

NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study

IDSEM-UG 2095

**Sovereignty, Interrupted: The Contested Legacies of Montreal's Quiet Revolution
Souveraineté interrompue: l'héritage contesté de la révolution tranquille à Montréal**

Spring 2021

Eugenia Kisin

eugenia.kisin@nyu.edu

1 Washington Place, Room 516

By-Zoom office hours by appointment T 2:00-6:00

Book office hours [here](#)

Jacob Remes

jacob.remes@nyu.edu

1 Washington Place, Room 515

By-Zoom office hours by appointment T 1:00-5:00

Book office hours at <https://tinyurl.com/remes-appointments>

Description

What does it mean to build and defend culture, sovereignty, and social democracy? What does it feel like to live in a bilingual city? How can historically oppressed and marginalized peoples reckon with their own continued culpability in the oppression of others? What are the continuing legacies of the upheavals of the 1960s? The course explores these questions in contemporary Montréal, Québec's largest and most diverse city and cultural capital. During the Quiet Revolution, ordinary Quebecers declared that they would be "maîtres chez nous," masters in our own house, as opposed to English Canadians, Catholic priests, or autocratic politicians. They remade the city politically, culturally, and architecturally and created modern—secular, social democratic, and nationalist—Québec. This class will take an ethnographic and historical approach to Montréal, using the city as a site to explore questions of nationalism, identity, feminism, art, and globalization. We will explore Montréal through scholarship, visual and performance art, novels, and film. Topics will include national liberation struggles of Québécois and other ethnic groups; bilingualism; nationalized health and child care; visual sovereignty; Expo 67; and Indigenous—specifically Kanien'kehá:ka—sovereignty and nationhood. We may consider work by Denys Arcand, David Austin, Céline Dion, Sean Mills, Alanis Obamsawin, Anne-Claire Poirier, Moshe Safdie, and Skawenatti. The course will be delivered in English, and French is not required.

Learning goals

- Students will be introduced to, consider, and learn major themes in the history and anthropology of Montreal, Quebec, and Canada.

- Students will learn the backgrounds of and develop critical analyses of questions of nationalism, cities, language ideology, visual culture, Indigeneity and settler colonialism, as they apply to Montreal and Quebec.
- Students will practice their research, analytical, and academic writing skills.
- Students will develop strong opinions about the appropriate use of accents, ethnonyms, and bagels.

A note about this semester

This semester is going to be unusual, and it's going to be difficult. Even though we did it last semester, we'll still all be figuring things out as we go along. We will all need to be patient and flexible. We should expect things to be tougher than usual for all of us and to make allowances for each other. We will need to experiment with ways to approximate at a distance the in-person modes of learning, thinking, and socializing to which we were once accustomed. To borrow ideas from Japan, we will all need to *ganbaru* and *gaman*—to do our best and to persevere—and we'll need to help each other do that.

This semester may come with special challenges for you as a student, whether it is in your ability to study, write, and think, or to pay tuition, eat, remain housed, or stay sane. We won't be able to solve every problem, but we can help with many of them, and we can direct you to people and offices who can help with others. But we can't help if you don't tell us that you're struggling. You can feel free to tell us as much or as little as you are comfortable sharing, but please do not hesitate to let us know if you need support so we can try to help you. You can feel free to talk to either or both of the professors.

We all should try hard to replicate the ordinary seminar room on Zoom. For that reason, please join the Zoom meeting on time, please keep your camera on, and please engage as you would if we were meeting in person. If there are reasons you can't do any of these things, please talk to one or both of us and we'll come to an agreement about how to accommodate your circumstances.

Required texts

We will read these books more or less in their entirety. Please obtain them. They are on order at the NYU Bookstore and are available from other bookstores too. Most of them are also available online via Bobst. We strongly encourage you to look for and purchase used copies so that you can read them on paper and mark them up while also saving money. (The ISBNs are listed below to facilitate your finding cheaper copies.) Note that other readings will be available digitally on Brightspace.

- Melissa Blais, *"I Hate Feminists!" December 6, 1989 and its Aftermaths*, trans. Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Halifax: Fernwood, 2014). ISBN 9781552666807.
- Michèle Dagenais, *Montreal, City of Water: An Environmental History*, trans. Peter Feldstein (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017). ISBN 9780774836234.
- Monica Heller, *Paths to Postnationalism: A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). ISBN: 9780199746866
NB: While this book is available for purchase from the Bookstore, it is outrageously expensive. Bobst has a digital version, and we recommend using that.

- Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010). ISBN 9780773536951.
- Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014). ISBN 978-0-8223-5655-4.
- Walter Scott, *Wendy* (Toronto: Koyama Press, 2014). ISBN 9781927668092.

