

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This academic year has focused on the negotiation and implementation of our new [Collective Agreement](#). Our own negotiations occurred in a larger context of labour action from those associated with our academic environment.

As of December 14, 2016, we signed a new *Collective Agreement*, our fourth as StFXAUT. Our Members approved the tentative *Collective Agreement* as of October 14, 2016 and the StFX Board of Governors approved the same tentative agreement on October 20, 2016. Much credit is owed to our Negotiation Team, Ken MacAulay (Chief Negotiator), Christie Lomore, and Kris Hunter, for managing the process of negotiation, overseeing the logistics of wording and formatting changes, and assisting in the communication to Members about the implementation of the *Collective Agreement*.

Although labour action was not necessary to conclude our recent negotiations, labour action with significant consequences from various unions with whom we interact is shaping our academic context. The [Cape Breton University Faculty Association \(CBUFA\)](#) remains without a ratified contract and a University President because of their negotiation process. The [Canadian Association of University Teachers \(CAUT\)](#) is in a labour dispute with their staff union ([COPE 225](#)) that has resulted in intermittent strike activity, work to rule action and allegations of bargaining in public. The [Nova Scotia Teachers Union \(NSTU\)](#) was met with [legislation from the Nova Scotia Government](#) imposing a contract on teachers without continuing to negotiate and with a law suit related to the provision of student teacher training from Universities in Nova Scotia, including St. Francis Xavier University.

We continue to monitor threats to the role and rights of unions and their Members as we persist in managing and maintaining our own role and rights in our immediate academic context.

In solidarity,

Mary Oxner
President StFXAUT

GETTING TO KNOW YOU: SENIOR LAB INSTRUCTOR KELLY THOMPSON

by Philip Girvan



Human Kinetics Senior Lab Instructor Kelly Thompson (standing) in his Exercise Physiology 365 Lab with students (left to right): Therese Greencorn, Lauren Peters, and Katheryn Grant.
Photo Credit: Dr. Dan Kane

In 2001, Kelly Thompson and his family moved to Antigonish from Saskatchewan when his then spouse was hired at StFX. As luck would have it, the Human Kinetics Department was looking to fill both a lab position and a skills position at that time. Both positions were well-aligned with Kelly's skillset, and he was hired shortly after arriving. Kelly currently works as an Exercise Physiology Lab Instructor and Gymnastic and Fitness Skills Instructor teaching three sections of Gymnastics 105, two sections of Gymnastics 205, and two sections of Fitness 105.

For over 35 years, gymnastics has been a major part of Kelly's life whether as an athlete, a coach, an official, or an administrator. He has been involved in several major world events including 4 Commonwealth games, 3 Pan-American Games, 6 World Championships, and 3 World University Games. Kelly served as an official during the 2004 Olympic Games. Yet, Kelly may be best known, at least in Antigonish, for his role in creating the teaching practicum component of the Gymnastics 205 course.

This provides StFX students with hands-on experience teaching gymnastic skills to children. Kelly describes the practicum as “a skills course but [also]... a community outreach program”. Antigonish had been lacking a community gymnastics program prior to the practicum roll out. Charging a nominal fee (Kelly noted that the fees are approximately a third of those charged for similar programs in larger cities), the program has grown from about 25-30 kids participating to now close to 100. Thompson notes that the program is now “at capacity. We can't take anymore. Don't even advertise. We basically fill by word of mouth”.

When asked how the practicum benefited his students, Kelly was quick to suggest that “it teaches them that all children are different: what works for one does not work for another. [Gymnastics students] have to provide an inclusive environment. It teaches them discipline and teaching strategies”.

Kelly is as passionate regarding education as he is about gymnastics. Thirty years after graduating from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education, Kelly was awarded a Masters of Education from StFX in 2016. The Masters stream was project-based and for his project Kelly developed an educational gymnastics web resource. This web resource, which Kelly maintains and updates regularly, is now part of the Nova Scotia Department of Education's curriculum documents. It features approximately 160 instructional videos and can be found here: <http://people.stfx.ca/kthomps0/Home.html>.

Despite having travelled all over world, Kelly is happy to call Antigonish home. When asked what keeps him in Antigonish, Kelly was quick to say, “Love the community. Love the simplicity of Antigonish. People are outstanding. It’s a special place”.

