

the Catalyst

Citizens for Public Justice

Summer 2018

Pub. Mail Agreement no: 40022119

Invest in a Just Transition, Not Pipelines

By Karri Munn-Venn

In the midst of protests, politicking, and global proclamations, the Government of Canada bought the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project on May 29, 2018 for \$4.5 billion.

There was a swift, vocal reaction from all sides. This included concerns about the inconsistency of this purchase with the federal government's commitment to climate action and outcries about how far that money could have gone to address the multiple crises faced by Indigenous communities. There were also objections to giving public money to a large, foreign corporation.

While the federal government's action polarized Canadians, it also emphasized the need for serious reflection on how we can move forward most constructively.

This issue is tremendously complex. The perspectives of people at different points in the discussion—including oil sands workers, environmentalists, and Indigenous people—each hold truth that is necessary for us to hear. If we approach one another with respect, there is so much we can learn.

Common hopes and fears

Regardless of our positions on pipelines or the oil sands, we all want the same thing. Profits and politics aside, we all want a good life for our family and a solid future for our community.

"We made promises to protect our young ones, and that is what we are doing," said Cedar George-Parker, a Tsleil-Waututh organizer with Protect the Inlet. Groups like Protect the Inlet and Indigenous Climate Action (ICA) are at the forefront of Indigenous resistance to the Kinder Morgan pipeline and tanker project. "We're not just [speaking out] for ourselves," echoed Eriel Deranger, of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and Executive Director of ICA. "We're doing it for our communities and the communities beyond our communities."

At the same time, groups of newcomers, faith communities, and fly-in workers in Fort McMurray are all doing their best to provide for their families and make a contribution to society.

Closely tied to this desire to safeguard future generations is

a widespread, deep-seated fear of loss. Indigenous peoples fear the loss of their land, their culture, and their identity. After generations of oppression, they refuse to be left out of the conversation.

Grandmothers also worry. They fear the devastation of the Earth before their grandchildren are old enough to understand its beauty and many gifts. Knowledge about the Earth's limits weigh heavily.

At the same time, oil sands workers fear the loss of their jobs, their homes, and their dignity. Many of them, lured from across the country and around the world by the promise of good money, have known economic hardship. They don't want to go there again.

"It's not like people love oil in particular," said the Rev. Dr. Dane Neufeld, an Anglican priest in Fort McMurray. "But the oil sands have given people a chance to have a normal life."

And industry leaders fear that without increased market access and a higher price for oil, the entire economy will flounder—and much of the social safety net with it.

"Oil production is a major source of revenue to governments at all levels," notes Dave Bakker, a long-time worker in the oil and gas industry and member at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church in Calgary. "Royalty revenue, corporate and employee taxes, and the economic spin-offs through supporting businesses contribute to all the privileges we enjoy today."

Pipelines are not the solution

When we acknowledge our common desires and fears, it helps us to move away from judging or labelling one another. So too does recognizing our shared responsibility.

While some are more implicated than others, we are all complicit in the ongoing overconsumption of oil-based products. And we all have a role to play in holding our governments accountable—not only for the strength of the economy, but for the well-being of Canadians; not just to trade deals, but to climate change and human rights agreements as well.

...continued on page 3

In Review

New Board Members

CPJ welcomed four new board members this spring. At our AGM in Toronto, CPJ members elected **Rene Adams** of Brampton, Ont., **Harold Roscher** of Edmonton, Alta., **Cherilyn Spraakman** of Newmarket, Ont., and **Tiffany Talen** of Redwood Meadows, Alta. to CPJ's Board of Directors. We are excited about the contributions they will bring to our work.



CPJ in the Community

CPJ held our AGM in Toronto in May. **Joe Gunn** introduced a panel of contributors to his new book, *Journeys to Justice*, including **Moira Hutchinson**, **Peter Noteboom**, **John Olthuis**, **Jennifer Henry**, and **David Pfrimmer**.

In April, CPJ held book launch events in Ottawa (with **Tony Clarke**, **Bill Janzen**, and **John Foster**), Halifax, and Antigonish, N.S. CPJ is planning more events for *Journeys to Justice* in western Canada for the fall.

In late April, CPJ co-hosted Voices for Peace, a conference featuring keynote speakers **Jim Forest** and **Shad** (below). The conference was also sponsored by the Henri Nouwen Society, Church of the Redeemer (Anglican), and the Basilian Centre for Peace and Justice.



Remembering Thea DeGroot

On May 16, 2018, **Thea DeGroot**, CPJ's board secretary, passed away at her home in Sarnia, Ont. Thea was a long-time, active member of CPJ and will be sorely missed by all of us.

Refugee Advocacy Resource

In June, CPJ released "Reclaiming Protection," a new advocacy resource on the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA). It highlights the first-hand experiences of several refugee claimants, details how the STCA has put refugees in danger, and provides guidance on how to advocate for a just approach to refugee protection in Canada. Download "Reclaiming Protection" at cpj.ca/reclaiming-protection.

CPJ on the Hill

CPJ's public justice intern **Deborah Mebude** joined MCC Ottawa's **Nicholas Pope** and **Lydia McGeorge** of the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue to meet with Liberal MP **Marwan Tabbara** for a conversation about refugee resettlement and wait times.

Natalie Appleyard, CPJ's socio-economic policy analyst, attended a social policy forum hosted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development where she met with **Jean-Yves Duclos**, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, to talk about the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy.

CPJ's executive director **Joe Gunn**, along with Campaign 2000, Ottawa ACORN, and Child Care Now, met with NDP Leader **Jagmeet Singh** and NDP MP **Brigitte Sansoucy** (below) for a conversation about child poverty in Canada.



