

VANIER ACADEMIC VOICES

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with Online Curation and Social
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Editor's Note

Once again, an abundance of excellent content precludes the inclusion of a lengthy editor's note, but I'd be remiss if I didn't take a few lines to thank all of the creative and generous contributors to this issue of *Vanier Academic Voices*. The fifth edition of Vanier's in-house pedagogical magazine is brimming with innovative ideas that are sure to spark reflection among readers. This semester marks an exciting time at Vanier: as we ring in a new decade, we will reflect on Vanier's 50 years offering outstanding education, and we will look forward as we develop the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan and Student Success Plan. Here's to 50 more years of collaboration!

Acknowledgments

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Building Expertise on Diversity Education at Vanier College

As one of the most diverse colleges in the country, Vanier College takes pride in the range of nationalities, languages, and identities represented among our students. As a signatory to CICA's Indigenous Education Protocol, Vanier is also committed to affirming the importance of Indigenous education. However, rather than being a finalized accomplishment to hold up on a pedestal, this diversity pushes us to think about how educational institutions can be best equipped to educate and support the students who come to us.

Vanier faculty and staff have long been active in research and projects related to diversity education. In fact, this work has been so extensive that the college is moving forward with the creation of a centre of research and expertise on the topic, which will allow us to highlight and support both existing projects and the creation of new initiatives. In this article, I will look at how we can understand diversity education; some examples of the work already being done at Vanier; and some of the next steps and considerations to keep in mind as plans for the centre develop.

What is diversity education?

Although "diversity" is sometimes understood mainly in ethnic or cultural terms, the diversity education work at Vanier generally takes a broader definition of diversity, looking at ethnocultural background, gender, language, sexuality, gender identity, religion, disability, class, and age, among other characteristics. As we look at all of those forms of diversity, there are many questions we can ask, including:

How do different forms of diversity intersect?

People's experiences and identities cannot be compartmentalized: someone is not a woman in some moments, and Indigenous in others, for example. The pieces of our identities do not simply add themselves to each other; rather, they interact with each other and influence each other. As many people reading this will be aware, Black feminist legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989 to refer to the ways that forms of discrimination based on categories like race and gender work together and reinforce each other. As educators, it behoves us to ask ourselves, what does intersectionality look like in the lives of our students?

Who do we imagine as the "default" student, and who is excluded from this image?

Do we assume a "typical" student to be someone who is around 18 years old and living at home with parents who support them financially? Do we assume them to be born in Canada and to speak English or French as a first language? Do we assume that reading a certain number of pages for homework will only take a short time? If

we talk in conversation about a typical student, are they more likely to be named "Jimmy" or "Johnny" than "Emilio," "Fatima," or "Rebecca"?

If so, what are we missing? It's true that certain experiences or backgrounds may be more common than others, and there's nothing wrong with that; the problem is what happens when students don't feel that we are ever taking their backgrounds or experiences into account, and when our words or actions implicitly exclude certain students over and over.

What barriers might students be facing?

At Vanier, we often talk about the diversity of our student body as a strength. This is true! However, if we are not as aware as we could be about the diverse experiences of our students, there may be barriers that have a disproportionate impact on some of our students. Students who speak English as a third or fourth language may be unfamiliar with certain figures of speech used in class. Students who are non-binary may face barriers to their physical education classes because of the gendered changerooms. Students with dyslexia may struggle to read PowerPoint slides that are cluttered or have insufficient contrast in colours. How can a greater attention to diversity help reduce some of these barriers?

What is the "education" piece of "diversity education"?

Having looked at what "diversity" means, let's look at the "education" side. Research and pedagogical projects aimed at diversity education might look at one or more of the following areas and prompt us to pose the following questions:

- **Course content:** what is the "canon" in particular fields? Whose voices are left out? How might all disciplines be enriched by ensuring a wider diversity of topics covered and authors read?
- **Pedagogy/teaching styles:** how can teaching styles be adapted in order to be accessible to students with a wide range of possible disabilities, language levels, and cultural points of reference? How can Indigenous pedagogies be incorporated into more disciplines?
- **Institutional policies:** are there policies around admission or assessment that might create disproportionate barriers for certain students? What considerations need to be kept in mind in order to ensure that policies don't impose a greater burden on some students than on others?
- **Services for students:** what does it look like for academic institutions to offer services (financial, psychological, disability-related,

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and others) that are culturally relevant, that respond to the needs of our students, and that are available at times that our students can access them?

- **Campus climate:** what does it mean for a campus to be safe and accessible to students, both physically (such as the presence of ramps and elevators) and in other ways (for example, options for washrooms that affirm people's gender identities)? How do we assess whether our campus climate affirms all students?
- **Representation:** what impact does representation of backgrounds and identities among faculty, staff, and administration have for students?

Who is already working on diversity education at Vanier?

Below is a non-exhaustive sample of some of the research on diversity education that Vanier faculty and staff have undertaken as part of their work at the college:

- The Critical Diversity in Higher Education working group organized a conference in 2017 looking at zones of “discomfort” when talking about issues around race, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, and language.
- Humanities teacher Leila Bdeir and I are collaborating on a project that examines the experiences of Muslim college students in Quebec.
- French teacher Philippe Gagné's work investigates “twinning” programs as a way of building connections across cultural and linguistic differences.
- Anthropology teacher Jacky Vallée has created an Indigenous Studies Certificate Program at the college as well as trainings and pedagogical materials for teachers wanting to incorporate Indigenous pedagogies into their work.
- French teacher Danielle Altidor worked with her students to publish a book about experiences of racism.
- Sociology teacher Sophia Grabowiecka's research examines students' experiences of diversity and belonging on campus.
- Humanities teacher Kim Matthews has studied the development of intercultural competence among students and is currently working on questions of food security.
- French teacher Katri Suhonen is working on research looking at feelings of inclusion and exclusion among allophone students in French classes.
- English teacher Maria Chiras, whose doctoral research focuses on discourses about allophone students, has prepared a report and strategic plan for a diversity education centre at Vanier.
- Year-long task forces of teachers representing a wide range of

programs have examined how to implement Universal Design for Learning in the Vanier context and have conducted research about accessibility barriers that students face.

What's next for diversity education at Vanier?

For the last few years, Vanier has been moving towards the creation of a centre of research and expertise on diversity education, which will bring together some of the existing work in this area and offer support and resources to further enhance such work. Among the anticipated outputs of this centre will be both scholarly publications and hands-on tools that other educators can use in supporting their students, revisiting course content, and contributing to a campus climate that affirms the diversity of its community members.

One element that has arisen recently as a key component of this work is that of community care. The work of engaging with themes around social justice and systemic oppression can be draining, and it is important to think about what collective care can look like among people doing this work. A recent workshop facilitated by Humanities teacher and community organizer Rushdia Mehreen raised questions about how Vanier faculty and staff can better support ourselves and each other in some of the work that we do. The workshop opened up discussions and ideas that we will be following up on in the future. My intention is to weave some of these ideas into the centre of diversity education from the outset as a way of opening up new possibilities for how to think about the research process and the people involved in it.

In her book *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, feminist scholar Sara Ahmed writes that “we need to keep asking what we are doing with diversity. If diversity is to remain a question, it is not one that can be solved” (p. 17). Throughout her study, Ahmed cautions against seeing diversity as a *fait accompli* or as a public relations exercise. Instead, she argues that the real work often comes through critical reflection about ourselves, our institutions, and the world in which we live. As we move forward in looking at diversity education at Vanier, it is important to continue to commit to asking hard questions and not shying away from the difficult and often uncomfortable work of addressing racism and other systemic forms of oppression.



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Time Flies When You're Focused and Having Fun!

Introduction

Few places are as anxiety provoking as the second language (L2) classroom. There, learners at all levels of mastery often experience feelings of inauthenticity and incompetence as they develop new linguistic and intercultural skills. The research community refers to the resulting emotional state as foreign language anxiety, a situation-specific form of anxiety, which implies that it can even affect individuals who may not experience anxiety in other situations.

Given the anxiety inherent to the second language classroom, it is not surprising that researchers focused on the effects of this negative emotional state when they began studying the relationship between affect and second language acquisition in the 1970s. Numerous studies have since shown that this type of anxiety significantly interferes with learning comprehension and production (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). A suggested cause for these observed learning deficits is that anxiety hijacks the cognitive resources crucial for

Positive emotions such as joy, interest, contentment, pride and love have a broadening effect on cognition and encourage engagement, creativity and exploration, thus fostering learning and a sense personal well-being.

learning, such as attention and memory, automatically redirecting them from the learning task toward the source of the anxiety (Eysenck, 1979).

Most early models used to study emotional states looked at negative emotions, such as anxiety, which restrict cognitive resources and engender avoidance behaviour. However, more recently, research has begun to suggest that exclusively embracing this perspective paints only part of the picture. According to the broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions such as joy, interest, contentment, pride and love have a broadening effect on cognition and encourage engagement, creativity and exploration, thus fostering learning and a sense personal well-being (Fredrickson, 2013).

The complex interplay between negative and positive emotional states in the context of second language learning raises questions regarding how teachers can create optimal learning environments

for their students. More specifically, devising ways in which to reduce anxiety may not suffice when teachers strive to improve their learning outcomes. Research findings provide strong evidence that teachers should also foster positive emotional states in their students (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Cultivating the *flow* state is one way of achieving this goal.

What is *flow*?

Characterized by intense concentration and involvement, the *flow state* is one of the most extensively researched positive emotional states. When experiencing this peak motivational state, individuals lose track of time and self-consciousness while performing challenging but doable tasks (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi coined the term *flow state* in 1975 and carried out pioneering research on the construct. Early *flow state* research aimed to understand the conditions that allow artists and

athletes to flourish by entering into concentrated, trance-like states, losing themselves in their work for hours (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Ever since, the concept of a highly focused mental state conducive to productivity has been widely referred to across a variety of fields.

