doctors, military and clergy also held people in bondage.⁴⁹ Reportedly 22.8 percent performed field labour, only one hundred and ninety-two of whom were classified as “Negroes”. This may partially account for differences in life expectancy between the *panis* at 17.7 years and blacks 25.2.⁵⁰

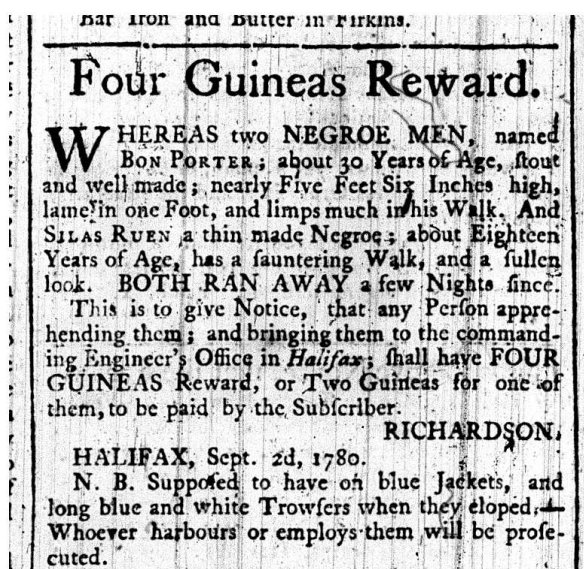


Figure 4: Richardson, “Four Guineas Reward,” *Nova-Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle*, Tuesday, 5 September 1780, vol. 10, no. 744, p. 3; PANS MFM #8158, Reel 8158, 6 September 1774 – 26 December 1780, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

The objectification of the enslaved and the prolific belief in African inferiority and brutishness led slave traders, slave owners, and other colonialists to see the enslaved as interchangeable and expendable units of labour. This pervasive colonial ideology led to the premature deaths of enslaved people and devastating slave mortality rates from multiple causes including violence, illness, malnutrition, and murderous work regimes. These brutal work regimes led to rampant physical disability amongst the enslaved, many of whom were prohibited from accessing proper medical care.

These disabilities were documented in fugitive slave advertisements by slave owners as additional data to identify a runaway. Placed in Halifax on 5 September 1780, an advertisement entitled “Four Guineas Reward” claimed that Silas Ruen, approximately eighteen, and Bon Porter, approximately thirty, “two NEGROE MEN,” had

⁴⁶ Orlando Patterson, “The Constituent Elements of Slavery,” *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World*, eds. Hilary McD. Beckles and Verene Shepherd (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2000)

⁴⁷ Marcel Trudel, *L’esclavage au Canada français: Histoire et conditions de l’esclavage* (Quebec, Presses universitaires Laval, 1960), Marcel Trudel, *L’esclavage au Canada français* (Montreal: Presse de L’Université Laval, 1963) and Marcel Trudel, *Dictionnaire des Esclaves et de leurs Propriétaires au Canada Français* (La Salle: Éditions Hutubise HMH Ltée, 1990). See also: Maureen G. Elgersman, *Unyielding Spirits: Black Women and Slavery in Early Canada and Jamaica* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), p. 15.

⁴⁸ Trudel, *L’esclavage au Canada français*, (1960, 1963); cited in Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada: A History*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), p. 9.

⁴⁹ Winks, *The Blacks in Canada*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ Another key factor in the differences between *panis* and black slave life expectancies was the indigenous susceptibility to European diseases like smallpox. Robin Winks documents the death of fifty-eight indigenous people and only two black people during an epidemic in 1733 and later fifty-six indigenous and six black people in 1755.

fled together and that Porter was “lame in one Foot, and limps much in his Walk.” (fig. 4).⁵¹

Enslavement in a region with cold winter climates also made enslaved people susceptible to disabilities brought on by exposure, which was exacerbated by deliberate material deprivation such as the poor quality of the clothing which slave owners typically provided.⁵² Quebec fugitive notices detail the damage to the bodies of enslaved people caused by the cold weather, as when Azariah Pretchard described the enslaved “Negro man” Charles as “has the ends of both his great toes frozen off.”⁵³ The enslaved were also deeply harmed and rendered disabled through corporal punishment. In 1777, William Brown the co-founder and then solo owner of the Quebec Gazette newspaper, paid the executioner five shillings to publicly whip the African-born enslaved man Joe in the market square.⁵⁴

Under the laws of various empires, to be enslaved was to be chattel or moveable personable property - like a chair, a table, or a cart - a fact highlighted in slave sale and auction notices. Slaves were slaves for life and furthermore, slavery was strategically organized in a matrilineal order as a means to most fully benefit the slave owning classes. Any child born to an enslaved female was automatically a slave, taking the status of the mother at birth, regardless of the class, social status, or race of the father. Therefore, the very fabric of slavery served to incentivize rape and sexual coercion since to impregnate an enslaved female was to enrich her owner with a new unit of labour when the baby was born.

Blackness and whiteness, race as we know it today, was a by-product of slavery and a means through which the enslavement and expropriation of millions of Africans was justified by several European Empires. It is estimated that a total of 21 million Africans was expropriated during the Transatlantic Slave Trade.⁵⁵ Together, Britain, Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain and The Netherlands enslaved an estimated 12.5 million Africans who were systematically and forcibly dispersed. During this forced overland migration which sometimes began in central Africa and regions distant from the places of embarkation on the west coast, it is estimated that some 7 million Africans perished.⁵⁶ Another 2 million were to die onboard the slave ships from illness, the wounds of corporal punishment, murder, and suicide.⁵⁷ These captives were mainly shipped from the west coast of Africa to various regions of the Caribbean, and Central, South, and North America, including Canada.

⁵¹ Richardson, “Four Guineas Reward,” Nova-Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle, Tuesday, 5 September 1780, vol. 10, no. 744, p. 3; PANS MFM #8158, Reel 8158, 6 September 1774 – 26 December 1780, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (hereafter NSARM), Halifax.

⁵² See the description of enslaved clothing in the transcribed fugitive slave advertisements in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 307-40. For more on the impact of cold weather on the enslaved see: “In Bondage when Cold was King: The Frigid Terrain of Slavery in Antebellum Maryland,” Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies, vol. 38, issue 1 (2017), pp. 22-36.

⁵³ Azariah Pretchard, “RUN away from Subscriber,” Quebec Gazette, 22 May 1794, supplement, vol. 1506, p. 5; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Canada.

⁵⁴ Colonel Hubert Neilson, “Slavery in Old Canada: Before and After the Conquest,” lecture delivered to the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, 2 March 1906, p. 33.

⁵⁵ Angela Rosenthal and Agnes Lugo-Ortiz eds., “Introduction: Envisioning Slave Portraiture,” Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 2, 30.

⁵⁶ Rosenthal and Lugo-Ortiz eds., “Introduction: Envisioning Slave Portraiture,” pp. 2, 30.

⁵⁷ Brenda Wolfe, “Slave Ships and The Middle Passage,” Encyclopedia Virginia https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Slave_Ships_and_the_Middle_Passage (date of last access 30 July 2018); Rosenthal and Lugo-Ortiz eds., “Introduction: Envisioning Slave Portraiture,” pp. 2, 30.

Supressing the Truth about Canadian Slavery

Although Canadian participation in Transatlantic Slavery is little known both inside and outside of the nation, slavery was practiced by the British and the French in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia (including Cape Breton), P.E.I. and Newfoundland, from at least the early seventeenth century. The prolific ignorance about Canadian Slavery has been strategically cultivated by Euro-Canadians who have, over generations, created the Canadian myth of racial tolerance enshrined within a federal policy of multiculturalism. But to erase slavery is also to erase the centuries-long presence of people of African descent in the territories which became Canada, to position black Canadians instead as *always already* foreign or recent immigrants.

What replaces slavery in the Canadian imagination is celebratory narratives of the Underground Railroad, the period between 1833 when the British abolished slavery by an act of parliament and 1865 when the American Civil War ended. A national cohesiveness of memory has been produced through the almost universal teaching of Underground Railroad histories in both elementary and high school curricula (particularly in February during Black History Month). Canadian education therefore plays a central role in the indoctrination of prepubescent Canadian youth who are routinely taught that Canada is both racism-free and race-blind. But popular media has also played its part. Many Canadians have been raised on “Heritage Minutes,” one-minute historical short films about various aspects of Canadian history created by Historica Canada that air nationally on Canadian television.⁵⁸

One such short entitled “Underground Railroad” (1991) represents a white Quaker woman comforting a formerly enslaved black woman, Eliza, as they wait anxiously in Canada for news of Eliza’s enslaved father who is en route, escaping from slavery in the USA. The film ends with Eliza’s father emerging from a wooden bench in which he had been hidden on a wagon trip north, to embrace her and his unnamed son. The father then exclaims “we’re free,” to which Eliza responds emotionally “Yes Pa weez in Canada!”⁵⁹ The constant recitation and celebration of the Underground Railroad has allowed Canadians to erroneously disassociate Canada from a four hundred year history of Transatlantic Slavery and to enshrine a period of three decades, casting themselves as the liberators of enslaved African Americans. These myths allow white Canadians to celebrate their difference (mainly from white American-ness which they actively associate with a pro-slavery American South) as a citizenry made up of “good” people whose white settler ancestors presumably exploited no one in their quest for land, power, and capital. This hierarchization of whiteness is not solely built upon a fabricated history of a completely anti-slavery north (Canada) and a completely pro-slavery south (USA). Instead, when Euro-Canadians do concede that slavery happened in Canada, they routinely attempt to distinguish and valorize their own slaving histories as somehow superior (meaning more benevolent) based upon the ludicrous assumption that slave minority societies were fundamentally less physically and psychologically brutal for the enslaved than slave majority ones.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Historica Canada (date of last access 20 June 2020) <https://www.historicacanada.ca/>

⁵⁹ “Underground Railroad,” Historica Canada (date of last access 20 June 2020) <https://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/underground-railroad>

⁶⁰ Slave minority societies are ones in which the enslaved comprised the minority of the population, like Canada, and slave majority societies were defined by enslaved people outnumbering whites and other populations, like Jamaica.

The unacknowledged histories of Canadian participation in Transatlantic Slavery - by the state, academia, and popular media alike – have bred a collective amnesia resulting in an appalling lack of national support for the academic study of Canadian Slavery; the knock-on effect of which is the absence of the serious study of topics of obvious and accepted importance within the field of Slavery Studies. Unsurprisingly then, the study of Canadian Slavery lags far behind other regions in the quantity, scope, and foci of the scholarship. The number and disciplinary diversity of the scholars devoted to the study of slavery in the American South, the Caribbean, and the northern parts of South America, has led to a host of specialized studies on slave culture, diet, dress, labour, literacy, resistance, family structures, maternity, childhood, and the detailed study of population size, fertility, and mortality. Significantly, while the analysis of fugitive slave advertisements has been an important sub-field of Slavery Studies in American,⁶¹ Caribbean,⁶² and South American Slavery⁶³ since the 1970's, my publications are among the first to undertake a similar study of Canadian notices.⁶⁴ Furthermore, while important sources on Canadian Slavery provide regional overviews, the majority do not prioritize the lives or experiences of the enslaved.⁶⁵

⁶¹ See for example: J. Christopher Lehner, Reaction to Abuse: Maryland Slave Runaways, 1750-1775 (Baltimore: Morgan State University, 1978); Lathan A. Windley, Runaway Slave Advertisements: A Documentary History from the 1730's to the 1790 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983) The volumes include: #1 - Georgia, #2 - Maryland, and #3 - South Carolina.; Billy G. Smith and Richard Wojtowicz eds. Blacks Who Stole Themselves: Advertisements for Runaways in the Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728-1790 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989); Philip D. Morgan, "Colonial South Carolina Runaways: Their Significance for Slave Culture," Slavery and Abolition, vol. 6, no. 3 (1985), pp. 57-79; Freddie L. Parker, Running for Freedom: Slave Runaways in North Carolina, 1775-1840 (New York: Garland, 1993); Graham Russell Hodges and Alan Edward Brown eds., "Pretends to be Free": Runaway Slave Advertisements from Colonial and Revolutionary New York and New Jersey (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994); David Waldstreicher, "Reading the Runaways: Self-Fashioning, Print Culture, and Confidence in Slavery in the 18th c. Mid-Atlantic," The William and Mary Quarterly (April 1999), pp. 243-72.

⁶² See for example: Patricia A. Bishop, Runaway Slaves in Jamaica, 1740-1807: A Study Based on Newspaper Advertisements Published During that Period for Runaways (Kingston, Jamaica: The University of the West Indies, 1970); Michael Craton, Searching for the Invisible Man: Slaves and Plantation Life in Jamaica (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978); Orlando Patterson, Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1982).

⁶³ See for example: Gilberto Freyre, Sylvio de Vasconcellos, and Virgilio B. Noya Pinto, Os Escravos nos Anúncios de Jornais Brasileiros do Século XIX, 2nd edition (São Paulo: Companhia Editoria Nacional, 1979); Ana Josefina Ferrari, A voz do dono: uma análise das descrições feitas nos anúncios de jornal dos escravos fugitivos (Campinas, SP, Brasil: Pontes, 2006); Silmei de Sant'Ana Petiz, Buscando a liberdade: as fugas de escravos da província de São Pedro para o além-fronteira, 1815-1851 (Passo Fundo: Universidade de Passo Fundo, UPF Editora, 2006).

⁶⁴ Charmaine A. Nelson, "'Ran away from her Master... a Negroe Girl named Thursday': Examining Evidence of Punishment, Isolation, and Trauma in Nova Scotia and Quebec Fugitive Slave Advertisements," Legal Violence and the Limits of the Law, eds. Joshua Nichols and Amy Swiffen (NYC: Routledge, 2017); Charmaine A. Nelson, "Servant, Savage or 'Sarah': Enslaved Black Female Subjects in Canadian Art and Fugitive Slave Advertisements," Women in the Promised Land?: Essays in African Canadian History, eds. Wanda Bernard, Boulou Ebanda de B'éri, Nina Reid-Maroney (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018); Charmaine A. Nelson, "'[A] tone of voice peculiar to New-England': Fugitive Slave Advertisements and the Heterogeneity of Enslaved People of African Descent in Eighteenth-Century Quebec," Current Anthropology, guest editors Ibrahim Thiaw and Deborah Mack (forthcoming June 2020).

⁶⁵ William Renwick Riddell, "Slavery in the Maritime Provinces," The Journal of Negro History, 5, no. 3 (July 1920), pp. 359-75; William Renwick Riddell, "Notes on the Slave in Nouvelle-France," The Journal of Negro History, 8, no. 3 (July 1923), pp. 316-30; William Renwick Riddell, "The Slave in Upper Canada," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology, vol. 14, no. 2 (Aug., 1923), pp. 249-78; William Renwick Riddell, "Le Code Noire," The Journal of Negro History, vol. x, no. 3 (July 1925), pp. 321-29; Marcel Trudel,

Another scholarly deficit in the study of Canadian Slavery is the absence of studies of the cultural and ethnic makeup of enslaved communities of African descent. Scholars of Canadian Slavery, like those who focus on other regions, commonly use the term black to name all enslaved people of African descent. However, the term works to obscure the specificity of the ethnicities and birth origins of heterogeneous populations which in Canada were comprised of, at least, African Canadian, African American, African Caribbean, and African-born people.⁶⁶ Enslaved people of African descent were born in Canada (African Canadians) and also arrived in Canada through both overland travel and by sea, particularly on merchant ships from the Caribbean. They were also sold individually or in groups, in private sales or public auctions. The most infamous Canadian advertisement for a public sale, discussed in further detail below, was placed by Joshua Mauger, a Halifax-based merchant, on 30 May 1752 in the Halifax Gazette.⁶⁷

The extraordinary diversity of black enslaved people meant that despite their shared African cultures, many enslaved people in the regions that became Canada would not have shared a common language. Therefore, their potential to communicate with each other, to build social bonds, and to strategize about resistance, would have been hampered by this lack, especially in New France/Quebec where slave owners forced the enslaved to learn both English and French.⁶⁸ The complexity of New France/Quebec is also heightened by the dual enslavement of people of both African and indigenous descents, the latter known as panis(e).

Clearly, Canadian Slavery is a complex and difficult terrain through which we must explore the colonial foundations of the nation; foundations built upon the systemic exploitation and brutalization of black and indigenous people. The time has come to disrupt the dominant Canadian narrative of historical innocence by remembering the centuries-long presence of people of African descent in the regions which became Canada. In what follows, I will offer an overview of different aspects and practices of Canadian Slavery and consider, not merely *what* slavery was, but the lives and experiences of the enslaved and the unimaginable harm that slavery caused.

Understanding Slave Advertisements

In the interdisciplinary field of Slavery Studies which is dominated by historians, the tools at our disposal are often both plentiful and frustratingly limited. In many regions there exists significant holdings of historical manuscripts and published sources about various aspects of the “peculiar institution,” as slavery was known. This is simply because whites who owned human property were historically not ashamed of this fact and documented their ownership of the enslaved, often rigorously, for economic and legal ends. The sources from which scholars routinely draw include things like correspondence, plantation ledgers, diary entries, wills, estate records, bills of sale, and the slave advertisements - sale, auction, and fugitive – that slave

L’esclavage au Canada français: Histoire et conditions de l’esclavage (Quebec, Presses universitaires Laval, 1960); Marcel Trudel, Dictionnaire des Esclaves et de leurs Propriétaires au Canada Français (La Salle: Éditions Hurtubise HMH Ltée, 1990); Robin W. Winks, The Blacks in Canada: A History, 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s Press, 1997); Frank Mackey, Done with Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal 1760-1840 (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).

⁶⁶ Nelson, “‘[A] tone of voice peculiar to New-England,’” np.

⁶⁷ Joshua Mauger, “Advertisements: Just Imported,” Halifax Gazette, Saturday, 30 May 1752, p. 2; PANS MFM #8151, Reel 8151, 23 March 1752 - 6 March 1766, printed by John Bushnell, Grafton-Street, NSARM, Halifax.

⁶⁸ See the slave advertisements transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 307-40.

owners published to sell and recapture the enslaved. Although I will draw upon a variety of these documents, I will focus mainly on slave advertising in this overview.

There are three key types of slave advertisements, sale and auction advertisements used for the exchange of the enslaved and fugitive slave advertisements used to hunt and recapture enslaved people who resisted their bondage by running away. As one might guess, sale and auction notices were often characterized by their brevity and dishonesty (fig. 5). This was simply because, the motivation to sell one's "human property" prompted slave owners to lie about the personalities, behaviours, ages, and health of the people they held in bondage in order to dispose of them quickly and to turn the best profit. As such, slave sale advertisements routinely proclaimed that enslaved people were honest, obedient, healthy, and physically fit.⁶⁹ Runaway or fugitive slave advertisements were another matter altogether. Enslaved people resisted in a myriad of ways, including feigning illness, work slow-downs, secretly practicing their African cultures or maintaining their African naming and spiritual traditions, resisting physical and sexual assault and for enslaved women, secretly practicing abortion in a world where they were constant targets of sexual violence for profit. One of the most common forms of resistance was running away and trying to escape slavery altogether by removing oneself from one's owner. However, because the enslaved were so valuable, they were constantly hunted by their owners, who benefited from the enslaved person's bondage through the theft of their labour. The notices that owners printed for public display or published in newspapers to recapture fleeing enslaved people were called runaway or fugitive slave advertisements and slave owners commonly offered rewards for information about or the return of the enslaved and threatened legal action against people seeking to help or harbour the enslaved.

Common throughout the Transatlantic World, fugitive slave advertisements demonstrate the ubiquity of African resistance to slavery. Such advertisements are what Shane White and Graham White have referred to as, "the most detailed descriptions of the bodies of enslaved African Americans available".⁷⁰ I would argue that their contention also applies to the regions of the Americas that practiced Transatlantic Slavery in general, particularly places where abolition predated the development of photography.⁷¹ Although published by the slave owning classes for dubious reasons, because slave

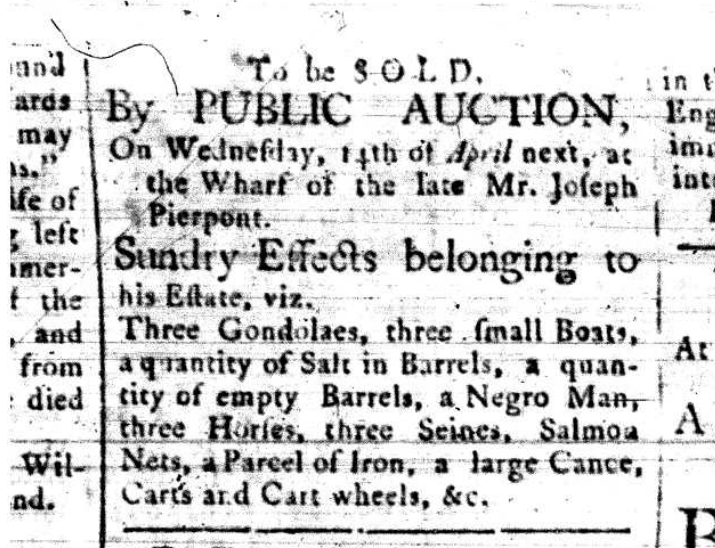


Figure 5: Anonymous, "To be SOLD, By PUBLIC AUCTION," *Nova Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle*, Tuesday, 23 March 1773, vol. 3, no. 134, p. 4; PANS MFM #8155, Reel 8155, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

⁶⁹ See the slave sale advertisements transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," pp. 307-40.