Staff Changes

CPJ is excited to welcome back **Darlene O'Leary** as our socio-economic policy analyst. Darlene had been on leave since October 2017. We are very grateful to **Natalie Appleyard** who stepped into this role for eight months. We also said goodbye to **Brad Wassink**, CPJ's communications coordinator, who began his parental leave this summer.



309 Cooper Street, #501
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0G5
Unceded Algonquin Territory
tel.: 613-232-0275
toll-free: 1-800-667-8046
email: cpj@cpj.ca
web: www.cpj.ca

Citizens for Public Justice's mission is to promote public justice in Canada by shaping key public policy debates through research and analysis, publishing, and public dialogue. CPJ encourages citizens, leaders in society, and governments to support policies and practices which reflect God's call for love, justice, and the flourishing of creation.

CPJ annual membership fee includes *the Catalyst*:
\$50 / \$25 (low-income)

Summer 2018 (Volume 41, Number 2)
ISSN 0824-2062
Agreement no. 40022119
Editor: Brad Wassink

the Catalyst, a publication of Citizens for Public Justice, reports on public justice issues in Canada and reviews CPJ activities.

the Catalyst subscription:
\$20 (three issues)

the Catalyst is also available electronically. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of *the Catalyst*, simply contact us at cpj@cpj.ca.

Connect with us online



[facebook.com/
citizensforpublicjustice](https://facebook.com/citizensforpublicjustice)



twitter.com/publicjustice

...continued from page 1

As we navigate this difficult terrain, Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Bishop for the Anglican Church of Canada, emphasizes the importance of “being kind to one another. We have to work a lot harder,” he says. At the same time, he reminds us that “[God’s invitation to] care for creation calls us to pivot our economic well-being towards a sustainable way of living.”

Our economy, ecology, and society are all wrapped up in one another. If the health of one relies on the destruction of the other, then we have failed.

Rev. Emilie Smith is an Anglican priest in B.C. and was arrested in April at the Kinder Morgan Burnaby terminal. “We’re at a turning point in history,” she told me. “We can no longer think that we can proceed without consequence. It’s time to turn to a whole new way of living with one another and with the Earth.”

CPJ opposes the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion because it would further climate change and inhibit reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. And, we firmly believe that moving forward, the legitimate fears of oil sands workers must be addressed.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions benefits everyone. It is good for all of us when there is cleaner air and water, more predictable weather patterns, and reduced risks to key pollinators like bees and butterflies.

To align with the Paris Agreement on climate change and recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Canada should aim for emission reductions of 25 to 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. Canada’s current target would barely get us halfway there by 2030.

Pipelines are long-term projects intimately linked to fossil fuel extraction, Canada’s primary source of emissions. They also present a threat to Indigenous peoples. “It is our rights, it is our Indigenous laws, it’s our Indigeneity overall that continues to be eroded and challenged [by these developments],” said ICA’s Deranger.

A just transition for everyone

The key to advancing our hopes and addressing our fears is a just transition. In a just transition, the weight of change is not borne disproportionately by one group of people. A just transition includes significant investments in low-carbon energy development as well as funding for skills development and retrain-

ing programs for oil and gas workers. It also incorporates a robust Employment Insurance program to assist those who find themselves temporarily out of work. A just transition gives financial supports to the most vulnerable and leads to increased social justice for all.

The work of the federal government’s new Just Transition Task Force for coal power workers and communities offers a good reference point for a broader just transition plan for all of Canada that includes oil sands workers.

Rev. Neufeld of Fort McMurray thinks that many oil sands workers would be happy to transition to cleaner sectors. “Having the conversation about a transition is important,” he says, noting that for many it could mean relocation, lower salaries, or other financial losses. “It’s okay that we’re asking something more of people who are in the industry, but their sacrifice has to be acknowledged.”

“Diversification is a good strategy,” adds Bakker. “Retraining and leveraging the skills and competencies of unemployed people must be implemented to support and establish business in other sectors.”

And developing the renewable energy sector makes solid economic sense. Studies by the UN Industrial Development Organization and the International Labour Organization show that dollar-for-dollar, investing in renewables and energy efficiency creates more jobs than conventional energy projects.

The federal government now has a tremendous opportunity. Trans Mountain could one day prove financially beneficial, but at a remarkable cost to the climate and to the first peoples of this land. A just transition to a low-carbon economy, on the other hand, offers so much more.

The government often says that “the environment and the economy go hand in hand.” Now, they can put these words into action by investing in infrastructure across the country in a way that meets the needs of communities, respects the rights of Indigenous peoples, promotes sustainable jobs, and increases climate ambition for the benefit of us all.



Karri Munn-Venn is CPJ’s senior policy analyst.

Setting a Course to End Poverty

By Natalie Appleyard

After over a decade of calling for a national anti-poverty plan, we have finally been told that the government's Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy (CPRS) will be released this year. With this in mind, the Dignity for All (DfA) campaign took advantage of a critical moment. From May 14 to 18, supporters were asked to meet with or call their MPs with a united message: pass legislation that will set us on a course for dignity for all!

Given that the plan is coming soon, DfA has shifted its priorities. Instead of focusing on policies and programs that are presumably already set, we wanted to ensure that the strategy was backed by legislation. This is key to ensuring that it becomes a permanent and accountable part of Canadian social policy.

We consulted with organizations and partners that have endorsed DfA in the past. Based on their feedback, our Set a Course campaign called on the federal government to create anti-poverty legislation that:

1. Set strong poverty reduction targets and timelines to eradicate poverty once and for all;
2. Establish a plan to meet measurable targets and timelines; and
3. Reinstate the National Council of Welfare and establish a National Commissioner to ensure accountability and representation.

CPJ and DfA have long been asking for legislated targets, timelines, and implementation plans as part of a national strategy. What may be less familiar to our supporters, however, is our call for the reinstatement of the National Council of Welfare (NCW) and the establishment of a National Commissioner.

