A CAPTIVATING "OPEN CITY":
the production of Montreal as a "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte"
in the 1940s and '50s

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Abstract

This thesis will employ Montreal as a case study to interrogate the local-global dynamic in the history of "open cities". Particularly, this thesis is interested in the representation of Montreal as a North American open city in the 1940s and '50s: who was represented by it and who was excluded from it—by what means and in whose interest? While the city carried an alleged "400-year-old heritage of sin", it was only in the mid twentieth century that this "sin" transitioned from an immoral but "necessary evil" to exciting, sensational and marketable entertainment. Focus will be placed heavily on mass-produced literary and visual representations (*e.g.* magazines, popular novels, propaganda, political campaign rhetoric) of Montreal and other open cities, both fictional and non-fictional. These sources will provide insight into the open city as a discursive formation, invested in by moral reformers, business men, politicians, journalists and fiction writers alike, working both inside and outside of Montreal.

This thesis will also ask what relevance the sensationalistic open city has today, when Montreal is still regarded as an international city of spectacle. Interrogating the construction and effect of Montreal's post-war imaginary, as well as the opportunities and motives which made it possible, will allow for a re-assessment of some long-held beliefs about the city's open city era and will re-open the debate on what "openness" meant for a modern metropolis like Montreal in the mid twentieth century. The open city was not open to everyone.

Résumé

Ce mémoire s'intérrogera sur l'aspect local/global de l'histoire des «open cities» en prenant l'exemple de Montréal comme étude de cas. Il s'intéressera tout particulièrement à Montréal comme un open city nord américain des années 40 et 50: qui y était inclus et qui ne l'était pas, par quels moyens et dans quels intérêts? Montréal a été considérée pendant un long moment comme une ville dépravée, possédant un lourd héritage de «400 ans de pêché» et ce n'est qu'au milieu du 20ème siècle que ses «vis» se sont transformés en un divertissement commercialisable, excitant et sensationnel. On se concentrera surtout sur les supports littéraires et visuels de masse, fictifs ou non-fictifs, (ex. magazines, nouvelles populaires, propagande, rhétorique de campagnes politiques) de Montréal et d'autres «open cities». Ces sources nous donneront un apperçu de l'open city: un formation discursive, un investissement pour les réformateurs moraux, hommes d'affaires, politiciens, journalistes, écrivains, travaillant à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de Montréal.

Ce mèmoire va aussi se questionner sur la pertinence de la sensationelle open city d'aujourd'hui, tandis que Montréal est toujours considérée comme une ville internationale du spectacle. Se questionner sur la construction et l'effet de l'imaginaire d'après-guère de Montréal, ainsi que sur les opportunités et motifs qui l'ont rendu possible, va permettre de réevaluer certaines idées préconçues sur l'open city qu'était Montréal. Ceci permettra aussi de réouvrir le débat sur la définition d'«openness» moderne comme Montréal l'avait au début du 20ème siècle. La ville n'était pas ouverte à tous.

Acknowledgments

This thesis could not have been completed without the intellectual, financial and emotional support of many people and institutions. Its structure has undergone numerous revisions over the course of my time spent at McGill; and I am grateful to all those who helped me remain confident in my argument, opinions and pursuit of a captivating topic. Early on, while it was at times difficult to articulate what precisely my thesis statement would be, the material I was researching never failed to amuse those who inquired into the progress of my master's project: "You're reading dime-store novels and scandal magazines for school? That sounds like *fun*!" Due to much encouragement, this "*fun*" has finally coalesced into a finished thesis that I hope will instruct and entertain whoever may read it.

First of all, I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Professor Jarrett Rudy. I could not have asked for a better editor and friend to oversee the fruits of my research. I have, on numerous occasions, gotten bogged down in the labyrinth of my research notes; and Professor Rudy has always been there to take me for coffee, help me organize my thoughts and provide valuable advice for my writing. He been a pleasure to work with and study under at McGill. I would also like to thank at McGill's Department of History & Classical Studies: Mitali Das, who, since day one, has helped me with whatever question and paperwork I have brought her way; Sylvia Crawford, who assigned me many a teaching assistant position; and Professor Gavin Walker, who introduced me to interesting scholarly works on suspense literature and often inquired after which Montreal-noir books I was currently reading.

There are libraries, archives and private collectors in need of acknowledgment. Firstly, I am indebted to whoever it was that decided to hang the large posters of *Wreath for a Redhead, The House on Craig Street* and other Montreal-noir novels in the stairwell of the McLennan library—helping me, in many ways, to "find" my topic. The staff at McGill's Rare Books and Special Collections kindly scanned many documents for me and spoke encouragingly about my

raised. Upon many a visit home, my relatives have listened with enthusiasm to my "progress reports" and have never failed to send me back to Montreal with wonderful care-packages. My brothers, Peter and Luke, have written, phoned, visited and, in the process, done a great deal to preserve my sanity since I left home—I thank them also for helping me develop ideas and for reading my rough drafts. To my mother and father, Win and Walter, I owe many things. Coming to Montreal and studying its history has been a way for me to connect with my father's roots, as he and his sisters were born and raised in this city—and I, raised on their stories. My mother has, as always, been a major pillar of emotional strength for me: her phone-calls, photos, drawings and words of love have been integral to my own confidence in and out of school. Additionally, I am indebted to both my father and mother's creative sensibilities in the writing of this thesis. Lastly, no Kuplowsky acknowledgment would be complete without, as well, a word of thanks to the family cat, Yeats.

A Note on Terminology

In this thesis I use "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte" to refer to two readings of Montreal's "open city" era of the 1940s and '50s. Historically, while the latter has consistently carried a negative connotation implying immoral conduct, commercialized vice and municipal corruption, the meaning of the former has been more ambiguous: occasionally connoting, alongside negative attributes, cosmopolitanism and urban play. These terms owe their origin to the lexicons of early twentieth century European military, post-war urban planning and American sensationalist media—the relations between which will be made clear in the thesis. While the only purely negative reading of Montreal in the period under examination is "ville ouverte", positive readings are multiple: including, "ourtown", "helluva town," "city unique", "Paris of the North" *et cetera*. However, for the purpose of clarity, I will be amalgamating these multiple positive readings into the term "wide-open town", so as to differentiate it from the negative "ville ouverte" and the more ambiguous European/American parent-term "open city".

Abbreviations

CHM	Centre d'histoire de Montréal
CMP	Comité de moralité publique
LAC	Ligue d'action civique
LVS	Ligue de vigilance sociale
MSRP	Montréal sous le règne de la pègre
NFB	National Film Board

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To my Father, Walter,
 from whom I inherited my sense of Montrealité

"On ne se souvient pas, on récrit la mémoire
 comme on récrit l'histoire."
                              (Chris Marker, *Sans Soleil*)

INTRODUCTION

> "Montreal, sometimes described as 'the only town
> in Canada that stays open on Sunday,' seemed
> more like its old gusty, uncorseted self last week.
> Gambling, fast women and lively entertainment
> had returned to 'Little Paris.'"
>
> ("Old Look"*, Time,* 25 July 1949)

On 25 July 1949 an article appearing in the American weekly *Time* ignited a crisis of representation for Montreal's Executive Committee. For one councilman, Harold B. Fewkes, the article threatened Montreal's financial and cultural "crédit" in the world.[1] To the political and popular opposition of the committee, it was evidence of the city's alleged return to its "Old Look" of "Gambling, fast women and lively entertainment"; this, five years after City Hall's rather dubious "fermeture" of the infamous Red-Light district.[2] As the city's recently discharged chief of morality— and self-styled martyr of the "fermeture"—Pacifique ("Pax") Plante so spitefully sneered, it was an article which "éclata comme une bombe à l'hôtel de ville."[3]

While local newspapers routinely depicted Montreal as a city plagued with crime, prostitution and an open nightlife throughout the early twentieth century, *Time* certainly picked an interesting moment to publish their article. The city's recently quarantined immoral *plague* was being sold by the American mass-media as openly immoral *play*. Moreover, despite the threat that this "wide-open" representation of Montreal seemingly posed to the city's Executive Committee, this representation was quickly adopted—with a mixture of intrigue and disgust—by middle-class anglophone and francophone Montrealers alike. This was a development which had not hitherto been witnessed in the

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1 Pacifique Plante, *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (Montreal, 1950), 5
2 Indeed, the Red-Light was officially closed in 1944. However, illegal practices (gambling, prostitution, unlicensed sale of alcohol *et cetera...*) continued to operate in and around its vicinity. See Jean-Paul Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre, Recherches sur les commissions d'enquête* (Hurtubise, 1984), 118-120.
3 Plante, *MSRP*, 5.

city; not even when Montreal faced municipal scandals in the 1910s, 20s and 30s, when it served as a "wet" refuge for a "dry" Prohibition era America. In the 1940s, a deliberately constructed market for vice emerged in Montreal.

One month after *Time'*s article, Plante and journalist Gérard Pelletier were penning American-style urban *exposés* in *Le Devoir,* culminating in a four-day front page consecration of Montreal as a "ville ouverte" in January 1950.[4] By February, similar articles began appearing in the *Herald* and even student newspapers, like *The Georgian* of Sir George Williams College.[5] Outside the press, Montreal's aspiring poets, novelists and filmmakers were excited to share the low down on the big town like never before. While the city carried an alleged "400-year-old heritage of sin", it was only in the mid twentieth century that this "sin" transitioned from an immoral but necessary evil to exciting, sensational and marketable entertainment.[6]

Whether or not Montrealers sided with or against *Time*'s depiction of their city, and regardless of the veracity in this depiction, the scandal at City Hall presaged a deep-seated crisis of urban representation for the decade to come: what did Montreal, the "wide-open town" or "ville ouverte", actually mean? Were the two terms opposed, and if so in what way? Politically charged and originating from the city's two most prominent religious-linguistic communities (anglophone-Protesant/francophone-Catholic), both were responses to a period in the Western world simultaneously marked by urban re-development and re-invigorated international trade as well as a deepening concern for the security of populations.[7] Retrospectively, both conjure narratives of shared, sensationalistic

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4   Plante and Pelletier's *Le Devoir* articles were published as *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* in 1950. The Montreal "Ville Ouverte" campaign in *Le Devoir* ran from 20-24 January 1950.

5   *The Montreal Herald.* 17 February 1950. *The Georgian*. 20 February 1950.

6   *Photo*, July 1953. An example of the twentieth century's collapsing connotations of "big city sin" is evident in a simultaneous reading of journalist Martin Abramson's two sub-titles to this cited article: on the cover page, "Fast, Fashionable, French"; and on the article-proper, "A 400-year-old heritage of sin keeps this French-Canadian city bogged down in the mud of corruption and vice."

7   Of course, the linguistic-religious make-up of Montreal in this period cannot simply be framed as anglophone-Protesant and francophone-Catholic. Some Irish, Italian and Ukrainian communities, for example, can be viewed an example of Montreal's anglophone (or allophone, in the case of recent immigrants) -Catholic community; additionally, Montreal has been for much of its history a home to non-Christian communities, such as Jewish and Asian communities—both of

characteristics by which these developments in Montreal are currently being (mis)remembered. However, these narratives of wide-spread post-war developments in the Western world, both belong to a broader discursive formation, the North American "open city"—less divided by language and Christian denomination than by class, sex and gender and race. This thesis is interested in the following questions: what did it mean to claim that Montreal was an "open city" in the 1940s and '50s: who was represented by it, who was excluded from it—by what means and in whose interest? What relevance, if any, does the sensationalistic open city have today, when Montreal is regarded as an international city of spectacle? As this thesis is more interested in the *representation of* and not the *institutions in* an open city, I will not be examining the finer-workings of gambling houses, brothels and publishing houses— other scholars have done this. Interrogating the construction and effect of Montreal's post-war open city imaginary, as well as the opportunities and motives which made it possible, will also prove an excellent case study for understanding Foucault's adage on modern societies, that "to police [*i.e.* to close] and to urbanize [*i.e.* to open] is the same thing".[8] It is in the post-war period, with the debate on what "openness" meant for a modern metropolis like Montreal, that this equation is thrown into high relief. The open city was not open to everyone.

WHAT IS AN OPEN CITY?

The subjective reading of Montreal's "openness" is very much due to the plastic definition of the term "open city" itself—a welcome plasticity for the purposes of this thesis. Originating in WWI Europe, an "open city" legally referred to an "undefended city...exempt from attack" by international law.[9] After the war, the term acquired new meanings somewhat divorced from the legal reality to which

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which having various ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds.
8   Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 337 (insertions mine).
9   "Open City", *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.<http://dictionary.oed.com/> [accessed 22 February, 2013]. While the term open city has its etymological origins in the twentieth century, one could argue that, conceptually, there has been an open city process (still very much dealing with connotations of defence and circulation) dating back to Haussmann's boulevardizing of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century or even further back, to the opening up of fortified towns of the eighteenth century. See Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, 150-155. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 13, 18.

it initially referred to. In the inter-war period, a city was considered "open" when involved in a system

of municipally tolerated vice; at the same time, it could refer to the de-urbanizing, architectural vision

promoted by celebrated French artist Le Courbusier in *Vers une architecture* (1923). Afterward,

following the economic boons of WWII, open cities referred not only to corrupt administrative policies

or space-obsessed city-planning but also to a "lurid vision" of the city, reified through urban data-

collection, confidential journalism, fiction and cinema; and very much entangled in late nineteenth

century notions of cosmopolitanism and twentieth century notions of vice, secrecy and sensation.[10] Into

the 1960s and onwards, open cities acquired still more connotations: referring to, as in Jane Jacobs' *The

Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), an openness to the diverse reuses of a city's parts.

More recently, Detlev Ipsen has considered open cities as products of cultural diversity in both socially

isolating and integrating spaces.[11] Today, an open city can refer to anything from an urban model of

reformed public space to a proposed free circulation of civic data.[12] Despite its many possible

interpretations, the open city has, since the mid-twentieth century, never shed its connotation of

manufactured-ness: a produced vision and/or theoretical approach to urban environments, *but not such

an environment itself*. In a sense, the open city is somewhat like Edward Said's understanding of

the"Orient": "a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery,

doctrines" targeting an object that is not "merely imaginary", and yet "less a place than a *topos*".[13]

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10 In this line of reasoning, which is derived from Will Straw's conception of the "lurid" aesthetic category, I am proposing that, retrospectively, there is an open city narrative-genre, related to the general crime and pulp novels and the more particular detective novel. This open city narrative-genre also borrows visual elements from the film-noir style. Will Straw, "Urban Confidential: the lurid city of the 1950s" in David B. Clarke, ed. *The Cinematic City.* (London, 1997), 126 .

11 Detlev Ipsen, "The Socio-Spatial Conditions of the Open City: A Theoretical Sketch", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* vol. 29 no.3 (September, 2005), 653. It should be noted that Le Courbusier and Jacobs do not so much use the term "open city" as they constantly evoke physical or intellectual "openness"—contributing to more recent definitions of the term.

12 For two recent Canadian examples, see the group OpenCity Projects, which claims to "view place through the eyes of people who use it every day and apply our insights to help *create* vibrant urban experience"; and Montréal Ouvert which "promotes open access to civic information for the region of Montreal". OpenCity Projects, "About" <http://opencityprojects.com/about> [date accessed, 12 June 2014] (italics mine); Montréal Ouvert, "About Us" <http://montrealouvert.net/a-propos/?lang=en> [date accessed, 12 June 2014].

13 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979), 2.

A similar but more widely applicable term than Said's process of "orientalization" can be found in the work of André Jansson and Amanda Lagerkvist and their recently coined "encapsulation". Encapsulation is an urban process of modernity: the "creation....[of] a coherent realm of experience...of politicized spaces of representation and spatial attachment" for consumption as spectacle. Encapsulation is, in other words, a commodification of space and the objects within *via* the generalizing tools of narrative and genre as promoted by various interests.[14] In order for there to be a coherent open city experience as there appears to have been in Montreal during the 1940s and '50s, various interventions (police procedure, political and economic imperatives *et cetera*) were employed to make the lurid urban vision a reality.

POST-WAR MONTREAL OPENS UP

Montreal literally "opened up" in a number of ways during the post-war period, each contributing to and confounding the competing representations of the city as portrayed by the prominent open city discourse of the period.[15] For example, post-war Montreal, like many urban centers at the time, was a site of reconstruction. One might consider the following: Montreal's housing-crisis and post-war *baby-boom* as the impetus for rapid suburbanization, annexation and housing construction (Dorval, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Ville Saint-Laurent, Snowdon); the digging-up of Montreal's streets with the boulevardizing of Dorchester street in 1954-55, the expropriation of working-class neighbourhoods between 1950-1975, the urban renewal project, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, in 1959; and the 1951 establishment of *La Commission de Transport de Montréal,* with its 1953 proposal to give Montreal a subway system.[16] While reconstruction could prove alienating in its pursuit of urban

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14 André Jansson and Amanda Lagerkvist, "The Future Gaze: City Panoramas as Politico-Emotive Geographies", *Journal of Visual Culture* vol.8 no.1 (2009), 26.

15 Taking a far broader purview of the historical field, Michel Foucault has argued that "the question of the spatial, juridical, administrative, and economic opening up of the town" has been an issue since the eighteenth century. However, this is a subtle process and I would argued that in the case of Montreal it attains visibility in its open city era. Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*. Michel Senellart, ed. Graham Burchell, trans. (New York, 2007), 13.

16 Linteau provides a good summery of various post-war projects and developments that opened Montreal both in a national and international context. See section four, "La Métropole Québécoise, 1945-1991", in Paul-André Linteau,

exploitation and familial management, it was an issue openly "embraced, negotiated, or opposed" by citizens of various backgrounds.[17] However, suburbanization and a strengthening of the city's Central Business District (CBD), aided by a rising car-culture, more efficient commuting services and a commercial re-purposing of downtown residential neighbourhoods, separated many Montrealers from the complex dynamics of urban life. In this transition, the urban experience became increasingly mediated by newspapers, magazines and the newly introduced television—all of which promised an unobstructed view of the changing city.

In the realm of politics, a slow democratization opened up new possibilities for the city's electorate. While the city had become significantly corporatized by 1940 with an amendment to the city charter that gave greater corporate representation at the voting box, an increase in citizen-based municipal- and moral-reform parties during the '50s challenged and later abolished this electoral class.[18] According to Harold Kaplan, parties like the Ligue d'action civique (LAC, 1951) "created a sudden break in [political] tradition, jarring loose many previously unquestioned assumptions and practices and opening up possibilities for new departures".[19] During this period of increased civic action there emerged new political-reform journals and hebdomadaires, like *Cité Libre* (1950) and *Vrai* (1954).

Another important way in which Montreal opened up concerns rural migration and international immigration into the city. Although French-Canadians were the ethnic majority in Montreal since 1871, approximately 330,000 migrants from rural Quebec came to the city throughout the 1950s, drastically changing the previously anglophone-elite culture of the city.[20] However, it was not only French-

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Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération (Montreal, 1992); See Harold Kaplan, *Reform, Planning, and City Politics: Montreal, Winnipeg, Toronto* (Toronto, 1982), 396.

17 Although more confined to the immediate post-war period, Magda Fahrni presents a more complicated view of reconstruction than Linteau. Reconstruction demanded a "renegotiation of roles within the household in the wake of the war". This "renegotiation" took place, according to Fahrni, openly in the "public sphere". Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto, 2005), 6-7.

18 This business-elite electorate appointed a third of the city's councillors, known as "Class C". "Class A" councillors were elected by homeowners and "Class B" councillors were elected by homeowners and tenants. See Annick Germain and Damaris Rose, *Montréal: The Quest for a Metropolis* (Chichester: 2000), 63-64.

19 Kaplan, *Reform, Planning and City Politics*, 338, 358.

20 Bernard Robert, *Évolutions, démographiques régionales et migrations intérieures de population: province de Québec*

Canadians who gained a greater presence. Between 1951 and 1961, due to the softening of Canadian immigration laws, the percentage of Montrealers born outside of Canada climbed from 12 to 17%, resulting not only in an increase of already present Jewish and Italian communities, but also in the arrivals of Greeks, Portuguese and West Indians.[21] Especially in the case of Jews and Italians, these communities became more present and, due to newly-opened avenues of education, more socially and geographically mobile throughout the city.[22] Although referred to as a city of "solitudes", some Montrealers were beginning to think of themselves as "cosmopolitan".[23]

Finally, it should be noted that Montreal like many other booming metropolises of the world at this time was opening up experientially to new opportunities, lifestyles and cultural trends. A development beginning long before WWII, but still of critical importance to the period following it, was the increased presence of women going to and returning from work in Montreal's public sphere. Additionally, one should note the emergence of a visible—albeit marginalized or covert—gay and lesbian community, meeting both in cafés, cabarets and grills as well as through the city's new journaux jaunes (a type of yellow press).[24] For aspiring poets, novelists, visual artists and filmmakers, both native or recently arriving to the city, post-war Montreal was also opening up new sights, new sounds, new geographies, new interactions and even a couple of old wounds. This was the era of Montreal's rising schools of anglophone (post- *First Statement/Preview*) and francophone (*L'Hexagone*) modernist poetry, the Canadian urban-novel, the founding of the *Théâtre du Nouveau Monde*, automatisme and cinéma-direct.

The rhetoric surrounding Montreal as an open city did not stem from its reconstruction projects,

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1941-1966 (Montreal, 1973), 83-99.

21 Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 462-471.

22 Ibid., 467.

23 William Weintraub, *City Unique: Montreal Days and Nights in The 1940s and '50s* (Toronto, 2004), 3. The representation of Montreal as a city of "solitudes" was popularized by Hugh McLennan's 1945 novel *Two Solitudes*.

24 The journaux jaunes should not be confused with the Montreal Noir paperbacks. Both objects are sensationalist, are littered with exaggerations and were often treated as disposable yellow paper publications; however, where the former takes on the conventions of journalism, the latter takes on the conventions of the novel. What is interesting is that the two objects have not often been paired together in a detailed study.

democratization or growing cultural diversity—this would come later, as the term "open city" evolved. Rather, in the postwar era, Montreal gained its open city reputation from a reintegration with the popular American mass-media culture of confidential journalism, disseminating public concern over municipal and moral corruption in regional capitals and medium-sized cities of North America.[25] Between 1946 and 1951, Prime Minister Mackenzie King's Liberal government relaxed and then repealed the War Exchange Conservation Act of 1940, thus reintroducing these sensationalist American magazines into Canada after a period of domestic protectionism.[26] Alongside Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer's *New York Confidential* (1948), *Chicago Confidential* (1950), and *Washington Confidential* (1951), one could easily insert Pacifique Plante's *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (*MSRP*) (1950): all of which portrayed big-cities as criminal spaces and appealed in dramatic gestures for attention towards commercialized vice.[27] Not only did the confidential-genre find entry into Montreal through the Canadian government's renewed openness to the American print market, but also through the growing presence of television after 1952, which introduced—as radio had done before—Canadians to similar open cities *via* American vice-probes (*e.g.* the Kefauver Hearings) and crime dramas (*e.g The Naked City*) broadcasted from south of the boarder.[28]

Alternatively, an older Runyonesque, or colourfully idiosyncratic, form of *exposé* developed concurrently in Montreal.[29] While borrowing characteristics of the more recent confidential-genre, this older form celebrated the city's openness as a loose leisure space: a "helluva town" where "every grimy

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25 Straw, *Urban Confidential*, 115-116.
26 Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, "From Hewers of Wood to Producers of Pulp: True Crime in Canadian Pulp Magazines of the 1940s." *Journal of Canadian Studies* vol.37 no.2 (Summer 2002), 12, 14.
27 For example, the cover of *Washington Confidential* announces that "Nothing could silence Lait and Mortimer! Neither threats nor persuasion nor influence nor bribe offers...". Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, *Washington Confidential* (New York, 1951). Similarly, Plante in *MSRP* styles his mission after the words of a *La Presse* article, "dans des conditions difficiles et risqueé, [Plante] a été l'objet de menaces et de provocations." See Plante, *MSRP*, 2.
28 Straw, *Urban Confidential*, 118.
29 Damon Runyon was an American journalist and short-story writer who has particularly been remembered for his colourful tales of New York's street life. Stories (fiction and non-fiction) depicting urban "rouges" like bookies and gamblers, and employ idiosyncratic underworld jargon, all with loveable naivity, are referred to as "Runyonesque". See Elizabeth Webber and Mike Feinsibler, "Runyonesque" in *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Allusions* (Springfield, 1999), 479.

square foot" was documented for adoration and exploitation.[30] Where Plante opened up a labyrinth of

seemingly quotidian Montreal addresses to reveal the city's underworld at work, *Herald*/*Gazette*

columnist Al Palmer's *Montreal Confidential* (1950)—comparable to the Lait and Mortimer

productions in name only—opened up the doors to the Jamaica Grill and Chez Maurice to reveal the

playful idiosyncrasies of his "ourtown".[31] Viviane Namaste's examination of Montreal's journaux jaune

draws attention to the ways in which post-war Montreal opened up to its citizens through this

Runyonesque-, or "character"-journalism, not simply as a criminal space but as a leisure space too:

> les montréalais les [*i.e.* journaux jaunes] achètent et les lisent pour se tenir au courant
> des loisirs en vogue. Contrairement aux revues et aux livres de poche importés, les
> publications locales présentent de l'information et des publicités sur les spectacles et
> les artistes montréalais.[32]

This type of journalism would influence the later historical scholarship and popular remembrance of

Montreal's mid-twentieth century as celebrated in William Weintraub's *City Unique* (1996), the

téléroman *Montréal Ville-Ouverte* (1992), the film *Jack Paradise* (2004) and the 2013 Centre d'histoire

de Montréal (CHM) exhibit *Scandal!*.[33]

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

Scholarship regarding the history of Montreal's open city era (c.1920-1960) consists of a body

of rich but heavily compartmentalized works, chiefly revolving around the moral and municipal reform

movement of 1944-1954—when the term "open city" acquired two specifically local readings for

Montreal: the "wide open town" and "ville ouverte".[34] Regarding this period, the thematics of

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30 Al Palmer, *Montreal Confidential: the Low Down on the Big Town* (Montreal, 2009), preface.

31 While Al Palmer's *Montreal Confidential* has often been criticized as a plagiarism of the Lait and Mortimer books, Brian Busby has observed that the two are not only written differently but of a completely separate genre. Brian Busby, "Al Palmer Plagarism Scandal!", *The Dusty Bookcase*. <http://brianbusby.blogspot.ca/search?q=new+york+confidential> 26 January, 2011[date accessed: 9 January, 2013].

32 Viviane Namaste, "La réglementation des journaux jaunes à Montréal, 1955-1975: le cadre juridique et la mise en application des lois", *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* vol.61 no.1 (2007), 68-69.

33 Will Straw has written an excellent article on the popular remembrance of this period of Montreal history as retold through French-Canadian television of the 1990s. See Will Straw, "Montreal Confidential: Notes on an Imagined City", *CinéAction* 28 (Spring. 1992) <http://strawresearch.mcgill.ca/montrealconfidential.htm> [accessed November 17, 2012].

34 I am limiting Montreal's open city era primarily to 1944-1960 as it is during this period, between the assigning of Pacifique Plante to the head of Montreal's Morality Squad and Jean Drapeau's second election as city mayor, that an

prostitution, gambling, mass-media sensationalism, the birth of Canadian modernism, political

corruption, municipal taxation and urban renewal have been independently explored and vigorously so

in the last twenty years.

Examining prostitution in Montreal, Andrée Lévesque, Tamara Myers, Danielle Lacasse and

Julie Podmore have made important contributions to de-sensationalizing Montreal's ville ouverte

legacy: by clarifying the historical period of Montreal's Red-Light as one which took place from the

mid nineteenth century to its closing in 1944 and involving numerous moral-crusades and municipal

enquiries.[35] Furthermore, these scholars significantly interrogate the relationship between prostitution,

the creation of the urban delinquent and the surveillance of the female-body in the twentieth century.

Here, a chronologically expansive evolution of prostitution in Montreal is presented which has been

beneficial in keeping the subject of moral-reform in a more global, longue durée discussion about

modernity.

However, a problematic result of this expansive view is a tendency towards abstraction. This is

notably evident in the work of Podmore, where victimized women become signified by "the Lower

Main" while reformers of varying social and ideological positions are amalgamated into "the city".[36]

Certainly, the desire to give a voice to the victims of older and dispassionately neutral-tone histories is

admirable—but, as Mathieu Lapointe points out, "il manque...à cette historiographie une véritable

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interest in Montreal *as an open city* is operating visibly at political, economic and social levels.

35 Julie Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City': Place, Gender and Difference Along Montréal's 'Main'.* (PhD thesis. McGill University, 1999), 12-14. Myers in particular has emphasized how *un*-unique the Caron Commission of the 1950s was in light of its precursors—most notably the Coderre Commission of the 1920s—both in Montreal and in the entire North-American context. Tamara Myers, *Criminal women and bad girls regulation and punishment in Montreal, 1890-1930* (PhD thesis. McGill University, 1996), 92.

36 This is evident in the opening of "Chapter 5: Red-Light On The Main". See Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City'*, 174. Additionally, Podmore's insistence that Montreal's Red Light district be treated as a "third solitude" to Hugh McLennan's famous "two solitudes" reading of Montreal social-geography is troubling—primarily because McLennan's "two solitudes" is an over-simplification of the complex social interaction, exchange and human individuality that takes place in any divided community. Perhaps this is an unintentional weakness in Podmore's argument, as she does later acknowledge that "'urban public culture' implicates the many social and cultural groups [sharing in] overlapping discursive practices". Ibid., 4-7.

analyse fine de l'identitie et du discours des réformateurs" in their respective sociocultural contexts.[37]

This is also notably a problem in the work of Lacasse, who, despite exceptionally breaking down traditional prostitution-stereotypes, appears to paint the many manifestations of moral reform in Montreal with the same brush.[38] Of course, not all of these scholars tend towards abstraction. Lévesque, a pioneer of this scholarship, employs a Foucauldian analysis in which the "norm" of female conduct (with prostitution as "deviance") is determined by a system of collaborating interests. This collaboration ranges from the church and social services to the will of women to survive in a repressive patriarchal society.[39] Myers, indebted to Lévesque's interest in regulation, is even more thorough in detailing the workings of the "Montreal system", particularly focusing on the Juvenile Delinquents' Court and its ancillary institutions—a welcome counter-balance to the regulatory power Lévesque ascribes to the Catholic Church.