To define the characteristics of this optimal experience of *flow*, Csikszentmihalyi (1990) and his colleagues collected data from thousands of participants using an ingenious method. Participants wore a pager that, when randomly activated, incited them to stop and record what they were doing and how they were feeling. Participants experiencing these optimal emotional states were not engaged in leisure activities, as one might expect, but rather in stimulating and meaningful tasks for which they perceived themselves as having:

• skills matching the challenges
 • clear goals and immediate feedback on progress and outcomes
 • total awareness of actions and deep concentration
 • a sense of total control
 • a loss of self-consciousness
 • a sense of time flying

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Csikszentmihalyi refers to these as the *elements of enjoyment*. Interestingly, *flow* was the word many participants used to describe these intensely enjoyable and productive situations.



Csikszentmihalyi argues that humans expand and flourish while in a *flow state*, and research suggests that participants experiencing *flow* exhibit exploratory behaviors, pushing them beyond current skill levels (Trevino & Webster, 1992) and enhancing task performance (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Jackson & Roberts, 1992).

Flow and the second language classroom

The *elements of enjoyment* referred to by Csikszentmihalyi closely resemble conditions that most second language teachers and researchers would consider favorable to learning. It is, therefore, not surprising that a small number of studies (e.g., Egbert, 2003; Kirchoff, 2011) have already looked at *flow* in the classroom. For instance, Egbert (2003) observed significant *flow* in a text chat activity and Kirchoff (2011) detected elevated *flow* levels during an extensive reading course.

However, while these studies show that *flow* does exist in the classroom, they do not tell us much about the specific dimensions or characteristics of tasks, activities and other teacher practices that are favorable to *flow*. Identifying those characteristics would allow us create a framework to help teachers render current practices more enjoyable by tweaking specific aspects, such as adding a game element to a current activity, or rendering it more kinesthetic and interactive. We believe that identifying specific *flow*-inducing activity characteristics will help harness positive emotions in the second language classroom and promote engagement, creativity and exploration.

A facilitating methodology

In an ongoing pilot study, we developed a methodology to help address this theory. We are currently working with ten Cégep teachers of French and English as a second language and their students (n=300). Each teacher chooses five activities that students evaluate for *flow* at various points throughout a semester. In order to evaluate an activity, teachers and students fill out separate online Google Form questionnaires.

The teacher questionnaire has 25 items defining the activity characteristics, which include items such as:

- the targeted competencies (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics)
- the competency modes (e.g., listening, speaking, interacting, reading writing)
- the interactive dynamics (whether the activity was performed individually, in pairs or in groups)
- the teacher-student dynamics (whether the activity was teacher or student centered)
- pre-task planning, (whether or not students had time to prepare before completing the activity)
- competition (whether or not the activity was competitive)
- timing (whether or not the activity was timed)

On their end, students anonymously complete a *flow* questionnaire, developed by Webster, Trevino and Ryan (1993), containing 14 items. The evaluate the items using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). Here is a sample of the items:

- This task excited my curiosity.
- This task was interesting in itself.
- I felt that I had no control over what was happening during this task.
- When doing this task, I was aware of distractions.
- This task bored me.
- I would do this task even if it were not required.

Since we wanted to gather *flow* data on a wide range of activity types, we encouraged the participating teachers to evaluate their most engaging ones as well as their least engaging ones. Thus, we asked teachers to evaluate student *flow* after grammar quizzes, games, collaborative writing exercises, oral presentations, online vocabulary exercises, conversation tasks, etc.

The preliminary results from 24 tasks (424 respondents) suggest that games and other interactive activities conducted in a group setting, involving movement, an element of competition and ongoing feedback generate significantly more *flow* in the L2 classroom. We also observed several trends approaching significance suggesting that students experience more *flow* in non-evaluative situations and during timed activities. More data will be needed, however, to see if these trending factors do indeed significantly influence *flow*.

Based on this pilot study, we suggest the following learning activity characteristics for creating *flow* in the second language classroom:

- **Gamifying activities:** Because games are some of the highest-rated activities in our study, it is a great idea to create both team and individual leaderboards or to use Socrative, a free web application which easily gamifies classroom quizzes and exercises.
- **Getting students into conversations:** It turns out that students love to have both free-form and guided conversations with other students. For example, different Information Gap Activities rated highly in *flow* in our pilot study. One example of an Information Gap Activity is Complete the Text where students receive two versions of a story with different missing information. Students must read and talk together in order to fill in the missing parts of the story.
- **Timing activities:** When starting an activity, display the Google online stopwatch application on the whiteboard to give your students just enough pressure to move them into *flow*.

In addition, we suggest that teachers create activities that combine the most engaging activity characteristics from our study to create even more *flow* for their students. For instance, paired dictation, where two students sit together with one student writing what his/her partner reads out loud, is an engaging activity because it already encourages conversation and negotiation between pairs. In order to make it even more engaging, teachers can add both movement and a game element to the activity. The activity called Read and Run, where pairs of students complete a dictation competition walking around the room, is one of the highest-rated activities for *flow* in the pilot study.

Ongoing research

We are excited about the opportunity to continue to work on this study in order to bring teachers and students more scientifically backed recommendations for making learning more *flow* inducing and more engaging. We would like to thank Vanier College for supporting our contribution to the project through the Vanier Development and Support Opportunities Grant (DSO) we received. We are also excited to have received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

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Developing 21st Century Skills with Online Curation and Social Annotation

“The times they are a’changin’,” Bob Dylan first sang 55 years ago. Today, it doesn’t take a folk song to remind us that change is afoot; we can’t help but notice it. Consider how the smartphone and cloud computing have changed the way we access information, consume media, entertain ourselves, and communicate. We see changes in our students as well. Increasingly, teachers wonder how to engage and motivate students who have more access to information and are surrounded by more stimuli than previous generations. Then there are the changes occurring in the workforce thanks to emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, extended reality, robotics, and the internet of things (Philbeck & Davis, 2018, 18). As educators, how do we prepare our students for this new world when many of the jobs of the future have yet to be created?

While the future is unknown, it’s clear that change and continuous learning are now a constant. So too is an overload of information. An important key to preparing our students for the future is to help them develop transversal 21st century skills that will allow them to adapt to new situations and challenges: skills such as digital and media literacy, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and adaptability (Humans Wanted, 2018, 26-27).

Two strategies that are useful for developing 21st century skills are online curation (OC) and social annotation (SA).

Online Curation

Online curation is increasingly recognized as a must-have skill used for managing information overload. It involves

- purposefully collecting online content on a given topic;
- selecting the most relevant or interesting information;
- summarizing its significance for the collection;
- organizing it; and
- sharing it on a cloud-based platform.

Cloud-based platforms like Netboard.me and Padlet facilitate publication and collaboration. Students can curate individually or collaboratively and receive feedback on what they have curated from their teacher and peers. They can also publish their work to the class or the web instantly. The strategy affords opportunities for students

to develop the following skills: research, digital literacy, critical thinking, organization, communication, and collaboration.

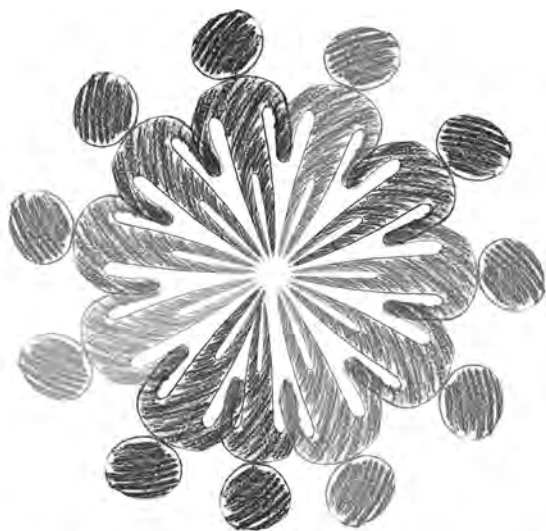
Social Annotation

To curate well students must also know how to consume media critically. Social annotation can help students learn to do so. Also, cloud-based SA platforms like Perusall, Hypothes.is, or Classroom Salon¹ allow students not only to comment on elements of a discourse and see each other’s comments, they can also reply to each other’s annotations. Students can co-construct their understanding of a discourse while offering constructive feedback to peers and developing their ability to self-reflect.



"The Curation Process" by Patti Kingsmill.
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¹ To read reviews of 17 collaborative platforms useful for curation or social annotation, visit <http://collab.vanierpsi.profweb.ca/>



The Vanier OC/SA Project

New strategies often require new approaches and resources to implement them. With that goal in mind, Kelly MacDonald (Social Science), Heather Roffey (Biology), Judy Ingerman (Humanities) and Patti Kingsmill (Pedagogical Support and Innovation) formed the OCSA team. Our aim was threefold: learn to integrate OC and SA into the classroom, develop instructional strategies and resources to facilitate this process, and promote these to our colleagues. The OCSA team has occasionally been joined by other teachers: Jennifer Mitchell (Humanities) who is experimenting with OC, Lissiene Neiva (Biology), Kevin Lenton (Physics), and Aurora Flewwelling-Skup (English), who are implementing SA into their courses.

The metaliterate learner is someone who not only consumes, but actively produces and shares content in participatory, collaborative digital environments while reflecting on their learning and how they behave and interact constructively online.

Our first step was to familiarize ourselves with metaliteracy²—a comprehensive framework developed at SUNY³ which encompasses multiple literacies while promoting critical thinking, metacognition, and collaboration. We found the framework useful as it encompasses real world and digital environments. The metaliterate learner is someone who not only consumes, but actively produces and shares content in participatory, collaborative digital environ-

ments while reflecting on their learning and how they behave and interact constructively online.