From 1969 to 2012, the NCW served as an arms-length advisory group to the federal government on poverty-related issues. Comprised of members from across the country, the NCW created opportunities for people experiencing poverty to have their voices heard in national decision-making processes. Rather than focusing solely on poverty or being tied to a specific policy, it had a holistic approach that examined social and political inclusion as well. Unfortunately, the NCW was cut by the federal government in 2012. No comparable organization currently exists, and civil society groups do not have the resources, access, or authority to carry out the NCW's important mandate.

Sheila Regehr is a former executive director of the NCW. She spoke with me about the group's historic and potential benefits. Of critical importance to Regehr were their cross-country consultations, noting that, "experts in their field don't have expertise in all contexts."

Regehr recalls a young mothers' group in Toronto. "The women controlled the meeting," she said. "It was so much more powerful than if one of those women had come to join a panel or committee rather than meeting with them as a group." While diverse representation was necessary in appointing members to the NCW, Regehr cautions that this is no replacement for connect-

ing with people on their home turf.

Regehr recommends the reinstatement of some form of the NCW which reflects the great gains that have been made in terms of available data, the implementation of strategic policies, and the recognition of diverse voices and experiences. At the same time, she notes gaps in civil society engagement that could be addressed through the reinstatement of the NCW. To increase accountability and transparency, the Council needs to have its mandate and independence legislated, an adequate budget for staffing and consultations, and direct access to report to the House of Commons.

The Set a Course campaign was taken up by over 20 organizers in five provinces and one territory. Many of our organizers were participating for their first time with DfA and shared their appreciation for feeling part of a broader movement while acting in their own local communities. At the Every Women's Centre in Sydney, N.S., organizers invited clients to write their frustrations and experiences of poverty on cue cards which were delivered to their MP during their meeting. As always, the strength of these campaigns lies in the dedication and truth-telling of our members. Together, we are setting a course for dignity for all!

We are still waiting for the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy to be released. We hope it will be:

- **Comprehensive.** The strategy must involve integrated policy in a minimum of six areas, including income security, housing and homelessness, healthcare, food security, employment, and early childhood education and care.
- **Rights-based.** People with lived experience of poverty, anti-poverty groups, and community organizations must be engaged in an ongoing way in the further development, implementation, and evaluation of the CPRS.
- **Legislated.** The strategy requires federal anti-poverty legislation that includes accountability mechanisms for review and evaluation, based in human rights.
- **Fully-funded.** Adequate funding commitments must be made to support a robust and responsive strategy.



Natalie Appleyard is the socio-economic policy analyst at CPJ.

Journeys to Justice: Reviews

Finding Hope in History

By Kathy Vandergrift

Dangerous memory is how Rev. Christine Boyle characterizes the heritage of Christian social action in the ten stories found in *Journeys to Justice*. Hopeful, inspiring memories is the intent of Joe Gunn, according to his introductory letter to his children and the next generation. Can they be both dangerous and inspiring?

As a start, this collection of first-hand accounts by leaders of justice initiatives that have helped to shape Canada is a good read. The personal backstories give big ideas, like Jubilee 2000, a human face, and their reflections share insights for those on similar journeys today.

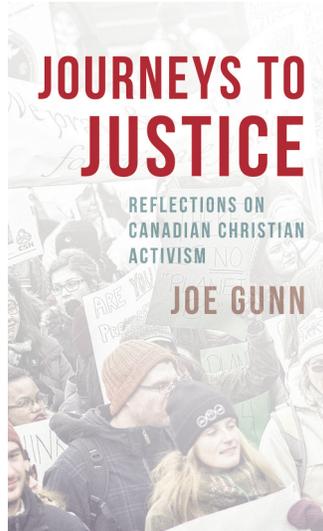
The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline story, for example, resonates with the controversial Kinder Morgan buy-out in the news today. Refugee appeals that came from Chile and Vietnam now come from Syria and Myanmar. The pharmacare debate today continues the fight for inclusive health care. Equitable treatment for women, indigenous people, and people living in poverty still need our attention.

While the issues are different, the stories also illustrate common, essential elements. They include strong, principled foundations rooted in fresh reading of Scripture; a combination of solidarity with affected persons and comprehensive research that links specific policy decisions to core values; and dynamic co-operation between citizen groups, official church leaders, and members across Canada, each playing their own roles to shift the public discourse as well as decisions on Parliament Hill.

Readers might want to ask a few more tough questions and add more critical analysis to inform future strategies, which the young contributors flag near the end. Any one of the stories can launch discussions over coffee, around a dinner table, or in a classroom.

At the heart of the matter, advocacy rooted in faith forces public consideration of deeper values than the short-term economic interests that tend to dominate at critical moments in Canadian history. It challenges the status quo and that makes it dangerous. Canada is a better place because of these ten and other similar stories. That makes it hopeful.

Kathy Vandergrift is the former chair of Citizens for Public Justice's Board of Directors. She has worked inside and outside government at municipal and federal levels to advance social justice.



Journeys to Justice: Reflections on Canadian Christian Activism

By Joe Gunn
Novalis, 2018

Who Will Carry the Mission Forward?

By The Rt. Rev. John H. Chapman

Journeys to Justice includes stories and reflections offered by a variety of justice seekers these past forty years. But, at the end of it all, the reader will see inside Joe's heart and soul.

He reveals in his own words and through the words of others, a desperation to make our world right and holy. This is not work done in isolation but rather it is communal work. He rightly recognizes that we all must work together as churches, social activists, politicians, and justice seekers to address a society that seems to have lost its steam, as Joe puts it, to seek justice for all of God's people.

In addition to sharing with us a compelling account of the good work that has unfolded in the past, there is a longing in his heart, a wondering perhaps, as to who will continue this good and holy work. The "heady days" of the 70's and 80's are long past. No longer are expressions or catch phrases like "preferential option for the poor," "Christian activism," "justice for all," and "liberation theology" commonplace in our society today. This may not be all bad since our context may not be similar to those days past, and our justice issues are nuanced differently today. But the problems remain: who will carry the mission forward?

