

## The Maple Spring as the background for the flourishing of the *Fifth Estate* in Québec or how the Millennials appropriated interactive digital technologies to rise up and politically engage.

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### Abstract

The political disengagement of the Millennials has long been a subject of scholarly debate. Using ethnographic research methods, our lab conducted a multi-sited field study to investigate the digital practices of some of the community networks that have emerged or consolidated since the Maple Spring. Our field findings suggest that the Millennial student protesters – alongside citizens from all generations who have lent them their support – have actively engaged in their own forms of political participation and by doing so, have helped to firmly entrench the Fifth Estate in Québec society. In particular, we have found that these grassroots networks might have expanded Québec's alternative press by using interactive technologies to self-publish, self-represent and self-document issues that are of great concern to them and have typically not been topics up for debate on the public agenda. Our analysis brings to the fore the fraught relationship between the Fifth Estate and the four traditional democratic institutions.

### Keywords

Fifth Estate, Maple Spring, interactive digital technologies, citizen journalism

“We have come to expect that privately owned networks might put on the news in the form of spectacles to be consumed for entertainment. But when public broadcasters cover the news this way too, the mainstream press as a whole then subjects us to a kind of rhetorical brutality. The problem I am talking about has nothing to do with the figure of *this* anchorperson or *that* news commentator who remains but an actor on the stage where news is performed. In fact, what this really reveals is a much more perverse social process which consists in debasing the medium of public debate. And it is because we have let this happen that we can say that our public institutions have gone adrift.”

(Christian Nadeau, interview and personal communication, March 5, 2014)<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The Maple Spring student protests have been said to have swept a tidal wave of social awakening over hundreds of thousands of Montrealers in the first half of 2012 and to have ignited a culture of political participation in Québec, especially among the Millennial generation (Ancelovici & Dupuis-Déri, 2012; Julien, 2012; Nadeau-Dubois, 2013). Originally triggered by opposition to hikes in tuition fees in the province's universities, it transformed into a full-fledged social movement of global proportions when trade unionists, feminist activists, diverse minority groups and citizens from all walks of life rallied behind student demonstrators in support of the broader cause of social, political and economic justice, not only in the province, but all around the world (Taylor, 2012, p. 7). It has been called the “the longest-running student protest in the nation's history” (Ostrovsky, 2012, para. 2) and “the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history” (Goodman, 2012, para. 24). According to Vincent Mosco – who did a series of media interviews on Occupy and related movements in 2012-2013 – the Maple Spring stands as one of the worse examples of repressive state measures against a social protest movement: “I don't know that a government in North America has done a

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worse job in handling and addressing the issues and the people than in Quebec [*sic*]” (Tousignant, 2012, para. 23)<sup>2</sup>.

The International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations (INCLLO) has taken the Maple Spring protests as one of nine case studies, which provide contemporary examples of repressive legislative, law enforcement and judicial responses in violation of individual’s right to peaceful protests (2013, pp. 16-21). An in-depth report co-authored and co-published by the Ligue des droits et libertés (LDL), l’Association des juristes progressistes (AJP) and l’Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante (ASSÉ) has found that “during the student strike, law enforcement officials not only failed in their duty to respect freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly, they actually violated these rights by arresting people without legal foundation and using coercive methods against peaceful citizens” (2013, p. 15). This report describes in granular detail countless instances of police brutality, misconduct and strategic lawsuits against public participation, also known as SLAPP - a form of legal intimidation used to discourage participation in public protests or assembly (Landry, 2012, p.12). It also states that it was commonplace for police officers to inflict abusive or cruel detention conditions upon arrested demonstrators (LDL et al., 2013, p. 4), to attempt to neutralize protesters by using chemical irritants, tear gas, pepper spray, kinetic energy weapons, stun grenades, and by firing plastic or rubber bullets (p. 8); and to deploy crowd control and mass arrest techniques such as kettling (p. 13) and cavalry (La Presse Canadienne, 2013, para. 8).

A general malaise has set in among those who actively participated in this social movement, but also among those who bore close witness to it through their first-hand experiences as citizens simply trying to circulate through the streets of Montréal in early 2012. A significant number of articles, edited books, audio-visual documents and art works have been produced on the event since. Many offer personal accounts, empirical studies or editorial commentaries of the basic human rights violations towards protesters that were routinely perpetrated during the Maple Spring in the form of acts of political, judicial and policing repression. In particular, many citizens and civil rights associations have expressed public outrage at the *Service de police de la Ville de Montréal’s* (SPVM) culture of brutality, misconduct, discriminatory profiling and abuses of power during their strategic law enforcement interventions, and have demanded, *en masse*, a public inquiry be held to investigate whether this might be a problem endemic to the SPVM.<sup>3</sup>

The gravity of this problem came to be well known on the streets and well supported in social media networks and alternative news feeds by a wide array of media texts generated by citizens and amateur journalists. These texts included photos, videos and detailed textual accounts. However, with the exception of the respected independent daily newspaper, *Le Devoir*, many protesters felt that the mainstream press hardly evoked this aspect of the Maple Spring.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, they typically portrayed the SPVM as the guardian of civil order and protector of citizens, at times, going to the extent of manipulating news coverage to show how civilians or SPVM police officers were being victimized by students in the chaos and *mêlée* of the protests. Not only does the abundance of personal testimonies and primary sources collected by citizens as journalists provide hard evidence disproving this perspective, it also exposes it as outright fallacious.<sup>5</sup>

Without such audio-visual material evidence, civil rights associations would likely not have been in a position to investigate facts, and issue reports and recommendations that denounce the abusive political, legal and police repression of the Maple Spring social movement. Indeed, one report deplores how the bias shared by the state and the mainstream media works to legitimate a systematic and massive infringement of protesters’ basic human rights:

When the State joins the media in publicly labelling and vilifying categories of citizens, describing them as irresponsible, violent, delinquent, and shameful examples, it violates their dignity and even justifies their repression. (LDL et al., 2013, p. 42).

LDL et al. (2013) also remarks that the mainstream press and police representatives propagated “misleading information...that led some to believe that not only student associations and organizers, but also individuals taking part in demonstrations, were breaking the law” (p. 29).<sup>6</sup> The sentiment that the mainstream press intentionally misinformed the citizenry on the nature of what really happened in the trenches of the Maple Spring protests was shared by most protesters we interviewed in Montréal in 2013-2014. Conversely, those who were never physically present during the protests and watched newscasts remotely did not feel they had been misinformed.

During the Maple Spring, the student press was actively involved in providing written accounts and editorials in university newspapers such as the *McGill Daily*, *Quartier Libre* and *Impact Campus*, and alternative news channels such as Concordia University Television (CUTV) and Université de Montréal’s UniversiTV (UTV). Even though this student press showed legitimate credentials, over and over again, the SPVM violated its freedom of the press rights.<sup>7</sup> The SPVM also got in the way of other journalists from the mainstream media. For instance, established journalists from *Le Devoir* and other news organs were often intimidated and even brutalized by police officers, especially if they wore red squares and their press credentials were less visible.

The most bizarre of these incidents likely occurred when *Le Devoir* 20-year veteran staff photographer, Jacques Nadeau, was knocked down and almost trampled over by the horse of a SPVM cavalry patroller on May 15, 2012 (Bélair-Cirino, 2012).<sup>8</sup> One of his three cameras was destroyed on impact, while a second one was pushed into his abdomen, leaving him with severe bruising (Chap-sal, 2013). As a result of this injury, Nadeau will have to undergo abdominal surgery in 2014; he is also scheduled to receive eye surgery to treat the toxic ocular effects of over a dozen exposures to tear gas and pepper spray he suffered during this field work (Jacques Nadeau, personal communication, March 4, 2014). A cameraman from UTV videorecorded the incident that took place as the cavalry unit was attempting to disperse protesters (UniversiTV, 2012, [~2m0s]).<sup>9</sup> The video montage of various footage shot that same day also shows another cavalry patroller telling a CTV cameraman to stop filming as he circles around him on his horse, while civilians shout back at the officer to “let the press do its job...they have a mandate to cover the events” (UniversiTV, 2012, [~3min 30s]).<sup>10</sup> During the Maple Spring, UTV posted this clip on their official website which has since been dismantled. The clip is now made available on VIMEO™ with the title “Where can the media go? – Events filmed on May 15, 2012”<sup>11</sup>

Because of the journalistic authority it has, our field findings suggest that *Le Devoir’s* press coverage may have been instrumental in allowing the marginalized voices of those who were brutalized and unfairly charged by the police to be heard and taken seriously against the dominant discourse that was falsely disseminated in most mainstream news media channels. But perhaps more importantly, the sustained practices of citizen journalism that spawned from the Maple Spring protests has provided citizens with alternative news coverage that would otherwise never seen the light of day. Suzanne Bilodeau -- a member of *Mères en colère et solidaires*, a feminist group of mothers who supported the student strike -- stated in an interview:

“Thanks to social media, we were shown the hidden dimension of the Maple Spring...and especially the gap between “official” media news sources and what was really happening on the streets...I think this may have been the big difference between the 2012 demonstrations compared to those of previous years because this time, we had access to images that showed a truth that we would have remained ignorant of before, when there was only the “official” media news channels” (Suzanne Bilodeau, interview, *Dérives*).<sup>12</sup>

This article analyzes empirical data collected with ethnographic research methods during 2013 and 2014 to investigate some of the ways that digital technologies have been used to support oppositional discourses in Québec since the Maple Spring. Our field findings and interviews suggest that the Maple Spring did not only result in the social and political awakening of the Millennials in this

province, but that it also served to augment and accelerate the emergence of a Fifth Estate largely driven by this generation, and accordingly, to make a growing number of Quebecers of all ages, aware of its political presence and engagement in today's society.

### Using a Fifth Estate Approach for the Maple Spring

Communication theory offers a number of conceptual models that describe discursive arenas ostensibly used to keep the public informed; to cultivate, exchange and share knowledge; and to fuel the substance of public debates in liberal democratic societies. For instance, Habermas's (1989/1962) bourgeois public sphere (BPS) -- or its later reformulations by Habermas and some of his critiques (Calhoun, 1993; Dahlgren, 1991, 1995; Habermas, 1993, 2006; Hahn, 2000; Negt and Kluge, 1993; Peters, 1993) -- is one model that provides historical evidence of how reading publics were formed and informed at the intersection of physical and discursive social spaces.<sup>13</sup> By providing a grounded basis for the socio-cultural origin of a discursive public arena in the 19<sup>th</sup> century era of market capitalism and liberal democracy, and then following its historical mutation into 20<sup>th</sup> century monopoly capitalism and imperialism, Habermas's BPS model has led to a fertile renewal of critical theory in relation to issues of the common good, democratic participation and the formation of rational public opinion through the possibility for debate.