MSc/MA SUPERVISION CREDIT

by Russell Wyeth

Following the conclusion of our recent collective bargaining process, an inequality amongst our members has been established. Faculty in Education will receive teaching credit for supervision of Master’s theses, while faculty in science and the arts will not (Section 1.3.6 of the [4th Collective Agreement](#)). The Administration has indicated that their refusal to provide credit for supervision of MSc and MA theses was linked to the longstanding practice of providing “tuition waivers” to MSc students. However, during bargaining, the inequality created by discriminating between faculty members in different disciplines was recognized by both parties, and a letter of understanding (LOU #1) was signed by the Administration and the Union to strike a committee to explore options for providing Master’s thesis supervision credit outside of the Faculty of Education.

There are several important considerations to be tackled by this committee:

1. Supervising Master’s student theses requires substantial amounts of time, regardless of the faculty in which the Master’s student is enrolled.
2. Teaching of Master’s students is not limited to thesis supervision. Master’s programs also require faculty to prepare and deliver graduate-level courses (for which no credit is currently given in MA or MSc programs).
3. Teaching credit is enshrined in our collective bargaining agreement as a mechanism to manage equal teaching duties among faculty. Linking this to tuition waivers provided to certain students conflates faculty workload (and compensation) with a student support program. Should faculty teaching varsity athletes receive diminished teaching credit if those athletes receive financial support to defray the costs of tuition?
4. In the sciences, the “tuition waivers” are not, in-fact, a waiver of tuition with no strings attached. They are, in fact, compensation for teaching duties (in labs, grading, etc.) that amount to the value of one year’s tuition. They are, in fact, a paid teaching assistantship (TAship), as found in most graduate schools in North America. The use of “tuition waiver” is a misnomer that has unfortunately persisted.
5. In addition to providing important financial support to individual Master’s students, the TAship (“tuition waiver”) is a critical research support.
 - a. Standard practice in science is to pay all graduate students a nominal salary each year, sufficient to cover living costs and tuition. Recruiting

good MSc students in competition with other institutions depends on whether or not we can offer sufficient financial supports. Other institutions can draw on a variety of internal funding options in addition to provincial and national fellowships and faculty research grants. At StFX, our only internal support is the TAships program.

- b. In sciences, supervision of graduate students is becoming (has become) an essential gatekeeper for any chance at Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and other funding sources. Without graduate programs at StFX, anything more than token scientific research will dwindle in the future. The TAships are the only concrete support of graduate student training that faculty members can use in their grant applications as evidence of StFX's commitment to training future researchers at the graduate level.
- c. Supporting graduate students has important knock-on benefit for undergraduate research experiences. Graduate students act as valuable role models and mentors as undergraduates are introduced to research. Moreover, funding undergraduate research opportunities is also tightly linked to research support in general and graduate student support particularly. In sciences, 14 NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards are available annually, subsidizing salary of Honours and other undergraduates conducting scientific research in labs at StFX. The number of these awards is directly tied to the total funding we receive from NSERC. Thus, once the effect of graduate student support on grant application success is considered, the graduate student TAships are a critical piece in supporting our undergraduate research experiences.

In summary, given the insistence by the administration to link "tuition waivers" to redressing the inequality in Master's supervision, the committee has some important work to do in order to ensure that adequate research, graduate and undergraduate student support are maintained (or improved) while ensuring faculty outside of education receive credit where credit is due for Master's thesis supervision.

Remember to access your Professional Development Fund (PDF)...

Article 1.22 of the *Collective Agreement* entitles each member to an expense account, against which you can claim for reimbursement of

PD-related expenses:

[*PDF Information*](#)

[*PDF Expense Claim Form*](#)

CAUT STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY – MARCH 8

This International Women's Day, academic staff unite with women across the country and around the world to celebrate achievements and to call for bolder action to address inequality.

Twenty years ago, Canada was ranked first place on the UN's Gender Inequality Index. By 2014, Canada slipped to 25th place.

We need to once again become a global leader.

The Liberal government has moved quickly in its first year to regain some lost ground: the child benefits and retirement security systems were improved; investments have been made to the shelter system; the Court Challenges Program of Canada (CCP) and the long-form census were reinstated; and a gender analysis of the budget is underway. In addition, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was launched and a commitment made to develop a comprehensive federal gender violence strategy and action plan.