Like the scholarship on prostitution, that which focuses on the journaux jaune has primarily sought to rescue the voices of those—here, chiefly Montreal's LGTB community—lost amidst the dispassionate, chronicle-*esque* histories of older academics like Robert Rumilly or Harold Kaplan.[40] While such an approach advances many new and exciting perspectives, it has occasionally obscured our understanding of the motivations behind the reformers that targeted this community and the open city industry that exploited it. As in the scholarship on prostitution, readers of Ross Higgins, Line Chamberland and Vivian Namaste are occasionally presented with rivaling abstractions rather than a more complex dynamic. However, these scholars are dealing with the history of a particular everyday,

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37 Mathieu Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique, l'Enquête Caron et les campagnes de moralité publique à Montreéal, 1940-1954.* (PhD diss., York University, 2010), 13.

38 Jean-Paul Brodeur has considered this bias to be primarily the fault of Lacasse's over-dependence on Caron Commission documents. See Jean-Paul Brodeur, "LACASSE, Danielle, La prostitution féminine à Montréal: 1945-1970 (Montréal, Éditions du Boréal, 1994)", *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* vol.50. no.1 (1996), 124.

39 Andrée Lévesque, La norme et les déviantes: des femmes au Québec pendant l'entre deux guerres (Montreal, 1989), 12, 87.

40 In particular, see Ross Higgins and Line Chamberland, "Mixed messages: lesbians, gay men, and the yellow press in Quebec and Ontario during the 1950s and 1960s", [ed.] Ian McKay. *The Challenge of Modernity: a Reader on Post-Confederation Canada* (Toronto, 1992), 422-431.

popular consumer product (*i.e.* the magazine), and they correctly point out that the varied uses of this product across an urban social spectrum may offer a history of resistance against the era's dominant social norms.

An interest in Montreal's open city era is certainly not restricted to academics: numerous popular histories by journalists, poets and novelists also contributed to the city's open city discourse, both then and now. Two particularly important texts of this sort are the former-Montreal *Gazette* writer William Weintraub's *City Unique* and the former-Montreal *Star* writer Brian McKenna's *Drapeau* (co-written by Susan Purcell); both of which define Montreal's mid-century by the open city genre of the 1940s and '50s. Neither author is an academic historian: each employing more journalistic- and literary-punch than scholarly-analysis in their writing.[41] However, it is precisely the style in which these authors write their respective histories that a certain artificiality is revealed—a nostalgic look at a distant, adventuresome past: a complex attraction and repulsion not inconsistent with what Will Straw has playfully-termed the anglophone "thematics of an ooh-la-la Frenchness".[42] However, it would be misleading to think that this popular interest was solely generated by the city's anglophone community. Newspaper and television scenario-writer Daniel Proulx's oft-cited *Le Red Light de Montréal* as well as Alain Stanké and Jean-Louis Morgan's *Pax: Lutte à finir avec la pègre* offer a stylistically francophone parallel to the works of Weintraub and McKenna. Even still, these popular histories are not so much valuable for *what* they say, but for *how* they say it—providing insight into certain middle-class media-saturated attitudes: a "spectacular-gaze" towards the city which has yet to be explored in-depth.

As with many Western metropolises, Montreal's mid twentieth century was an era of shifting moralities where a redefinition of gambling, sex, night-time leisure and the role of the State were eroding a long-expiring Victorian mentality. It is this fluidity that more recent scholars are becoming

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41 McKenna's *Drapeau* in particular reads incredibly like the screenplay for a film—which is unsurprising considering that it was written by a filmmaker—opening with all the drama of a fiction: "The cry from the baby's room filled Joseph and Berthe Drapeau with dread." Bruce McKenna and Susan Purcell. *Drapeau* (Toronto, 1980), 3.

42 Straw, *Montreal Confidential,* online.

engaged with, echoing Marshall Berman's exercises in studying the broad-process of modernity, and "see[ing] all sorts of artistic, intellectual, religious and political activities as part of one dialectical process, and...develop[ing] creative interplay among them."[43] New directions should be taken to excite interdisciplinary discussion. For example, while keeping aware of the well-established religious and political dimensions of Montreal's open city era, Suzanne Morton, Magaly Brodeur, Robert Schwartzwald, Anouk Bélanger and Mathieu Lapointe direct their attention to alternative points-of-entry.[44] Morton employs Montreal as a case-study in her analysis of "male-sporting culture" in Canada. Brodeur re-examines the history of municipal reform in relation to Quebec's fiscal policies of 1892-1970. Schwartzwald unites the histories 1950s "nettoyage" and the beginnings of an urban Quebec literature through "night-time" politics and their relation to sexual-identity, time and space. And Anouk Bélanger examines the history of St. Lawrence Boulevard and the significance of local processes ("vernaculaire") amidst global ("spectaculaire") transformation of cities as urban spectacles.

A more simple but uniquely fresh approach to Montreal's open city history comes from Mathieu Lapointe, who re-examines a period entangled with moral reform (particularly the operations of the Comité de moralité publique, CMP) through a detailed analysis of mid twentieth century conceptions of "morality". While a wealth of excellent scholarship already exists on prostitution, gambling and municipal reform in open city era Monteral, it has often been too broad in scope: submitting itself to abstractions (moral *regulators vs* morally *regulated*) and failing to appreciate the complexity of Montreal's historical situation. Lapointe asks that Montreal's open city era of "moralité publique" be re-approached as a dialogue between moralité *en public*, moralité *de l'État*, and moralité *du public*, where each overlaps, breaks with, and informs the other.[45] In this light, "moralité publique" may be seen as an

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43 Marshal Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (Brooklyn, 1983), 5.
44 Suzanne Morton, *At Odds: Gambling and Canadians, 1919-1969* (Toronto, 2003); Magaly Brodeur, *Vice et Corruption À Montréal: 1892-1970* (Quebec, 2011); Robert Schwartzwald, "Montreal by Night", *Public* 16 (1996); Anouk Bélanger, "Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire: dialectique de l'imaginaire urbain", *Sociologie et sociétés* vol.37 no.1 (2005); Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique*.
45 Ibid., 22.

ideological contest between various political groups attempting to impose a particular, moralized *ville imaginaire* over their stimulating metropolis. The degree to which Montreal was "open" in the post-war period is in this sense an open question of subjective morality.

Even with a broad approach, such as those alluded to above, it would be unwise to conclude that because this open city era occurred during the rise of the Kenseyian Welfare State and the increased integration of world markets—two historical processes which greatly marginalized the autonomy of municipal administrations—that the city is too confined an object of analysis. Likewise, as the slow erosion of a Victorian morality took place around the Western world, Montreal's deviant representation could be considered entirely unremarkable on its own. However, Michel Foucault remarks that "In reality, power in its exercise goes through much finer channels [than the State]....The systems of domination and circuits of exploitation certainly interact, intersect, and support each other, but they do not coincide."[46] As such, this thesis will employ Montreal as a case study to interrogate the local-global dynamic in the history of open cities.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This thesis will place Lapointe's three-pronged morality within a more inclusive framework of "openness" and "closedness". Although insightful for understanding the moral reform movement in Montreal, Lapointe's use of "morality" is too constricting with regard to place and subject-matter. The moral reform movement of 1944-1954 was necessarily tied to the American municipal reform movement, which itself was entangled in the mass-media spectacle of "open city" promotion. A framework of "openness" and "closedness" will allow for the examination of not only historical documents which explicitly deal with the "open" morality of Montreal's era of municipal corruption, crime and delinquency, but also with those documents which dealt with the "openness" of other cities facing similar but nominally different crises. Moreover, this framework will allow for an examination

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46 Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*. Colin Gordon, ed. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper, trans. (New York, 1980), 72.

of those documents by which the author sought to comprehend the "open" and "closed" realities of the everyday urban environment and the social relations developed therein.

The first two chapters will examine the tensions between Montreal as a celebrated "wide-open town" and a condemned "ville ouverte": what economic, social and political agendas drove these representation of the city; and by what means were these representations disseminated to the local and global public? These two chapters will focus heavily on mass-produced literary and visual representations (*e.g.* magazines, popular novels, moralist propaganda, political campaign rhetoric) of Montreal, both fictional and non-fictional. The first chapter will cover the manufacturing of Montreal's representation as a "wide-open town" and its tacit municipal sponsor; the second, as a "ville ouverte" and its indebtedness to American municipal reform movements and mass-media sensationalism. What will be argued is that Montreal's "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte" are encapsulated products of a discursive formation known as the "open city" which capitalized on the aestheticization and narrativization of twentieth century urban problems and pleasures in Western metropolises like Montreal for political and economic ends.

The third chapter will attempt to analyze mid-twentieth century Montreal below the surface of popular- or political-representation: considering the alleged "open city" as a simultaneously "closed city". A reading of the apparatus of security and its disciplinary technologies embedded in Montreal's urban fabric and institutions will be provided to collapse the traditional celebratory/condemnatory binary as presented in the first two chapters. "Vice" and "delinquency" are historically recent legal terms with historically-specific functions that are not simply discursive problems: they are tools which produce "real social effects".[47] However, in counter-point to this reading I will also call upon Michel de Certeau's "practices of the everyday" so as to complicate this panoptic depiction of modern society. The conception of a "panoptic society", developing from the nineteenth century, has never reached its ideal

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47 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Alan Sheridan, trans. (New York, 1995), 271, 282.

state—for with each new colonization effort by disciplining procedures, these very efforts are being resisted by the everyday procedures of actively "living".[48]

Before concluding, space will also be provided to discuss the legacy of the open city in Montreal: how a renewed interest in the open city era of the 1940s and '50s was spurred by the identity politics of the 1995 Quebec referendum; and how the open city continues to shape our understanding of Montreal's mid twentieth century and current identity, as is evident in a recent exhibition being showcased by the *Centre d'histoire de Montréal* entitled, *Scandale! Vice, crime et moralité à Montréal, 1940-1960*. It is all too clear why now is the perfect timing for such an exhibition: with the on-going Charbonneau Commission attracting public attention and ire, a continual investment in festivities and nocturnal culture, and a surge of creative interests towards preserving the city's mid-twentieth century history (be it by cinematic period-pieces, community history projects, or in the re-publication of Montreal's anglophone crime thrillers), the remembering of the city's mid-twentieth century representation, municipally- and popularly-expressed, returns to the fore in its many complex iterations.

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48 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Steven Rendall, trans. (Berkley,1984), 50. However, while tracing the origins of the panoptic-society in *Discipline and Punish*, Focault's later commentary on "security" considers that the impossibility of a disciplinary society may in fact not be a result of "resistance", as implied in de Certeau's *Practice*, but of a mutation (*not* evolution!) in the art of governing. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 48-49.

CHAPTER I: WIDE-OPEN TOWN (1944-1953)

For Montreal's 1940s and '50s to be experienced by some, and remembered by many, as a "swinging paradise", a "city unique", a "helluva town" or a "little Paris", a political-economy needed to be in place that could circulate, like a consumer product, the urban experience as obtainable within the limits of municipal law and order. This prescription was true for both local citizen and visiting tourist. However, a city is not a coherent product; it is a network of changing relationships in a given urbanized space. Before Montreal could be taken as a product—celebrated as, or mistaken for, a "wide-open town"—the potential disorder in its network of social-relationships (vice and corruption) had to be exposed, isolated, surveyed and "encapsulated". The politicized commodifcation of the city's infamous Red-Light district, by use of a "visual regime" of various media, offering it at home and abroad as Montreal, a world-class "open city", is one example of the encapsulation process.[1]

Throughout the early twentieth century, and particularly the Prohibition- and Depression-eras of the 1920s and 30s, Montreal acquired the reputation of being a city for "good times" by entertaining an "enlightened approach to alcohol regulation...unique in North America" and a muted tolerance of prostitution; it was described as "open", even "wide-open".[2] However, before the mid-'40s, open cities were primarily understood by their administrations' tacit policies of loose police supervision over business hours at drinking establishments; not as a species of city with its own lexicon, imagery, characters, texts and authorities.[3] A decade later, catching national and international attention with its night life playground, select individuals from Montreal's political, economic and cultural spheres participated in the encapsulation of their city, defining Montreal by its vices. It was a similar

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1   Jansson and Lagerkvist, *The Future Gaze*, 27.
2   Parallel to the Quebec government's efforts to control the distribution of alcohol in the province in February of 1921 was the granting of previously denied liquor licenses to entertainment venues and an adjustment of the legal drinking age. John Gilmore, *Swinging in Paradise: The Story of Jazz in Montréal* (Montreal, 1988), 29-30.
3   *The Toronto Daily Star*, 29 April 1909. *The Globe and Mail*, 18 January 1912.

development to that which had taken place in Miami during the 20s, when urban boosters

spectacularized their own city as "wide-open" by institutionalizing its immoral but lucrative features.[4]

It is at the moment when Montreal was being referred to as a uniquely uncontrollable entity that it was

the most unremarkably constructed it had ever been.

<div align="center">**"Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili!": Economic Origins of Montreal's "Wide-Open Town"**</div>

In 1951, after the exotic dancer Lili St. Cyr was acquitted for crimes against morality at

Montreal's courthouse, the city's Board of Trade exclaimed in their newsletter *Commerce-Montréal*:

> Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili!...Bravo à ceux qui refusent d'agir, sans eux nous
> perdions notre titre de "Little Paris", de capitale de la vie de nuit au Canada. Nous serions
> une ville morte à l'amour et aux plaisirs.[5]

While the meeting of economic interest and urban popular culture is hardly unique to Montreal, this

section will examine the various motives and opportunities which contributed to a particular

encapsulated open city experience, developed and circulated in Montreal during the 1940s and '50s.

The power that encapsulates is not and cannot be centralized in any particular political, social or

economic institution. An "interplay between subjective gazing and strategic urban landscaping and

scripting", it is rather a discursive formation: sometimes operating in strategic synchronicity and at

other times in competition with each other, sometimes internally and other times externally.[6] However,

as this chapter will be focusing on the power to commodify the urban experience *via* encapsulation,

economic interests will take the fore.

Magaly Brodeur observes that Montreal's era of highly publicized and frequent police raids

owes its origin to a 1930s pecuniary measure aiming to "régarnir la trésorerie [municipale]" (what

Plante would later refer to as the "comédie des cadenas") in a period of economic depression.[7] This

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4   Gregory Bush, "Playground of the USA": Miami and the Promotion of Spectacle", *Pacific Historical Review* vol.68 no.2
     (May, 1999), 154-156.
5 "Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili! Bravo Lili!" in *Commerce Montréal,* vol 6 no. 37 (June 18, 1951). Comité de Moralité Publique
fonds. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, P47 H,3.
6   Jansson and Lagerkvist, *The Future Gaze*, 26. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 26.
7   Brodeur, *Vice et Corruption*, 44.

theatrical fiscal strategy, initially targeting residential prostitution, was institutionalized in 1945 with the appointment of Arthur Taché to the city's newly conceived "morality squad", defining a more generalized source of taxation (the "delinquent") and a more particularized means (the "morality squad") to exploit vice in the service of the municipality.[8] The evolution of this particular fiscal strategy reflects a crumbling nineteenth-century Victorian morality and the rise of a twentieth-century mass-media oriented culture that targeted sensationalized nocturnal activity.

From the late-nineteenth century to the early 1930s, residential prostitution districts served as a both a place of sexual commerce and a social-buffer-zone for the middle-class. The "environmentally-determined" immorality of the working-class was seen as a source of moral differentiation and charity: vice was disciplined, not taxed. The Red-Light's economic value was in this light made subordinate to its social value (a "necessary evil").[9] However, with the onset of the Great Depression and later WWII, the federal government demanded of Montreal its most lucrative tool of taxation: the revenue tax; and so a broadening of the city's alternative tax-source, "vice", was necessary.[10] While prostitution had come to be seen as a hindrance to the war and post-war efforts (*i.e.* as physically and ideologically debilitating), the expansive taxation source of delinquency spoke more directly to mid-century concerns of the middle-class. The conquest against delinquency amalgamated such issues as the disintegrating family-unit, the growing female presence in the public sphere and the unproductive citizen into one social problem. As Foucault argues regarding the evolution of delinquency,

> as soon as the economic levy on sexual pleasure is carried out more efficiently by the sale of contraceptives, or obliquely through publications, films or shows, the archaic hierarchy of prostitution loses much of its former usefulness.[11]

8   Ibid., 46, 81.
9   Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City'*, 184.
10   Brodeur, *Vice et Corruption*, 52.
11   Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 306. Contraception in Canada was not decriminalized until 1969. However, condoms were widely distributed at all Canadian army bases (including Montreal) during WWII and the obligatory treatment of venereal disease (by education and contraception) was seriously debated after the adoption of the *Loi pour prévenir les maladies vénériennes* in 1941. Add to these an increase in the consumption of alcohol, the proliferation of *pin-ups*, "erotic" illustrated journals and sex films as well as the intensification of burlesque night shows in Montreal and one may see the growing irrelevance of the Red Light by the mid '40s. Lapointe, *Le comité de moralité publique*, 65-97.

A nineteenth century phenomenon, Montreal's Red-Light was growing obsolete by 1944, and its economic function soon expanded across the city in textual, photographic and statistical representations of a commercial underground (*le pègre*). Julie Podmore argues that the Red-Light functioned as the *façade* for an industrial machine "where 'private' bodies became 'public' through commodification"; its "closing" revealed this machine to be commodifying the urban environment in its entirety.[12]

Pacifique Plante in *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (*MSRP*) revealed a vast municipal network exploiting commercialized vice after the Red Light-era of residential prostitution. Commercialized vice operated with the complicity of City Hall and its adjacent institutions. City officials visited gambling dens, betting houses, blind-pigs and brothels on numerous occasions during the year: whether to carry out an annual review of a building's civic number or liquor-license, for sanitation and fire-safety inspections,or for the ritual police-raid and padlocking.[13] Located at 1221 Phillips Square, the building that housed Square Sportsdom Association Inc., owned by one of the "kings" of the underworld, Eddie (Kid) Baker, was even registered to the City of Montreal as proprietor! Reminding his readers of how much this one organization serves the city, Plante notes that between 1940-1946 Square Sportsdom Association Inc., alone held 43 fake civic numbers (charged for water-taxes accordingly), received 100 condemnations, was padlocked 19 times and payed $12,825 in fines, none of which seriously hindered its business.[14] Not only were city officials complicit in the operations of Montreal's commercialized vice, but so were broader economic interests such as those coming from the Bell Telephone Company, the Canadian National Railway and the Coca-Cola

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12 Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As Third City,* 174.

13 Plante, *MSRP,* 29-30. Even the lawyer who represented the City of Montreal in the Caron Commission, Edouard Masson owned a gambling den (operated by a Ludger Audette), located at 1455 Bluery Street and active during the period 1940-45. "Déposition". Caron Commission fonds. Archives de la Ville de Montréal, P43-3-1_1950-003.

14 Plante, *MSRP,* 30. William Weintraub in *City Unique* describes the not so unique case of "straw men" like Barney Shulkin who, while legally obliged to go to jail after a third conviction for operating a gambling house, was arrested ninety-three times. At each conviction, Shulkin, and other straw men like him, was fined $100, a fine which, according to Weintraub, "provided the city's treasury with a substantial flow of income, in effect a sort of tax on illegal activities." Weintraub, *City Unique*, 59-61.

Company: all of which installed equipment in or held contracts with a large number of these illegal establishments.[15]

However, for all that Plante revealed in *MSRP,* he also contributed to the encapsulation of Montreal's urban environment in a similar manner to the economically-motivated yellow-press of his time; it is what Will Straw describes as

> a generalized aestheticization of cities, one that draws nourishment from shadowy spaces (like alleys and warehouses) and sites of transition (like ports and railroad stations)...whose distinct populations and practices are heavily marked by crime but not reducible to it.[16]

MSRP showcases an array of photographs—often staged and obscured in abstract visual clichés—as well as cartoons—a majority of which point to Plante's capability to not only direct the police force but also his omni-presence/-potence to expose vice from all its obscurities: Plante stands staidly above his bustling subordinates gutting a gambling-den; in an unidentified room, black and devoid of spatial markers, a cloud of smoke shrouds a group of faces surrounding a game of barbotte; in a comic panel, Plante's hand, drawn in god-like proportions, tears a building with the words "Montreal Crime Edifice" scrawled across it from its foundations.[17] In *MSRP* vice is given a reified "géographie" determined by street names, building addresses and descent statistics; and this "géographie" is populated primarily by a generalized assortment of "coupes de veston...chemises de couleur particulière...des cravates 'flashy' qui ne trompent pas..." and "l'élément ouvrier".[18] Like a pulp novel, Plante's *MSRP* promised to take readers on a trip to "le mal en profondeur" and "à des scènes à faire dresser les cheveux sur la tête".[19] It is a small wonder that the book sold 15,000 copies only two weeks after its publication.[20]

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15 Morton, *At Odds*, 149-150, 161. At professional gambler Harry Ship's bookmaking establishment at 906 Saint Catherine East alone, eighteen telephones maintained on the premises amassed long-distance bills for nearly $24,000 between 1940 and 1946.
16 Will Straw, "Nota Roja and Journaux Jaunes: Popular Crime Periodicals in Quebec and Mexico", *Aprehendiendo al delincuente: Crimen y medios en América del norte*. Graciela Martinez-Zalce,Will Straw and Susana Vargas, eds. (Mexico City, 2011), 54.
17 Plante, *MSRP,* 20, 75, 11.
18 Ibid., 2, 13.
19 Ibid., 6.
20 Morton, *At Odds*, 162.

As mentioned earlier, *MSRP* followed the conventions of the yellow-press of its time and the employment of these conventions were economically motivated. As Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo put forth, Canada's pulp magazine industry was the product of WWII conservation politics. Between 1940 and 1945, the Liberal party's War Exchange Conservation Act restricted periodicals featuring "detective, sex, western, and allegedly true or confession stories" from being imported into Canada. This created a new Canadian-based market for pulp-culture and leisure reading, stimulating print houses in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.[21] The brief absence of the American periodical and the French roman en fascicule gave birth to Canadian "True Crime" and urban leisure magazines, as well as the Anglophone Northern and Montreal-noir, and Francophone détective Canadien-Français genres.

Montreal's municipal corruption commissions—Surveyer (1943), Cannon (1944), and Caron (1950)—which were contemporary to the above developments in the Canadian print industry became intertwined on the pages of local, national and international newspapers and magazines, circulating and reinforcing Montreal's open city image for various economic interests. Beneath a thin sheet of moralizing rhetoric, vice exposés in both English- and French-language presses contained tips for integrating oneself into Montreal's commercialized vice culture (instructing on proper underworld slang and conduct with regard to gambling and prostitution; prices and locations included!). These exposés were often, if not always, accompanied in local dailies like the *Gazette* or *Herald* by paid-advertisements for exotic dance shows at allegedly immoral cabaret clubs—the exposé was in this sense an unofficial extension of the city's department of tourism.[22] This is hard to dismiss in light of the fact that Montreal's newspapermen received a $1000 annual "gratification" from City Hall until 1954

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21 Strange and Loo, *Hewers of Pulp*, 12.
22 In fact, one of the direct activities mandated by the City of Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau, established in 1944, was "Providing photographs, when necessary...particularly to magazines and other publications publishing articles on Montreal." *City of Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau: Its Functions, Its Activities (Feb 1947)*. Office d'initiative économique fonds. Archives de la Ville de Montréal, VM146. S1D1. Moreover, this bureau was connected to a broader organization, the Canadian Government Travel Bureau, which demanded "the co-orditination of newspaper and magazine advertising, sport shows, radio shows, conferences, special tourist events, and dozens of large-scale photography campaigns." Alisa Apostle, "The Display of a Tourist Nation: Canada in Government Film, 1945-1959", *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* vol.12 no.1 (2001), 5.

and that all of Montreal's mayors from the mid-1940s to 1960 (Houde, Drapeau and Fournier) openly celebrated the economic value of Montreal's playful night life culture, albeit with nuanced rhetoric pertaining to their particular electoral needs—each stressing the necessity of Montreal's openness (as opposed to framing their city as "closed") within honest boundaries.[23] The economic constellation of Montreal's wide-open town is revealed in the dedication to Al Palmer's 1951 *Montreal Confidential*: where dancer Lili St. Cyr, street-corner hoodlum Kid Ohblay, Bellevue Casino owner Harry Homlock, "many varied cab drivers", "a couple of members of the detective bureau" and morality squad director "Pax" Plante all share the page.[24]

That a connection can be made between City Hall, its political opposition, journalists, criminals and private businesses is not to reveal a conspiratorial ring intently perpetuating criminality in—and to the ruination of—Montreal, but simply a shared interest in "vice" under many names (legal and illegal), exploited to benefit the city.[25] This benefit had both negative and positive moral motivations for the bourgeoisie: vice paid for municipal kickbacks as well as bankrupt city services; it was a social and political problem in need of correcting as well as a lucrative but generalized characteristic of the open city narrative-genre. As claimed by Ludger Audet before the Caron Commission, "Dans le monde du jeu, on se disait plus ou moins employé du governement."[26]

In 1944, the Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau (an institution connecting City Hall to private-enterprises) was established with one of its directives being "collecting and interpreting...social and economic data (housing, health, welfare, employment conditions *etc.*.)" for the economic benefit of the city.[27] Perhaps vice belongs to this "etc...". Or perhaps the negative subject-data of vice is implied

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23 *Le Devoir,* 20 December 1954; Daniel Proulx, *Le Red light de Montréal* (Montreal, 1997), 53. Upon his election in 1957, Sarto Fournier particularly expressed this sentiment in promising a less puritanical Montreal that would remain "wide open but honest". *The Herald*, 15 March 1957.
24 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 17-18.
25 Calling "hypocrisy" upon his critics in the press after the 1944 Red-Light scandal, J.O. Asselin, president of the city's Executive-Council, reminded his readers in *The Star* that "everybody plays something." *The Star,* 19 October 1945.
26 Cited in Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 57.
27 *Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau,* VM146. S1D1.

in each of the positive subject-datums listed by the Bureau above (*e.g.* housing implies the risk of vagrancy; health, of disease; welfare, of poverty; employment conditions, of exploitation). After all, the end of tourist promotion is, similar to policing, the generalizing (making-safe and commodifiable) of a given territory according to that territory's prominent characteristics. How could vice not have been taken into account by Montreal's tourism industry after it had transitioned from promoting the city as a "convention city" to a city of "diversion" for adventurous "travelers"?[28] No matter the individual, group or institution in question, vice became important for post-WWII cities: and increasingly so in form of data—that is, on the page.

From Red-Light to Yellow-Press: from the street to the page

As mentioned previously, 1944 saw the establishment of the Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau, bringing city management into a tighter relationship with private enterprise.[29] It is not surprising that following this development, municipal authority and urban representation in Montreal become so entwined. It was also in 1944 that Major-General E.J. Renaud of the Canadian military addressed a letter to Montreal's City Hall, demanding the closing of the city's Red-Light district— blamed for the venereal infection of 4,007 service-men—and reminding the councilmen of "what repercussions such a step [quarantining the city] would have on the City, the Railways, the merchants, the hotels, the restaurants etc..as well as the bad publicity as far as Montreal is concerned."[30] It is interesting that Major-General Renaud framed his warning as "publicity", as it indeed ignited a hitherto

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28 One will note this transition in comparing tour-guides produced by the Montreal Tourist and Convention Bureau in the 1920s and '30s with those by the Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau—especially starting with *Highlights of Montreal* (1948). It is only in the late 1930s that Montreal is depicted for the tourist "at night" (albeit without reference to "night life"); it is from 1948 that Montreal's "night life" is more clearly defined by clubs, cabarets, cocktail lounges *et cetera*. Today, "vice" figures even more prominently in promoting Montreal tourism. For example, in a 2013 statistical report on Montreal's night life, issued by *Tourisme Montréal*, Las Vegas, which "on associe courrament...à la ville du vice (Sin City)" is listed as "competition" for the city. *Vie Nocturne à Montréal: Service de la recherce.* Tourisme Montréal (2013), 137 <http://www.octgm.com/toolkit/en/statistics/nightlife-2013.pdf> [date accessed, 10 June 2014]

29 In fact, the Bureau was called upon to "fulfil the duties of a general information agency of the civic administration for all matters *concerning the city as a whole.*" *City of Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau,* VM146. S1D1. (italics mine).

30 Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 39. " Letter addressed to Montreal's City Hall from Major-General E.J. Renaud". 2 February 1944, reprinted in *Le Devoir*, 16 October 1954.

absent publicity campaign of "fermeture" from City Hall—resulting in, on 21 February, the barring of

18 brothels, 160 arrests and the alleged closing of the Red-Light district in but one single night![31]

      Jean-Paul Brodeur argues that the police alone could not have achieved such a feat overnight

and provides two hypotheses as to the sudden closing of the Red-Light. Both hypotheses propose that

those individuals truly behind the district's closing were economically motivated and tied closely to

municipal power. The two hypotheses differ on whether legal (clubs, cafés, cabarets) or illegal business

(gambling, prostitution) were more pressured to comply with Renaud's threat—although, oftentimes the

former was the front for the latter.[32] In any case, the ambiguity is significant and lays the necessary

groundwork for subsequent ambiguities including the meaning of the 1949 *Time* magazine scandal, the

1954 Caron Commission verdict and Montreal's entire popular culture of vice, immorality and urban

representation throughout the 1950s. Could Montreal's open city status be controlled within the legal

municipal limits of morality? Could a legally open city exist without contradicting the moral limits of a

more powerful body like the Canadian army? This is the chief problematic of "security", the most

modern apparatus of governmentality, as defined by Foucault:

> The general question basically will be how to keep a type of criminality...within socially
> and economically acceptable limits and around an average that will be considered as optimal
> for a given social functioning.[33]

Commericalized vice did not cease with "fermeture" in 1944—it continued to serve a political,

economic and cultural purpose in the city. However, commericalized vice *had* breached a socially and

economically acceptable limit in the Red-Light district, and thus demanded a more secure and artificial

milieu: the "wide-open town". But how to introduce this milieu to the population and potential tourist?

A sort of advertising was necessary.