However, as Kellner (2000) notes, the BPS does not address the *material conditions of society* as it now, because first, it fails to provide the means by which the discursive can be transformed into decision and action (p. 273); second, it disables democratic participation by separating the life-world that serves as the stage of communicative action from the system formed by economy and state (p. 274) and third, it does not account for the role that new media and technology can play in enabling new forms of democratic participation (p. 279). In addition, one can contend that the physical spaces the BPS maps its discursive space onto belong to another era -- that of 19<sup>th</sup> century Bourgeois society -- and as such, it is difficult to see how the BPS and its reformulations could provide a strong enough methodological anchor to analyze social processes around the kinds of digital media practices that support different forms of journalism today.

Murdock's (2010) conceptual model of the cultural domain has better traction in this regard. In his analysis of the three economies that make up the cultural domain, he describes the *commercial cultural commons* as the cultural commodity economy subject to market processes and norms, while he makes the case that institutions such as "public libraries, museums, galleries and adult-education centres" as well as spaces such as public television, "parks, recreation grounds, sports fields, city squares and piazzas" constitute the *public cultural commons* of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a concept which arguably overlaps with the 'cultural' dimension of the BPS (pp. 225-226). According to Murdock's analysis, coterminous with the growing use of the Internet, a third cultural common has emerged, an online gift economy, which takes the form of Web-based sharing, cooperation and collaboration "based not on the price system or advertising payments (as with commodified culture) or on subsidies from taxation (as with public goods) but on the principle of reciprocity, and the expectation that time and labor donated will be matched by other participants" (pp. 228). Murdock situates citizen journalism in this new, emerging gift economy, citing the online newspaper *Oh MyNews* as an example of successful collaboration between amateurs and professionals (p. 228). Indeed, he argues that the revitalization of the public cultural commons as a tangible manifestation of the common good may well depend on how it can be connected to the gift economy that has emerged through digital practices (p. 232-233). In the case of citizen journalism, for instance, this can take the form of news content being selected and contributed by citizen journalists while editorial and curatorial expertise is exercised by public-service broadcasters such as the BBC. Although Murdock's idea has several appealing advantages (p. 235), it rests on the assumption that public institutions can be trusted to deliver a neutral and balanced coverage of news, itself a historically-contested idea (Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Evans, 1984; Kellner, 1992; Wasburn, 1995). Further-

more, citizen journalists and alternative press workers operating outside institutions are doing so in the “social factory”, which leaves the product of their labor open to be co-opted in the interest of state surveillance and private capital (Gill & Pratt, 2008, pp. 7-8).

Turning to Dutton (2009), one may find a model powerful enough to explain and analyze the turn that citizen journalism has taken in Québec in the past decade. Building on the idea that the press constitutes the Fourth Estate as an important democratic institution which complements the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government, Dutton argues that, the twenty-first century has seen a *Fifth Estate* emerge as a result of online digital media practices (pp. 1-2).<sup>14</sup>

Several distinctions can be made between the Fourth and the Fifth Estate. First, while the former includes the institutionalized networks of the written press, radio, television and other mass media, the latter is more loosely made up of “networked individuals...[which]...move across, undermine and go beyond the boundaries of existing institutions, thereby opening new ways of increasing the accountability of politicians, press, experts and other loci of power and influence” (Dutton, 2009, p. 2). Second, while the former consists of well-entrenched structures that are centralized and have relatively well-defined hierarchies, the latter has dynamic structures that are decentralized and more temporally and spatially in flux. Third, while the former operates almost exclusively within the set boundaries of social institutions and its hegemonic norms and values, the latter extends its action beyond these boundaries, thus opening up a space for contesting these norms and values (p. 3). Fourth, while the former are focused toward the exercise of greater order and control in the name of a universal common good, the latter pushes for open-endedness and freedom in the self-interest of particular communities. And fifth, while the former relies on institutions to define and deliver the common good top-down style, the latter relies on grassroots groups formed by networks of individuals to set the agenda and take action from the bottom-up.

One can see in Dutton’s analysis, an interesting way to revisit Habermas’s public sphere model in that the Fourth Estate could be said to represent the institutions of the BPS while the Fifth Estate better describes that of counter-publics, counter discourses and the processes that enable alternative hegemonies. In relation to Murdock’s model of the commons, one can imagine that the combination of the commercial cultural commons and the public cultural commons loosely form the Fourth Estate while the online gift economy maps onto the Fifth Estate. The two main distinctive features in both cases of comparison is the opposition between institutionalized practices and non-institutionalized ones and accordingly, the opposition between top-down and bottom-up approaches. For this reason, it could be said that Dutton’s model is not about digital media practices *per se* – since both the Fourth and the Fifth Estates engage in this – but rather about whether such practices offer the possibility of creating an undertow that pushes back on institutions when they have come to protect their own interests over the public’s at all cost.<sup>15</sup>

### **Three Documented Forms of the Fifth Estate Related to the Maple Spring**

#### *The Fifth Estate as networks collectively producing public records: self-publication*

Our field research showed that, prior to the Maple Spring, there existed in Montréal important clusters of individuals and groups actively engaged in initiatives against police brutality and misconduct. However, as a result of police abuses of power during the Maple Spring protests, these seem to have significantly expanded, multiplied and come to form robust networks both online and offline. As such, we believe they might provide an interesting example to begin our discussion of one of the forms the Fifth Estate takes in Québec; in this case, an issue public committed to producing and disseminating knowledge in the form of public records through the intertwining of digital and non-digital communication practices.

For many years now, many of these groups have been actively engaged in offline initiatives such as organizing fundraising activities, vigils and street protests. Throughout these events, members of

these groups have come to meet and know one another, and thus recognize that they share similar concerns about exposing and providing facts around what they perceive as the systemic problem of SPVM police officers using excessive force or violating their own code of conduct. This has led them to openly exchange information with one another and build on each other's research. Indeed, many members of these groups spend a great deal of time compiling different forms of evidence to publicly support their claim. Here, we use the example of a simple list of names to illustrate the kind of outcome that can result from their online/offline cooperation.

Several of these groups have collaborated to produce and publish lists identifying people that have been killed by police officers in the past 25 years. One might think that such information would be readily available as a matter of public record, but in fact, were it not for the activists' sustained efforts, such lists would probably never have been drafted. Our lab found different versions of these lists on a number of websites; they all reveal the full name of the deceased, their age at the time of death and the date they were killed. How were these lists produced?

We asked members of two of these organizations – the Coalition contre la Répression et les Abus Policiers (CRAP) and the Collective Opposed to Police Brutality (COPB) – where they had obtained these lists.<sup>16</sup> On January 16, 2014, we interviewed *Steve*, a member of COPB.<sup>17</sup> He explained that such lists have never existed as a matter of public record and have arguably never even been maintained by official authorities:

“It is very difficult to obtain this kind of information from police authorities. In fact, it was a hell of a lot of work because it meant someone had to pay money to make an official request to have access to police reports and then go through them one at a time to identify the cases in which there were deaths that resulted from police brutality or misconduct. It is so daunting that no member of the general public would take on such an enterprise unless they themselves had been a victim and wanted to take action to ensure that their fellow citizens would not be exposed to this risk. This is probably why these lists wouldn't exist if we had not produced them.” (Steve, interview, January 16, 2014).<sup>18</sup>

Another member of the COPB explains, “we do this work to remember those who were killed by SPVM or other police forces because no one deserves to be brutalized, beaten to death, shot or tasered to death without the police being accountable for their actions” (GAPPASquad, 2014a).<sup>19</sup>

In a series of email exchanges we had with him, Alex Popovic, spokesperson for CRAP, explained that it was the COPB that originally took the initiative to research the first list that was drawn, only covering deaths in Québec. The Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition then followed suite by researching and publishing different lists that include most of the “names of people killed by the police across Canada”. A note at the top of this list on their website remarks: “These lists are NOT comprehensive, only what we have collected so far. If you have any more names to add e-mail us at 22oct.mtl@gmail.com”, thus calling upon the public to participate in this collective act of knowledge production through online technology-mediated participation (Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition, 2013).

Popovic himself later engaged in the labor of researching this data by scouring through newspaper archives for missing names, in Québec and later in Canada. Today, he regularly maintains the list by going through a web search in online newspapers with specific keywords: “It's a lot of work but we are able to find new names by using this method” (Alex Popovic, personal email communication, January 29, 2014).<sup>20</sup> By sharing and exchanging this data with other groups such as the COPB and the Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition, CRAP was able to refine the list and ensure that it becomes more accurate over time by validating the data across a variety of primary sources.

Yet, Popovic believes that given the research methods that were used to produce these lists, there are many names still missing: “Unfortunately, not all the names of the deceased have been

listed because we did not find a single public organization that maintains an exhaustive list, not even the coroner's office...I am sure of this because I did obtain their list through an access to information request and when I compared their list to my own, I noticed that theirs had many names missing" (Alex Popovic, personal email communication, January 29, 2014).<sup>21</sup>

Although Popovic could not evaluate how many people and how much time it had taken to make up those lists, suffice to say that this kind of research is labor intensive and time-consuming. The fact that such lists are not kept and made available as a matter of public record calls into question notions of transparency and accountability with regards to deaths imputable to law enforcement interventions.<sup>22</sup> This, in turn, may constitute a threat to public safety: first, because there is no available record of what such statistics might look like to alert the general public or news media that there may be a problem with the SPVM; second, because the absence of this record implies that these deaths are construed as the simple cost of collateral damage; third, because proving in a court of law that one may be a victim of police misconduct is much harder to do if one has no body of evidence that historically grounds this claim in other precedents or jurisprudence. For these reasons, it can be argued that the existence of these lists could serve the public interest.

This issue may be better understood through the comments of one of our interviewees, Serge Lavoie, who, in the heels of the Maple Spring on October 2, 2012, survived a brutal and unwarranted assault by "badge number 728", known in city as the infamous Stéfanie Trudeau:

"[After the incident,] one man said to: 'oh yes, I have heard about your story with the police-woman trying to strangle you, but you know I can't believe it was as bad as you say because after all, you are still alive, so how bad could it have been?' So there is this strange perspective out there that it is just business as usual for people to be victim of police brutality and to die from it. My take on it is that I want my community, and this society to be as well informed as possible about these issues and how things really happened because people need to know that there are mistakes made in the police force and judicial system. It's important because otherwise what happens is that people hear about how someone has been arrested and they automatically assume that this arrest is a legitimate one because they assume that the system never makes mistakes. And this is a very, very dangerous assumption which, without a system of checks and balances, will not only lead to abuses but could legitimate them by creating a blind spot in the public eye." (Serge Lavoie, interview, January 20, 2014).<sup>23</sup>

Himself the son of a retired SPVM officer, it is because Lavoie survived this almost fatal experience with the police that he has since become an activist on this issue, organizing several initiatives, from art-based fundraising events to staging live performances. Indeed, a year after his incident took place, Lavoie used the list of names collaboratively produced by COPB, CRAP and the Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition to conduct a public intervention at the MÉGAPHONE, an interactive public space art installation deployed in Montréal's Quartier des Spectacles. That evening, he and two other victims of police brutality took turns reading poems followed by the list of names of the seventy young men who were killed during police interventions since 1987. As they read, some of these names began to appear in real time on the monumental media façade. This eulogizing ceremony transformed the downtown plaza of the Promenade des artistes into a memorial space, paid homage to the victims and made a public plea for peace by using the architectural-scale media façade as a commemorative monument.