In addition to the above books, which everyone will read, you will read your choice of one Montreal novel. They are available as recommended books through the NYU Bookstore.

- Nicolas Dickner, *Nikolski** (2005)
- Kaie Kellough, *Accordéon* (2016)
- Mordecai Richler, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (1959)
- Gabrielle Roy, *Tin Flute** (1949)
- Michel Tremblay, *The Fat Woman Next Door Is Pregnant** (1978)
- Zoe Whittall, *Bottle Rocket Hearts* (2007)

Assignments and grading

Class participation - 25%

This grade reflects your **active engagement with the course and the readings** through live online class discussions, group work, chat contributions, posts to Brightspace, and how you help each other navigate the course materials in ways that we won't necessarily be able to see. Because class participation will look different across platforms, time zones, and learning styles, we will ask you to assess your own participation in a narrative reflection, due the same day as your final paper. We also understand that speaking in a Zoom classroom can be anxiety provoking. If you are struggling with speaking up in class, please let us know over email or in office hours so we can discuss strategies.

Discussion Forum Posts - 10%

Each week **the day before class** (by 5pm New York time!), you will post a reflection of approximately 300 words to the week's Forum on Brightspace. These posts should be related to the readings for the week, but could also draw in a previous week's work, earlier posts, and/or anything else that you've been thinking about or doing in relation to course themes. You should always feel free to ask questions, too, and before class, please try to read your classmates' posts.

News report - 10%

In one week of your choosing, you will find a newspaper article about Montreal and give a **five-minute presentation** in class about the news item. The news article should be related to the week's theme, and we will cut you off after five minutes. Please **email us by 5pm** the day before class to let us know that you want to present that week. If you can read French, we encourage you to look at [Le Devoir](#) or [La Presse](#). For English-language news coverage of Montreal, try the following:

- [The Gazette](#), the mainstream daily
- [The Globe and Mail](#), a Toronto newspaper with pretensions of national importance
- [The CBC](#), the public broadcaster
- [Cult MTL](#), the arts-oriented alt-weekly
- [Ricochet](#), a left-leaning news website
- [The Link](#), Concordia University's campus newspaper

Book club and 5-7 page paper - 20% - Due April 7

You will choose from among a handful of novels written about Montreal by Montreal writers. On March 31, you'll meet in small groups--a book club, if you will--and talk about the book with others who read it. Then, you'll individually write a **five-to-seven page paper** on how the themes of the class and the novel elucidate each other--that is, how does understanding the contested legacies of the Quiet Revolution help us to interpret the novel *or* how does the novel help us to better understand contemporary Montreal?

If you are able to read in French, we encourage you to choose one of the French-language novels (identified with an asterisk on the list) and read it in the original language. If there is a different Montreal novel you'd like to read instead of one of the six we've selected, and you can find two or more classmates who want to join you, you can propose that novel to us as an alternative.

Research paper, 10-15 pages - 25% - Due May 11, 5pm

You will write a **research paper on a relevant topic of your choice**. Your paper can be on any relevant topic so long as it (a) engages at least some of the ideas we read and discuss in seminar, (b) involves primary source research, (c) advances an argument, and (d) contains your original analysis. It should be 10-15 pages long (plus a bibliography), include Chicago/Turabian style footnotes, and have a title. In keeping with the Gallatin ethos, you may propose a different sort of final project as long as it has major research and analysis components; if you are interested in doing this talk to us in office hours about what you'd like to do. If you need help thinking of a topic, we're always happy to talk and give ideas. You'll work on the paper in several stages, and there are times built into the class schedule to talk about them.

Paper proposal with short bibliography - 10% - Due March 17

In preparation for your research paper described above, you will write about **two pages proposing your topic**. Explain what you want to write about (what questions you will ask), how you plan to research it, and why it is a good topic. Important for this assignment is to say what primary sources you plan to use—that is, what sources or data will you analyze yourself as the basis of your paper? In addition, you should include a brief bibliography of five scholarly, secondary sources that you will use to for context, background, framing, and/or theory for your analysis of your primary sources.

Course schedule

Week 1 - February 3

Introductions/Présentations

- Please look through the Musée québécois de Culture populaire's virtual exhibit on the Quiet Revolution before the first class.
<http://www.larevolutiontranquille.ca/en/>

Week 2 - February 10

La révolution tranquille/The Quiet Revolution

- Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal* (Montreal and Kingston: MQUP 2010).
- "[Speak White](#)" by Michèle Lalonde (1968), trans. Albert Herring [we will watch a film version of the poem in class]

Week 3 - February 17

Indigenous politics and sovereignty/Politique et souveraineté autochtones

Guest speaker: Nadia Myre (Kitigan Zibi Anishinaabeg/Québécoise), artist and co-founder of *centre d'art daphne art centre*

- Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

Week 4 - February 24

Language/La langue

- Monica Heller, *Paths to Postnationalism: A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- Patricia Lamarre, "[Bilingual winks and bilingual wordplay in Montreal's linguistic landscape](#)," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* no. 228 (June 2014): 131-151.

