



NB MEDIA CO-OP

independent media by and for New Brunswickers

Annual Report 2015-2016

Prepared by Tracy Glynn

Highlights

Alain Deneault on tax havens

As part of our sixth annual general meeting, the NB Media Co-op co-presented a talk by Alain Deneault on tax havens to a full room at St. Thomas University in Fredericton on Sept. 29, 2015. Deneault's talk was very timely, just months after the Panama Papers were released, exposing the scandal of tax havens and tax avoidance worldwide. Deneault, a Quebec author on topics such as international finance, globalization, transnational corporations and corporate tax havens, spoke on "The Halifax Banking Company, the Irving Family and Nova Scotia Business: How the Maritimes Pioneered the Offshore World." Jean Sauvegeau of the NB Prosperity and Not Austerity Coalition provided opening remarks. The lecture was co-hosted by St. Thomas University's Department of Criminology and Department of Sociology, and the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations. The lecture explored how Maritime interests helped innovate the offshore economy of tax avoidance. The amount of money being sent from Canada and the United States to offshore tax havens such as the Cayman Islands, Luxembourg or Bermuda has increased over tenfold since the 1980s, with significant implications for public institutions here and for the global order that Maritime business interests have helped to innovate. Deneault gave another talk earlier in the day as part of a panel called "What companies don't want you to know: Barrick, Goldcorp and the Irving's." The noon hour panel also had Jackie McVicar with the Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network and Julian Walker, a journalist and communications expert, share thoughtful perspectives and interesting stories on the corporate influence over our institutions. Deneault also spoke at the Université de Moncton and helped us reach out to people in that part of the province.



Breaking stories

The NB Media Co-op continued to cover important stories not being picked up by other media in New Brunswick including NB Power's connection to the starving indigenous Wayúu communities in Colombia, the ongoing struggle to ban glyphosates from the forest in New Brunswick and indigneous resurgences in Atlantic Canada against destructive resource extraction.

UNB Arts 3000 Intern

NB Media Co-op's UNB Arts 3000 intern Chris Pearson worked with the NB Media Co-op in the winter 2016 semester and produced a number of stories, including news on the status of abortion access in the province, the provincial budget and the Gallant government's backing down from changing the binding arbitration process in the wake of labour union protests. He produced a research paper that looked at media coverage of the NB Media Co-op versus the Irving-owned newspaper as well as CBC. Chris also distributed *The Brief* on campus and updated our events page. The NB Media Co-op hopes to have another UNB Arts 3000 intern this year.

Our Website

Our website, nbmediacoop.org, continues to publish news articles on topics concerning labour, poverty, social justice, the environment, indigenous communities, women, LGBTQ, students, politics, the economy and health in New Brunswick, Canada and the world. Our most popular story this year was efforts to stop spraying New Brunswick's forest, over 8,000 hits while a public statement by Refugees Welcome Fredericton condemning the Ezra Levant-backed *Toronto Sun/Rebel Media'* racist media coverage targetting the Fredericton High School received over 1,500 hits. Most traffic to our site comes from Facebook. We also increased our social media presence to 1,620 Facebook fans (up from 1,430 last year) and 1,434 Twitter followers (up from 1,285 last year).

The Brief

Our broadsheet publication, *The Brief*, continues to be popular. We distributed 2,500 copies ten times this past year to coffee shops, unions, offices, campuses, and various locations around New Brunswick. Over 100 locations and individuals are now receiving *The Brief* by mail, making postage the highest expense for the NB Media Co-op. Many of these individuals are distributing 15-50 copies of *The Brief* in their communities. Many movements, such as the environmental, reproductive justice and labour movements, use *The Brief* to educate the public on social problems and their demands for change. For distributing a large number of copies of *The Brief* in their communities each month, the NB Media Co-op wishes to thank Gerry McAllister, Sophie Lavoie, Sarah Kardash, Leticia Adair, Gloria Paul, Lawrence Wuest, Gary Heathcote, Wendy Keats, Rachel Daigle, Catherine Doucet, Beth Nixon, Shaunessy McKay, Debbie Hopper, Anita Cannon, Grace Morris, Nicole Richard, Roger Richard, Onile Gallant, Leo Goguen, Matthiew Vienneau, Dallas McQuarrie, Lisa Barkley and Bonnie Glynn.