"The SPVM headquarters was just a few blocks away and I knew that they would be able to see the names of the victims displayed on the façade. In fact, had it been possible, it would have been better to have the names projected onto the façade of that building." (Serge Lavoie, interview, January 20, 2014).<sup>24</sup>

Lavoie's vigil was made possible by the joint efforts of COPB, CRAP and the Justice for the Victims of Police Killings Coalition who collected and shared data online and offline to produce a simple list that has become a matter of public record by virtue of DIY self-publishing and self-representation in virtual public space (the groups' websites) and real public space (the giant screen interface of MÉGAPHONE in downtown Montréal).

*The Fifth Estate as networks reporting in digitally-augmented spaces: self-representation*

While the list brings to bear the role of *self-publication* in the emergence of the Fifth Estate, field findings made from first-hand observations of how people used MÉGAPHONE help ground our description of how practices of *self-representation* supported by digital technologies might underscore the emergence of a Fifth Estate. MÉGAPHONE is a monumental interactive installation deployed from September 4 to November 4, 2013 in the *Promenade des artistes*, a busy downtown public space through which about 15% of the Maple Spring street protests passed.<sup>25</sup>

Every evening, our lab took detailed field notes, photographs and videos of each intervention that occurred between 7 pm to 11 pm. Interviews with 5 experts and over 21 participants were later conducted in the three months that followed the deployment. This field data has already informed interpretative studies on how free play with the MÉGAPHONE might offer useful insights on the new forms public, social, civic and embodied interaction could take in public space (Fortin, Hennessy & Sweeney, 2014; Fortin, Neustaedter & Hennessy, 2014).

During the field study, well over a thousand people were observed taking turns to speak at the MÉGAPHONE (see Figure 1). From the plaza and even many blocks away, one could see its monumental media façade project their spoken words converted into written text through a custom-built speech recognition software that could be operated either in French or in English (see Figure 2). The multifaceted art installation was interactive in several ways: First, it amplified the speaker's voice throughout the agora space and beyond. Second, it used speech recognition software to analyze the spoken words, which were then filtered, separated and individually displayed on the large media façades, with changes cycling through as data was processed almost in real time (30-second delay). Third, it projected on the monumental media façade a gamut of emergent visual graphic designs and colors generated from variations in the amplitude of the speaker's voice. Fourth, it used four output interfaces and urban furniture to digitally augment and to spatially define the agora space as an immersive, yet intimate setting. And finally, fifth, even from many streets away, the large media façade provided urbanites with a giant interface displaying words that, on the one hand, indexed the theme of live interventions, and on the other hand, inscribed each speaker's contribution as text on a digital public screen. As one participant told us, "We could see what the conversation was about from afar, and we also saw which language it was taking place in." (Robert Bourque, interview, November 16, 2013).<sup>26</sup>

Although holding a microphone to speak to fellow citizens in the middle of a town square is far from being a novelty, according to our lab's field observations and analytical interpretations, because of its playful use of digital technology, some of the ways in which the MÉGAPHONE's digitally-augmented "Speakers' Corner" was appropriated suggested new possibilities for people to interact with other people through technology in real time and in public space. We believe that such forms of interaction could arguably be construed as new digital practices in the Fifth Estate. Given its design affordances, MÉGAPHONE provided an open and flexible environment for people to come up to the "Speakers' Corner" and respond, add or comment on each other's intervention, while publicizing their presence symbolically and materially by having their spoken words displayed on the large media façade. In fact, this seemed to happen as a matter of course. In particular, the digitally-augmented installation was used by several citizens to make news announcements, offer social commentaries, present alternative views on news events, share their personal insights on a social



problem, engage in public debates with people sitting in the agora space and even stage several first-person news reports in public space.

For instance, the evening of Friday, October 4, 2013 began at 7:30 pm with *Vigilance GMOs* and *Équiterre* holding an hour-long intervention on GMOs and environmental issues hosted by Greenpeace activist, Rehn Thibault. We counted on average 30 people sitting in the agora at any given time; and about six of them who stepped up to share their views at the microphone after Thibault's presentation. At 8:30 pm, about 28 people listened to another presentation, this time on community gardens, hosted by three women representing the *Groupe de travail en agriculture urbaine* (GTAU), an umbrella group that includes several local grassroots organizations working in urban farming and social development.<sup>27</sup> An hour later, this intervention segued into an "open mike session" during which time, we saw three different people talk about the challenging experiences they faced when cycling in the city of Montréal, followed by the *Chorale du peuple*, a local choir made up of activists who write and perform their own lyrics to the tune of famous songs. That evening, the choir performed three songs: one that celebrated the salvaging of food wastes, one about the danger of GMOs and one denouncing the Enbridge pipeline project. Attendance during open mike session ranged from 5 to 55 people from 8:30 pm to 11 pm.

The next evening, on Saturday, October 5, 2013, in front of over 125 people, Greenpeace held an hour long candlelight vigil in solidarity with Alexandre Paul and Paul Ruzycki, two Canadian activists who were detained at sea by Russian authorities on September 19, 2013, facing charges of piracy and possible imprisonment. This was followed at 8:00 pm by the Montreal chapter of the glocal<sup>28</sup> grassroots initiative, "100 in 1 day", which saw several young people give a detailed and personalized account of the artistic interventions they had performed earlier that day in various neighborhoods to "improve our city and foster our communities" in this "festival of doing" intended to encourage civic action (Maurice, 2013). Attendance during that hour varied between 65 and 100 people.

Our lab watched Nemo, a young Inuk man who was not party to this intervention, be so moved by the sense of community he felt in the agora that he spontaneously went up to the "Speakers' Corner" and stood next to each one of the speakers, while he helped hold up the "100 in 1 day" banner. This unexpected gesture seemed to make people uncomfortable at first, but after about five to ten minutes, his presence became part of the event. Nemo attentively listened to every speaker, nodding as they spoke, and when all had spoken, he took the microphone and said, "You are awesome people".<sup>29</sup> The MÉGAPHONE master of ceremony, which our lab interviewed as an expert three months later, remarked that Nemo's gesture and how participants enfolded him, was his most memorable moment at MÉGAPHONE (Louis-René Beaudin, interview, January 15, 2014).

The way in which the "100 in 1 day" community handled Nemo's uninvited presence at the "Speakers' Corner" underscores the social porousness and more informal character of interaction with grassroots movements in comparison to institutionalized structures. The activists had a well-defined tightly-knit group identity and a ceremonial sense of order was manifest in their interventions: each speaker was individually introduced and their intervention well timed; their presentation format was fairly standardized, etc. Had Nemo stepped up this way on a stage that represented an established institution such as an academic environment, a press briefing, a book launch, a museum art-opening or a public inauguration, security guards would probably have ushered him away within two minutes. Because it was co-produced by the *National Film Board of Canada* and the *Quartier des Spectacles Partnership*, in theory, MÉGAPHONE would likely be considered an institutional setting. Yet, our lab observations suggest that the installation's ecosystem functioned much like the Internet: it was an infrastructure that could accommodate networking and digital communication practices in institutional and non-institutional spheres alike (Dutton, 2009, pp. 6-7). This is what leads our lab to propose that a digital urban technology like MÉGAPHONE has the potential to be a game-changer, since, like the Internet, it provides a digital infrastructure for grassroots networking and self-representation.

Over the course of the three-month deployment, several young activists, students and university professors also came to publicly speak on specific topics while making commentaries and answering questions on related issues that were newsworthy current events. Some of these included political participation in the upcoming elections (Michel Venne from the INM on September 5); the relationship between economy and democracy (Ianik Marcil, UQAM professor on September 12); the scarcity of student housing (students from UTILE on September 13); the Charter of Québec Values (Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, student activist on September 18); the Idle No More Québec movement (Melissa Mollen Dupuis, Native activist on September 25); the widening socio-economic gap between Montrealers (the INM on October 3) (see Figure 1); Feminism in contemporary Québec society (Léa Clermont-Dion, feminist on October 9); social integration of youth and women (Cathy Wong, activist on October 17); alternative insights resources for mental health problems sufferers (Céline Cyr, researcher on October 23).

These constitute examples of how the immersive installation space provided citizens with a digitally-augmented stage to express themselves in ways that go beyond the mere act of public speaking. While the loudspeaker units amplified the speakers' voice and the large media façade gave one the possibility of visualizing their ideas, the theatrical responsive stage lighting provided them with a way to self-represent, and thus assert a symbolic presence and stance in public space. Whether they used its "Speakers' Corner" or not, many of the people who participated in MÉGAPHONE enjoyed the experience so much that they came back, sometimes on several occasions. Our lab even noted about two dozen people who regularly attended once to twice a week and came to recognize one another. Ties between these individuals were either created or strengthened through repeated attendance. On the last day of the deployment, many of them came by for half an hour or more to say good-bye to the staff and to other participants. In fact, it was an emotional moment for many. This had our lab wondering whether a longer deployment could have facilitated the formation of new, sustainable networks and communities.

According to Dutton (2009), the networks of the Fifth Estate have two distinctive features which characterize the interplay between its networks of individuals and the other four estates' institutional networks: first, it relies on digital technologies to afford the "enhancement of communication power...within and beyond various institutional arenas" (p. 3); and second, its action works towards the grassroots, bottom-up "creation of networks of individuals which have a public, social benefit" and are often described as "communities" (Ibid.). Because this definition corresponds to what our lab observed during MÉGAPHONE interventions, we suggest that this digital installation might be construed as a technology constitutive of the Fifth Estate. However, just as the Internet can be said to help shape the digital practices of networks of all five estates, whether they are institutionalized or not, so too can MÉGAPHONE be used by all them to give or receive information, occupy civic space, reach new publics and strategically affect outcomes.

Indeed, during the ten-week deployment of MÉGAPHONE, *Le Devoir*, which, under Dutton's (2009) definition would fall under the fourth estate -- reserved a total of five one-hour interventions on Wednesday evenings from the fifth to the ninth week of deployment inclusively. Those evenings saw the daily's journalists use the "Speakers' Corner" to present editorial comments on a wide range of topics, which included climatic change, local arts and culture, the new economic and political paradigms, urban planning for human scale, the historical roots of political corruption in the city and public order policing during activist protests. The associate news editor of this local independent daily explains their rationale:

"These interventions were organized as part of our mandate which requires us to be actively present not only in the public sphere, but also in the city as a social space. Of necessity, we are often involved in events such as conferences and debates. We saw the MÉGAPHONE as a new kind of opportunity to support public speaking and public debate in real space rather than

just online as public interaction increasingly takes place now.” (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014).<sup>30</sup>

This more “institutional” use of MÉGAPHONE by a mainstream press newspaper may seem inconsistent with the conceptual intention behind the installation since it was primarily designed to be an interactive digital “Speaker’s Corner”, a platform in the city where anyone could freely express their views and listen to their fellow citizens. Indeed, the artist who imagined the installation drew inspiration from Hyde Park’s traditional soapbox “Speakers’ Corner” in London. However, he admits that he also intended to create an artifact that supported freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in response to the civil rights *débâcle* that occurred during the Maple Spring: his objective was to make sure that “the conversation continues” (Étienne Paquette, personal communication, February 11, 2014).