Week 5 - March 3

Building and defending the Quebec model of social democracy/Construire et défendre le modèle Québécois de la démocratie-sociale

Guest speaker: Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, M.N.A., co-spokesperson of Québec solidaire

- Daniel Salée, "[Transformative Politics, the State, and the Politics of Social Change in Quebec](#)" in *Changing Canada: Political Economy as Transformation*, edited by W.

Clement and L. Vosko (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003): 25-50.

- "History of Quebec's Student Strikes," *Ultimatum* April 2012, 4.
- "Share Our Future: the CLASSE Manifesto" (2012) with introduction by Jacob Remes, *All About Mentoring* 42 (winter 2013): 114-118.
- Jonathan Turcotte-Summers, "[Students as Workers and the 2019 Québec Student Strike](#)," *Activist History Review*, 26 August 2019.
- Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, "La fin des certitudes," *L'actualité* 2 December 2020 [[in French if you can read it](#)] [[Google translate](#)]

Week 6 - March 10

Other liberations / les autres libérations

- David Austin, "[All roads led to Montreal: Black Power, the Caribbean, and the black radical tradition in Canada](#)," *Journal of African American History* 92, no. 4 (2007): 516-539.
- Yan Grenier, "Le développement du mouvement associatif communautaire québécois dans le champ du handicap," in F. Saillaint and E. Lamoreux, eds., *InterReconnaissance: La mémoire des droits dans le milieu communautaire en Québec* (Québec, QC: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2018).
- Edward Ou Jin Lee, "Escape, Retreat, Revolt: Queer People of Colour Living in Montreal: Using Photovoice as a Tool for Community Organizing," in Aziz Choudry, Jill Hanley & Eric Shragge, eds., *Organize! Building from the Local for Global Justice* (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press, 2012), 82-95.
- Ted Rutland, "[Profiling the Future: The Long Struggle against Police Racial Profiling in Montreal](#)," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 50, no. 3 (2020): 270-292.

Week 7 - March 17

Politics and filmmaking/La politique et réalisation

- Denys Arcand, *Le Comfort et l'Indifférence* (1982).
- Alanis Obamsawin, [270 Years of Resistance](#) (1993).
- Jeff Barnaby, *Blood Quantum* (2020).

Week 8 - March 24

Come talk to us in office hours about your paper proposals.

Week 9 - March 31

Meet with your book club/club de lecture.

Week 10 - April 7

Essay on your novel due

Urban visual cultures/Les cultures visuelles urbaines

- Walter Scott, *Wendy* (Toronto: Koyama Press, 2014).
- Kitty Scott, "[Brian Jungen: Habitat 04](#)," in Rhona Richman Kenneally and Johanne Sloan, eds. *Expo 67: Not Just a Souvenir* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 221-238.
- Aurora Wallace, "[Girl Watching at Expo 67](#)," in Rhona Richman Kenneally and Johanne Sloan, eds. *Expo 67: Not Just a Souvenir* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 109-122.
- Film: Minutes du patrimoine: Expo 67 (1997)
<https://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/expo-67>

Week 11 - April 14

Environment/l'environnement

- Michèle Dagenais, *Montreal, City of Water: An Environmental History*, trans. Peter Feldstein (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017).

Week 12 - April 21

École Polytechnique massacre/tuerie de l'École polytechnique

- Melissa Blais, *"I Hate Feminists!" December 6, 1989 and its Aftermaths*, trans. Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Halifax: Fernwood, 2014).
- Melissa Gismondi, "[When Feminism is Met with Violence](#)," *Washington Post*, 6 December 2018.

Week 13 - April 28

Feminism and laïcité/ Féminisme et laïcité

- Sirma Bilge, "[Mapping Québécois Sexual Nationalism in Times of 'Crisis of Reasonable Accommodations'](#)," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33 no. 3 (2012): 303-318.
- Alexandra Dobrowolsky, "[Gender versus Culture Debates and Débâcles: Feminisms, Interculturalism and the Quebec Charter of Values](#)," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 50 no. 2 (June 2017): 515-533.
- Roshan Arah Jahangeer, "[Anti-Veiling and the Charter of Québec Values: 'Native Testimonials,' Erasure, and Violence against Montreal's Muslim Women](#)," *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 32, no. 1 (2020): 114-139.

Week 14 - May 5

Contemporary Montreal and Food/ Montréal contemporain et la bouffe

Guest Speaker: Selena Ross, editor of *Maisonneuve Magazine*.

