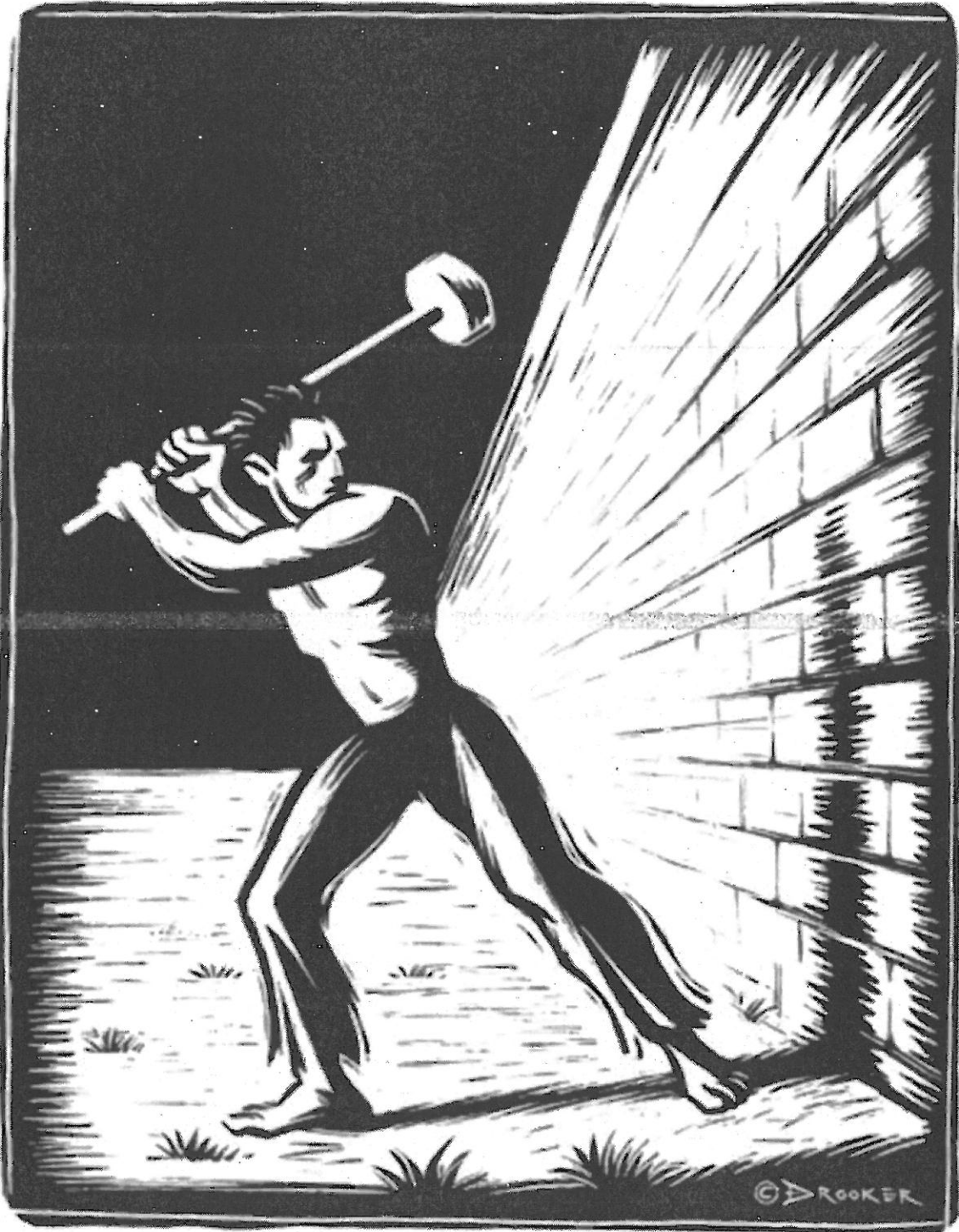


**OPIRG CARLETON ANNUAL REPORT**  
**SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2008 – AUGUST 31<sup>ST</sup> 2009**



**RESEARCH. EDUCATION. ACTION.**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**September 2008 – August 2009**

Chris Dalton  
Matt Kristjansson  
Matt Morgan  
Brian Coulson  
Tanya Miller  
Matt Morgan  
Emma Slany-Gose  
Janet Yip  
Ashton Starr (ex-officio)