Well aware of this symbolic connection and Paquette’s design intention, *Le Devoir*, who had abundantly published articles that raised questions on the State’s political, judicial and law enforcement interventions during the Maple Spring, participated to show their support of this idea. In fact, it was in this spirit that they programmed their five thematic presentations:

“Public speaking in Québec has its history but this culture has been lost today: in the nineteenth century, there were public assemblies, deliberative assemblies, working-class assemblies, which included republican factions too. This culture was stifled probably because it does not serve the interest of those who set the agenda of public speaking. Having people stand on street corners publicly discussing all kinds of subjects must have been perceived as a threat to the common good by those who claim to defend and uphold social order.” (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014).<sup>31</sup>

The abundant use of red over white in the design of MÉGAPHONE was intended to reference the “red square” motif emblematic of the Maple Spring, while the megaphone artifact and logo themselves allude to its popularity as a voice amplifying device used in large-scale public gatherings. It is also noteworthy that the use of a megaphone can be declared illegal in public space by virtue of article 9 of the City of Montréal B-3 by-law, which prohibits noise produced by sound equipment that can be heard from outside *if it is judged a nuisance* (City Of Montréal, 1994). The jurisprudence shows there have been some court cases in which the SPVM has applied the by-law to bring charges to protesters using a megaphone during a street protest.<sup>32</sup>

During the Maple Spring, a different law enforcement strategy was even used during a peaceful student demonstration involving the use of a megaphone, which started in front of the building that houses the *Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et des Sports* and ended in front of the *Chambre de Commerce* in Sherbrooke, Québec, on April 17, 2013. When Nicolas Barbeau, a student at the Université de Sherbrooke, was asked by fellow students to say a few words and used a megaphone to call out, “the street is ours,”<sup>33</sup> he was immediately singled out by the police force as the organizing figure of this demonstration and profiled; Barbeau was the only student arrested that day. He was charged for refusing to step aside when police officers started to enter the *Chambre de Commerce* building. The legal accusation was that he obstructed “traffic lanes”, an offense for which he received by post, a few months later, a \$3,765 fine imposed by virtue of article 512.0.1 of the Québec Highway Safety Code (Les Alters Citoyens, 2014). His is one of many stories that underscore the fraught relationship between the megaphone and the judicialization of student demonstrations. Accordingly, the designers’ choice of the bright red megaphone as the centerpiece of the installation symbolically associates it to social protests, the reclaiming of public space, grassroots movements, freedom of assembly and freedom of speech.

The iconic quality of the megaphone as such a symbol is crystallized and perpetuated by the countless images that have been published and posted of people using the MÉGAPHONE’s “Speakers’

Corner” under the bright red cone (see Figure 3). Indeed, many of the speaker’s had made plans to have friends or colleagues photograph or videorecord their intervention at the “Speakers’ Corner” or the large media façade that displayed their spoken words in monumental fonts. Our lab asked many participants how they used these recordings. The most frequent answers were that they were either sent as email attachments to friends or family, or else posted on an individual or a group’s blog or FACEBOOK™ page.

For instance, the *Syndicat des charges et chargés de cours de l’UQAM* (SCCUQ) – the university’s union for sessional lecturer’s – hijacked the open mike session at MÉGAPHONE on Friday, November 1, 2013 from 7:30 pm. On October 22, 2013, they announced their initiative on their FACEBOOK™ page under a short post titled “the SCCUQ occupies public space”<sup>34</sup> The seven-paragraph copy of this post ends with “Come join us in speaking into the MÉGAPHONE and run the chance of having your uttering of the words “precarity”; “quality”; “pride”; “teaching”; and “contempt” be displayed on the frontal façade of the UQAM President-Kennedy building”.<sup>35</sup>

Our lab observed their intervention on the cold night of November 1, 2013. Eight professors took turns speaking into the microphone and photographing each other and the large media façade which they filled up with words such as “salary”; “equal”; “precarity”; “course”; “sessional”; “competence”; recognition”; and “why”. What was surprising about their particular intervention in comparison to the others we had observed was that they were more concerned with recording the images of themselves and of the façade, than they were with the live intervention (see Figure 4). Although, many groups did publish the audio-visual documentation of their intervention on social media or the Internet, the SCCUQ never did. But the fact that they passionately engaged in creating these images was of great interest to our lab because it speaks to the idea that occupying the public space around MÉGAPHONE was partly an exercise in self-representation.

This is perhaps made more obvious by a series of interventions that took place on the evening of October 30, 2013. That evening, instead of having their own reporters editorialize on the subject of police brutality and state repression during the Maple Spring, *Le Devoir* organized a one-hour session at 7:00 pm with the assistance of the activist-turned-mascot, Anarchopanda, to have people use the “Speakers’ Corner” to give live, public personal accounts of their own experiences. Because he is a key figure in the grassroots movement that is engaged in denouncing and contesting abuses of power and prosecutorial misconduct that took place during the student protests, Anarchopanda was asked to recruit Maple Spring activists that had been discriminated against and falsely accused.

These live, authentic first-hand testimonies at MÉGAPHONE were intended to make public the glaring injustices perpetrated upon citizens such as Cécile Riel and David Sanchagrin, as a counterpoint to the fact that their stories had either been blatantly overlooked or else grossly misframed by the mainstream press (Anarchopanda, interview, January 9, 2014). Given that there were only about fifty people present in the agora during these interventions; one can wonder if these efforts could help any of the participants attain the desired goal. However, it was not the interventions alone that had an impact in legitimizing their stories; it was the way the coverage of the event was later channeled in different media. This was made possible by two primary news sources: first, by *Le Devoir* who published a detailed 1000-word article on the interventions the next day, online and on the broadsheet’s cover page (Rettino-Parazelli, 2013); and second, by a local citizen journalism collective called *99% Media* who filmed the intervention live

Two of the most common digital practices in citizen journalism are first, the reposting and thus recontextualization of existing news media items, and second, the live-streaming of news online, both defining tactics of the Fifth Estate. The online version of the article published by *Le Devoir* on October 31, 2013 was reposted as a link by several community networks and activists on their TWITTER™, FACEBOOK™, blogs, websites or news feeds. In Québec, *Le Devoir* is considered a highly respectable French-language newspaper and it is one of the only Canadian dailies that have survived the tsunami of media convergence. It offers well-informed critical editorials as well as independent, balance coverage of current news events. It also regularly publishes several contributions

by university professors and intellectuals. For this reason, when an article is published in this newspaper, few readers question its veracity and authority. This is critical because one of the main problems faced by citizen journalists in the Fifth Estate is that of credibility (Dutton, 2009, p. 9). Well-informed citizens tend to be suspicious of a news item published in Fifth Estate channels when it offers a version that outright contradicts that of the mainstream press.

Based on his followers' "likes" and "comments", Anarchopanda remarked that the unofficial comments he had posted on TWITTER™ and FACEBOOK™ about Cécile Riel and David Sanschagrín's story garnered limited attention and comments. However, his republishing of *Le Devoir's* article on the same social media sites created a greater buzz around their testimonials and gave them a new legitimacy, which he believes was a result of *Le Devoir's* journalistic authority: "people tend to believe the version published in 'official' news sources" (Anarchopanda, interview, January 9, 2014).<sup>36</sup>

In addition, the original post of the article included a photo of Riel and Sanschagrín standing in front of Anarchopanda and the MÉGAPHONE installation (Tremblay, 2013). This image gives the two speakers a human face and shows them as mature-aged citizens that look more like next of kins than political agitators. Indeed, Riel is 56 years-old and goes under the name @FrogsAreLovely on TWITTER™, while Sanschagrín is a Master's student in political science and regular columnist for *Union Libre*, the UQAM student newspaper. A mere look at them on *Le Devoir's* photograph makes one wonder how they can ever be charged with anything but jaywalking. With this photo, *Le Devoir's* article did not only bring legitimacy to their stories, it humanized both victims and reminded readers that this could happen to them. But it is its reposting on social media by citizen journalists that gave it further traction to receive attention from a wider critical mass of readers.

*Le Devoir's* offices are located a street corner way from MÉGAPHONE at a distance of about fifty meters. For this reason, after the deployment, our lab insisted on obtaining an interview with its associate news editor, who had overseen, and participated in, the daily's five thematic evenings. Asked if he thought this digitally-augmented "Speaker's Corner" could offer a new means to produce news in public space, he expressed a great deal of skepticism:

"The problem I see is that it has been sold as a space for citizens to engage in public speaking. But I think this is a mystification because what we saw at MÉGAPHONE was what we see everywhere else: an illusion that there is a public space in which everyone's voice can be heard when in fact it's always the same people who speak publicly on behalf of others. Furthermore, they all belong to the same social class, come from the same background, have the same education, and share the same values...in fact, they all know each other and greet each other with a kiss...and I am the first to admit that I am part of this...because those who work in newsrooms here or around the world, also studied the same subjects, are of the same generation, have the same profile, hang out in the same places, like the same music, and what's more, breed amongst themselves and create dynasties...we see this with many members of the press that come from the same family, but generations apart...so in fact, what is really going is that a whole class has taken it upon themselves to stage its own self-representation in the public realm, and this includes the news." (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014)<sup>37</sup>

Nadeau's comment echoes the findings of prior empirical research, which traces the contour of this phenomenon from a political economic perspective and argues that now that the press's labor force has been bought into the middle-class, it is more biased in defending its values since they now also represent its own interests (Accardo, 2007). More broadly, McKercher and Mosco (2007) have published several studies that show the increasing job precarity of knowledge workers and exposes the myth of the Information Society, which in reality works towards thwarting knowledge, creativity and critical thinking, especially in media industries.

Nadeau explained that not all of *Le Devoir's* journalists were comfortable with presenting at the MÉGAPHONE because public speaking involved “playing the game of self-representation in front of a crowd” and while some journalists enjoy this, others prefer the less glamorous, more private space of the broadsheet: “The framing of news in itself is a sort of *mise-en-scène*, so the public stage of the MÉGAPHONE added yet another level of *mise-en-scène*”. (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014).<sup>38</sup> Our field observations corroborate Nadeau’s analysis: news was often *performed* at the MÉGAPHONE and when it was not, audience members tended to leave.

A “news performance” did not need to be theatrical or flamboyant to have an impact. It needed to seem authentic, be conveyed in a personal and subjective way and respect the most basic conventions of the art of public speaking. To illustrate this, we recall a middle-aged woman who came up to the “Speaker’s Corner” in a mobility scooter in the beginning of an “open mike” session that followed a programmed speaker. She simply gave a short personal account of how she had given up her son for adoption 25 years ago and then, in the year that followed, fought to get him back and raise him herself. She ended her narrative by saying that her son had recently thanked her for having done this. This moving story could have been a small news report broadcast as a television nightly news segment, but instead, the MÉGAPHONE allowed her to choose where, when and with whom she could share this private aspect of her life, without any of it being framed or edited out. As she spoke, her voice could be heard across the plaza while many of her words were displayed on the large media façade, which was thus transformed into a monumental wall that bore witness to her story, perhaps the Western modernized version of a *dazibao*.