Joe and all of the ten contributors are clearly asking the question: can we rise above our own internal sin and limitations and continue our work toward a just society? We have the capacity, even now, but is there the will? Do we have ears to hear God's call? Can we see the mission God calls us to embrace?

Perhaps what moves me most as I plow through names of people and organizations is the underlying theme, not always spoken, but certainly present throughout the book, that while God calls all people to be justice seekers, God also calls out particular people to offer leadership through word, example, passion, and hopefulness. In other words, God calls out of our midst prophets who will speak truth to power, truth to one another, always mindful of the frailty and beauty of every human being.

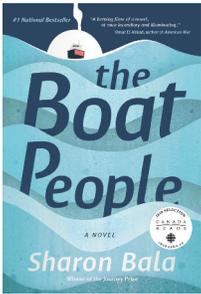
This book allows you to hear from ten such prophets and Joe, who may not think of himself as a prophet in his own time, but the reader will quickly conclude that he is, indeed!

The Rt. Rev. John H. Chapman is the 9th Bishop of Ottawa in the Anglican Church of Canada.

PURCHASE YOUR COPY OF JOURNEYS TO JUSTICE AT CPJ.CA/JOURNEYS

Book Reviews

Summer book suggestions from Citizens for Public Justice



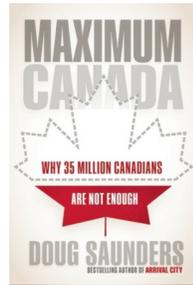
The Boat People
By Sharon Bala
McClelland &
Stewart, 2018

Reviewed by Deborah Mebude

The Boat People is inspired by the untold stories of hundreds of Tamil refugees who arrived on British Columbia's coast in 2009 and 2010. It depicts the tension between the slow pace of government protocols and the urgent needs of refugees in search of protection. Though a work of fiction, Bala weaves together a strikingly realistic portrayal of the difficult process of refugee determination. The novel sparks timely and difficult questions about how countries must balance their national interests with the greater international responsibility to provide support to refugees.

When Canada is confronted with a boatful of migrants, the story dives into the minds of government decision-makers, legal professionals, Canadians, and the refugees who find themselves waiting in detention, at the mercy of the bureaucratic process. Bala presents a complex and nuanced story ripe with emotion, suspense, and gravity. She expertly draws attention to the ills of the Japanese internment to show that Canada has not always gotten it right in regard to foreigners. Later, Bala uses the Underground Railroad to explain how allowing outsiders into the country can absolutely be a morally upright decision.

With this book, Bala holds up a mirror to the present day and invites each of us to connect deeply with the lives of those in search of protection, reflect on the past, and envision the type of Canada we want in the future. With lives at stake, we cannot afford to get it wrong.



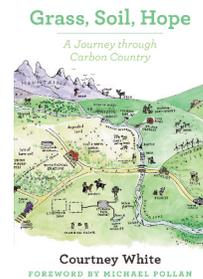
**Maximum Canada:
Why 35 Million
Canadians Are Not
Enough**
By Doug Saunders
Knopf Canada, 2017

Reviewed by Gloria Nafziger

I was fascinated by Doug Saunders' recent book *Maximum Canada*. Like many Canadians, I support immigration to Canada, believe that multiculturalism is a good thing, and think we need new immigrants to help sustain our economy, particularly as our current birth rate will not support the needs of an aging population. Saunders argues that in order to sustain our economy we need to work towards a population goal of 100 million by 2100. He also argues that achieving this goal is impossible without a substantial investment in the social, environmental, and physical infrastructure that would benefit the whole of society.

I was surprised to learn of the extent to which Canada is a country of emigrants, with significant population losses; mostly to the United States. I was not surprised to read that Canada's immigration policies have been historically racist, with a focus on British immigration and a narrow pool of white Europeans, and that the treatment of Indigenous peoples in the work of colonization has been atrocious.

I would like to have seen more discussion of the merits of current immigration streams, from investors to family reunification, refugees and temporary foreign workers, but perhaps this is a topic for another book. No matter our population goals or nature of programs, we need to ensure we create a society where no one is marginalized and everyone will have a home. Saunders provides a hopeful vision of how this might be possible.



**Grass, Soil, Hope: A
Journey Through
Carbon Country**
By Courtney White
Chelsea Green
Publishing, 2014

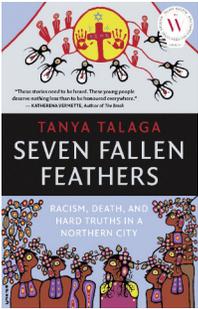
Reviewed by Wayne Groot

Whenever we read about climate change, we are reminded of the vast amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) we are pumping into the air through the burning of fossil fuels. Another huge emitter of CO₂ has also been the cultivation of soils in our agrarian societies. Soils contain vast amounts of carbon which, when allowed to decompose, turns into CO₂ and is released into the atmosphere.

Courtney White, in his book *Grass, Soil, Hope*, does a wonderful job explaining what carbon is and how it is a necessary building block in anything on this planet that is alive. He explains how power from the sun through photosynthesis can bring huge amounts of carbon back into the soil and thus lower CO₂ levels in the atmosphere.

This book is full of fascinating stories of people across the world who are working on regenerative agriculture. They are not just sustaining what we have, but are bringing soils back to health by increasing organic matter where it has been depleted due to excessive grazing, over cultivation, or other abuses of the natural environment.

In a world where many feel overwhelmed about the unsustainable direction of our CO₂ levels, this book offers some real hope in regards to some concrete ways we can adapt our agrarian practices and help sequester carbon back into the ground.



Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City
By Tanya Talaga
House of Anansi Press, 2017

Reviewed by Sarah DelVillano

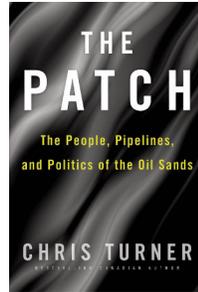
Seven Fallen Feathers is a powerful account of the deaths of seven Indigenous youths in Thunder Bay. It shines a light on each individual story behind the seven fallen feathers of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

Each of the fallen feathers represents one young Indigenous student, forced to leave home to pursue education, away from their families—families plagued by the intergenerational trauma resulting from residential schools. Many of these youth were found in rivers, despite being strong swimmers and having lived by the water their whole lives. And all their deaths were deemed accidental by local authorities.

For many settler Canadians, it is very easy to put the legacy of colonialism and the genocidal policy of residential schools behind us, believing these events to be a shameful part of our past on our successful road to reconciliation. The wealth of information presented in this book makes it impossible to deny that systemic and institutional violence, as it relates to colonialism in Canada, are alive and well today. The stories behind each of the seven fallen feathers pick apart these beliefs, slowly but surely, and expose them for what they are. Each child has a family that was failed by the system both before, and after, their passing.

Talaga ends the book with a look at present-day relations. Her work deconstructs the belief that Indigenous peoples and First Nation communities are passive victims of this violence. It is a powerful testament to the resilience of these youth, and a troubling indictment of continued colonial violence in Canada.

Seven Fallen Feathers won both the Indigenous Literature Award and the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.



The Patch: The People, Pipelines, and Politics of the Oil Sands
By Chris Turner
Simon & Schuster, 2017

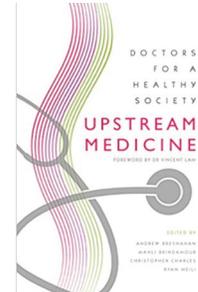
Reviewed by Karri Munn-Venn

Who knew that a 319-page book on bitumen could be so captivating? *The Patch* is undoubtedly the best book I have read in a long time.

At once a history book, a technical account of methods used to separate oil from sand, and a socio-political commentary, *The Patch* expertly weaves together the personal stories of Raheel Joseph, Marvin L'Hommecourt, Maryellen Fenech, and several others whose lives are directly intertwined with the oil sands industry. Through the tales of immigrants and maritimers, transplants from Toronto and local Dene, heavy equipment operators and petroleum engineers, trappers and fishers, husbands and wives, author Chris Turner creates a compelling narrative on the complexities of life in the boreal forests of northern Alberta.

The themes of scale and pervasiveness feature prominently in this book. The immense size of a Caterpillar 797 haul truck is matched by the magnitude of the global climate crisis. Hydrocarbons from a barrel of oil are in our cars, in our skincare products, and even in gummy candies. Turner explores these themes in a beautifully nuanced way that offers insights and highlights complexities you simply will not find in the political rhetoric that swirls around the region, industry statements about jobs, growth, and reforestation, or the reports of environmental organizations lamenting the devastation caused by the oil sands.

And there is one more thing: the responsibility for change is on all of us. As he concludes, Turner shares some of his own life experience and the ways in which he—as a writer, traveler, and former Green Party candidate—is also “dug in,” as he puts it, “as fully complicit in the long rule of oil as anyone. As everyone.”



Upstream Medicine: Doctors for a Healthy Society
Edited by Andrew Bresnahan, Mahli Brindamour, Christopher Charles, and Ryan Meili
Purich Publishing, 2017

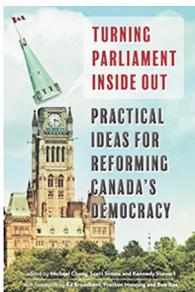
Reviewed by Janelle Vandergrift

It is hard not to be inspired by the depth of first-hand knowledge and the dedication of the impressive roster of physicians interviewed in *Upstream Medicine*. The book is a collaborative project between Upstream, a non-profit in Saskatchewan, and the Canadian Federation of Medical Students. In this book, various medical students have interviewed established doctors about the *social determinants of health*, also known as upstream health issues, of the patients they see. They include poverty, refugee health care, climate change, and housing, among others. Upstream was started by doctor Ryan Meili who, in his interview, nods to his Catholic faith and inspiration from social justice teachings and liberation theology.

The easy-to-read interview format allows space for personal reflection and stories. Interviewees seemed to find it refreshing to talk about their work with someone early on in their careers. Rudolf Virchow's quote, “politics is medicine on a larger scale” was often repeated, and the book often reads as a call to political action for doctors.

Throughout reading, I found myself equally encouraged by this movement of doctors engaging in advocacy and yet tentative about placing them as the main champions of public health and progressive social policy. Other professions and organizations were mentioned in many of the interviews, and the book touches on the privilege and platform doctors experience. But my hope is that we can likewise amplify the expertise of other medical and social professionals, policy wonks, lawyers, politicians, churches, activists, and organizations to create the healthy society we all need.

Book Reviews



Turning Parliament Inside Out: Practical Ideas for Reforming Canada's Democracy
Edited by Michael Chong, Scott Simms, and Kennedy Stewart Douglas & McIntyre, 2017

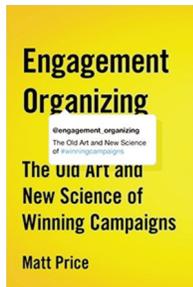
Reviewed by John Milloy

Canada's Parliament is broken. What once represented the apex of thoughtful political debate and discussion is in desperate need of repair. Meaningful exchanges have been replaced by hyper-partisan bickering, an over-reliance on canned speeches, and manipulation by powerful, unelected political staff. To make matters worse, the make-up of our national deliberative body does not reflect modern Canada, particularly when it comes to representation by women.