More needs to be done. CAUT urges the government to:

1. Re-establish funding for women's, Aboriginal, and equity-seeking groups, which engage in advocacy. The government's \$3 million increase last year to Status of Women Canada and the return of advocacy activities as an eligible grant activity were a start. However the Status of Women Canada's budget is still only 0.02% of total federal program spending.
 2. Address inequality in employment. In universities and colleges, women are underrepresented in senior positions and overrepresented in precarious contract positions. The Conservative government weakened the Federal Contractors Program that requires organizations and businesses – including universities and colleges – receiving federal government contracts to have employment equity plans.
 3. Close the wage gap. Women still earn less than their male counterparts even in academia, and when adjusted for rank, discipline, and other factors. The gap is greater for women who are Aboriginal, racialized, transgender, and those with disabilities. The federal government has promised to introduce pay equity legislation before 2018. This legislation should be based on the recommendations of the 2004 Federal Pay Equity Taskforce report and the 2016 Report of the Special Committee on Pay Equity.
 4. End violence against women. The federal government has committed to a comprehensive federal gender violence strategy and action plan. This should include a plan to end “rape culture” and provide better access to legal aid for victims.
 5. Establish a national child care program that offers accessible, affordable, and quality care. The federal government must provide funding and leadership, and work with provinces, territories and Indigenous communities to make affordable quality child care a reality for all families.
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NOT EQUALITY, EQUITY

by Rhonda Semple

Even though I committed to writing this piece for the *Beacon* ages ago, and even though I care deeply about the subject of equity, it has taken me a long time to finally sit down to write. My research and teaching are deeply embedded in concerns over equity and, to be frank, my experience in those areas likely informs my reticence. On the one hand, as a Historian of belief, my interests in decolonizing empires is a little radical for mission history. On the other hand, as a Historian of religion, I'm a little suspect in feminist circles. In a similar manner, this will likely be too reductive for some colleagues and too complex for others. I will claim experience in being a woman although I'm neither expert at that nor can I claim expertise as a person in the many 'equity seeking' groups that contribute to an academic community.

I have, however, seen the CAUT studies that led our national union to state that "many academic staff face discrimination and harassment in their jobs. Women, Aboriginal persons and visible and ethnic minorities are under-represented, particularly amongst the most senior academic ranks. Academic staff with disabilities face significant hurdles. Lesbian, gay and bisexual academic staff often feel they must hide their sexuality out of fear of damaging their careers and transgender and transsexual academic staff face significant discrimination based on their gender identities" (<https://www.caut.ca/issues-and-campaigns/equity>). And I have heard about my female colleagues catcalled on campus and have had students, year on year, tell me about being racially harassed by their peers. I was sexually harassed by a gang of male students outside my house in the fall – threatened with anal rape on my own street because apparently that's what a woman needs to shut her up.

I work in a province that roughly matches the national norm for a variety of problematic areas for women in the workforce: fewer women than men work in academe, women advance more slowly through the ranks than do our male colleagues, and women make less money.¹ I work on a campus where until yesterday (7 March) none of our named research chairs were held by a woman, where only one of our senior administrators is a woman or reflects

¹ [The Persistent Gap: Understanding male-female salary differentials amongst Canadian academic staff \(March 2011\)](#)

other equity-seeking groups, and where we have not yet had a formal institutional commitment to equity as represented by an Equity Policy. “We believe in equity; we commit to equitable practices.” How hard is that? Do we not believe in equity? It has been nearly a year since we have had a Human Rights and Equity Advisor on campus, someone with the knowledge and experience to guide us towards productive solutions through what can be awkward and difficult discussions.