This, and many of our other field observations which suggest that a public space installation such as MÉGAPHONE has the potential to uphold a robust citizen press in the Fifth Estate, have us disagreeing with Nadeau, who was not present every evening of the deployment; he attended only a few of *Le Devoir's* programmed presentations and some interventions involving famous local figures that attracted large crowds. Our lab’s field observation confirm that indeed those celebrity speakers tended to attract over 150 people and enjoyed generous coverage of their intervention by different mainstream media news outlets, while speakers who were ordinary citizens from all walks of life generally had an audience of under 50 people and no media coverage by the mainstream press. It is true that certain high-impact events provided ample empirical evidence that, even in an open public space, not all public speakers are given equal attention and legitimacy. Class, gender and race appear to often still work as social filters through which public discourse is stratified and segregated, or even worse, simply dismissed.

The most blatant example of this was on the night when the mayoral candidates each presented their political platform at MÉGAPHONE. Every local news organization had sent reporters and camera crews to cover the three-hour event which had been officially organized by the French-language public television network, Radio-Canada. Between 250 and 300 people attended the first-hour during which the major candidates made their presentations. The high-profile candidates were scheduled to speak in the first hour. When they left, so did the camera crews and most of the audience. During the second hour, the independent Marxist candidate, Joseph Young; the independent “visible minority” candidate, Kofi Sonokpon; and the other four independent candidates who did not fit the respectable white middle-class profile of Montreal’s elected politicians, each presented in front of an audience of under fifty people and not a single television camera. Furthermore, many people left during that hour. By the time question period came around in the third hour, there were about twenty-five audience members left at the most. Ironically, of those who heard all the candidates, many said that Sonokpon seemed like the one who had the most grounded, rational and realistic platform and came across as the most honest. This strange lack of interest in listening and covering the independent candidates made us recall a lyric from the eighties Al Stewart song titled *The Candidate*: “Where are all the voters and where are the voters’ wives? They have all gone to the movies, trying to understand their lives.”

In spite of this, our lab's interpretation of the field data suggests that it is precisely *because the installation affords self-representation in both physical and discursive space* that it can provide citizens with a means to produce news: live in real public space, then asynchronously in virtual space as an archival media document of a staged first-person reporting. Like the woman who came up to the microphone to tell her story without having segments of it framed or edited, and without having to be pre-selected as a newsworthy citizen, during "open mike" sessions, anyone can just walk up to MÉGAPHONE and state what they want to. Their voice is amplified throughout the installation space and some of their words appear on the giant screen interface that can be seen from many blocks away. It is this agency in being able to instantly appropriate public space that highlights the importance of a third digital practice in the Fifth Estate: that of independently producing and manipulating one's own audio-visual documentation with the aid of technology.

*The Fifth Estate as networks gathering audio-visual evidence: self-documentation*

According to Nadeau, some of the best news coverage of the Maple Spring events had been produced by Concordia University Television (CUTV) who live-streamed the protests from the vantage point of a single camera on the streets, while other CUTV camerapersons collected additional footage for the montage of documentary material (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014). As is mentioned earlier in this article, other student-run university media news channel used similar methods to cover the event, in particular, *UniversiTV*.

In the aftermath of the Maple Spring, many of these long-existing community media collectives faced a number of "internal" problems that has since forced some to dismantle, or else undergo an internal review. For instance, *UniversiTV* shut down its operations in 2013, while CUTV's "station activities halted" in the fall of 2013 because there were talks of CUTV's content being redirected for broadcast to *MyTV*, a new English-language community television station proposed by cable provider Vidéotron during its CRTC licence renewal (Harris, 2013). Indeed, the disappearance and possible convergence of this alternative press would have constituted an interesting area of research that, if investigated, could provide further insights on the relationship between the Fourth and the Fifth Estate in Québec.

However, for the sake of this article, suffice to say that the Maple Spring provided an effervescent social context for this student press to flourish and develop into rhizomes that bypassed major news sources. Nadeau was not the only one to acknowledge that it provided an alternative coverage of the social movement that had no equivalent in the mainstream press; we recall many scholars making this claim during the *Differential Mobilities* conference held at Concordia University in Montréal from May 8-11, 2013, while Université du Québec à Montréal professors such as Francis Dupuis-Déri and Marc-André Cyr have been quite vocal in the press about how coverage of the student protests has been discriminatory. It is noteworthy however, that the labor force in each of these grassroots media collectives often consisted of a mix of university students and Montreal residents who joined in on a volunteer basis to learn and engage actively in civic life; CUTV offers workshops to train its membership which many citizens outside the academic community participate in.

CUTV was not the only news channel to live-stream audio-visual coverage of the Maple Spring protests. Thirty-seven years-old, Simon Lussier from 99%MÉDIA offered a second live-streamed news channel on YOUTUBE™ in 2013. 99%MÉDIA started up as OM99%MÉDIA (i.e. Occupons Montréal 99% Média), an alternative media collective that was then but a fledgling, unstructured network of seven citizen journalists who met during the Occupy Montréal movement in 2011:

"At a certain point, we dropped the "OM" because people thought that we actually were the Occupy Montréal movement, when in fact, we emerged from it as a media collective covering its activities. When we did this, it gave us additional credibility." (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2014).<sup>39</sup>

Lussier says that his involvement in the Occupy Montréal movement was the turning point that turned him into a full-fledged activist and citizen journalist. He remarks that he had always been aware of social injustices since his teen years, but when he participated in the Occupy Montréal sit-ins in the fall of 2011, for the first-time in his life, he met people who chose to act:

“The idea behind Occupy Montréal was ‘don’t try to fight back alone, organize, organize, organize...it’s useless to fight the system alone, but if you organize collective action, change is possible’. Everyone was in agreement: the system is broken, the economy is falling apart, the environment is destroyed...so, what do we do?” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2014)<sup>40</sup>

Lussier adds that although the Occupy Montréal movement was very short-lived, its legacy is still manifest today. The online and offline networking that took place during Occupy Montréal allowed a great number of different community groups to meet each other for the first time and initiate relationships to constitute networks that still exist today. According to Lussier, “Occupy was a networking fest for grassroots movements and for those of us individuals who were fighting alone” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2014).<sup>41</sup> Concretely, what this means is that a community food initiative such as *La Cuisine du Peuple* formed on the heels of the 2011 Occupy Montréal movement, was already a node in a network of pre-existing associations such as *Coop Sur Génereux* and *Food not Bombs* the day it started up. Planting a seed in a lush garden may give these groups significant strength.

Similarly, the Occupy Montréal movement provided the fertile soil for a growing number of new alternative press organs to join the ranks of *CUTV*, *UniversiTV* and non-university initiatives such as *Les Alter Citoyens*<sup>42</sup> and the *Coop média de Montréal*<sup>43</sup>. Some of the new kids on the block, like *GAP-PASquad*, a self-declared “monitoring tactic concentrating on media” took root during the Maple Spring, while others, such as *Roches, Papier, Allumettes*, a Montréal-based anarchist newspaper available online or in paper form, appeared in the year or so that followed. Our preliminary analysis of field data strongly suggests that the Maple Spring acted as a catalyst and fertilizing force for this alternative press to grow and establish a firm foothold by solidifying their networks. Again, these phenomena would constitute a good avenue for empirical research.

For the sake of this article, our lab interviewed Simon Lussier to find out, alongside *CUTV*, how he became one of the seven members of 99%MÉDIA, which expanded its operations and viewership during the Maple Spring. Lussier’s first experience at the MÉGAPHONE was on the night of October 30, 2013, when he showed up with his equipment to film Riel, Sanschagrin and Anarchopanda’s intervention at the MÉGAPHONE, footage he has since posted on his YOUTUBE™ channel ([Lussier, 2013](#)). Lussier also filmed an impromptu intervention by a member of COPB on November 4, 2013 ([Lussier, 2014](#)).

Lussier started out as a citizen journalist cameraman covering the Maple Spring protests by live-streaming his video captures on the 99%MÉDIA website. Because he had worn the ubiquitous Guys Fawkes mask during his Occupy days and wanted to protect his identity, his FACEBOOK™ and TWITTER™ sites only showed a photo of him wearing the mask. It was in December 2013, that he first posted a photo of himself and took the pseudonym Cyborg\_Simon. He explains what he refers to as his “coming out” in these terms:

“I wanted people to see what I shot, but not who I was. What was important to me was having an impact through the footage and not buying into the idea of the figure of the journalist as being part of news. When I decided to do my “coming out”, I noticed that it changed two things: the first is that viewers are interacting with me more on social media since then; and the second is that now people, including established journalists, are retweeting my news post,



something no one did when my identity was anonymous” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2013).<sup>44</sup>

Lussier wonders whether this means that people are more interested in celebrity news figures than in the news itself. He is intrigued by the fact that he is now being followed by mainstream press journalists and institutions, and wonders if revealing his identity has given him authority.

This is illustrated by a story he shared. In early January, Hydro-Québec held a public relations campaign on TWITTER™ and in the mass media asking citizens to lower their electricity consumption. The next day, Lussier noticed that the exterior of the Complexe-Desjardins tower, the building adjacent to the Hydro-Québec’s headquarters, was brightly glowing with green-colored architectural lighting after dusk. As Cyborg\_Simon, he sent Hydro-Québec the following tweet on January 2, 2014: “@hydroquebec...your neighbor, the Complexe Desjardins, is well lit...businesses and institutions should lower their consumption before citizens do #froidextreme”.<sup>45</sup> Three hours later, the tower’s architectural lighting was shut off and the building went dark. Lussier believes that this may have been the effect of his tweet, “I am speculating that they must have checked my TWITTER™ profile and realized that I was a citizen journalist who had a wide enough following to be perceived as a legitimate source”.<sup>46</sup>

Much to Lussier’s surprise, Hydro-Québec’s main TWITTER™ account and its public relations office’s TWITTER™ account have been following him since. (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2013). In fact, one of the advantages that a citizen journalist like Lussier enjoys is that he has access to sources and publics that are completely closed off to members of the mainstream press. Lussier has been actively engaged in grassroots community initiatives for many years now. People trust him and know that he will not distort the facts and stories that they send him.

He currently has over 1400 on TWITTER™ and over 1200 followers on FACEBOOK™. This may not seem like a very large audience, but his viewership can at times be higher since followers who monitor his live-stream news feed will alert their friends through social media when Lussier is capturing newsworthy footage. This implies that there can be “down time” while he is filming with about 40 people half-watching and then suddenly the viewership can exponentially go up.