Our News and Opinion

A number of people write news stories and opinion pieces for us. Dallas McQuarrie continues to cover struggles to protect the environment in New Brunswick, Bruce Wark, a seasoned journalist like Dallas, has also started writing for the NB Media Co-op. His stories focused on politics and include coverage of payday loans in New Brunswick and tidal energy. Asaf Rashid has written a number of stories about issues facing workers in our province, including the Covered Bridge Potato Chip workers' strike, and has added audio to our website by posting his *From the Margins* radio shows that air on Mondays on the Fredericton campus/community radio station, CHSR. Sophie Lavoie has covered the arts and culture beat in Fredericton for us. Tracy Glynn continues to cover a variety of social justice issues both provincially and internationally. Our stories have also been re-posted on *Rabble*, *Moncton Free Press* and several blogs.

Our Board of Directors

At our sixth AGM in 2015, we elected Sarah Kardash, Asaf Rashid, Tracy Glynn, Josephine Savarese and Alex Bailey to the Board of Directors. The board met four times in the past year to discuss the health of the NB Media Co-op.

Our Editorial Board

The Editorial Board elected at last year's AGM included Matthew Hayes, Sophie Lavoie, Tracy Glynn, Asaf Rashid, Josephine Savarese and Najat Abdou-McFarland. A number of volunteers assist the Editorial Board with proofreading *The Brief*.

Our Sustainers/Donors

The NB Media Co-op continues to receive monthly and annual donations from individuals and organizations across the province. Sarah Kardash, our membership coordinator, sends reminders to members to renew their memberships and encourages others to sign up. The NB Media Co-op continues to attract new members. The NB Media Co-op had just over 30 paid members and donors this year. The NB Media Co-op has not promoted

membership this year beyond reminding our members to renew and asking for membership at events. The NB Media Co-op is looking for volunteers to do more membership outreach and grassroots fundraisers. Annual membership is \$30/year and can be paid by PayPal on the website or by cheque/cash. Board members agree that membership outreach is an area of attention that the co-op needs to address in the future.

Labour unions and social justice organizations continue to support the NB Media Co-op. Their support makes it possible to keep publishing and distributing *The Brief*. Thanks to the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), the Union of Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the Fredericton/Oromocto local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the CUPW Atlantic office, the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations, the University of New Brunswick's Dean of Arts, the Mount Allison University Faculty Association, the Sisters of Charity in Saint John, St. Thomas University's Sociology Department, St. Thomas University's Criminology Department, the Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network, the Southeast New Brunswick Forest Products Marketing Board and the Conservation Council of New Brunswick for the ongoing support.

In the coming year, we hope to:

- Encourage more people to contribute news stories and analysis to the NB Media Co-op.
- Expand our reach. Increase the distribution of *The Brief* and increase our fan base on social media.
- Encourage more people to sign up as members so that we can sustain and grow the co-op.
- Be a credible and critical source of news and analysis on the challenges facing New Brunswickers and people worldwide.
- Spark public discussion on the important events and issues affecting our lives through articles and events.
- Increase critical media literacy.

Special events for the upcoming year:

Keynote lecture with Jennifer Brant on "Forever Loving, Forever Resisting: Recent Research on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women" on September 29, 7 PM, Kinsella Auditorium at St. Thomas University in Fredericton. Co-sponsored by Women's Studies and Gender Studies, STU and the History Department, UNB.

Workshop with Jennifer Brant, Reconciliation Through Education & Film Screening "Our Sisters in Spirit", created by Nick Printup. September 30, 9:30 - 11:30 AM, Kinsella Auditorium at St. Thomas University. Co-sponsored by Women's Studies and Gender Studies, STU, School of Education, STU, Law in Society Program at UNB and the Canadian Law and Society Association.

We are also planning a fun fundraising event and to co-host lectures, films and book launches throughout the year. Please watch our website, nbmediacoop.org, and Facebook page for details.

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