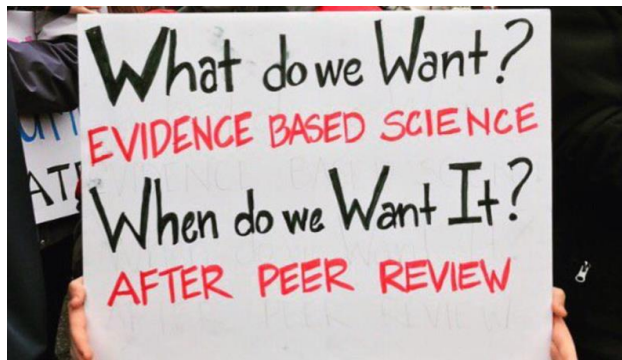
Talking about equity is straightforward in a certain sense. As an academic, my basic instinct is to rely on making sense of evidence through analysis and to build on peer-reviewed work to help make sense of that evidence. What the evidence shows, in modern British (imperial) history, is that when evidence is read ‘against the grain’ in formal archives and additionally, when evidence is collected outside of them, our analysis of the past is transformed. Historians like E.P. Thompson broadened the concept of who should be considered as having contributed to political and economic history.² Catherine Hall’s work indicates that viewing political revolution through a gendered lens enriches our understanding of how the trajectory from subject to citizen must include both men’s public contributions and the masculine respectability of supporting a family (thus excluding women).³ Antoinette Burton points to how middle-class women, in claiming for themselves the right to vote, tended to exclude the contributions of working class women and built their case for suffrage on the backs of non-western women.⁴ The masterful sociologist Stuart Hall slapped academics silly for ignoring culture and ethnicity in a Britain defined by its imperial past, and a range of young scholars have met the challenge to embed modern political culture in an important range of identities.⁵ Lest this be dismissed as “history as a shopping list of cultural identities,” I would challenge you to explain why whiteness matters more than other imperial identities when analyzing citizenship and WWI, or to explain away the central meanings of recognizing yet silencing the interconnectedness of class difference, queerness, and militarized masculinity in the Household Guard – what is more British than the Guards? Seriously, identities other than white male and middle class matter, and to not acknowledge that is not just about inequities. It is just bad history.

² E.P. Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1963).

³ Catherine Hall, *White Male and Working Class* (London: Wiley, 1992).

⁴ Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History* (Raleigh: UNCPress, 1994).

⁵ Matt Houlbrook, ‘Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, c.1900-60’, *JBS* 42:3 (July 2003): 351-88.



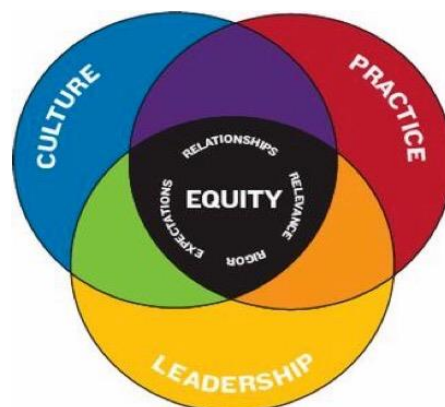
I know about and can participate in the debates in my discipline. It is more difficult to discuss race, diversity, and equity at work – but not to do so results in a bad work environment. Since we all think for a living, we could apply that critical lens to our workplace, innovate, and be leaders in equity. The subject is complex. And just as my students struggle with understanding their own place (and how it relates to the past), I do the same. A lot of times I don't want to deal with the discomfort of challenging norms, and I often can make the choice not to. But not everyone can. For example, like many others, some of our colleagues and other people I care about were floored by Trump's election. One colleague in particular felt very threatened by a group of male students wearing Trump hats on campus that week. Yes, they had the right to do so, but by doing so they were communicating particular notions. Is our colleague a 'snowflake'? I don't think so. Trump spilled a lot of vitriol against various equity-seeking groups during the election. His supporters lapped that up, and he's done nothing to counter the hatefulness subsequently. So that week was difficult for a lot of people. To put it in context, my queer acquaintances receive hateful and threatening letters in their mailboxes and check the mail knowing that could happen any day. I don't. A gay man from Pictou was left paralyzed from a beating he received a few years ago. My gay friends make travel plans with a view that going to the wrong country could result in physical harm, incarceration, or death. That is not the reality of someone who is weak, although it is living besieged. The limited amount of CAUT data available indicates those negative experiences are compounded in academia.⁷ How do we define people whose identity and privilege doesn't match our own? 'Fit'. 'We just need to see if it's a good fit,' which is a just murky enough description that it can mean anything.

⁶ <http://gizmodo.com/why-scientists-are-planning-their-own-march-on-washingt-1791618754>

⁷ [A Partial Picture: The representation of equity-seeking groups in Canada's universities and colleges \(November 2007\)](#)

And it isn't just difficult to act because of my own privilege; in writing this, I struggle with how to communicate equitable practice to an audience that might not want to hear it. It is important to be able to identify our own privilege in order to acknowledge it, note inherent inequities, and then mobilize for change. The most difficult place from which to note inequity is from a place of privilege. Did you open the footnote about the gender pay gap above and see it was roughly \$8000 per annum in 2006? Did you think "aw, not that bad" or "argh, that's irritating?" The answer will speak to your degree of privilege – or lack thereof – as well as your ability to empathize. It is not about feeling guilty and it is not about explaining away privilege. It is about listening and responding.