- *Maisonneuve* Montreal Issue, Spring 2020
- Nicolas Fabien-Ouellet, "[Poutine Dynamics](#)," *Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Culture* 7 no. 2 (2016).
- Joseph Rosen, "[The Death of the Montreal Bagel?](#)" *Globe and Mail* 23 November 2018.
- Calvin Trillin, "[Funny Food](#)," *The New Yorker* 23 November 2009.

Course policies

Attendance. As described elsewhere in this syllabus, participation in class discussion is a key thing we do in this class. You can't participate if you're not in class. Therefore, attendance on our Zoom sessions is required. Please turn your camera on and be prepared to participate as you would in an in-person seminar room. Frequent absences will be factored into your participation grade. That said, some absences are legitimate and unavoidable, and it is up to you to decide what those are. It is always better to be on the Zoom call than not, but if an absence is unavoidable, please email one of us ahead of time and we will excuse your absence. Absences for religious observance are always permissible, but you should let us know what days you'll be out. No matter why you miss a class, it's your responsibility to find out what happened during it, so you should ask a classmate for notes. If your situation is such that attendance and participation via Zoom is or becomes impossible, please talk to one or both of us.

Academic integrity. As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the university. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website (<http://gallatin.nyu.edu/about/bulletin/undergrad/policies/integrity.html>).

Beyond the above boilerplate warning, the best rule is: When in doubt, cite. This admonition isn't just about following the rules. To be convincing, arguments must be based in fact, and in order to assess facts the reader must know from whence they came. Academic dishonesty also robs you of the education you're here for; if you don't do the work you're supposed to do, you don't get the educational experiences you're supposed to get. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, ask.

Deadlines and extensions. Written work must be turned in on time. Reading responses will not be accepted late under any circumstances; all other work that is turned in late will be marked down a third of a grade per day; that is, a paper turned in a day late that would otherwise have gotten an A- will get a B+. If a legitimate delay is unavoidable, you can ask for an extension, but you must ask for one no less than 24 hours before the deadline.

Practically, what this means is that you should try to get your work done on time, and if you can't you should ask us for an extension and we'll work something out. But if you don't ask me for an extension first, you'll be in trouble.

Office hours and help. This semester, our office hours are by Zoom. We each have individual office hours by appointment on Tuesday, and we will be holding joint, drop-in office hours on Wednesdays before class. Please see the top of this syllabus for the relevant URLs. We both encourage you to visit with us on Zoom to talk about Montreal, the Quiet Revolution, and about whatever else you'd like, too. If you need to meet outside our office hours, feel free to email either of us for an appointment and we'll make something work. You're also welcome to email us about anything else at jacob.remes@nyu.edu and eugina.kisin@nyu.edu (but please don't expect a fast response on weekends). Always, the rule is, if you don't understand something, or if you're having trouble, ask for help, whether in class, by email, or in office hours.

Academic assistance. What we're trying to do here is think about hard things in a supportive environment. This course is supposed to be difficult (if it's not, complain to us and we'll fix it!) but we also want to be supportive. Giving you help is our job. But we're not the only ones you can turn to for help. We strongly encourage you to make use of the Gallatin Writing Center at every stage of your writing, from conceiving of your paper to your final revisions. See <http://gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/undergraduate/writing/writingcenterappointments.html> for more details. The general rule, whether for reading or writing or researching, is: ***If you're having trouble, ask for help.*** That's what we're here for. If for whatever reason you don't want to talk to either of us, reach out to your academic advisor or to your class advisor. The most important thing is not to suffer in silence and to make use of the many NYU and Gallatin resources that exist to help you.

General support. Beyond academic support, Gallatin has resources for you if you need help. Both of us, your class advisor, and others at Gallatin are especially aware that this semester will be difficult for many students—academically, emotionally, and financially—and we want to help as best we are able. There are many entry points: you can turn to your academic advisor; to your class advisor; to Richard Jung, the assistant director of student affairs (richard.jung@nyu.edu, 347-453-9751(c)); to the NYU Wellness Exchange (212-443-9999, 24 hours a day); or to either of us. If you're having difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, and you think it's affecting your performance in the course, we urge you to contact Richard Jung or Dean of Students Pat McCreery (patrick.mccreery@nyu.edu) for support. If you feel comfortable speaking to either of us, we will advocate on your behalf.

Disabilities. New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. It is the University's policy that no qualified student with a disability be excluded from participating in any University program or activity, denied the benefits of any University program or activity, or otherwise subjected to discrimination with regard to any University program or activity. If you have a disability and need accommodation, the first step is to talk to the Moses Center for Students for

Disabilities. You can contact them at 212-998-4980 or email mosescsd@nyu.edu; see <http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html> for more information. Before or after you speak with the Moses Center, we are happy to talk to you about accommodating you.