Next, we defined our objectives for using OC and SA in the classroom. Following a backward design⁴ process, we identified learning objectives aligned with the course competencies, determined how students' achievement of these would be assessed, and developed learning activities to support the attainment of the objectives. Finally, we defined the digital learning environment needed for these activities.⁵ In the winter 2019 semester, Heather and Kelly chose to integrate OC into their courses using Netboard.me, and Judy and Lissiene introduced SA to their students using Perusall.com. In fall 2019, Heather, Kelly, and Judy integrated both curation and social annotation into their courses, while Lissiene, Kevin, and Aurora incorporated social annotation.

We also took time to introduce students to the platform they would be working on, providing time in class to try it out while we offered support. This brief training helped lessen students' anxiety, as did our sharing with them the fact that we were experimenting with the platform and with new learning strategies and so would value their input and feedback on both the tools and their learning experience.

The OCSA team met weekly so that we could share our experiences with OC and SA. We debriefed and tweaked the tools we were developing, searched for and developed additional resources when needed, and kept a running list of tips for instructors wishing to adopt OC and SA. Eventually, these turned into three guidelines:

- Integrating Online Collaboration into a Course
- Integrating Online Curation into a Course
- Integrating Social Annotation into a Course

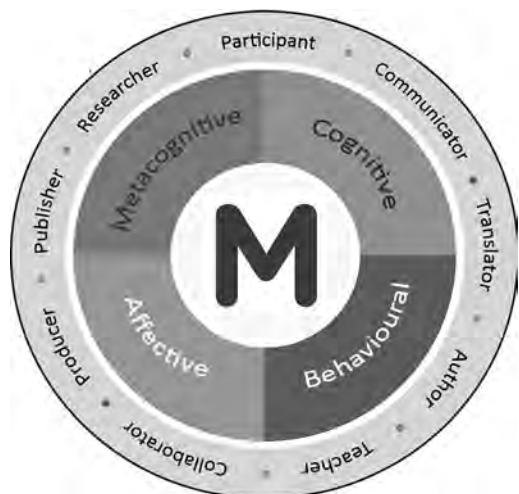
Meanwhile, we curated resources on topics related to OC and SA, such as the evaluation of digital sources, metaliteracy, technopedagogy, assessment, and online collaboration. When we couldn't find the resources we needed for our students, we created our own. Recognizing that many students are unaccustomed to interacting online in a professional or academic context, we developed 7

² "About." Metaliteracy.org. Retrieved from <https://technoped.netboard.me/ocsa/?tab=63326>

³ Developed by Tom Mackey and Trudi Jacobson at State University of New York, Albany.

⁴ "Understanding by Design." *Center for Teaching*. Retrieved from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/understanding-by-design/>

⁵ To help with this process, we used the Technoped Activity Design Template available at <https://technoped.netboard.me/ocsa/?w=741788>



“The Metaliterate Learner.” Figure 3.1 in *Metaliteracy: Reinventing Information Literacy to Empower Learners*, adapted by Patti Kingsmill for the OCSA Project, is licensed under CC-BY-NC-SA.

Netiquette Rules. When students hesitated to critique peers, we created 5 Tips on Offering Constructive Feedback. Drawing on her experience of integrating curation into her history course, Kelly created a sample curation activity with step-by-step instructions for teachers. And as part of a MOOC on metaliteracy that Patti took with SUNY, she developed a sample curated site. Finally, we developed various sample marking rubrics:

- Holistic curation rubric
- Descriptive marking rubric and checklist for curation
- Hybrid curation and peer review rubric
- Holistic rubric for peer-reviewing curated sites
- Descriptive rubric for social annotation

The online teaching tool turned out to be the secret to creating a more animated, personable IRL classroom!

These resources are housed on our OCSA Netboard under the tabs Teaching Curation, Teaching SA, Online Collaboration, Technopedagogy, and Metaliteracy.

Scaffolding Student Learning

To scaffold their learning of these new strategies, we provided students with clear instructions, marking rubrics, and the above-mentioned tips. We also started with small, simple activities to prepare students for more complex tasks. For instance, Judy introduced SA with a brief, accessible article, instructing students to focus comments on structural and rhetorical elements. Kelly and Heather introduced OC by asking students to choose and annotate one source by synthesizing and categorizing it as a primary, secondary, academic, popularized, or commercial source. Students were provided with criteria for choosing and categorizing sources. To help them peer review curated sources, students were given several resources: the criteria for choosing sources they used when curating, tips on how to make respectful, constructive comments, and a marking rubric on providing peer feedback.

Scaffolding also occurred organically: thanks to the collaborative nature of the activities, students supported one another during the learning process. For example, not only did Kelly require students to work in groups, she paired the groups. Twinned teams then worked separately on the same topic. Once each team’s work was complete, the twinned groups reviewed each other’s curated sources. Because the teams were assessing source choices related to a topic they too had researched, they could make more informed comments. As well, because students had access to the work produced by all groups on the shared platform, teachers could draw class attention to well-written comments or well-curated sources, using peer work as a model for others.

Reflections on OC and SA

Overall, we observed many benefits to using OC and SA. When surveyed, the majority of students recognized several benefits of curating and appreciated engaging in collaborative learning. They agreed that doing so helped them conduct research, practice synthesizing discourses, improve their work, deepen their understanding of course content, receive or give feedback to peers, share work with others, and organize ideas. Similarly, students in Judy’s course reported that SA helped them identify and understand the rhetorical elements and structures

of a text, collaborate with peers, deepen their understanding of course content and concepts, offer constructive feedback to others, and organize their ideas. Lissiene’s students reported that Perusall helped them either discuss course content or collaborate with

peers. Several students appreciated being able to ask questions and read student perspectives on a text. Lissiene also noted that thanks to SA, her students asked more varied questions than in previous semesters.

⁶ “Integrating Online Curation and Social Annotation into Courses” published on VTE’s website provides more detail on student and teacher observations about the benefits and challenges of using OC and SA and of working collaboratively. Much of the text in the first part of this article was taken, with permission, from that text.

We also faced various challenges during this process, including resistance on the part of some students to engage in an active learning approach; balancing the right length and frequency of SA readings to engage students in the discourse while not overwhelming them; discovering what sort of guidance promotes thoughtful annotations; and working with a new platform and its idiosyncrasies. We invite you to read about the benefits and challenges of integrating OC and SA into the classroom in our article on the VTE website, published after our first semester working together.⁶ Here, however, with the hindsight of two semesters' work on the OCSA project, we offer the reflections of OCSA team teachers on the experience of integrating these strategies into the classroom.

Kelly MacDonald—History

As a history teacher, I often struggled to get students to engage with complicated historical texts and material. Classes like Ancient Rome are filled with juicy facts and harrowing stories, but the content is still weighty and the concepts can be complicated, especially for CEGEP-level students.

Using Online Curation in a history class solved a lot of problems for me. It allowed me to give students access to a wealth of primary materials, as well as secondary materials, for minimal cost.⁷ Having students comment on and analyze materials in an online platform compelled them to engage with the material and each other on a more regular basis. Finally, I got much better insight into what students understood or were confused by. I was also able to see what they hated and what they really loved about the course, in real time and not just through the end-of-semester evaluation.

Over the duration of the semester, students' ability to source, analyze and discuss historical material improved significantly. I was even able to incorporate some of their Netboards into my own presentations, which students loved. This practice created a wonderful interactive dynamic between the students and me—they felt valued for their work and took pride in their contributions to the class, and I was grateful for a little extra guidance from my students.

Using online curation helped students go deeper into their analysis of material and become more tech savvy and more involved in the classroom. In the same vein, the practice of commenting online made students more comfortable speaking up in class, providing feedback on each other's work, and engaging in debate in class. Yes, in the greatest of ironies, the online teaching tool turned out to be the secret

to creating a more animated, personable IRL⁸ classroom! It was delightful.

Heather Roffey—Biology

I think that the greatest impact that online curation activities have had on my students is a recognition of the different types of sources they access for information. My students regularly search online to supplement the subjects we discuss in the classroom. They may be seeking information to answer a question that arises during our time together, or they may be seeking confirmation of previously acquired knowledge when they are working independently. I think that these situations apply to nearly all students. Our students know how to find answers to their questions quickly, but are they taking the time to assess the reliability of the sources they are using?

One of my main objectives for using online curation in my class was to have students reflect upon their source choices and not just choose those that appear first in their search results. I tasked students, who worked in groups, with creating curated content in order to educate their peers on a topic relevant to the course material. As part of the curation process, students justified why they chose one source over others. They noted author expertise; peer-review of, or opportunity for, feedback on the source; relevancy to the topic; and appropriateness for their target audience. Googling online information has become a significant part of the acquisition of knowledge in the 21st century. We cannot assume that our students know how to sort through this information. It is important that we guide our students in the selection and curation of online content.

Judy Ingerman—Humanities

As the senior (age, not experience) and most technically-challenged member of the OCSA team, I see investigating both the learning and teaching of online curation and social annotation in the classroom in the digital age as a means of blurring the lines of traditional hierarchal knowledge-delivery systems.

These enquiries are well suited for the Humanities Knowledge category course *Life as an Experiment*. The basic goal of the course is for students to think about how they learn, from within and without. In the digital space of Netboard.me, students uploaded academic articles of interest to the

⁷ Kelly used Netboard.me to model curation to her students by sharing open access sources with them on the Netboard platform.