      Between 1944 and 1949 a burgeoning urban exposé movement in the *Gazette* and *Herald*, the

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31 Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 39-40.
32 Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 144.
33 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population,* 5.

rise of French-Canadian photo-journalism, as well as Hollywood movies, newspaper cartoons,

serialized stories and real-life accounts of American gangsters such as Al Capone and local gangsters

such as Harry Davis and Louis Bercowitz, redefined crime for the public in narrative form. However

until 1949 Montreal's locally written open city narrative was yet under construction. As Suzanne

Morton puts it, "popular culture generated a market for what professional gamblers were selling in

terms of entertainment".[34] This "market" was fully realized by the yellow-press and other pop-culture

reflections on Montreal's commercialized vices. In Canadian literary history, the 1940s saw the first

depictions of Montreal's urban environment in the novel form: Gwethalyn Graham's *Earth and High

Heaven* (1944), Gabrielle Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion* (1945) and Hugh Maclennan's *Two Solitudes*

(1945). However, concurrent to these was another story composed by, or in the interest of, City Hall.

The closing of the Red-Light district in 1944, the *Time* magazine scandal in 1949 and the proliferation

of Montreal's own yellow paper products: in these events one may read the story of Montreal as a wide-

open but honest town.

    As with the yellow-press of the era, participating in the wide-open Montreal was a sort of

bourgeois distraction from modern drudgery and post-war failings by which transgressive desires could

be acted out safely. For "Gambling, fast women and lively entertainment" to be considered under

control, Montreal had to be presented as openly navigable and within the surveillance of law and order.

A tour-guide was required. Whereas, previously, tour-guides had been the product of "exhibition

publicists, hoteliers, [and] railway companies", the sensationalist leanings of an emerging open city

imaginary allowed for journalists and aspiring novelists to dominate this market with unofficial

mappings.[35] These economically-motivated Montrealers, in the words of jouranlist William Weintraub,

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34 Morton, *At Odds*, 146.
35 David Chaney, *Fictions of Collective Life: Public Drama in Late Modern Culture* (London, 1993), 72-73. It is not
    surprising that these tour-guides focused on Montreal's connection to vice, for "adventure" had always been a keyword
    in promoting travel to Quebec—first as a anti-modernist objectification of the habitant, and after WWII, strictly in the
    case of Montreal, an objectification of night-life and vice culture.

"considered themselves worldly, were proud of the fact that their city was famous for being sinful" and wanted *to show it*—and have others *buy it*.[36] The most prominent of these publishing "ourtowners", as they called themselves, was an entertainment columnist for the *Herald* (among many traditional and yellow-press papers) named Al Palmer.

(i) Al Palmer and the Montreal-Noir

Al Palmer and his writings have had a large effect on Montreal's open city imaginary. Sports, police-beat and entertainment columnist for the *Herald* and *Gazette,* he forged through his journalistic career a Runyonesque vision of Montreal—a city of "characters" and "midnight manners"—where crime is reduced to an array of "edge-men" with catchy nicknames, and law and order "boss-men". During his three-year absence from the city (1949-1952), taking up the police-beat in Florida, he imported both the American confidential and noir fiction genres to Montreal with his two contributions to Canadian literature: *Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street* (1949), a novel, and *Montreal Confidential* (1950), a tour-guide.

The strength of Palmer's influence is evident in Montrealers' acceptance of his "helluva town" as their own, following him and his cast of ourtowners (from the re-occurring "unidentified lush" to night club singer Jacques Normand, to Quebec Prime Minister Maurice Duplessis) in the dailies. In Mordecai Richler's *Son of a Smaller Hero*, Palmer is presented by one character as the locus from which extends the socio-economic network of the working-class anglo-Montrealer:

> A guy buys the *Herald* for Palmer and the sports. He buys the *Herald* so he sits down
> and has a coffee. Does he have a coffee only? No. He has a sandwich with it. Maybe cigs,
> too. If he can't get the *Herald* here he goes to Levy's. There he has his *Herald* and his
> coffee and his sandwich and his cigs.[37]

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36 Weintraub, *City Unique,* 86. Shortly after his reinstatement in 1957, Albert Langlois, rival police chief to Pacifique Plante recalled the Houde-Asselin government's tolerant position towards the public indulgence in Montreal's open city culture. He argued that before being dismissed by the Drapeau government in 1954 "the situation in our night clubs was most satisfactory" and that, having been reinstated, this culture would again be tolerated: "you [the public] are more familiar with 'bumps' 'grinds' and 'shimmies that I am and I expect you to act accordingly." *The Montreal Gazette*, 9 January 1958.
37 Mordecai Richler, *Son of a Smaller Hero* (Toronto, 1989), 77.

But Palmer was not only considered a representative of Montreal's anglophone night life. In some publications, especially in those which were not local, Palmer took on french-sounding pseudonyms, like Henri Le Sage (*Flash*) and Jimmy Souviens (*Police-Patrol*), to promote Montreal's "little-Paris" image. For this patronage, Palmer was warmly welcomed in the popular francophone press, like Jacques Francoeur's *Dimanche-Matin,* as "notre collègue", and was immortalized in a poem by *La Presse* columnist Maurice Desjardins as "un confrère anglais" worth sharing a beer with.[38]

At the other end of the social-spectrum, Palmer was also the "man who knew all of Montreal's secrets" and by revealing these secrets played into what Carlo Salzani elsewhere deems a "bourgeois obsession with law and order, ideological security, and political immobility" generated by the fear of a city's whose inner-workings were unknown.[39] Palmer's Montreal was "very much an English-speaking city", where the "underworld [had] lost its major league status" and its mayor was both "perennial" and "popular".[40] His ourtown can be seen as a shorthand, not for a collection of individual Montrealers, but a "network of relationships" articulating "shared forms of perception and understanding."[41] It is intriguing that Palmer considered the city's former Red-Light as "the Oriental Main" while confessing ignorance as to the meaning behind the adjective "Oriental".[42] In *Orientalism*, Said puts forth that the cultural generalization of the "Orient" is, in part, constructed through "characters" belonging "to a

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38 *Dimanche-Matin*, 5 December 1954. Maurice Dejardains, "Untitled Poem", 1955. Al Palmer Fonds. Concordia University, P084. Additionally, it should be noted that Palmer's two major publications, *Montreal Confidential* and *Sugar Puss on Dorchester Street* were not solely marketed to the anglophone community. An 1954 article in *The Montreal Gazette* reported on Palmer's works being translated into french. *The Montreal Gazette*, 27 February, 1954. Brian Busby records that numerous Montreal-noir were translated into French during the 1950s and '60s on his website *The Dusty Bookcase* <http://brianbusby.blogspot.ca/> [date accessed, 16 June, 2014].

39 Weintraub in Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 9; Carlos Salzani, "The City as Crime Scene: Walter Benjamin and the Traces of the Detective", *New German Critique* vol.34 no.1 (Winter 2007), 169. Similarly, writing on a slightly earlier historical discovery of bourgeois precariousness, Michel Foucault has remarked, "How was this wealth to be protected? By a rigorous morality....to segregate the delinquents and show them to be dangerous not only for the rich but for the poor as well...Hence also the birth of detective literature and the importance of the *faits divers*, the horrific newspaper crime stories." Foucault, "Prison Talk" in *Power/Knowledge*, 41.

40 Weintraub, in Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 11. Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 16, 24.

41 Chaney, *Fictions of Collective Life*, 4.

42 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential,* 79.

system, a network of related generalizations."[43] In a sense, it is with Palmer and the characters of

ourtown that Montreal is orientalized "as a state of mind."[44]

As much as Palmer's *Montreal Confidential* is framed as an exposé, or "low-down on the big

town" *à la* popular American confidential genre, the work reads much more as a happy and harmless

tour-guide than a damning call for municipal reform like Plante's *MSRP.*[45] For all that Palmer informs

the reader exists in Montreal along the lines of wine, women and song, more interesting (and perhaps

more frequently depicted) is what he claims does *not* have a place in "ourtown"—zoot suiters,

communists, ethnic tension, marijuana, dope and, to a degree "far less serious than many smaller

cities", a juvenile delinquency problem.[46] In Palmer's Montreal even the "tramps" have become

"necessarily honest...[in] fear of the Morality Squad".[47] Keeping all of this undesired vice under

control, Plante makes an appearance in *Montreal Confidential* still serving the municipal government

that had recently dismissed him. When Palmer exclaims that "Pax [Plante] means 'Peace'", he is clearly

selling the potential for tourism in Montreal rather than commending the accomplishments of an ex-

chief of the Morality Squad.[48] If "every square foot" of the city had the potential to be adored, it also

had to potential to be kept under surveillance for the benefit of the visiting American tourist.[49] Never

far from *Montreal Confidential'*s agenda is a depiction of Montreal as "a helluva town to visit, a

helluva town to live in and a helluva town to come back to".[50]

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43 Said, *Orientalism*, 119.
44 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential,* 151.
45 It may be interesting to note that the cover design of *Montreal Confidential* features a nearly identical layout to the "official" city tour-guide *Highlights of Montreal,* published a year earlier.
46 Ibid., 53. Despite Palmer's convictions, at and around the time of his writing *Montreal Confidential*, the topics of communism, juvenile delinquency and ethnic tension were widely circulating in the city newspapers, magazines, journals, and political parties. The frequent media coverage of these topics was partially due to, and supported by, the Drapeau election/administrative platform of 1954-1957 which, through the Comité de Moralité Publique published numerous pamphlets (a mix of speeches, English and French newspaper-clippings, and essays) on immorality in the city.
47 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential,* 23.
48   Ibid., 41. Nicole Neatby has observed that while, for the most part, American interest in visiting Quebec had always revolved around the anti-modernist indulgence in a commodified habitant fantasy, Montreal served as an alternative modern fantasy of "enticing naughtiness". Nicole Neatby, "Meeting of Minds: North American Travel Writers and Government Tourist Publicity in Quebec, 1920-1955", *Social History/Histoire Sociale* vol.36 no.72 (2003), 483.
49   Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, back cover.
50   Ibid.

Palmer was not the only ourtowner to present Montreal in a rational, navigable manner.

Following the success of *Montreal Confidential*, and up to the mid-1950s, a Montreal-noir genre

developed among the city's anglophone writers, all of whom tapped into the pride of living in an

internationally recognized "sin city".[51] It is significant that this particular sinful-pride was channeled

through the crime novel, a type of narrative constructed, as Ernest Mandel argues, with the ideological

aim of preserving social-order:

> Disorder being brought into order, order falling back into disorder; irrationality upsetting
> rationality, rationality restored after irrational upheavals: that is what the ideology of the
> crime novel is all about.[52]

As mentioned earlier, Montreal in the 1950s was not only a city open to vice, but also home to a

rising French-Canadian middle-class elite seeking to wrest municipal governance from a City Hall

associated with an increasingly irrelevant anglophone power.[53] At the heart of anglophone Montreal-

noir novels, such as Ronald J. Cooke's *The House on Craig Street* (1949), Brian Moore's *Wreath for a

Red Head* (1951), David Montrose's *The Crime on Cote des Neiges* (1951), *Murder Over Dorval*

(1952), *The Body on Mount-Royal* (1953) and Martin Brett's *Hot Freeze* (1954) is what Will Straw calls

attention to as an "authorial attitude" and "distinctiveness of the Montreal Anglo...to negotiate the

linguistic and political complexities of the city."[54] The Montreal-noir genre was entirely interested in

the preservation of the increasingly eroding social-dominance of anglo Montreal through a tacit

acceptance of the Houde-Asselin government's tolerance of commercialized vice. For Montrose's

detective Russel Teed, Montreal was paradoxically "a city with verve and yet much dignity, a good

place to live—and sometimes an easy place to die."[55] Unsurprisingly in these novels, the leads, their

51 While Will Straw has noted the francopone Montreal rarely produced its own crime novels taking place within the urban-environment of Montreal, it should still be noted that the anglophone Montreal-noir was widely read across ethno-linguistic lines, often in translation. Straw, *Captive City*, 17. Also, for coverage of the *trans*-linguistic success of Montreal-noir, particularly Palmer's *Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street*, see *The Montreal Gazette*, 27 February 1954.
52 Ernest Mandel, *Delightful Murder: A social History of the Crime Story,* (Minneapolis, 1984), 10, 44.
53 Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 481.
54 Straw, *Montreal Confidential,* online.
55 David Montrose, *The Body on Mount Royal,* (Montreal, 2012), 123.

lovers and clients are often McGill-educated Westmount residents: like Russel Teed in the Montrose

trilogy, John Riodan's lover Joan Mansfield in *Wreath for a Redhead*, or the Remingtons in *Hot Freeze*,

all of whom partake in their own "ritual-descents" from the mountain for a resolution of disorder below

Sherbrooke street.[56]

The Montreal-noir, like Palmer's *Montreal Confidential*, belongs to the tour-guide class of

encapsulating narrativization. Fredric Jameson explains how the detective of crime-fiction is

> an involuntary explorer of the society [who]... visits either those places you don't look
> at or those you can't look at....the detective's journey is episodic because of the
> fragmentary, atomistic nature of the society he moves through...a figure...invented who
> can be superimposed on the society as a whole, whose routine and life-pattern serve
> somehow to tie its separate and isolated parts together.[57]

While it may be tempting to consider the popular tour-guides of the open city narrative-genre as a form

of resistance against municipally sponsored scriptings of urban-conduct, this is not entirely the case.

The detective's ability to "tie [the city's] separate and isolated parts together" mirrors the process of

encapsulation, the desire of a coherent urban experience. The Montreal-noir, like all crime-fiction,

participated in the abstraction and commodification of the city's immoral' geographies, "a childish

intoxication that hides the political, social, and economic realities of capitalist modernity".[58] An

excellent example of this appears in the preface to Palmer's *Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street*, which

follows a personified female "Dorchester Street" on a tour through downtown Montreal. The

downtown female-body, represented by the street, "spews out almost within the shadow...in Montreal's

slummy, crummy East End...where the French and English meet-but do not blend"; a phantom of the

Red-Light district still "pollutes the air"; Clarke Street needs to be "hurriedly skirt[ed]" by; and St.

James Basilica "look[s] reproachfully down" from Mount-Royal.[59] No people inhabit this tour, simply

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56 Straw, *Montreal Confidential,* online.
57 Fredric Jameson, "On Raymond Chandler." *Southern Review* vol.3 no.6 (1970), 629.
58 Salzani, *The City as Crime Scene*, 170.
59 It should be noted that there is no St. James Basilica on Mount-Royal Palmer is possibly referring to St. Joseph's
Oratory, a pretty big slip for a self-professed expert on all things Montreal. Al Palmer, *Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street*.
(Montreal, 2013), 10.

two essential ingredients needed to encapsulate any phantasmagorical open city: shadows and fog.

(ii) Les Journaux Jaunes

However, it would be misleading to assume that an indulgence in Montreal's wide-open town was confined to anglophone crime-fiction and ideologically to an interest in preserving the political power of anglo Montreal. Even more expansive than the Montreal-noir*,* which while popular only amassed as little as nine titles, were the francophone journaux jaunes—such as *Allo-Police! Ici Montréal*, *Can-Can*, *Fouine* and*,* a nod to the world of Al Palmer*, Montréal Confidential*—which, by their decline at the end of the 1950s, could still boast of a weekly circulation of anywhere between 4,000 and over 100,000 subscribers per magazine.[60] Typical *journaux jaunes* consisted of a mass of gossip blocks (potins*)*, each relegated to particular interest-sections such as Travel, Business, City-Hall, Nightlife and so on, presenting a regulated assault on the senses. While these potins exposed crime and immorality to the public—what Jean Drapeau in his 1954 electoral campaign deemed a morally subversive "l'exploitation de l'événment"—they also defended the capability of Montreal's police to protect their city from such vice in its most rampant forms.[61]

In some cases, co-operation between the journaux jaunes and the city police was explicit, as in *Allo-Police!* or the bilingual *Montreal Police Reporter* which both contained detailed statistics, departmental-briefs and sermonizing editorials on honest citizenship. Straw has observed in such magazines "a broader move toward the localization of crime and a documentation of crime that linked

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60 "Brian Busby on Montreal Noir and its Pulp Fiction" Nigel Beale interviewing Brian Busby. *Literary Tourist Blog*. July, 2012 <http://literarytourist.com/2012/07/audio-interview-brian-busby-on-montreal-noir-and-its-pulp-fiction/> [accessed 19 February 2013]. *Vrai*, 1 June, 1957.

61 Drapeau, *La Jeunesse*, 9. In the journaux jaunes the seemingly contradictory publication of "immorally-moralizing" stories came both in the form of fact and fiction. One example can be found in the very layout of publications such as *Allo-Police*! which in its inaugural issue juxtaposed a spread of articles concerning "Une épidémie" of theft in Montreal with a large article on "Le laboratoire ambulant le plus moderne du pays à la Police de Montréal" on the following page. *Allo-Police*! 28 February 1953. *Fouine* published fictionalized "true crime" stories like "Il Pretait de L'Argent Aux Jeunes Filles", which, while indulging in descriptions of a striptease and near-rape scene, like many similar stories in the journaux jaunes ends with the police arriving to save the day. See "Il Pretait de L'Argent Aux Jeunes Filles", *Fouine*, 27 July 1957.

it explicitly to questions of municipal governance".[62] In a sense, a similar tension of "disorder being brought to order" as exemplified by the Montreal-noir played out in the very composition and content of the *journaux-jaunes*. Not only do magazines and newspapers, through the use of columns, blocks, and sections, present an order to the chaotic stimuli of mass-media, but they also act as an abstracted, comprehensible, stand-in for the city (Figure 1). Each potin page of *Ici Montréal*, for example, plays its part in the phantasmagoria of modern-life, in the encapsulation of the city, transforming it into a detective's hunting-ground: where "les secrets du tout Montréal" can be "followed" (*i.e.*"*suite...*").

(Figure 1: Typical layout of the journaux jaunes—*Ici Montréal*, 27 Mar 1954)

While I will discuss in greater detail the extent to which the journaux jaunes provided alternative mappings of Montreal for its more marginalized communities in Chapter 3, this press also had an economic motive, very much tied to the encapsulating open city discursive formation, for charting both metropolitan fun and urban delinquency. Like how the vice exposés in Montreal's large daily presses contained tips for integrating oneself into Montreal's wide-open town, the journaux jaunes defined the rules and limits of play in Montreal's night-life.

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62   Straw, *Nota Roja*, 62.

If the newspaper is the medium by which citizens participate, in accordance with a given era's journalistic values, within an imagined metropolitan, national or international community, the journaux jaunes too constructs, according to its own commitments, an imagined community.[63] While the *Gazette* may have included advertisements in its back pages for *Rockheads' Paradise* and the *Gayety Theatre*, and the *Herald* had Al Palmer covering the Cabaret Circuit in his own punchy language, the journaux jaunes*, such as *Ici Montréal* or *Allo Police!,* promised eavesdroppings on Montréalais personalities like singer Jacques Normand or chef Pierre Demers or offered tours of the city's police-departments. On the pages of the journaux jaunes, politicians were harangued, local celebrities were spotlighted, sexual deviants and murderers were apprehended, the in-jokes of the quartier were shared, addresses to suspected gambling-dens were brought to light, and a working-class street-language had its place, all in an encapsulated bubble. More so than the regular press, Viviane Namaste has argued that the journaux jaunes surveyed ("documenter") to promote night life culture in Montreal.[64] Sold at kiosks, restaurants, bars and cabarets, the journaux jaunes tied together the spaces of socializing, delinquency and celebrity into one commodified, comprehensive urban-vision: the wide-open town.[65] However, it should also be mentioned that the journaux jaunes were by no means an entirely unique medium for representing Montreal as an open city. Yellow-press publications exploited the representation of various cities around the globe, including New York, Mexico City and Paris in the post-war era; and while there are certainly historio-cultural factors which contributed to small differences amongst them, these are far outweighed by their formal commonalities.[66]

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63 For more on the relationship between the novel and newspaper to the consolidation of communities, see the chapter "Cultural Roots" in Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* (New York, 2006).

64 Namaste, *La réglamentation des journaux jaunes à Montréal*, 68.

65 Ibid., 69.

66 See the scholarship produced by Will Straw: particularly the articles "Nota roja and journaux jaunes: Popular crime periodicals in Quebec and Mexico", "Urban Confidential: The Lurid City of the 1950s", "Montreal and The Captive City" and "Cities of sin, backroads of crime". In fact, many of Montreal's English-language yellow-press were produced in the interest of Toronto's publishing houses, like Harlequin Enterprises and Export Publishing Enterprises. See Busby, *Brian Busby on Montreal Noir and its Pulp Fiction,* online.

(*iii*) *Photography and Film*

Aside from being represented textually, the imaginary products of the open city—the characters, the delinquents, the urban jungle—also found reification in the photograph disseminated by newspaper, magazine, postcard and film. Moreover, this urban-picturing often conformed tacitly to the urban visions as expressed by the political, economic and cultural elites of the period, not only in Montreal but across the globe. As David Chaney argues,

> It is in the ways of staging the picturing of social forms that we can identify the public or cultural significance of the dramaturgy of popular   photography....The 'story' of any one performance [photograph]...is therefore the institutionalisation of a complex of roles and discourses within which a particular narrative or type of narrative becomes possible or even probable.[67]

Staging and performance were integral Montreal's promotion as a wide-open town. Any representation playing into Montreal's open city imaginary necessarily *had* to be staged or performed: after all, the events that transpire in alleged open cities are often criminal, and "criminal events usually unfold in secret, carried out by people with an understandable resistance to being photographed."[68] For all the vice coverage there was in Montreal's 1940s and '50s, little of its photographic representations was subtle when it came to the dramaturgical demands of photographic journalism.

The first important photographic contribution to visualizing Montreal as a wide-open town came in a mixed assemblage of staged and non-staged photography appearing in a 1947 *Standard* photo-essay titled "Morality Squad". The article began with a half-page of text, informing the reader of the "clean up" at City-Hall and the effective crime-busting tactics of Montreal's morality squad under the direction of Pacifique Plante. The subsequent photo-essay by Michal Rougier, however, seems to have been ripped out of a late-Hollywood 1940s film-noir—with all the dramatic attention to light and shadow that such a term implies. In the photos, prostitutes wait on potential clients (or employers) in

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67 Chaney, *Fictions of Collective Life*, 82-83.
68 Will Straw, "True crime magazines.. Stratégies formelles de la photographie d'actualité criminelle", *Etudes photographiques* 26 (2010), 2.

alleyways; a gambler is posted on "roof look-out" duty over a deserted street; police scouts investigate a gambling den in plain-clothes; two men stand above a potential deviant, bundled in a trench-coat and casting a menacingly large shadow.[69] These locations and figures, realized with low-key lighting, chiaroscuro contrasts, low-, high- and canted-angle shots, are characteristic of a particular historical genre.[70] Rougier sold a vision of Montreal with the same aesthetic-choices that Brassaï, concurrently, employed to sell Paris, or Weegee used to sell New York (Figure 2).[71]

(Figure 2. Comparing the aesthetic-choices of Rougier (left) and Brassaï (right)[72])

The economic value and industrially-produced character of the photos featured in "Morality Squad" is evident from their subsequent mass-circulation in local, national and international press about Montreal over a number of years. While late-1950s true crime picturing would rely on the inexhaustible photographic archives of police departments—aside from covers and feature-story

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69 *Montreal Standard*, 2 August 1947.

70 Andrew Dickos, *Street with No Name: A History of the Classic American Film Noir* (Lexington, 2002), 9.

71 Both Brassaï and Weegee helped to transplant the film-noir genre in photojournalism. For some background on the theatrical qualities of their work, see Barbara Confino, "Weegee an American Original" *The New York Photo Review.* May 2012 <http://www.nyphotoreview.com/NYPR_REVS/NYPR_REV2087.html> [date accessed, Jan 31, 2014] and Stuart Jefferies "The Dark Lord" *The Guardian*. February 6, 2001 <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2001/feb/06/artsfeatures> [date accessed, Jan 31, 2014].

72 *Montreal Standard*, 2 August 1947; Brassai, *Paris de nuit* (Paris, 1933).

articles, which, in any case, offered a different aesthetic than the preceding generation of staged photos
—the criminal images of Montreal, such as those found in and reproduced from the article "Morality
Squad", belonged more to the Hollywood celebrity-, confessional- and detective-fiction magazine
culture of fantasy, fashion and eroticism.[73] As if Montreal, as the wide-open town, were a transferable
commodity (among other open cities), the very same images found in "Morality Squad" (1947) were
later published in American magazines like *Eye* (1951) and *Photo* (1953), as well as locally in
Pacifique Plante's *MSRP* (1950).[74] By the late-1950s the seeming prostitutes and gamblers of
artistically-lit alleyways, bars and cabarets were replaced more and more by corpses, "slums", "juvenile
delinquents", and scantily-clad women in blown-out, empty environments: another commodified
Montreal (*i.e.* the ville ouverte) created for different political and economic interests, both local and
global. Much like the transition from a particular taxable criminality (residential prostitution, gambling)
to a general one (delinquency), so too did the illustrated crime feature transition into the vice exposé as
it provided a wider source for visual exploitation.

Montreal, depicted in film, also followed global (chiefly Western) aesthetic trends. One of the
earliest representations of Montreal's urban environment intently produced for a public audience is
Rhapsody in Two Languages (1934). This railway sponsored city-symphony-*esque* production by
Associated Screen News *à la* Dziga Vertov and Walter Ruttmann sought to attract Americans to Canada
during the Great Depression, not by an indulgence in vice culture but by promoting the Prohibition-era
reputation given to the city: a legal refuge of wine, women and song. The expressionistic rendering of
Montreal attempted in *Rhapsody in Two Languages* was subsequently abandoned in the next major
filmic representation of the city, *La Cité de Notre-Dame* (1942). Produced during WWII by the
National Film Board (NFB), *La Cité de Notre-Dame* is marked by a near-absence of style (recall the

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73 Additionally, before the advent of the mass-consumed television, the magazine industry was much more economically
    viable and could therefore afford to pay for studio photography. Straw, *True crime magazines*, 4-5.
74 *Eye.* November 1951. *Photo*. July 1953.

effects of the War Time Conservation Act, prohibiting sensational, foreign products) and is less a film

which aims to *sell* Montreal than it is a document of Canadian propaganda.[75] Opening with the sound of

church bells and concluding with a shot of warships in the harbour, what is highlighted throughout the

film is not the cabaret and the many stimuli of metropolitan life, but industry, religious devotion, order,

family unity and national strength—even the whirr of St. Catherine street is tamed by the slow waltz of

an organ-grinder.

(Figure 3. *La Cité de Notre-Dame* (top) and *Montreal By Night* (bottom))

With the end of the war, and the complete re-integration of Canada into the world's markets,

filmic representations of Montreal once again attempted to follow global aesthetic trends and exploit

the historical situation of the city, particularly to attract American tourism. Produced by the NFB in

1947, *Montreal By Night* is a mixture of Hollywood film-noir/confidential aesthetics and a moralizing

validation of municipal authority, hinting that Montreal's newly minted wide-open status could be kept

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75 Despite its near-absence of style, this "newsreel" format may have contributed somewhat to the Canadian cinéma-direct
    movement, later to emerge in the 1950s. Additionally, I am choosing to connote by my use of the word "propaganda" a
    means of communication, not a style (although, retrospectively, Western WWII propaganda could certainly be
    considered to have a distinct style).

within the limits of law and order. Unlike *La Cité de Notre Dame*, *Montreal by Night* was not funded

by the Wartime Information Board, which perhaps explains its more creative approach in direction and

interest in social discourse. However, despite the artistic and educational integrity commonly

associated with the NFB and its founding member John Grierson, emerging Cold-War paranoia

integrated the film board's "Canada Carries On" series with the interests of the Canadian Government

Travel Bureau.[76] It is also important to note that *Montreal by Night* was produced after the

reintroduction of foreign entertainment medias and during a transition of economic power within

Canadian cities—namely, the stabilization of Toronto as the country's new financial capital and

Monteral's post-war focus on entertainment, consumer products and service industries.[77]

    Montreal by Night associates Montreal with a culture of "night", a significant rendering for

future representations of the city up to the present day.[78] Although no scenes of commericalized-vice

are depicted, visual codes associated with the open city genre abound in the film: high contrast black

and white; low- and canted-angle tracking shots through entertainment districts; and the shooting of

shadowy "no-man's lands" like warehouses and ports. Then there are more explicit cues, like the

wailing police car that interrupts the film's narration; the "big city" association connecting Montreal to

Paris and New York in the forms of noise, speed and entertainment; figures shown emerging from bars

only to disappear down dark streets; and a film poster for "Dangerous Intruder: the story of a madman

who wanted...only to kill!" positioned next to a scowling organ-grinder, a hawker and poverty-stricken

man on Saint Catherine Street.

    A politically-charged moralization is not absent from *Montreal by Night*, from the encapsulated

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76 Dominique Brégent-Heald, "Vacationland: Film, Tourism, and Selling Canada, 1934-1948", *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* vol.21 no.2 (2012), 39. Alisa Apostle, *The Display of a Tourist Nation*, 181-182.

77 Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal*, 286, 428. According to some scholars this transition had been in process since the late nineteenth century. See Germain and Rose, *The Quest,* 28-32.

78 Schwartzwald, *Montreal by Night*, 81. A comparison of Montreal by Night with the contemporaneous Toronto: Boomtown (1951), emphasizes the different processes of encapsulation these two cities underwent in the mid-twentieth century: whereas Montreal's empty stock-markets and industry are filled with shadow, Toronto's are exploding with life and new projects; whereas Montreal is described as a "little-Paris", Toronto is described as "like Cleveland"; and whereas Montreal was to henceforth to become a city of night, Toronto is shown emerging as a city of day.

city which the camera "frames". The common exposé and moralist narrative of French-Canadian rural

girls being drawn to a life of urban sin in Montreal is checked in the character of Collette, an

industrious cigarette-factory worker who "wants to get married" and, isolated from the chaotic

downtown, finds her innocent entertainment in amusement parks.[79] Downplaying recent allegations of

municipal corruption, there is an insert of Mayor Camillien Houde being vigorously applauded as he

makes his way to "an important civic function". Most interestingly—a subtle and perhaps unconscious

conflation of commercialized vice and controlled Canadian tourism—real-life street-corner hoodlum

Kid Ohblay is cast as an American tourist who asks two policemen for directions![80]

The associations between Montreal, night and crime on film become more explicit in the 1950s.