## **STAFF**

Angela Mooney Full-time Co-ordinator  
Dan Sawyer Full-time Co-ordinator  
Rachel Gurofsky (Full-time Temporary Staff)  
Hani Siyad – Summer Grant Staff

## WORKING GROUP REPORTS

### **BOOKS 2 PRISONERS**

Books 2 Prisoners - Ottawa was unsuccessful - again - at smashing down and chewing up the industrial prison complex that seems to plague us. We did however, have another good year of killing cops in our brains, the brains of our friends, and others within our periphery of influence. We are like a Cold War, that is neither cold, nor a war, but more closely associated with the common cold: biting, annoying, working hard to keep those fragile bodies in the bureaucracy at CSC from performing their their violent day to day functions. We also held our annual booksale, printed the money. Used the payola to send books to our friends held captive on the inside. Remember friends: The only vehicle for prison reform.... a bulldozer.

### **CARLETON CINEMA POLITICA**

Since beginning in the fall of 2008, Carleton Cinema Politica has attracted thousands of patrons with a diverse selection of the best in political documentaries. This year was filled with many overwhelming successes including co-hosting Norman Finkelstein at Carleton and premiering American Radical, premiering The Coca Cola Case with director German Gutierrez and other experts, and most recently, having a Skype Q&A with renowned street artist Roadsworth (just to name a few!). Most importantly, we added three new dedicated volunteers to the team this year which have allowed us to reach out to even more students and community members. Next year we're hoping to expand our membership and will be attempting to secure a student levy to make sure Cinema Politica has a stable budget at Carleton. Thanks for helping us screen truth to power!

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT (IPSMO)**

IPSMO (Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement) has worked with various Indigenous communities in the region to further their efforts for sovereignty and rights: Barriere Lake Algonquin, Ardoch Algonquin, Grassy Narrows Cree, Mohawks of Akwesasne. We held a very successful event on the situation of Missing and Murdered Native Women. We also were part of organizing for the first annual Indigenous Sovereignty Week in October 2009, as well as holding demonstrations regarding the situation in Peru in June of 2009, and the Olympics and the torch relay. We have facilitated an 'Indigenous Solidarity for Settlers' workshop a number of times, tabled at various events with literature about different Indigenous campaigns/issues, and kept people up-to-date using our

website and Facebook group, and a weekly/bi-weekly newsletter sent out over our email listserv (over 200 subscribers). We are also continuing legal support resulting from the Barriere Lake blockades of Highway 117 held in October/November 2008.

## **STUDENTS AGAINST ISRAELI APARTHEID**

Students Against Israeli Apartheid Carleton launched in September 2008 with the goal of educating students on the nature of Israel as an apartheid state and pushing the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign on our campus.

SAIA members had their first encounter with the powers of the administration at a town hall meeting with the President in which we asked questions relating to Carleton's stance on apartheid. Our microphones were swiftly turned off. As a first public event, SAIA hosted two lawyers for Al-Haq, an organization that is committed to documenting violations of the individual and collective rights of Palestinians. The event was so well attended that we turned away an estimated 80 people from a 200 + sized room, largely due to the University having proclaimed to the entire university community that it in no way supports this event. The 2008-2009 school year at Carleton also saw a lot of debate among the student media surrounding the idea of an Academic boycott of Israel.

While the University refused to debate SAIA on the merits of an Academic boycott, there was a lively debate among the Carleton community. The undisputed highlight of the year was Israeli Apartheid Week, which was held in March. Some of the speakers included Bob Lovelace, Omar Barghouti, and Ronnie Kasrils. SAIA faced a concerted effort by administration to try and derail the week through the banning of the IAW poster and through a chilling email sent by the Provost to students warning us to brush up on our knowledge of the Ontario Human Rights Code. IAW was a success by every possible measure; rooms were at full capacity each night, it was covered by national and international media, and student solidarity over the repressive actions of the Administration was overwhelming. Due to the discrimination faced by Palestinians on campus and supporters of Palestinians, SAIA filed a complaint at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. The complaint was accepted mediation is pending.

## **CANADIAN STUDENTS FOR SENSIBLE DRUG POLICY (CSSDP)**

It was our first year as a Carleton club and as an OPIRG working group. Our main goals for the year were to spread the word about Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy (CSSDP) around the Carleton Campus, to expand our membership base and to find interested and committed members who could carry the club further after the founding members graduated.