⁸ I.e., In the Real World.

experiment they were about to launch and published three annotated bibliographies from their selection. Prior to submitting these to be evaluated, students had the opportunity to review each other's work and add compliments, comments, and critiques in a classroom forum. Following this, students had the opportunity to re-evaluate their work and decide whether they would like to make changes prior to the final submission date. This exercise addresses many of the tenets of the course:

- **LEARNING IS A PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** - As the platform is new to me as well, there are no 'experts' in the classroom, so all of us work through the process of embarking on a new digital platform together. This loosens the academic 'apron strings' and for perhaps the first time in students' lives, asking their teacher the question "is this good?" is meaningless and absurd.
- **STUDENTS REFLECT ON THEIR LEARNING STYLE** - This is the early stages of meta-cognition (thinking about thinking) in that students are aware that their work will be examined by their peers prior to being seen by the teacher; therefore, they view their responsibility to and for the work in a new light.
- **LEARNING IS COOPERATIVE** - Students have an opportunity to see and comment on others' work, gaining new insight and perspectives on how to approach an assignment.
- **LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE** - The digital platform allows for and reinforces productive collaboration as a means of building knowledge and wisdom.
- **LEARNING IS A PROCESS, NOT A DESTINATION** - By overtly inserting editing and proof-reading into the project, students can see the value of both and are more likely to make it a practice in other learning situations.
- **LEARNING IS ABOUT QUESTIONING** - Students can learn to evaluate the comments and critiques of others before making the decision to alter their final assignment.
- **THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE** - As the exercise is digital, the skill that is now known as "netiquette" can be addressed in a real situation – not just a lecture in class.

An auxiliary benefit of using a collaborative platform to share sources is that students may discover interesting articles posted by their peers that they may want to read or use for their experiment. Another benefit is that students seem to gain more confidence in their decision-making abilities after repeating this kind of exercise repeatedly.

We debriefed and tweaked the tools we were developing, searched for and developed additional resources when needed, and kept a running list of tips for instructors wishing to adopt OC and SA.

Overall, the experience of working with OC and SA has been a positive one. Even the challenges we faced helped us learn and inspired us to improve our approaches. This past term, our focus was on honing our strategies and developing presentations on OC and SA to share with colleagues in the winter 2020 semester. The OCSA team became a SALTISE Learning Community, allowing us to share our work with a wider audience. In fact, our SALTISE OCSA page⁹ was featured on their main website and in a fall SALTISE newsletter. We have also been invited to share OC and SA with the Dawson Active Learning Community and at the SALTISE conference next semester. We are also planning to submit a proposal to present at the AQPC conference in Quebec City this June. However, a central goal for the team is to share OC and SA with the Vanier community. Kelly, Judy, and Heather hope to present OC and SA to departments and programs in winter 2020 and to share with individual teachers. So please do contact them if you are interested in learning more. As well, Kelly is the recipient of a SALTISE grant that will allow her to continue working on the integration of OC in the classroom and to investigate opportunities for situating OC within the existing research on collaborative learning. The grant should allow her to support teachers interested in trying out one or both of these strategies. Our hope is that interest in OC and SA, as well as the power of collaborative learning, will continue to grow and thus help teachers support students' development of much-needed 21st century skills, all the while increasing motivation and engagement.

<https://www.vteducation.org/en/articles/collaborative-learning/integrating-online-curation-and-social-annotation-courses>



⁹ <https://www.saltise.ca/learning-community/online-curation-and-social-annotation/>



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Life as an Object: Teaching Lived Experiences Alongside Theories

One of the fundamental challenges for the educator, maybe more so for one who trades in the fields of humanities, social sciences, or liberal arts, is to be able to share the real, concrete, and empirical manifestations of the curriculum. Although theory is undeniably important, providing purely conceptual and abstract tools to our students may not be the best way to foster their understanding of the reality of lived experiences. Preferably, the educator should operate with a constant back-and-forth between lived experience and its theorization. This can be achieved by reflecting on the works of literary writers in relation to the works of sociologists.

The Relationship Between Literature and Social Scientific Discourse

The role of the sociologist is to debunk everyday notions. The distinction between everyday notions and social scientific discourse operates through an epistemological rupture that distinguishes the former from the latter (Bourdieu, 2001, p.172). Without this distinction, no theoretical knowledge would be possible.

In his canonical writings about the relationship between the ideal and the material, Karl Marx explains how everyday notions act as ideologies (Marx, 1972). We know that our minds process information through mental shortcuts, analogies and generalizations (Massey, 2007, p.9). Without this inductive generalization, our minds would always rely on deductive reasoning, which would translate into an

We need to be able to talk about “race” and ask ourselves questions to which both sociologists and writers have long found thought-provoking answers.

energy vacuum to the extent that mundane acts would not be achievable (Massey, 2007, p. 9). We also know that schemas are necessary to organize the world around us into cognitive categories, and that experimental knowledge might be ill-suited for basic reasoning (Brubaker, 2004, p.71). For example, a child will learn that the stove can burn his body based on a categorization of warm and cold based on experience. Yet, the same child would be ill-advised to test if the stove burns his hands, then subsequently try his feet, his mouth, and so on. All this is to say that both philosophy and cognitive psychology allow us to understand that different types of knowledge operate in a hierarchy of functions rather than in a hierarchy of importance.

It is at this point in our reasoning that we need to come back to Marx. His insights on ideologies as veils that hide the true nature of economic disparities has been the object of many scholarly debates,

yet out of the debates comes a contemporary consensus: the relationship between the organization of society and its mental production is not a pure, simple, causal one (Marx, 1972). Cultural production reflects the organization of production, the allocation of resources, and the fundamental antagonisms between groups in any mode of production. These fundamental antagonisms are the sites of concrete struggles for the distribution of resources, privileges and their inherent coercion. In other words, the narrative of a movie like *The Pursuit of Happyness*, which emulates meritocracy, is as much a reflection of the mode of production as the novel *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, which criticizes the exploitation and sanitary disaster of the meat-packing industry at the turn of the 20th century in the United States. Both the social relations and their symbolic counterparts are central in the understanding of lived experience.

Based on Marx’s insight on the relationship between the organization of society and its mental production, literature and social scientific discourses might not be as distinct as we may at first think. My goal in the following lines is to demonstrate, with three specific examples of sociological topics (the institutionalized horrors of slavery, Jim Crow, and 20th century European antisemitism), how the contribution of three specific writers (Morrison, Faulkner, and Kafka) can help integrate a pedagogy that provides both a sensible experience and an explanation of the topic. This, in turn, can be a valuable tool for the classroom.

Hauntings of the Past

Slavery is the total control of the body of the enslaved, all the way from the hands to the reproductive system. This state of dehumanization is fueled by complete coercion: physical and mental torture. It is almost

impossible to imagine. The instructor who engages with their students on a purely abstract level fails to communicate the intense state of pain, humiliation and dispossession experienced by slaves, yet slavery is an important topic to examine because it gives us insight into the persistence of acts of racism today.

The growing of indigo, cotton, and tobacco on the territories that were stolen from the Indigenous peoples of the United States led to a growing demand for slaves and their labour. The latter was achieved by an increase in the demand of picking by the slaves (Baptist, 2014, p.103). If quotas were not achieved, the slaves were disciplined with physical abuse (Baptist, 2014, p.113). The fear that resulted from such violent coercion led many slaves to develop ambidexterity (the usage of both hands for picking at the same time), which, in turn, led to heightened expectations of productivity and further abuse (Bap-

tist, 2014, p.113). The growing demand on the bodies of new slaves became problematic with the prohibition of the importation of slaves in the United States in 1807. To address this issue, the slave owners resorted to a practice that was already common and widespread in the Antebellum South.

Sensible experience obtained from immersion in a literary work complements the social scientific understanding obtained from theoretical texts; the use of literature is a pedagogical strategy that activates both.

The first anti-miscegenation laws of the Antebellum South never formally enforced prohibition of sex between white men and Black women (Khanna, 2011, p.27). Indeed, sexual assaults from the masters were incentivized by the production of offspring who became enslaved themselves and were valued higher than non-mixed slaves (Khanna, 2011, p.28). With the abolition of the slave trade and the growing demand for cotton in the late 1800s, the Antebellum South began the practise of “breeding” slaves as an economic strategy to fuel a domestic slave trade (Baptist, 2014, p.238). Babies born into slavery were not only offspring of the masters and assaulted Black women, but children of slaves themselves. Most were separated from their families, and many were sold in the new territories stolen from Indigenous people.

The economic demands of the northern states and England, which were both undergoing massive industrialization, contributed to the perpetuation of the mental and physical torture of slaves (Baptist, 2014, p.321). A sociological explanation such as this, which provides social factors for the understanding of a social transformation, can never truly allow us to grasp the horrors of slavery. It is missing the stories of the subjugated themselves. This is where literature can provide a way to share a sensible experience that can lead to a better learning experience for the student interested in this social issue.

Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved* has provided a useful tool to deepen students’ understanding of slavery and its consequences on the enslaved. The novel tells the story of Sethe, an enslaved woman who wins her freedom by fleeing North. The narrative occurs years after she escapes bondage and is set in a house that is haunted. We slowly understand that the ghost that haunts her is her child, whom she murdered to flee the plantation. The haunting in *Beloved* is an analogy both of Sethe’s remorse and of the fact that slavery is still plaguing her existence. While a full appreciation of the novel is, of course, enhanced by comprehensive knowledge of the sociological context of American slavery, an understanding of the sociological context is more complete with an appreciation of the emotional and psychological impacts of slavery, which is made more accessible through the literary form. Sensible experience obtained from immersion in a literary work complements the social scientific understanding obtained from theoretical texts; the use of literature is a pedagogical strategy that activates both.

The Past Is Not Even Past

Following the end of the civil war in 1865, the passage of the 14th and 15th amendments guaranteed constitutional rights to Blacks. But with the failed experience of Reconstruction and the ruling of Plessy vs. Fergusson, Blacks in the South were still experiencing the concrete manifestations of white supremacy. One-drop rules, which classified individuals with any trace of African ancestry as Black, were voted in at various state levels, establishing a formal racialization of Blacks and Whites (Khanna, 2011, p.31). Such legislation was fundamental for the smooth functioning of Jim Crow laws; they were needed to delimit who fell on which side of the color line. The Plessy vs. Fergusson ruling of 1896 made Jim Crow Laws constitutional, initiating the formal segregation of Blacks from Whites in all social institutions, social spaces, and intimate relationships (Khanna, 2011, p.31). As an educator, it is sometimes difficult to explain how the legacy of slavery overlaps with continued systematic racism against Blacks. I believe that the work of the writer William Faulkner helps to illustrate this complexity.