Generally, this was an era of exposé and social problem cinema which sought to depict the "lurid

cities" of North America. While certainly more prominent in the United States, where there was more

money and a much larger film industry, Canadian and international production companies saw in

Montreal, for a brief moment, a Canadian analogue to Las Vegas, New Orleans or Chicago. It is only

after the *Standard*'s "Morality Squad" and the NFB's *Montreal by Night*—both of which transplanted

the characteristics of film-noir into photographic representations of Montreal's urban environment—

that one starts to see productions like *L'inconnue de Montréal* (1950), *Forbidden Journey* (1950), *The

Butler's Night Off* (1951) and *Intent to Kill* (1958). Will Straw explains that for these "lurid city" films,

"narratives...are secondary to their *cataloguing of vice* and to the formal organization of these films as

sequences of scenes in night-clubs, gambling-dens and along neon-lit streets."[81] A "cataloguing of

vice": an interpreting of collected social and economic data, staged and non-staged, for the touristic

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79 The question of moral integrity, with regard to rural French-Canadian women, is commonly invoked in depictions of
Montreal's urban-environment in the 1940s and '50s. For a fictional example, the character of Gisele in Al Palmer's
Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street; for a non-fictional example, "Les Ruraux et la Moralité des Villes", *Action Civique*
vol.1 no.1 (June 1952). Comité de Moralité Publique fonds. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, P47/P,1.
Also, Lapointe follows the construction of this narrative from the 1930s (*Protection de la Jeune Fille*) and in the 1940s
(*Jeunesse ouvrière catholique féminine*). See Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique*, 51.
80 For more on Kid Ohblay, see Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 31-34.
81 Straw, Urban Confidential, 114 (italics mine).

benefit of the city.[82] A "sequence of scenes": a travelogue. That these films were often co-productions

between Canadian and international investors and that reviewers often pointed out the films' travelogue

aspects is telling.[83]

In a film proposal commissioned by the Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau in the late '40s

("Ballet of a Great City"), the scenarist recommends for shooting Montreal at night,

> Suggesting: Maturity, Colour, Romance, Exoticism, Gaiety.
> Choreographic and Editing Style: Swirling vivid dance steps,
> exciting, wild.[84]

Likewise, an official tour-guide for 1949, *Highlights of Montreal*, renders the city at night unlike any

other day-time photo in the book: as a chaotic maze of entertainment signage that was typical in

sensationalist presentations of open cities (Figure 4). It is in the meeting of the historical events,

opportunities and trends mentioned in this chapter—the post-war scares of commercialized vice and

municipal corruption, the maturation of the Hollywood film-noir genre, a new economic interest in

collecting urban data for tourism and a popularization of Montreal's night-life—that the literary and

photographic representation of Montreal in the 1940s and '50s developed in the way that it did:

suggesting an adventure in the wide-open town obscured in shadow and exposed in bright neon.

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82 In this particular instance, by "industry" I mean the emerging Quebec film industry. Pierre Véronneau charts the mid-twentieth century aspiration to turn Quebec, and particularly Montreal, into a Hollywood of French Cinema through international co-productions. See Pierre Véronneau, "The First Wave: 1944-1953", *Cinema Canada* 56 (June-Iuly 1979), 44-46.

83 "The film lacks pace and wallop...and the leisurely pace with which it moves from the docks to the rendezvous with his uncle, does little more than *give the viewer a travelog of Montreal*." See "Forbidden Journey". *Variety,* 27 September 1950 (italics mine); "Of primary interest to Canadians will be the fact that the story is centred in Montreal and many of the street scenes shown it it will be extremely familiar..." See "Intent to Kill". *Toronto Daily Star*, 12 February 1959.

84 "Scenario for Ballet of a Great City". Office d'initiative économique fonds. Archives de la Ville de Montréal, VM146. S3 SS2 D1.

(Figure 4. "Montreal After Dark" from *Highlights of Montreal*)

CHAPTER II. MONTREAL VILLE OUVERTE (1950-1954)

The bright lights of "little Paris" and "les nuits de Montréal" were not for everybody; at least,

not as managed by the Houde-Asselin administration. As mentioned at the outset of this thesis, the

1949 *Time* scandal triggered two seemingly opposed representations of Montreal for its readers:

Montreal, the "wide-open town", discussed previously, and the "ville ouverte". Significant to the ville

ouverte representation of Montreal as pronounced in *Le Devoir*, is its connotation of

"defencelessness"—an inheritance from the term's wartime origin. Whether portrayed visually in

photograph or editorial cartoon, numerically in statistic or literally in sermonizing pamphlet, the

reformers of the ville ouverte argued that the conditions of vice were operating far beyond the control

of Montreal's municipal government. In particular, these conditions of vice included prostitution, illegal

gambling, violence, juvenile delinquency, an over-sensualized media and, above all, rampant municipal

corruption.

However, it would be misleading to assume that the reformers who decried their city as a ville

ouverte were as ideologically united as the ourtowners, despite their propensity for associating in

leagues, such as the Ligue de vigilance sociale (LVS, 1944-1946)*,* Comité de Moralité Publique (CMP,

1950-1960) or Jean Drapeau's electoral party, Ligue d'Action Civique (LAC, 1951-1964)*.* Mathieu

Lapointe reminds us that younger Catholic militants such as J. Z. Léon Patenaude and Paul-Émile

Robert had very different agendas for "moral" reform in Montreal than their more conservative elders,

and how the ex-chief of morality, Pacificque Plante, lead an entirely different crusade to that preached

by Executive Committee member Pierre Des Marais.[1] In surveying the various manifestations of

Montreal's ville ouverte the question of immorality spanned from the conduct of City Hall members all

the way to the conduct of everyday citizens. And yet, in spite of this disparate understanding of

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1   Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique,* 356.

morality, one objective was uncontroversial: the Houde-Asselin government had to go.[2]

Additionally, Suzanne Morton's argument that moral reform in Montreal was "unique" because of its religious character may not be entirely accurate.[3] Moral reform in Montreal was a branch of North American municipal ("open city") reform, not a branch of French-Catholic prosylitization.[4] Moral/municipal reform has an inter-confessional and secular history in Montreal; even the first vice-probe to precede the famous Caron Commission (1950)—that is, the Cannon Comission (1944)— was instigated by the secular anglophone press and the joint support of French- and English-Canadian religious leagues like the LVS and the Montreal Council for a Christian Social Order.[5] The movement against open cities was an entirely unremarkable twentieth century urban, and not religious, development. The religious-character of Montreal's iteration was limited considerably to surface-level rhetoric.

Taking a step back from Montreal, the historical role that the Catholic Church has played in Quebec should not be seen as the "anti-modern" antithesis to the modern State that the "orthodox liberals" of the Quiet Revolution framed it as.[6] Nor was conservative Catholic ideology in Quebec simply replaced by the liberal-economic values of a modern industrial society in the nineteenth century, as argue the somewhat more recent "revisionists".[7] Rather, the Church, considered as an institution and

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2   Lapointe provides an excellent discussion on the shared political allegiance for moral reformists in representing their city as a *ville ouverte*, dispite their varied ideological differences. Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique,* 356-61.

3   Morton, *At Odds*, 162.

4   In particular, note the Protestant/Catholic origins of the LVS; or the case of the CMP which was financed primarily by Catholic organizations, claimed to be secular in expression and, while comprising only francophones in its executive council, "parl[ait] de faire des démarches auprès 'des organismes étrangers, protestants, juifs, Montreal Council. Nous voulons que l'enquête soit demandé [sic] par les gens de Montréal dans tous les milieux."' Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique,* 184, 316, f.167.

5   Ibid., 61. Although the CMP did not have many anglophone members, this is not to say that no anglophone Montrealer saw their city as a corrupted ville ouverte. Tracy Ludington's mid '40s "It Happens in Montreal" column in the *Gazette* was very prudish in its depictions of urban vice and more similar to the writing of Plante than that of Palmer. So were were the *Gazette*'s regular gambling exposés—published from summer 1945 to winter 1946, and stimulating a public desire for a vice probe—much like Plante's *MSRP*. Tamara Myers's *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945* is a good resource for learning more about inter-confessional and cross-linguistic efforts to rid Montreal of vice and delinquency.

6   Michael Gauvreau, *Catholic Origins of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, 1931-1970* (Montreal, 2005), 5.

7   Ibid., 6.

not a religion itself, re-configured amongst other institutions concerned with governance: the Court, the

Police, the Prison and Media.[8] Indeed, morality has a religious aspect to it, however not all moral

reformers in mid-twentieth century Quebec sought to perpetuate of clericalism. And so, let us to some

degree remove the Church from our discussion and rather consider morality, at this moment, as the

limits of acceptable governance—whether influenced by Catholic values or not, both disparate and

converging at all levels of society. In Montreal, the ourtowners tacitly defended their municipal

administration through a defining of moral boundaries: what was socially and economically acceptable

for the wide-open town. So too were the reformers wholly concerned with the political-economy of the

ville ouverte.

"L'exploitation de l'événment"?

It would also be misleading to assume that the reformers were, unlike the ourtowners,

unaffected by the imported characteristics of American mass-media sensationalism (especially the open

city discourse) against which they so often railed. Will Straw notes how Montreal's reformers were

often, if not always, caught up in "exploiting the similarities of their actions and movements for urban

reform in American cities in the '50s".[9] Mathieu Lapointe similarly argues that these reformers sought

discipleship from earlier American progressive propagandists as well as from more recent "crime-

busters".[10] The open city as an encapsulated space and material target of reform developed through

each other. As Mara Keire observes in her study of American reform history, "Reformers closed the

Red-Light districts, but first they created them."[11] Anglo- and francophone press-coverage of vice in

Montreal abounded in popular American crime jargon: bookies, edge-men, side-lines, rackets,

gangbusters, underworld *et cetera*. Mid twentieth century municipal reform was a lurid vision of the

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8   For more information about the Catholic Church as an institution, see Foucault, *Security, Territory Population*, 148-149.
9   Straw, "Montreal and the Captive City", 13.
10   Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique,* 95, 397-398.
11   Keire, *For Business and Pleasure: Red-Light Districts and the Regulation of Vice in the United States, 1890-1933*
      (Baltimore, 2010), 5.

city; the ville ouverte was this vision, produced by an open city industry that encapsulated urban space through scholarship, visual and textual imagery and a vocabulary.[12] Despite the religious origins of Montreal's reform leagues, their rhetoric (textual and visual) was primarily secular and influenced by American media.[13] Three American individuals that contributed to the reform rhetoric of Montreal's 1940s and '50s were Thomas Nast, Thomas Dewey and Estes Kerfauver—each of whom were masters at the exploitation of the event.

(i) Thomas Nast to Robert LaPalme

Thomas Nast's contribution to political cartooning during the Tammany Hall corruption scandal in late nineteenth century New York (Tammany Society "Boss" William Tweed's *coup* of city management *via* a political-machine of money-laundering, profit-sharing, and tolerance) greatly influenced future visual depictions of municipal corruption. Nast biographer Fiona Deans Halloran describes his "power of the visual" thusly,

> ..fired by indignation and free to express his opinions in the face of opposition, threat, and bribery, [and able to]...swing the allegiances of voters....Nast pointed to the crusade as an example of what cartooning could do for a candidate, party, or cause.[14]

Allegory and caricaturistic-reduction in political cartooning may aid in providing visual signs for an encapsulated space—and while seemingly more morally-charged than media of divertissement, is not less economically motivated.[15] The collapsing of cartooning, entertainment and political action found in Nast contributed greatly to a reformist open city imaginary in Montreal—and especially, over half a century later, to Robert LaPalme's political cartoons for various local newspapers and publications by the CMP.

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12 As Gaston Bachelard writes of space and Edward Said writes of time—objectively these two subjects are "less important than what [they are]...endowed with". An "open city" and a "golden age" are poetically endowed space and time. Poeticization aspires for rationality inasmuch as it makes the incomprehensible comprehensible; as such, it plays into the encapsulation process. See Said, *Orientalism*, 55.

13 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 403.

14 Fiona Deans Halloran, *Thomas Nast: The Father of Modern Political Cartoons*. (Chapel Hill, 2013), 143.

15 As Keire notes, Mugwump reformers of Nasts time "came out of the urban social elite and included bankers, industrialists, career philanthropists, and upper-class clergy from liturgical Protestant denominations." Keire, *For Business and Pleasure*, 6.

Lapointe points to the striking similarity of Nast's "The Tammany Tiger Loose" and LaPalme's "A NOUS DONNER LE COUP DE GRACE"—both of which were published for the purpose of political propaganda. Notably, both cartoons feature a female figure, representing the city, being mauled by a beast, representing municipal corruption (Figure 5). The sense of adventure, implied by Nast's "crusade" against the tiger of Tammany Hall, is echoed in LaPalme. However, this "adventure" is significantly heightened in LaPalme by two elements more indebted to twentieth century reformers, such as Dewey and Kefauver: a more explicit imperative ("à nous donner...") and the inclusion of an everyday (male) citizen (coached by Judge Francis Caron) poised to spear the beast itself.[16]

(Figure 5. Nasts' "Tammany Tiger Loose" (top); LaPalme's "A NOUS DONNER LE COUP DE GRACE (bottom)[17])

Nast, LaPalme and the visual representation of urban moral decay are connected by a shared

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16 The influential power of narrative and media is a recurrent theme for LaPalme with regard to Montreal's municipal corruption. A more explicit example than "A NOUS DONNER LE COUP DE GRACE" can be found in his cartoon published in *Le Canada* in on 28 May 1947. The cartoon depicts a mother telling her child a bedtime story. The story is about a poor girl who becomes rich; however, the child, over-exposed to vice coverage, contorts the story into one of prostitution, innocently asking "Et Pacifique Plante lui y la ty faite arrêter?" *Le Canada*, 28 May 1947.

17 *Harper's Weekly,* 11 November 1871; *Vrai*, 23 October 1954.

narrative: an adventure to save the "fallen woman". While an idealization and/or fear of the female

form entails a long inconstant history in Western culture, the political and economic history of

exploiting this form within the context of the open city imaginary is more recent and historically

particular. The importance of Nast's "The Tammany Tiger Loose" lies in the mass-production of an

image that collapses discourses of modernity, the city, crime, delinquency, virtue and gender all into the

form of the fallen female body. This aggregation provided a relatively new reading of the female form

for Nast's time, when, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the urban phenomenon of the "modern

girl" was beginning to emerge concurrent with the erosion of residential prostitution in big cities.[18] In

her introduction to *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945* Tamara Myers outlines

this collapsing of discourses, this associating of the street and all its ills with the female form, as a

process extending from the end of the nineteenth century into the 1940s:

> Modern girls appeared to manifest a homeless quality, belonging to a world beyond
> the foyer and the parish, where the bonds and bounds of traditional society had little
> consequence....in the late nineteenth century, 'modern girls' implied streetwalkers; by
> the 1940s, they were independent adolescents participating in Montreal's 'wide open'
> night culture.[19]

Essentially, Myers is charting the development of woman's relation to the street, and from the street to

the city, in the eyes of industrialized, patriarchal Western society. Al Palmer suggests this very

transition in his *Montreal Confidential*, when he orders his male reader to "cherchez la femme" no

longer on the streets of the Red-Light as "the trampettes [have] spread all over the city"—obtainable by

tourist or police.[20] The visual power in Nast's "Tammany Tiger Loose" operates somewhat presciently

in the open city genre transplanted to Montreal by Palmer over a century later: it eroticizes the city-

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18 It is not that the female form was not used as a substitute for the city until the late nineteenth century; but that, after
   Nast, the female form is employed by men not as metaphor but as synecdoche. Also, I am employing the term "modern
   girl", or "jeune fille moderne", for the purposes of keeping this thesis anchored in the history of Montreal. The global
   phenomenon of the modern girl, however, comes under many different names: for example, "flapper" in the English
   world, "moga" in Japan, "neue Frauen" in Germany *et cetera...*
19 Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869–1945.* (Toronto, 2006), 3.
20 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 22.

body, the city-as-commodity, encapsulated in the coherent image of the fallen woman and presented as "salvageable", obtainable, transferable, ever circulating in print, illustration and, later, photography.[21] It is not surprising that over half-a-century after Nast's Tammany Tiger, the reformers in Montreal and elsewhere also visualized their cities as if they had taken on the form of fallen women. I am not simply referring to the homage paid to Nast by Robert LaPalme in numerous cartoons and publication-layouts for the CMP, but to those products of a global open city industry as discussed in Chapter 1.

One may observe the increasing substitution of "woman" for the "city" on the covers of the Montreal-noir and journaux jaunes. For example, in the mid- to late-1940s the first Montreal-produced pulp-novels and -novellas like *Corbillard Macabre* (1944) and *La Revanche d'IXE-13* (1948) associated uninhabited, generic urban spaces with crime on their covers; following this, *The House on Craig Street* (1949), *Sugar-Puss on Dorchester Street* (1949) and *The Mayor of Côte St. Paul* (1950) introduced men, women, and criminals into more localized spaces yet at the same time keeping this space elastic and associated with a fantastic underworld; by the mid-1950s, in the decline of widely broadcast municipal corruption, the presence of fallen women eclipsed most other visual markers as is evident on *The Body on Mount-Royal* (1953), *Hot Freeze* (1954) and *The Deadly Dames* (1956); finally, throughout the 1950s, with the flowering of the journaux jaunes, the female form became the chief visual gateway into the open city (Figure 6).[22]

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21 The implication of property in the word "salvage" is attested from the seventeenth century, with regard to cargo, and more generally from the nineteenth century. See "salvage (n.)", *Online Etymological Dictionary.* <http://www.etymonline.com/> [last accessed 18 March 2014].

22 Toronto poet Raymond Souster's description of "Our Maid of Montreal" "one arm outstretched/ on Jacques Cartier Bridge,/*both legs slightly open*/ at Westmount, St. Louis" was not an uncommon epithet during the 1940s and '50s. Raymond Souster, "Our Maid of Montreal" in *so far so good: Poems 1938/1968 by Raymond Souster* (Ottawa, 1968). "Cover girls" have long graced the front-pages of entertainment magazines, however, it is with the journaux jaunes and other yellow-press publications that the eroticized fallen woman became a stand-in for open city life.

(Figure 6. Example of Montreal yellow-press covers, 1944-1960)

Parallel to this evolution, one can observe a similar exploitation of the female form: a collapsing of the city, immorality and adventure in the propaganda of the LVS and CMP. Note an advertisement published by the CMP in the early 1950s, entitled "Libérons Montréal de la Pègre". The advertisement displays a disheveled woman wearing Montreal's coat of arms; she is kneeling in submission to the ribbons of vice ("jeu commercialisé", "immoralité publique", "pari organisé", "prostitution", and "prévarication") that bind her. While certainly a fiery denunciation of crime and vice *à la* Nast, Lapointe suggests that the narrative conveyed by the CMP advertisement would also hardly have been foreign to the columns of the Montreal-noir, journaux jaune*,* or American-influenced mass-media: the story of "une innocente réduite en esclavage, qui attend le preux justicier masculin qui la libérera de ses

aggresseurs."[23]

(ii) Thomas Dewey, Jean Penverne, Pacifique Plante, Jean Drapeau

If adventure was only an implied narrative frame for moral reform propaganda in the late nineteenth century, both the tactics employed by Federal Prosecutor Thomas Dewey in fighting organized crime in 1930s New York and the recently of-age "mass media" made this frame more explicit for the twentieth century public.[24] In the wake of the 1930 Seabury investigations in New York City, which exposed a tacit collaboration between city-officials (once again connected to Tammany Hall) and professional criminals, New York's grand juries elected Dewey to establish a special task-force for investigating further into the city's organized crime ("rackets"). Dewey's task-force comprised of sixty police officers, "twenty assistants, ten investigators, four process servers, four clerks, two grand jury reporters, nineteen stenographers, two telephone operators, and four messengers" and was hailed at the time, and even still by some recent historians, as a "breakthrough in the modernization of law enforcement", as genuine reform.[25] However, this development was less reform than it was the amalgamating of various historical trends and processes, which had already been underway for centuries: an increasing implementation of the apparatus of surveillance in government, industrial modernization and a further integration of politics and media. In the course of his investigations, Dewey hand-picked juries, normalized wire-tapping in law enforcement, "reinvented" small-time gamblers as celebrity criminals, detained individuals without charge so as to construct conspiratorial narratives, surrounded himself with media coverage and devalued every-day crime in his pursuit of

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23 Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique,* 401. For example, this hardly unique narrative of fallen innocence is employed in Al Palmer's *Sugar Puss on Dorchester Street* and a short story in the magazine *Fouine,* "Il Pretait de L'Argent Aux Jeunes Filles". See *Fouine*, 27 July 1957.
24 For an introduction to the beginnings of a mass-media proper, the amalgamation of print, audio and visual medias into one industry by the 1920s and '30s, see Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *Social, History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (Cambridge, 2010).
25 Mary M. Stolberg, *Fighting Organized Crime: Politics, Justice, and the Legacy of Thomas E. Dewey.* (Boston, 1995), 86. Michael Willrich, "Fighting Organized Crime: Politics, Justice, and the Legacy of Thomas E. Dewey by Mary M. Stolberg" *Law and History Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), 198-198.

"rackets".[26] In order to garner enough attention and support to take down the Tammany machine, Dewey framed his endeavour as "adventure". He presented himself as a "gangbuster" in an encapsulating New York open city narrative.[27]

The influence of Dewey on moral reform in Montreal was far more explicit than that of Nast, whose contributions only generally affected twentieth century visualizations of vice and moral reform from which he was temporally removed. In 1937 Montreal's mayor, Adhémar Raynault, selected lawyer Jean Penverne to travel to New York City, study law enforcement tactics from Dewey himself and aid in the enacting of a vice probe in Montreal (which was aborted after his return but nevertheless sewed the seeds for the Cannon Comission of 1944).[28] What impressed Penverne most of all in New York was the "efficiency" of Dewey's force: its management.[29] It is not surprising that the Cannon Commission in 1944 was less concerned with "criminality" than it was with "order"—perhaps also suggesting a growing bitterness between Montreal politicians and the Quebec premier Maurice Duplessis, whose Sûreté provinciale was targeted in the Commission for misconduct in local affairs.[30] Moreover, a gloss on the news coverage of Penverne's discipleship shows that the Canadian press was eager to capitalize on their own Dewey-*esque* hero, readily employing the dramaturgy for a Montreal open city narrative that would appear analogous to the "racket busting" in New York.[31]

Dewey's preoccupation with management and media certainly reshaped the vice-probe to serve

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26 Ibid., 199.
27 "The Gangbuster" was a nickname Dewey adopted as a means to "make himself more frightening than the rackeeters". Richard Norton-Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey and his times*. (New York, 1982), 145, 151,285.
28 Lapointe, *Le Comité de Moralité Publique,* 95.
29 *Lewiston Daily Sun*, Feb 22 1937.
30 Eager to have his vice-probe, mayor Raynault looked to premier Duplessis as a source of financial assistance. Certainly, Duplessis' dismissal of almost all the provincial police in Montreal in 1936 was a cause of some bitterness between the two Union Nationale members. Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 111-112, 113, 115. One can also clearly observe cracks in Raynault and Duplessis' otherwise cordial relationship in 1938 when Raynault supported F.J. Leduc as a potential opposition candidate to Duplessis. *Toronto Daily Star*, 12 July 1938.
31 For example, in *The Globe and Mail*, Blair Fraser referred to Penverne as "tentatively cast for the role of Montreal's Thomas Dewey". *The Globe and Mail*, 18 February 1937. *Le Petit Journal* initiated with their own article beginning "Montreal est un peitit New-York." *Le Petit Journal*, 21 February 1937. Also, in constructing a Dewey-*esque* narrative, Penverne excitedly referred to his future squad as the "A" (for ace) men, in line with catchy US task-force names, like LaGuardia's "X" men and Hoover's "G" men. *Toronto Daily Star*, 22 February 1937. In *Le Canada*, Penverne expressed the desire that "nous aurons nous aussi, de fameaux détectives." *Le Canada,* 22 February 1937.

two chief functions: *(i)* generating electoral propaganda *(ii)* generating news readership. Following this development, one may gain insight into why Jean-Paul Brodeur argues that "L'enquête Cannon de 1944 est, avec les enquêtes Caron [1950] et Spence [1966]...où la politisation du processus judiciaire est la plus évidente" and why these were the first vice probes in Montreal that were ignited by yellow-press sensationalism.[32] However, where Dewey transformed his investigations into an personal political platform *via* intense media coverage, the Cannon Commission ultimately lost steam in the press due a greater media interest in WWII overseas, an excess of local politicization, a lack of particular incrimination and the marked absence of a public "hero"—Penverne disappeared somewhat from the press.[33] The subsequent Caron Comission however, which ended up a political springboard for lawyer Jean Drapeau, would not fail to conjure up a veritable open city before Montreal and the world. But first, Penverne's successor: Pacifique Plante.

Although it was Penverne who studied under Dewey in the 1930s, Plante debuted as Montreal's first true "gangbuster" in 1946: the public hero that the media so lacked in covering the Cannon Commission two years prior. If not a genuine hero, Plante certainly was a "character" of sorts. While occasionally remembered as a "fanatic, a humourless prude, and obnoxious puritan" by wistful ourtowners, his personal and semi-public life in the 1940s was rather "flamboyant, with interests in yachts, beautiful women, and theatre."[34] A close acquaintance of journalists, businessmen and politicians such as André Laurendeau, Lucien L'Allier, Gérard Filion, Claude Robillard, and Jacques Perrault, Plante possessed a Palmer-*esque* low down on the big town as is implied in *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (*MSRP*).[35] Acquiring along his way both a nickname ("Pax") and a slogan ("throw the spotlight on 'em"), he effortlessly emerged in the public eye as a "delicate Daniel to face the

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32 Brodeur argues that a general interest in establishing a commission on crime in the early 1940s stemmed from the publication of scandal sheets in a journal ironically titled *Le Moraliste*. Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 109, 115.
33 Ibid., 116-117. For more on the lack of particular incrimination, see Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 176-182
34 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 76. Morton, *At Odds*, 160.
35 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 270.

lions".[36]

Plante entered City Hall in 1939 as a court clerk, where he remained unknown to the public until his appointment to legal adviser for the city's morality squad in 1946. In that same year of 1946 a hand-grenade explosion in a downtown gambling-house and the assassination of underworld "edge man" Harry Davis in July threw into doubt the 1944 closing of the Red-Light district. Fearing a breach in public confidence, City Hall fired the captain of the morality squad Arther Taché and appointed Plante to take his place. While Plante proceeded with an aggressive and successful campaign against Davis' next-in-line, Harry Ship—ending in arrests, prosecution and jail-time charges—this sudden shift in the operation of Montreal's law enforcement may not have been entirely motivated by moral outrage or modernization. Suzanne Morton notes that the charging of Ship was largely "symbolic": he was a "great man for publicity", a public figure with a handle ("The Boy Plunger") and so his contest with Plante was merely a seeming "knockout-punch" to organized crime: a contest of characters.[37] The event made for great headlines, saved the city face and solidified Plante's public-image as a genuine gangbuster.

Following Dewey's meteoric rise to power in the 1930s, William Howard Moore observes that, ever since, "crime fighting had become a quick means of political promotion."[38] As the chief of the morality squad, Plante too employed crime fighting and media attention as a platform for higher aspirations. Chiefly, he hoped to be appointed as the head of Montreal's police force—a position allegedly promised to him by a member of the Executive Council.[39] Davis' assassination caused a stir of public opinion which both Plante and the media-at-large quickly capitalized on. Plante assumed that he had to create a greater presence for himself so as to assure his promotion. He therefore took on symbolic big-name targets like Ship (and later, politicians and police chiefs like J.O. Asselin and Albert

36 Stanké and Morgan, *Pax*, 95. Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 41.
37 Morton, *At Odds*, 160. Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 41.
38 William Howard Moore, *The Kefauver Committee and the Politics of Crime, 1950-1952*. (Columbia, 1974), 17.
39 Stanké and Morgan, *Pax*, 51.

Langlois) and started tipping-off newspapermen about his police-raids so as to increase coverage of, and public interest in, his grand nettoyage. To feed the press, he presented his conquests in staged photography and continuously broadened the scope of particular vices, giving greater depth to uneducated perceptions of "the underworld"—*e.g.* gambling came to include lotteries which extended even to church bingo![40] Like Dewey, who was serialized in radio-dramas and inspired films, Plante's exploits were eulogized in popular poems and re-tellings throughout the 1940s and '50s; and cartoonists bestowed upon his otherwise "unthreatening" physique the omnipresence and omnipotence of a superhero.[41] As if speaking of Russell Teed of Montreal-noir fame, a 1955 article from the *Star Weekly* described Plante in the following manner: "Pax has been shot at, threatened and offered bribes since 1946. He has lived under constant fear of death; dodged bullets, thugs fists".[42]

When Plante lost the appointment of police chief to Albert Langlois in 1947, and was subsequently dismissed for insubordination in 1948, he further involved himself with press and politics by penning *MSRP* alongside Gérard Pelletier and by campaigning alongside lawyer Jean Drapeau and the newly-formed CMP for an investigation into municipal corruption. Plante's narrative of open city adventure paid-off, when in 1954 Jean Drapeau was successfully elected as mayor of Montreal and Plante was appointed police-chief. Despite the disdain which reformers publicly held towards sensationalist exposé*s* and immoral detective fiction, Plante and his associates had written one themselves. As a 1956 article in *Le Petit Journal* recounted, "Depuis 1946, les Montréalais suivent avec intérét un passionnant et interminable *roman policier* dont l'action se déroule dans leur ville."[43] After being dismissed again in 1957, it is fitting that Plante concluded this roman policier in exile—allegedly

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40 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 74-79.
41 Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey,* 250. Weintraub, *City Unique ,* 74. For a poem "Les tripoteurs frappé par Pacifique", see *Vrai*, 12 March 1955.
42 *The Star Weekly*, 2 May 1955.
43 *Le Petit Journal*, 25 March 1956. (italics mine). Note that Plante's *MSRP* was published in 1950, in the midst of the short-lived era of Montreal-*noir* publications (1949-1956). Straw too has observed a "novelistic trajectory [in] Plante's career". See Straw, *Captive City*, 16-17.

escaping threats from the underworld to live out the rest of his life in Mexico.