⁷⁰ White and White, "Slave Hair and African American Culture," p. 49.

⁷¹ Two places where the fugitive slave archive may pale in comparison to photographic archives of the enslaved are Cuba and Brazil where slavery was not abolished until 1886 and 1888 respectively. Laird W. Bergad, *The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. xiii.

owners were so determined to recapture their fleeing property, today such advertisements have become key historical sources which can assist us in understanding the nature of slavery and the lives and experiences of the enslaved.

Slave owners seeking to recapture enslaved fugitives employed textual descriptions and standardized images in their advertisements. However, these textual descriptions were fundamentally visual. Besides noting things like names, language, and skills, these advertisements frequently recounted the dress, branding, scarification, mannerisms, physical habits, and even the expressions and gestures of fugitives. The advertisements relied upon the primacy of vision as the most effective sensory tool to lead to the identification and recapture of the enslaved person. Indeed, “success” was achieved when the mainly white readers became co-conspirators visualizing, recognizing, and apprehending the fleeing person. Ironically, it was the visual individuation of the enslaved person that became the pathway to their recapture and a return to their anonymous life as “property”.

Ethnicity and Complexion: Naming Practices

Just as slave owners in tropical locations like Jamaica paid careful attention to the African ethnicity of the enslaved and expressed concern for the resistance of certain groups, similar preferences, albeit broader, seem to have taken root in northern regions. For instance, in regard to the selection of labourers for his plantation Mount Vernon, George Washington preferred to buy Creole West Indian (Caribbean) people, who were, according to R. F. Dalzell and L.B. Dalzell, “thought to be preferable to Africans since they were already familiar with plantation ways.”⁷² Meanwhile in Quebec, when the co-founders and co-owners of the Quebec Gazette, William Brown and Thomas Gilmore (who died in 1773) were searching for reliable labour for their printing office, they wrote to their former employer William Dunlap in Philadelphia and specified that they wanted a “Negro Boy” who was “fit to put to press, and who has had the Small Pox, *is Country born*, and can be recommended for his Honesty.”⁷³ (*italics mine*)

For more on photography of the enslaved in Brazil see: Margrit Prussat, “Icons of Slavery: Black Brazil in Nineteenth-Century Photography and Image Art,” Living History: Encountering the Memory of the Heirs of Slavery, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009)

⁷² R. F. Dalzell and L.B. Dalzell, George Washington's Mount Vernon: At Home in Revolutionary America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.130. For more on the slaving practices of George Washington see Ryan Kluffinger, “In the Shadow of the Big House: Mount Vernon’s Architecture of Slavery,” Chrysalis: A Critical Student Journal of Transformative Art History, vol. 1, no. 3 (Winter 2016) <http://www.blackcanadianstudies.com/journal/> (date of last access 20 June 2020).

⁷³ William Brown and Thomas Gilmore (Quebec City) to William Dunlap, Esq. (Philadelphia), letter 29 April 1768, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa; partially transcribed in Neilson, “Slavery in Old Canada,” p. 32.

It would appear that Brown did not get what he asked for since a series of six fugitive notices were printed in his newspaper (five by Brown and one by the sheriff, James Shepherd Esquire) for the “NEGRO MAN SLAVE named JOE, *born in Africa*” who appears to be the most resistant enslaved person known to date, in the history of Canada. (*italics mine*)

William Brown, “BROKE out of His Majesty’s Gaol in Quebec,” Quebec Gazette, 4 May 1786; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 328-29.

The initial printing dates of the six fugitive notices for Joe were: 27 November 1777; 29 January 1778; 24 December 1778; 23 September 1779; 23 February 1786; 4 May 1786. The fifth notice was placed by the sheriff. For transcriptions of these advertisements see: Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 319, 320, 321, 322, 328-29.

The description offered by Brown and Gilmore was precise and detailed. While the mention of smallpox reveals slave owner preoccupation with the health and mortality of their enslaved labourers, it also underscores the commodification of labour which was at the heart of slavery. Their preoccupation for the male's fitness and age, highlights the demands of the intellectual *and* physical nature of the work to which they intended to set their new "Negro Boy". While the request that Dunlap's choice be honest was of obvious relevance to any slave owner, the request that the black boy also be "country born" demonstrates the white preference for Creoles, blacks who, through their birth in the Americas, were deemed to be "seasoned" and less resistant. While it is as yet uncertain if this preference for Creoles existed in other northern regions like Nova Scotia, I would argue that evidence will eventually bear out that this too was the case, in part because slave owners in the regions that became Canada were far less familiar with African-born people than various groups of Creoles (African Canadian, African American and African Caribbean people).

Whereas the practice of identifying the enslaved by ethnicity persisted in Jamaica until the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the use of the term Negro as a generic term for people of African ancestry seems to have pervaded racial discourse in Nova Scotia and Quebec. Significantly, the frequent use of the term Negro implies that white slave owners did feel it necessary to name race in slave advertisements, perhaps in part, to differentiate between enslaved indigenous people [panis(e)] or Africans in Quebec.⁷⁴ While Jamaican racial naming included a six-pronged hierarchy including: Negro, Sambo, Mulatto, Quadroon, Mustee, and Musthiphino, Quebec naming practices for enslaved blacks as indicated in slave advertisements included only Negro, Negro-Mulatto, or Mulatto. Although the archive of slave sale notices in Nova Scotia is less definitive, known auction, fugitive, and sale advertisements use the terms black, Negro, and mulatto.⁷⁵

Within the slave minority context of Canada, the term Negro - as a common stand-in for black, African, and slave - disrupts our ability to understand to what extent African ethnicity or Creole status was discernable within the enslaved and free black populations. Since the history of slavery in the region under the French (as New France) dates back to the 1600's, without a doubt, African Canadians (or those whose creolization had dominantly occurred in the region) were definitely present.⁷⁶ The history of African American fugitives fleeing north (not to freedom at this time, but simply away from their specific enslavement and towards a community that would hopefully not identify them as enslaved) as well as the forced relocation northward of enslaved blacks by their white American owners (mainly Loyalists) meant that African Americans were also present in significant numbers in Quebec, starting in 1760.

Besides Creoles who were of African Canadian and African American origins, the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century black populations in Nova Scotia and Quebec were

⁷⁴ In Quebec where enslaved people of African and indigenous ancestry were enslaved together, the term panis was used for enslaved indigenous males and panise for females.

⁷⁵ I have deduced this from my own research and the notices compiled by Harvey Amani Whitfield in Black Slavery in the Maritimes: A History in Documents (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2018)

⁷⁶ Creolization refers to the transformation of distinct racial populations who came into contact in the Americas within the context of Transatlantic Slavery. It commonly refers to African and European contact, although some scholars include indigenous people. For enslaved Africans, creolization always occurred under duress through the legislation, rules, and prohibitions imposed upon them by slave owners. See: Sidney Mintz, "Creolization and Hispanic Exceptionalism," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*, vol. 31, no. 3, The Second Slavery: Mass Slavery, World-Economy, and Comparative Microhistories, Part II (2008), pp. 251-65; Linda M. Rupert, Creolization and Contraband: Curaçao in the Early Modern Atlantic World (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

augmented by the steady arrival of other Creoles; the enslaved people of African descent who arrived as the “secondary cargo” or commodities on ships that originated from Caribbean ports, ships also loaded with primary cargoes of slave-produced plantation goods like sugar, rum, and molasses. Printed in the Halifax Gazette, on Saturday, 30 May 1752, the notice entitled

New-York, Law for Newfoundland.

Advertisements.

JUST imported, and to be sold by Joshua Mauger, at ~~Major~~ Lockman's Store in Halifax ~~from~~ at Negro Slaves, viz. A very likely Negro Wench, of about thirty five Years of Age, a Creole born, has been brought up in a Gentleman's Family, and capable of doing all sorts of Work belonging thereto, as Needle Work of all sorts, and in the best Manner; also Washing, Ironing, Cookery, and every other Thing that can be expected from such a Slave: Also 2 Negro Boys of about 12 or 13 Years old, likely, healthy and well shap'd, and understand some English: Likewise 2 healthy Negro Slaves of about 18 Years of Age, of agreeable Tempers, and fit for any kind of Business: And also a healthy Negro Man of about 30 Years of Age.

Figure 6: Joshua Mauger, “Advertisements, JUST imported, and to be sold by Joshua Mauger,” Halifax Gazette, Saturday, 30 May 1752, p. 2; PANS MFM #8151, Reel 8151, 23 March 1752 - 6 March 1766, printed by John Bushnell, Grafton-Street, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

“Advertisements, JUST imported and to be sold by Joshua Mauger” listed six enslaved people for sale. While the word “just” worked to further objectify the people listed in the advertisement by emphasizing the newness of the arrival of Mauger’s human commodities and his desire for a quick turnaround, the word “imported” announced the enslaved people as foreigners. The first person to be described in this notice was “A very likely Negro Wench, of about thirty five Years of Age, a Creole born”.⁷⁷ Creole, as it was used in this context, was a way to describe a Caribbean origin. However, this advertisement may also have disclosed the presence of African-born people among the group, a point detectable in the lack of English language fluency in a group arriving from the British Caribbean. The notice continued, “Also 2 Negro Boys of about 12 or 13 Years old, likely, healthy and well shap’d, and understand some English”.⁷⁸ (sic) (fig. 6).

Unlike more southern port settlements in British North America (later USA), the primary port in Nova Scotia, Halifax, and the two primary ones in Quebec, Quebec City and Montreal, did not appear to receive merchant ships directly from Africa. Instead, late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century newspaper notices for shipping affairs routinely listed vessels arriving from or bound for Britain and the Anglo-Caribbean. Such information was commonly printed in notices reporting harbour news, custom house activity or those placed by individual ship captains advertising space for passengers and/or freight. In one such case, an advertisement printed on Tuesday, 26 March 1799 in Royal Gazette and Nova-Scotia Advertiser exposes the profound economic transatlantic connections between Halifax and the Anglo-Caribbean. The notice informed the public that the brigs Lord Nelson and Nymph, captained by Rundle and Pryor

⁷⁷ Joshua Mauger, “Advertisements, JUST imported, and to be sold by Joshua Mauger,” Halifax Gazette, Saturday, 30 May 1752, p. 2; PANS MFM #8151, Reel 8151, 23 March 1752 - 6 March 1766, printed by John Bushnell, Grafton-Street, NSARM, Halifax.

⁷⁸ Mauger, “Advertisements, JUST imported”.

respectively, had arrived from St. Vincent, along with Captain Hughes brig Friends from St. Thomas in twenty-eight days and an unnamed brig from Jamaica.⁷⁹

Identity and Labour

Fugitive advertisements often detailed the skills of the missing enslaved person, in essence describing the labour that had been extracted from them for free, often under threat of bodily harm by their owners and their surrogates. Jobs like cooper, carpenter, and caulker indicated not just the abundance of skilled labour that whites stole from blacks, but also inadvertently highlighted the exploitation, which did not allow blacks to accumulate the economic benefits of such, physical exertions, knowledge, and skills for themselves.

As in other parts of the Americas, men and women, and boys and girls were enslaved in Canada. In fact, slavery denied black children access to childhood; a time of life characterized by carefree attitudes, play and the constancy of love and protection of one's parents and elders. The normal gendered division of labour that applied to the white middle and upper classes, did not apply to the enslaved. Peculiarly, slavery both exploded and reinforced certain normative, racialized understandings of sex and gender differences in terms of labour. Jamaica was a plantation economy, driven primarily by sugar production. As Lucille Mathurin Mair has explained,

“It was sugar that placed Jamaica at a strategic point in the emerging international capitalist system of the eighteenth century, establishing it as Britain's most prized transatlantic colony. In 1805 it was the world's largest individual exporter of sugar. Sugar commanded the island's major resources of land, capital and labour. In 1832, sugar employed 49.5 per cent of the slave work force.”⁸⁰

However, it would be incorrect to assume that such “hard labour” was reserved for enslaved males. Rather, as Mair further articulates, “In 1832, sugar employed 49.5 per cent of the slave work force. The majority of those workers were women, the ratio being 920 males to 1,000 females.”⁸¹ Therefore, the complexity of labour for the enslaved meant that routinely, enslaved females performed arduous, monotonous, and dangerous work and that, due to their sex, enslaved males were privileged to be instructed in skilled labour which would allow them to escape field work and access greater social mobility.

At the same time, in tropical, plantation, slave majority regimes like Jamaica, it was enslaved females who suffered the brunt of the surveillance and sexual violence which became synonymous with their sexual labour as “breeders” of generations of new enslaved people. While the insidiousness of strategic sexual violence and breeding is harder to retroactively deduce in slave minority sites like Nova Scotia and Quebec, mainly due to the lack of explicit documentation, Jamaican planters like Matthew Lewis openly kept “breeding lists” which monitored and commodified the fertility of the enslaved females in his possession.⁸² Therefore,

⁷⁹ “Halifax March 26,” The Royal Gazette and Nova-Scotia Advertiser, Tuesday, 26 March 1799, vol. xi, no. 585, p. 3; PANS MFM #8168, Reel 8168, 3 October 1797 – 14 October 1800, NSARM, Halifax. The name of the brig from Jamaica was not printed and the captain's name is partially illegible, but may be Sprout.

⁸⁰ Lucille Mathurin Mair, “Women Field Workers in Jamaica During Slavery,” Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader, eds. Verene Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2000), p. 390.

⁸¹ Mair, “Women Field Workers,” p. 390.

⁸² Matthew Lewis, Journal of a West India Proprietor: Kept during a residence in the Island of Jamaica, ed. Judith Terry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 237.

the role of enslaved females as the primary field labourers in Jamaica did not dissuade Jamaican planters from simultaneously extracting sexual labour from them.

The dual labour of enslaved females was also normal in slave minority sites. As Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris have explained,

“By their numbers alone, women – cooking and cleaning for whites, suckling their infants, raising their children, and succoring their aged – were the face of slavery in New York City. Slave women were ubiquitous in the households of New York’s elite and common among the white families of the middling sort.”⁸³

Both slave sale and fugitive slave notices placed in the *Quebec Gazette* mentioned the labour and skills of the enslaved people they described. However, since the detailing of an enslaved person’s skills was tantamount to advertising their ingenuity, talent, and intelligence, such descriptions were more frequent in the slave sale advertisements in which slave owners were more compelled to present the enslaved person as healthy, trustworthy, and useful “property”.

Criminalizing the Enslaved

When an enslaved person fled, owners capitalized upon their wealth, class privilege, and literacy to disseminate *their* versions of events broadly and to dominate public opinion normally through a vilification of the enslaved, often

by portraying them as cunning and idle. In a 1794 Quebec fugitive notice for a “NEGRO MAN named *Isaac*,” Azariah Pretchard advised the public that “said Negro has been guilty of theft and many other misdemeanors.”⁸⁴ (fig. 7). This imposition of information meant to malign Charles was also used against white indentured servants. When the enslaved black man Ireland (about twenty-eight years old) and the indentured white Francis Freeland (“suppos’d to be about 16, tho’ small of his Age”) escaped from William Gilliland in Willsborough, New York, Gilliland expounded of Ireland, “as he has liv’d with me, without any Appearance of Discontent, for upwards of 13 Years, it is supposed he has been seduced by the little Fellow that is gone off with him, and who is well known to many in Canada for his Villany.”⁸⁵ (sic) While some slave

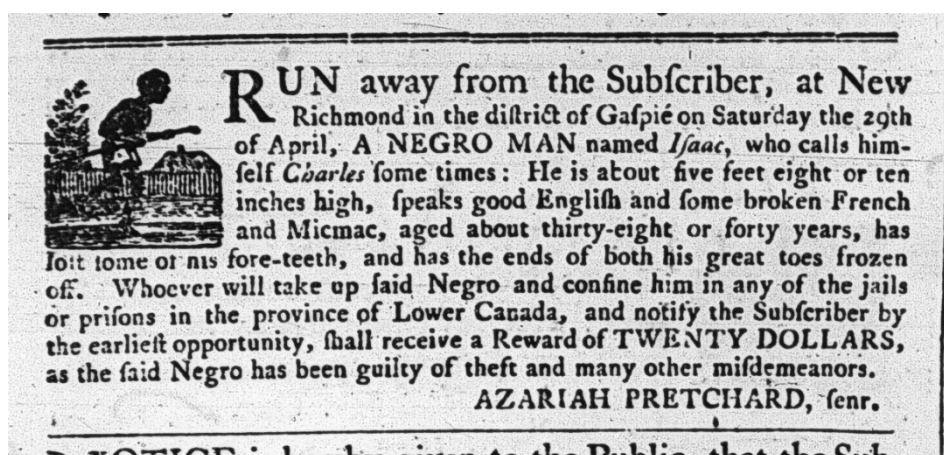


Figure 7: Azariah Pretchard, “RUN away from Subscriber,” *Quebec Gazette*, 22 May 1794, supplement, vol. 1506, p. 5; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Quebec, Canada.

⁸³ Berlin and Leslie M. Harris eds., “Uncovering, Discovering, and Recovering,” p. 11.

⁸⁴ Pretchard, “RUN away from Subscriber,” transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: New paper Notices,” p. 337.

⁸⁵ William Gilliland, “SIX DOLLARS REWARD,” *Quebec Gazette*, 19 September 1771; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 318.

For Gilliland, Freeland’s villainy was surely linked to his instability. The advertisement advised that Freeland had a remarkable number of employers “on the lake” while working as a stave-cutter, as well as employment in Quebec with Mr. Charles Hay. This last detail is certainly why Gilliland suspected the pair of heading to Canada.

owners and employers deployed sweeping generalizations designed to tarnish the fugitive's character, others provided specific details of the items which had supposedly been stolen.

Enslaved female fugitives were not immune from such accusations. When an unnamed "NEGRO GIRL" of about twenty-four years of age fled from Isaac Werden in Quebec City, he included in the notice that she was "suppos'd to have Cash, both Gold and Silver, with her."⁸⁶ In Nova Scotia, after stating broadly that the "Negro Woman Slave, named PHILIS" had "Robbed the Subscriber of sundry Articles of value," Abel Michener's fugitive notice proclaimed that she had "carried away," an assortment of clothing.⁸⁷ Although Michener did not use the word stolen, the implication was that her dress could be mobilized to deceive the public.

Workhouses in Jamaica and Canada

Workhouses were the penal institution of choice in which slave owners requested that escaped enslaved people be lodged in the tropical colony of Jamaica. When slave owners conspired with the public to catch runaways, the workhouse or jail was the usual place that an owner suggested the captured party be lodged. Workhouses also functioned as a penal institution where slave owners could have enslaved people punished and tortured; generally, those that they deemed disobedient, unruly, rebellions or troublesome. The Rev. Thomas Cooper explained that workhouses were used as punishment for "incurable" enslaved people who were sent at the whim of the overseer or master/mistress for any length of time without the intervention of a magistrate.⁸⁸ He also noted that the enslaved were chained together, two by two, and forced to repair the roads in the day and locked up at night. After witnessing a gang at work on a trip to Lucea, Cooper described the restraints as follows: an iron ring is locked around the neck to which a stout chain is attached, leading from one enslaved person's neck to the other, males and females are shackled in the same way.⁸⁹

Northern British colonies like Nova Scotia also had workhouses which functioned in the same respect. Besides shedding light on the sex and racial makeup of prisoners, the duration of their imprisonment, and the circumstances of their criminal status, the annual ledger of the workhouse or house of correction of Halifax for the year 1790 allows for an analysis of its role as a site for the criminalization and punishment of fugitive enslaved people and indentured servants.⁹⁰ Although the ledger lists forty-two names corresponding to those who were locked up between 1st January and 31st December 1790 (inclusive), in reality a total of thirty-five people, both men and women, were incarcerated. The discrepancy between the number of people listed, forty-two,

⁸⁶ Isaac Werden, "RUN-AWAY, on Saturday the 22nd of August, 1766," *Quebec Gazette*, 1 September 1766; transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 314.

⁸⁷ Abel Michener, "RUN away from the Subscriber on Monday," *The Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 30 June 1789, vol. 1, no. 14, p. 2; Abel Michener, "RUN away from the Subscriber on Monday," *The Royal Gazette and Nova Scotia Advertiser*, 7 July 1789, vol. 1, no. 15, p. 3; McGill University Library, Montreal; cited in Allen Robertson, "Bondage and Freedom: Apprentices, Servants and Slaves in Colonial Nova Scotia," *Collections of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, vol. 44 (1996), p. 62.

⁸⁸ Thomas Cooper, *Facts Illustrative of the Condition of the Negro Slaves in Jamaica: with Notes and Appendix*. (London: Sold by J. Hatchard and Son, Piccadilly, and Lupton Relfe, 13, Cornhill; G. Smallfield, Printer, Hackney, 1824), pp. 27, 57-58.

⁸⁹ Cooper, *Facts*, pp. 27, 57-58.