William Faulkner lived in Mississippi when the Jim Crow laws were in full effect. In his novel *Absalom! Absalom!*, Faulkner tells the story of Thomas Sutpen, a poor white man from the Appalachian Mountains who wants to build an estate and a name for his family. He embarks on a trip to Saint-Domingue where, working on the plantations, he accumulates wealth and has a relationship with an emancipated Black woman with whom he has a child, Charles-Étienne Bon. Sutpen leaves his wife in Saint-Domingue and his son in Louisiana and arrives in Mississippi where he coerces Indigenous people to “sell” him some land. He starts a plantation with slaves and marries a white woman with whom he has children. Sutpen’s dream of a respectable plantation life is shattered when his first son Charles-Étienne Bon befriends his son from his new marriage, Henry Sutpen. Charles-Étienne Bon is set on marrying the sister of Henry Sutpen, his own sister. When Henry discovers that Charles-Étienne Bon is Black, he murders him, not because of the transgression of the taboo of incest but because the transgression of the taboo of the color line. *Absalom! Absalom!* is an analogy of the fundamental horrors that are foundational to the Jim Crow South: the land stolen from Indigenous people, slavery, the Black wife and Mulatto children abandoned, and the murder of a Black son and brother because of his attempt to become a regular American citizen.

The color line is explored in other works of Faulkner. His novel *Light in August* explores the lynching of an Octoroon (a man with 1/8 of black blood who looks white but is black according to one-drop rule laws). The victim, Joe Christmas, is accused of killing a white woman—an accusation that was often invoked during lynching in the South, even if it wasn’t true—yet, Faulkner explains that the real norm that Christmas transgressed and the reason for his murder was that he *acted* “just like a white man, and that was what made the people upset.”

As an educator who has taught racism in a number of classes, I've noticed that the topic of Jim Crow racism is of great interest to my students. I've found that a nuanced understanding of the impact of this system of white supremacy is best developed by engaging with the narratives of powerful writers like Faulkner who share the sensible experience of people living under Jim Crow laws. Encountering the hate, pain, betrayal, and violence that characterized the period through literature helps students grasp the sociological phenomenon of Jim Crow racism and understand how its legacy bleeds into our society even to this day.

A Prismatic Category

Another topic that I approach with my students is Judeophobia/antisemitism. I use the novels of Franz Kafka—terribly lucid metaphors and stories about life in central Europe in the 20th century—to help students engage with the ordeal of living in a totalitarian state or experiencing the rise of a discriminatory doctrine that structures itself into a racist, fascist state. The work of Maynard (2017) and Coulthard (2014), among others, asserts that while Quebec society is not void of racism, it is nonetheless a challenge to bring a typical Quebecker born after 2000 to an understanding of what it might mean to experience such terrible events. It would be naïve to think that without having experienced it ourselves we could fully appreciate the impact of living under a brutal dictatorship, but it our duty to remember and try to enrich our experience with knowledge and empathy.

The Trial by Kafka takes place in an unknown city at an unknown time. A man is woken up in his bedroom one morning by two police officers who arrest him. He is informed that he is free to go while his trial is ongoing. The novel then takes a nightmarish turn as the protagonist tries to win his trial even though he never knows what he stands accused of. The novel would almost be funny if it weren't for the fact that the novel was written in 1915 in the future Czech Republic, 24 years before the invasion of the country by Germany and its integration into the racist and totalitarian empire of the Third Reich.

One important challenge I've found in my experience as an educator teaching antisemitism—a problem that Kafka's writing can help us to grasp—is to understand the specificities of this brand of racism, which racializes religion. One way of explaining these specificities is to understand the differences between middle age Judeophobia and modern antisemitism. Whereas the first is a type of discrimination and prejudices based on the rejection of the Jewish faith, the second is a modern racist ideology that racializes (that is, forcefully putting someone into a “racial” group) people of Jewish faith (Dufour 2012). This means that conversion was always a possibility to escape persecution in medieval Judeophobia, while it is impossible with modern antisemitism.

With the modernization process instilled by the French Revolution, a fair amount of European countries proceeded to what they called “Jewish emancipation” (Rodrigues, 2010). This meant that the old discriminatory practices of Judeophobia (prohibiting the practice of law by Jews, ghettoization, and the prescription that Jews wear particular articles of clothing) were all abolished on the condition that

Europeans of Jewish faith would assimilate in the “universal” national culture. Yet with all the great social transformations of modernity and the explosion of new political ideologies, this period corresponds to the birth of conservative antisemitism, an ideology that scapegoats Europeans of Jewish faith as being responsible for the destruction of the old world (Rodrigue 2010, p. 196). Medieval Judeophobic tropes are the basis for modern antisemitism. In the twisted logic of the early anti-Semites, if Europeans of Jewish faith benefited from the gains of modernity, they must be the ones responsible for those changes that were considered undesirable to conservatives (Bauman, 1989). Furthermore, since Europeans of Jewish faith were, after all, Europeans who just so happened to have a different faith, and the old stigma markers of the Middle Ages (Judenhut, rouelle) were now forbidden, the anti-Semite saw his enemy everywhere, like a lurking fifth column. To paraphrase Hanna Arendt, you could always convert from being Jewish, but there is no escape from Jewishness. In the mind of the anti-Semite, the European of Jewish faith is a different species that cannot co-exist with non-Jewish Europeans.

Many of us have seen the horrific propaganda of Nazism—images the Nazis and their collaborators propagating images of rats as an allegory of the “threat” of Europeans of Jewish faith to the health of the body of the nation. For many Jews, it was as if they had been transformed into vermin in the eyes of their neighbours. Needless to say, the central metaphor of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, wherein a normal man becomes a despised monster in the eyes of his own family, serves as a powerful tool to activate students' understanding of dehumanization. Of course, the writing of Kafka extends beyond issues of racism and illustrates various social scientific issues. But, in the difficult topic of the specificity of anti-Semitism, Kafka has provided a useful tool.

Conclusion

The communist philosopher Slavoj Žižek speaks of an ancient Chinese curse that goes something like this: *may you live in interesting times*. With the current social issues of police brutality against Blacks, ongoing colonization and encroachment on Indigenous lands by settlers, the rise of right-wing populism, and the increase of both Islamophobia and antisemitism, these days we live in what seems like an interesting (and depressing) time for sociologists. But it seems like it is also a time where we need to be able to talk about “race” and ask ourselves questions to which both sociologists and writers have long found thought-provoking answers. In the context of teaching, this means that we need to be able to link the lived (or at least empathic) experiences of students with abstract theories. The latter enables them to understand the systemic processes at work and how they can tackle them, while the former enables them to understand that their daily challenges are intrinsic to sociological knowledge.



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Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence

Imagine this scenario...

You receive a MIO from a student that they're hoping to talk to you before class. Maybe you've noticed that they seem distracted lately, or that they've been absent more frequently than usual. Maybe you haven't noticed anything at all. You find them waiting outside your office. They come into the room and you notice their hands are shaking. They start by telling you they've been struggling and are hoping for an extension on their paper. They go into their story and begin sharing with you their experiences of sexual violence.

What do you do? How should you respond?

**Disclaimer: Any likenesses to real persons is unintentional. Although this narrative has been inspired by real teachers and students, it does not reflect the stories of any specific person(s).*

Sexual Violence and Post-Secondary Education

Bill 151, *An Act to prevent and fight sexual violence in higher education institutions*, was created by the Quebec government in response to the

fact that 15–24 year olds are the most likely age group to experience sexual violence, and student status is seen as a key risk factor (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). Roughly 20% of female post-secondary students; as many as 50% of trans, gender-queer, and non-binary students; and

almost 7% of male students express experiencing sexual violence in their lifetimes, with half of those experiences happening during their school careers (AAU, 2017; Schwartz, Z. 2018; CFS, 2015; DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; UofA Sexual Assault Centre, 2001; Sabina, & Ho, 2014). Now imagine the students in your classes. It's very likely that one or more of them has recently experienced sexual violence.

Each one of these students will be affected differently by their experiences, and each will know best what they need in its wake. Sexual violence is just one aspect of their lives; they are also passionate students, caring family members and friends, dedicated workers, engaged community members, and vibrant people. As educators, we have the privilege to walk alongside many of them through emerging adulthood, witnessing as they develop who they are and the trajectory of their lives. We can all play a role in how these chapters of their stories are written, and we have a responsibility to ensure that their experiences at Vanier contribute positively to their lives, and do not compound trauma. This article aims to help teachers feel better equipped to support students struggling in the wake of an experience of sexual violence.

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response at Vanier

To fulfill our legal obligations to Bill 151 and address this need, Vanier has created its *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Official Policy & Procedural Document*. Along with a team of people in Student Services and the policy's Standing College Committee, as the Social Service Officer for Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (SSO-SVPR) I am responsible for providing direct support, outreach, education, and coordinating this policy's implementation at Vanier.

Sexual violence robs an individual of choices. Through the collective efforts of the Vanier College community putting this policy into action, we are trying to facilitate a survivor/victim's ability to make choices that re-establish some equity and sense of justice, so that students affected by sexual violence have the same opportunity to succeed in their studies as other students. The policy defines a survivor/victim as a "Person who has experienced sexual violence. Personal, cultural, and socio-political reasons may influence a person in self-identifying with either term, survivor or victim" (Vanier College, 2018, p. 6). We affirm their right to choose the word that best fits for them; both terms are used throughout the policy.

All of the students I've met as a part of my work providing support are striving to do well in their studies, despite the significant impacts of their experience. Some of the impacts on their lives might include difficulty concentrating, mentally reliving what happened to them, hypervigilance, reactivity or numbing, and difficulty managing big emotional responses. Teachers are an important bridge between these students and our services. They see these students on a regular basis and can also direct them to supports or resources if they become aware that one of their students has experienced sexual violence. Compassionately responding to disclosures and facilitating referrals to specialized services offer students with choices to meet their needs. These achievable interventions can make a huge difference in their lives.