We created and distributed several leaflets and posters throughout the school year. Some were simply to recruit new members to the club, but others were designed more to inform the Carleton community about drug policy issues that affect them, such as the legal status of marijuana, and the current government's stance on drug policy. These were distributed throughout the school, and were also on display whenever we tabled at Carleton.

We hosted several movie nights, showing informative and thought-provoking films, such as "The Union: The Business Behind Getting High", which gives an amazing and detailed look at the cannabis industry in Canada, "Hoffman's Potion", which explores LSD and its effects on individuals and society, "Fix: The Story of an Addicted City", which highlights the plight of hardcore addicts in Vancouver's downtown eastside who have turned to activism to improve their lives, and "The Prince of Pot", which looks at the current plight of Marc Emery, one of Canada's top activists for marijuana and drug policy reform, who is facing possible extradition to the USA to face charges for selling marijuana seeds (an act for which he would not face charges in Canada). We found that holding the movie nights in conjunction with other clubs, such as Resistencia Alternative Films made more people aware of our club and the issues we are trying to address. After the movies were showed, a discussion would usually take place, where people shared their thoughts and knowledge on issues surrounding the films. It was always a good way to look at opposing or differing viewpoints and try to put things into a new perspective.

Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy held its 2nd annual national conference, titled "100 Years of Failed Drug Policy" in Ottawa in November 2008. This is the only drug-policy conference in Canada and is completely organized by students. Many Carleton members were involved in the planning and execution of the conference, which attracted close to 200 students, activists and academics from across the country in the name of exploring alternatives to drug prohibition and the war on drugs.

CU CSSDP also hosted the Ottawa segment of the national "Resolving Marijuana Prohibition" in partnership with the National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML). The tour travelled across Canada, stopping at campuses and inviting activists and academics to share their thoughts on marijuana prohibition, its effects and its alternatives. What was especially exciting about this tour was that it was meant to culminate in a nationwide council on marijuana law reform that would produce national resolutions to be presented to the government as a realistic and concrete alternative to the current situation. It was exciting for our chapter to be part of this process.

As our chapter developed, we began getting invited to participate in other drug-policy related events in the Ottawa area. Members participated in a "What's With



Weed" workshop, hosted by the CSSDP chapter at the University of Ottawa, where they learned more about alternative methods to the current "Just Say No" message in drug policy. We were also invited to a public forum called "Responding to Ottawa's Open Drug Use: An Integrated Approach" hosted by the Ottawa Coalition on HIV/AIDS, where they listened to presentations on the subject from community-based groups, (such as the AIDS Coalition of Ottawa and the Canadian Mental Health Association), incredible academics and activists in the field, as well as the Ottawa Police Service. Some of our members posed questions to the panellists. One was even able to stump an Ottawa police officer, with questions about his contradictory statements.

Several chapter members participated in CSSDP's national lobby day, held in April 2009. For many of the students, this was their first exposure to the political process. CSSDP had a meeting room in the Parliament buildings, received lobbying tips from Libby Davies and visited over 30 MPs, explaining why Bill C-15 (a bill that would introduce mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes) is a HUGE step in the wrong direction for Canadian drug policy. As a result of this lobby day, CSSDP was mentioned in the House of Commons, and several MPs recognized that youth do not feel protected or represented by this legislation, despite the fact that it is often presented "in the protection of youth". Several of our main talking points have since infiltrated the language we hear in the opposition parties, although we still haven't yet managed to crack a Conservative Party member (we're working on it).

As part of the national campaign against Bill C-15, CSSDP created a petition. Carleton CSSDP members saw the excellent timing of events such as the Global Marijuana March (May 2, 2009) and the "4/20" celebrations on Parliament Hill and Major's Hill Park as an opportunity to do some outreach, handing out leaflets about Bill C-15 and asking people to sign the petition.

One of the benefits of being a chapter in a National organization is the opportunity to have contact and to coordinate with drug policy reformers from across the country. We are able to share materials and strategies with other chapters, as well as receiving advice and support from the national organization, which often provides us with stickers and buttons and other neat outreach materials, that help to attract people to our tables and start the discussion about why the drug war has failed Canadians and what the alternatives might be.

## TRAINING and WORKSHOPS

**Consensus Decision-Making and Process:** Sick of meetings being dominated by a few individuals? Tired of not being heard? This workshop will discuss the techniques for sharing power with your fellow activists. It will provide tools to equalize participation among your group of volunteers. This is a mandatory workshop for all OPIRG volunteers and working group members.