⁹⁰ "Account of Persons Committed to the Work House (Or House of Correction) of Halifax and etc. from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1790, both days inclusive," *Prisoners in Bridewell 1790-1831 and County Gaol 1751-1849*, RG 34-312, Series J, vol. 4, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax.

and the number of people incarcerated, thirty-five, is a result of the fact that two prisoners left the work house only to be returned again in the same year.⁹¹ In the first case, a man, presumably white, named William Wilson was imprisoned seven times from 19 April to 10 May, 7 June to 9 July, 12 July to 9 August, 9 August to 11 August, 1 September to 5 September, 5 September to 26 October, and on the 9 December for 23 days.⁹² The second prisoner who seemed to make more than one appearance in the workhouse was listed only as Joe. Named as prisoner #16 and #18, Joe was incarcerated from 7 June to 13 June and 25 June to 28 June respectively.

Of these thirty-five prisoners, sixteen or seventeen were women, a fact that can be discerned not because the sex of the prisoner was specified, but because of the gendering of the prisoners' first names.⁹³ Much like the sex of the prisoners, the race of certain prisoners can also be ascertained, but not because of the specified categories of the ledger. The ledger is organized across two pages with the following columns: number, names, when committed, by whom committed, when discharged, by whom discharged, number of days in the house, paid for, and remarks. However, racial categorizations were also written into the ledger after the names of certain individuals. Crucially, it was the race of people of African descent only that was highlighted in the ledger with the terms black and Negro. Of the forty-two names listed, seven specify black subjects: #6 Peter (a black man), #16 Joe (a black man), #18 Mary (a black woman), #23 Joe (a black man), #32 Jane (a Negro wench), #38 Geo' Love (a black man), and #40 Belfast (a black man).⁹⁴ Therefore, of the thirty-five prisoners, since the man listed as Joe (#'s 16 and 23) appears to be one and the same, at least six black people seem to have been imprisoned in the Halifax workhouse in 1790.

While Hugh Kelly, the keeper of the workhouse, unfortunately did not see fit to include a column for the prisoners' crimes, a remark inscribed in red ink provides a means of ascertaining the most likely "crime" of some of the prisoners.⁹⁵ Kelly wrote "those marked in red figures have been paid for by *their masters*". (italics mine) Unfortunately (for my purposes), Kelly also neglected to record the names of the masters who appeared to pay the fines or their names could be easily matched against the subscribers of fugitive slave notices. Although the word "masters" does not distinguish between the employer of an indentured servant and the owner of an enslaved person, the addition of racial naming makes it very likely that at least some of the black prisoners were enslaved fugitives.

⁹¹ "Account of Persons Committed to the Work House"

⁹² "Account of Persons Committed to the Work House"

The ledger does not list a date of release for Wilson's last incarceration. The fact that Wilson was imprisoned from 1 September to 5 September and then reincarcerated on 5 September can be explained by the fact that he escaped on that day and was apparently quickly apprehended. This fact is confirmed in the ledger in the column headed "by whom discharged" under which it was indicated "ran away". However, regarding Wilson's release and re-imprisonment on 9 August, it would appear that he committed some new crime after his release since no such notation is present. Of the seven times he was imprisoned, Wilson apparently escaped twice as the ledger indicated that he ran away on 11 August and 5 September. The last name of the man named William seems to have been spelled two ways in the ledger. In entries #'s 11 and 17 the last name is spelt Wilson and in entries #'s 28, 30, 36, 37 and 41 it is spelt Willson.

⁹³ The lack of clarity about the number of women is due to the name of prisoner # 31, Kit Nichols.

⁹⁴ Love's first name was most likely George.

⁹⁵ "Account of Persons Committed to the Work House"

None of the prisoners' supposed crimes appear to have been very serious since the periods of incarceration ranged from one to fifty-two days. Those who served one day included: Peter (a black man), #24 Esther Roberts, #25 Dina Roberts, and #26 Else McCullogh. It was William Willson (#37) who was held for fifty-two days. None of the prisoners seem to have been sentenced to death.

While the fines paid range between 1 and 14, no currency was specified. However, since Kelly's tally of annual costs on the third page of the ledger was provided in pounds, shillings, and pence (25.3.6), the "paid for" column likely adhered to the same currency.⁹⁶ Of the forty-two entries, nine included the red-inked fine: #7 Walter Edwards (5), #12 Joseph Alexander (4), #18 (a black woman) Mary (2), #29 Richard Allicate (1), #32 (a Negro Wench) Jane (14), # 35 William Lucas (7), #38 (a black man) Geo' Love (8), #39 William Watson (2), and #40 (a black man) Belfast (14). While Edwards, Alexander, Allicate, Lucas, and Watson were most likely whites who may have been indentured servants, Mary, Jane, Geo', and Belfast were almost definitely enslaved fugitives whose owners collected them from the Halifax workhouse after they were captured.

Further evidence exists that suggests Belfast's enslaved status. A fugitive slave advertisement initially dated 8 February 1794 placed by Michael Wallace in The Weekly Chronicle of Halifax described the escape of "a Negro Man Servant, property of the Subscriber, named BELFAST".⁹⁷ The dates of the two documents (1790 and 1794 respectively) and the uncommonness of the enslaved man's name, Belfast, make it likely that the man listed in the workhouse in 1790 was the same man who escaped from Wallace in 1794. Although the black man Joe, listed twice, was not amongst those who was claimed by a master who paid his releases, the combination of his race, the lack of a family name, and the date of the ledger, makes it extremely likely, that he too was enslaved. That the ledger listed last names for racially unspecified prisoners, something that only one of the black people possess (Love), is further evidence of the unfree status of the black prisoners.

Enslaved Females

The matrilineal order of slavery meant that any child born to enslaved females was immediately a slave, owned by their mother's owner.⁹⁸ This was true whether the father was enslaved or free, black or of any other race. Slave owners capitalized on this convention by practising breeding, forcibly pairing enslaved males and females, actively manipulating their sexuality and overruling their personal intimate choices to produce more enslaved property.⁹⁹ Breeding was a calculated, public, and well-documented enterprise in tropical plantation regimes like Jamaica, where planters were known to keep lists tracking the fertility of their enslaved females.¹⁰⁰ White male slave owners understood sexual access to enslaved females as their legal right, which unsurprisingly led to the explosion of a mixed-race

⁹⁶ Notes on the ledger indicate that it was examined by Justices of the Peace John Newton, George Smith, and Daniel Wood who ordered Hugh Kelly to be paid 25.3.6 pounds. The ledger was verified by Clerk of the Peace, Thos (Thomas) Wood on 11 January 1791.

⁹⁷ Michael Wallace, "Twenty Dollars Reward," The Weekly Chronicle Saturdays, 8 February 1794, vol. vii, no. 402, p. 1; 15 February 1794, vol. vii, no. 403, p. 1; 22 February 1794, vol. vii, no. 404, p. 1; 15 March 1794, vol. vii, no. 407; MFM 8165, NSARM, Halifax. The microfilm reel does not include a copy of the issue prior to 8 February 1794. Although we can assume that Wallace also ran advertisements for Belfast's return on 1 March and 8 March 1794 (vols. vii, nos. 405 & 406), these issues are also missing from this reel.

⁹⁸ Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999)

⁹⁹ Thomas A. Foster, "The Sexual Abuse of Black Men under American Slavery," Journal of the History of Sexuality, vol. 20, no. 3 (September 2011), pp. 445-64.

¹⁰⁰ Nelson, Slavery, Geography and Empire, pp. 250-52.

or coloured
enslaved population
rendered visible in
part through
Canadian slave
advertisements for
the sale of
“mulatto” and
“mulatto Negro”
people.¹⁰¹

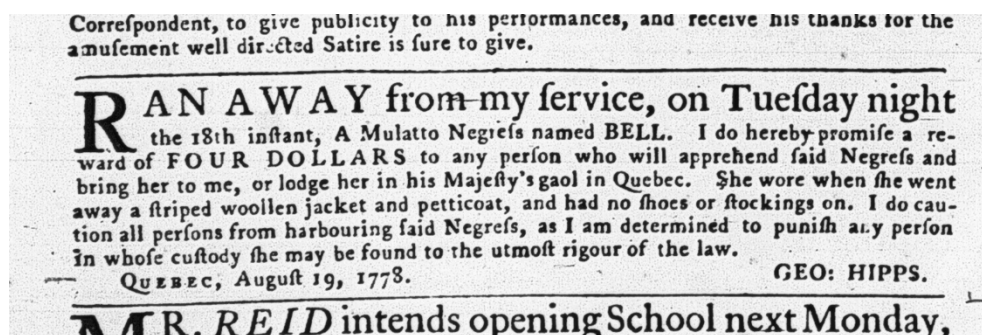


Figure 8: George Hipps, “RAN AWAY from my service,” *Quebec Gazette*, 20 August 1778, vol. 677, p. 3; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Enslaved
females resisted their
oppression in various ways including through flight. However, due to their maternal roles, they escaped much less often than their male counterparts. Although smaller in number, fugitive slave advertisements for enslaved females yield significant information about their experiences. Several Canadian fugitive notices immediately stand out for: 1) the state of the runaway and (2) the timing of multiple escapes. The mixed-race female named Bell is noteworthy for both reasons. Bell was documented in two fugitive slave advertisements. Both placed by her owner, the butcher George Hipps, the first notice placed on 20 August 1778 claimed that she had escaped on 18 August 1778 and the second notice placed on 5 November 1778 claimed that she had fled yet again on 29 October 1778.¹⁰² Since most enslaved people in northern colonies deliberately planned escapes in the spring or summer months to take advantage of the good weather and the increased ship travel, Bell’s second escape in late October, is particularly significant. Bell’s determination to escape Hipps is remarkable, not only due to her two documented attempts, but to their proximity. The fact that the two advertisements were separated by under six weeks is a demonstration of her persistence as is the fact that the second notice recounted a late October escape when the weather was surely colder. But the notice for her August escape also discloses alarming details. Hipps revealed that Bell, who he described as a “Mulatto Negress” had fled with “no shoes or stockings on”.¹⁰³ Whether in August or not, the absence of shoes on an enslaved person in Quebec or Nova Scotia was an uncommon occurrence, unlike a tropical colony like Jamaica.¹⁰⁴ Thus, that Bell ran away without proper footwear was surely an indication of her desperation and most likely the hastiness of her first unplanned attempt (fig. 8).

For enslaved females, running away was surely often motivated by a desire to escape sexual abuse. The history of Bell’s multiple sales to various white men and her identity as a mulatto most certainly impacted the nature of her enslavement and predisposed her to a certain type of sexual exploitation.¹⁰⁵ Frank Mackey, and William Renwick Riddell before him, have carefully researched Bell’s multiple owners.¹⁰⁶ It is unknown when Captain Thomas Venture

¹⁰¹ Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 307-40.

¹⁰² George Hipps, “RAN AWAY from my service,” *Quebec Gazette*, 20 August 1778; George Hipps, “RUN away from George Hipps,” *Quebec Gazette*, 5 November 1778; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 321.

¹⁰³ Hipps, “RAN AWAY from my service,” Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 321.

¹⁰⁴ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography and Empire*, pp. 350, 360, 373, 385 n. 75.

¹⁰⁵ Charmaine A. Nelson, “Racing Childhood: Representations of Black Girls in Canadian Art,” *Representing the Black Female Subject in Western Art* (NYC: Routledge, 2010), p. 56.

¹⁰⁶ See: Riddell, “Notes on the Slave in Nouvelle-France,” 324; Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 535 endnote #32.

first sold Bell or Isabella to George Hipps at auction. However, in less than two weeks after her second escape (and subsequent recapture), Hipps again

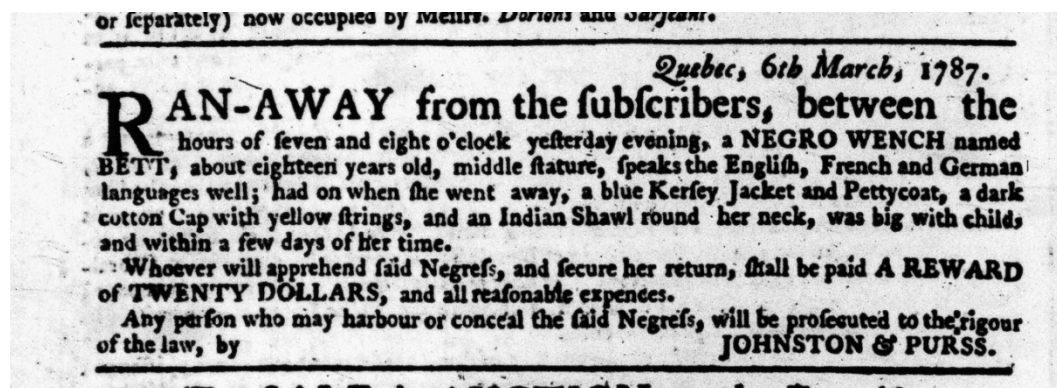


Figure 9: Johnston and Purss, “RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,” *Quebec Gazette*, 8 March 1787, no. 1125, p. 2; Johnston and Purss, “RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,” *Quebec Gazette*, 8 March 1787; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

sold Bell, then fifteen years old, on 14 November 1778 to Lieutenant-Governor Hector Theophilus Cramahé for £50.¹⁰⁷ Given this development and the fact that Hipps’ first notice offered a reward of four dollars for Bell’s return, Hipps’ refusal to offer a reward for her return in his second fugitive notice likely indicates his forethought about disposing of her in an attempt to “cut his losses” and to rid himself of someone he no doubt felt was troublesome.¹⁰⁸ In 20 April of 1779 Cramahé also sold Bell to Quebec harbour master Captain Peter Napier for £45.¹⁰⁹ Finally, upon his death on 9 February 1782, Napier’s widow Sarah, sold Bell identified as “a Certain Molatto Woman Known by the name and Appellation of Isabella Grant” to Francis Daniel and Richard Dalton, two Quebec merchants, for £52.10s on 6 February 1783.¹¹⁰ (sic) Therefore, while it is not known how long Hipps held Bell in bondage, or the amount of time she was enslaved by Daniel and Dalton, that Bell was owned by Napier (and his wife) for under four years and by Cramahé for only around five months, may speak to her ongoing pattern of resistance, a trait which made her undesirable “property”.

The state of the runaway is also poignantly revealed in the 8 March 1787 *Quebec Gazette* advertisement for the return of a pregnant “NEGRO WENCH, named BETT, about eighteen years old, middle stature, speaks the English, French and German languages well”.¹¹¹ (fig. 9). Placed by the Quebec City based West Indian trading partners of James Johnston and John Purss, like the 1791 notice for an enslaved woman named Cloe,¹¹² the advertisement even detailed the time of day when Bett fled.¹¹³ Bett like Cloe escaped at night, between seven and eight o’clock. Her owners’ documentation of the timing of her escape, to the hour, may indicate that her resistive nature had been previously observed and that Bett, more valuable due to her pregnancy, was under increased surveillance. That the notice was placed the next day – as compared to days

¹⁰⁷ Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 535 endnote #32.

¹⁰⁸ Hipps, “RAN AWAY from my service,”; Hipps, “RUN away from George Hipps,”; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 321.

¹⁰⁹ Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 535 endnote #32.

¹¹⁰ Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 535 endnote #

¹¹¹ Johnston and Purss, “RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,” *Quebec Gazette*, 8 March 1787; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 329.

¹¹² Judah Joseph, “RUN AWAY,” *Quebec Gazette*, 28 July 1791; transcribed in Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” p. 334

¹¹³ Mackey, “Appendix I: Newspaper Notices,” pp. 308, 532 endnote #24.

or even weeks later like most other Quebec advertisements, also demonstrates Bett's value as well as the specific nature of her circumstances as a pregnant enslaved female.

As the notice related, Bett "was big with child, and within a few days of her time."¹¹⁴ The fact that she chose to flee in her advanced state of pregnancy – clearly in her third trimester – is surely a sign of great distress with her living conditions, as is the fact that, of the nine enslaved female fugitives documented in Quebec fugitive slave advertisements, she was the only one to run away in the winter.¹¹⁵ As an enslaved female, Bett's child, regardless of its paternity, would have been considered a slave and was to instantly become, like Bett, the property of Johnston and Purss. Therefore, the urgency of their notice was an indication of the merchants' acknowledgement that they stood to lose not one, but two enslaved people, with Bett, already proving herself to be particularly valuable due to her fertility. But we would be foolish if we did not consider if either Johnston or Purss was the father of Bett's unborn child. As the targets of continual sexual predation enslaved black females routinely bore the mixed-race children of their white male slave owners; men who customarily continued to hold both the enslaved females and their own mixed-race children in bondage.

But Bett's escape was unfortunately only temporary. On 5 July 1787 almost four months to the day of her escape, a notice in the *Quebec Gazette* announced the private sale of "A STOUT, healthy, active NEGRO WOMAN, about eighteen years old".¹¹⁶ Like the earlier fugitive advertisement, Bett's sale notice also duplicates the earlier description of her facility with English, French, and German.¹¹⁷ As Mackey has noted, the trilingualism that in her fugitive advertisement was listed as a sign of her cunning and a potential vehicle of disguise, in her slave sale advertisement was "promoted, like her other skills, as an asset to her owners."¹¹⁸

It was surely no accident that Bett's name was withheld in the sale advertisement. Rather, the anonymous notice may be explained by the fact that Johnston and Purss did not want the sale associated with Bett's previous flight. Alarming too, the sale notice listed only Bett and not an infant for sale. As Mackey has deduced, tragedy had befallen Bett, who, in May 1787, "having lost her baby, had been briefly held on suspicion of murdering the child."¹¹⁹ Bett's maternal loss makes Johnston and Purss' pronouncement in the slave sale notice that she was "very handy in the care of children," seem especially cruel and unfeeling.¹²⁰

Conclusion

The scale of slavery in Canada where the enslaved were routinely outnumbered by whites, made it no less violent than its tropical counterparts. Indeed, we must consider the extreme toll that multiple transatlantic crossings, isolated living conditions, continual

¹¹⁴ Johnston and Purss, "RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,"; transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 329.

¹¹⁵ See the fugitive slave advertisements transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," pp. 307-40.

¹¹⁶ Anonymous, "FOR SALE, A STOUT, healthy, active NEGRO WOMAN," *Quebec Gazette*, 5 July 1787; transcribed Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 329.

¹¹⁷ Anonymous, "FOR SALE, A STOUT, healthy, active NEGRO WOMAN,"; transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 329.

¹¹⁸ Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 309.

¹¹⁹ Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 309. Mackey's sources in UMCB (Université de Montreal, division de Archives, P0058, Collection Louis-François-Georges Baby), J2/141, KB, Court Docket, Quebec, May Sessions 1787, 75. See p. 529 endnote #2.

¹²⁰ Anonymous, "FOR SALE, A STOUT, healthy, active NEGRO WOMAN,"; transcribed in Mackey, "Appendix I: Newspaper Notices," p. 329.

surveillance, hyper-visibility, and the accelerated rate of creolization and cultural loss took upon the enslaved. Indeed, for the enslaved in Canada, we must recognize isolation – from self and from community - as a form of ongoing trauma and abuse. Furthermore, the regional climates of Canadian territories, seasonal shifts, and extremely cold winters, meant that enslaved black people who had been born in tropical or semi-tropical regions like Africa, the Caribbean or the American South, were forced by their slave owners to relocate to the north and unceremoniously dropped into geographical and climactic conditions which were both foreign and hazardous, especially with the routine provision of substandard, hand-me-down clothing.

The Canadian desire to see ourselves as the saviours of African Americans has prevented us from telling the truth about our own slaving histories. We have not yet begun to fully recuperate the lives, identities, and experiences of the enslaved in Canada, nor to speak truthfully about the tremendous harms committed by white slave owners like James McGill. Instead, our investment in the retelling of the 32-year history of the Underground Railroad – 1833-1865 – rather than the two-century long history of slavery, has caused us to erase the profoundly colonial history of our nation, and along with it, the centuries-long presence of people of African descent.

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Plate List

Figure 1: Robt. M. Guthrie, “Run Away on Thursday morning last,” Montreal Gazette, no. 6, Thursday, 29 September 1785, p. 4; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Figure 2: James Crofton, “RUN-AWAY, from *James Crofton*,” Quebec Gazette, 14 May 1767, vol. 124, p. 4; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Figure 3: A List of Negroes on Hope Plantation in St. Andrews (1788), paper, 32.39 x 20.3 cm., ST West Indies Box 3(1), Huntington Library, San Marino, California, USA.

Figure 4: Richardson, “Four Guineas Reward,” Nova-Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle, Tuesday, 5 September 1780, vol. 10, no. 744, p. 3; PANS MFM #8158, Reel 8158, 6 September 1774 – 26 December 1780, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Figure 5: Anonymous, “To be SOLD, By PUBLIC AUCTION,” Nova Scotia Gazette and Weekly Chronicle, Tuesday, 23 March 1773, vol. 3, no. 134, p. 4; PANS MFM #8155, Reel 8155, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Figure 6: Joshua Mauger, “Advertisements, JUST imported, and to be sold by Joshua Mauger,” Halifax Gazette, Saturday, 30 May 1752, p. 2; PANS MFM #8151, Reel 8151, 23 March 1752 - 6 March 1766, printed by John Bushnell, Grafton-Street, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Figure 7: Azariah Pretchard, “RUN away from Subscriber,” Quebec Gazette, 22 May 1794, supplement, vol. 1506, p. 5; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Quebec, Canada.