StFX can reach a better potential by mobilizing privilege to structurally reshape norms that enshrine inequalities, through individual choice, by the institution naming problems, and by shifting practice.⁸ We did participate in a facilitated forum nearly two years ago where challenges were identified and some solutions initiated. Our institution has decided to make equity and inclusion one of the five pillars of our strategic plan and it remains to be seen what that means exactly. How can we listen? There exists a joint Administration-Union equity implementation committee which did not meet this year and while the Priorities Framework document released with the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan noted that an "equity review" has been initiated, and that a revised version of the Harassment and Discrimination policy has been developed, at the very least there doesn't seem to have been broad-based engagement in our institution regarding these initiatives.



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⁸ <http://www.communichi.org/racial-equity-diversity-awareness/>

⁹ https://ljwalsh123.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/img_6216.jpg

Of course there are initiatives being undertaken in our institution and I have certainly seen change in the past ten years. Making real change is also complex, as the CAUT literature suggests – but requires reshaping culture and shifting practice. So what can we do? Women and other equity-seeking groups are likely not the focus of systematic exclusion but they are under-represented – as students, as Faculty, in certain disciplines and in Administration. When individuals have to advocate for their interests in the face of what is ‘normalized’ but actually excludes them, we need to act. Sitting on CoN, I helped replace individuals on committees who could not fulfill their committee contributions because the committee members suggested meeting during family-centered parts of the day. So, one solution is to step up and state it is not a good time of the day – that is what a professional should do. You might do so, but that gets tiresome. A culture of inclusion includes colleagues who do not make the lone voice say “it is not a good time for me.” We all work at night, but when I write or grade at home, I can clean up the kitchen and help with homework before turning to my own work. Sitting in a seminar room on campus is quite different.

An equitable institution requires we act decisively, build capacity in the university, and build meaningful partnerships with local community members. I know the university has recently invited the Band Chief from the local Mi’kmaq community to join the Board of Governors. We have also seen a much larger and more diverse attendance on campus events for Mi’kmaq History month and when Mawiomi’s are organized, and community members from Paq’tnkek have joined the StFX community for the Take Back the Night March for a couple of years. Alan Syliboy was a welcome presence on campus last fall as Coady Chair in Social Justice, and the visit of the Honourable Murray Sinclair and the related events was both a challenge and inspiring. I will never forget our student presenting Senator Sinclair with a memento of her grandmother, a Residential School survivor, who did not get to share her story with him. That presentation closed a circle between past and present, her family and community, students, and our school and purpose.

But we need to build on these initiatives, think carefully as we move forward, and continue to communicate our commitment clearly. We have one committee on campus - CABSS - where Faculty and Staff, Students, Advisors, Administrators, and Community members meet together. For several years the committee has picked away at a variety of issues but for the most part I would say we share stories and work on pieces of change without being able to affect systematic transformation. We have not

developed a policy whereby we focus recruiting efforts in equity-seeking communities. Although the new and welcome funding initiatives from the Deveau Fund are supporting students and new teaching initiatives, students consistently point out that the very Xaverian spirit we celebrate and lean on for recruiting tends to exclude non-traditional students. Further, this year there have been several moments that contributed to a dampening down of hope for collaboration. While we have begun to acknowledge formally and wrestle with the meaning of our community's locale in Mi'kmaqi, as an institution we have chosen to both fly the Mi'kmaq flag but then take it down again. My understanding is that local elders have expressed deep concern over this choice. Students organized a petition in support of flying the flag and the student newspaper has been provoking debate on a variety of related issues all year.¹⁰ The Administration counters that policy is required as well as a place to fly the flag. This policy is taking a long time, however. Given that there are empty flag spots on Morrison, a flag could be flown there temporarily until another locale is decided upon. Additionally, in our province the need to 'develop flag policy' has served as code for keeping flags (such as Pride Flags) off municipal buildings so it is hard for advocates in equity-seeking communities not to read administrative language in that light. We are currently being consulted as a community about this effort. Yet if this is indeed unceded territory – historically, legally, and ethically – this can happen, so really this further signals the authority of an institution of higher learning over traditional rights.