According to Lussier, the most viewers he has had is about 1800 people. He knows this because while he is broadcasting live, he uses an application that allows him to see the number of viewers who have his channel open. This application also allows him to ask viewers a yes/no question while he is filming. Lussier uses it to ask his viewers what coverage they want him to prioritize when there are several newsworthy events or location: “[For instance, I can ask those who are following me] if there are two streets protests happening at the same time., should I continue filming the protest against Monsanto or should I go and cover the one against Stephen Harper’s policies?” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2013).<sup>47</sup>

He also chats live with his viewers. This can be useful in assessing or confirming important facts:

“One of the affordance I like the most about new media is that it allows us to interact live...someone watching my live-stream can ask me while I am filming, ‘How many people are protesting?’... So, people don’t have to wait until there is a press conference or press briefing held during a news event., they can get the feedback from me as it is happening.” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2013).<sup>48</sup>

Because he is in the middle of the event, Lussier can immediately reply. This may seem trivial, but according to many Maple Spring protesters we interviewed, one of the most common fallacies that were newscast by the mainstream press during the protests was how big the demonstrations were. Interviewees recall being part of demonstrations that had hundreds of thousands of protesters, and later reading or hearing in the news reports that there were only a few thousand, sometimes barely a few hundred. This infuriated many supporters of the social movement. But perhaps more im-

portantly, it illustrates the importance of self-documentation in citizen journalism within the Fifth Estate. If the mainstream media is misrepresenting how many people support a street protest, then how else can the truth be revealed but by creating evidence?

Our field observations showed that this problem has taken on alarming proportions in Montréal since 2012. The escalating tension between the SPVM and those who have been denouncing police brutality and repression in the city has led to some bizarre exercises in public relations and suppression of freedom of the press on the part of the police force. For instance, every year the COPB organizes a peaceful march through the streets of Montréal to protest against police brutality. This year, it was scheduled for March 15, 2014. On March 13, 2014, the SPVM called a press conference for all the members of mainstream media – without extending an invitation to any of the alternative press. William Ray, an uninvited CUTV journalist unexpectedly showed up. He later reported on social media that the SPVM had put on a screening for the benefit of the mainstream press of their own contrived montage convincingly showing that the COPB's annual march against police brutality was so dangerous that even the mainstream press would have to be kept away this year (GAPPASquad, 2014b). The police showed members of the press a video they claimed had been filmed on March 15, 2013, during the previous year's COPB march. Ray was able to identify the scenes from a clash that occurred during the Maple Spring protest, which had nothing to do with COPB marches. Did the mainstream press realize that the SPVM was misinforming them by manipulating the video montage? How did they receive this “friendly” warning issued by the SPVM that their freedom of the press would be stifled two-days before an event took place? Even in wartime – when the state has been known to fabricate propaganda to manipulate public opinion – freedom of the press is not typically suppressed.

In the first twenty minutes of the 2014 march, the SPVM arrested 288 people by kettling which had the effect of quickly dispersing other protesters (Christoff, 2014). Thus, the 2014 demonstration against police brutality and the increasing militarization of the state was stillborn. However, the alternative press disregarded the prohibition on filming issued two-days and self-documented the arrests. Lussier was there to film that day and he live-streamed what he saw.

Lussier uses a Canon 60D DSLR and a SamSung QF-30 live-streaming camera to cover events, while his wife, who stays home to take care of their four children, makes sure the live-stream is running and that she records live captures when her husband seems to be in trouble. Lussier says that she became interested in what he was doing about a year after he started. Now, they work as a team and he depends on her to run operations at home and to call for help if he is in trouble – for instance, if police officers are trying to seize his camera. Asked what would help him work better, he said, “I could use a studio, a car or a mobile unit, a laptop, better power sources, a new camera, a new lens, and a new microphone...I bought my camera on credit and I don't know how I'll ever pay it back” (Simon Lussier, interview, January 14, 2013).<sup>49</sup>

Lussier describes himself as a “working-class guy with no formal education”<sup>50</sup>. His approach to citizen journalism is completely unpretentious. He admits that he does not have any formal training, that he is self-thought, that he constantly improvises and that he is learning on the job. For instance, he has refined his filming techniques over time: he has learned to frame differently when he is capturing images for live webcasting (wider shots at a greater distance to protect people's identity in order to make sure that they cannot be identified and thus profiled or closely surveilled), than when he films material for the purpose of documentary montage (he moves in closer, focusing on his subject). Lussier is not the only citizen journalist to fit this profile.

Works on the history of journalism often describe nineteenth century reporters as men with little formal education who belonged to the working-class (Campbell, 2006; Schudson, 1978). Campbell, for instance, writes that most news reporters of that era were men who had little or no education, were obliged to accept unfavorable pay structures and never enjoyed any job security; they were known as “pencil-pushers” (pp. 122-124). As a History scholar, journalist Jean-François Nadeau corroborated this in relation to the history of journalism in Québec during our interview:

“[In the nineteenth century, those who became reporters] often had nowhere else to go for work. It was the newspapers that signed the articles, not the reporters, which made them more easily interchangeable. They were generally not very educated. The only labor force that had some education in journalism during that era were typographers, and indeed, they were the first to join forces and form trade unions” (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014).<sup>51</sup>

Although Campbell (2006) identifies 1997 as the year that marked the turn point when the status of journalism went from that of trade to profession, the development of the modern newsroom occurred at a distinct pace and under considerably different circumstances in Britain, France, Germany, the United States, and Canada (Ward, 2004, p. 182). For this reason, there is a great deal of variation in how journalism historians chart this evolution. Generally speaking, the scholarship identifies the last one or two decades of the nineteenth century as one of the critical phases in the development of the market-based press, when it underwent what Lippman called a “commercial revolution” (Schudson, 1978, p. 17). Chalaby (1998) makes a distinction between the public (pre-journalistic) phase and the journalistic phase separated by what he refers to as the “rupture” that occurred in this period (p. 3). In the pre-journalistic phase, newspapers were the mouthpiece of a partisan press, subsidized by political parties and funded with subscriptions. Driven by liberalism and its imperatives of market forces, over the second half of the nineteenth century, newspapers were industrialized into businesses. With this came the professionalization of journalism and its absorption into the middle-class:

“At the turn of the century there was as much emphasis in leading papers on telling a good story as getting the facts...reporters sought as often to write ‘literature’ as to gather news...in the 1890s, changes in the ideals of journalism did not translate into occupational norms so much as make newspaper ideals and practices consonant with the culture of dominant social classes.” (Schudson, 1978, p. 5)

Our field findings suggest that citizen journalism within the Fifth Estate can be construed as a response to the class-bias that have become the staple of journalism practices in the Fourth Estate. It is noteworthy that the desire to oppose these practices do not only come from individuals like Lusier, student media groups such as CUTV or rogue grassroots media collectives such as GAP-PAsquad. Of late, there have been large-scale initiatives to create new models of journalism which are organized to operate from the ground up, as we see, for instance, with *First Look Media*, funded by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar (Cardew, 2013). At the time of writing, McGill University had just scheduled journalist, constitutional lawyer, commentator, and bestselling author, Glenn Greenwald, to speak of his involvement in the development of the *First Look Media* organization in the 2014 Beaverbrook Annual Lecture to be held at McGill on Thursday, October 23, 2014. This suggests that academic institutions are particularly sensitive to the urgency of rethinking investigative journalism today. Questions raised by this new model are: Can such organizations reform the Fourth Estate or will they help to consolidate and possibly organize and legitimate the Fifth Estate? Or are they Fourth Estate institutions posing as Fifth Estate ones?

Currently, one of the biggest problems faced by the Fifth Estate – as seen from the critique of its own networks of individuals – is that it preaches to the converted, that is, fragmented audiences of activists and intellectuals which exist in small ‘echo chambers’. This, in fact, has been one of the principal critiques made of the Fifth Estate (Dutton, 2009, p. 9). Most of our interviewees deplored this because it defuses the possibility of engaging in real public debate. For instance, regular attendees of MÉGAPHONE told us that they felt that when left-leaning speakers presented on political issues, only similar perspectives were heard in response during those sessions; they deplored not being able to hear what the right had to say on the same issues. Another salient question is, are the voices of the Fifth Estate confined within certain classes? What this would imply is that the Fourth Estate and the Fifth Estate mostly talk past each other or are stone deaf to one another. Were they

to take the gloves off by engaging each other in public debate, would we see a new form of journalism emerging, of the kind that Greenwald and Omidyar may be envisioning with *First Look Media*?

The relationship between the Fourth Estate and the Fifth Estate is what underpins our current research agenda which has us conducting field work to look into addressing that issue by asking, on the one hand, how are the Fourth and Fifth Estate dependent on one another, and on the other hand, what devices, applications and infrastructures are needed to help create better connections between the them (Garbett, Comber, Egglestone, Glancy and Olivier, 2014). It may be that they need to remain entirely independent of one another, but should this exclude the possibility of establishing new dialogical models for them both? For instance, as we have seen, some major news sources follow the alternative press's social media newsfeed because they are looking for news topics and agendas. They may also sometimes call upon citizen journalists as "insider" sources. Conversely, citizen journalists benefit from having one of their news item disseminated in a mainstream news channel. Thus, we believe that defining the relationship between the Fourth and the Fifth Estate constitutes an important avenue for future research in journalism.

## Conclusion

This article has set out to show that online and offline networks of student and young activists have formed and grown in Québec since the Maple Spring. We have argued that some of their digital practices of self-publication, self-representation and self-documentation may have catalyzed their structuration in the form of a Fifth Estate.

The past decade has seen a number of studies reflect on young Canadian's low levels of civic and political participation, arguing that they have disenfranchised themselves from the traditional political process by showing low voting turnout (Baril, 2012; Barnes and Virgint, 2013; Ménard, 2010; Turcotte, 2005, 2007). Based on our field findings, this paper argues that the Millennials in Québec are not only actively participating in the political process, but they are actively reshaping it through digital practices. As an instance of massive student uprisings by Québec youth, the Maple Spring and its legacy in Québec's fledgling Fifth Estate is evidence that the Millennials have "re-enfranchised" civic life and politics on their own terms. They may reject the political institution, structures and procedures that previous generations have put in place, but the flourishing of grass-roots community initiatives and an increasingly robust alternative press provides hard evidence that this generation is far more politically engaged than they have been given credit for.

On March 17, 2014, Michael Short, editor of *Zone*, opened the first public lecture of the "Future Melbourne Network" titled "A better future for Melbourne: What's your vision?" with the comment, "Leadership comes from the bottom-up, not from the top-down...innovation, leadership and change is driven by the community". Given that the Millennials and the community networks they have spawned are likely the major force building this future, how is one to understand their engagement in the Fifth Estate? And perhaps more importantly, how can the Fifth Estate be preserved and sustained as a space for innovation, critical thinking and change?