Turning Parliament Inside Out is an attempt by a multi-party group of backbench Members of Parliament to identify ways to reform Parliament. In a series of well-written and accessible essays, these concerned MPs outline practical solutions for increasing the quality of debate, making Parliament more representative, and curbing the power of party leaders and their staff. As well as offering the perspective of practitioners, the essays provide the reader with valuable insight into the history and workings of our national deliberative body.

Would adopting all these measures fix Parliament? Even the editors themselves admit that it will take more than their suggestions. But they call on backbench MPs to defy the dictates of their party leaders to bring about substantial change, even if it stalls their career or results in defeat.

Perhaps this is the book's greatest weakness. Is it reasonable to ask politicians to park their ambitions at the door when they arrive in Parliament? Or is the bigger challenge to find ways to reform Parliament that recognizes the reasonable desire of MPs and political parties to succeed personally and electorally? Perhaps this represents the true challenge of Parliamentary reform.



Engagement Organizing: The Old Art and New Science of Winning Campaigns
By Matt Price
On Point Press, 2017

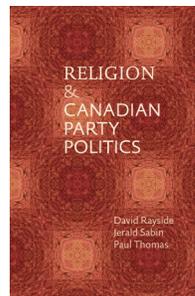
Reviewed by Natalie Appleyard

The let's-do-this-together organizer in me had many a great many *a-ha moments* while reading this book. I had to stop taking notes because it was essentially turning into copyright infringement. This is an excellent book for anyone who loves bringing people together for a common cause, not only because of its smart and strategic insights, but because of the integrity of its practices.

Rather than a win-at-all-costs approach, Price reminds organizers of the irreplaceable importance of human connections and the consistent practice of values underlying any given social movement. While the proliferation of data offers a breadth of engagement previously unknown, *Engagement Organizing* reminds us of the depth that can only be achieved through a return to the interpersonal relationships of community organizing.

Price uses case studies of political campaigns, the NGO sector, and unions to highlight best practices for organizing. These include distributed leadership, communicating *with*, not at, supporters (and encouraging them to communicate with one another), and harnessing the power of data to identify and reach "your people" and evaluate and refine your practices.

Price offers no magic formula. But he does give enough practical tips to really get the wheels turning. It has already permeated our strategic discussions at CPJ and I look forward to seeing the fruit it bears.



Religion and Canadian Party Politics
By David Rayside, Jerald Sabin, and Paul E.J. Thomas
UBC Press, 2017

Reviewed by Joe Gunn

Is faith still a factor in Canadians' voting patterns and the activity of Canadian political parties?

The three academics who wrote this book were particularly focussed on the power of "moral traditionalists." Unfortunately, what progressive movements of faithful Christians contributed to Canadian public policy remains of less interest.

As religious affiliation decreases, and Canada's population grows more diverse, these authors argue that religious conservatism has become a diminished, but not inconsequential, force across all the provinces and territories.

In earlier Canadian history, electoral preferences and party affiliation were often based on the sectarian divisions between Catholics and Protestants. Today, we are told, this has all but disappeared from the Canadian landscape. What still matters is evangelical affiliation, which aligns with parties on the right, especially in western Canada and Ontario.

The authors describe in detail the faith-based advocacy and political conflict over abortion issues, describing these as "now politically settled." However, there are still "hot" questions regularly raised around gender diversity, sexual health education in school curricula, and, more recently, debates about accommodations to adherents of Islam and the wearing of religious garb.

Whereas moral traditionalists consistently raise contentious issues, this study concludes by noting the "recognition among parties that developing high-profile policy commitments reflective of the preferences of moral traditionalists loses more votes than it gains."

Let's Stop Asking Refugees to Pay for Travel

By Danielle Steenwyk-Rowaan

I recently married an American guy. My born-and-bred Canadian arrogance has died hard.

When before I often drew sharp contrasts between the U.S. and “the true north strong and free,” being married to my Michigan-er and learning more about the systemic affronts to human dignity in my own beloved country has blurred those sharp contrasts for me.

Which brings me to the ongoing refugee crisis.

Canadians are often so sure that we're different from the U.S., with its rampant anti-immigrant rhetoric and scapegoating, that we don't usually think about the pressures they live with that we've been isolated from. We are surrounded by water on three sides, and the fourth side is the “longest undefended border” in the world, with a superpower across the way.

Recently, the U.S. has cancelled the Temporary Protected Status for many refugees while public opinion has turned against them. As a result, Canada's southern border has begun to experience just some of the migration pressure that the U.S. has been grappling with for a long time. It has not been a flood by any means. But Canadians are so unaccustomed to dealing with irregular arrivals (not “illegal immigrants” as some have dubbed them) that the movement of people across sites like Roxham Road in southern Quebec has created a national conversation.

The situation has led Conservative immigration critic Michelle Rempel to worry aloud that our social license for refugee welcome could erode, and I agree with her. The fears that drive American anti-refugee sentiment are not absent from Canada. If immigration pressure increases here, our political will to welcome refugees may well begin to resemble the U.S. situation more closely. We are not immune to that fear. For example, I regularly see big-hearted people with poor information posting on Facebook, and it worries me.

Canada has enjoyed the kind of isolation that not even island nations like Australia or the United Kingdom have enjoyed, and for the most part we've been able to handpick who arrives on our shores—from our economic immigrant points system to our refugee system.

But instead of playing tough with refugees, the way to preserve this social license and political will is to make sure they're able to adapt as quickly as possible. If we underfund services that help refugees to learn our official languages, find jobs, and adapt to their new home, we will be creating the conditions for poor and

isolated pockets of new Canadians. None of us want that situation.

One major barrier highlighted in “A Half Welcome,” a report from CPJ, is the travel loans program. Most refugees arrive in Canada already indebted to the government by \$3,000 to \$10,000 for the costs incurred in bringing them to this land, including medical exams, travel documents, and plane tickets. They must begin repaying this loan within one year, when they have barely begun to regain their footing.