Teachers play a crucial role in a few other key ways. They can teach using trauma-informed school practices, including how they broach the topics of rape or rape culture in their classrooms, if they choose to discuss them. They can also support academic accommodations for their students, by collaborating to see how a student's identified needs can be reasonably accommodated within the pedagogical context of the course.

Trauma-Informed School Values

- feelings of physical, social, and emotional safety in students
- a shared understanding among staff about the impact of trauma and adversity on students
- positive and culturally responsive discipline policies and practices
- access to comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services
- effective community collaboration

(CPI, 2018; NASP, 2016)

The Scope of a Teacher's Roles and Responsibilities

A teacher does not have to be a jack-of-all-trades. The Vanier community collaborates as a holistic unit to support all students. If you ever feel out of your skill set or overwhelmed, Student Services is here as a specialized support for both students and teachers in this process. We have specialized education and training to support students who have experienced trauma. We are not expecting teachers to be counsellors or trained intervention professionals, and we also recognize how intimidating and overwhelming it can be to receive a disclosure. We are hoping you can connect as the empathetic and caring human being who chose to enter this profession. You don't have to be perfect to have a big impact.

Responding to Disclosures

If you receive a disclosure, remember this set of words: Listen, Believe, Empower.

Listen	Actively and compassionately listen and respond to what you're hearing.
Believe	Validate and normalize the person's feelings, and assure them it's not their fault.
Empower	Ask the person what they need right now, and connect them with resources.

Listen - When receiving a disclosure, the most important thing is to listen and create a space where you can give the disclosure your full attention. Offer a choice to the student; suggest meeting somewhere private where there won't be any interruptions or people overhearing. Sometimes people can also feel safer near a more public space. Ask which is the right fit for them, and follow their lead.

Start by telling them you are glad they felt comfortable sharing with you what happened to them. Disclosing can bring up fears and anxiety; you might acknowledge the step that the student is taking by telling you what happened to them. You might say something like, *"It takes courage to talk about this,"* or *"Thank you for sharing that with me."* Let the survivor/victim tell you as little or as much as they want and avoid asking for details. Discussing what happened in detail may be overwhelming or feel re-traumatizing. For some people, talking about their feelings around what happened can be as helpful as talking about the details. Take their lead on this.

What can be most comforting and affirming for survivors/victims is feeling seen and heard. This means demonstrating empathy for what the person is going through by reflecting their emotional reactions or feelings to events and showing compassion for their experiences. Encourage their disclosure by showing you're engaged and actively listening. You could do this through nodding, or by making listening noises (like *"mhmm"*). Mirroring the language they use to describe the events or themselves, or paraphrasing can be other ways to demonstrate respect and care for their perspective. For example, *"what I hear you saying is..."*.

Avoid minimizing or expressing judgment for what happened to them. Never respond in a way that highlights how *"it could have been worse"* or that they're *"lucky nothing more happened to them"* or *"they should be over this by now."* The impact that sexual violence has on a person is very personal and shouldn't be ranked or rated. Showing compassion for someone's experiences doesn't lessen the amount we have for others but grows our capacity for it.

Believe - This empathy can go a step further by validating and normalizing the survivor/victim's responses. You could say something like, *"It makes sense that you feel this way,"* or *"It is okay to feel angry/confused/sad/scared..."* to reassure them that these are understandable and common reactions to this type of experience.

Victim blaming and shaming and other behaviours that foster fears of not being believed are some of the biggest barriers for people reaching out for support. Many sexual assault survivors/victims struggle with blaming themselves. One of the most damaging things we can do would be to blame, judge, or not believe our students, especially if we're the first person they have told. You could offer reassurance that what happened to them was not their fault. (*"I believe you,"* or *"It's not your fault."*) To convey that they are not alone in what they're experiencing, you might reassure the person that, if they would like your help, together you will try to do whatever is possible to get the support they are seeking.

It is worth acknowledging that some people express discomfort

in 'believing' survivors/victims as they feel it means they are not impartial, or it might look like they are taking sides. However, should someone be telling you something of such significance, it is because they trust you as a person in authority who can somehow help them. All of the teachers I have met so far take their responsibility to help seriously and know that it is not a teacher's role to judge the veracity or significance of what happened to a student. Should they have any concerns around their ability to receive a disclosure, teachers can refer the student to the **Sexual Violence Response Team (SVRT)** in Student Services. You might offer *"I'm here to listen and support you, and it would be helpful for you to talk to someone who has specialized knowledge in this area,"* or *"I would be happy to go with you to talk to someone,"* or *"There are places that you can go to get information or confidential support."* If it is needed, any documentation required, especially as it relates to academic accommodations, will be handled by our sexual violence specialized service.

Empower - The most important role we can play is supporting the decisions the person makes about their needs, even if we might behave differently given the same circumstances. Work together to identify their immediate needs, figure out the person's next steps and

reassure them that they have control of their decisions. Connect them with supports and resources to address the needs they feel are most important to them. They may already have psychological, social or emotional support. Our role could be small, or large, depending on their access to services and support systems. It is always one part of a bigger picture in their lives.

In responding to a disclosure of sexual assault, we also want to promote empowerment of the survivor/victim. Sexual assault can result in a sense of loss of power and control. When discussing their options moving forward, you can support the person in exerting control over their lives by trusting them to make choices about what to do next—choices that place their health and wellbeing at the forefront.

If it's appropriate, explore with them their social supports (e.g. family, friends, and professionals), and help them connect with them. Make referrals to Vanier support services or other sexual violence support services in their community. If they say they would find it helpful, support them in accessing these services by calling ahead or accompanying them to Student Services. If they express reluctance to talk with other people, you can call a member of the SVRT for consultation on how to proceed or which resources you can provide.

Finally, if talking about sexual violence feels uncomfortable for you, practice role playing these scenarios with a colleague, or a member of the SVRT. It takes practice to be able to talk about, let alone receive disclosures of trauma and our own experiences can often impede our ability to be fully present or dictate our reaction. Practicing these discussions can limit reactions that can be unhelpful or even harmful, such as shock or alarm, or shutting down and dismissing someone without fully hearing them. The way a disclosure of sexual violence has been received can have either positive or detrimental impacts in a survivor/victim's healing journey, and

preparation can go a long way in ensuring you are promoting trust and safety.

Direct Support Services for Sexual Violence at Vanier

Vanier Sexual Outreach and Support (VSOS) is Vanier’s hub for sexual violence response service, which also offers outreach and education related to healthy sexuality and the prevention of sexual violence. The One-Stop Service, staffed by the Sexual Violence Response Team (SVRT) at Student Services, is one branch of VSOS’s programming that provides direct support and responses from the College following incidences of sexual violence.

Depending on the needs and resources of the person, we may be able to offer them:

Supports and Responses Offered by VSOS

- Case Management
- Emotional Support
- Accommodations
- Advocacy & Accompaniment
- Assisted Referrals
- Information
- Informal and Formal Responses from the College – including facilitated education, and other complaint processes

Referrals

Every individual in Canada, including teachers, who receives a disclosure of sexual violence from an underage person, has a responsibility to report it to the Director of Youth Protection to ensure their safety and the safety of others (suspected sexual abuse of children and persons under the age of 18). How this happens can be informed by the student; if they are interested, you may work alongside them to submit the report. If you would like support in filing a report with DYP in a way that’s sensitive to students’ needs, you can come to Student Services.

Acknowledging the potential deleterious effects of sexual violence, survivors/victims can be granted academic accommodations to help them succeed in their studies. If a student wants to directly disclose their academic accommodations needs to a teacher, we affirm their right to do so. Teachers are encouraged to offer referrals to our services so that students are aware of these supports on campus. However, we will never mandate a student to visit with these supports or place their accommodation requests through these mechanisms, if that is not what they want. Regardless of whether or not a student wants to visit our support services, we can also provide anonymous support to teachers so that they can pass along resources and information to their students, if they feel comfortable doing so.

Some students may want to keep their experiences of sexual violence separate from the classroom experience, thereby protecting their

classroom relationships. Having the knowledge that their teachers don’t know what happened to them can be incredibly important to being able to concentrate, feeling more like themselves, and not feeling defined by what happened to them following incidents of sexual violence. To facilitate the communication of a student’s accommodation needs, VSOS may reach out to teachers directly.

If a student comes to a teacher but feels uncomfortable explaining the reasoning behind their need for an academic accommodation or extra support, teachers are encouraged to provide an assisted referral by calling Student Services and asking for a member of the Sexual Violence Response Team. We will try to accommodate an assisted referral where the teacher walks the student down to Student Services, or we can set up a time to meet with the student later. We will then coordinate with the teacher to communicate the student’s accommodation needs later.

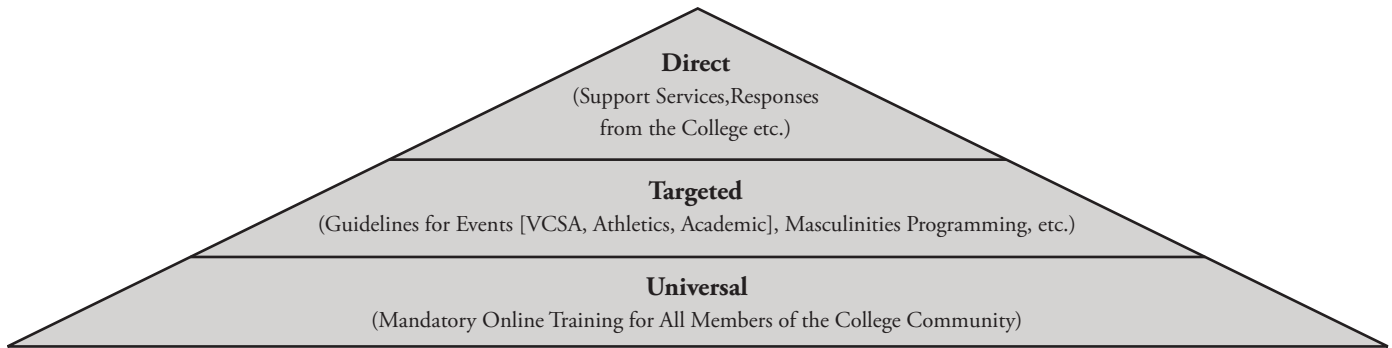
How do we support survivors/victims in the weeks and months to come, or survivors/victims of historical violence? Would they prefer if you checked in with them periodically or would they prefer to bring it up if they want to talk about it with you? Assess what amount and what kind of support you are able and willing to give. You are not a therapist or professional support person; it’s not your job to be in constant support mode. Set the boundaries you need to set. Don’t focus only on their traumatic event/history. No one wants to be in ‘survivor’ or ‘victim’ mode all the time.