Further to these concerns, along with creating new programs and accepting funds to build a new building, we have accepted Brian Mulroney's office materials, including the desk gifted to him by his party that was owned by Sir John A. Macdonald. While Richard Gwyn may dismiss concerns over the celebration of Macdonald – apparently naming aboriginal peoples "problems" is not a problem¹¹ - as academics it is our job to problematize meanings and communicate our findings. Maybe there is an intention that is going to happen (at a conference? In a collection of essays? Through art installations?), but I am a concerned listener, and I have not yet heard about those intentions. Again, we think and teach for a living. We can say many thanks to donors for supporting our programs and build programs that teach students to think critically, and in particular lead debates that historicize the founding of our country against the resulting material and cultural meaning of that institution for aboriginal communities and us all.

¹⁰ <http://www.xaverian.ca/articles/2016/11/27/6b88h4zfplr89uhl4iamx6n1kvs7lf>

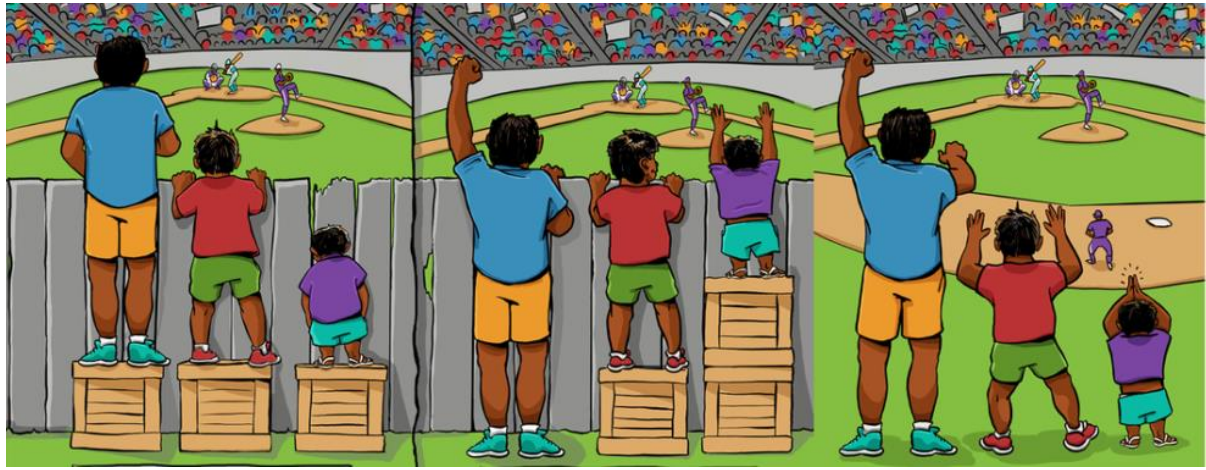
¹¹ https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/02/06/sir_john_a_macdonald_made_mistakes_but_he_w_asnt_a_racist_gwyn.html

Our 150 year anniversary is a perfect time to do this, and if we are an institution committed to equity, then we should act.

There are many problems pointed out here. There are difficult decisions to be made, but some solutions are dead easy. Some Faculty committees commit to meaningful contributions: last year we were represented by a female Union President, the Chair of General Faculty is another formidable woman, and women have been represented as Chair of Senate and as members of its steering committee recently. We can educate ourselves as Faculty about the culture that slows success of equity-seeking groups in being hired, applying for and getting research chairs, and in promotion. Our institution can promote equity formally, by supporting equitable recruitment, by formally acknowledging equity in promotion and tenure, and perhaps by partnering with CAUT in hosting some of the in service programs the organization has developed.

And one final but important note. Apparently Verdana is not a particularly popular font. I can't say that I've ever felt strongly about a font unless it is 1 a.m. and it makes the next paper to grade difficult to read. However, for people who have dyslexia, it is one of the fonts that is easier to read than others.¹² We all read and write a lot in our jobs. When we write to communicate to our students I would suggest we choose to use one of the dyslexia-accessible fonts. If students with dyslexia (and their fees) are welcomed into our institution and we do not meet their learning needs, I would suggest they are like the short purple-shirted kid in the first image on the left below that I'm sure we've all seen. S/he's sitting in your class but actually reading the syllabus the first day is a challenge. Adapting your teaching to this student promotes equality of access and is illustrated in the middle image. You can print a syllabus off for her/him in Verdana and make sure it is handed out to the right person that first day and it might very well make their life a lot easier. However, if you make a systematic institutional change by shifting your default to Verdana, you will never need to think about it again. The students without dyslexia probably will not even notice – but the person who can benefit will, and you will no longer need to act in a conscious, "exceptional" manner for the benefit of one student. That's the third picture, where the institutional choice that benefits the tall dude ceases to be a problem for anybody. The barrier just ceases to exist.