Figure 8: George Hipps, “RAN AWAY from my service,” Quebec Gazette, 20 August 1778, vol. 677, p. 3; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Figure 9: Johnston and Purss, “RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,” Quebec Gazette, 8 March 1787, no. 1125, p. 2; Johnston and Purss, “RAN-AWAY from the subscribers,” Quebec Gazette, 8 March 1787; Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

SECTION ONE

Overview: History of Slavery in New France (French Empire pre-1760) and Quebec (British Empire 1760-1834)

Nicholas Raffoul

Despite the fact that the institution of slavery has been virtually erased from the collective history of Quebec, slavery shaped many aspects of society in the region that would become Canada as early as the seventeenth century. Slavery in New France and Quebec officially existed between 1632 and 1834, with the former territory being governed by the French and the latter by the British Empires.¹²¹ Between 1660 and 1760 under French rule, colonists of New France developed an extensive system of slavery that commodified and subjugated indigenous and black peoples for the sake of colonial commerce.¹²² During French rule, the majority of the enslaved people of New France were indigenous and were referred to as *panis(e)* which became a generic term to refer to all indigenous slaves despite their region of origin.¹²³ Over 85% of enslaved indigenous people in New France were taken captive in the Mississippi River basin.¹²⁴ Enslaved populations were most visible in large urban centres where 61% of all known enslaved people were held.¹²⁵ Seemingly a common practice in Montreal, according to Brett Rushforth, “half of all colonists who owned a home in 1725 also owned an Indian slave.”¹²⁶

The first recorded black enslaved person in New France was Olivier Le Jeune, a young man brought from Madagascar in 1628 and sold in New France by English settler David Kirke for 50 half crowns.¹²⁷ Years later in 1688, Jacques-René De Brisay De Denonville, Intendant of New France, wrote to the French Secretary of State complaining of the scarcity of agricultural and domestic labour, suggesting the importation of black enslaved people from the West Indies considering such endeavours were already ‘successful’ in New England.¹²⁸ King Louis XIV initially had reservations to import enslaved blacks because of fears that Africans would not be able to survive Canada’s climate, yet Denonville’s request was approved by the minister a year later, officially legalizing slavery in the colony as of 1689.¹²⁹ The enslaved were legally defined as *meubles*, movable personal property, and were therefore bound to their owners rather than to the land. As such, the enslaved were liberated only if they were granted freedom or when they died.¹³⁰

¹²¹ Marcel Trudel, Canada's Forgotten Slaves: Two Centuries of Bondage, (Montréal: Véhicule Press, 2013), p. 254.

¹²² Brett Rushforth, “‘A Little Flesh We Offer You’: The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France,” The William and Mary Quarterly, vol. 60, no. 4 (October 2003), p. 777.

¹²³ Rushforth, “The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France,” p. 788.

¹²⁴ Trudel, Canada's Forgotten Slaves, p. 70.

¹²⁵ Trudel, Canada's Forgotten Slaves, p. 78.

¹²⁶ Rushforth, “‘A Little Flesh We Offer You,’” p. 777.

¹²⁷ Robin W. Winks, Blacks in Canada: A History (Montreal.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), p. 1.

¹²⁸ William Renwick Riddell, The Slave in Canada (Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1920), p. 2.

¹²⁹ Riddell, The Slave in Canada, p. 2.

¹³⁰ Tamara Extian-Babiuk, “‘To Be Sold: A Negro Wench’: Slave Ads of the Montreal Gazette 1785 -1805,” (Montreal: Art History Master’s, McGill University, 2006).

The institution of slavery in Canada was first recognized and protected by French Law and then extended under the British regime after the 1760 Conquest of New France. The 47th Article of Capitulation stated,

“Negroes and Panis of both Sexes shall remain in possession of the French and Canadians to whom they belong; they shall be at liberty to keep them in their service in the Colony or sell them; and they may also continue to bring them up in the Roman religion.”¹³¹

During the American Revolution, a large number of British Empire Loyalists migrated north, forcibly relocating any black enslaved people that they owned to Quebec and other provinces like Nova Scotia.¹³² The majority of enslaved people of African descent that arrived in Quebec were Creoles, often African-Caribbean or African-American, American-born (continental) people who had already been separated by many generations from Africa.¹³³ Of the 4,124 documented enslaved people in Quebec whose race was recorded during slavery, 35% were black, while 64%, including 339 children, were recorded as indigenous.¹³⁴

Marcel Trudel’s research in his ground-breaking book Canada’s Forgotten Slaves – first published in 1960 - reveals that slavery permeated most ranks of society in New France, such that many figures celebrated today for their contributions to Quebec’s history were slave owners. Many government officials were slave owners, including the French Regime’s governor generals and intendants who managed the colony’s civil administration, settlement, and infrastructure, and who were responsible for establishing regulations which governed the judicial system and commerce. The colony’s House of Assembly, made up of seventeen Anglophone and Francophone members all owned enslaved people.¹³⁵ Seigneurs, the feudal lords of New France owned many enslaved people, such that half of the colony’s 300 seigneurs owned a total of 442 slaves, making slavery, “a regular feature of life in seigneurial manors.”¹³⁶ Under both French and British rule, merchants owned the most enslaved people in Quebec, with about 315 merchants, traders, and other members of the bourgeoisie owning over 830 human beings, James McGill being one of them.¹³⁷ After the British Conquest, 54% of this group were Francophone, and they owned 58% of the enslaved population. Doctors, surgeons, carpenters, notaries, artists, and printers were among the slave holding class.

Bishops, priests, nuns, and numerous religious communities in Quebec were not immune to the institution of slavery and in fact were but another segment of society where slave labour was normalized.¹³⁸ Besides individual priests, religious orders in New France held at least 100 people in bondage, including Jesuit communities in Québec City, the Seigneurie of Sault St. Louis (on land taken from the Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke south of Montreal), the parish of Saint-François-du-Lac near Trois Rivières, and several others.¹³⁹ The Grey Nuns who managed Montreal’s Hôpital Général also owned indigenous enslaved

¹³¹ Riddell, The Slave in Canada, p. 6.

¹³² Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 76.

¹³³ Charmaine A. Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal and Jamaica (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), p. 79.

¹³⁴ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 64.

¹³⁵ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 105-11

¹³⁶ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 105-118.

¹³⁷ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 105-118.

¹³⁸ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 109.

¹³⁹ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 112.

people. Cambridge historian William Foster details that, “the foundation of the physical support,” for the hospital was built by unfree labourers: “female and male convicts, Indian slaves, self-indentured Canadians, and at least 27 British soldiers taken prisoner in the Seven Years’ War.”¹⁴⁰ Founder of Grey Nuns Marguerite D’Youville, who has been revered as a saint by the Catholic Church since 1990 owned several enslaved people and on at least two occasions, fought in court to gain ownership of a person.¹⁴¹

Slavery in Quebec and Montreal was no secret. Many enslaved individuals were sold in the marketplace at Montreal and in public auctions around Quebec.¹⁴² In fact, newspapers in Quebec during the British regime printed notices concerning the sale of enslaved blacks, as well as advertisements calling for the return of runaway fugitive slaves, servants, and deserters.¹⁴³ The French regime may have had a similar system to advertise the sale and policing of the enslaved, but there is no archive of such documents due to a lack of recorded print culture in New France before the 1760’s.

In Done With Slavery: The Black fact in Montreal, 1760-1840 (2010), Frank Mackey gathered all fifty-one notices concerning enslaved runaways in Quebec, giving us crucial insight into the lives of enslaved people in the province.¹⁴⁴ The first of such newspaper notices appeared in 1765, the final in 1810, providing detailed snapshots of the black and indigenous men, women, and children subjugated in bondage in the province of Quebec during this time.¹⁴⁵ The colony’s first newspaper, the Quebec Gazette printed by William Brown and Thomas Gilmore at Quebec City as of 1764 began publishing notices for the sale and return of enslaved individuals in Quebec in 1765. Other publications that did so include the Montreal Gazette, the Quebec Herald, the Quebec Mercury, and the Canadian Courant & Montreal Advertiser.¹⁴⁶ These advertisements help us to recuperate the narratives of enslaved individuals who actively challenged their enslavement, undermining a reductive perception of slavery that positions enslaved individuals as docile or merely discontent with their enslavement and dispossession.

Despite the fact that the institution of slavery stained many aspects of Quebec and Canadian history, it continues to be one of the abhorrent realities of Canadian heritage that is deftly hidden. “Slavery is Canada’s best-kept secret,” writes Afua Cooper, discussing Canada’s collective amnesia.¹⁴⁷ Trudel noted that slavery left “few traces in the collective memory and literature of Quebec,” and only “scattered references” are found in nineteenth-century Quebec literature. Although the version of Quebec history we have long been told was all about missionaries and spiritualists, he remarks, “our colonial past can be likened to the Thirteen Colonies of America.”¹⁴⁸ Vestiges of slavery in Canada and Quebec continue to

¹⁴⁰ William Henry Foster, The Captors’ Narrative: Catholic Women and Their Puritan Men on the Early American Frontier (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 91.

¹⁴¹ Foster, The Captors’ Narrative, p. 97.

¹⁴² Frank Mackey, Done with Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal, 1760-1840 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), p. 23.

¹⁴³ Mackey, Done with Slavery, p. 307.

¹⁴⁴ Mackey collected ninety-four notices concerning the sales of black slaves and the flights of black prisoners, ship deserters, servants, and slaves that appeared in Quebec’s early newspapers as early as 1765. Mackey, Done with Slavery, p. 307.

¹⁴⁵ Mackey, Done with Slavery, p. 307.

¹⁴⁶ Mackey, Done with Slavery, p. 313.

¹⁴⁷ Afua Cooper, “The Secret of Slavery in Canada,” Gender and Women’s Studies in Canada: Critical Terrain (Toronto: Women’s Press, 2013), p. 254.

¹⁴⁸ Trudel, Canada’s Forgotten Slaves, p. 270.

influence contemporary society and economy and sets the foundations for race relations which Canadian society is founded upon. Contemporary systemic racism cannot be understood without understanding the history of slavery and its foundations.

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SECTION TWO

Critical Biography of James McGill, Slave Owner and West Indian Merchant

Lucy Brown and Emma Ridsdale

Condensed Biography

Through contemporary scholarship and common public records, we have come to know James McGill as the industrious and wealthy Scottish merchant from Montreal who founded McGill University through his good faith and generosity. His donation of land and funds for the construction of an academic institution as well as his prosperous mercantile businesses have characterized McGill as a conscientious and hardworking individual who was especially influential in the establishment of Montreal as it is celebrated today. However, those same records confirm that McGill's mercantile business, landholding, and wealth supported and was built upon the enslavement of African and indigenous people. Consequently, to address our own present associations to slavery, specifically within the context of Montreal and McGill University, it is essential to re-examine James McGill's life not as a diligent and profitable businessman, merchant and philanthropist, but as a slaveowner and active participant in Transatlantic Slavery.

McGill began his merchant career in the fur trade, which he then expanded into the even more lucrative transoceanic and West Indian trade. Warehouses on Rue Saint-Paul of Montreal were the focal point of McGill's empire, which according to a 1797 business ledger, housed goods imported from the West Indies like tobacco, sugar, molasses, and rum, all plantation crops and goods produced by enslaved labour. During the American War of Independence, McGill profited by supplying the British army with rum while also providing officers with tobacco and sugar as well as rum. Similarly, British army posts in other judicial districts in Quebec also required rum, which McGill readily supplied. The plantation crops and goods McGill imported from the Caribbean, and on which he built his enterprise, relied entirely on the labour and presumed expendability of thousands of enslaved people, directly tying him to slavery in the West Indies.

In addition to his business connection to Transatlantic Slavery, McGill was also a slaveowner and trader. At various times, he owned at least five people of both African and indigenous origins. This number was extraordinary for Montreal, where owning more than two enslaved people at a time was well above average. No enslaved person lived comfortably, including in Canada - two of the people who McGill enslaved were children who died at the age of 10. He proctored the sales of at least six enslaved people during his lifetime, some of whom were purchases made on behalf of governmental agencies. Personal accounts from McGill's colleagues suggest that he was excessively greedy. This attitude is at odds with the philanthropic persona our university has traditionally crafted for him. Maintaining that inaccurate perception is disrespectful to the memories of the enslaved people that he owned and abused.

After McGill's death on 19 December 1813, he left £10,000 as well as the Burnside Estate towards the endowment of an academic institution. He specified in his will that the college or one of the colleges within the university should bear the name "McGill". By providing the means to establish McGill University, James McGill joined the ranks of elite, white men who used their wealth made from the exploitation of enslaved people and colonial trade built upon Transatlantic Slavery to found academic institutions throughout the English colonies and North

America. Not only was McGill invested in the business of slavery elsewhere as a West Indian Merchant, but he was also a prolific slaveowner in Montreal. The misrepresentation of the endowment that was essential in the founding of the University as solely James McGill's, erases the lives and deaths of thousands of enslaved people – in Canada and the Caribbean - that allowed him to build his wealth and establish his place as an influential figure in Montreal, Quebec, and Canadian history.

Introduction

Through contemporary scholarship and common public records, we have come to know James McGill as the industrious and wealthy Scottish merchant from Montreal who founded McGill University through his good faith and generosity. His donation of land and funds to the construction of an academic institution, as well as his prosperous mercantile businesses, have led scholars to characterize McGill as a conscientious and hardworking individual who was especially influential in the establishment of Montreal as it is celebrated today. However, to represent his life and actions as entirely virtuous overlooks the realities of what being a landowner, politician, and merchant entailed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the British transatlantic world. This uniform celebration of James McGill as a wise, forward-looking, and selfless philanthropist relies on the active erasure of other more troubling aspects of his biography. Indeed, McGill's mercantile business, landholding, political acumen, and massive accumulation of wealth was underpinned by the institution of Transatlantic Slavery, the colonial trade in slave-produced plantation goods, and the enslavement of people of both African and indigenous descent in Montreal. Consequently, to address our present associations to slavery, specifically within the context of Montreal and McGill University, it is essential to reexamine James McGill's life not as a diligent and profitable businessman, merchant and philanthropist, but as a slave owner and active participant in Transatlantic Slavery.

James McGill: the West Indies Merchant

James McGill (fig. 1) was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on 6 October 1744, as the second child and eldest son of James McGill senior and Margaret Gibson.¹⁴⁹ McGill arrived in Montreal in 1766, though it is unclear how he emigrated to the English colonies from Scotland.¹⁵⁰ McGill

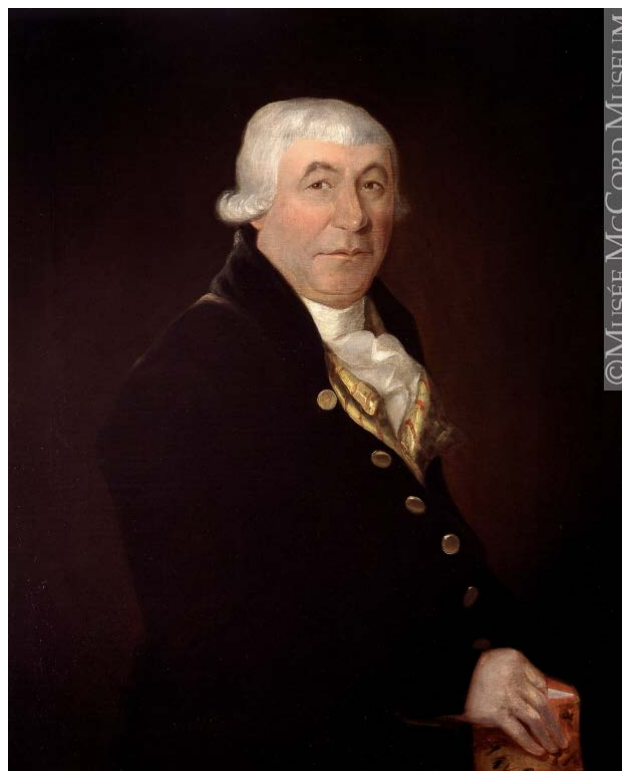


Fig 1. Dulongpré, Louis. *Portrait of James McGill, (1744-1813)*. 1800-1810. McCord Museum.

¹⁴⁹ Cooper, J. I., "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5 (1985), http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcgill_james_5E.html

¹⁵⁰ Cooper, "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5

was a part of an English-speaking mercantile elite who arrived in Montreal during and following the American Revolutionary War and secured their position and wealth through trade and British authority. McGill began working as a fur trader in Canada, taking advantage of the prosperous trade to build up the beginnings of his empire.¹⁵¹ In 1776, McGill married a French gentlewoman, Marie-Charlotte Trottier Desrivieres, which stabilized his position as a merchant in Montreal and allowed him to broaden his network of associates into Desrivieres' circle of family and friends.¹⁵² While McGill never had any children of his own, he appears to have had close relationships with Desriviere's three sons from a previous marriage.¹⁵³ Interestingly, the youngest son even took James McGill's name later on in his life.¹⁵⁴

By 1803, McGill appeared to have mostly retired from the fur trade, expanding his mercantile business into the even more lucrative transoceanic and West Indies trade.¹⁵⁵ McGill joined forces with his partner Isaac Todd as "Todd, McGill and Company," which was later succeeded by "James and Andrew McGill and Company."¹⁵⁶ From the 1770's to 1790's, warehouses on Rue Saint-Paul of Montreal were the focal point of McGill's empire.¹⁵⁷ According to a 1797 business ledger, they housed goods imported from the West Indies like tobacco, sugar, molasses, and rum, all plantation crops and goods.¹⁵⁸ One of McGill's most frequent associates and customers, John Askin, who lived in Mackinac, wrote a letter on 8 May 1778, asking for shipments of rum to be brought up "by way of the lakes," stating that "[he would take it] no matter how much [McGill] sent."¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, during the American War of Independence, McGill profited by supplying the British army with rum – then a staple ration of soldiers¹⁶⁰ - while providing officers with tobacco and sugar as well.¹⁶¹ Similarly, British army posts in other judicial districts in Quebec also required rum, which McGill readily supplied.¹⁶² The plantation crops and goods that McGill imported from the Caribbean, and on which he built his enterprise, relied entirely on the labour and presumed expendability of thousands of enslaved people, directly tying him to slavery in the West Indies. As McGill continued trading throughout the British Empire, he became inextricably linked to Transatlantic Slavery, profiting from the institution and the forced labour of enslaved people of African descent and amassing a fortune he would later reinvest in Montreal and McGill University.¹⁶³

It has been noted during McGill's lifetime that he was perhaps excessively greedy. In one case, General Frederick Haldiman warned the Commandant at Mackinac, Major Arent de Peyster of Todd and McGill and their company's "rapacity."¹⁶⁴ As a merchant, McGill was willing to

¹⁵¹ Charmaine A. Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal Jamaica* (London: Routledge/Taylor and Francis, 2016), p 86.

¹⁵² Cooper, "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5

¹⁵³ Cooper, "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5

¹⁵⁴ Cooper, "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5

¹⁵⁵ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 84.

¹⁵⁶ Cooper, "McGILL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 5

¹⁵⁷ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 68.

¹⁵⁸ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 86.

¹⁵⁹ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 58.

¹⁶⁰ Paul E. Kopperman, "'The Cheapest Pay': Alcohol Abuse in the Eighteenth-Century British Army," *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 60, no. 3 (July 1996), pp. 445-70.

¹⁶¹ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 60.

¹⁶² Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 60.

¹⁶³ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 48.

¹⁶⁴ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 60.

accept “any commission for a commission,”¹⁶⁵ and Frank Mackey writes that one is given “the impression that McGill could have just as equally have built his fortune on trading slaves as in furs, had slaves been as much in demand as animal skins.”¹⁶⁶ In 1784, he even provided legal representation for Thomas Curry of L’Assomption in the sale of an enslaved man and woman to the merchant Solomon Levy,¹⁶⁷ yet another example of McGill’s willingness to involve himself in the outright trade of enslaved people and the continuation of slavery within the British colonies.

James McGill: The Slaveowner

Although his will did not list any enslaved property, McGill had adopted the practices of enslaving both African and indigenous people for business and personal use. As articulated in the Overview of Slavery in New France and Quebec above (section one), these practices originated during the French rule in New France and were much wider spread than most contemporary Canadians are led to believe. Even after the region passed into British control in 1760, Canada’s involvement in Transatlantic Slavery continued. After the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834, the government reimbursed slave owners for their “lost property.”¹⁶⁸ The records of these reimbursements show that slavery was commonplace within the empire, and the highest rates of slave ownership per population size were found in Scotland.¹⁶⁹ In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, any Canadian would have viewed slavery as commonplace, particularly a person of Scottish descent like McGill. Even within this framework of slavery as typical, McGill still stood out as exceptional for the extent of his personal involvement. An investigation of McGill’s own slave ownership reveals that, at various times, he owned at least five enslaved people of both African and indigenous origins; this number was extraordinary for Montreal, where owning more than two enslaved people at a time was well above average.