Seeking out self and community care after receiving a disclosure of sexual violence can be vital for avoiding vicarious trauma and sitting with the emotional discomfort that can be associated with receiving one, such as not knowing what happens to that student afterwards. Processing this is important and might look like visiting your personal therapist, debriefing your own experiences with colleagues without sharing the student’s story, coming into the Respect Works or another member of the SVRT’s offices to talk, or finding another avenue that fits your needs. Keep in mind that unless you are debriefing with someone who is bound by confidentiality (such as a therapist or the Respect Works Officer), it is imperative not to reveal names or any identifying information about the survivor/victim who disclosed to you.

Vanier College’s Approach

Teachers are one piece of a bigger picture at Vanier. They help in setting the tone by fostering empathy and facilitating support for members of our community that have experienced sexual violence. They can also model how to facilitate discussions (including class discussions) related to rape culture in a compassionate way. Vanier will also be introducing strategies in a multi-tiered public health approach that will evolve and grow over time to decrease the prevalence of sexual violence amongst our student body.

Among the offerings to come are universal prevention strategies for all members of the Vanier community, including mandatory online training for all staff, students and faculty on the topics of consent, responding to disclosures, and active bystander interventions. Targeted prevention and response initiatives to address instances where a higher risk or need is present will be implemented. These include



guidelines for orientation events, events in the first 8 weeks of the semester, or events where alcohol is present. Finally, direct services to mitigate the impact of sexual violence have already been put in place. There are ways that teachers can be involved at all three levels, if they would like to support these efforts.

At the universal and targeted levels, teachers can contribute to College initiatives to shift its culture towards one that instills consent practices and disrupts norms that enable sexual violence. Since starting at Vanier, I have been impressed by the number of academic festivals and fairs here that have covered the topic of consent or gender-based violence with care and sensitivity, helping to shift our culture in positive ways. As educators, we have a legal and moral responsibility: when classroom content touches on rape culture or sexual violence, we must work to foster empathy and equip students with tools to make consent an important part of sexual encounters. We must also decrease barriers for survivors/victims of sexual violence who are seeking support. As an educational institution, we set the tone for how these issues are addressed; our actions shape students' perceptions of these topics.

Next Steps

If you would like to learn more about VSOS or the efforts happening related to sexual violence, feel free to reach out to me (ext. 7145 – C203-B) or another member of the SVRT. We will be continuing to roll out education and outreach on preventing and responding to sexual violence. This includes upcoming mandatory yearly online training for College employees.

Finally, I would like to extend a special thanks to the UBC AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre who have very graciously offered me their continued knowledge, support and workshop content, which directly informed parts of this article.



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Come As You Are: Vanier Collective Gardens Community Project

Introduction

A sense of belonging plays an important role in students' well-being and academic and educational success, and participation in community gardens promotes a sense of belonging, self-confidence, and mental health, according to a number of sources. In March 2017, pedagogical counsellor Krista Riley, on her own behalf and that of three Vanier teachers (Myriam Mansour, Kim Matthews, and myself), submitted an application for Entente Canada-Québec funding for a project that would focus on the Vanier Collective Gardens as a potential place to cultivate (pun only partly intended!) a sense of belonging in students who might otherwise feel marginalized at Vanier, through the use of garden-related activities, workshops and outreach. At the end of the Vanier Collective Gardens Community (VCGC) Project, we felt that work in this area had just begun. We hope the Vanier community as a whole will continue to reflect on the potential of the Gardens as a hub of learning and of belonging.

Definitions of Belonging

What is “belonging”? According to Vanier English teacher Alan Wong (2019), *belonging* is a basic human need to feel “respected, valued, accepted and cared for” that includes a sense of being “connected...to others in a social environment” (slide 5). College students can experience “not-belonging” if they, among other things: feel out of place in an academic environment; are minoritized (racialized, for example) and thus subject to prejudice; or are unable to fully participate in college life (due to personal, medical or other issues.) *Belonging* is not the same as *inclusion*: *inclusion* requires the will of another person or group (“we will include you”), whereas *belonging* is internal to the subject: a student’s feeling of belonging is their own, whereas if they are to be included, others are responsible for that inclusion. Wong also draws a distinction between *belonging* and *fitting in*: in order to fit in, one must adapt and conform to the environment, whereas, if one belongs, one belongs just as one is.

What conditions are necessary to create a sense of belonging in students? Rebeiro (Diamant & Waterhouse, 2010) suggests four conditions that can create an environment in which a sense of belonging can emerge: affirmation, an element of choice and self-determination, access to both private and community space, and a sense of safety (p. 85). Diamant and Waterhouse further point out the importance of *facilitating* these factors: where they do not emerge naturally, they must be actively fostered (p. 86).

The activities that we undertook in the course of the VCGC Project could all be seen to promote one or more of these conditions.

Affirmation

Some aspects of gardening at Vanier that existed before our project began were inherently affirming. For example, garden volunteers receive STAR volunteer hours that can lead to an attestation. Also, according to Diamant and Waterhouse (2010), such routine garden activities as weeding “[provide] instant feedback and a sense of achievement when the target area has been weeded” (p. 87). Also, “Gardening as a group...generates affirmation on multiple levels... from the group and the wider community, who are able to enjoy the output of their endeavours.” (Diamant & Waterhouse, p. 87)

The VCGC Project undertook a number of new activities that could be seen as providing opportunities for affirmation. A foundational part of our mission was the development of a Social Justice Statement (SJS) that would affirm the value of students of all backgrounds and identities. According to the SJS, the Gardens collective

focuses on uniting individuals and recognizing diversity, while promoting sustainability, mental health, and body positivity. We stand firmly against all forms of discrimination and we are working on creating a safe place where every Vanier student can feel they belong just as they are. We also aim to increase awareness of social justice topics such as food accessibility, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, and environmental issues, and to give our community the ability to discuss and share ideas. We are committed to an ongoing process of learning and self-reflection where we face our mistakes with a desire to grow and do better.

The intent of the statement is to make clear that the Gardens are a place where everyone matters and is treated with respect, and that we are all responsible for the dynamic, active process of making these things possible.

Important Note

All parties involved in the Gardens have found it important to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we do our gardening. Vanier is situated within the traditional unceded lands of the Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) peoples, part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. There is also a strong historic presence of Anishinaabe peoples in what is now known as the Greater Montreal area. As we work towards incorporating social justice principles, we remain aware of our responsibilities in the face of the settler colonial history and present.

Also, workshops throughout the year were intended to give students both skills for personal empowerment and new ways of looking at themselves. Cooking workshops provided opportunities for students, faculty, staff and guests to make food together and learn about such topics as vegetarianism and Indigenous food. Workshops on medicinal herbs and edible insects aimed to provide students with new ways of seeing food; others on permaculture, plasticulture, and seed saving empowered them to engage in sustainable practices; and a workshop on mental health and herbs was in part a way to normalize discussions about mental health. A workshop on body positivity and Health at Every Size was intended to promote the concept that all bodies are worthy of respect, regardless of their size.

The VCGC Project also collaborated with the food justice initiative A Place at the Table, initiated by humanities teacher and VCGC Project member Kim Matthews, in offering workshops, and, thanks to a generous contribution from Jake's Café, free soup to all during six Universal Breaks throughout the semester. The active message was: you deserve soup no matter who you are! Also, thanks to the generosity of The Vanier College Foundation and The Vanier College Students' Association, sixty-nine students in need received 100\$ gift cards for Jake's Café. The initiative's goals were 1. to raise awareness of food security issues on campus, 2. to garner funds to provide food for students in need, and 3. to promote the building of students' life skills. At the base of these goals was the affirmation of every student's right to be fed. Soup was also served at workshops, and students were

free to visit and take soup regardless of whether they participated in the workshop. The message was fundamental to our mission and to the mission of A Place at the Table: you do not need to pay *in any sense*, including with your time, to be worthy of having your basic needs met. This initiative was also an example of the importance of choice and self-determination in our desire to promote a sense of belonging in students.

Choice and Self-Determination

Before the VCGC Project began, the Gardens were already providing students with opportunities to exercise their autonomy in a variety of ways. For example, student volunteers were asked to sign up for gardening activities that interested them—weeding, watering, planting, harvesting, maintenance etc.—at times that were convenient for them, and to make use of the Garden facilities, such as the shed and the tools it houses, whenever they wished.

Last year, as the VCGC Project was getting off the ground, we invited students to a brainstorming session to give their input as to what role the Gardens could play in their college experience and what sorts of infrastructure and activities they would like to see. We also hired two student interns, and chose them based partly on our stated requirement that they be self-motivated and able to work autonomously to organize outings, self-direct their work and tasks, and implicate other students.



Photo credit Felix Da Silva



Photo credit Felix Da Silva

As mentioned above, A Place at the Table also offered free soup at workshops while making it clear that students who were served soup were under no obligation to stay. A number of students availed themselves of the free meal and returned to their activities, although some decided to stay and participate in workshops; the choice was left up to them, and those who expressed a sense of guilt about taking free food and running were reassured that the soup had no strings attached!