¹² http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/sites/default/files/good_fonts_for_dyslexia_study.pdf



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I accept that this is a symplistic example, although if my student offspring had dyslexia I would welcome an explanation as to why he didn't deserve similar treatment. And if you are reading this and thinking of the many more complex situations offering evidence as to why you should not use Verdana, or why the institution shouldn't tell you to teach or act inclusively, or how irritating it is for a Historian to be nattering on at you about your professional life, then maybe the problem with equity is you.¹⁴

REMINDERS:

- The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) offers [Health and Dental Benefits for Retirees](#). To learn more about monthly premiums for residents of NS, please [click here](#).
- StFXAUT social media activity is ongoing: follow [@StFXAUT](#) on Twitter and like our [Facebook](#) page, www.facebook.com/StFXAUT, to monitor goings-on.
- The next deadline to submit the [StFXAUT Sponsorship Application Form](#) is **Saturday, April 1st**. The StFXAUT invites sponsorship requests from organizations committed to education, labour, social justice, and community development.
- Please remember to send your event notices and campus updates to the StFXAUT list serve to keep all Members informed.

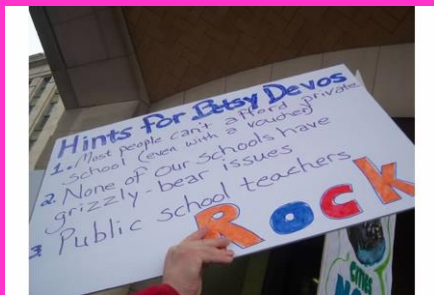
¹³ Artwork by Angus Maguire. interactioninstitute.org madewithangus.com

¹⁴ It's me too.

REFLECTIONS ON THE WOMEN'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON – SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

(Submitted on February 14)

by Erika Koch



Seven airplanes, four hotel rooms, and not quite seven days. That's what it took for me to travel to and from my usual winter conference—leaving it a day early—and arrive in Washington, DC for the Women's March, which took place the day after the current American President's inauguration. I had felt ashamed to be American after the election, and despite the fact that I voted in the election (as is my right as an American citizen), I felt powerless. So, when my sister-in-law invited me to march with her, I felt both thrilled and honored. As I said to her at the time of her invitation, I think I've always wanted to be part of a march on Washington. When I lived in Maryland for three years before arriving at St. FX, I played tourist in DC a few times a year and always enjoyed soaking up the city's history. I was excited to return to the city and be a part of a new history.

People have asked me why I marched. I could fill a great deal of space answering that question, but I will try to be brief. Selfishly, I wanted to dampen my own sense of powerlessness, but, less selfishly, I wanted to remind the world that most Americans who voted did **not** vote for the current President. I wanted to show the new administration that women are not going to be silent when confronted with misogyny. I wanted to remind myself that not everyone is going to passively accept the new administration's whims, especially those that threaten women's rights.



I will always remember the day fondly: the sense of excitement as I saw women in pink knit hats at breakfast, the hour+ Metro ride (with a crowd size that reminded my sister-in-law of Tokyo), the women with whom I chatted and laughed on the Metro, the funny and poignant signs at the March, the chants, the speeches (especially by 6-year-old Sophie Cruz: [click here](#) to be inspired), and the sea of people that spilled on to the streets of DC. I heard on the Metro ride back that local stores actually ran out of posterboard, which explained the creativity of media on which some of the signs were written; I think that I even saw one on written on the back of a hot water tank box. One of the early signs I saw was a hand-written “MOMMA’S BOY,” proudly held by a young man. The number of men—and children—at the March was truly moving. I recall the flak that the initial March organizers received—understandably—about being overly white. The diversity of speakers and marchers suggested that those initial squabbles were long gone.

One thing that struck me was the completely positive vibe that permeated the day. On the lengthy Metro rides, no one complained. When two young men wearing Trump hats hopped on the Metro, no one harassed them. I saw no counter-protests, no violence, surprisingly little (obvious) security... The peace of the day truly was remarkable.

For a few hours, some of my shame at being American was lifted, replaced by an unusual sense of pride.

But I still mailed my Canadian citizenship application yesterday.