No slaveholder was truly benevolent, as owning another human is violent within itself. However, McGill may have been a particularly harsh master, a trait that stands at odds with the moral, philanthropic persona constructed for him today. Among the enslaved people owned by McGill were two indigenous, or *panis(e)*. One unnamed panise girl was baptized and buried in 1778 at 10 years old, and the other, Marie, was baptized and buried in 1783, aged around 10 or 12.¹⁷⁰ The fact that both of these girls died so terribly young reveals McGill as an especially harsh slaveholder.¹⁷¹ His poor demeanor among his white colleagues was almost certainly even worse towards the people he held as property and was free to treat however he wished. Further indication of his cruelty as a slaveholder comes in the form of Sarah, an enslaved woman of African origin who was purchased by McGill from a merchant named Jean Louis Cavillhe.¹⁷² After this purchase, Sarah who appears to have been renamed “Charlie Marie McGill,” later

¹⁶⁵ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 63. Rapacity means aggressive greed. “Rapacity,” *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rapacity>

¹⁶⁶ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p 457

¹⁶⁷ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p 457

¹⁶⁸ “Legacies of British Slave-ownership,” *University College London* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/inventories/>

¹⁶⁹ “Legacies of British Slave-ownership,” (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/inventories/>

¹⁷⁰ Marcel Trudel, *Deux siècles d'esclavage au Québec* (Montreal: Hurtubise HMH, 2004).

¹⁷¹ Historian Marcel Trudel gives typical panis mortality at about 17 years old.

Trudel, *Deux siècles d'esclavage au Québec*.

¹⁷² Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p. 85.

changed her name to Charlotte Cavilhe – taking on the family name of her former enslaver - when she was freed.¹⁷³ Sarah’s refusal to keep McGill’s name when she gained the opportunity is not uncommon, as rejecting names imposed upon them by their slave owners was a form of resistance used by many enslaved people. Clearly, Sarah preferred the last name of her previous owner to McGill’s. The exact way that James McGill treated those whom he enslaved is difficult to recover, as enslaved people had little opportunity to document their own lives and experiences. The information we do have access to - such as the wariness with which he was viewed by his white colleagues, the early death of several of the people he held in bondage, and Sarah’s rejection of his family name despite a willingness to bear the name of someone who had also owned her - does not cast him as the charitable and kind man that many subsequent depictions have made him out to be.

McGill’s involvement in Transatlantic Slavery stretched further than his own direct ownership of people or his trade within the British West Indies since he was in fact a slave trader. In 1784, he proctored the sale of two enslaved people, Caesar and Flora, which was a transaction worth “£100 Quebec currency.”¹⁷⁴ Several years later, in 1787, he purchased four enslaved people on behalf of the Department of Indian Affairs, who were apparently intended to be traded to indigenous communities.¹⁷⁵ The business of slavery was lucrative and easily accessible to McGill

because he already did much of his trading with people who were directly involved in Transatlantic Slavery. The ownership and trade of enslaved people was a recurring source of the wealth amassed under the McGill name.

Establishing McGill University

Besides his residence within the fortified settlement of

Montreal,¹⁷⁶ James McGill purchased his Burnside property (fig. 2) around the year 1797 in

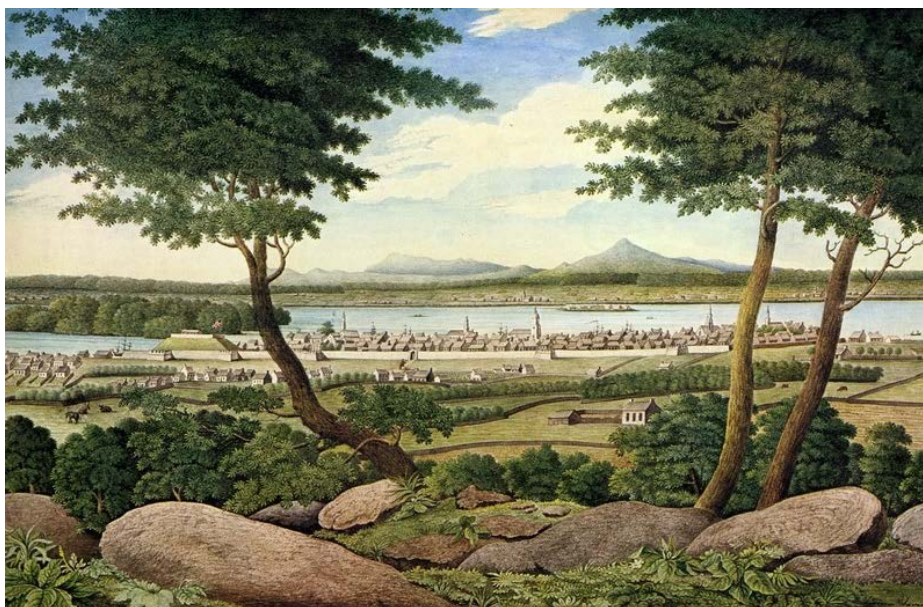


Fig 2. Davies, Thomas. *A View of Montreal in Canada, Taken from Isle St Helena in 1762 (1762)*. Watercolour over graphite on laid paper, 35.3 x 53.5 cm. *National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa*. MBAC 6272.

¹⁷³ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p. 85.

¹⁷⁴ William Renwick Riddell, “Notes on the Slave in Nouvelle-France,” *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 8, no. 3 (July 1923), pp. 327.

¹⁷⁵ Frost, *James McGill of Montréal*, p 63.

¹⁷⁶ James McGill’s main home, known as the Bécancour house, was purchased shortly after he married Marie-Charlotte in 1776. The house was previously owned by the merchant Thomas Walker and was described as “a fine stone house.” The Bécancour house was located near the Château Ramezay, between Rue Saint-Paul and Rue Notre-Dame. Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 167.



Fig 3. Notman, William. *McGill College, Sherbrooke Street, Montreal, QC, about 1859.* Probably 1968. *McCord Museum*. VIEW-7071.02

order to build his summer house.¹⁷⁷ The land itself was located on the slopes of the southern side of the Mont-Royal and named for the brook or “burn,” as McGill would have called it, that entered the property above where the Milton Gates are currently found where the MacDonald Engineering building now stands.¹⁷⁸ McGill’s Burnside property was only rendered useful through the labour of indigenous and African enslaved individuals.¹⁷⁹ After McGill’s death on 19 December 1813, he left £10,000 as well as the Burnside Estate towards the endowment of an academic institution.¹⁸⁰ He specified in his will that the college or one of the colleges within the University should bear the name “McGill.” By providing the means to establish McGill University (fig. 3), James McGill joins the ranks of elite, white men who used their wealth made from the exploitation of enslaved people and colonial trade built upon Transatlantic Slavery to found academic institutions throughout the English colonies and North America.¹⁸¹ Not only

was McGill invested in the business of slavery elsewhere as a West Indian Merchant, but he was also a prolific slaveowner in Montreal. The misrepresentation of the endowment that was essential in the founding of the University as solely James McGill’s, erases the lives and deaths of thousands of enslaved people – in Canada and the Caribbean - that allowed him to build his wealth and establish his place as an influential figure in Montreal, Quebec, and Canadian history.

¹⁷⁷ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 166.

¹⁷⁸ Stanley Brice Frost, *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1980). p 55.

¹⁷⁹ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 169.

¹⁸⁰ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 167.

¹⁸¹ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p 167. See also: Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities* (New York City: Bloomsbury Press, 2013).

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SECTION THREE

Biographies of People Enslaved by James McGill

Gemma Else and Colin McCrossan

Indigenous Enslavement: Marie and the Unnamed Child

James McGill enslaved two indigenous children both of whom died at young ages due in part to the brutal nature of McGill's enslavement.¹⁸² The name of the first child, who died in 1778 at the age of 10, has not been recovered from archival research. This anonymization of the enslaved was a customary and deliberate outcome of the nature of the sources which documented their identities and lives, sources which were not designed to preserve the complex lives of the enslaved.¹⁸³ The second enslaved indigenous child named Marie died in 1783 between the ages of 10 and 12.¹⁸⁴ The tragically young age at which Marie and the other unnamed child died stands out from the already low life expectancy of enslaved people in Montréal. The life expectancy for black people enslaved in Quebec was about 25 years while the life expectancy for Indigenous people was only 17.¹⁸⁵ While the harsh conditions of enslavement in Canada almost always shortened the life span of the enslaved these two indigenous children died at an exceptionally young age disputing any assertion that James McGill may have been a "good" or "benevolent" slave owner.

Although the title *panis(e)* originally indicated a specific indigenous ethnicity, it became a generalized term that referred to all indigenous people held in slavery and was used to describe these two children.¹⁸⁶ The incorporation of indigenous people into chattel slavery is unique to the region that is now Canada.¹⁸⁷ Systems of settlement and trade in New France were part of Transatlantic Slavery.¹⁸⁸ Black and indigenous people were often enslaved alongside each other in the domestic and rural environments of Montreal, however, they were viewed differently by society.¹⁸⁹ Marcel Trudel places the number of individuals enslaved within New France at 3,604 in 1759 with two-thirds of this number being indigenous.¹⁹⁰ Multiple factors could have contributed to this discrepancy. Due to rarity the enslaved black person became a signifier of wealth, their presence was exotic and not easily replaced.¹⁹¹

Marie-Louise

McGill enslaved two women of African descent, one of whom was named Marie-Louise. Marie-Louise was originally enslaved by the Montreal merchant Joseph Amable Trottier dit

¹⁸² Mackey, Done with Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal, 1760-1840, p. 86.

¹⁸³ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, p. 87.

¹⁸⁴ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, pp. 87, 106, Trudel, Marcel. Dictionnaire Des Esclaves Et De Leurs Propriétaires Au Canada Français (LaSalle, Québec: Hurtubise HMH, 1990), pp. 377, 108.

¹⁸⁵ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, p. 75.

¹⁸⁶ Mackey, Done with Slavery, p. 7.

¹⁸⁷ Brett Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You": The Origins of Indian Slavery in New France," The William and Mary Quarterly, vol. 60, no. 4 (2003), p. 779.

¹⁸⁸ Rushforth, "A Little Flesh We Offer You," p. 779.

¹⁸⁹ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, p. 75.

¹⁹⁰ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, p. 75.

¹⁹¹ Nelson, Slavery, Geography, and Empire, p. 75.

Desrivières, who was a fur trader.¹⁹² Desrivières's wife, Charlotte Cuillimin, forcibly Christianized Marie-Louise on 17 January 1771 by "sponsoring her baptism" at Notre-Dame Church.¹⁹³ Marie-Louise was said to have been six years old at the time, which would put her birth year at 1765.¹⁹⁴ Questions remain about her birthplace. Was she born somewhere in Africa, forcibly removed and brought in chains to the Caribbean and North America or was she born in the Caribbean or elsewhere in the Americas, perhaps in Montreal? Since Marie-Louise was enslaved, reduced to a piece of property to be bought, sold, and exploited, traditional archival sources inherently fail to capture these details. Desrivières according to the logic of slavery and white supremacy, would have had no reason to record details of Marie-Louise's life or remember her as anything but property.

Desrivières eventually died in 1771, and five years later Charlotte Cuillimin married James McGill on 2 December 1776. Marie-Louise thus became the property of McGill. While enslaved by James McGill, Marie-Louise would have been subjected to extreme material and social deprivation. Marie-Louise would have been forced to maintain McGill's twelve room mansion in Old Montreal¹⁹⁵ and also likely served as a nurse to McGill's young stepchildren, all while trying to avoid possible sexual predation and violence from James McGill, his friends and associates.¹⁹⁶ Like many enslaved and free people alike, the nature of her labour and social and material deprivation predisposed impoverished people to illness and disease and in the summer of 1788, Marie-Louise became ill and was admitted to Hotel-Dieu Hospital where she was identified as a twenty-seven-year old "Négresse" belonging to "Mr. McGill."¹⁹⁷ She was eventually discharged from the hospital but returned on 22 November 1788, remaining there until she died on 6 February 1789. She would have been between 23 to 28 years old.

Sarah Cavilhe

James McGill purchased and enslaved female named Sarah in 1788 only one year after McGill signed a report calling for the gradual abolition of slavery.¹⁹⁸ The bill of sale that remains refers to Sarah as a "Negro Woman" about the age of twenty-five, a considerable age for an enslaved person for whom mortality rates were high. The term "Negro" was used to describe enslaved people of African descent, encompassing both unmixed and mixed race people, the latter often referred to as mulattoes.¹⁹⁹ Although the term Negro gives no clues about Sarah's ethnicity or birth origin, like many enslaved blacks in New France, she may have been subjected to a second Middle Passage before arriving in Quebec.²⁰⁰ The act of purchasing and further enslaving Sarah undermined any antislavery actions that James McGill may have purported to have participated in over his lifetime.

¹⁹² Stanley B. Frost, "DESRIVIÈRES, FRANÇOIS," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed April 5, 2020, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/desrivieres_francois_6E.html.

¹⁹³ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, pp. 448-449.

¹⁹⁴ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, pp. 85, 449.

¹⁹⁵ James McGill, *Plan and elevation of house*, 1816, Architectural Drawing from McGill Estate, McGill University Rare Books and Special Collections, Montreal, Canada.

¹⁹⁶ Harvey Amani Whitfield, *North to Bondage: Loyalist Slavery in the Maritimes* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), pp. 55-70.

¹⁹⁷ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p. 449.

¹⁹⁸ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p. 86.

¹⁹⁹ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, pp. 1-6.

²⁰⁰ Nelson, *Slavery, Geography, and Empire*, p. 7.

The timing of her purchase by McGill lines up closely with the progression of Marie-Louise's illness. Sarah was purchased soon after Marie-Louise was first recorded as falling ill in the summer of 1788²⁰¹ and would have been living and working on the estate when Marie-Louise died in 1789.²⁰² The timing of the sale supports the idea that Sarah was to serve as a replacement for the ailing Marie-Louise.²⁰³ A pattern of premature deaths which afflicted those whom James McGill enslaved speaks to the hard conditions of Canadian Slavery and the abuse, deprivation, and physical and psychological cruelty to which slave owners such as McGill subjected their enslaved "property".

Although the archive is lacking in regard to the circumstances surrounding Sarah's emancipation, she reappears a free woman in 1802 when she married Joseph Frank "a native of Jamaica, in an Anglican ceremony."²⁰⁴ Sarah's reappearance in archival records sheds light on her quest to distance herself from McGill: Sarah took on different names throughout her life and married as Charlotte Cavilhe.²⁰⁵ Changing her name upon gaining her freedom may have been a way for Charlotte to assert her identity and create distance between herself and the slave owning James McGill.²⁰⁶ As a free woman Sarah has been referred to as Marie-Charles and Charlotte but even more striking is the rejection of McGill for Cavilhe, the name of her previous white male owner.²⁰⁷ While the act of choosing the last name Cavilhe is not entirely outside of the patriarchal order of chattel slavery it demonstrates Sarah's desire to create distance between herself and James McGill.²⁰⁸ As a free woman Charlotte disrupted the matrilineal order of chattel slavery and gave birth to two free sons before her death in 1809.²⁰⁹

Jacques

James McGill also enslaved a man of African descent who was named Jacques. In 1806, Jacques was baptized at Notre-Dame Church and recorded in church records as being a forty-year-old "nègre" belonging to James McGill.²¹⁰ Jacques would have been born in 1766 if he was indeed forty at the time of his baptism, and according to notary records he was said to be born in Africa, indicating that he would have remarkably survived multiple Middle Passages from the African continent to the Caribbean or North America eventually being brought to Montreal.²¹¹ Jacques may have been enslaved with Marie-Louise or Sarah if his enslavement predated or overlapped with their own. More research into notarial documents and other archival sources can shed light on whether or not these individuals would have been enslaved at the same time,

²⁰¹ [Bill of Sale Documenting the Transfer of Sarah Cavilhe from Jean Louis Cavilhe to James McGill](#), September 23, 1788, John Gerbrand Beek, Reel M620/66, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec (BANQ), Quebec City, Canada.

²⁰² Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 449.

²⁰³ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 86.

²⁰⁴ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 86.

²⁰⁵ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 86.

²⁰⁶ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 86.

²⁰⁷ Nelson, [Slavery, Geography, and Empire](#), p. 87.

²⁰⁸ Nelson, [Slavery, Geography, and Empire](#), p. 87.

²⁰⁹ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 86.

²¹⁰ Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 74.

²¹¹ Nelson, [Slavery, Geography, and Empire](#), pp. 79-92, 126-130; Mackey, [Done with Slavery](#), p. 444.

labouring alongside and helping each other under unimaginable circumstances.²¹²

Jacques would have laboured in McGill's house and warehouses while also being forced to tend to McGill's summer estate, Burnside, which was surrounded by farmlands and orchards.²¹³ Forced to work in domestic, urban, and agricultural settings, Jacques would have sustained McGill's enterprises and personal life as did Marie-Louise before her death. Jacques then would have become quite a skilled individual, knowing how to take care of multiple spaces that McGill himself probably did not fully know how to maintain. When McGill and his wife eventually died, Jacques became the property of one of McGill's stepsons, François Desrivières.²¹⁴ Stories that circulated about Jacques indicate that he was eventually released from bondage, but remained a servant of the McGill family until he died in 1838 at the age of 80, when slavery had been abolished in the British Empire.²¹⁵ If Jacques indeed died in 1838 he would not technically have been enslaved, but his continued servitude to McGill's descendants constrained him to live in a state of precarious and limited freedom.

Dispelling Founding Myths

There should be no doubt about James McGill's deep connections to Transatlantic Slavery. The founder of McGill University not only personally enslaved several individuals, but also went out of his way to tie every other aspect of his career and social life to slavery. Students, staff, faculty and visitors who walk and work on McGill's downtown Montreal campus today are traversing the same land and space where McGill brutally enslaved other human beings. James McGill is the man whose name and sanitized myth stubbornly persist at the University, but McGill is far from an idyllic and philanthropic founder. Like his fellow slave owners, he was the man who could have raped or sexually preyed upon Sarah. He was the man who cut Marie-Louise's life short and who terrorized Marie and the anonymous indigenous child. If McGill University is to address its history and legacy of slavery, it should begin with addressing the founder himself.

²¹² Historian Frank Mackey notes that Jacques was a "native of Africa" but does not say exactly where this information comes from. He does, however, cite various notarial documents which could have been bills of sale for Jacques. Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, pp. 74, 444.

²¹³ Stanley Brice Frost, *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980), pp. 55-61.

²¹⁴ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, pp. 74-75, 444.

²¹⁵ Mackey, *Done with Slavery*, p. 74.

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SECTION FOUR

Slavery and Western Universities and the Early History of McGill University

Roxanne Cornellier, Amalie Løseth, and Denisa Marginean

Slavery and Western Universities

“The founding, financing, and development of higher education in the colonies were thoroughly intertwined with the economic and social forces that transformed West and Central Africa through the slave trade and devastated indigenous nations in the Americas. The academy was a beneficiary and defender of these processes.”²¹⁶

-Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy* (2013)

How was the conception of academia in North America tied to the institution of Transatlantic Slavery? How could an institutions devoted to higher learning have been a part of such a practice? The answers to these questions seem implausible to most of us, and yet to urge the decline of indigenous nations, European powers founded colleges to regulate their colonies and the African slave trade was its financial resource.²¹⁷ English universities like Harvard were initially designed for indigenous people’s cultural submission and used as a strategy to maintain religious orthodoxy.²¹⁸ Christianity provided the socio-political entitlement or “divine right” of white people to North America and colleges intensified this vision.²¹⁹ These American colleges targeted wealthy white planters and soon the direct enrolment of their sons and their countless donations (for faculty positions and buildings amongst other things) would become indispensable to the university.²²⁰ Then, “armed with family wealth and college educations,”²²¹ the young men sought-out the various careers of planter and trader and headed south to expand their fortunes.²²² The academy in service to its rulers, the colonial elite, purchased and traded large numbers of enslaved people whose physically intensive labour built and sustained campuses.²²³ Students, specifically American students, refined these colonial ideals; they forged the material of human difference and constructed scientific racism that justified territorial expansion and Transatlantic Slavery, hence dooming thousands of non-white people to dispossession, violence and death.²²⁴ Even the research of their claims originated from the very use of subjugated people’s bodies.²²⁵ Scientific racism reinforced concepts of white supremacy and African

²¹⁶ Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), p. 2.

²¹⁷ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 9.

²¹⁸ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, pp. 21-27.

²¹⁹ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 156.

²²⁰ See Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 30. Wealthy young men would be sent to Europe to acquire their diplomas. However, families increasingly feared their exposure to abolitionist and antirepublican ideologies and sought out an increasingly “American” education. See Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 159.

²²¹ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 53.

²²² Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 31. Many who did not have a past in trading also chose to take on this role when exposed to the economic benefits from their peers.

²²³ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, pp. 138-139. Africans and African Americans were the majority of enslaved laborers on North American campuses. There is also evidence of regulated violence used to “correct” unwanted behavior, making campuses a powerful space of trauma for hundreds of people, see Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, pp. 129-130.

²²⁴ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 182.