Plante's co-prosecutor in the Caron Commission, Jean Drapeau—whose name simultaneously evokes the historical narratives of moral reform, urban modernism and authoritarian governance in the Montreal consciousness—is also highly indebted to the political tactics developed by Dewey, especially with regard to the use of crime fighting as an electoral platform. Drapeau, a young lawyer with political ambitions, had prior to 1954 failed on numerous occasions to make a presence for himself on either the provincial or federal stage.[44] After attaching himself to various causes and gaining "une certain réputation d'opportunisme" he successfully co-opted the Caron Commission and its press-coverage as an electoral platform, announcing his candidature for mayor on the very day the Caron Commission's report was made public.[45]

Just as Dewey's 1937 case against Jimmy Hines of Tammany Hall involved a refashioning of New York's popular eateries into a source of the nation's most influential labour rackets (within which Hines was accused of participation), Drapeau similarly refashioned the sinful but celebrated wide-open town of Montreal into a veritable ville ouverte with the hope of discrediting the Houde-Asselin administration.[46] Brodeur has observed that in order for Drapeau to construct the successful case that he presented in the Caron Commission, he had to

> abolir tout écart temporel qui aurait pu être perçu entre le processus de l'enquête tel
> qu'il s'est déroulé après 1950 et les événements auxquels il se rapportait et qui étaient
> antérieurs à 1945.[47]

Drapeau in his Caron Commission dossier entirely concerned himself with events that took place between 1941 and 1948, yet associated these events with the administration of 1950.[48] In doing so, he

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44   Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 124.
45   Ibid., 130.
46   Stolberg, *Fighting Organized Crime*, 171, 176.
47   Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 155.
48   Daniel Proulx notes that when Plante was drafting the Comité de Moralité Publique's petition for submission to the Superior Court, only 500 dossiers were available to present the allegation of municipal corruption. Drapeau then suggested to Plante that they extend the temporal frame of their allegation to 1941, bringing them an extra 4,000 documents from which to draw charges. See Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 55.

was able to add an astonishing 10,000 accusations of vice and municipal corruption to an already

embellished 5,000 supplied by Plante in his petition to the Superior Court.[49] The ville ouverte narrative

crafted by Drapeau during this commission fed directly into his own electoral propaganda in 1954 and

certainly influenced public perception about the vice conditions in the city. On 16 October, all but a

week before the municipal elections, *Le Devoir,* a financial contributor to the CMP and LAC*,* reprinted

the Caron Commission report in full (a total of forty pages!), conflating judicial, political and economic

interests into a single piece of propaganda and news spectacle—which is, perhaps, to be expected to

some degree considering that newspaper is a particularly obvious tool for encapsulation. For an

individual who would in the mid-1950s rail so aggressively against "l'exploitation de l'événment",

Drapeau owed much of his political tactics to an American mastermind of scandal politics.[50]

    (iii) Estes Kefauver and the Comité de moralité publique

    In *La prostitution féminine à Montréal*, Danielle Lacasse frames the CMP as a clérico-

nationaliste body; and the committee's affiliation with 275 religious and nationalist associations

likewise leads Suzanne Morton to see this Catholic-nationalist linkage as "unique" in the history of

post-war vice-probe history.[51] Certainly, Catholic leagues and moralizing propaganda in Montreal

during the 1940s and '50s collapsed discourses of Catholic-purity and nationalism, especially in

relation to the juvenile court system.[52] However, despite overlaps in personnel and discourse, the CMP

was not envisaged as a platform for clerico-nationalist pontification—the precursory Comité National

d'Action catholique (1945-1952) was, rather, dedicated to this purpose and ultimately exhausted itself

over the moral priorities held by the province's various dioceses.[53] Lapointe points out in Le Comité de

Moralité Publique that while receiving moral and financial support from Catholic leagues, the CMP

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49 McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 88.
50 Drapeau, *La Jeunesse,* 9.
51 Lacasse, *la prostitution*, 106. Morton, *At Odds*, 162.
52 Myers, *Caught*, 6.
53 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 212-213.

was intended by its founders and supporters to "peut-être...parer l'accusation de faire de la politique" and avoid the label "religious crusade": its objective was to replace the Houde-Asselin administration.[54]

In particular, the CMP owes its establishment and public-image more to the citizen-committee politics of American senator Estes Kefauver than the clerico-nationalism suggested by Lacasse. Promoting municipal reform movements across the United States in the late-1940s and early-'50s, Kefauver, "an essentially aloof [but] keenly intelligent" senator from Tennessee, worked parallel to the moral reformers in Montreal and connected their movement to a general North American distraction from post-war failings abroad and at home—particularly, communism and the disintegration of the family-unit.[55] Much like Thomas Dewey before him, Kefauver ascended the ranks of American politics through "a deliberate cultivation of the public and press" obtaining for him a Presidential nomination in 1952 and 1956.[56] Appearing on television *via* the Kefauver Hearings—what Straw has deemed "the first significant use of television for the broadcasting of judiciary or legislative proceedings"—and before the ending credits of city-exposé films like *Captive City* (1952), he brought an explicit dramaturgy, a deliberate fictionalization, to the presentation of vice before the public.[57]

Kefauver was motivated to employ the narrative of a "national organized-crime web" by the muckracker Lee Mortimer (whose *Chicago Confidential* was previously discussed in relation to Al Palmer and the ourtowners).[58] Certainly influenced by a sort of technical delusion wherein newspapermen "tended to see national patterns in the underworld" due to an increasing exchange of information *via* wire-services, Mortimer provided Kefauver with a thrilling narrative that demanded audience participation in the form of citizen-committees and which could be commercially and

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54 Ibid., 291.
55 Moore, *The Kefauver Committee,* 41, 46.
56 Ibid., 46-47.
57 Straw, Urban Confidential, 118-119.
58 Ibid., 118.

politically exploited over and again for various interests.[59] For Montreal, Kefauver provided the CMP

and its members of the middle class with a rationalization for participating in the otherwise immoral

encapsulation of their city, the ville ouverte: "stamping out crime...it's up to you".[60]

Will Straw argues that the CMP's rationalization of the ville ouverte entailed a mixture of

"degradation and ennoblement", a mentality that suggest an interest in the "sexiness" of contemporary

American vice-culture: a desire to successfully adopt the image of "heroic, idealistic, racket busters

rather than [that of] puritanical middle-aged men."[61] This is not to claim that Montreal in the 1940s and

'50s did not have, like other major urban centers at the time, criminal activity or municipal corruption

that demanded sincere attention, nor that the CMP openly welcomed the products of American

sensationalism. However, a cursory look at some operations of the CMP reveals a captivated interest in

the narrative-construction of Montreal's ville ouverte: to be exploited for social and political

ennoblement.[62]

If the open city is to be considered an "industry" of vice-related products, the CMP was one of

such industry's many "production houses". The committee produced between 1950 and 1960—

concurrent to the Montreal-noir—an array of pamphlets, books, monthly news bulletins, statistics,

public service advertisements and sponsored film distribution and political candidates. One can observe

a certain naivety in the operations of the CMP, a game of adult "dress-up" (Figure 7). Straw has pointed

to the Montreal premiere of the film *Captive City* on 11 July 1952 as one explicit example of this sort

of play, this "cultural cringe".[63] Analyzing a context-heavy group-photograph taken on the night of the

premiere, he notes how the executive committee of the CMP gathered at the Orpheum Theatre to

exploit "similarities between their own actions and [Kefauver's] movements for urban reform underway

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59 Moore, *The Kefauver Committee*, 41.
60 These are Kefauver's final words to the audience in the epilogue of *Captive City.*
61 Straw, *Captive City*, 18.
62 Straw provides some discussion on the linkages between Kefauver and the CMP's shared "captive" rhetoric. Ibid., 14.
63 Ibid., 21-22.

in the United States".[64] Another example of this play is observed by Julie Podmore, who sees in the detailed reports on urban vice offered by the CMP (among other affiliated parties) before the Caron Commission: "the male reformer's impressions of his own adventures into what he perceived to be the city's underworld."[65] Additionally, Lapointe has pointed to CMP executive J.Z. Patenaude's belief that his committee was "une créature" of the French-Canadian secret society, *l'Ordre de Jacques Cartier*: a delusion that the fight against an underworld of mythic proportions was being undertaken by a body of equally mythic proportions.[66] The CMP's members readily took to theaters, streets, bars and to their own imaginations to find in Montreal an analogue to the exciting open city narrative unfolding in the Kefauver Hearings. Regardless of what immorality or corruption existed in Montreal, reformers indulged in the participatory element of the open city, giving form to their ville ouverte, and making a place for their city in the modern world epitomized by the United States.

(Figure 7. Newspaper caricature of Kefauver (left); CMP group photo (right)[67])

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64 Although B-movies are the filmic analogue to the pulp-fiction novel, the CMP felt compelled to strike a deal with United Artists for the right to include in all Quebec screenings of Captive City an introductory message by the committee to bookend Kefavuer's own at the conclusion. Ibid., 13, 15.

65 Podmore, *The Third City*, 199. Statistical reports were integral to Kefauver's self-interpreted mandate to "sketch a picture of the American underworld" in his hearings. Moore, *The Kefauver Committee*, 76-79. The interest shared by the CMP and Kefauver in mapping crime is similarly of interest to the crime novel as discussed in Chapter 1.

66 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 318-320.

67 *Washington Evening Star*, 5 May 1950. *Action Civique*, 1 August 1952. Comité de Moralité Publique fonds. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. P47/ P,1.

The Caron Commission and Election of Jean Drapeau: "the hallowed practice"

Borrowing rhetoric and characteristics of the open city discourse concurrently developing south of the border, reformers in Montreal successfully captivated popular opinion in 1950, transforming a rather conventional "wide-open" Montreal news-piece (the 1949 *Time* article) into a unique municipal spectacle. In particular, the attention that Plante and the CMP garnered with the serialization of *MSRP* in *Le Devoir* provoked the Superior Court to accept an investigation into the allegation of municipal corruption at City Hall.[68] This resulted in the Caron Commission of 1950, the discrediting of the Houde-Asselin administration in Judge Caron's ruling on 9 October 1954 and, but a few weeks later, a landslide victory for Drapeau in the mayoral election. What is striking about the Caron Commission and the 1954 election is how reformers and the media put the ville ouverte before the public. The allegations of municipal corruption which Plante had made in *MSRP* and with Drapeau in their Caron Commission dossier were entirely concerned with events that took place chiefly between 1940 and 1945, yet were portrayed as being associated with the administration of 1950-1954.[69] City Hall was corrupt, but this corruption was given exaggerated dimensions. A narrative of the misdeeds of past administrations was necessary to stir popular opinion and put a moral distance between the actual politics of Drapeau, Plante and the reformers on the one side, and their opponents on the other.

The ville ouverte was reified before the public in the course of the Caron Comission: in the serialized press coverage it received and in the prosecuting tactics of Plante and Drapeau, which Lapointe describes as "coups de théâtre".[70] In one sense, theatrics were necessary. Since the 1920s, provincial law had made it extremely difficult to proceed with enquiries into municipal problems on *general* accusations—there had to be "vrais coupables". Throughout his career as a court recorder,

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68 The investigation did not commence immediately as some Superior Court judges, such as Tyndale, supported the cause, while others, such as Cousineau did not; consequently, the commission proceeded in a dilatory manner, full of appeals and suspensions. See Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 128-129.
69 Brodeur observes that judge Caron devoted most of his attention to infractions made during the years 1941-1943. See Bordeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre,* 132.
70 Ibid., 436.

Plante amassed a list of some vrais coupables residing in the city's police department (*i.e.* those who upheld the system of tolerance and protection).[71] This evidence of police corruption was then framed within a broader narrative before the court: the ville ouverte, run by an underworld in collusion with City Hall. Unable to present enough verifiable accusations of municipal corruption, reformers presented, rather, an exploited event, what has become in the Québec imaginary "une sorte de roman policier montréalais": a caricature of the underworld so provocative that it would either force the Houde-Asselin administration to confess its linkages with a system of criminal "tolerance" or anger the public enough to vote for a new administration at the next election. In the course of the hearings, the public was provided a "detective's gaze", a "transformed vision glimpsing a presence where it is not, a space where it does not belong, and triggering a frission of possible recognition."[72] A parade of striking witnesses were brought before the public in an attempt to associate visible crime (prostitution, gambling) to the executive-council's less visible crime (tolerance, embezzlement). While the reformers targeted City Hall, what they presented were prostitutes, straw-men, gamblers and night-club owners whose success suggested collusion and a city-wide conspiracy.[73] Truly a spectacle, *Le Petit Journal* could not refrain from polling its readers with the question: "AIMERIEZ-VOUS VOIR A LA TELEVISION l'enquête sur la moralité?".[74]

Granted, in the commission's final 1954 report, Judge Caron and the Court concluded that systematic police and municipal tolerance certainly existed in Montreal prior to the closing of the Red-Light district—and so the reformist argument, that their city was a ville ouverte in the sense of la moralité publique (i.e. en public, de l'Etat, du public), was credible:

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71 Plante, *MSRP*, 8.

72 Tom Gunning quoted in Salzani, *The City as Crime Scene,* 177 .

73 Weintraub recounts the Caron Commission in this manner, "a long parade of witnesses from the seamy side of the city": the "star witness" Paulette Déry, Max Shapiro "the law in the downtown gambling industry", Councillor Frank Hanley "very much the man about town". Weintraub sums up the atmosphere in a quote from the *Montreal Star,* "the crowd surged forward like the surf driven by a hurricane of curiosity...They came to rub shoulders with the ghosts of one of the city`s most colourful eras...It was almost as if the historical costume department of a famous museum were to take the renowned old clothes to the laundromat." Weintraub, *City Unique,* 78-84.

74 *Le Petit Journal,* 5 October 1952.

At Montreal, in the district of Montreal, in the period between the first day of January 1941 and today, certain disorderly houses were operated in all parts of the city *to the knowledge of the public in general, the Police Service and certain members of the Executive Committee* of the City of Montreal.[75]

However, contrary to the reformers' claims, Judge Caron observed that since 1944, and the closing of the Red-Light district, a sincere effort had been made to clean up corruption and commercialized vice by City Hall and the police, and that tolerance was "not a case of collective, but personal responsibility".[76] No member of the Executive Council was penalized by the Court's ruling—not even J.O. Asselin, whom the reformers had often targeted as a puppeteer hiding behind Mayor Camillien Houde.[77] And regarding the period that followed Plante's firing as the chief of the morality squad, Caron even remarked that "during 1949 surveillance by the police of clandestine establishments was exercised with more vigorous efficiency than ever before and that the results were more conclusive".[78]

Lapointe argues that in spite of the Court's ruling, *Le Devoir* gave a sensational reformist "spin" to its publication of Judge Caron's report, which appeared less than a month before the municipal election. Taking a rather arid piece of text (the judgement) and guiding the reader through it, by means of headlines, cartoons and photographs, an irrelevant electoral imperative was constructed: a narrative conclusion to the ville ouverte was put before Montreal's eligible voters.[79] *Le Devoir* transformed the "demi-victoire" of the Caron Commission into a veritable condemnation of the Houde-Asselin administration, projecting its own judgement ("Justice est fait") beyond Judge Caron's and substituting Plante and Pelletier's vision of 1950 for the rather unremarkable findings of the Court.[80] By imploring

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75 Caron Commission Judgement reprinted and translated in the *Montreal Star* 9 October 1954 (italics mine).
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid. Regarding Asselin, Judge Caron remarked: "From 1941 on, Mr. Asselin was very worried over the tolerance of vice."
78 Ibid. Jean-Paul Brodeur provides a great commentary on the culpability of Police Director Langlois, one of the major targets of the Caron Commission—Plante's former superior and rival. Even though Langlois was not judged guilty by the Court, he was penalized and Brodeur argues that "le commissaire-enquêteur a manqué d'impartialité envers lui dans son jugement". See Brodeur, *La délinquance de l'ordre*, 151-153.
79 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique,* 453.
80 Not to mention that the "Montreal, Ville Ouverte" campaign of 1950 primarily recounted events that took place between 1944 and 1948.

Montreal's citizens to vote in the upcoming election, *Le Devoir* demanded participation in the reformers' encapsulation of the city, in affirming the "facts" presented by Plante, Drapeau at court, the commission's coverage by *Le Devoir* and the reformer's narrative (not unlike a detective novel or social problem film) wherein "il a suffi d'un petit nombre d'honnêtes gens pour nettoyer la ville". On 26 October this demand was answered in the landslide election of Jean Drapeau as Mayor of Montreal. Perhaps Judge Caron was short-sighted in his targeting of personal responsibility for Montreal's "openness". While not a premeditated collective conspiracy, Montreal's open city was entirely born of a collective cultural moment.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

"Aujourd'hui dans le monde: "Montréal répudie la pègre et ses protecteurs" read *L'Action Catholique*'s headline after Drapeau's victory at the polls.[81] Bruce McKenna recalls the election night as if the penultimate scene in a nerve-wracking thriller: RCMP raids, secret lists, bribes; "bully boys" and "goons" given the marching orders to storm and sack Drapeau's committee rooms—not that this was unheard of for the other candidates, or even early twentieth century elections in general.[82] What later was considered a "record turnout in the city's electoral history" confirmed the popular demand for a new administration.[83] The election seemed to signal the transition from an antiquated, anti-democratic and corrupt ville ouverte to a modern, democratic and reformed ville fermé (à vice). As the recent 2013 Centre d'histoire de Montréal exhibit *Scandal!* announces, "Like in the movies, the good guys win."[84] But how remarkable was this transition, really? How different was the Drapeau administration from that of Raynault, of Houde-Asselin or his brief successor Fournier? There were broader processes at

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81 *L'Action Catholique,* 26 October 1954.
82 McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 94. Left unmentioned by McKenna and Purcell, Drapeau's chief opposition, Raynault, also faced a trying election night: "between 50 and 75 men [less than at Drapeau's office] swooped down on the headquarters of the majority candidate Adhemar Raynault yesterday, and in the process of wrecking his headquarters, knocked a policeman unconscious....".*The Montreal Gazette*, 26 October 1954.
83 *The Montreal Gazette*, 11 November 1974.
84 Charlebois, *Scandal!*, 16.

work which united all of these administrations with parallel municipal developments occurring in administrations across the Western world.

It is clear that even on the eve of the 1954 election there was little to distinguish the reformers from the old-guard. If anything, the platform for reform was distinguished not *against* that of its political opposition but *through* a shared encapsulation of the post-war city: the open city imaginary as it was imported to Canada during the 1930s and '40s. As discussed in this and the previous chapter, the open city was largely imported to Montreal through new trends in urban-writing/picturing and progressive American reform rhetoric.[85] Otherwise, Drapeau and his chief opponents, Raynault, Asselin and Fournier, all championed the same post-war projects: the construction of low-income housing, a remedying of urban circulation, a crackdown on illicit services and an investment in arts and culture.[86] As Harold Kaplan observes, Drapeau simply "continued a hallowed Montreal-practice [of] undoing the work of a previous administration in order to revive and put one's own label on virtually the same project."[87] The metro system, the widening of Dorchester Street, the campaigns against immorality and vice, "slum clearance", the institutionalization of gambling and the re-oganization of the CBD were all initially undertaken by former administrations of Montreal and then continued by Drapeau.[88] Once elected, even the encapsulation of Montreal's urban environment as a ville ouverte was strategically substituted by Drapeau for the old economically friendly wide-open town: "We [the reformers] have been wrongly labelled (sic). We don't want Montreal to be a closed town. We want it to be a lively town within the law."[89]

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85 The influence of American sensationalism on Montreal's political reformers apparently became even more evident after Drapeau disassociated himself from LAC in 1960. CMP executive J.Z. Patenaude framed the Drapeau administration at times as "une histoire à la Hitchcock", " un roman d'espionnage", et "la science-fiction". See J.Z. Patenaude, *Le Vrai Visage de Jean Drapeau.* (Montreal, 1962), 62, 67, 71.
86 *The Montreal Gazette,* 25 October 1954. In fact, even Asselin demanded a further enquiry into vice and corruption in the city. See *Le Devoir*, 23 October 1954.
87 Kaplan, *Reform, Planning and City Politics,* 376.
88 Ibid., 375-385 Morton, *At Odds*, 189-191.
89 *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 October 1954. Fournier echoed Drapeau in the following administration, announcing that Montreal would remain "wide open but honest". *The Montreal Herald* 15 March 1957.

The 1954 election signalled a change in government but not of governmentality—only a refining of its moral boundaries. Much has been made about Drapeau being, for better or for worse, a totalitarian ruler over Montreal, acting as mayor from 1954 to 1986 (with a brief absence during 1957-1960)—that Montreal was changed *by* him.[90] However, rather a "fantastic personage", his "reign" deserves a deeper interrogation: not with regard to what he envisioned of Montreal but to how his vision of a modern city fit within a broader array of imbricated political-economic processes.[91] After 1954, Drapeau and the reformers' seemingly unique crisis of the ville ouverte showed its unremarkable place in the development of Western governmentality. It was but one narrative utilized to rationalize the shifting moral boundaries of acceptable governance.

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90 As Gerald Clark argues, "Drapeau goes his own way, running the City Council and the city itself with mild authoritarianism—because that's the way Montrealers want their city to be run." Gerald Clark, *Montreal: The New Cité* (Toronto, 1982), 15. Darel Paul, for example, considers Drapeau as an "Imagineer", a monarchical engineer in an "living laboratory". Darel E. Paul, "World Cities as Hegemonic Projects: The Politics of Global Imagineering in Montreal", *Political Geography* no.23 (2004), 579. Sandra Jensen exaggerates Drapeau's sole influence over poster-ing in the Red-Light district. Sandra Jansen Writing on the Main: Tracing Street Posters in the Red Light District of Montreal."Paper prepared for *Montreal* as Palimpsest II: Hauntings, Occupations, Theatres of Memory. Department of Art History, Concordia University, (Montreal, 2009). Vivian Namaste likewise accords too much of police repression and change in Montreal to Drapeau. Vivian Namaste, *C'était du specatcle! L'histoire des artistes transexuelles à Montréal, 1955-1985*. (Montreal, 2005) 48, 60.

91 This is how Foucault describes the modern "sovereign". Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 39.

CHAPTER III: A CLOSED CITY? (1945-1960)

"The ghetto of Montreal has no real walls and no true dimensions. The walls are the habit of atavism and the dimensions are an illusion. But the ghetto exists all the same."[1] So explains the disillusioned, Jewish working-class narrator of Mordecai Richler's *Son of A Smaller Hero*, published in 1955. And yet, in the previous two chapters this thesis has drawn attention to the motivations and interests that lead to, as well as perpetuated, the representation of Montreal as an open city; its "openness", whether portrayed positively or negatively and affirmed by a discursive formation. From *Time*'s "wide-open town" to Palmer's "ourtown" to the reformers' "ville ouverte" to Weintraub's "city unique", the popular narration of Montreal's historical situation in the 1940s and '50s has often been conceived by white, heterosexual middle-class men employing the encapsulating open city aesthetic of that era.

Discussing Irish literature and urban form in Belfast, Neal Alexander observes that "the contemporary city has forsaken its external walls for a dematerialized grid of socio-political forces" and that through "the novel" Belfast reveals itself as a "carceral city", even when striving for cosmopolitanism or, at least, freedom.[2] Similarly, this thesis has observed how narrative simplifies the complexity of urban life, despite an aim to render it open—and thus comprehensible—to the gaze of its reader.[3] The pulp-novels, tour guides, newspaper articles, film and photography, political propaganda, statistical reports and juridical enquiries hitherto discussed have all presented Montreal's mid twentieth century in an encapsulating "open city" narrative which has generalized the city's history. Of course, in the previous two chapters this thesis has wholly neglected a look at *other* narratives of the same period, which explicitly reveal the "closed" Montreal of an alleged "open city" era; narratives which by

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1   Mordecai Richler, *Son of a Smaller Hero*, 10.
2   Neal Alexander, "The Carceral City and the City of Refuge: Belfast Fiction and Urban Form," *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies, vol.33 no.2* (Fall, 2007), 28.
3   As Said writes of the "Oriental" narrative: "absolutely anatomical and enumerative; to use its vocabulary is to engage in the particularizing and dividing of things...into manageable parts." Said, *Orientalism*, 72.

exploring the limits of urban, marginalized voices challenge the privileged "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte". This chapter will interrogate the limits of "openness" in Montreal's open city imaginary, and will look at music, poems, novels, films, actions and remembrances of Montreal's marginalized voices of the 1940s and '50s to reveal the open city narrative-genre as one amongst many.[4]

If, as this thesis argues, one is to regard the open city as a product of its time, there are both producer and consumer dimensions to this product. A product can be used *as it was intended* by the producer or it can be *unintendedly* re-purposed by the consumer.[5] One intended use of the open city narrative was the creation of the "delinquent" (*e.g.* as a source of taxation, a moral scapegoat, an entertainment figure); and one unintended re-purposing was the "delinquent's" use of this narrative to (re-)define itself, (re-)forge networks and (re-)comprehend the city it had been alienated from. As Michel de Certeau puts forth, "the story *is delinquent* [and it]...is in the interstices of the codes that it undoes and displaces".[6] Like the enthralled dreamer who takes control by realizing its dream, delinquency is re-appropriated by the "delinquent" by realizing the open city narrative imposed upon it. However, the struggle is, as Foucault points out, "indefinite": power invests in the body, the body revolts and there is a new mode of investment.[7] This thesis will now discuss the "delinquent" in its many forms specific to Montreal's 1940s and '50s, and in doing so interrogate the struggle of those citizens who sought to define themselves while being defined by others. In particular, I will be highlighting delinquency in the imbricated contexts of class, sex and gender and race.

But first, some general comments regarding the "openness" of Montreal's era of "gambling" and

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4   One might be confused by my insertion of "actions" in this list of alleged "narratives". However, as Anouk Bélanger as argued, "Les histoires sans paroles de la marche, de l'habillement, de l'habitat travaillent les quartiers dans l'ombre" as much as the narratives of writers, artists, developers, promoters, and officials reify the city. Bélanger, *Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire,* 15-16. "...participants in disreputable leisure still managed to challenge government policies through their everyday practices and their use of city space." Keire, *For Business and Pleasure*, 4.

5   de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* 32-33.

6   Ibid., 131 (italics mine).

7   Or, "For each move by one adversary, there is an answering one by the other." Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 57.

"lively entertainment", when its reputation for being a city "where everything was allowed was firmly established."[8] The popular cartography of Montreal's open city era is ambiguous: in 1945, reporter Ted McCormick pictured the gaming houses of Montreal as "scattered like raisins through the loaf of the town"; in the"peu de géographie" provided in *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (*MSRP*), a point-form list echoes this scattered "raisin" imagery, as do the potins of the journaux jaunes; similarly, Weintraub's memory of Montreal's mid twentieth century is "*studded* with [gaming and illicit entertainment] establishments".[9] A more critical mapping, however, would confine "openness" (*i.e.* "protected" illegality) to the Red-Light district and City Hall—not the city as a whole. As Morton observes, "The location of betting and gaming establishments [in Montreal] was not random"; and, evidenced by the flight of gambling to the suburbs in the interwar era, "gamblers in Montreal did not operate in a completely 'open' city."[10] Even the notion of suburban, "floating" establishments for prostitution or gambling, accessed by private transport-services, does not suggest the centrifugal movement of vice across the city so much as it does a controlled network converging on a specific "place" where clients were procured: the bars, clubs and cabarets between the streets Saint Catherine and Dorchester.[11]

The notion that "everything was allowed" during this era also needs to be interrogated. While the moral underpinnings of gambling and entertainment were changing greatly over the course of the twentieth century, "risk-taking" leisure rarely operates without policing. The wealth invested into Montreal's open city reputation was not invested carelessly. Hence the almost sudden explosion of "delinquency": crime made less threatening yet more apparent and more exploitable.[12] Additionally,

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8   Time, 25 July, 1949. *SCANDAL! Vice, Crime, and Morality in Montréal, 1940-1960*. Centre d'histoire de Montréal. Exhibition catalogue (2013), 8.

9   Ted McCormick quoted in Morton, *At Odds*, 83. Plante, *MSRP*, 17. Weintraub, *City Unique*, 61 (italics mine).

10 Morton, *At Odds*, 83, 145.

11 de Certeau has written of "place" as being defined by a configuration of relationships which "excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location". In this sense, the limits of illegal commerce in a city constitute *one place*, regardless of the space it borders, overlaps and shares with legal and residential places. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* 118

12 Foucault explores this line of thought, the infantilizing of crime, in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault, *Discipline and*

the very concept of "protection", a system of self-control and social efficiency, ruled by reason and predictability, conformed to the era's economic morality of burgeoning neo-liberalism.[13] "Protection" and "delinquency" went hand in hand in an infantilizing regulation of conduct. Even enthusiastic celebrations of the "wide-open town" like Palmer's *Montreal Confidential* were prohibitive rather than permissive: "Montreal is *not* plagued by zootsuiters", "This is *not* a town you 'tear up' on a night out", "if you're a Communist—*keep out*", "*don't* leave any valuables" in cars, "*don't* try to smuggle a doll up to your hotel room", "*don't go* out on a Saturday night", a speakeasy "*isn't* worth it" *et cetera*.[14]

CLASS

"IF IT IS AT ALL POSSIBLE, DON'T GO OUT ON SATURDAY night. That is the night when all the nighteries are jampacked by those of *the lesser income brackets*." So runs one of Palmer's "low downs" on Montreal, revealing a particular divide in his seemingly united ourtown.[15] For certain middle- and upper-class individuals, the working-class occupied a different *place* in the "open city"— even if they shared the same *space* of "Montreal". Whether one celebrated or condemned the city's "openness", the working-class was isolated as a moral subject: differentiated from the delinquent only by a prevarious "self-control"—moral and monetary—and thus paradoxically conceived as both the victim *and* source of vice in the city.[16] Particularly with gambling, much as in other cities of the twentieth century Western world, "the 'problem'...most often focused on [the] working-class", morally excluding or "protecting" it from the riskiest of capitalist endeavours.[17]

As discussed in the first chapter, Montreal's open city narrative-genre often recounted a "ritual descent" from the mountain, to juxtapose the economy of its middle-class protagonists against a

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Punish, 227

13 Morton, *At Odds*, 24-27.

14 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 53, 108, 112, 133, 134 (italics mine).