SOME OF THE UPCOMING KEY DATES IN THE [*4th Collective Agreement*](#):

March 31st:

- **Transition of Tenured Assistant Professors:** Applicants are required to meet with their Dean prior to applying for associate under this program. Applicants may request to have a representative of the StFXAUT present at this meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to assist faculty in preparing their application and, if needed, to receive coaching and assistance from the Dean to help invigorate their research program. Potential applicants should meet with their Dean no later than **March 31, 2017**. (**Letter of Understanding #2: Transition of Tenured Assistant Professors;4**)

April 10th:

- On the basis of the evidence submitted to, and collected by, the Outstanding Teaching Awards Committee, the Committee shall select the recipients of the Outstanding Teaching Awards by **April 10**. (**Article 2.7.1 University Research/Publication/Teaching Awards:4.8.1**)

April 15th:

- Applications for URPTA, based on research or publication, shall be made to the appropriate Dean, at the Faculty members' initiative, by **April 15** of each academic year. (**Article 2.7.1 University Research/Publication/Teaching Awards:3.1**)

April 30th:

- The Annual Report shall include a statement of activities for the period from the previous **May 1** to **April 30**. (**Article 3.3 Annual Report:2.0**)

May 1st:

- Employees who wish to retire shall provide, to the Academic Vice-President & Provost, Dean or Director, notice by January 31 of their intent to retire between **May 1** and **June 30**. For Faculty, it is understood that there will be no effective dates during the Fall or Winter Teaching Terms. (**Article 1.14 Retirement:2.0**)

May 15th:

- Each librarian shall submit to the University Librarian a copy of an Annual Report of professional activities by **May 15** of each year. (**Article 3.3 Annual Report:1.0**)
- The Performance Evaluation shall take place by **May 15** or the Instructors contract termination date, whichever is earlier. (**Article 4.6 Performance Evaluation:2.0**)
- Applicants will forward their CV and supporting evidence with respect to the above criteria to the Chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee by **May 15** of the year in which they wish to apply. (**Letter of Understanding #2: Transition of Tenured Assistant Professors;5**)

May 31st:

- More specifically, the Chair or Coordinator shall:
 - b) in consultation with the Dean of his or her Faculty and with his or her Department/IDP, determine the courses of instruction to be offered by the Department/IDP in each academic year: The Chair /Coordinator shall, by **May 31**, inform each Faculty member in his/her department/IDP in writing of the Faculty member's teaching assignment for the forthcoming academic year, after receiving the approval of the Dean for that assignment. (**Article 2.0.2 Chairs of Departments, Coordinators of Interdisciplinary Programs and Assistant Director, School of Nursing:2.3 b**)
- All Laboratory Instructors and Senior Laboratory Instructors returning the following academic year shall be given their teaching assignments from their respective Chair, Coordinator, or Director by **May 31st**. If a changes after the deadline must occur the Instructor and Instructor's Supervisor must be consulted about the change in assignment as soon as is reasonable. (**Article 4.4 Conditions of Employment:8.2**)



StFXAUT Members (left to right): President Mary Oxner, former President Peter McInnis, and Executive Member Wendy Panagopoulos participated in a local rally in support of the members of the Nova Scotia Teacher's Union (NSTU), held on Wednesday, February 15th. Rally supporters gathered behind the 5 to a \$1 and marched to Antigonish MLA Randy Delorey's Office on Main Street. Approximately 50 members from the NSTU, AUT, and the community participated in the rally.

SAVE THE DATE!

Please note the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the StFXAUT will be held on **Thursday, May 11th** from **1:15pm - 2:30pm** in **SCHW 205**.

Prior to the AGM, there will be four information sessions (topics to be confirmed later this month) from **11:30am - 12:30pm**. Lunch will be provided. Please inform [Susan MacKay](#) if you have any food allergies or special dietary requirements.

YOUR 2016-2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

[Mary Oxner](#), President
[Bruce Sparks](#), Vice President
[Brad Long](#), Past President
[Clare Fawcett](#), Secretary
[Martin van Bommel](#), Treasurer
[Charlene Weaving](#), Chief Grievance Officer
[Kris Hunter](#), Member at Large
[Martin Sastri](#), Member at Large
[Monica Lent](#), Member at Large
[Wendy Panagopoulos](#), Member at Large

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE STFXAUT OFFICE:

#219-42 West Street (Old Municipal Building)
(902) 867-3368 • [Email](#) • [Website](#)