²²⁵ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 195.

primitivism; access to black people, even in death, became exceedingly normal.²²⁶ Students held immense power due to their participation in key political debates and they laid the intellectual foundation which vindicated centuries of assaults, exclusion, and removal campaigns.²²⁷ As scholar Craig Steven Wilder argues, higher education in North America was never separate from slavery. Rather, alongside church and state, it was the third pillar of a society based on bondage.²²⁸

These links between academia and the institution of slavery have also been discussed through official reports made by several Western universities. In 2003, Brown University's President Ruth J. Simmons assigned a broad committee of faculty, administrators, undergraduate and graduate students to investigate the history between the university and slavery. For three years, they researched, organized, and wrote a profoundly significant report.²²⁹ Shortly thereafter, the university responded with a commission to endorse the recommendations that the committee had made, which included the production of memorials, a response from the city and state, an updated curriculum, funds for public events on slavery in Rhode Island, and research prizes.²³⁰ All of this information was made public and accessible. Other institutions like Harvard University which are undeniably interwoven with the institution of slavery have hosted multiple open activities such as plaque unveilings, academic collaborations, conferences, seminars, and exhibitions across campus. Their effort was built upon a decade of professor, graduate, and undergraduate seminars and an official three-year faculty committee that included a national academic conference in 2017. In 2019, they also allocated five million dollars to fund an official interdisciplinary committee to address their history.²³¹ On the other side of the ocean, Glasgow University assigned twenty million pounds for research after the official report issued in 2018 calculated that an estimated 16.7 to 198 million pounds (in today's currency) had been donated by Scottish slave traders to the university.²³²

The first Canadian academic institution to issue an official report was Dalhousie University in 2019 (started in 2016), which linked the unwelcoming racial climate of the campus to the Nova Scotia governor Lord Dalhousie's anti-black views and actions.²³³ The university subsequently issued an official apology to people of African descent and declared their commitment to implementing the recommendations. The report asked for regret, responsibility, recognition, and repair from Dalhousie, and notably the expansion of the panel's research, the support of Black Studies, the allocation of resources for Black students, faculty and staff, and a stronger relationship to the African Nova Scotian community. In 2018, King's University initiated a scholarly inquiry investigating its ties to King's College in New York and its indirect

²²⁶ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 209.

²²⁷ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, pp. 267-273.

²²⁸ Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy*, p. 11.

²²⁹ "Report of Commission on Memorials," *Brown University* (date of last access 5 April 2020) https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/documents/memorials.pdf

²³⁰ See, "Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice," *Brown University* (date of last access 5 April 2020) https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/

²³¹ "Harvard and Slavery," *Harvard University* (date of last access 5 April 2020) <https://www.harvard.edu/slavery>

²³² Severin Carrell, "Glasgow University to pay 20m in slave trade reparations," *The Guardian* (date of last access 5 April 2020) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/aug/23/glasgow-university-slave-trade-reparations>

Glasgow University had previously highlighted its role in the abolition campaign, while its profits from slavery were ignored. For the full report see "Slavery, Abolition and the University of Glasgow," *University of Glasgow* (date of last access 5 April 2020) https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_607547_smxx.pdf

²³³ "Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race," *Dalhousie University* (date of last access 5 April 2020) https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/ldp/Lord%20Dal%20Panel%20Final%20Report_web.pdf

and direct connections to slavery.²³⁴ Following this movement in Western Universities, McGill University has yet to strike a task force or release a report. Unlike the other institutions that are leading reports and conversations, McGill's link to slavery go beyond donors and alumni. The university's founder, James McGill, was a slave owner and West Indian merchant (see section two). As the institution approaches its bicentenary, Provost Christopher Manfredi did appoint two Provostial Research postdoctoral scholars who will begin research in the fall of 2020 for an estimated period of one to two years.²³⁵ However, postdoctoral fellows are amongst a universities most precarious employees since by definition they are not permanent, tenured faculty. Given that Brown's, Harvard's and Dalhousie's reports took three years each to generate, as we approach McGill University's bicentenary 2021, the fact that the upper administration has set no such official effort in motion would indicate their deliberate neglect and avoidance of the profound connections which the university's founder, James McGill, had to Transatlantic Slavery, in Canada and in the Caribbean (see sections two and three). Although the goal of the postdoctoral research is to examine questions of McGill's connections to Transatlantic Slavery, colonialism, and its impact on black and indigenous communities, McGill's upper administration has not explained how they intend to use the research findings and unlike the aforementioned universities, no committee has been struck nor plans for formal recommendations made.

The Early History of McGill University

McGill University was established in 1821 and since its foundation has been interconnected both directly and indirectly with the history of slavery and colonialism.²³⁶ The land upon which the downtown campus is now located was originally territories indigenous people lived on long before the European founding of Montréal.²³⁷ Settler colonialism is an integrated part of McGill University.

The early history of the university begins with one of the many European settlers who prospered through the economic profits of slavery and the colonial trade. James McGill, a Montréal merchant from Scotland, is known as the founder and namesake of McGill University. When he died in 1813, after building a fortune through fur trade and trade in other colonial goods,²³⁸ he bequeathed £10,000, as well as his forty-six acre Burnside Estate, to the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning.²³⁹ This was a significant amount of money at the time of his death, donated on the condition that the institution establishes a university or college in his name within ten years of his death.²⁴⁰ Founded twelve years prior in 1801, the Royal

²³⁴ "King's & Slavery: A Scholarly Inquiry," University of King's College (date of last access 5 April 2020) <https://ukings.ca/administration/public-documents/slavery-scholarly-inquiry/>

²³⁵ The article also refers to its history as having "blemishes." James Martin, "Confronting Colonialism," *McGill Reporter* (date of last access 5 April 2020) <https://reporter.mcgill.ca/confronting-colonialism/>

²³⁶ "1535: Jacques Cartier Visits Hochelaga," *SSMU University Affairs*, (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://ua.ssmu.ca/2016/08/31/first-entry/>

²³⁷ Stanley Brice Frost, "Montreal and James McGill," *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980), pp. 6-9.

²³⁸ Frost, "Montreal and James McGill," pp. 6-9.

²³⁹ Stanley Brice Frost, "The Royal Institution," *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980), p. 35.

²⁴⁰ "James McGill's will," *McGill Archive*, (date of last access 8 April 2020) <http://www.archives.mcgill.ca/public/exhibits/installation/main/gallery-will.htm>

Institution was established to meet the demands for “public education.”²⁴¹ It soon became a secular instrument in charge of numerous educational organizations until it merged with McGill University in 1852.²⁴²

McGill’s early years were impacted by several lawsuits concerning the rights to the endowment of £10,000 and the Burnside Estate. Still, the Royal Institution approved its legal entitlement through the 1821 charter, which stated that James McGill enabled the Royal Institution to “set up a university or college on the Burnside estate.”²⁴³ Notably, this charter also claimed that “the said College shall be deemed and taken to be a University’ capable of conferring bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s degrees ‘in the several Arts and Faculties’.”²⁴⁴ Thus, McGill College as it was called until 1885, constituted a university.

However, despite the financial donation to launch McGill as an educational institution, the early years were also characterized by significant financial troubles. McGill was initially not a prestigious academic institution; it had a limited number of courses, professors and degrees.²⁴⁵ In 1850, when the university had to evacuate its buildings due to structural deficiencies, McGill was approaching bankruptcy. This is why in 1860 the Executive Council of the Crown from the Province of Canada “withdrew 40,000 pounds from the General Indian Trust Fund and loaned the money to McGill College.”²⁴⁶ Additionally, £8,000 were given to the former McGill principal Charles Dewey Day for securing the loan, one withdrawn from the fund assigned to the Six Nations of the Grand River.²⁴⁷ This transferal of the funds happened without the consent or knowledge from the Six Nations communities. While McGill paid down the loan with an additional one in 1881 to the federal government, the money taken from the Six Nations’ Trust Fund was never returned.²⁴⁸ The value of this loan is today estimated at 1,7 billion dollars.²⁴⁹ McGill University has failed to acknowledge that in order to avoid bankruptcy, the institution was saved through wealth extracted from resources belonging to indigenous communities, further denying its complicated history and dependence on the suffering of racially marginalized groups.²⁵⁰

Overcoming its first forty years of financial struggle, McGill expanded and became “one of Canada’s best-known institutions of higher learning and one of the leading universities in the world,”²⁵¹ or at least as stated on the university’s website. As a billion-dollar institution, McGill

²⁴¹ “McGill University,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, (date of last access 8 April 2020)

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mcgill-university>

²⁴² “McGill University,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, (date of last access 8 April 2020)

²⁴³ Stanley Brice Frost, “The Years of Litigation,” *McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, Volume I, 1801-1895* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1980), p. 49.

²⁴⁴ Frost, “The Years of Litigation,” p. 49.

²⁴⁵ “Approaching Bankruptcy, McGill Withdraws a Loan from the General Indian Trust Fund,” *SSMU University Affairs*, (date of last access April 8 2020) <https://ua.ssmu.ca/2016/08/31/approaching-bankruptcy-mcgill-withdraws-a-loan-from-the-general-indian-trust-fund/>

²⁴⁶ “Approaching Bankruptcy,” *SSMU University Affairs* (date of last access April 8 2020).

²⁴⁷ “Approaching Bankruptcy,” *SSMU University Affairs* (date of last access April 8 2020).

²⁴⁸ Emily Saul, “Century-old federal debt not yet repaid to Indigenous community,” *The McGill Daily*, Monday, 29 September 2014 (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.mcgilldaily.com/2014/09/century-old-federal-debt-not-yet-repaid-to-indigenous-community/>

²⁴⁹ Saul, “Century-old federal debt not yet repaid to Indigenous community” (date of last access 8 April 2020)

²⁵⁰ Saul, “Century-old federal debt not yet repaid to Indigenous community” (date of last access 8 April 2020)

²⁵¹ “Who We Are” *McGill.com* (date of last access April 8 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/about/>

carries significant financial and epistemological power and is often regarded as the “Harvard of Canada,”²⁵² an historical weight it has yet to examine.

On the eve of its bicentenary, formal Recommendations are necessary considering that McGill University has never fully embraced “the principles of academic freedom, integrity, responsibility, equity, and inclusiveness” that it espouses.²⁵³ As a matter of fact, the university has a long history of exclusion and oppression vis-a-vis women, people of colour, and indigenous communities. When McGill College initially opened its doors in 1821, it was to white male professors and students only.²⁵⁴ In 1884, sixty-three years after the university’s inauguration, white women were allowed to take classes.²⁵⁵ Donald A. Smith (later Lord Strathcona) donated \$120,000 to the university “on condition that the standard of education for women should be the same as that for men for the ordinary degrees in Arts.”²⁵⁶ The first *Donaldas*²⁵⁷ (as the first female cohorts were known) to graduate from McGill College with Bachelor of Art degrees in 1888 were Eliza Cross, Martha Murphy, Blanche Evans, Gracie Ritchie, Jane Palmer, Alice Murray, Georgina Hunter, and Donalda McFee.²⁵⁸ Twenty-two years later, Maude Abbott was awarded an honorary medical degree in 1910, which was eight years before women were officially admitted in the Faculty of Medicine.²⁵⁹

White women were not the only ones affected by McGill University’s exclusionary practices. After some difficult financial times in the 1850’s, the college was granted a loan which brought it back from near-bankruptcy at the expense of indigenous communities. As previously stated, on 14 June 1860, “the Executive Council of the Crown from the Province of Canada withdrew \$40,000 from the General Indian Trust Fund and loaned the money to McGill College.”²⁶⁰ Furthermore, the 1884 donation from Donald A. Smith which allowed women to be admitted came mostly from his commercial activities and shares held in the Hudson Bay Company. The capital was raised through the exploitation and dispossession of indigenous communities such as the Inuit and Naskapi Innu from Labrador.²⁶¹ To add insult to injury, from the 1950’s until the end of the 1960’s, McGill University’s hockey, football and basketball male teams were named “McGill’s Indians.”²⁶² The women’s hockey team was called the “Squaws,” a slur referring to a hyper-sexualized caricature of indigenous women.²⁶³ On 12 April 2019,

²⁵² Anthony Kuan, “Rethinking the “Harvard of Canada: McGill must be appreciated on its own terms,” McGill Tribune (date of last access 4 April 2020) <https://www.mcgilltribune.com/opinion/rethinking-the-harvard-of-canada-091217/>

²⁵³ “McGill University Mission Statement and Principles,” McGill University (date of last access 6 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/mission>

²⁵⁴ “McGill History” University Affairs, SSMU (date of last access 4 April 2020) <https://ua.ssmu.ca/history/>

²⁵⁵ “Blazing Trails: McGill’s Women” McGill University (date of last access 4 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/about/history/features/mcgill-women>

²⁵⁶ “Blazing Trails: McGill’s Women” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁵⁷ Donaldas was the name given to McGill’s female students in honour of Donald A. Smith.

²⁵⁸ “Blazing Trails: McGill’s Women” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁵⁹ “Blazing Trails: McGill’s Women” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁶⁰ “1860: Approaching bankruptcy, McGill withdraws a loan from the General Indian Trust Fund,” University Affairs, SSMU, (date of last access 4 April 2020) <https://ua.ssmu.ca/2016/08/31/approaching-bankruptcy-mcgill-withdraws-a-loan-from-the-general-indian-trust-fund/>

²⁶¹ “1860: Approaching bankruptcy” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁶² “McGill History” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁶³ “McGill History” (date of last access 4 April 2020).

Suzanne Fortier announced that McGill's men's varsity sport teams would no longer be called the "Redmen,"²⁶⁴ but she has yet to announce a new designation.

Black people were especially discriminated against and excluded throughout McGill's history. In 1848, William Wright a McGill alumnus was the first black medical doctor in British North America, twenty-seven years after the university's foundation.²⁶⁵ However, Wright's achievements do not mean that black students were welcomed thereafter. On the contrary, in 1911, Prime Minister and McGill Law alumnus Wilfrid Laurier – for whom the university has a commemorative plaque displayed on the McCall MacBain Arts Building - signed an Order-in-Council, banning black immigrants from Canada.²⁶⁶ From the 1920's until the 1930's and again from 1945 until the early 1960's, the university adopted racial restrictions in the admissions of black students.²⁶⁷ From 1930 until 1947, "Black medical students were barred from doing their internships at hospitals in Montreal."²⁶⁸

Similarly, the rise of anti-Semitism also transpired in McGill's practices. In 1929, the Faculties of Medicine and Law instituted a quota system to limit the number of Jewish students.²⁶⁹ The Faculty of Arts likewise participated in this anti-Semitic practice; while it did not institute a quota, it held Jewish students to higher academic standards.²⁷⁰ In 1943, McGill's wartime administration excluded students of Japanese descent.²⁷¹

Although the university has come a long way, the fight for inclusion is not over. In an article by François Shalom published on June 2019, it was revealed that only forty black students took part of the Spring 2019 Convocation;²⁷² an extremely low number which accounts for black students shared feelings of isolation. The students interviewed also suffered from subtle and overt racism from their peers.²⁷³ Christelle Tessono, president of *McGill's Black Students' Network* argues that the lack of representation in numbers results in a lack of representation in academic material.²⁷⁴

The legacy of Transatlantic Slavery is intertwined with Western universities. McGill University does not exist in a separate reality where it stands unaffected by the institution of bondage. It does, however, remain different than other colleges. Whereas universities with indirect links have confronted their connections to the profits of enslavement, McGill, with direct links and only mere months away from its bicentenary, has yet to strike a task force or issue a full report or even recommendations. Additionally, the upper administration has failed to undertake the self-reflection that equals fellow institutions such as Brown University, Harvard University, University of Glasgow, Dalhousie University, King's College that took years, and

²⁶⁴ "Decision about Redmen name," *McGill Athletics and Recreation*, (date of last access 6 April 2020) <https://mcgillathletics.ca/sports/2019/4/12/decision-about-redmen-name.aspx>

²⁶⁵ "McGill History" (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁶⁶ "McGill History" (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁶⁷ Natasha L. Henry, "Racial Segregation of Black People in Canada," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, (date of last access 6 April 2020) <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/racial-segregation-of-black-people-in-canada>

²⁶⁸ Henry, "Racial Segregation of Black People in Canada" (date of last access 6 April 2020).

²⁶⁹ In order to complete their residency, they had to fulfill the requirements in the hospitals attached to Howard University in Washington D.C.

²⁷⁰ "McGill History" (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁷¹ "McGill History" (date of last access 4 April 2020).

²⁷² François Shalom, "Inaugural Black Grad celebrates Black students at McGill," *McGill REPORTER* (date of last access 6 April 2020) <https://reporter.mcgill.ca/inaugural-black-grad-celebrates-black-students-at-mcgill/>

²⁷³ Shalom, "Inaugural Black Grad celebrates Black students at McGill" (date of last access 6 April 2020).

²⁷⁴ Shalom, "Inaugural Black Grad celebrates Black students at McGill" (date of last access 6 April 2020).

extensive funds to produce. The lack of addressing the issues at the core of its foundation should lead us to question McGill's self-proclaimed dedication to inclusiveness and what it means for students of any background to attend and learn from an institution that fails to deliver what it claims to value.

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SECTION FIVE

Redressing McGill’s Colonial Legacy: Faculty Recommendations

Ellie Finkelstein, Jane O’Brien Davis, and Sam Perelmuter

McGill University is one of the largest research universities in Canada and is renowned throughout the world. McGill is home to approximately 5,000 teaching staff, which includes course lecturers, and employs 1,726 tenured and tenure-track professors.²⁷⁵ Starkly, of this large number only ten of the 1,726 tenured and tenure-track faculty members are black faculty members and only eleven are indigenous.²⁷⁶ This blatant underrepresentation of black and indigenous faculty members – who comprise a mere 0.58% and 0.64% of the tenured and tenure-track faculty respectively – perpetuates McGill’s legacy of colonialism, started by the university’s founder, the West Indian merchant and slave owner James McGill (see sections two and three). This lack of representation within faculty members creates a racial climate on campus that is harmful, discouraging, isolating, and exclusionary for black and indigenous students and faculty.²⁷⁷ The racial climate on campus captures and communicates the attitudes, perceptions, and expectations of a university and its community in regards to the issues of race, ethnicity, and diversity.²⁷⁸ In other words, McGill’s exclusion of black and indigenous professors creates an understanding of McGill as an institution solely for white people and their scholarship, perpetuating the colonial legacy started by James McGill 200 years ago. Both symbolically and materially, the catastrophic under-representation of black and indigenous educators sends a message to McGill’s student population, its other staff, donors, alumni, stakeholders, and the broader lay public, that McGill does not value the diversity of its faculty, nor does it understand or appreciate the benefits of research generated by people of different, perspectives, locations, and identities.

An attempt to gain a better understanding of how McGill’s faculty makeup compares to other Canadian universities necessitates the development of a national picture. However, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) claims that statistics regarding race for Canadian university faculty members is “hard to obtain” and that although Statistics Canada is currently working on a project to collect the racial data of university teachers within Canada, it is not yet accessible to the public.²⁷⁹ Meanwhile, CAUT’s annual report regarding diversity and equity for 2018 stated that black professors constitute a mere 2% of all university level teaching staff in Canada, although they makeup 3.1% of the Canadian labour force.²⁸⁰ Similarly, indigenous professors constitute only 1.4% of all Canadian university level teaching staff, yet

²⁷⁵ Tynan Jarrett (Office of the Provost and Vice Principle) to Jane O’Brien Davis, email 7 April 2020, “Racial statistics of McGill’s faculty members”.

²⁷⁶ Tynan Jarrett (Office of the Provost and Vice Principle) to Jane O’Brien Davis, email 7 April 2020, “Racial statistics of McGill’s faculty members”.

²⁷⁷ Kimberly A. Griffin et al., “(Re)Defining Departure: Exploring Black Professors’ Experiences with and Responses to Racism and Racial Climate,” *American Journal of Education*, vol. 117, no. 4, (August 2011), pp. 495-497.

²⁷⁸ Griffin et al., “(Re)Defining Departure,” pp. 495-497.

²⁷⁹ Caroline Lachance (Canadian Association of University Teachers) to Jane O’Brien Davis, email 31 March 2020, “Form submission from: Contact Us”.

²⁸⁰ *Equity Report*, “Underrepresented and Underpaid: Diversity and Equity Among Canada’s Post-Secondary Education Teachers,” Canadian Association of University Teachers, April 2018.

they comprise 3.8% of the labour force. This report also indicated that black professors have the highest unemployment rate of any other racial group within academia.²⁸¹

The CAUT did provide sex statistics regarding Canadian university teachers, including tenured, and tenure-track professors, and course lecturers. As of 2018, there were 46,440 university teachers in Canada, 40% of them being female.²⁸² However, it is notable that there were 16,743 full professors within Canada and only 28% of them are female.²⁸³ For assistant and associate professors 43% and 49% of them were female, respectively.²⁸⁴ That some 54% of course lecturers, a more precarious often contract position, were women is a demonstration of the gender/sex bias that still permeates academia.²⁸⁵ As of 2019, 50% of tenured and tenure-track faculty members at McGill were female.²⁸⁶ However, as the racial statistics for black and indigenous faculty attests, the overwhelming majority of the women represented in these numbers are white. Canadian universities, McGill included, commonly hire white women within the context of “equitable hiring policies,” thereby creating the guise of diversity within their faculties.²⁸⁷ However, if the equity and diversity policies that are in place only target and benefit white women, they must be rigorously scrutinized and urgently revised so that their effectiveness can extend beyond white people to black, indigenous, and other marginalized groups.