15 Ibid., 135 (italics mine).

16 Foucault has traced the emergence of the "[working-class] populous as a moral subject" to the entrusting of wealth from bourgeois to "popular hands". With this, Foucault argues, it is not the bourgeois who became potential delinquents but only the working-class, as it became only they who could potentially squander the wealth entrusted to them. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 41-42.

17 Morton, *At Odds*, 64.

working-class environment of economic mismanagement. Rather than people, what pulp-novelists, muckrakers and reformers found in Montreal's exoticized "slums" were vices: *illegal* gambling, prostitution, drug-peddling, idleness, violence, alcoholism and broken or burdened families. Of course, the "ritual descent" as a privileged *spectacle* and *specialization* was nothing new—first acted out in Herbert Ames 1897 *City Below the Hill*, a sociological look at poverty in Montreal.[18] However, whereas nineteenth century morality focused on acts of charity towards a "passive" poor, the increasingly neo-liberal morality of the twentieth century demanded the vigilance of "active" individuals—subjecting the potential "delinquent" to a seemingly impartial political-economy of choice.[19]

Participating in an intensely nocturnal, commercialized leisure-culture was a recent phenomenon for Montreal's post-war working-class.[20] As remarked by the then chief of police Fernand Dufresne,

> il y avait alors plus de monde, les gens étaient plus actifs, de jour ou de nuit (...) Nous avons eu des problèmes nouveaux: les ouvriers et ouvrières travaillant dans les usines de guerre descendaient dans les cafés qui (sic) fêtaient jusqu'à 4h00 du matin.[21]

In Montreal's era of "wide-open" nightlife, the "ritual descent" was concerned not so much with sanitary disgust as with *how* and *where* the working-class spent the time and the wealth "entrusted" to them by the bourgeoisie. If the open city narrative was a privileged diversion from the drudgery of daily life, that drudgery still needed to be serviced by an obedient, working-class—which, according to

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18 *The City Below the Hill* was both published as a book and serialized in the *Montreal Star* throughout the year of 1897.

19 See Chapter 2, the section on Kefauver and "participation". Particularly during the "open city" era, politicians like Jean Drapeau in Montreal went to great efforts to interpret "corruption" as stemming from the conduct of the populace, not the administration. For example. in a 1956 speech given to *Société des Artisans* of Montreal, Drapeau argues that "D'abord le recul de la moralité en général dans toutes les sphères de l'activité, notamment dans le domaine des loisirs...c'est enfin la corruption...de l'administration". Drapeau, *Communisme et Moralité Publique,*7. Unlike classical liberalism, neo-liberalism "do[es] not regard the market as an existing quasi-natural reality" but rather a market in which "individuals are identified as...the object and target of governmental action and...the necessary (voluntary) partner or accomplice of government.". Graham Burchell, "Liberal government and techniques of the self" in *Foucault and Political Reason.* Andrew Barny, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose, eds. (Chicago, 1996), 23.

20 Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 55.

21 Dufrense cited in Susanne Commend, *De la femme déchue à la femme infectieuse: perception sociale et répression de la prostitution montréalaise pendant la seconde guerre.* (Montréal, 1996), 38.

the this narrative's characteristics, could not display self-control and thus needed guidance.[22] It should

be no surprise that a typical way of concluding a report on the "slums" was by invoking the image of a

poor, dirty child: seeing all but destined for tragedy due to a lack of parental guidance.[23]

The debate on working-class conduct in Montreal's open city manifested itself in different

discourses, but the primary one was "slum clearance" and the creation of modern housing projects.

Despite the occasional informed report, an encapsulated "slum" furnished Montreal's muckrakers with

an exoticized landscape of criminalized poverty: a landscape "abandoned" somehow to "quartiers les

plus sordides", "la délinquence juvénile" and communism.[24] One 1946 citizen's enquiry into drinking

establishments around Montreal made a clear distinction between places frequented by "ouvriers" on

the one hand, and "la classe honnête" on the other.[25] Another "Enquête sur les taudis de Montréal" on

Radio Canada's *Carrefour* in 1954 even framed its broadcast with a menacing orchestration akin to B-

movie *exposés* of the period.[26] By waging a "war" against the "abnormal" desires and "irregularities" of

the "slum", these moralists paradoxically responded to the open city imperative ("stamping out crime:

it's up to you!") while contributing to a vast library of confidential tour-guides which mapped "la plus

grande école du vice".[27] Serialized "drames de la rue" attracted middle- and upper-class readership

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22 Mandel, *Delightful Murder*, 70-71. This is much like how SoHo became "the dark, industrial back region that serviced the spectacular front stage of the West end pleasure zone" in London. Judith Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London*. (London: 2012), 21.

23 Joy Parr observes Canada's long history of depicting children as the raw materials "from which the 'dangerous classes' were formed". Joy Parr, *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869–1924* (Montreal, 1980), 33. Andrea Walsh also explains how throughout the 1920s-1940s, a lack of proper sanitation—or, as framed in a more infantilizing manner, "disobeying health rules"—was described by the Canadian Red Cross in "criminal terms", thus bringing the child, the impoverished and the criminal into a single association. Andrea Walsh, "Healthy Bodies, Strong Citizens: Okanagan Children's Drawings and the Canadian Junior Red Cross", *Depicting Canada's Children*. Loren Lerner, ed. (Waterloo, 2009), 282-284. For Montreal examples, see *La Patrie*, 26 July 1947, *The Montreal Gazette*, 23 March 1951, *Photo Journal*, 21 September 1957. Also, see the Parcs de Montréal film *Adam, la pomme et Ève* (1949) and National Film Board (NFB) films, *À Saint-Henri le cinq septembre* (1962) and *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance* (1964) for visual associations of poverty and infancy.

24 André Laurendeau "Les logis de la misère" in *L'Action Nationale* no.30 (September 1947), 30. *Le Devoir*, 31 August, 1951.

25 In the same enquiry, "ouvriers" are also termed "ces malheureux" robbed by " les barbottes et les bookies". *Citizen Enquiry into Cafe Surveillance [no title], 1946*. Comité de Moralité Publique fonds. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. P47 H,6., 11 .

26 "Enquête sur les taudis de Montréal". Les Archives de Radio-Canada. *Société Radio-Canada*. Dernière mise à jour : 29 Aug, 2008. <http://archives.radio-canada.ca/societe/pauvrete/clips/14441/> [date accessed: 4 June 2014].

27 Even after the era of "slum clearance", journalists continued to exploit the sensationalistic, moralizing and pseudo-

while isolating the poor as alcoholics and prostitutes. If not for the presence of "les enfants [qui]...porte dans les yeux toute la misère du quartier [ouvrier]" confessed one article from *Photo-Journal,* "Pour nous, tout n'était que pittoresque".[28]

Journalism and statisticism was not the only means of criticizing working-class conduct in the open city. More effective was the Dozois Housing Project and the Drapeau administration's urban revitalization plans of the mid to late 1950s. Only superficially at odds, these two projects were united in an effort to push the city's most vulnerable to the outskirts of Montreal, redevelop valuable commercial property and provide *some* working-class families with a place of rest befitting their "proper" industrial-life.[29] In writing a Marxist history of the Regent Park Housing Project in Toronto (contemporary to the Dozois Project), Jaihun Sahak paraphrases Engels' observation that

> [the working-class] presence depress land value rather than increase it. When this occurs, the housing projects are demolished and replaced by luxury apartments, shops and commercial and public buildings. The new houses are targeted towards the gentry, the bourgeois upper-class. The working-class, on the other hand, are forced out of their homes and into the "outskirts".[30]

When considering Drapeau's desire to build radio-towers and a more tightly-knit CBD on expropriated neighbourhoods, or that the Montreal Board of Trade held such a keen interest in "slum clearance" during the 1950s, Sahak's reading of Toronto's Regent Park Project illuminates possible selfish and alienating motivations behind Montreal's redevelopment.[31] The elite's duplicitous regard towards the

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scientific rhetoric of the "slum exposé". One 1969 Gazette article described the Montreal "ghetto" in the following terms: "a higher rate of delinquency", "one out of every five children can't speak until the age of three....is distinctly abnormal in weight or height....bad posture....nearly half the children show psychological irregularities." Ad for the *Fédération des Oeuvres de Charité Canadiennes-Françaises* in *Le Canada* 23 February, 1945. This confidential literature was abundant (as discussed in Chapter 1). One example is the article "J'ai passé la nuit dans un 'Blind Pig'" in *Photo-Journal*, 29 September 1956. Also, *Ici Montréal*, *Allô Police, Fouine, Can-Can et cetera* were entire magazines dedicated to this genre.

28 *Photo-Journal*, 21 September 1957.

29 The projects Dozois and Jeanne-Mance are usually pit against each other in the context of political rivalries; however, the objective of moving the "unmanageable" working-class out of the CBD and re-developing the land was, nevertheless, sought by both. Alexandra Mills, "The Desire for Integration: Attempts to Engender a Utopian Social Order at Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Montreal." paper prepared for Montreal as Palimpsest II: Hauntings, Occupations, Theatres of Memory. Department of Art History. Concordia University (Montreal, 2009), 4-7.

30 Paraphrase of Engels in Jaihun Sahak, *Race, Space and Place: Exploring Toronto's Regent Park from a Marxist Perspective.* (M.A. thesis. Ryerson University. Toronto, 2008),19.

31 Mills, *The Desire for Integration*, 4-5.

open city is best observed in the pages of *Commerce-Montréal.* In 1951, Montreal's businessmen could speak of, on the one hand, neighbourhoods which engendered "des misères physiques et morales indescriptibles ou inconcevables", and on the other hand, how erotic dancers "fait fleurir une foule de petites industries et de commerces particuliers", without batting an eyelash.[32] In their minds, the open city had to be nourished to the exclusion of the working-class.

For those families who managed to reside at Montreal's *one* modern housing complex, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance* (est. 1959), the "openness" promised to them by developers (open air, sunlight, social cohesion) never materialized; nor were residents given a say in the functioning of their buildings.[33] While newspapers projected a decline in delinquency, crime actually rose in the area, individual freedom was restricted by building-regulations and Montrealers generally ignored the existence of the complex.[34] Rather than letting the people of Montreal's working-class neighbourhoods carry out their own urban regeneration efforts, the city constructed, in the words of one Montreal poet, "rows upon rows of violated dreams".[35] Or, as another poet observed , "A public architect looked at our city/ And with his tidy eye, bilingual word,/ Commanded every rat and tenemented bird/ to find new quarters from Peel to Demontigny."[36] Denied a role in managing their community and denied a role in managing their housing complex, tenants of *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance* were eventually regarded by outside commentators as prisoners.[37]

But working-class Montrealers were neither without agency nor aspiration to become mobile

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32 *Commerce-Montréal* vol.7 no.8 (29 Oct, 1951). *Commerce-Montréal* vol 6 no. 37 (18 June 1951).
33 Nor did the *twelve* other modern housing projects recommended by the Dozois report materialize on the city's thirteen expropriated neighbourhoods.
34 *The Montreal Gazette*, 27 Oct, 1959. Mills, *The Desire for Integration*, 7, 16-17.
35 The process of "unslumming" which is demands the agency of a community, not of city-planners, is advocated by urban theorist Jane Jacobs in her *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, a critique of 1950s urban-planning. Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, 2011), 353-379. John Glassco, *Montreal* (Ann Arbor, 1974), 25.
36   Miriam Waddington, "The Thorough Way" in *The Season's Lovers*. Toronto: Ryerson, 1958. Another poet, and tenant of Toronto's Regent Park complex, cried out similarly against the regulatory processes behind housing projects, declaring "I am trapped/ in a clean bright place/ warm/ but I can't get out/ And all the doors/ are prison grey/ what was my crime". Dorothy O'Connell, "A Modern Sonnet for Public Housing Tenants," *The Raised Roof* no.3 (November-December 1974).
37 Mills, *The Desire for Integration*, 23. *La Presse*, 27 September 1967.

throughout their city. The nightlife culture recently made available to them in the post-war era was taken to with vigour. While the city's politicians, businessmen and major media outlets concerned themselves with the regulation of working-class conduct through sensationalistic exposés, housing projects and "slum clearance", *who* was listened to and *what* was read could come from alternative sources. Viviane Namaste for example points to the journaux jaunes, which, while contributing to Montreal's encapsulated "open city", found their primary audience in the working-class. The journaux jaunes were inexpensive and offered an otherwise inaccessible gaze at the city's more luxurious cultural products.[38] Interrogating the consumer's relation to newspapers and magazines, de Certeau has asked, "What do they [the consumer] make of what they "absorb," receive, and pay for? What do they do with it?".[39] While major media gave "no room where the consumers can mark their activity", the journaux jaunes allowed "Les Montréalais...se tenir au courant des loisirs en vogue."[40] Additionally, while this type of literature played on the notion that Montreal was a city of sin, working-class readers freely joined in on this "play", a counter-conduct to the conservative moralization emanating from the Church and City Hall.[41] Some working-class communities, such as those in Griffintown and Point St-Charles, were even proud of the "tough" or "dur" character by which they were represented to the outside world.[42]

Writing of Montreal's first urban-novel *Bonheur d'occassion* (1945), Susan Kevra points to

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38 Namaste, *La réglamentation des journaux jaunes à Montréal*, 68.
39 de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 32.
40 Ibid., 32. Namaste, *La réglamentation des journaux jaunes à Montréal*, 69. Novelist Mordecai Richler recounts in "The Street" how a 1930s *Time* magazine article collapsed sensationalistic discourses on communism and poverty in a description of Montral's St-Urbain Street, offending the community's working-class citizens. Mordecai Richler, "The Street" in *The Street* (Markham, 1985), 31. Calvin Pryluck has observed that in the early sixties, an NFB documentary on the working-class district of St-Henri "turned out badly for the people depicted. They felt debased and humiliated; they were mocked by their neighbors; one family felt forced to remove its children from the local schools." Calvin Pryluck, "We Are All Outsiders: The Ethics of Documentary Filming." *Journal of the University Film Association*, vol.28 no.1 (Winter 1976), 23.
41 Namaste, *La réglamentation des journaux jaunes à Montréal*, 69.
42 John Matthew Barlow, *The House of the Irish": Irishness, History, and Memory in Griffintown, Montréal, 1868-2009*. (PhD Thesis. Concordia University, 2009), 190-191. See Robert Duncan, dir. *The Point*. NFB, 1978 [streaming video: https://www.nfb.ca/film/point].

Montreal's 1940s as having "a burgeoning commercial culture in which even the poor can participate".[43] Montrealers moved through a landscape of increasing commercial "temptation" and defined their own financial limits. If they could not afford the neon-lit cabarets and private sports clubs, they could still indulge in "the entertainment that arouse spontaneously in the street", in bingo and back-room penny gambling, in sport and dance, window-shopping, in colonizing "Saturday night" and walking their city.[44] In spite of being represented as dirty, delinquent, pitiful and powerless by the "open city" encapsulation of the "slum", working-class Montrealers resisted by seemingly inconsequential everyday actions. As *chansonnier* Raymond Levesque sang of the poverty in his neighbourhood of Saint-Henri: "Malgré tout on rit..."[45]

SEX AND GENDER

As discussed in Chapter 1, post-war Montreal saw a proliferation of commercialized mass-entertainment: cabarets, sports clubs, jazz clubs, movie theatres and dance halls—all of which brought young men and women together from across the city.[46] The city's service industry, stirred by the post-war economy, also attracted women into the public sphere in greater numbers and into daily contact with men outside the home and Church. However, when one speaks of Montreal's "wide-open town", what is being referred to is a "male sporting-culture", largely owned by and restricted to white, heterosexual middle- and upper-class men.[47] As for the "ville ouverte", it too was largely "owned" by this social group. Where was woman's place in Montreal's "open city"? What were the limits of "male sporting-culture"? And was there a place with those who did not identify themselves with either gender

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43 Susan Kevra, "Undressing the Text: The Function of Clothing in Gabrielle Roy's Bonheur d'occasion." *Québec Studies* vol.37 no.1 (2004), 110.

44 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 157. In the case of gambling, Suzanne Morton argues that, for working-class Canadians, it "offered a way to combine entertainment with a creative means to obtain money or material goods" or even social mobility. See Morton, *At Odds*, 62-65. For Griffintown resident, Thelma Pidgeon, church halls acted as spaces where boys and girls could challenge, through dancing and socializing, the moral authority of the Church monitors who supervised them. Thelma Pidgeon quoted in Barlow, *The House of the Irish*, 195-196.

45 This is a lyric from Raymond Levesque's chanson "St-Henri", which first debuted in the opening-credit sequence for Hubert Aquin's *À St-Henri le cinq septembre* (1962).

46 Morton, *At Odds*, 73.

47 Ibid., 70,87.

roles as they were defined at the time?

(i) Women

Myers notes that with the emergence of Montreal as an industrial city in the mid nineteenth century, the domestic, "proper sphere" of girlhood faced new challenges as women "turn[ed] to the workplace and the street to earn a living [for their families]" and came to be seen as economic agents of consumption.[48] However, even with woman's entrance into the industrial landscape, the dominant patriarchal society and its political, educational and economic institutions perpetuated a system of division and inequality based on sex.[49] Most of the women who willingly sought out work were of the working-class and faced, in the forms of compulsory schooling and judiciary protectionism, that infantilization previously discussed, whereby the "state expanded its role to 'super parent'".[50] Meanwhile, the former "super parent" of the Catholic Church was charging these women with the destruction of the "foyer familial", the "grande force" of the French-Canadian identity.[51] By the beginning of the open city era in the 1940s, female Montrealers were forging their way into a public-sphere lined with commercial and moral exploitation on either side.

Women did not always share a place with men in the open city of "gambling and girls" without consequence. Of course, women, like men, gambled illegally in Montreal: in the company of their husbands or partners, women took roles in underground book-making or could be found "on the arm of a man at the barbotte table or by the roulette wheel."[52] However, when women gambled alone, especially working-class women who played bingo, condemnation quickly followed. Women who played bingo were criticized as being home-wreckers when in fact the game was not only played for

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48 Myers, *Caught*, 4. Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City'*, 60.
49 Even by 1960 women's salaries incredible disproportionate to men. For example, most women made $1,000—1,499 per year in comparison to most men who made $2,000—2,999. Moreover, while 8% of men made over $4,000 a year, the percentage of women making this amount was 0.2. Lacasse, *La prostitution féminine à Montréal,* 90, 94.
50 Myers, *Caught*, 5.
51   "Le travail féminin et la guerre". École sociale populaire (1942) cited in Lapointe, *Comité de moralité publique*, 114.
52 Morton, *At Odds*, 70, 81.

leisure but also as a source of extra income and community-building.[53] Unlike male-dominated private gambling, there were no positive images of bingo; and from 1945, Montreal's morality squad started targeting the game as a delinquency despite its prominent role of fund-raising in the Catholic church.[54]

With regard to commercialized-sex before WWII, residential prostitution was considered by some women as a viable profession—especially when few lucrative jobs were made available to them besides domestic, restaurant and factory work.[55] Residential prostitution offered passage into the city's emerging nightlife culture, providing *some* women (*e.g.* a celebrated "companion" or brothel Madame) with the agency to determine their own involvement in it. Throughout the early twentieth century, many brothels in Montreal were owned by women who managed their employees and clientele as they saw fit and who had a working-understanding of the city's system of tolerance—which could be manipulated to their benefit.[56] However, with the closing of the Red-Light, the development of the open city discursive formation and a renewed moral vigour among Montreal's reformers, prostitution was forcibly moved from the brothels into the streets, and in the process was entangled in the panic of juvenile delinquency.

"Like all big cities, Montreal has a juvenile delinquent problem," states Al Palmer in a chapter of *Montreal Confidential* entitled "The Young Degeneration".[57] That a "youth problem" emerged in Montreal around 1944 is not surprising. The province "expanded the age of the juvenile delinquent from under sixteen to eighteen" in 1942; it also enacted a nocturnal curfew law for children in 1943.[58] Statistically, juvenile delinquent cases brought before Montreal's courts leaped from 2979 to 3680 between the years 1940-1944.[59] This increase was likely due to the legal extension of childhood in 1942

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53 Morton has an excellent section devoted to the reception of female bingo players (as "delinquent" mothers and wives) in Canada. Ibid., 95-96.
54 Ibid., 88.
55 Lévesque, *La norme et les déviantes*, 71. Also, according to Victorian morality, prostitution in Montreal was deemed by the police as a somewhat "necessary evil". Podmore, *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City'*, 179.
56 Lacasse, *La prostitution féminine à Montréal,* 65-66.
57 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 53.
58 Myers, *Caught*, 71.
59 *The Montreal Gazette*, 11 March 1944.

coinciding with an emerging mental picture of the "modern girl", as depicted in the newly imported

sensationalist media. The consequences of "delinquency prevention" restricted the mobility of women

as they attempted to navigate the city. On the street and in places of leisure, women working outside of

the sex-industry were mistaken for prostitutes—and prostitutes were mistaken for children.[60]

Showcasing a photograph of what is clearly an adult woman from a yellow-press clipping, a

1944 *Gazette* advertisement for Delinquency Prevention Week screamed, "This Might Be Your

Daughter!" Most women arrested in Montreal between 1945-1970 for infractions against Canada's

penal code were charged not with prostitution but vague "crimes against morality and public order"—

often a code for street-walking or loitering.[61] These women, considered children before the law, were

brought into Montreal's Juvenile Delinquent's Court (MJDC) where they had to submit to invasive

medical testing about "immoralities" they may or may not have committed.[62]

The harassment that women were subjected to on the street and in leisure establishments also

restricted their ability to claim or realize alternative sexual identities to those constructed by a

patriarchal society and inculcated by the Church and Court.[63] Having little disposable income and

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60 As a 1944 advertisement for Delinquency Prevention Week decried to its reader, showcasing a drawing and photograph of what are clearly not children but adult women: "This Might Be Your Daughter!". *The Montreal Gazette*, 11 March 1944. In 1951, J.Z. Patenaude of the Ligues du Sacré-Coeur claimed that 3,000 "petites filles" aged 13 to 17 were being prostituted in the city's bars, a claim which Lacasse argues has little validity and is more a misreading of charges made against minors for "vagabondage", not prostitution. Lacasse, *La prostitution féminine à Montréal,* 38-39. Statistics like those generated by Patenaude were not uncommon. A Temperance Investigative report made between 1946-1953 made unverifiable claims that the bars they visited had a clientele of "70% prostitutes", "prostitutes of all ages", "prostitutes 16-19 years old" *et cetera*. Cited in Podmore, *Third City*, 198. In *Montreal Confidential* Al Palmer asks that tourists do not try to pick up girls in the city, suggesting a prevailing perception that the women who walked Monteral's streets were likely prostitutes. Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 20-23. Also, see *Man's Life*, October 1959, where a photo of two women walking is presented with the caption: "Girls search Montreal streets for male companions"—here, both an infantilization and eroticization is evident. Downtown resident Marcelle Valois-Hénault recounts "Étant jeune et bien tournée, on pouvait vous confondre avec une prostituée"—quoted in *SCANDAL!,*12.

61 Lacasse, *La prostitution féminine à Montréal,* 28-29.

62 Myers notes in *Caught* that the MJDC "maintained a long and close relationship with psychiatrists and psychologists". She also notes in "Embodying Delinquency" that physical and dental tests were common in MJDC cases. Myers, *Caught*, 75. Tamara Myers, "Embodying delinquency: Boys' bodies, sexuality, and juvenile justice history in early-twentieth-century Quebec", *Journal of the History of Sexuality* vol.14 no.4 (2006), 403.

63 Line Chamberland "Remembering Lesbian Bars", *Journal of Homosexuality* vol.25 no.3 (1993), 4. Myers notes how amongst the scientific personnel working in conjunction with the MJDC, lesbian activity was generally dismissed as the expression of "a want of affection"; yet the deliberate separation of girls from girlfriends by probation officers "could be read as fear of or desire to prevent lesbian relationships." Myers, *Caught*, 173, 221.

prohibited by law from entering taverns, women in post-war Montreal found it significantly more

difficult to claim homosexual space than did gay men.[64] However, in some clubs, cafés and grills, as

well as everyday industrial and service industries, lesbian women established a community at the risk

of being arrested as delinquents or being attacked, physically and verbally, by men.[65] Considered " la

déviante par excellence", to be openly lesbian in Montreal was a significant form of counter-conduct

that challenged the tools of surveillance and repression embedded in the "norms" of marriage and

motherhood.[66] Some clubs like the *Ponts de Paris*, which had no explicit homosexual entertainment,

seated its lesbian clientele together so as to help newcomers connect.[67] Additionally, the sensationalized

reports of lesbian activity printed in the journaux jaunes aided in mapping the geography of the city's

lesbian community.[68]

Regarding woman's freedom of movement in general: Morton is correct in her argument that

throughout Canada's twentieth century "Men, and in particular white middle-class men, continued to

'own' the entire city in a way that was not possible for women" by traversing its many places.[69] This

was especially true for Montreal's allegedly "open city" era. However, just as women resisted the

injustices of the industrial work environment by continuing to work, picket and protest, so too did they

resist the city that was closed to them by continuing to walk and observe it. Richard Dennis notes this

type of resistance in his scholarship on urban geography:

> By the 1880s, if not before, women were on the streets and public transport, on their
> own, as workers, tourists, shoppers and observers, with the potential to destabilise the
> position of male flâneurs.[70]

64 Julie Podmore, "Gone 'underground'? Lesbian visibility and the consolidation of queer space in Montréal", *Social & Cultural Geography* vol.7 no.4 (2006), 602-604.
65 Chamberland, *Remembering Lesbian Bars*, 236-237. An *Ici Montréal* potin notes a lesbian club opening up under the guise of a hair-salon. *Ici Montréal,* 6 November 1954.
66 Lévesque, *La norme et les déviantes*, 87, 95.
67 Chamblerland, *Remembering Lesbian Bars,* 238-239. *Ici Montréal*, 9 May 1953.
68 For example, a 1954 clipping from *Ici Montréal* informs its readers that "Ramona, la lesbienne, reste toujours la rein du St-John Café, sur la Main." *Ici Montréal* 26 Jan, 1957. More about this mapping will be discussed in the next subsection, with regard to the establishment of an openly gay community in Montreal.
69 Morton, *At Odds*, 87.
70 Richard Dennis, "Historical Geographies of Urbanism" in *Modern Historical Geographies*. Brian Graham, Catherine

Similarly, de Certeau has pointed to "walking" as a tactic, a "manoeuvre within the enemy's field of vision", whereby the dominant representation of urban space can be challenged.[71] In her essay on "Girl Watching" in post-war Montreal, Aurora Wallace observes that while an increased presence of women in the public sphere came with verbal harassment and the articulation in print-media of working women as "eye candy" for working men, this growing awareness of women on "real city streets" points to the "tactical occupation of a traditionally male-dominated milieu."[72] Female writers, such as Miriam Waddington, P.K. Page and Mavis Gallant, creatively transcribed their walks around Montreal in the 1940s and '50s as flâneuses, ready and willing to critique social-injustice by their own observances. One artifact of this "tactic of walking" is found in the poem "A Journey to the Clinic" (1955), wherein Waddington travels to work on Saint-Antoine street. Over the course of her commute, she observes not only the merciless destruction of Montreal's neighbourhoods to the "steam shovel...[and] naked garish claw", but also the lack of municipal attention being directed towards the city's most impoverished citizens.[73]

(ii) Men

It may appear strange to interrogate the marginalized male voice in Montreal's open city, as this encapsulated space was chiefly a celebration of male privilege. Do some men fall into the category of marginalized voices? Certainly, when accompanied by questions of class, race, language and sexual preference. In 1944 novelist Raymond Chandler described the detective of his era as "everything. He must be *a complete man* and *a common man* and an *unusual man*"—what Ernest Mandel sees as a combination of cynicism and romanticism.[74] The detective of the mid twentieth century was in a sense

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Nash, eds. (Ann Arbor, 1999), 226.

71   de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* 38. Additionally, see his chapter "Walking the City", pgs 102-118.

72   Aurora Wallace, "The geography of girl watching in postwar Montreal", *Space and Culture* vol.10 no.3 (2007), 350.

73   "...the smell of soup/ From canteen lunches, children's feet and pee./ Oh little children, fishes in the net/ Of doctors, dentists and their instruments/ You are the captives here." Miriam Waddington, "A Journey to the Clinic" in *The Second Silence*. (Toronto, 1955).

74   Raymond Chandler quoted in Mandel, *Delightful Murder*, 35.

the cosmopolitan bourgeois male, possessing "a privileged mobility, and worldly *command* of goods, ideas and bodies".[75] Participating in Montreal's open city discursive formation meant reading and playing in the urban environment as a male detective-type; owning it, involving oneself in it, yet also remaining unusually distinct from it and whole. As an encapsulated experience, this participation was particularly suited to pleasure-seeking tourists as well as to journalists and reformers.

Privileged participants of *both* the wide-open town and ville ouverte role-played in a Montreal-noir as defined by the open city discourse of the era. Free from the condemnation of moralizing exposés (as it was they who *exposed*), white, middle- and upper-class men took in an intoxicating nightlife-culture and traversed their city's geography without consequence, just like Russel Teed or John Riodon from the pulp-novels.[76] American men's magazines like *Brief* and *Focus* reassured potential male tourists that pleasurable-vice could be procured throughout the *No.1 City of Sin* in "legit nightclubs".[77] Or as a 1959 article in *Man's Life* overtly put it "They [Montreal's municipal administration] make it a joy-centre for vacation-happy [later "girl-happy"] tourists in the town that winks at vice" if you can pay for it.[78]

Likewise, Will Straw has observed that, in the operations of the Comité de moralité publique (CMP), reformers also indulged in an urban adventure that demanded both time and money.[79] The *Service du tempérance de Montréal*, *Ligues de Sacré-Coeur*, and the CMP all toured Montreal's nocturnal world, reifying middle-class anxieties through sensationalistic statistics which provoked the city's various media-outlets to furnish their own enquiries.[80] This is not to say that reformers only

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75 Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 5 (italics mine). Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 47.
76   It is significant Montroses' *The Body on Mount-Royal* follows an upper-middle class detective who is able to navigate his city and solve crimes while being utterly intoxicated; it is the bourgeois dream to bring order while being outside of that order itself.
77   *Brief*, August 1954. Private Collection of Will Straw. According to Focus, while Montreal had "kicked sin into the streets", the male tourist could still enjoy "wild-and-woolly but legal entertainment" *Focus*, 1953. Private Collection of Will Straw.
78   *Man's Life*, October 1959. Private Collection of Will Straw .
79 Straw, *Captive City*, 16.
80 Podmore, *Third City*, 198-199.

participated prudishly in the open city. Crime-buster Pacifique Plante, for example, was known as an

"amateur de chemises de soie et de belles femmes, amoureux de yachting et passionné de théâtre" and a

frequent positive presence in articles on Montreal's nightlife, such as those discussed above.[81] In fact, it

is evident in the men's magazines of the era that those who celebrated and those who condemned

Montreal's openness encouraged each others' pursuits, keeping Montreal in a balance of safety and

sinfulness.

