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(this week)

- Students protest corporate presence on university and CEGEP boards
- Montreal Impact vs. The World
- Black rights group opens office in Montreal North
- Turcot turnaround?
- Canadian journalist arrested in Tehran - *Web exclusive!*
- Questions ahead for Iranians - *Web exclusive!*
- City buys Mile End green space
- CKUT Radio Camp - *Web exclusive!*

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- Jamie O'Meara
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June 18th, 2009

- Tamil refugees face deportation from Canada [12]
- Acoustic smog drowns whale communication
- Collective photo project in the Plateau - *Web exclusive!*
- Making Montreal a sustainable city - *Web exclusive!*
- Cultural Crossroads: Constellation Records - *Web exclusive!*

June 11th, 2009

November 20th, 2008

Combating electoral malaise

The apathy party

Christopher Paré

Think it's tough trying to muster any interest in a provincial election, especially following the denouement of an Obama victory down south? Try being democracy advocate Ilona Dougherty, who has the unenviable task of making you care.

Dougherty, 28, is the co-founder and executive director of Apathy Is Boring, a national, nonpartisan initiative started in 2004 aimed at engaging young voters (i.e., the 18-to-35 bracket) in the political process. They rely heavily on digital technology and web-based tools as part of their outreach, but with voter fatigue at an all-time high (an oft-cited poll by CROP Inc. shows that 70 per cent of Quebec voters do not want another election), Dougherty concedes that there is much work to be done.

"It's funny - one thing I heard a lot after the last federal election was the fact that it's not only young people who aren't voting, now their parents aren't voting [either]."

She says the Apathy squad has been a little slow off the mark as a result of their involvement in the last federal election, but that the campaign is finally underway. Their website includes information on how to vote in Quebec, a summary of party platforms, a coalition of artists against apathy and even a candidates' kit. "The other thing we try to do is not just reach out to youth, but also reach out to candidates about how they can better engage youth."

Accessibility, especially around the holiday season, will also be an issue. Ironically, Dougherty was unable to vote in a 2006 Quebec by-election in her Ste-Marie-St-Jacques riding. "I hadn't registered beforehand, and didn't realize that federally and provincially the rules were that different. So if that can happen to me, [it] can definitely happen to anybody."

And to the disengaged, disenfranchised or just plain disinclined, Dougherty proffers the same cautionary words she does every election: "A democracy that isn't used is dangerous, and we need to recognize that it's the times when it doesn't seem as exciting that are probably the most critical to get out and vote - because big things happen when no one is watching."

For more information, visit www.apathyisboring.com.



Apathy Is Boring election trooper
Melissa Auf der Maur

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- Israel will face Quebec court
- Mohawks continue struggle to disarm border
- Benefit concert for Barrière Lake [1]
- Urban art event transforms Centre-Sud - *Web exclusive!*



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June 4th, 2009

- Abousfian Abdelrazik kite protest
- Community radio conference [1]
- Newsfeed: Montreal's red light district faces demolition
- Newsfeed: Controversial Colombian trade bill stalls
- The fifth Montreal Citizen Summit - *Web exclusive!* [1]

Hmmmmmm.....

How do you deal with electoral indifference despite ongoing economic instability and health care issues? How do you engage the populace who are overwhelmingly opposed to an election despite all the issues in play right now? I think that as a beginning you have to look south to see how to engage an electorate. By bringing the machinery into the 21st century. By engaging people directly and addressing the widespread issues that affect all the subsections of society. Michelle Blanc hit it on the head on tout Le Monde En Parle by calling out that political head regarding the archaic method of campaigning both here in Quebec and the rest of Canada. It takes a multi-faceted approach to campaign nowadays. And given the stunning success of the campaign to the south, it seems that the results are there to be had....it just takes the temerity to take that first step.

[Reuven De Souza](#)

November 25th, 2008

May 28th, 2009

- Lily Tomlin: Uncensored
- Outrage simmers over Villanueva shooting [1]
- Montreal leads the International Cities of Advanced Sound
- Just Seeds collective bring poster art exhibition to Montreal

¿quis légèt hâec?: CLXXIV

The reason that it's tough trying to muster any interest in an election, provincial or otherwise, isn't because we as a society don't care or don't believe in the power of democracy, no, it's simply that we as a people don't believe in the choices before us. Apathy IS boring but where are we expected to muster up faith in an election when the parties and representatives involved only seem motivated in pushing their agenda regardless of what we the people want or need. In Quebec alone we're stuck choosing between the ineffectual Liberals and strident and terribly out of touch PQ. The ADQ? Right...assuming it ever gets its head out of its arse it might almost register as an alternative worth considering. Almost. Iona Dougherty, co-founder and executive director of Apathy Is Boring fails to grasp that motivating the masses means nothing if the infernal machine that is our government is hopelessly out of touch with the people it is meant to serve.

[Pedro Eggers](#)

November 23rd, 2008

May 21st, 2009

- Montreal Biennale
- New community centre in Pointe St-Charles [1]

May 14th, 2009

- Anarchist Bookfair turns 10
- Montreal refugees tell their personal stories
- Laura Whitehorn diffuses terror [3]
- Projet Montréal hope to reshape city politics
- Quebec town bans plastic bags

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