The same data gathered from the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT) provides a useful comparison.²⁸⁸ McGill staff confirmed the number of black and indigenous tenured and tenure-track faculty members at McGill. As indicated above, the ten black faculty members constitute only 0.58% of McGill professors, and the eleven indigenous faculty members constitute merely 0.64% of McGill professors. This data was based upon the 79.5% professor completion rate of McGill’s employment equity survey.²⁸⁹ McGill’s percentages of black and indigenous professors are much lower and more dismal than the national level of 2%, highlighting the unchecked nature of the exclusion of black and indigenous people from the ranks of McGill’s faculty.

Both the national and McGill data indicate the prevalence of blatant and systemic racial discrimination which provokes the question why are there so few black professors employed at Canadian universities, including McGill? During the period of slavery, black people were strategically prohibited from becoming literate and systemically blocked from attaining an education, and well into the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, they were and continue to be victim to discriminatory hiring and retention policies and institutional racism (see introduction

²⁸¹ Equity Report, “Underrepresented and Underpaid: Diversity and Equity Among Canada’s Post-Secondary Education Teachers,” Canadian Association of University Teachers, April 2018.

²⁸² Public Reports, “Faculty count by rank, gender, and provinces 1970-2018,” Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2018.

²⁸³ Public Reports, “Faculty count by rank”.

²⁸⁴ Public Reports, “Faculty count by rank”..

²⁸⁵ Public Reports, “Faculty count by rank”.

²⁸⁶ Employment Equity Biennial Report to Senate, Professor Angela Campbell, 15 May 2019, Office of the Provost and VP (Academic), McGill University, Montreal, Quebec.

²⁸⁷ Joanne D. Leck and David M. Saunders, *Hiring Women: The Effects of Canada’s Employment Equity Act*, Canadian Public Policy/Analyse de Politiques, vol. 18, no. 2, (June 1992), p. 216.

²⁸⁸ Jo-Anne Watier at MAUT redirected the inquiry to Professor Angela Campbell, the Associate Provost of Equity and Academic Policies. However, Tynan Jarrett, a senior Employment Equity Advisor, responded on behalf of Prof. Campbell’s office.

²⁸⁹ Tynan Jarrett (Office of the Provost and Vice Principle) to Jane O’Brien Davis, email 7 April 2020, “Racial statistics of McGill’s faculty members”.

three).²⁹⁰ Today, those barriers need to be acknowledged and critically addressed in order to be overcome. Despite their publicly stated commitments to equity and diversity, universities in North America have failed to recognize the prolific and unique barriers that faculty of colour encounter as a result of racism, sexism, and other dimensions of identity.

Based on the data within the 2016 national census, The Canadian Association of University Teachers determined that all university professors of colour combined make up only 15% of post-secondary instructors.²⁹¹ Although some argue that this underrepresentation is not due to discrimination, but a lack of qualified candidates, this is a false claim.²⁹² Women of colour hold 18.7 % of doctoral degrees, yet constitute a much lower percentage of university teaching positions nationwide.²⁹³ Therefore, the lack of representation of people of colour faculty in Canadian Universities is largely due to systemic and deep-seated biases in recruiting, hiring, and retention practices, all of which could be remediated with concerted effort.

As Erika Wright and Wendy Cukier note, it is important to acknowledge the power of the university as more than an educational institution, but also one with influence over knowledge production and societal discourse.²⁹⁴ When black and indigenous professors are vastly underrepresented, the message that is being conveyed is that they do not possess the drive, discipline or intellect to complete the higher education necessary to become academics and that they are not knowledge-producing or knowledge-bearing individuals. In predominantly white institutions, the hardships of black faculty members have often been defined through white narratives.²⁹⁵ It is crucial that counter narratives are brought to the forefront to allow people of colour to name their own realities and to challenge racial oppression.

Research findings suggest that faculty of colour experience a variety of forms of racial oppression through workload, lack of race-based services, course expectations, and tenure decisions.²⁹⁶ Clearly, all of these issues would only be compounded by the problem of isolation which many such faculty experience. Research has also shown that black scholars' experiences differ from those of their white counterparts, particularly in regard to role conflict, isolation, lack of respect, and perceived legitimacy as scholars.²⁹⁷ This kind of discrimination is played out through racial micro-aggressions that reinforce the idea that black people differ from the "norm"

²⁹⁰ Martin Anderson, Alexander W. Astin, Derrick A. Bell, Jr., Johnnetta B. Cole, Amitai Etzioni, Walter Gellhorn, Phillip A. Griffiths, Andrew Hacker, Theodore M. Hesburgh, Walter E. Massey and Reginald Wilson, "Why the Shortage of Black Professors?" *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 1 (The JBHE Foundation Inc: Autumn 1993), pp. 25-34.

²⁹¹ Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) *Underrepresented & Underpaid Diversity & Equity Among Canada's Post-Secondary Education Teachers*, vol. 10, no. 7, (15 April 2018), p. 6.

²⁹² Erica Wright and Wendy Cukier, "Assessing Diversity and Inclusion within Canadian Universities," Conference Paper, *Nineteenth Annual Conversation on the Liberal Arts*, 27-29 February 2020, Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA, USA, p. 3.

²⁹³ Samuel Edith and Njoki Wane, " 'Unsettling Relations': Racism and Sexism Experienced by Faculty of Color in a Predominantly White Canadian University," *The Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 74, no. 1 (University of Toronto: Winter, 2005), p. 76.

²⁹⁴ Wright and Cukier, "Assessing Diversity and Inclusion within Canadian Universities," p. 5.

²⁹⁵ Chavella T. Pittman, "Racial Microaggressions: The Narratives of African American Faculty at a Predominantly White University," *The Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 81, no. 1, Special Focus: Adolescent Discipline, Cultural Compatibility, and Academic Achievement in Education (Winter 2012), p. 84.

²⁹⁶ Pittman, "Racial Microaggressions: The Narratives of African American Faculty at a Predominantly White University," p. 84.

²⁹⁷ Roxanne Harlow, " 'Race Doesn't Matter, but...': The Effect of Race on Professors' Experiences and Emotion Management in the Undergraduate College Classroom," *Social Psychology Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 4, Special Issue: Race, Racism, and Discrimination (American Sociological Association: December 2003), p. 348.

of whiteness. Additionally, faculty of colour experience frequent racial stigmatization in the classroom, harsher judgement on course evaluations, and an immense burden of emotional labour.²⁹⁸ Black professors have reported that their success in university institutions is due to their endless effort to perform, manage their emotions, and mentor students of colour.²⁹⁹ Consequently, black professors are burdened with immense, unrecognized emotional labour in addition to the constant endurance of micro-aggressions through micro-insults from white students, micro-invalidations from white colleagues, and intermittent instances of overt racism. It is little wonder there are so few black professors in Canadian Universities because universities are simply not designed for them to succeed. If institutional racism and discrimination are not addressed, faculty of colour will continue to suffer professional and psychological consequences, such as depression, distress, anxiety, and wavering self-esteem.³⁰⁰ Indeed, many black professors opt to abandon the profession altogether because the systemic and crushing racism of universities demand the dual labour of being black on top of being a professor.

Some Canadian universities have acknowledged and implemented various programs and institutes to address their colonial legacies. However, McGill University is behind these institutions in addressing its involvement in the colonization of indigenous lands and peoples, as well as its direct and profound connections to Transatlantic Slavery (see sections two and three). The University of British Columbia (UBC) does not have the same history as McGill in regard to Transatlantic Slavery, however, it was heavily involved with the colonization of indigenous peoples and their lands. UBC has made many outreach efforts to amend its relationship with indigenous peoples in Canada. In 1936, it opened the First Nations Longhouse,³⁰¹ which hosts the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) that serves to make the university's resources accessible to indigenous peoples and to improve its ability to meet their needs, among various other initiatives.³⁰² In 2018 UBC opened the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre (IRSHDC) which is a "survivor-centred and trauma informed space, facilitating access to records related to Canada's Indian Residential School System."³⁰³

Both the UBC Vancouver and Okanagan campuses have signed memorandums with the indigenous communities in their respective areas recognizing the schools placement on traditional territory and authorizing joint initiatives for First Nations higher educational programs.³⁰⁴ UBC's Faculty of Forestry has also absorbed the Haida Gwaii Institute and offers "Haida Gwaii Semesters" which are intensive 14-week programs where students "attend classes at the award-winning Haida Heritage Centre at Kay Llnagaay... meet with local experts and knowledge holders, and become immersed in the Haida Gwaii community,"³⁰⁵ underscoring the

²⁹⁸ Pittman, "Racial Microaggressions: The Narratives of African American Faculty at a Predominantly White University," p. 89; Harlow, " 'Race Doesn't Matter, but...'," p. 349.

²⁹⁹ Harlow, " 'Race Doesn't Matter, but...':" p. 349.

³⁰⁰ Chavella T. Pittman, "Exploring How African American Faculty Cope with Classroom Racial Stressors," *The Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 79. no. 1 (Journal of Negro Education: 2010), pp. 66.

³⁰¹ "Longhouse," *The University of British Columbia* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://indigenous.ubc.ca/longhouse/>

³⁰² "First Nations House of Learning," *The University of British Columbia* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://indigenous.ubc.ca/longhouse/fnhl/>

³⁰³ "Residential School History and Dialogue Centre," *The University of British Columbia* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <http://irshdc.ubc.ca/>

³⁰⁴ "A Brief History of UBC," *The University of British Columbia* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://archives.library.ubc.ca/general-history/a-brief-history-of-ubc/>

³⁰⁵ "Haida Gwaii Semester," *The University of British Columbia Faculty of Forestry* (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://forestry.ubc.ca/students/undergraduate/haida-gwaii-semester/>

value UBC sees in these indigenous communities as educational resources and leaders. These services work to offer ties between the indigenous peoples in the area and the university, creating a more cohesive environment and demonstrating the effort UBC is taking in creating a climate of reconciliation and repair with these communities.

In comparison, McGill has a First Peoples' House, which serves as a residence for indigenous students to live in and hosts events aimed at "fostering community bonds".³⁰⁶ McGill also convenes Indigenous Awareness Week each year. However, both of these initiatives are not targeted at faculty and fail to acknowledge McGill's colonial legacy. Arguably, instead of alleviating and redressing the university's colonial legacy, they both perpetuate a guise of diversity that allows McGill to continue as normal, upholding a racially-exclusionary climate within their faculty and hiring process.

On the other coast, Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia has a direct connection to Transatlantic Slavery. In September 2019, Dalhousie released the "Report on Lord Dalhousie's History on Slavery and Race" for the university's bicentennial. The Report asked "what did it mean to celebrate 200 years of existence in the context of racism, anti-Blackness, and knowledge about the founder's view and actions toward people of African descent?"³⁰⁷ Notably, the inclusion of a critical examination of "the founder's view and actions toward people of African descent" is an important site of investigation for the report. In response to the report's recommendations, Dalhousie now offers a Black and African Diaspora Studies program of study, although this program is only offered as a minor and is not its own department.³⁰⁸

Unfortunately, McGill has not taken any such comparable action. There is no department for African, African Canadian, Black Diasporic or Indigenous Studies at McGill. There is a major and minor program available for African Studies and an Indigenous Studies minor program. However, it is a common complaint from undergraduate students in these programs that they cannot get enough credits to fulfill the program requirements within the three or four years of their undergraduate degrees due to the lack of courses offered and of professors equipped to teach such courses. Whereas interdisciplinary programs that are housed within a faculty typically borrow courses from faculty members who are appointed to a specific department, departments differ from a major or minor program because they necessitate the hiring of full time tenure and tenure-track faculty members who are attached to the specific unit and therefore can be guaranteed to provide a certain number of courses and programs.

With the bicentenary of the university mere months away in 2021, it is an embarrassment that McGill has made no effort to produce a report similar to Dalhousie's or other prominent American and British universities (see section four). UBC has taken action regarding their colonial history with indigenous peoples and Dalhousie has addressed their direct ties to Transatlantic Slavery; ties, it must be stated, that are less direct than those of McGill University. McGill, with colonial connections to the oppression of both black *and* indigenous peoples, has taken little action towards recognition and reconciliation. To rectify this, we recommend that McGill takes the following actions regarding the lack of black and indigenous faculty members within the professoriate:

³⁰⁶ "First People's House," McGill University (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/fph/>

³⁰⁷ "Lord Dalhousie Scholarly Panel on Slavery and Race," Dalhousie University (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.dal.ca/dept/ldp/about.html>

³⁰⁸ "Black African Diaspora (Minor)," Dalhousie University (date of last access 8 May 2020) <https://www.dal.ca/academics/programs/undergraduate/black-african-diaspora.html>

- Creation of two new *departments* of: 1) African and Black Diaspora Studies and (2) Indigenous Studies
- This would immediately change the racial climate on campus by increasing representation of black and indigenous faculty, scholars, and scholarship.
- The creation of both of these departments would necessitate the hiring of permanent tenured and tenure-track faculty members. This hiring would prioritize black and indigenous professors, addressing their underrepresentation in the McGill faculty.
- Creation of advisor and advocacy position for black and indigenous faculty members
- These would be full time positions dedicated to providing support for black and indigenous faculty, while advocating for their needs and attempting to address the unique issues they face. Since there are so few black and indigenous faculty, when racism is encountered, the department chairs (the first point of contact) or faculty deans are often white people who lack the necessary lived experience and training and therefore are ignorant of the issues and unsympathetic.
- Creation of a new office to oversee all academic appointments which includes a director and a support staff of fourteen people, one for each of the twelve faculties and schools at McGill, and two administrative staff members.³⁰⁹ This team would be responsible for ensuring the full implementation and the McGill community's full adherence to its equity, inclusion, and diversity policies.
- This would drastically lower the unrecognized workload of black, indigenous, and other people of colour professors, who typically sit on committees as the spokespeople for communities of colour.
- This new team would be completely independent of any dean and work to hold each faculty (and their departments, units, and centres) within the university accountable for implementing existing policies of equity, diversity, and inclusion, especially within hiring practices; as such this staff would have the authority to intervene in search committees and hiring practices which do not adhere to McGill's stated equity and diversity policies.
- Establishing a new mandate for the hiring of at least one professor of Black/Post-Colonial studies and/or a black professor within each department of the university by 2026 (within five years of the bicentenary).
- Allows for black and indigenous presence as knowledge-bearers and in the production of scholarship to become a more significant part of the university.
- This will help to transform the harmful and exclusionary racial climate of McGill university.

³⁰⁹ "Faculties and Schools," McGill University (date of last access 8 May 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/faculties/>

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SECTION SIX

Redressing McGill’s Colonial Legacy: Student Recommendations

Lucia Bell-Epstein, Simone Cambridge, and Bella Silverman

Racial Demographics at McGill University

It is crucial that McGill University actively prioritizes the racial diversification of its students and staff. To achieve this, racial data regarding graduate and undergraduate students and academic staff must be collected and displayed publicly. We recommend that the university release this report publicly, in both print and electronic versions, and circulate it widely among students, academic and non-academic staff, and alumni, as well as among other interested parties. After contacting McGill Enrolment Services to ask if they keep both overall and specific racial statistics for undergraduate and graduate levels of study, we were met with an unsatisfactory response. To this inquiry, the Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services replied, “We do not currently collect this info, however, we have plans to start collecting more robust self-identified demographic data starting this June. Sorry I’m not able to give you the info you would like at this time.”³¹⁰ This response reflects a severe blind-spot in McGill’s Enrolment Services, revealing the inaccessibility of this type of information.

“Universities Canada” keeps racial statistics which is fundamental to their mission of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Respondents of the 2019 survey identified that a critical challenge is a lack of resources, specifically the insufficient funding for recruitment and retention of staff and faculty.³¹¹ For instance, the lack of funding for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) staff and initiatives is revealed in the fact that a third (32%) of EDI offices have one or less full-time staff member.³¹² In their Data Collection and Analysis section, a table of self-identification data specifically for undergraduate and graduate students states, “Universities are much more likely to collect data on Indigenous students (71-73%) than racialized students (23-25%).”³¹³ Therefore, it is essential that McGill actively collects racial demographics for all racial groups including indigenous students.

Furthermore, McGill only participated in the Universities Canada survey at the Medical/doctoral level of study, leaving out the majority of the student body.³¹⁴ We call on McGill to collect racial data not only at the doctoral level, but at all levels of undergraduate and graduate study as well as for staff members. Moreover, to prioritize accessibility, these statistics should also be made transparent on the McGill quick facts page.³¹⁵ This information should be used to inform recruitment, retention, and promotion practices. This transparency is essential not only for the McGill community, but also vital information for prospective students and staff, in order for them to make an informed decision on whether to choose McGill as a place for study or

³¹⁰ Gillian Nycum, Directrice, Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services, McGill University, email correspondence, 28 March 2020.

³¹¹ “Equity, diversity and inclusion at Canadian universities: Report on the 2019 survey,” Universities Canada, (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/publications/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-at-canadian-universities-report-on-the-2019-survey/>.

³¹² “Equity, diversity and inclusion at Canadian universities.”

³¹³ “Equity, diversity and inclusion at Canadian universities.”

³¹⁴ “Equity, diversity and inclusion at Canadian universities.”

³¹⁵ “McGill Quick Facts 2019,” McGill University, (date of last access 14 May 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/about/quickfacts>.

employment. Full transparency will reveal McGill's admission processes and hiring practices. Without these essential racial data, McGill has arguably rendered itself blind to the extent of the problem of its lack of racial diversity across both student and staff populations.

Mandatory Class: James McGill was a Slave Owner – Understanding Quebec's Relationship to Slavery and Colonialism

We propose the implementation of a required introductory class for all of McGill's undergraduate students that investigates James McGill's slave owning and colonial trading histories and the province of Quebec as a site of Transatlantic Slavery and colonial power. (see introduction three and sections one and two) We propose the following as a working title for the course: "James McGill was a Slave Owner: A Starter's Guide to Understanding Quebec's Relationship to Slavery and Colonialism." This course would be optimal if mandated in the first semester of the first year of undergraduate study, with required in-person attendance. Failure to complete this course would result in a hold on students accounts for course registration. The concern that students would end up merely resenting the imposition of such a course is a challenge, but one that can be overcome through creative, innovative, dynamic, and participatory teaching methods.

This class will address James McGill's slave owning history, histories of Quebec Slavery – which entailed the enslavement of people of African and indigenous descent - and an overview of the histories of French and British imperialism in New France and Quebec respectively. The class will examine slave advertisements (fugitive, auction, and sale) that were published in Quebec and engage in discussions regarding Canadian Slavery from the establishment of the Le Code Noir (1685) to British abolition (1834). In the final section of the course, the class will review the ramifications of slavery that continue to be prevalent today, addressing present day racism in Canada and on university campuses. The impetus of this class is to examine the history of colonialism through a multi-faceted lens instead of relying on an institutionalized, Eurocentric narrative. This mandatory class will be a step in the right direction for McGill to begin repairing the harms done by slavery and its legacy. It will also ensure that every undergraduate student has the opportunity to learn these disturbing and complex histories through which the Canadian nation was forged.

Office for Students of African Descent

Vital to the development of McGill's racial inclusivity and goals for diversity is the establishment of an Office for Students of African Descent. McGill's current Social Equity and Diversity Education Office (SEDE) is not sufficiently funded nor does it have the power to intervene in racist situations, practices, and outcomes such as racist hiring practices. Moreover, the SEDE's website contains links for "more information," yet those said pages do not exist.³¹⁶ This exemplifies not only McGill's need for transparency and additional resources, but also serves as evidence of the inadequate funding and lack of institutional commitment to establishing an office which has the mandate, authority, and funding to fundamentally shift the racist institutional culture of the university. Additionally, SEDE's mandate centres on "provid[ing] information, education, and training to all areas of the University in order to cultivate a

³¹⁶ "Social Equity and Diversity (SEDE) Office," *Engage McGill*, (date of last access 8 April, 2020), <https://www.mcgill.ca/engage/support/cat>.

respectful and supportive campus.”³¹⁷ A platform solely based on education and training is insufficient on a campus like McGill that is so clearly devoid of people of colour. Out of 1726 tenure-track and tenured faculty members, there are only ten black and eleven indigenous professors at McGill. (see section five) The fact of the matter is, students of colour rely on these professors for emotional and academic support as they navigate their own time at McGill, years also characterized by heightened experiences of isolation and discrimination. Within an academic system governed by the measurement of research, teaching, and administration, McGill – like many other white-dominated institutions - does not acknowledge the emotional labour shouldered by these black and indigenous professors who routinely stand-in for the missing psychological and social support staff that universities refuse to employ and fund. Given the profound underrepresentation of both people of colour faculty and students, McGill urgently needs to designate a space and hire staff to support students of African descent who need to access expertise that is targeted to their identities and cultures. McGill must realign its priorities and take seriously the need for a multi-faceted equity and diversity support program for students of African descent.