The Gardens are a place where everyone matters and is treated with respect, and that we are all responsible for the dynamic, active process of making these things possible.

What activities could be undertaken in the future that might provide for choice and self-determination? Diamant and Waterhouse (2010) mention the importance of “encouraging responsibility for certain areas of the garden and planning the daily schedule” (p. 86). Asking students to assign themselves to specific garden areas might be possible if there were more volunteers available. (An earlier initiative entitled “Adopt-a-Box” allowed people from across the Vanier community to do just this; it was not implemented during the year of the VCGC Project, but could be again.) Encouraging teachers to allow students to do garden-related assignments might be a way to foster garden-related choice and self-determination in the context of students’ programs. Also, polling classes and clubs to ask for their input into Garden decisions (such as what they would like to see grown) might inspire students to come out and see and contribute to the Gardens.

Private and Community Space

The Gardens are already a community space, well-placed around and in the centre of campus, and accessible to everyone. One of the major achievements of the VCGC Project was the construction of a pergola as a space where clubs and individuals, as well as classes, can meet.

The Project had a number of plans for this pergola, including setting up a sign-up system and reaching out to clubs and departments to encourage use of this space; unfortunately, construction delays meant that the Project was over when the pergola was finally erected. There are ongoing challenges concerning the maintenance and administration of this community space, but we hope the net outcome is positive: a public garden structure open to all students and available particularly for Garden Team activities. (I can personally attest to the success of bringing a class to the garden for a tour and lesson with the lead gardener, Mark Reynolds, and making use of the pergola to sit, discuss, have tea, take notes, and so forth.)

Private space is a different matter. In their discussion of a UK-based garden project, Diamant and Waterhouse (2010) outline some ways to create private space in a public garden context:

Although Thrive’s gardens are open to the public, there are areas that allow a person to be on his or her own, such as secluded areas or greenhouses.... Although access to [the general garden area] is open, the buildings used are off limits to the general public. These also act as private and confidential spaces. By providing these boundaries, Thrive

has its own internal sense of community as well as being situated in the wider context of a public park. (p. 87)

The Collective Gardens are not technically a public area, but they are open to the entire Vanier community. One question that came up a few times during this project was the possibility of creating a Garden Club; if such a club were established, a Garden clubhouse for members could be an interesting benefit, and would create a private space for those who “belong” to the club. Also worth investigating would be the landscaping of parts of the Gardens to create nooks that create a sense of privacy, complete with benches and tables, although such concerns as accessibility, safety, and burdens on groundskeepers would of course have to be taken into account.

Safe Environment

The VCGC Project took several steps to create a sense of safety, particularly emotional safety, in the Gardens. In addition to the development of the Social Justice Statement, which articulates the collective’s mission to make sure everyone is respected, our hiring of two student interns was in part an effort to make students feel comfortable in a way they might not with staff and faculty. Our hope was that these students would put others at ease, both by “taking charge” and by liaising with faculty/staff mentors if there were difficulties. We hired an outside consultant (Mark Reynolds, mentioned above, who was later hired on to be lead gardener) to assist students and VCGC Project members with the organization of workshops, in order to give an additional sense of structure and authority that we hoped would relieve pressure for the student interns.

When it came to workshops, we tried to create a comfortable and collaborative atmosphere (including providing the free soup, inviting students in from the hallways, and reaching out directly to students who had participated in earlier workshops in order to make them feel welcome). By happenstance, we needed to change the date of our final workshop from the usual Universal Break workshop time to a slot during class hours, so we reached out to teachers, two of whom brought their classes to the workshop. This more structured approach alleviated the need for shy students to take on a new activity of their own volition. If given our time back, we might decide to schedule workshops during class hours more often.

In fact, reaching students where they are, rather than expecting them to come to us, was a continual preoccupation. Late in the year, we decided to try video-recording some of our workshops, but not all presenters were comfortable with this request; in the end, only the final workshop (“Breaking the Rules Around Food”) was recorded and shared on our website. However, we did collaborate with VTV for a special segment for the “Campus Cooking” channel, in which Brandee Diner, an Environmental and Wildlife Management teacher, and her student Sophie McCafferty presented information about Garden activities and demonstrated how to make tofu rice bowls with produce from the Gardens. The hope was that first encountering information about the Gardens on video would be less emotionally risky for shy students, and might give them the impetus to take the step to come out to a workshop or to volunteer.

Regardless, creating a collective and physical space that gives students a sense of comfort and safety is something that could be worked on in the future. More publicization of the Social Justice Statement and overall social justice mission, especially to other college groups and bodies, might be a start. Also, more presence and hands-on involvement of faculty/staff mentors—not just garden coordinators but organizers of activities, especially during the summer—might give students a greater sense of structure and support. This is difficult because most garden activity takes place during periods when teachers are not available to the college, and because creating a sense of safety and comfort for students requires a particular set of interpersonal skills. One easier step would be to organize workshops during times when teachers can bring classes, in order to minimize students’ emotional risk-taking in making the choice to attend.

Conclusion

Our objective of creating a space of “belonging and learning” in the Gardens is a long-term one. One important consideration is that there is very little garden work that can happen during the academic year; it might make sense for other projects and services to come together with the Gardens to create a larger cross-campus initiative under the umbrella topic of student belonging. We feel that the Gardens can provide a hub that makes students feel they can “come as they are” and find a place for themselves, but it is a goal that the Gardens can achieve only with the support of the entire community. We are confident that Vanier has the will and means to provide this support, and we look forward to seeing the ways that the Gardens are a part of this larger achievement in the years to come.



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Vanier Researcher Profile

Stephen Cohen

Stephen Cohen studies the mechanics of *space elevators*—an alternative to rockets, which could eventually allow us to shuttle people and goods to and from space in a

more cost-effective and secure way.

To many of us, this might sound like something straight out of a science fiction novel. However, as Stephen explained when I interviewed him for this researcher profile, scientists working in this area believe that space elevator technology may become a reality within the next 30 years.

At this point, you may be wondering what a space elevator would look like. Stephen described the space elevator as an infrastructure consisting of a long tether between an ocean-floating vessel on Earth and a satellite in space with a Geosynchronous Equatorial Orbit (GEO). A GEO is an orbit directly over earth's equator with an orbital period matching that of earth's rotation period. Consequently, a satellite in GEO always finds itself over the same spot on earth. Via the physical connection between earth and space created by the tether, payloads can be transported to high altitude and released into orbit using high-speed trains that climb the tether.

Stephen went on to say that the theoretical basis for space elevators is not new – it was originally proposed in 1960. However, its first engineering analysis in 1975 showed that the tether required a specific strength far greater than any material in existence at the time. Specific strength refers to a material's strength-to-density ratio. According to Stephen, scientists estimate that the material used to build the tether must have a specific strength 50x that of steel.

With the development of new materials in recent years, which are both very strong and very light, the interest in planning and developing the space elevator's design has been reignited within the scientific community. Following suit with this trend, within his most recent grant application to the Fonds de recherche du Quebec – Nature et technologies, Stephen proposes to study the effect that certain modifications to the space elevator's design have on its mechanical behaviour.

Later in the interview, I asked Stephen why and when he decided to choose the study of space elevator mechanics over more immediately applicable specialties within the field of mechanical engineering. "I never saw myself as the handy type of engineer," Stephen answered. "I was always more interested in theory." "I also enjoy working on a project that is so futuristic," he added. Stephen also mentioned that, in his last year of undergraduate studies at McGill University, he took a course on spacecraft dynamics. This area of physics includes everything from studying how orbits work to planning interplanetary missions. Stephen was so drawn in by the content of the course that

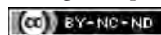
he ended up selecting the professor for this course as his Master of Engineering thesis supervisor. He has collaborated with Professor Misra on research ever since.

Immediately following the completion of his MEng, Stephen worked at MDA Space, helping to design satellites so that they don't break in transit. However, throughout his schooling and early career, Stephen primarily saw himself as an educator, which eventually led him to apply for a teaching position at Vanier.

As a teacher in Vanier's Physics Department since 2010, Stephen has witnessed the positive effect that his research is having on his students. For example, in 2014, he presented to his class before going to a space conference and, as a result of doing so, many students exhibited a high level of interest in working with him on research projects. One student in particular developed a software that simulated what it would look like to go into space as a space elevator operator. In 2019, in the context of a Research Methods course offered to Vanier students, Stephen supervised three students whose goal was to assess how the space elevator tether would move due to the release of payloads from it. Among other things, they discovered the particular release locations where the dynamical consequences were most severe. This work was presented in October, 2019, at the International Astronautical Congress in Washington, D.C. As an added bonus, these students were able to perform the entirety of the research at Vanier because it did not require sophisticated equipment, only software with which to perform numerical simulations.

When asked what he enjoys most about his job at Vanier, Stephen replied that it is the challenge of making complex ideas simple for his students to understand. He also enjoys the unpredictability of the classroom setting, as one class can be completely different from the next. Moreover, he is inspired to teach because students are open-minded and malleable. As such, he would like to continue nurturing them to pursue careers in physics that are as fulfilling as his own.

For a list of Stephen's most recent publications, please visit: <https://theengineerspulse.blogspot.com/p/space-elevator.html>



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Publications from Vanier Teachers and Staff

Kingsmill, P. (2019). Integrating online curation and social annotation into courses. *Vitrine technologie-education*. Retrieved from <https://www.vteducation.org/en/articles/collaborative-learning/integrating-online-curation-and-social-annotation-courses>

Honours Awarded to Vanier Teachers and Staff

In June 2019, **Rivka Guttman** received the Anthony Battaglia Scholarship at the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

In November 2019, **Louise Robinson** placed first in the international division of the Bai Jiang Industrial Product Innovative Design and 3D Printing Technology Competition in Tianjin, China.

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