As mentioned earlier, the open city was a privileged male diversion from certain post-war

failings abroad. Young working-class men became the foreign enemies of capitalism and democracy

internalized.[82] With capitalist wealth entrusted to the working-class, boys and men who indulged in

"unproductive" activities became perceived threats. The heavy policing of working-class men perhaps

suggests a redirection of their wealth back towards the city.

One perceived threat: the post-pubescent, jobless adolescent boy. Myers observes how

increasingly in the twentieth century the Western world

> boy problem...forecast dire news of unproductive, criminal adulthood. As children and
> youth were increasingly seen as state assets and future citizens, it was imperative that
> the juvenile justice system turn these delinquents around.[83]

By the 1940s, young men, like the "modern girls" before them, began appearing before the MJDC

charged with participating in delinquent leisure (chiefly sexual) and were subjected to invasive

questioning which furnished sensationalized studies, articles and political propaganda. They were taxed

in the form of fines and sent back into the city only to be rejected from it again amid the panics of

juvenile delinquency.[84]

Another perceived threat: working-class men as communist sympathizers—a recurrent theme in

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81 Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 48.
82 An article in *La Patrie* in 1948 titled "Une élite en danger" makes this quite clear in its emphasis on making the
    working-class aware of the benefits of capitalism. *La Patrie*, 28 October 1948.
83 Myers, *Embodying delinquency,* 392.
84 Ibid., 413-414.

yellow- and political literature of the era. In the late 1940s, a housing-shortage in Montreal sent war-veterans, led by Labour Progressive Party leader Henri Gagnon, into the city's abandoned gambling dens. There, they protested that the city turn these illegal spaces into legal housing. Gagnon's political affiliation and the particular space of the protest were collapsed by politicians and journalists into a stigmatizing open city scandal: the men involved were labeled as communists and bad fathers for neglecting their families, jobs and the democratic struggle.[85] It is possible that the demands of the squatters fell on deaf ears as the properties were both old (gambling) and new (re-development) sources of income for the city.[86] As support began to turn in favour of the veterans, charges of communist conspiracy were dropped, veterans were moved to homes outside the CBD and the issue transitioned into a more general war to expropriate the city's "slums" for re-development.[87]

And yet, in spite of an alienating moralization, men of varied classes and ethnicity continued to participate together in the wide-open town.[88] Indeed, the sporting-class developed not only in middle- and upper-class spaces such as cabarets and private sports clubs. Boys were educated on the morality of small-time gambling in the backrooms of corner-stores and in residential alleyways; young men learned about courage, audacity and risk in community gyms; bachelors met in "pool rooms, bowling alleys, cigar stands and taverns" for the low-down on their city; and still other men, playing jazz or singing in clubs, contributed directly to the privileged open city as entertainers.[89] Of course, while male-sporting culture allowed for men of marginalized economic and ethnic backgrounds to define themselves as complete, common and unusual ("sportive"), this participation presupposed a homosocial but

85 Fahrni, *Household Politics*, 130. A fictional public opinion piece printed in *The Montreal Gazette* described a citizen labelling the Squatter's Movement as " anti-democratic and prone to "lawless" Communist hijacking". *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 Oct 1946. *The Montreal Gazette*, 29 Oct 1946. Particularly, *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 October 1946.
86 In spite of the city's claim that they had padlocked the building from gambling, when the squatters entered 4509 St-Denis they allegedly found two "employés de la 'barbotte' on the premises. *La Patrie*, 30 October 1946.
87 Note Fahrni, *Household Politics*, 133.
88 I will define the limits of this integration in the following section.
89 For example, Richler describes this corner-store environment in *Son of a Smaller Hero*. Richler, *Son of a Smaller Hero*, 17, 25, 77, 106. The socializing of men of different ethnic backgrounds at gyms during Montreal's mid-twentieth century is evident in the NFB films *Golden Gloves* (1961) and *La Lutte* (1961). Morton, *At Odds*, 87. John Gilmore, *Swinging in Paradise*, 160.

heterosexual hegemony—which brings up a third perceived threat: male homosexuality.

The gay community was coerced before the public to feed a shared obsession of the municipality and press: the discovery of "criminality"—especially amongst the working-class wherein the gay community was more visible.[90] Ross Higgins notes that, unlike other cities with contemporaneously emerging gay communities, Montreal's municipal administration did not target gay meeting places for closing but for repeated self-serving crusades—as with prostitution and gambling.[91] Police arrest quotas were met by the "entrapment" of gay men; and the city went to great lengths to criminalize gay meeting places in the image politics of "nettoyage", such as when the underbrush on Mount-Royal was cleared in 1954 or when extensive raids on gay bars were publicly announced in March 1959.[92] The journaux-jaunes thrived on this criminalization of homosexuality by capturing their readers' attention with sensationalized descriptions of gays as "dépravé", "béstial" and "hugger-muggers".[93] Alongside gambling, prostitution and communism, homosexuality gave Montreal a captivating "openness" that could be manipulated for political and economic ends.

However, the administrative costs involved in "entrapping" gays in Montreal could not be sustained; nor could the journaux jaunes regulate its intended heterosexual readership.[94] Higgins and Chamberland have examined how gays in Montreal were able to turn their legal "delinquency" into a means for mapping their community and claiming a space within the wide-open town on their own terms:

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90 Homosexuality was a crime in Canada until 1969. Higgins, *A Sense of Belonging*, 102. For working-class relation to the gay community and the exploited markers of homosexuality by the middle- and upper-classes see pages 72, 230, 277, 301.

91 Ibid., 192-193.

92 Entrapment tactics involved policemen role-playing as gays so as to get other gay men to produce criminal acts. Ibid., 103, 183-4. For the Drapeau administration, the clearing of Mount-Royal was an attempt to control "[les] pervers et alcooliques". Christine Larose, "Coeur de la ville moderne" *Cité Éducative* (March-April, 1992), 14. Guidon, *Les contestation des espaces*, 64.

93   Jean-Francçois Roberge, *Influence de la presse écrite sur l'émancipation de la communauté gaie Montréalaise au XXe siècle* (MA thesis. UQAM, 2008), 29. *Ici Montréal*, 23 October 1954. *Ici Montréal*, 4 December 1954. Montrose, *The Body on Mount Royal*, 12.

94 Higgins, A *Sense of Belonging*, 104.

> In the days before gay phone lines, with no gay papers listing the cruising spots, it was a major problem for those coming out to simply find the gay world. Here the yellow newspapers played a key role, all the while appearing to attack homosexuality.[95]

The potins, articles and lonely hearts ads in the journaux jaunes functioned as a sort of guide for gays to connect throughout the city—an unprecedented development in Montreal, where the gay community was previously confined to private residences and sailors' bars.[96] For Higgins, the journaux jaunes' mapping of publicly gay spaces, although embedded in a largely homophobic context, "constituait souvent le premier pas symbolique de l'individu dans la construction de son indentité".[97] Furthermore, the very same press could be used by gays (and liberal heterosexuals) as a forum for defending gay rights.[98] It was not long after the 1950s that Montreal's gay community took control of its own press and leisure establishments and began to politicize its own definitions of masculinity.[99]

RACE

In his 2009 appreciation of Al Palmer's *Montreal Confidential,* William Weintraub recounts how Palmer's "ourtown" was primarily "an English-speaking city"—this anglocentrism reinforced by a historic anglo-British economic hegemony over a largely French-Canadian working-class.[100] This colonial dynamic, visually manifested in Montreal by English Westmount and the French-Canadian East-end, lead to popular descriptions of the city as one of "two solitudes", "a fusion of two languages, two outlooks"; and in reminiscences of the 1940s and '50s, the "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte".[101] Montreal's historical situation is more complex: the "open city" or "solitude" binaries are

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95 Higgins and Chamberland, *Mixed Messages*, 429.
96 Ibid., 423.
97 Higgins cited in Roberge, *La presse écrite*, 25.
98 Higgins and Chamberland, *Mixed Messages*, 430. Roberge, *La presse écrite*, 49.
99 Montreal's first gay magazine, *Le Tiers*, appeared in 1971. Roberge, *La presse écrite*, 51. The first bar with gay-ownership was Armand Monroe's Lutèce, established in 1962. Higgins, *A Sense of Belonging*, 294. I realize that this section has not provided an overview of the history of transsexuals in Montreal. The scholarship on this topic is still very small (not to be confused with Gay and Lesbian histories) and has been primarily carried out by Viviane Namaste.
100 Weintraub in Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 11. Straw, *Montreal Confidential*, online. Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Montreal, The Sixties, and the Forming of a Radical Imagination*. PhD thesis. Queen's University (2007), 95.
101 As mentioned earlier, "two solitudes" was popularized in 1945 by novelist Hugh MacLennan. For "a fusion..." see Burrows, *Montreal by Night* (1947).

unstable; the 1940s and '50s saw *imposed* solitudes and *voluntarily* transgression operating simultaneously.

A common academic challenge to these binaries has been the introduction of a "third solitude" to Montreal's twentieth century: Jewish, Irish, Italian, black *et cetera*.[102] Here a different approach will be taken, more in line with the theme of "openness" introduced at the outset of this thesis. Rather than a hierarchy of "solitudes", the privileged concept of "cosmopolitanism" will be interrogated: a sort of closed-openness. Writing of London's "open" Soho district in the early twentieth century Judith Walkowitz observes cosmopolitanism as a "sensory indulgence, privileged mobility, and *worldly command of goods, ideas, and bodies*."[103] Central to both the celebration and fear of open city cosmopolitanism is *race*—and a hegemonic aestheticization and control of it, as with, in an imbricated manner, *class*, *sex* and *gender*. Although Palmer's Montreal, for example, is full of "African acres", "Caprice Chinois", the "fez-adorned", "Harps" and "Canadiens", the varied "characters" of Montreal's open city are often aestheticized as commodified races: as jazz-men, stock-villains, exotic scenery and scandal statistics for an artificial milieu.[104] Individuals of various ethnic backgrounds took part in, and even helped construct, Montreal's open city narratives; however, their place in this city was determined by a white, anglophone, Protestant, bourgeois male understanding of cosmopolitan openness.[105]

After the publication of Martinique-born philosopher Fratz Fanon's *Les Damnés de la Terre*

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102 For discussions of these "third solitudes", see Gerald Tulchinsky, "The third solitude: A. M. Klein's Jewish Montreal, 1910-1950", *Journal of Canadian Studies* vol.19 no.2 (1984); Jean Huntley-Maynard, "English Catholic Education in Quebec: An Annotated Bibliography", *McGill Journal of Education* vol.28. no.1 (1993); Filippo Salvatore, "Discoverism in the Work of Italian-Canadian Historians." in *Writers in transition: the proceedings of the First National Conference of Italian-Canadian Writers*. Dino Minni, ed. (Montreal, 1990). Dorothy Williams, *The Jackie Robinson Myth: Social Mobility and Race in Montreal, 1920-1960*. MA Thesis, Concordia University (1999). The "third solitude" is not only restricted to race, as Podmore considers women on St. Lawrence Boulevard as being part of a "third city". Podmore, *Third City*, 9-10; for the working-class in general as a "third solitude" see the Montreal Labour Council's *Third Solitude* (Montreal, 1965).

103 Walkowitz, *Stepping Out*, 5 (italics mine).

104 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 65, 72, 88, 123-125.

105 And so, this thesis does not agree entirely with Sherry Simon's argument that "from the then of the colonial city [of the 1950s]...to the now of mixed and cosmopolitan Montreal" there has been a linear transition from cultural segregation to a more free diversity, a transgression of the west-east binary. Sherry Simon, *Translating Montreal*, 4.

(1961), young radical Quebecers, particularly in Montreal, read their coming-of-age in the 1940s and '50s as a period of colonial struggle reaching back to Britain's conquest of New France in 1760. Rather than seeing Montreal as an open city, these radical thinkers saw their urban environment as a "colonial city...divided into [fixed] compartments".[106] While French-Canadians had been the city's ethnic majority since 1871, by 1960 many still considered themselves as "cheap-labour" under anglophone control. Among numerous injustices, 94% of homes in the primarily francophone east-end suffered from overcrowding and disrepair; and despite some social mobility in the late-nineteenth century, the annual wage of the *unilingual* anglophone was 37% larger than the *bilingual* francophone.[107] The Anglo-Protestant exploitation of French-Canadians did not stop at economic conditions but, as Sean Mills explains, was inscribed on the urban fabric itself and embedded in the urban experience.[108]

While "French-ness" was an integral element to the presentation of Montreal as an open city, this was derived from a chiefly Anglo-American context. For twentieth century North American travel-writing, English-speaking Canadians and Americans encapsulated Quebec as as "traditional...if not primitive" and imposed the image of the habitant on French-Canadians, even in the face of thoroughly modern Montreal.[109] The Montreal tour-guide of the wide-open town was an anglophone navigation of a culturally (mis)appropriated "little Paris".

There is little wonder that the Montreal-noir were not written by francophone writers, that they never starred francophone heroes and that French-Canadian pulp-fiction almost always took place *outside* of Montreal. In the 1940s and '50s, Montreal's francophone poets frequently raised the issue of a paradoxical illegibility/innavigability of a city that was dominantly francophone in population. As

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106 Mills, *Empire Within,* 92. A similar sentiment is observed in Louis-Georges Carrier's 1958 short-film *Au bout de ma rue*, wherein a poor child of the Montreal's francophone east-end escapes his towering, fenced-in backyard in the hope of exploring his city. After spending a day watching the ships at the harbour, the boy is reprimanded by a policeman who ushers him back home. The film ends as the boy stares up once again at the towering fence of his obstructed freedom.
107 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 170, 179.
108 Mills, *Empire Within,* 96.
109 Neatby, *Meeting of Minds*, 467, 471, 482-483.

Gaston Miron expresses in his 1955 poem "Monologues de l'aliénation délirante":

> ...je suis dans la ville, opulente/ la grande St. Catherine Street galope et claque/ dans les Mille et une nuits des néons/ moi je gis, muré dans la boîte crânienne/ dépoétisé dans ma langue et mon appartenance/ déphasé et décentré dans ma coïncidence/ ravageur je fouille ma mémoire et mes chairs/ jusqu'en les maladies de la tourbe et de l'être/ pour trouver la trace de mes signes arrachés emportés/ pour reconnaître mon cri dans l'opacité du réel...[110]

This was entirely the opposite urban experience as felt by Anglophone writers like Morley Callaghan, Irving Layton, A.M. Klein, Miriam Waddington and the Montreal-noir novelists, all of whom indulged in many a literary tour of the city's high and low, English and French.[111] William Weintraub notes that at this time "English signs outside stores gave downtown Montreal an almost completely English face".[112] Even the ville ouverte demanded a lexicon populated with anglicisms (with the exception of "barbotte"), framing the eroticization of the city's "French-ness" within an anglophone gaze. Just as "Knowing English was the entrance into Montreal's more lucrative, white-collar jobs" across the city, knowing English and Anglo-North American popular culture was the entrance into Montreal's open city.[113]

In almost vaudevillian "black-face", anglo-Montrealers did not portray French-Canadians so much as nefarious as childishly naive, bumbling, colourful, humourous and primitive. Describing a "hearty, young French-Canadian" in *The Body on Mount Royal*, Westmount detective Russel Teed observes: "He had short legs and long arms and trunk, and walked with a roll, sort of like an ape...He had a hard, pasty face the colour of unbaked bread and the consistency of a cemetery headstone," a

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110 Gaston Miron, "Monologue de l'aliénation délirante", *Embers and Earth: Selected poems*. Douglas G. Jones, Marc Plourde, trans. (Montreal, 1984).

111 Robert Schartzwald sees in the Mount Royal lookout at the opening of Callaghan's *The Many Coloured Coat* (1960), a "celebratory affect [that] is hard to come by in writing about the city in French." Schwartzwald, *Montréal By Night*, 81. Compare Miron's words above, for example, with the very calculated gaze of Klein: "from the parapet make out/ beneath the green marine/ the discovered road, the hospital's romantic/ gables and roofs, and all the civic Euclid/...making its way to the sought point, his home." Klein "Lookout: Mount Royal" [1948], *The Collected Poems of A.M. Klein*. Miriam Waddington, ed. (Toronto, 1974).

112 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 180.

113 Ibid., 171-172.

description not out of the ordinary.[114] Neither heroes nor villains in the wide-open town, French-Canadians were one agentless visual/aural signifier of Montreal's cosmopolitanism. Growing up in this milieu, future FLQ leader Pierre Vallières felt himself justified in the controversial claim that French-Canadians were being treated as the "white niggers of America" (which he employed as the English title for his 1968 History *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*). At a time when the black Civil Rights Movement was so visible in American media, Vallières considered Quebec and Montreal to be unique, in that here "il n'y a pas, au Québec, de '*problème noir*'", but rather French-Canadian segregation.[115]

And yet a 1956 article in the left-leaning newspaper *Vrai* called attention to "Noirs mal reçus dans certains hôtels et restaurants de Montréal.—Sur 6,000 Noirs montréalais, aucun n'est policier, facteur, employé de tramway...[116] Vallières statement above, that there was no "*problème noir*" in Quebec is part of what Dorothy Williams termed "The Jackie Robinson Myth": that "Despite the fact that Blacks were poverty stricken, constrained to live mainly in one area, and to work in ghettoized service sectors, there was a prevailing belief that the Blacks of Montreal were better treated than Blacks elsewhere."[117] One of the greatest misconceptions about blacks in Montreal is their supposed homogeneity. The most prominent generalization involves collapsing black Canadian history with that of Canadian jazz or sports. One receives a superficial reading of the black Montreal experience when, for example, white Jazz pianist Billy Georgette claims "The wonderful thing about the people of Quebec: they were open to music and entertainment and they found these black musicians and entertainers absolutely wonderful". Likewise, in both Palmer and Weintraub's popular histories on the Montreal's open city era, the place of black Montrealers is relegated to clubs and the sports arena.[118] As

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114 Montrose, *The Body on Mount Royal*, 47. As McGill educated John Riordan describes police officer Labelle's voice in Brian Moore's *Wreath for a Redhead*: "...the voice he used was one I hadn't heard before. It was low and it reeked of servility. It made me sick." Moore, *Wreath for a Redhead*, 30. Palmer writes of French-Canadians who "gesticulated with *habitant* enthusiasm" Palmer, *Sugar-Puss*, 17. For more on the *habitant* stereotype, see Neatby, *Meeting of Minds*.
115 Pierre Vallières, *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*. (Montreal, 1968), 26.
116 *Vrai*, 10 March 1956.
117 Williams, *The Jackie Robinson Myth*, 6. Jackie Robinson was the first African-American to break the "colour line" in Major League Baseball after being signed to the Montreal Royals in 1946.
118 David Eng, dir. *Burgundy Jazz: Life and Music in Little Burgundy*. CBC/CMF, 2013. online exhibition

elsewhere in the world, it was not uncommon for white Montreal writers and filmmakers of the era to exploit the black body to express sexual-power and (middle-class) counter-conduct or cosmopolitanism —often framed by visual and aural jazz markers.[119] While jazz was integral to the North American black experience, it has often been used to aestheticize black urban life.

The notion that blacks were somehow free from racism in Montreal partly stemmed from remarks made by black entertainers who traveled to Montreal during the Prohibition era, finding discrimination to be more "hidden" there, as well as from the city's white jazz enthusiasts who, by visiting black clubs, saw themselves as cosmopolitan despite their ignorance of the Montreal black community's ethnic, linguistic and occupational make-up. Williams notes three different black populations living in Montreal during the 1940s and '50s: American, West Indian and Canadian—all of whom possessed different educational backgrounds and job opportunities.[120] Black American entertainers looking to Montreal for work helped represent St. Antoine as a black space, catering by nightclubs, gambling joints, and prostitution rings in the area "to the monied White spenders".[121] In promoting open city Montreal, Saint-Antoine was encapsulated as "Montreal's Harlem" where, assures Palmer, "Unlike New York's Harlem, Whites are rarely molested..."[122]

"Every nation has a street in Montreal" sings an elderly Irish resident of Point St. Charles in Robert Duncan's documentary *The Point*. Encapsulated ethnic geographies, wherein the allegedly

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<http://jazzpetitebourgognedoc.radio-canada.ca/en> [date accessed: 3 June 2014]. Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 65-71. For Weintraub, despite his conscious division of Montreal social-groups according to language (English, French, Jewish), all of these groups are, by varying degrees, "white". Black Montrealers like Rufus Rockhead and Oscar Peterson are mentioned in the context of jazz and nightlife rather than a clearly present Black Montreal community. A very telling moment of this illusion is displayed in *September 5 at Saint-Henri,* where the narrator announces: Saint-Henri has its Negro community. But you won't find much conscious segregation. Children don't know the meaning of the word"—as if "children", the working-class and the city's Black population were interchangeable. See this chapter's earlier section on "class".

119 This is evident in the works of Richler, Callaghan, Cohen, Souster, Layton, Dudek to name a few. Robin Winks, *Blacks in Canada: A History.* (Montreal, 1997), 519. Note the change in music from chanson to jazz when discussing the "Negro community" in the NFB film *À Saint-Henri le cinq septembre* (1962).

120 "Black Canadians were actually a minority group, with little economic power and considered socially inferior by West Indian and American Blacks". Williams, *Jackie Robinson Myth*, 30.

121 Ibid., 34.

122 Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 70.

"delinquent" populations of French (of the east end) Irish (of St. Patrick), Chinese (of Lower St. Lawrence), Eastern Europeans (of St. Lawrence), and blacks (of St. Antoine) lived and worked, were integral to making Montreal's open city both sinful and cosmopolitan for its privileged white participants. Suzanne Morton notes that while open city leisure (gambling, prostitution, drinking) appeared across class, gender and racial boundaries, "influential representatives of 'old Canada' associated specific ethnic minorities, such as Chinese, Jews, and African and French Canadians" with vice.[123] Traversing economically determined geographies, privileged whites could only operate their "spectacular-gaze" if a distance could be put between them and "the others". In the allegedly "sophisticated", "cosmopolitan" and "open" Montreal of the 1940s and '50s, the invisible walls of carceral racism rose high.

While it is true that the mid twentieth century saw unprecedented social mobility for Montreal's French-Canadian, Italian, Jewish and Irish populations, it was still a city of limited or privileged mobility for those in the hierarchy of "white-ness".[124] Morley Callaghan complicates Montreal's "open city" representation in his 1951 *The Loved and the Lost*, wherein two middle-class whites, Peggy Sanderson and Jim McAlpine debate the validity of each other's presence in the black jazz clubs of Saint-Antoine. A black musician from the novel, Mr. Wagstaff, observes Peggy's affection for the black community as privileged exoticism:

> Soon I see her [Peggy] floating around the neighborhood. I see her coming around the other joints, sitting around the little taverns where we sit sometimes, or I see her stopping on the street with some of my boys, or some kid, or some porter or some little old guy, and she's giving them the treatment.[125]

Peggy's ability to traverse boundaries and mingle with the Saint-Antoine black community was not reciprocal. While black club owners like Rufus Rockhead ushered whites into his Paradise, "many white club owners uptown...made black patrons feel distinctly unwelcome, if they didn't refuse them

123 Morton, *At Odds*, 72.
124 Germain and Rose, *Quest*, 223-229.
125 Morley Callaghan, *The Loved and the Lost* [1951] (Toronto, 1993), 103.

entry altogether."[126] As Eric Adams observes in his recounting of the dismissed 1936-1939 case and

appeal Christie v. York—in which Verdun resident Fred Christie was denied service at the Montreal

Forum's York Tavern because of the colour of his skin—freedom of movement in the open city was a

white privilege:

> the "taverns down on St. Antoine" [were not] the York Tavern of Ste Catherine. Black
> was not "extraordinarily black."...Perhaps most importantly, a summer Saturday night
> on the eve of a boxing tournament featuring a local Black boxer was not a winter hockey
> game involving the Canadiens or the Maroons. Such facts mattered intimately to the
> informal soft law of inclusion and exclusion as practised in the streets, the stadiums,
> and taverns of Montreal.[127]

Similarly, while whites frequently descended upon Chinatown—whether for dining, gambling or, as in

the Montreal-noir, a tying-together of the "unintelligible city"—Chinese Montrealers rarely felt

welcome at dances, community meetings and other social functions.[128] Like black Montrealers

economically confined to railroad and domestic work, Chinese Montrealers in the mid twentieth

century

> found themselves blocked from access to all job opportunities in the mainstream labour
> market. They were first coerced into, and then confined for decades in, the personal
> service sector, or more precisely, in the "ethnic enclave sub-economy".[129]

> Longtime Chinese resident of Montreal, "Uncle Jack" recounts how newspapers and politicians

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126 Gilmore, *Swinging in Paradise*, 167. *Vrai*, 2 April 1955. Weintraub, *City Unique*, 129.

127 Eric Adams, "Errors in Fact and Law: Race, Space, and Hockey in *Christie v. York*" *The African Canadian Legal Odyssey: Historical Essays*. Barrington Walker, ed. (Toronto, 2012), 343-344. It was not until 1963, with the amendment of the Quebec Hotels Act, that this "soft law" could be combated with unambiguous legal recourse. See Section 8 of Quebec Hotels Act: "No owner or keeper of a hotel, restaurant or camping ground shall directly or through his agent or a third party: (a). refuse to provide any person or class of persons with lodging, food or any other services offered to the public in the establishment, or (b). exercise any discrimination to the detriment of any person or class of persons as regards lodging, food or any other service offered to the public in the establishment, *because of the race, belief, colour, nationality, ethnic origin or place of birth of such person or class of persons*." "Quebec-1963: Amendment to HOTELS ACT", *Some Missing Pages: The Black Community In The History of Quebec And Canada*. <http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/curriculum/social_sciences/features/missingpages/> [date accessed: 16 July 2014] (italics mine).

128 Uncle Jack interviewed in Kwok Bun Chan, *Smoke and Fire: The Chinese in Montreal*. (Hong Kong, 1991), 132. For an article on Chinese Montrealers being denied service at Catholic churches see *Vrai*, 12 March 1955. Note the description of Chinatown in Palmer's *Sugar-Puss*, "The night was unbearably warm and it seemed every resident of Montreal's Chinatown sat outside their dingy stores or on the balconies of their equally dismal homes. The street was a myriad of signs. Chinese characters spelled out restaurant names. Papers were pasted on the brick walls and served as newspapers. Black clad figures shuffled in and out of the many cafes and gambling places." Palmer, *Sugar-Puss*, 112.

129 Chan, *Smoke and Fire*, 172.

often distorted the geography and activities of Chinatown, noting that "if someone gambled, they [the newspapers] would write that if you go to Chinatown, there will be someone there who will butcher you."[130] Misrepresentation by the media was also felt deeply by Montreal's Jewish community. Aside from blaming Americans for the strength of "la pègre" in Montreal, Plante frequently targeted Italians and Eastern European Jews.[131] It was not uncommon that Jews were targeted for the dissemination of immoral literature, for participating in gambling or for simply living in "squalor".[132] Although many famous gamblers, gangsters and nightclub owners were Jewish, the community was wide-spread geographically and socially, giving upper-class individuals like David Schwartz no affection for the idiosyncrasies presented by the media and even working-class Jewish writers like Mordecai Richler.[133]

It is tempting to imagine that ethnic minorities were united in their struggle against an Anglo-Saxon hegemony; this was not the case. As with Foucault's comment on class-warfare, that "There aren't immediately given subjects of the struggle...We all fight each other", so does racism lack a comprehensible binary of "us *vs* them".[134] In 1964 Jacques Godbout considered it inconceivable that French-Canadians held a privileged position in the social hegemony of Montreal—who *were* they exploiting, he jested, "des esquimos?"[135] Analogously, this was only too true: if not "des esquimos", did not the peoples who inhabited the island of Montreal before the founding of Ville-Marie have "their own claims of colonization"?[136] Later, the country's First Nations' peoples were excluded from the "modern" open city imaginary by both the English and French through the substitution of actual peoples for a primitive emotional state of "Indian-ness". A telling example is found at the opening of *The Body on Mount Royal*, when Montreal is described in the following pseudo-ethnographic manner:

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130 Uncle Jack interviewed Chan, *Smoke and Fire,* 137.
131 Morton, *At Odds*, 117. Brodeur, *la délinquence de l'ordre*, 156.
132 Ibid., 117, 118. *Relations,* 23 March 1943. Mordecai Richler, *The Street*, 31-33.
133 Morton, *At Odds*, 118.
134 Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh" in *Power/Knowledge*, 208.
135 Godbout cited in Mills, *Empire Within*, 87.
136 Mills, *Empire Within,* 87.