The Office for Students of African Descent must occupy a designated space and be run by a team of at least 5-10 people. The people running this office must be black people since this will lend students of African descent comfort during a time when they may need emotional support. The office will have approximately four departments: therapy/psychology, support services, study services, and mentoring services, with the possibility of expansion in later years. This model is based on Dalhousie University’s “Black Student Advising Centre.”³¹⁸

It is essential that McGill offer therapists/psychologists that specialize in racial difference, racism, and intergenerational trauma as students of African descent experience specific difficulties that their white peers do not. Support services should be available that aid students who may be having difficulty with academic expectations, financial management, or navigating campus life.³¹⁹ Moreover, the support services would act as an advocate if a student finds themselves in academic or non-academic disciplinary procedures.³²⁰ Study services would offer general tutoring and essay writing support. Students would have access to individual sessions with tutors/advisors to discuss and edit their work.

The Office for Students of African Descent should have a mentorship program that is three-fold. High school mentoring would be offered with the goal of preparing Montreal students of African descent in grades 10-11 for university.³²¹ A McGill student will be paired with a high school student; this will not only foster the growth and work experience of potential McGill students, but give current McGill students the opportunity to participate in a fulfilling outreach program. The second mentorship branch is a peer mentoring/tutoring program. An upper-year student will be paired with a lower-year student who needs help or advice within their discipline.³²² Finally, professional mentorship should also be offered, as it is increasingly difficult to find a job post-graduation and a professional mentor of African descent would be an immensely powerful tool. Students will be paired with professionals or faculty members who are

³¹⁷ “Social Equity and Diversity (SEDE) Office.”

³¹⁸ “Support Services,” Black Student Advising Center, (date of last access 8 April, 2020), https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html.

³¹⁹ “Support Services,” Black Student Advising Center, (date of last access 8 April, 2020), https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html.

³²⁰ “Support Services.”

³²¹ “Support Services.”

³²² “Support Services.”

of African descent, allowing students to foster networks, lasting relationships, and to develop an understanding of the professional world in which they may want to enter.³²³

Transition Year Program

In an effort to diversify McGill's student body and to make McGill more accessible to people of all abilities, backgrounds, classes, ethnicities, races, and ages, we propose that McGill implement a Transition Year Program (TYP). Since admission to McGill is solely based on the applicant's grade point average, this exclusionary method prohibits those who may have been unable to attain high grades due to social and financial issues and disparities, family difficulties, or other struggles beyond their control. Although this program would be open to all, it would target students of African and indigenous descent, as well as members of the LGBTQ+ community, and those with working class backgrounds of all ethnicities.³²⁴ Admission to the TYP, therefore, will be based on a holistic application that considers not only academic achievement, but other variables of the applicants' life like work and volunteer experience. The goal of this program is to foster the growth of a more diverse student body through offering a year-long program of personal and academic support for anyone who fits the said guidelines.

The TYP coordinator should assist all prospective students in the application process and once admitted will facilitate their registration process.³²⁵ Throughout the year, there will be a mandatory writing course and an introduction to university course. Otherwise, students may take any classes listed for general registration. There will be a special orientation program for the TYP's students that is held at a date prior to the start of the fall semester. While incorporating academic factors, this orientation will also address the potential social alienation that TYP students may face due to their identities and cultural backgrounds. This orientation will provide an overview of the services available to students and match each student with a peer mentor who attends McGill. The peer mentor will act as a guide and resource for the TYP student throughout their first year at McGill.³²⁶

All students will receive personal advising throughout the year. This advising could take the form of degree planning, study skills and note-taking workshops, and essay writing tutorial sessions. After successful completion of the TYP, students will be able to continue their education within a traditional undergraduate degree program at McGill while maintaining access to advising throughout the duration of their degree. The TYP's mandate is to expand the social and cultural diversity of McGill's student body and to make all McGill students feel welcomed, supported, and fully equipped to take on their higher educations.

Support, Recruitment, and Under-Representation

Major changes must be made to the way McGill University supports and recruits its under-represented black and indigenous undergraduate and graduate students. Efforts also must

³²³ "Support Services."

³²⁴ "What is the Transitional Year Programme?" Transitional Year Programme: University of Toronto, (8 April, 2020), <http://sites.utoronto.ca/typ/about.html>.

³²⁵ "Transition Year Program," The University of Winnipeg, (date of last access 8 April, 2020), <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/assc/transition-yr-program.html>.

³²⁶ "Transition Year Program."

be improved to support their successful graduation and to provide encouragement to continue their education within graduate and professional degree programs.

The main pillar of support for Indigenous students on McGill campus is First Peoples' House.³²⁷ We recommend an expansion of the permanent indigenous faculty and of the various academic, community, and cultural programs. Specifically, the expansion and further development of the Elder in Residence program would be a positive contribution to enriching indigenous education and access to their communities. The Elder in Residence, an Indigenous individual from the Montreal community, offers cultural knowledge and activities for staff and students. Moreover, they have a hand in academic and personal counselling, shared problem solving, and regular check-in support with students on an individual basis.³²⁸ This program would benefit from increased funding to support its ability to serve the McGill community.

The primary support system for McGill students of African descent is the university's Black Students' Network (BSN). The BSN has two main objectives: 1) "to sensitize the McGill community to issues concerning Black peoples" and 2) "to work towards making McGill campus safe and accessible for Black students in order to support their academic success as well as mental and physical well-being."³²⁹ These objectives make the BSN an essential service to Black students on campus, providing an educational and social service within a predominantly white institution and serving as a refuge for potentially isolated students.

The BSN, however, is entirely student-run. Initiatives such as mental health support groups, black community day, and programming for incoming black students have been created by hardworking and committed teams of students. Unfortunately, as students matriculate, these programs are difficult to maintain and suffer from a lack of historical memory without the participation of appointed McGill staff members to ensure program continuity and longevity. Therefore, we recommend that McGill appoints multiple permanent black staff members with the skills and training to maintain such initiatives, while expanding the permanent physical space for the BSN to foster community, support, and recruitment of black students at McGill University.

We also recommend improved scholarships and exchanges for indigenous and black students. We propose that McGill increases the funding of indigenous scholarships to qualifying Canadian students. More funding must be allotted for obtaining school supplies, educational support, and general tuition fees.³³⁰ These scholarships would increase recruitment on campus and could be awarded based on academics, athletics, and other types of non-academic individual achievement. We also recommend that similar scholarships be created for Canadian students of African descent to address disparities in the student population by prioritizing students applying from the province of Quebec and Montreal. These scholarships would also be directed toward Canadian students of African descent, with a preference for students from Montreal. This would begin to address the lack of Canadian students of African descent on campus relative to the number of international black students at McGill.

Additionally, it is recommended that McGill University establish stronger relationships with academic and cultural institutions in the Caribbean to better address its historical ties to the

³²⁷ "First Peoples' House," McGill University (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/fph/>

³²⁸ "Elder-In-Residence," Queen's University: Faculty of Education, (date of last access 8 April, 2020), <https://educ.queensu.ca/Elder-in-Residence>.

³²⁹ "Black Students' Network of McGill," Facebook (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.facebook.com/pg/BlackStudentsNetworkOfMcGill/>.

³³⁰ "First Peoples' House," (date of last access 8 April 2020)

region. In addition to new partnerships with Caribbean institutions, McGill should expand the research and teaching goals of its existing Bellairs Research Institute (Holetown, Barbados), beyond its current mandate of “tropical terrestrial and marine environments” to encompass the study a Caribbean Slavery and it specific trade connections to Canadian Slavery.³³¹ We recommend that McGill explores the opportunity for the Institute to expand as a centre for the study of slavery and colonialism through the introduction of research scholarships. It is also recommended that exchange scholarships for Caribbean students of African descent are introduced in partnership with institutions like the University of the West Indies. This would act as redress for James McGill’s role as a West Indian merchant (see section two) and his importation of slave-produced plantation goods from the West Indies, the profits of which helped to establish McGill University. The University of the West Indies has campuses and in-person locations in seventeen countries including Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and Barbuda.³³²

³³¹ “Bellairs Research Institute,” McGill University (date of last access 8 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/bellairs/>

³³² “Home - The University of the West Indies,” The University of the West Indies <http://www.uwi.edu> (date of last access 17 May 2020)

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Nycum Gillian, Directrice, Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services, McGill University, email correspondence, 28 March 2020.

SECTION SEVEN

Redressing McGill's Colonial Legacy: Renaming and Commemoration

Nicholas Raffoul

Commission a Critical Biography of James McGill and McGill University's Connection to Slavery

To begin reconciling its history and connection with Transatlantic Slavery, McGill University first and foremost needs to commission an official report which critically investigates, analyzes, and details its colonial history and the present day effects of this history. McGill's call for applicants for Provostial Research Scholars in Institutional Histories, Slavery, and Colonialism, while a productive first step, does not outline specific outcomes of the scholars' research nor how their work will be published, disseminated or displayed.³³³ The call also does not provide details about how or if the research findings will be utilized by McGill in the future. As such, we recommend an expansion of this research to include, more specifically, the publication of a critical biography about James McGill and his direct connections to slavery and colonization. This research should include a detailed examination of James McGill as a slave owner, contextualizing the links between McGill's wealth, slave ownership and trading in Montreal, and his shipping trade with the West Indies. (see section two, three, and four) Such a biography is crucial for the basis of McGill's reconciliation with its slave owning history. This biography should also be accessible to the larger McGill community and readily available on the McGill website. We recommend that the university release this biography publicly, in both print and electronic versions, and circulate it widely among students, academic and non-academic staff, and alumni, as well as among other McGill stakeholders.

(Re)Naming Buildings and Public Spaces on Campus

Collective memory and public space are inextricably linked. Visual signatures and naming are strategic tools for an educational institution to commemorate what and who they consider to be the most important values, events, and people that make up its history. Currently, the names and images on McGill's campuses, including public art and sculptures, form a collective reflection of white privilege and white supremacy. The ubiquitous whiteness of the university landscape creates a material and symbolic environment that is not only unwelcoming, but often outright hostile for people of colour constituents. In order to reflect a greater and more critical understanding of its full history, McGill University should actively work to commemorate, recognize, and take accountability in its role in Transatlantic Slavery and the continued colonization of black, indigenous, and people of colour. McGill should prioritize creating a campus environment that promotes a full and nuanced view of its history and context.

When in 2003 Brown University's President Ruth J. Simmons established its Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, the initial summons soliciting questions, comments, and criticisms from the public elicited the predictable question of "Why risk opening chapters of the past that are, inevitably, controversial and painful?" With great wisdom, foresight, and respect for history and academia, the committee responded,

³³³ "Call for Applications: Provostial Research Scholars in Institutional Histories, Slavery, and Colonialism," McGill University (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/ahcs/files/ahcs/call>

“Brown is a university. Universities are dedicated to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. They are conservators of humanity’s past. They cherish their own pasts, honoring forbears with statues and portraits and in the names of buildings. To study or teach at a place like Brown is to be a member of a community that exists across time, a participant in a procession that began centuries ago and that will continue long after we are gone. If an institution professing these principles cannot squarely face its own history, it is hard to imagine how any other institution, let alone our nation, might do so.”³³⁴

McGill University’s acknowledgement of its colonial history critically through such an official report and thoughtful intervention in its public spaces would reflect the university’s attempt to reconcile these histories, creating a more honest and inclusive experience for all of its constituents. These actions would emerge from a duty to change how we think, write, and speak about the past, moving the university towards a truer reflection of its principles of equity and inclusiveness.³³⁵

McGill should make every effort to recognize marginalized and underrepresented communities and individuals through the naming of campus buildings. McGill’s Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets³³⁶ should incorporate more inclusive naming practices in order to commemorate a larger demographic of the university community. In order to do so, McGill should prioritize naming buildings and other assets after individuals from underrepresented identity groups that have been and continue to be a part of McGill’s community, and that have made achievements which are not directly related to their financial contributions to McGill University. Given James McGill’s aggressive colonial exploitation of enslaved people of African and indigenous descent, priority in naming and renaming should be given to the designation of McGill landmarks for these two groups. (see sections two and three)

Some buildings on campus recall the names of historical places such as McIntyre and Burnside. Other campus buildings are known solely by their municipal addresses. Examples include 3605 de la Montagne, 3647, 3674, 3690 Peel, and 3430, 3434, and 3438 McTavish. As written in the final report by the McGill University Working Group on Principles of Commemoration and Renaming published in December 2018: “It is erroneous to suppose that the naming of a building on campus in recognition, say, of individuals from marginalized and underrepresented communities needs to wait until one of them donates millions of dollars to finance construction of a building.”³³⁷

Some examples of such individuals deserving recognition are McGill University’s first black and/or indigenous students, faculty, department chairs, etc. McGill assets can also be renamed to recognize the enslaved black and indigenous people upon whose labour James McGill’s financial success was founded (see sections two and three). Indeed, the commemorative plaque unveiled by Harvard University President Drew Faust in 2017, acknowledging the connection of Harvard Law School to Transatlantic Slavery, honours the “enslaved whose labor

³³⁴ “Working Group on Principles of Commemoration and Renaming: Final Report,” McGill University, (date of last access 17 April 2020) https://www.mcgill.ca/provost/files/provost/final_report_working_group

³³⁵ “McGill University Mission Statement and Principles,” McGill University Secretariat, (date of last access 18 May 2020) <https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/mission>

³³⁶ “Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets,” McGill University (date of last access 18 May 2020), https://mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/policy_related_to_the_naming_of_university_assets.pdf

³³⁷ Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, “Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice,” Brown University, (February 2007), p. 6.

created wealth that made possible the founding of Harvard Law School.”³³⁸ We echo the Working Group on Principles of Commemoration and Renaming’s recommendation for a committee in conversation with the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), the Office of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, and the Board of Governors to address matters of commemoration and renaming on campus. Such a committee should carry a mandate for transparent and effective action with integrity, including representatives from historically excluded and marginalized groups (students, faculty, and other stakeholders) to ensure diverse perspectives.

Public Monument to Commemorate James McGill’s Connections to Transatlantic Slavery

Images and monuments provide an opportunity to educate the public and to commemorate histories, both victorious and tragic. Monuments actively point to an aspect of history that decision makers consider worthy of commemoration and memorialization.³³⁹ As an educational institution, McGill holds significant power to educate through its own institutional history and to uncover untold and suppressed aspects of this narrative. With this in mind, we recommend that McGill University commissions a public monument to recognize the enslaved people of Canada and the British Caribbean and to finally acknowledge the University’s direct connections to Transatlantic Slavery.

Such a monument might anchor a commemorative public space which salutes black and indigenous McGillians and would address silences regarding Canadian histories of black and indigenous communities. Specifics of such a monument can be decided by a committee similar to that of the proposed committee addressing matters of renaming described above, prioritizing black and indigenous artists. Such a committee would decide the process of commissioning a sculpture to be displayed in an outdoor public space on McGill’s downtown campus. While the committee should include interested students from historically excluded groups as well as professors from McGill with suitable credentials in relevant areas (such as art historians), the overall majority of committee members should be black, indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC).

Fostering Black and Indigenous Cultural Production & Fine Arts on Campus Establishing an African-Students Cultural Centre

We call for the establishment of a space on campus specifically for the promotion and empowerment of its black student body, facilitating its community members’ success in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, empowerment, and cultural enrichment. Several North American universities have established such centres including Yale College³⁴⁰ and The University of Iowa,³⁴¹ as well as Dalhousie University which has instituted a Black Student

³³⁸ “Harvard Law School unveils memorial honoring enslaved people who enabled its founding,” *Harvard Law Today* (date of last access 18 May 2020) <https://today.law.harvard.edu/harvard-law-school-unveils-memorial-honoring-enslaved-people-contributed-founding/>

³³⁹ Jamie D. Halper, “Law School Unveils Slavery Monument, Reflects on History” (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/9/6/hls-plaque-honors-slaves/>

³⁴⁰ “Afro-American Cultural Center,” *Yale College* (date of last access 18 May 2020) <https://afam.yalecollege.yale.edu/>

³⁴¹ “Afro-American Cultural Center,” *The University of Iowa* (date of last access 18 May 2020) <https://multicultural.uiowa.edu/culturalcenters/afrohouse/>

Advising Centre.³⁴² Such a centre would provide services on campus that promote the empowerment of students of African descent through the implementation of a permanent space to facilitate their programming, including but not limited to the Black Students Network, the McGill African Students' Society, and the Black Law Students' Association of McGill, as well as counselling specifically for black students. (see section six) The goals of the African-Students Cultural Centre would be to provide an affirming space for students from Africa and throughout the Black Diaspora to develop solidarity and express pride in their cultural and social identities with the support of designated specialist advisors and counsellors. The centre would also create opportunities for cultural production and networking and facilitate community formation. Such a centre should also have appropriate funding to employ students to maintain the space and facilitate effective programming and mentorship. Once again, the establishment of the centre should be in direct consultation with a committee of black students, staff, and faculty members interested and invested in such a project. This would be a space to facilitate community formation among Black McGillians and to house and make accessible services that work towards their empowerment.

Artist-in-Residence Program for Black and Indigenous Artists

We recommend that McGill University institute an Artist-in-Residence Program specifically for artists from marginalized communities who have been historically excluded from artistic and cultural production in Canada. Several universities in Canada have such a program, such as York University (Toronto), which amplifies cultural production of underrepresented artists.³⁴³ The Sustainability Projects Fund at McGill has also developed a similar program with the Redpath Museum earlier this year for climate change research. Therefore, this initiative is definitely within McGill's abilities as an educational resource.³⁴⁴ Artists would enrich the McGill community through teaching, lectures, studio visits, workshops, and exhibitions during their residencies at McGill. This program would invite artists to showcase their work and creative developments in several faculties and departments, such as but not limited to, the Department of Art History and Communication Studies, the Department of English, the Schulich School of Music, and the Faculty of Education, with the potential to expand into other units as programs continue to develop.

The Establishment of an African-Canadian Contemporary Art Gallery

There is currently only one art gallery dedicated to the collection, display, and promotion of black Canadian art – Dr. Kenneth Montague's Wedge Curatorial Projects³⁴⁵ – and only a few Canadian art galleries exhibit the work of international black artists.³⁴⁶ With the second largest

³⁴² "Black Student Advising Centre," Dalhousie University (date of last access 18 May 2020) https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html

³⁴³ "Osgoode's artist in residence amplifies the stories of Black Canada," York University Files" (date of last access 17 April 2020), <https://yfile.news.yorku.ca/2019/03/18/osgoodes-artist-in-residence-amplifies>

³⁴⁴ "Artist in Residence (in Climate Change) at Redpath Museum," McGill University, <https://mcgill.ca/channels>

³⁴⁵ "History & Mandate," Wedge Curatorial Projects (date of last access 18 May 2020), <https://www.wedgecuratorialprojects.org/>

³⁴⁶ "Black Artists' Network in Dialogue (BAND)" (date of last access 17 April 2020), <http://band-rand.com/site/>.

black population in Canada, shockingly, no such curatorial initiative exists in Montreal.³⁴⁷ We urge McGill to fill this crucial cultural and intellectual gap and empower black Canadian artists, both local Quebec and Montreal artists, as well as across Canada. This initiative would require a gallery space, the hiring of permanent gallery staff, curators, etc. and would provide important work placements for several students to maintain the gallery and its programming year-round. These student positions should prioritize black Canadian students. While University of Toronto,³⁴⁸ Carleton University,³⁴⁹ Concordia University,³⁵⁰ York University,³⁵¹ University of British Columbia,³⁵² as well as other Canadian universities all have at least one permanent gallery space, McGill University is one of the only major academic institutions in Canada without such an arts venue.

Such an initiative can be part of McGill's Department of Art History and Communication Studies and work side by side with the Visual Arts Collection considering they have existing expertise and curatorial infrastructure in place. Focusing on contemporary and historical art from the Black Diaspora, this permanent gallery space would feature guest curators, faculty, artists, and visiting scholars, in addition to its permanent staff, that promote black Canadian art and research, enriching the McGill and Montreal community, a mandate similar to that of The Ethelbert Cooper Gallery of African & African American Art at Harvard University.³⁵³ This would demonstrate McGill's attempt to prioritize inclusion and diversity, especially in the contemporary arts where art of the Black Diaspora has been historically excluded and undervalued in Canada.

Appoint a committee to monitor implementation of these recommendations

The recommendations made in this report require effective implementation, review, and oversight, as well as increased funding from the university to successfully achieve these goals. A committee to ensure that the university is implementing our recommendations is crucial. We recommend the creation of an oversight committee to supervise and aid the efforts of working groups which are each dedicated to implement the projects that we have outlined in this report.

³⁴⁷ "Diversity of the Black Population in Canada: An Overview," *Statistics Canada* (7 July 2020)

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190227/dq190227d-eng.htm>

³⁴⁸ "Art Museum at the University of Toronto," (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://artmuseum.utoronto.ca/>

³⁴⁹ "Carleton University Art Gallery," (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://cuag.ca/>

³⁵⁰ "Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery," (date of last access 18 May 2020) <http://ellengallery.concordia.ca>

³⁵¹ "Art Gallery of York University," (date of last access 17 April 2020) <http://agyu.art/>

³⁵² "Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery," (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://belkin.ubc.ca/>

³⁵³ "The Cooper Gallery," (date of last access 17 April 2020) <https://coopergallery.fas.harvard.edu/about>

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