As the report, which surveyed many Sponsorship Agreement Holders, states, “the pressure that comes with loan repayment means that refugees will not have the opportunity to fully acquire the language and educational skills necessary to contribute more productively to their new communities.”

So here's the proposal of the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue, and various partners, including CPJ: waive the loan repayment requirement for all refugees.

We've been overwhelmed by the more than 1,200 people across the country, from Victoria to Halifax, who have already spoken up with refugees to eliminate these travel loans. The statistics do not always show this positivity. Christian citizens are more likely to be suspicious of refugees, both in my husband's country and in my own. But these friends give me hope.

Nina Schuurman works with newcomers directly at Micah House in Hamilton. “I see the immense financial strain on folks who are settling into our nation,” she said. “After all the trauma that comes with being forcefully displaced and needing to flee to a new country, I am an advocate for tearing down any barriers that prevent newcomers from settling here well.”

John Hiemstra, a professor at The Kings University in Edmonton, noted that “to demand that refugees—defined as people who are ‘forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster’—repay travel loans at this vulnerable point in their lives is simply a violation of biblical justice.”

These advocates give me hope that churches will shape the immigration conversation in Canada with compassion, rather than suspicion.

Ask your MP to fully waive travel loan repayment for all refugees! Join the call at cpj.ca/take-action-refugee-rights.

Danielle Steenwyk-Rowaan is the justice communications team coordinator for the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue.



The Language of Love in Activism

By Amy Brierley



Danny Gillis, an animator with Development and Peace, CPJ's executive director Joe Gunn, and Colleen Cameron, chair of the Antigonish Affordable Housing Society, speak at CPJ's book launch in Antigonish, N.S.

On the evening of May 22, 2018 a group of people gathered in a small community meeting room in the People's Place Library in Antigonish, Nova Scotia to celebrate the launch of *Journeys to Justice*, a new book from CPJ. We gathered to hear reflections from Joe Gunn and several folks in Antigonish who, for many years, have committed their lives to a pursuit of social justice, carrying with them spiritual and faith understandings of what a better world can look like. The evening was full of conversation and rich with stories of success and struggle within Canadian Christian activism.

As we neared the end of the evening, the conversation turned to questions of the future and the particular involvement of youth in this activism. But in my discernment of this world and my place in it, I don't wonder how a church might adjust to better accommodate me, but rather how I might find places in my life that will allow me to contribute to the change that the world needs now. How do the ways we go about this change shape the outcomes that are possible? What is the bigger *why* that connects us in pursuits of justice?

I believe that to explore these questions deeply in community provides an opportunity for great transformation and meaningful activism. If we want to do this exploration in ways that unseat our own prejudices and commitments to unjust ideals, these communities must be committed to a life path of love.

What can this mean in reality? A community grounded in unconditional love speaks the language of deep and radical recognition. It goes beyond a language of tolerance to a language of understanding, of truly *seeing*, and out of this, acting in solidarity. It acts out of love because of gratitude for all the expressions and complexities of a person, not despite them.

In this language there is ever-diminishing space for defining truth by the so-called norm. There is less and less room to both implicitly and explicitly maintain that the fullest love is reserved only for those who hold power and privilege or who express their identity in narrowly defined ways. In this language, there is ever-diminishing space to ignore that so often dogmatic views and positions are tethered to the very same systems that cause deep

pain and damage to individuals and communities.

A community that lives out of this language is one that pursues social justice with a commitment to understanding and transforming the systems that reserve dignity for a privileged few. It is one that seeks justice for both people and Mother Earth, recognizing that relationship with the world around us is woven into the very fabric of the human experience.

A community rooted in right relationship recognizes the deep need for open listening, a commitment to doing the inner work in order to be a reflection of love in the world. It is a community that seeks to change and do what is needed to continue to live in right relationship when new understandings are formed—even when these changes might shake the very foundation of how the community has seen the world.

This sort of commitment requires of us honesty, integrity, and humility—hearing with the ears and the heart. And so, when it comes to understanding and reconciling past and continuing profound wrongdoings, it requires the community to go forth with a great openness. It means finding ways to do things that those in positions of power maintain are not possible. This is a commitment that leaves no space for activism that harms, denies human rights, or maintains a position of complicity.

As I think about the beautiful possibilities that these types of communities hold for our future, I arrive at the question: can churches and communities of faith be places where these commitments flourish? Can the churches' social justice work be centered in transformations of the heart?

When the answer to these questions is yes, I believe the future of social justice in the churches is one of great possibility.



Amy Brierley is the coordinator of the Martha Justice Ministry with the Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish.

A Carbon Price that Reduces Poverty

By Sarah DelVillano

As the summer road-trip season approaches, gas prices are, as usual, on the rise. The public narrative in Ontario puts the blame squarely on carbon pricing. To be sure, gas prices in Ontario rose 4.3¢ (of a total of \$1.35/litre) overnight when the province's cap and trade program came into effect in January 2017. And despite the many other factors at play, confusion about carbon pricing makes it an easy target when prices at the pump go up.

The federal Liberal government has failed to address concerns about the impact of carbon pricing on low-income Canadians. Instead, they've repeated (over and over) that the provinces can choose what to do with the revenue generated by the new price.

In 2015, Prime Minister Trudeau called on Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children, and Social Development, to develop Canada's first national poverty reduction strategy. It seemed clear that the Prime Minister intended to make poverty a national issue—something that civil society leaders had been calling on the government to do for years. Wouldn't it follow, then, that Ottawa would have a plan to deal with the effects of carbon pricing on the most vulnerable in society?