## Acknowledgements

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Translated from French: “*Que les chaînes privées fassent du spectacle...voilà, on ne peut rien attendre d’autre., mais lorsque les chaînes publiques considèrent que le seul moyen de rendre compte d’un débat public, d’enjeux de société...c’est d’opposer des gens qui ne peuvent pas se parler parce que la manière même de concevoir le débat fait en sorte qu’ils ne sont que deux protagonistes, alors il ne peut rien y avoir, il n’y aura rien à en tirer...alors on se retrouvera dans la situation où ce n’est qu’un spectacle...donc pour moi, la couverture médiatique...un des visages de ce que je pourrais appeler sa brutalité, c’est-à-dire les textes publiés de certains commentateurs ou certains chroniqueurs (on pense toujours aux mêmes)...mais pour moi, le vrai problème n’est pas dans le comportement de ces individus...il n’y aurait pas eu Richard Martineau, on l’aurait inventé...à la rigueur, Richard Martineau a sa part de responsabilité, Pratt a sa part de responsabilité, bon nombre ont leur part de responsabilité, mais pour moi c’est relativement secondaire., ce ne sont que des acteurs d’un processus et d’une conception de ce que c’est que la discussion publique qui s’est complètement dégradée..., et ça aussi ça fait partie de ce que j’appellerai la ‘dérive’ des institutions.*” (Christian Nadeau, interview, *Dérives* [~48min46sec])

<sup>2</sup> Below are links to some of the articles that have drawn from such interviews with Dr. Vincent Mosco:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2011/11/16/occupy-movement-vincent-mosco\\_n\\_1098283.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2011/11/16/occupy-movement-vincent-mosco_n_1098283.html)

<http://www.cbc.ca/m/touch/business/story/1.1397642>

<http://www.thewhig.com/2012/05/24/quebec-protests-could-spread-expert>

[http://www.thestar.com/business/2011/11/18/olive\\_the\\_occupy\\_movement\\_isnt\\_going\\_away\\_its\\_going\\_online.html](http://www.thestar.com/business/2011/11/18/olive_the_occupy_movement_isnt_going_away_its_going_online.html)

<sup>3</sup> Dupuis-Déri (2012) is but one example of such a collective petition, in this case from a group of university professors and sessional lecturers.

<sup>4</sup> According to (Giroux and Charlton, 2014) – a “scientific study” conducted on the media bias during the Maple Spring – *Le Devoir* gave less coverage to events that had violent aspects than other mainstream dailies, and focused more on core issues directly related to the student strike and open for public debate. However, we found this study questionable. First, it uses quantitative content analysis which looks at how much space coverage took by subjectively and systematically coding the qualitative character of the coverage. Second, the coding technique of this study itself seems unreliable. Third, although it was conducted in a Université Laval “research center”, the report was sponsored by the Quebec Ministry of Culture and Communication (*Le Centre d’études sur les médias bénéficie du soutien financier du ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec*), rather than by a research funding agency. In fact, *Le Devoir* has consistently offered editorials and opened up its pages for editorial contributions from the public on the issue of police brutality during and since the Maple Spring. Yet, (Handfield, 2014), an article in the daily *La Presse* published the findings of Giroux and Charlton’s (2014) study almost verbatim without offering any critical commentary or contextualization, thereby reproducing its bias in the reading publics of the mainstream press. When reading her article, one wonders in what way it constitutes journalism.

<sup>5</sup> One blatant example of a montage exposing and deconstructing a false news report can be seen in *Dérives* (Robertson, Beyhun and Steevenson, 2013, [~42min14sec]).

<sup>6</sup> The report goes on to say that “this misinterpretation was in fact condoned by Education Minister Michelle Courchesne, who stated that it would be up to the courts to interpret the law, thereby failing to provide guide-

lines for police and facilitating arbitrary applications...She even implied that simply wearing the *carré rouge* might be punished by the courts [*sic*]” (LDL et al., 2013, p. 29).

<sup>7</sup> LDL et al. (2013) reports: “Certain types of individuals, especially independent journalists and people filming or photographing events, appear to have been systematically targeted. Some journalists were charged with obstructing a police officer, and a few told of having their cameras confiscated and the contents erased. CUTV journalists were harassed, beaten and arrested with no regard to their status as journalists. One was threatened with being charged with incitement to riot. Another journalist spoke of being consistently intimidated during demonstrations; she was arrested and fined for merely photographing police” (p. 11).

<sup>8</sup> Nadeau shot over 40,000 photographs that visually document the Maple Spring crisis for *Le Devoir*. He has since published a monograph of 150 of these images (Nadeau, 2012) and exhibited original prints of these photos in four gallery shows in Chicoutimi, Eastman, Montréal and Sherbrooke, also giving conferences in the last two cities on his experience as a press photographer during the Maple Spring (Jacques Nadeau, personal communication, March 4, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> UTV’s media literacy approach is explained in detail in the copy underneath the short video clip: “This video has been edited to provide a critical and educational perspective on the mainstream press’s approach to covering the student strike...”; more on the video’s webpage: <http://vimeo.com/64331719>

<sup>10</sup> Translated from French: “*Laisse faire le travail au caméraman...il est mandaté pour couvrir les événements*”.

<sup>11</sup> UTV produced several other similar short montages as well as a two-hour documentary titled “Printemps Durable”, which claims to offer the perspective of student strikers (UniversiTV, 2013). The history of UniversiTV and how the Maple Spring shaped its activities and political engagement is clearly outlined in the copy underneath this video: “Since its creation in 2010, UniversiTV or UTV, Université de Montréal’s student television channel, has filmed and followed the movement against tuition hikes. In Spring 2012, this modest student media group, which operates on a volunteer basis became more and more involved in the student strike and increasingly radical...”; more on the video’s webpage webpage: <http://vimeo.com/64331719>

<sup>12</sup> Translated from French : “*Vive les médias sociaux parce qu’ils nous ont montré une autre dimension...pis ils nous ont montré l’écart entre ce qui est dit par les médias officiels et ce qui est la réalité de la rue...ça peut-être été ça la différence dans les manifs entre cette année et les autres qui ont précédées parce que l’utilisation de toutes ces images nous ont permis de voir une vérité qui nous aurait été complètement cachée autrement si on avait eu que les médias officiels ...*” (Suzanne Bilodeau, interview, *Dérives* [~50min22sec]).

<sup>13</sup> Kellner (2000) writes, “The public sphere consisted of organs of information and political debate such as newspapers and journals, as well as institutions of political discussion such as parliaments, political clubs, literary salons, public assemblies, pubs and coffee houses, meeting halls, and other public spaces where socio-political discussion took place” (p. 263).

<sup>14</sup> According to Dutton (2009), Thomas Carlyle claims that Edmund Burke coined the term “Fourth Estate” in reference to the important role played by the Reporters’ Gallery in the Three Estates in Parliament of eighteenth-century England (p. 1).

<sup>15</sup> For a definition of *structuration*, see Giddens (1984, p. 25) or Mosco (2009, p. 185).

<sup>16</sup> For instance, COPB (1995) publishes their list on a webpage which also contains a hyperlink on the bottom right titled “List of people that have been killed by the Montreal police (SPVM)” which, when clicked, activates a downloadable Excel sheet offering more details including the names of the police officers involved in these killings.

<sup>17</sup> Steve is a pseudonym taken by a youth who asked that his identity remain anonymous.

<sup>18</sup> Translated from French : “*Les morts causés par le service de police est une information qui est très dure à obtenir...en fait, souvent ce qu’il faut faire, c’est demander des rapports de police, donc payer pour obtenir cette information-là, puis ensuite passer à travers le dossier au complet pour en venir à la conclusion dans le fond que la mort de telle ou telle personne a été causée par une bavure policière. Donc c’est un processus de recherche immense et c’est pour ça que les gens sont pas vraiment au courant parce qu’en fait, qui honnêtement prend la peine de chercher ça, à part les personnes qui ont vécu tellement de répression policière qu’elle refuse que ça continue de se reproduire.*” (Steve, interview, January 16, 2014 [~39min38ses]).

<sup>19</sup> Translated from French : “*On fait aussi un travail de mémoire pour rappeler les gens qui ont été tués injustement par le SPVM et par tous les corps de police...personne ne mérite d’être brutalisée, battue à mort, d’être fusillée et électrocutée dans l’impunité la plus totale.*” (Anonymous, interview, GAPPASquad, 2014a [~5min10sec]).

<sup>20</sup> Translated from French : “*C’est d’la job mais ça permet de trouver des nouveaux noms.*” (Alex Popovic, personal email communication, January 29, 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Translated from French : “*Malheureusement, il manque encore des noms de personnes décédées car aucune organisme public ne semble maintenir une liste complète, pas même le bureau du coroner...pour fins de précision, je sais que la liste du bureau du coroner est incomplète parce que je l’ai obtenue via l’accès à l’information et j’ai pu la comparer à la mienne*” (Alex Popovic, personal email communication, January 29, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> In 2011, Alex Popovic filed an official request for this information to the *Commission d’accès à l’information du Québec*, the public body that deals with access to information. His request was rejected on October 10, 2012 in a judgment that stated that the names of the police officers involved in such cases is considered confidential information, but the judge made no mention of a ruling regarding the names of the victims. Motivated by the belief that the latter was a matter of public record, Popovic has since filed a request to obtain the victim’s names only with Quebec’s Ministry of Public Security’s through the “Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of Personal Information”, but this request was also rejected. Popovic recently appealed this decision in court in January 2014. His petition was once again rejected in a judgment rendered on January 31, 2014 which, to the best of our knowledge, offers no legally substantive reason to refuse his request.

<sup>23</sup> Translated from French : “*Il y a un Monsieur qui m’a dit, ‘ah oui, cette histoire-là avec la policière, ah ben oui, mais regarde, peut-être qu’ils ont exagéré un peu, hein? T’es pas mort? ...le fait que t’es pas mort...[ça veut dire que], c’est pas si grave...moi ce que ça m’enseigne, c’est qu’on cautionne qu’il y ait un abus policier, mais il ne faut pas qu’il te tue, par exemple, parce que s’ils te tuent, là, il y a un problème...moi, je voudrais que ma communauté soit mieux éduquée en général, qu’on mette l’emphase là-dessus point à la ligne, pis le reste en découle...quelqu’un qui n’est pas bien renseigné va dire, ‘ah, il s’est fait arrêter par la police...il est louche...et ça finit là...’. C’est important qu’on ait confiance en eux [la police], mais elle ne se comporte pas pour gagner la confiance du monde parce que la SPVM manipule l’information pour donner l’impression qu’elle a la confiance du*

*monde. Ceux qui ne se renseignent pas...vont se faire leurs idées à partir de ça et ne sauront pas le danger qui les guette.”* (Serge Lavoie, interview, January 20, 2014 [~1h09min45sec]).

<sup>24</sup> Translated from French : *“Quand on l’a fait, j’idéalisais... les noms...des victimes qui sont mortes...j’imaginai qu’on verrait le nom de ces gens-là sur l’immeuble...tout en sachant en plus que le quartier général est juste l’autre bord, pis ceux qui sont en haut du quartier général de police, ils peuvent voir les noms qui apparaissent...ils peuvent le voir...[le quartier] est St-Urbain entre Ste-Catherine pis Maisonneuve...l’autre bord...c’est un peu romantique mon affaire, mais j’idéalisais que le nom de ces victimes-là apparaîtraient sur l’immeuble.”* (Serge Lavoie, interview, January 20, 2014 [~3min10sec]).

<sup>25</sup> This percentage is roughly established according to the first-hand observations of one of this study’s interviewee, Simon Lussier, who participated in, and filmed, almost every Maple Spring street protest.