**Step Up, Step Back: An Introduction to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression:** Come to the introductory workshop to learn how racism and oppression interact with privilege and power. How do you fit into all of this? How can we work together for change? This workshop will allow you to explore these questions and more.

**Working Groups 101:** This workshop is designed to inform interested folks about how to become a solid working group. We will cover the steps to becoming a working group, the working group policy and other useful info. Questions are encouraged and welcome!

**Cheap Thrills: DIY Sex Toys:** After this workshop, participants might never see their house, the hardware store or grocery store the same way again. Kinky sex doesn't have to be expensive, and this workshop showed you how to transform everyday mundane items into sex toys. This workshop was part of the Tools For Change workshop series and was facilitated by Venus Envy.

**I'm Coming! A Guide to Womyn's Orgasm:** Some women never experience orgasm, some can have orgasms once in awhile, or on their own, or never on their own, or ... you get the picture. The female orgasm can sometimes be rather elusive, and that can be okay, but it can also be very frustrating. This session will look at some of the reasons women have difficulty with orgasm, offer suggestions around play to enhance sexual feelings, as well as covering important anatomical information.

**Organic Gardening for Balconies and Small Spaces:** Do you only have a small space for growing organic vegetables? Do you want to start growing organic vegetables on your balcony? The workshop leader, Fleurette Huneault, has been growing vegetables for her family on an organically managed site for thirty years. In 1998 she joined the Master Gardeners of Ottawa and obtained a Horticultural Certificate from Guelph University. Since then, she has spoken on the topics of organic xeriscaping and organic vegetable gardening and given courses promulgating small space vegetable gardening at events such as Seedy Saturday, Seeds of Hope, Bytown Urban Garden Growers Lecture Series, Ottawa University Organic Growers Group, Ottawa Library Lecture Series, Food Security Council of Ottawa now JUST FOOD Lecture Series, and Canadian

Organic Growers' Spring Workshop Series. Fleurette's courses emphasize how rewarding it is to grow your own vegetables even in small gardens or in balcony and patio containers. The underlying theme is organic growing.

**What I Learned In Class Today – Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom:**

Classroom discussions of Aboriginal issues often leave students feeling alienated and angry. Though troubling, these situations often go unreported and unresolved, affecting students' abilities to function in classes and in their coursework. These workshops are intended to help both aboriginal and non-aboriginal people understand the impacts and consequences of social position and dominant understandings of indigenous peoples that can contribute to problematic incidents that occur in the class room context. Through discussion, activities and video, this project aims to foster a more culturally sensitive and understanding learning environment.

**Vermicomposting – Learn to Compost with Worms:** Composting with worms is perfect for people with out backyards or lawn space. This workshop taught participants all they needed to know to get vermicomposting right away.



## MEMBERSHIPS

**Ontario Health Coalition (OHC):** Work to honour and strengthen the principles of the Canada Health Act by empowering the members of its constituent organizations to become actively engaged in the making of public policy on matters related to health care and healthy communities.

**Ontario Environment Network (OEN):** A non-profit, non-governmental network serving Ontario's environmental non-profit, non-governmental community. The OEN seeks to increase awareness of these organizations and encourage discussions about means to protect the environment. OEN is a non-advocacy network and therefore does not take positions on issues.

**OPIRG Provincial:** The Provincial organization of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group provides an opportunity for the members of individual PIRGs and OPIRG Organizing Committees to meet, exchange ideas, educate themselves and work together.

**Canadian Peace Alliance (CPA):** The largest umbrella peace organization in Canada; organizes cross-Canada campaigns and actions; arranges political lobbying sessions between member groups and key political leaders on Parliament Hill; facilitates the development of strategies for the Canadian peace movement; and produces and distributes education and action materials.

**Volunteer Ottawa:** A bilingual agency committed to building the capacity of our community through strong leadership and quality services.

**Campus United:** A group comprised of representatives from groups that make up the university, from workers, to students, to organizations and unions. This group meets as needed to address campus wide issues such as contract negotiations, tuitions fees, campus safety, and Carleton Administration.

**Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCC):** In existence since the early 90s this coalition is comprised of individuals and representatives of various organizations. The purpose of this group is to provide citizen/settler support for the Algonquin "land claim" in the Ottawa Valley. The negotiations between the Algonquins and Ontario and Canada were on hold (approximately 2002-2005) but now those negotiations are under way again.