Meanwhile, the Conservatives are suddenly raising concerns about poverty—an issue that they have historically kept at arms length. They have expressed concern for those with fixed income—who they say are being disproportionately affected by the rising gas prices. But it is no secret that they have long-favoured employment as the “most effective” tool for fighting poverty in Canada. Given this history, the party's shift towards acting as champions for individuals on fixed income appears rather disingenuous.

In February, the Dignity for All campaign released “Living in the Gap,” an insightful series of infographics that show what it's like for many people living in Canada who struggle to make ends meet.

Jessi Patel's story is just one of many. She is a single mother living in Toronto who has a B.A. and works full-time as an administrative assistant. Her ten-month-old son attends a downtown daycare centre. Commuting to her job outside the city would take two hours each way by transit, so Jessi drives.

Without taking into account clothes or diapers for her son, Jessi's income is insufficient to cover her monthly costs. So, when gas prices go up, she feels it. However, that cost increase pales in comparison to the \$1,750 she pays every month for childcare. Universal, low-fee childcare is the type of smart, evidence-based policy, that would help the Liberal government to address concerns about important policies like carbon pricing. Rising gas prices, energy prices, and food prices would sting a lot less if low-income Canadians did not face outrageous costs for childcare, pharmaceuticals, and housing.

Environmental action is often portrayed as an elite issue. People living in poverty don't always have the luxury of worrying about things like climate change. And yet, they are the ones most directly impacted. They are more likely to live in precarious situations, more vulnerable to extreme temperatures, and can be exposed to higher-than-average pollution levels—all of which can be associated with increased health risks.

A carbon price adjusts overall prices to reflect the true environmental cost of goods and services. It drives sustainable innovation and encourages people to spend differently. Of course, for someone like Jessi, already struggling to make ends meet, there isn't a lot of wiggle room.

That is why the ways in which these policies are implemented really matter. In order to prevent regressive effects on low-income households and stimulate further carbon reductions in the economy, a portion of carbon pricing revenues should be passed on to low-income families in the form of a rebate.

It may be that this is what Liberal MPs have in mind when they emphasize provincial control of carbon revenues. If so, they should say so. We know that Jessi would rest easier knowing that she has the support that she needs, not just for an affordable daily commute, but for a healthy future for her son.

“Living in the Gap” is a snapshot of the monthly incomes, expenses, and experiences of six fictitious households. These profiles are not unusual; they show what it's like for typical families living in the gap between what they have and what they need. The Patels represent the many households in Toronto where the high costs of childcare and housing undermine the stability expected of a well-paying job. Read all six of these stories at dignityforall.ca/in-the-gap.



Sarah DelVillano is a public justice intern at Citizens for Public Justice.



Three Simple Promises for Working Together

By David Burrows

The Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador (RSACNL) explores the various ways that people of differing faiths continue the work of advocacy for poverty elimination. Ten directors from Sikh, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and Christian faiths come together monthly to identify and enable the dignity of people living in Newfoundland and Labrador. We examine how we can advocate for change within the provincial government. Our hope is to establish a living wage for the province, and to advocate for a mechanism to apply a fairness lens upon all provincial legislation.

I have witnessed and participated in the listening, inclusion, and persistence of this group. It may not be rocket science or the most efficient practice even, yet it continues to work for us as we push forward slowly in advocating for change.

Listen

Each time we gather, we take time to offer silent prayer. In these moments, we begin and end our time acknowledging the Divine. We enter into holy space so that we can be present with each other. In this holy stillness, I reflect upon the words of I Kings 19: 11-13. Elijah encounters the LORD not in the great and strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire. The LORD is heard in the still small voice. This is my own reflection. Others come with their own perspectives of the Divine and the need to respond to make the world the place that God intends. Setting apart this sacred space gives us the focus and passion we need to get our work done. We listen first to God, and in turn, we are prepared to listen to each other. We discern strength and direction through our abilities to be present to differing perspectives. Offering this listening ear into the silence has helped us focus on our common unity.

Include

At each of our gatherings, we come together around a table, taking into account the various religious and cultural limitations and requirements. Above all, we enable everyone to have an equal voice and perspective in our discussion. In this I am reminded of the relationship we see with Jesus and the family of Bethany in John's Gospel. Jesus' relationship, his love, and his presence with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus for me show a profound care and a

profound value that he offers to each and everyone. Jesus did not dismiss persons based on gender or roles within society. He included people as they were and sat at a table with people of low or high standing within society. The directors of RSACNL come from varying socio-economic means, with differing roles within family, society, and profession. We are broad in our experience and expression. We come to the table because we see the value and the importance in each other.

Stay

In my recounting thus far, one may think that RSACNL is highly productive and efficient. This is not the case. There is still a disparity within Newfoundland and Labrador between the very rich and those living in poverty. The gap seems to be widening over time. In our earnest listening, in our monthly table dialogues, we spin our wheels; we don't always get the results we expect. Yet, we stay. We do not walk away from our commitment to listen, to be with each other, and to work to this higher cause. We still strive to work together to close the gap. I am reminded of the tenacity and persistence of God's dealings with Jonah. Jonah tried as hard as he could to ignore the summons of God to speak to the people of Nineveh. God did not accept no as an answer. There is always a way for us to move forward (albeit sometimes quite slowly) in the goal of poverty elimination in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I feel privileged to be present in this ongoing dialogue, and I am reminded that this listening, inclusion, and staying is of great benefit in poverty elimination, and also in other aspects of how people can work to effect change in our society. My work with these fine people reminds me that when we say, "You are welcome at the table, the table is large enough, stay here, we will listen to you," that great change and transformation can occur. It may not always happen in my time or my way, yet the change affects the entire system. I pray that these considerations might be present in many aspects of justice and advocacy.

David Burrows is a priest in the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador where he was appointed Canon of Society and Justice in 2014. He is the executive director of Home Again Furniture Bank and the coordinator of the Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador.