<sup>26</sup> Translated from French : *“Ça permettait...ce qui était projeté, on pouvait voir de qu’est-ce qui allait être parlé dans la soirée... je me souviens une fois, tout le mur était anglophone alors [on savait] que c’était des anglophones qui avait parlé.”* (Robert Bourque, interview, November 16, 2013 [~9min15sec]).

<sup>27</sup> Examples of groups represented by GTAU are Action Communiterre, Alternatives, Centre d’Écologie Urbaine de Montréal, Conseil Régional de l’environnement de Montréal, CRAPAUD, Marché de solidarité Frontenac and Santropol Roulant.

<sup>28</sup> Here, we use the term “glocal” in reference to cultural practices that refer to how a local culture might absorb global influences they find useful while adapting them for local usage (Friedman, 2007, pp. 421-422).

<sup>29</sup> Field notes for Saturday, October 5, 2013 around 8:45 pm.

<sup>30</sup> Translated from French : *“Nous, au départ, que ce soit ça ou que ce soit autre chose, on a une obligation sur la scène sociale (je parle au nom du Devoir), donc on a année après année des participations à un certain nombre de choses, on a à organiser des conférences...celle-là [le Mégaphone], c’était à cinquante mètre du journal que ça se déroulait ou à peu près...c’était facile d’accès et aussi ça pouvait toucher un certain nombre de nos lecteurs...l’initiative nous semblait intéressante dans la mesure où elle permettait de rendre palpable une chose qu’on a oublié aujourd’hui, c’est-à-dire que la parole publique peut s’incarner dans des êtres et dans des espaces physiques précis, c’est pas toujours...un relai FACEBOOK™ ou TWITTER™ ou papier tel qu’on a maintenant l’habitude de le faire...”* (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014 [~0min41sec]).

<sup>31</sup> Translated from French : *“La prise de parole en public est une culture qui a existé mais qui a été perdue avec le temps. Les assemblées publiques et les assemblées délibératives, on les a eu au dix-neuvième siècle ici à peu près : les assemblées ouvrières avec des mouvements républicains aussi qui ont existé...ce sont des tentatives qui ont été tuées savamment avec le temps. La culture de parole publique n’est pas une culture qui n’existe pas mais une culture qu’on a tuée pour une bonne raison, c’est-à-dire qu’elle ne rend pas service socialement. Elle ne rend pas service aux gens qui déterminent la parole publique. Il n’y a rien de plus détestable pour les gens en place de tout d’un coup se retrouver avec des gens qui partent dans tous les sens et font des agitations au coin de la rue.”* (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014 [~10min15sec]).

<sup>32</sup> See for instance: <http://canlii.ca/fr/qc/qccs/doc/2003/2003canlii15684/2003canlii15684.html> or <http://canlii.ca/fr/qc/qccq/doc/2010/2010qccq498/2010qccq498.html>. The author thanks Alex Popovic for drawing her attention to these legal rulings.



<sup>33</sup> Translated from French : “*la rue est à nous*”.

<sup>34</sup> Translated from French : “*le SCCUQ occupe l’espace public*”.

<sup>35</sup> Translated from French : “*Alors venez le dire au micro de Mégaphone et courez la chance de voir les mots “précarité”, “qualité”, “fierté”, “enseignement”, “mépris” apparaître aléatoirement sur le mur du pavillon Président-Kennedy de l’UQAM*” (SCCUQ, social media post, November 1, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Translated from French : “*...parce que les gens...s’il y a une manif de nuit, ils prennent le journal le lendemain matin ou ils regardent la télévision, pis là, ils entendent : ‘manif de nuit...il y a encore eu des arrestations, dont...deux méfaits, deux voies de fait sur des policiers...les gens ne réfléchissent pas...à premièrement, c’est-tu vrai? Et deuxièmement, comment ça s’est passé, dans l’ordre chronologique? ...parce que souvent, les policiers attaquaient, pis les gens qui se défendaient se faisaient attaquer, pis c’est comme si on revire l’histoire à l’envers et puis...on voulait sortir ces histoires-là...*” (Anarchopanda, interview, January 9, 2014 [~5min0sec]).

<sup>37</sup> Translated from French : “*C’est une espèce de faux-semblant énorme en disant que c’est la parole citoyenne qui s’exprime...il n’y a pas de densité assez forte à mon avis pour que quelque chose comme ça puisse tenir la route autrement que comme on le fait maintenant, c’est-à-dire en prenant les béquille de tout un personnel professionnel de la parole publique en passant par Marie-France Bazzo, Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois et ce genre de figures publiques de sortes qu’on se retrouve avec l’illusion d’une parole publique quand c’est toujours les mêmes qui parlent en fait...qui viennent aussi tous de la même classe sociale...ils viennent tous du même milieu, ils ont tous la même éducation, ils partagent tous les mêmes valeurs...ils se connaissent tous et on peut tous s’embrasser en allant là...et j’en fait partie de ça...pis les salles de rédaction pis les espaces journalistiques, c’est la même chose...chercher dans les salles de rédaction au Québec et ailleurs et ils ont tous fait les mêmes études, ils ont tous à peu près le même âge, le même profil, ils fréquentent les mêmes lieux, ils s’intéressent au même genre de musique, et c’est tellement grave qu’ils se reproduisent entre eux, il y a un nombre de couple énorme dans ce milieu et ça commence à entraîner des dynasties...on le voit à Radio-Canada...la deuxième ou la troisième génération de journalistes issue des mêmes familles...[alors, en fait ce qu’on voit] c’est encore la même classe qui s’est organisée un jeu de représentation de soi-même...” (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014 [~14min25sec]).*

<sup>38</sup> Translated from French : “*C’était une occasion de mettre en scène...une autre façon de mettre en scène la parole du journal...il y a une forme de mise-en-scène de soi qui est nécessaire dans un espace comme celui-là qui est déjà une mise-en-scène de toute façon...alors dans ce cadre-là, il y a un certain nombre de journalistes qui ne sont pas très à l’aise...*” (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014 [~6min15sec])

<sup>39</sup> Translated from French : “*Nous dans le temps on n’était pas 99%Média, on était OM99%Média...le monde à un moment donné pensait que 99% média était Occupons Montréal fais que on a droppé le ‘OM’ pis on a juste mis 99%Média...ça l’a donné une couche supplémentaire à notre intégrité pis à notre crédibilité... on est un des groupes qui sont sorties d’Occupons Montréal.*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~1hour06min20sec])

<sup>40</sup> Translated from French : “*“don’t fight back...organize, organize, organize’...c’est ça qui était le mot...ça te donne rien de te battre tout seul contre le système...organise toi avec le monde qui veulent aussi se battre contre le système...c’était ça Occupy! Tout le monde était d’accord...le système marche plus, l’économie marche plus, l’environnement est en train d’être brûlé de A à Z...qu’est-c’est qu’on fait?”* (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~1hour04min45sec])

<sup>41</sup> Translated from French : “*Le networking que Occupy a créé...continue encore aujourd’hui...quand le Occupy a splitté, quand ça s’est terminé...ben tout le monde qui avait des affinités ensembles ont tout partis des groupes.*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~1hour05min42sec])

<sup>42</sup> *Les Alter Citoyens* is an independent media production group founded in 2007.

<sup>43</sup> The *Coop média de Montréal* was established in May 2011 as a Canadian local of *The Media Co-op*.

<sup>44</sup> Translated from French : “*Je voulais que le monde voit ce que je faisais, mais je ne voulais pas qu’ils sachent qui je suis...c’était plus important pour moi la portée de ce que je faisais de qui j’étais...je voulais que les gens s’intéressent plus à ce que je couvre et qu’à ma personne...au mois de décembre, quand j’ai fait mon ‘coming out’...les gens interagissaient plus...j’ai beaucoup plus d’interaction depuis que j’assume le Cyborg\_Simon avec mon vrai nom qui est attaché avec...pis il y a du monde qui sont moins mal à l’aise d’interagir avec Cyborg\_Simon qui étaient mal à l’aise d’interagir avec Guys Fawkes...même que je jase avec des journalistes politiques, même eux n’ont pas peur de retweeter ce que je dis...avant, je pouvais sortir une nouvelle, les gens allaient cliquer sur la nouvelle pis relayer la nouvelle à partir du site, mais là depuis que j’ai fait ma sortie, depuis que je suis Cyborg\_Simon, les gens vont retweeter directement la nouvelle...*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013 [~17min21sec]).

<sup>45</sup> Translated from French : “*@Cyborg\_Simon Jan 2 @hydroquebec votre voisin, complexe desjardins, est bien illuminé. commerce et industrie devraient réduire avant population... #froid #extreme*” (Simon Lussier, personal email communication, March 10, 2014).

<sup>46</sup> Translated from French : “*euuu...oui, ben’ quand ils lisent mon profil TWITTER™, ‘Simon Lussier@Cyborg\_Simon’, pis tout de suite le titre qui suit c’est ‘journaliste webdiffuseur’...oh, aie! le gars il fait du PR...le gars il a une portée...le gars il a un réseau...c’est d’même qu’ils peuvent juger de ton poids médiatique...*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~52min03sec])

<sup>47</sup> Translated from French : “*Admettons qu’il y a deux manifestations en même temps., est-ce que je continue à suivre la manifestation contre Monsanto ou je m’en vais à la manifestation Harper?*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~33min06sec]).

<sup>48</sup> Translated from French : “*Une des fonctions que j’aime le plus dans les nouvelles technologies c’est que ça nous permet d’interagir...une personne qui regarde ce que je filme peut me demander pendant que je filme ‘Combien de personnes au total est-ce que tu penses sont dans la manif?’...le monde ne sont pas obligé d’attendre une conférence de presse ou un point de presse tenu après l’événement., pour pouvoir avoir le feedback, ils peuvent l’avoir pendant que je suis là.*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~35min40sec]).

<sup>49</sup> Translated from French : “*J’aurai besoin d’un studio, j’aurais besoin d’un studio mobile, j’aurais besoin d’un char, j’aurais besoin d’un nouveau laptop, j’aurais besoin d’une nouvelle caméra, j’aurais besoin de nouvelles lentilles, j’aurais besoin de nouveaux micros...j’ai acheté ma caméra avec ma carte de crédit pis j’chais pas comment je vais la repayer.*” (Simon Lussier, interview, part 2, January 14, 2013, [~55min55sec]).

<sup>50</sup> Translated from French : “*Je suis juste un petit prolétaire pas d’éducation*” (Simon Lussier, interview part 2, January 14, 2014 [~20min15sec]).

<sup>51</sup> Translated from French : “*[À l’origine, les journalistes]...c’était des gens qui n’avaient pas le choix de faire ça., d’abord on ne signait pas les articles, ce qui permettait au patron de rendre les journalistes absolument inter-*

*changeables...c'étaient des gens qui étaient en générale aussi pas très instruits...les gens qui étaient instruits dans ce milieu-là curieusement c'était les typographes...qui étaient presque une classe intellectuelle supérieure dans la société, c'étaient aussi les premiers à s'organiser en terme de travail, les premiers syndicats liés à la profession des journalistes, c'est plutôt du côté des typographes"* (Jean-François Nadeau, interview, January 15, 2014 [~18min0sec]).

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