"the place is still full of Indians. Low life, high life, all around the town, we got Indians. Not Red. White."[137]

French-Canadian antisemitism also abounded in the war years, with many an anti-conscription rally ending with youths rioting to the chant of "A bas les Juifs!"—not to mention, in the post-war years, the singling out of "Jewish gangsterism" during the ville ouverte scandal.[138] Conversely, as Richler recounts in his story "The Main", "We [Jews] fought the French Canadians stereotype for stereotype," taunting, especially, with the terms "pea soup" and "schwartz".[139] One common stereotype in Montreal's open city era was that of labelling Eastern Europeans as potential communist threats— particularly made clear in police chief Langlois' targeting of "undesirable" ethnic Montrealers in 1951.[140] Distinct by skin-colour and language, Chinese Montrealers felt the hurt of racism, both verbal and physical, from "all nationalities", recounts Liang Wozuo.[141] Not only were the Chinese often type-cast as communist spies in the Montreal-noir and Freanch roman-policier; but, as Kwok Bun Chan has shown through her excellent interviews in *Smoke and Fire*, Chinese Montrealers were harassed both on the street and at work, tragically submitting to the fear that "When you do not speak English [or French], you cannot report anything."[142]

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137 Montrose, *The Body on Mount Royal*, 11. Even socially-minded poets like John Glassco did not escape the appropriation of first nations' imagery to represent a certain sinfulness in an urban landscape that excluded the presence of these peoples. Writing of the squalor of industrial Montreal he exclaims: "But O/ Redskins/...our skies have now the colour/ Of the smoke of your pipes of peace." Glassco, *Montreal*. Also note the repeated references to Montreal as "Ville-Marie" during the ville ouverte campaign, associating moral Montrealers with the Christian missionaries of New France and immoral Montrealers with "les sauvages". Such a reading could be applied to the propaganda piece "Chicago ou Ville-Marie?" Comité de Moralité Publique fonds. Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, P47/J7.

138 "Les articles de Pacifique Plante et les révélations de l'enquête Caron allaient monter en épingle auprès de l'opinion publique canadienne-française la part que prenaient des ressortissants de groupes ethniques comme les Italiens (Mme Bisante) ou les Juifs (Mme Katz) au commerce de la prostitution." Brodeur, *la délinquence de l'ordre*, 156.

139 "Richler, "The Main" in *The Street*, 63. This is not to say that English Montrealers were incapable of antisemitism. In fact, as Weintraub argues the "English equivalent was silent, subtle and, in practice, more destructive." Weintraub, *City Unique*, 201.

140 In particular those associated the United Jewish People's Order, Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, Federation of Russian Canadians and Finnish Organization of Canada. *The Manitoba Ensign,* 19 May 1951.

141 "They (those who were racist to the Chinese) were all nationalities. The blacks were the worst, along with the Italians. The French were not so bad. The blacks were wilder and had no class. They would hit too. That was not good." Liang Wozuo interviewed in Chan, *Smoke and Fire,* 93.

142 Fang Zhoushi recalls that "When my children...were small, they [the French] would laugh at them and yell, "Ching, Ching, Ching"; and Xu Xiuhua, that "Where we worked, there were children who were very bad. When they were coming home from school, they would throw snow at our clothes lines". Ibid., 44, 48, 93.

Montreal's marginalized ethnic communities were not without agency. While cosmopolitanism remained a white privilege in the 1940s and '50s, the so-called ethnic "delinquents" and "threats" that the "cosmopolitan Montrealer" rubbed up against broke open the encapsulating open city experience from within. For example, Morton observes how "gambling...often had an economic role in marginal ethnic communities, allowing some individuals to make money when racism or anti-Semitism barred other avenues".[143] In particular, Jewish and Chinese gamblers saw Montreal's illegal economy as an opportunity to become socially mobile or even "improve one's status."[144] In *Son of a Smaller Hero*, Richler's protagonist, Noah, is entranced by the ethnicities and politics that mix in the city's livelier taverns, noting that only there can be found "red girls in green dresses, pink men in blue suits, and brown girls in yellow dresses."[145] While most open city activities occurred in homo-cultural gatherings, the establishments that housed these activities allowed for all kinds of potential social mixing.[146] Sean Mills has given some attention to this, arguing that while captivating the interest of the visiting tourist, cafés and nightclubs also constituted "alternative spaces...where culturally marginalized anti-conformist thinkers could congregate."[147] One exciting development in such alternative spaces in the 1940s and '50s was the formation of jazz bands wherein members came from various ethnic backgrounds.[148] In the *Herald*'s "Cabaret Circuit" Al Palmer often wrote of Lou Metcalf's "Jam Session", a multi-cultural group described in the following positive (if but somewhat sensationalized) manner:

> Metcalfe is half Cherokee-half Negro. The trombone player, Butch Watanake, is a
> Japanese Canadian. The violin player (rated the town's top fiddler) is Willie Gerard,
> a French-Canadian...[and] Harold 'Steep' Wade at the piano...is from the West Indies.[149]

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143 Morton, *At Odds*, 109.
144 Ibid., 199, 121. Liang Wozuo interviewed in Chan, *Smoke and Fire*, 99-100.
145 Richler, *Son of a Smaller Hero*, 66-67.
146 Morton, *At Odds*, 11.
147 Mills, Empire Within, 100-104.
148 Gilmore, *Swinging in Paradise*, 123.
149 *The Herald*, Jan 16 1948.

While it would not be until the 1960s and 70s that Montreal would birth visible, militantly left-wing groups (*e.g. Partis Pris* and the *FLQ*) promoting counter-conduct against an Anglo-Saxon hegemony, the privileged cosmopolitan experience of the open city era exposed the invisible walls of the city's diverse ethnic ghettos: inspiring a curiosity and appreciation as well as a fear and anger that remains present even today.

CONCLUSION: "MONTREAL, WHO ARE YOU?"

> Marcel: It never finishes. The life of a city never ends.
> (Proposed scenario for "Ballet of a Great City")

Our past influences our present and our present influences our past—at least, the remembrance of our past. This is particularly true for the historical discipline, a *present* interpretation of *past* events achieved through narration and plot-structure.[1] Montreal's "wide-open town" of the 1940s was not superseded by that of the "ville ouverte" in the '50s, and later closed to vice by the election of Jean Drapeau as mayor in 1954; nor was the open city closed with a continent-wide movement for municipal/moral reform and state-modernization; nor by a shifting of cultural trends. Likewise, this is not to say that Montreal was not at all "open" or that it was conversely "closed" and carceral. The "open city" was a mid twentieth century North American discursive formation: an urban imaginary and, at the same time, an array of tools which produced real, regulatory social effects. It is also one of many narrative-frames through which Montreal is perceived, mnemonically, assumptively and imaginatively as an encapsulated city endowed with unique "openness".[2] However, it is only very recently, with scholars like Mathieu Lapointe, Will Straw, Anouk Bélanger and Suzanne Morton that Montreal's open city era has come to be seen as more "natural", in the neo-liberal sense, than unique.

For English- and French-speaking historians alike, a "revisionist" trend amongst academics in Quebec, beginning in the 1970s, placed the complexity of Montreal's history in an inferior position to the "normal" processes of modernity—urbanization, industrialization and modernization.[3] Depending on one's politics (for revisionism did not equal separatism), these historians looked at the history of

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1 Hayden White, "The Politics of Historical Interpretation: Discipline and De-Sublimation", *Critical Inquiry* vol.9 no.1 (September 1982), 116.

2 Monique LaRue and Jean-François Chassay have an interesting book titled *Promenades littéraires dans Montréal*, in which the various narrative-frames of Montreal literature are exposed on the table of contents: Ville insulaire, Ville française, Ville américane, Ville religieuse, Ville cosmopolite, Ville portuaire, Ville bilingue, Montréal disparue, Montréal nocturne, Montréal Ville ouverte *et cetera*... As I have been arguing in this paper, these narrative-frames are not exclusive to fiction but also shape the literature of history. See table of contents in Monique LaRue and Jean-François Chassay, *Promenades littéraires dans Montréal*. (Montreal, 1989).

3 Ronald Rudin, "Revisionism and the search for a normal society: A critique of recent Quebec historical writing", *Canadian Historical Review* vol.73 no.1 (1992), 32-33.

Montreal within the broader context of a (Western) metropolitan and/or (Quebec) nationalist history. While allowing for more structural and theoretical approaches to historical analysis, the revisionist "march towards modernity" overlooked or generalized particular historical events, like that of open city reform in Montreal; the issue of morality and the religious associations championing it, or the issue of municipal corruption and instability, suggested an anti-modern backwardness.[4] The revisionists nearly turned a blind-eye towards the 1940s and '50s, labelling it *la grande noirceur*, before and after which could be positioned more important modern historical moments for Québec, such as the "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960s or the city's industrialization in the late nineteenth century.[5]

However, it appears that leading up to the 1995 Quebec referendum, as old wounds held by the province's two dominant linguistic communities were forced open, the discursive formation of Montreal's open city—particularly its character of openness and narrative of nettoyage—showed some re-purposed life. The wide-open town and ville ouverte, products of mid twentieth century media and governance, were re-employed in the late twentieth century to endow Montreal with a mythology, a body of stories, distinct from that of Canada or Quebec.[6] In the space between Canadian federalism and Québec separatism, Jean-Sébastien Barriault locates the construction of a "post-nationalist" Montréalité: an identity that is urban and cosmopolitan.[7] Ian McKay argues that while post-modern

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4   Ronald Rudin, *Making History in Twentieth Century Québec* (Toronto, 1997), 199. Moreover, the narrative of Jean Drapeau's rise to power, while initially suggesting a 'nettoyage' of 'backwards' municipal politics in the 1940s and early '50s, was compromised by Drapeau's "dictatorial" politics, perhaps preventing the period's integration into the revisionist history of modernization. See Lapointe, *Le comité de moralité publique*, 3-4.

5   Donald Cuccioletta and Martin Lubin, "The Quebec Quiet Revolution: A Noisy Evolution." *Quebec Studies* vol.36 no.1 (2003), 128. Jocelyn Létourneau is perhaps the first scholar to write of the ideology behind finding "appropriate subjects" for Quebec history: that "ideas of backwardness, retarded or blocked development, withdrawal and self-absorption, enclavement...uniqueness, clericalism and anti-statism, an ethnic class, and *la grande noiceur*...are inappropriate for describing the structuring and structural dynamics of the Quebec historical experience as a whole." Jocelyn Létourneau, *Passer À L'Avenir: Histoire, mémoire, identité dans le Québec d'aujourd'hui*. Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scot, trans. (Montreal, 2004), 129.

6   In 1996, Canada-day festivities organizer Roopnarine Singh established a partitionist organization "Movement for the 11th Province" which sought to endow Montreal with provincial-status. Singh's movement did not go unnoticed, nor was it without historical precedent. At the height of post-Expo 67 frenzy, Bruno Signori proposed "Option Montreal": a separation from Quebec, considering Montreal, under Drapeau, more "cosmopolitan" and accomplished than the rest of the province. *Toronto Star*, 13 February 1996. *The Montreal Gazette*, 25 February 1969.

7   Jean-Sébastien Barriault, *De la Montréalité: l'émergence de Montréal comme lieu de référence* (M.A. Thesis, Laval, 2007), 59.

communities tend to be incredulous towards nationalist meta-narratives, nostalgia, and the idea of a

Golden Age, remains one means to make the "chaotic depthelessness of contemporary life" more

coherent.[8] While Montréalité had various catalysts in 1995—the "traumatic" social decline of white,

Protestant anglophones, the allophone relation to the rest of Quebec, French-Canadian nationalist

disillusionment, an economic interest in strengthening Montreal's touristic identity—at its core was a

profound attachment to Montreal and its status as a "city unique".[9]

McKay remarks that "human experience, at both an individual and social level, has a narrative

character, and consequently so do most attempts to portray it".[10] Socially, politically and economically,

reviving Montreal's open city narratives—and with these, notions of Montrealers' claims to

cosmopolitanism, urbanity, spectacle and power—became a defining feature and origin-point of

Montréalité in the 1990s. Between 1960 and 1996, Alain Stanké and Jean-Louis Morgan's *Pax: Lutte à*

finir avec la pègre (1972) and Pierre de Champlain's *Le crime organisé à Montréal, 1940-1980* (1986)

were the only texts to deal with Montreal's open city history at length—the former, a series of

journalistic interviews with Pacifique Plante, echoing *Montréal sous le règne de la pègre* (*MSRP*); the

latter, a specialist's history in the questionable true crime genre. Since the early 1990s, and particularly

around the years of heated separatist debate, a flourishing of entertainment media, tourist promotion,

commemorative events and historical scholarship with a spotlight on Montreal's uniqueness, including

the Golden Age of the open city, has become evident.

According to Régine Robin, author of *Le Québecoite*, Montréalité demands the ability to live in

a "ville schizophrène—patchwork linguistique", making the detective-gaze, that transgressive unifier of

separate and isolated parts, all the more integral to the re-deployment of the open city in Montreal.[11]

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8   Ian McKay, "History and the Tourist Gaze: The Politics of Commemoration in Nova Scotia, 1935-1964", *Acadiensis*
     vol.22 no.2 (Spring 1993), 103.
9   Barriault, *De la Montréalité,* 59-62.
10   McKay, *History and the Tourist Gaze*, 104.
11   Robin cited in Barriault, *De la Montréalité*, 62.

A desire to once again comprehend the "divided city" through a detective-gaze can be seen in the large output of Montreal crime-thrillers in the 1990 and 2000s and the recent re-publication of '50s Montreal-noir.[12] Moreover, it is in the wake of the 1995 Quebec referendum that two seminal popular-histories were published on the topic of Montreal's open city era: William Weintraub's *City Unique* (1996) and Daniel Proulx's *Le Red Light de Montréal* (1997). Weintraub and Proulx's histories are indebted to the open city narrative-genre developed in the 1940s and '50s discussed in this thesis. Both texts single-out Montreal as a special case in relation to both Canada and Quebec and may be presently determining our perception, relation and assumed inheritance of Montreal's mid twentieth century.

Visually, *City Unique* follows many of the conventions of open city literature previously discussed in Chapter 1. Starting with the book-cover: the reader is presented with (in the hardcover) a canted-angle collage of dramatic urban images, or (in the paperback) the lone figure of Lili St-Cyr superimposed upon a red background—much like the female figure on the cover of Martin Brett's *Hot Freeze*. Proceeding to the text itself, the reader will notice the considerable influence of the ourtowners in Weintraub's mapping of the city. The contents-page, as in Al Palmer's *Montreal Confidential* or the potins of the journaux jaunes, segregates the city into a certain order: Politics, Show Business, Novelists, English, French, Jews *et cetera*.[13] Significantly, the book opens as a tour-guide: King George VI and Queen Elizabeth's 1939 Royal Tour stop in Montreal. Weintraub follows the Royal Tour and along the way assigns his historical actors of various ethnic and class backgrounds to particular geographical areas. An aestheticization of the city takes place and the reader is introduced to the communist of Outremont, the "*pure laine*" of St. Hubert Street and the sailor getting "inexpensively drunk" on "'the Main'—Montreal's tenderloin".[14]

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12 While there had been eleven Montreal crime-thrillers in the '70s and nine in the '80s, publication numbers rose again in the '90s to twenty titles. These were all English language novels.

13   The full chapter titles reveal an even greater debt to Palmer's punchy rhetoric—*e.g.* "Show Business: Lili St.Cyr's Town—and Al's and Oscars'", "English Spoken Here: Above the Tracks, Below the Tracks", "The French: From a Grain of Mustard Seed", "A Third Solitude: The Jews".

14   Weintraub, *City Unique*, 5-6, 8.

True to the ourtowner voice of Palmer (whom Weintraub idolized), *City Unique* is a book of secrets, of back-room conversations and privileged urban exploration.[15] This is not to say that it is a book of lies, but that it is a narrative particularly novelistic in presentation, "a complex gloss on the word meanwhile", the filling-in of historical-gaps so as to reach a clear *telos* and, with it, a comprehension of his object: "Montreal days and nights in the 1940s and '50s".[16] *City Unique* is Weintraub's emulation of Palmer's low down on the big town but raised to the quasi-academic status of a popular history.

In a 1998 scholarly book review, Jean-Ignace Olazabal judged *City Unique* to be "pas exactement ce qu'on pourrait appeler un livre d'histoire [mais]...un *voyage* dans un temps *fascinant*".[17] The open city thematic of "voyage" (*e.g.* the ritual mountain descent discussed in Chapter 1) or "adventure" (*e.g.* American municipal reform rhetoric discussed in Chapter 2) upon which Weintraub relies, tells the reader more about his anglophone, white, middle-class relation to Montreal than it does about the city itself. Similarly, the birth of Montreal's "cosmopolitanism", which Weintraub locates in the 1940s, is somewhat troubling; Judith Walkowitz elsewhere argues that a "world-view" like cosmopolitanism is "a bourgeois male pleasure. It established a right to the city—a right not traditionally available to, often not even part of, the imaginative repertoire of the less advantaged."[18] Sharing in Weintraub's voyeurism of the city from afar (temporally and socially), other white, middle-class critics like John Gray proclaimed upon the publication of *City Unique*

> [Weintraub] has *constructed* an engaging and useful *portrait* of the city, French, English, and Jewish, all with their own *enviable* riches and *wretched* poverty, their own cultural brilliance, their *saints* and their *sinners*.[19]

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15 In the "appreciation" to the 2009 re-print of Montreal Confidential, Weintraub writes of Palmer, "Back in those days, in the late 1940s, I used to look at Al Palmer with awe and envy. Al Palmer was a star—a journalist with a column, a friend of celebrities, a man who knew all of Montreal's secrets". Palmer, *Montreal Confidential*, 9.

16 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 30.

17 Jean-Ignace Olazabal, "Weintraub, William. City Unique. Montreal Days and Nights in the 1940s and '50s." *Canadian Jewish Studies* vol. 6 (1998), 140 (italics mine).

18 Paraphrase of Richard Sennett in Judith Walkowitz. *City of Dreadful Delight: narratives of danger in late-Victorian London.* (London: 1992), 16.

19 *The Globe and Mail*, 14 December 1996.

In Chapter 1, Ernest Mandel was quoted regarding the ideology of the crime novel, a sub-genre of the open city narrative-genre: of "disorder being brought into order". One may argue that Weintraub's generalized aesthetization towards historical comprehension has an interest in the preservation of English-Montreal's social order. This places *City Unique* not only in league with the ideological interests of the Montreal-noir, but also with an entire historical genre of anglophone-Montreal loss and lore, including: *The Lure of Montreal* (1945), *Lost Montreal* (1975), and *Montreal Yesterdays* (1969, 1989) amongst others. Of the 1940s and '50s, Weintraub claims that they "were years of ferment. They saw the growth of a sophistication", and that for "many Montrealers, the sort who considered themselves worldly...the fact that their city was famous for being sinful" was a source of pride.[20] An overview of Weintraub's other creative outputs, which include a memoir and novel on journalism in the 1950s (*Why Rock the Boat* (1961), *Getting Started* (2001)), a historical-fiction on cabaret-culture (*Crazy About Lili* (2005)), a dystopian novel and play on marginalized anglophones in Québec (*The Underdogs* (1979, 1998)), and a film titled *The Rise and Fall of English Montreal* (1993), cements this feeling of loss and makes the ideology behind *City Unique* all the more pronounced, especially in the wake of the 1995 Quebec referendum.[21] While not a book on moral reform in Montreal specifically, providing a moralization for the wide-open town is central to *City Unique*.

Proulx's *Le Red Light* is similar to *City Unique* primarily in style, suggesting again the study of an open city product rather than the complex social relations of the city's mid twentieth century. Half-way through Proulx's text, his history of the Red-Light proper ends—allowing for an examination of the Caron Commission and the aftermath of Drapeau's 1954 election, therefore collapsing the imaginary *ville ouverte* and material Red-Light district. As with *City Unique*, the cover of *Le Red Light*

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20 Weintraub, *City Unique*, 3, 86.

21 As remarked by Charles Foran in his review of City Unique, "Call my reaction post-referendum, but William Weintraub's account of the life and times of Montreal during its heyday reads like a sweet dream" Charles Foran, "Weintraub, William. City Unique. Montreal Days and Nights in the 1940s and '50s." *Quill and Quire* (1996) <http://www.quillandquire.com/reviews/review.cfm?review_id=694> [date accessed: 4 Apr, 2014].

plays into the open city narrative-genre developed in the mid twentieth century. The reader is presented

with Saint Catherine street at night, glowing in doctored neon. An association between "Montreal" (as

the Red-Light district) and "night" is offered to the reader when, in fact, this geographic area was

"temporally divided for different people and different practices at different moments".[22] Moreover, the

image itself belongs to those stock-images of Montreal which circulated locally and internationally

throughout the late 1940s and '50s, after the publication of "Morality Squad" in the *Standard*.[23]

Harkening to the confidential genre, *Le Red Light* commences: "Amsterdam, Londres, New York:

toutes les grandes villes portuaires du monde ont donné naissance à des quartiers interlopes. Montréal

n'a pas échappé à la règle."[24]

Proulx also employs in *Le Red Light* a dramatic language resembling that of Plante and Pelletier

in *MSRP*. Writing of the Red-Light scandal in the 1940s, Plante describes a "*spectacle*...[dont]

j'occupais donc un *fauteuil aux première loges*, avec *vue* non seulement *sur la scène* mais aussi bien

dans les coulisses de la Cour du Recorder, du départment de la Police et de l'Hôtel de Ville."[25] For his

part, Proulx, covering the outcome of Plante's exploits decades later, carries on the metaphor of the

theatre:

> Le *rideau* tombe lentement sur le Red Light quand les *projecteurs* de l'actualité se
> déplacent vers une salle de notre Palais de justice où une juge et des procureurs ont
> revêtu pour la circonstance la toge inquisitoriale.[26]

"Caravane," "bas-fonds" ('lower-depths'), "projecteurs", "rue en quête d'un auteur"—as with Plante,

Proulx's dramatic language creates a voyeuristic distance between the reader and its object.[27]

Interestingly, referring to the reading audience of the 1990s, the back-cover of *Le Red Light*

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22 Martin Allor, "Locating cultural activity: The 'main' as chronotope and heterotopia", *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* vol.1 no.1 (1997).
23 In fact, Proulx, in his follow-up history *Les Bas-Fonds de Montréal* (1998), used one of Rougier's photos from "Morality Squad" for its book-cover.
24 Proulx, *Le Red Light de Montréal*, 7.
25 Plante, *MSRP*, 8 (italics mine).
26 Proulx, *Le Red Light*, 53 (italics mine).
27 Ibid., 13, 16, 41, 80.

indicates that "Ni ses [le Red Light] habitués ni les passants n'ont idée de son spectaculaire passé".[28]

Proulx's "spectaculaire passé", similar to the "prime-time" of Weintraub's *City Unique*, is a privileged

spectacular-gaze. Specifically, in the case of Montreal's 1940s and '50s, this gaze is facilitated by

framing the city's complex network in a comprehensible open city narrative.[29] Participating in *Urbania*

magazine's "Montréal en 12 lieux" project (2007), Proulx describes the former Red Light district in the

following manner:

> il y avait des maison close, il y avait beaucoup de tripots, et il y avait tous les bars, les
> cabarets...et Montréal donc...en son heure de gloire [1940s-'50s], il y avait du néon, il y
> avait des boires...il y avait des specatcles, des orchestres, des girls, des révues...[un]
> monde étrange et dangereuse...mais aussi une espace du temps bon-enfant et gai.[30]

Rather than a space of urban social-interaction—not only night-time entertainment but an equal

presence of ethnic enclaves, synagogues and sweatshops as discussed in Chapter 3—the Red-Light is,

for Proulx, spectacularized as an open city playground.[31] However, to have been able to take part in

such a *by-night* playground was a privilege, as Raymond Souster observes in his "Montreal After Dark"

(1953):

> Endless streets of the neon/ red/ green/ blue/ winking/ All the bars filled/ all the glass
> brimming/ all the bands frantic/ all the taxis taken/ all the women beautiful/ all the
> rooms taken/ It must be sad/ even awkward to be poor.../ But then we can't/ all be rich,
> / *n'est pas*?[32]

It is, perhaps, not surprising that the Red-Light district has, since the 1960s, been buried beneath the

Quartier des Spectacles—a development which seems to have indeed spectacularized the area in

popular and even academic imaginaries to the present day.[33]

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28 Ibid., *back-cover.*
29 Mordecai Richler in Weintraub, *City Unique,* cover-page. It is interesting that Richler employed the word "prime-time" in describing the subject of Weintraub's book. Only a few years earlier, 1992, a téléroman dramatizing the gangbusting of Drapeau and Plante, *Montréal Ville Ouverte,* aired on actual Quebec prime-time.
30 "Coin Saint-Laurent / Ste-Catherine – Daniel Proulx, Aurteur de "Le Red Light de Montréal". *Urbania.* <http://urbania.ca/canaux/montreal12/372/coin-saint-laurent-ste-catherine-daniel-proulx-auteur-de-le-red-light-de-montreal> [date accessed: 7 April, 2014].
31 Julie Podmore provides a much more complex reading of urban social interaction within the Red Light district in her *St. Lawrence Blvd. As 'Third City': Place, Gender and Difference Along Montréal's 'Main'*.
32 Raymond Souster, "Montreal After Dark" *Collected Poems of Raymond Souster Vol. 1. 1940-1955*. (Ottawa, 1980), 182.
33 Although skeptical of this view Anouk Bélanger provides some discussion on "le spectacle urbain comme un produit de

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Beyond a rattling bead-curtain, a haze of smoke opens onto the tables and spotlit-stage of a Montreal nightclub: jazz melodies roll through the air, celebrities line the walls alongside colourful swizzle-sticks, coasters and "tourist-room" cards—so commences the Centre d'histoire de Montréal's (CHM) 2013 *SCANDAL!* exhibit on vice, crime and morality in Montreal's 1940s and '50s. Across seven elaborately constructed sets, the exhibition visitor, dubbed "tourist", is "invited to enter this *permissive* world offering the whole gamut of nocturnal pleasures...[to] plunge into the *adventure*...to *discover* the town that never sleeps".[34] With Al Palmer as an "expert guide", the tourist-visitor floats through a highly spectacularized vision of Montreal's open city era, and is "dared" to weave together the *places* of cabaret, port, brothel, gambling den, police office and courtroom.[35] Less historically illuminating than it does illuminate the writing of historical narratives, *SCANDAL!* and the timing of its production is an example of the persistent open city encapsulation of Montreal discussed in this thesis.

The spectacular-gaze in *SCANDAL!* is that of the cosmopolitan, white, male Montrealer. Upon entering the exhibit one immediately becomes Chandler's *complete, common* and *unusual man*, engaging in the privileged-risks of the liberal sporting-class and yet divorced from vice by the medium of history.[36] While the press-kit claims to present a narrative constructed by citizen "eye-witness accounts" of "all walks of life", the lurid narrative which frames these accounts offers an array of open city stereotypes: a homogenous black community "naturally" participating in jazz, sexual openness that did not see repression, woman-as-potential-prostitute and an invitation to "slum" in Montreal's seedier past.[37] The same visual markers (*e.g.* Rougier's *Standard* photos) and urban mapping strategies (*e.g.*

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consommation circulant dans une aire marchande définie de façon globale et homogénéisante". Bélanger, *Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire,* 14.

34 *Scandal!*, 8 (italics mine).

35 Ibid., 10.

36 Ibid., 11. The "risky pleasures" that the exhibit teases recall Morton's analysis of risk in liberal male sporting culture. Morton, *At Odds*, 69-75. In fact, one gets the notion that *SCANDAL!*'s particular gaze is that of Pacifique Plante—as the visitor stands behind the chief of morality's desk, immerses himself in his press-coverage, goes on his police raids and even takes in the night-time leisure he so often indulged in.

37 Jean-François Leclerc in Charlebois, *Scandal!*, 24.

from the confidential genre) of the mid twentieth century open city industry circulate throughout the

exhibit; and the neo-liberal demand for an "active" morality runs as its theme. It is fitting that the

exhibit ends with a game of dice, whereby the visitor must "roll" (not choose) his moral position: a

"game [that] doesn't end when visitors leave the exhibition, but continues into the street, in the present-

day city with its current issues and challenges."[38]

SCANDAL! curator Catherine Charlebois explains that "As our research files grew, a fascinating

detective story, against a backdrop of glittering cabarets, clandestine dens of vice, and the courtroom

[emerged]".[39] Indeed, as Mathieu Lapointe observes,

> Cette histoire [des années 1940-60] fascine les Montréalais et les Québécois depuis
> longtemps. Dans l'imaginaire québécois, c'est une sorte de roman policier montréalais,
> une histoire de policiers et de criminels, de demi-monde scandalisant les petits-bourgeois
> conservateurs de l'après-guerre, mais aussi de «lutte juste» contre l'influence de la
> pègre en politique.

The open city was a means of making coherent a complex array of modern urban experiences for

exploitative ends. It is no wonder that urban encapsulations like the frontier city, the open city, the

boomtown, the museum city, the modern city or the world city emerged alongside the birth of heavily

invested urban planning in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth-century. To plan a city is to reify a

complex series of unpredictable urban elements in one marketable, encapsulated object: both

Montreal's "open city" representation and its first master-plan date back to 1944. While Anouk

Bélanger argues that a "nouvelle économie du divertissement" emerges in the urban-planning of the

1980s, this thesis has shown, using Montreal as a case-example, that the new economy of diversion can

be traced back to the open city industry of the early- and mid-twentieth century.[40] Taking the open city

narrative-genre in particular, the detective novel as divertissement was as important for mollifying the

modern anxieties of the urban-planner as it was for Walter Benjamin's train-traveler: it provided a

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38 Charlebois, *Scandal!*, 17.
39 Ibid., 19.
40 Bélanger, *Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire,* 25.

controlled, comprehensible fear (a "thrill") to anaesthetize another (speed, crowd, the unknown).[41] The histories of modern tourism, leisure entertainment and urban-planning go hand in hand, and Montreal's "open city" ceases to be unique in the face of Las Vegas, Miami, New Orleans, New York *et cetera*.

The open city continues to be employed to represent Montreal's urban environment and place in the world—although it has become, at times, increasingly subtle and homogenized. From the 1960s to the 2000s, Montreal has been described as "international", "la Cité Multimédia" and Canada's "slightly naughty city" suggesting the cosmopolitanism, media-saturation and North American unusual-ness connoted in the city's mid twentieth century binary of "wide-open town" and "*ville ouverte*".[42] Just as when, in the 1940s and '50s, Montreal built its reputation as a world-class open city for adventure, cosmopolitan sophistication and girls, mega-projects of the 60s and 70s (*i.e.* Expo, Olympics) and a slew of annual world festivals beginning in the 80s (*e.g.* Jazz Fest, Just For Laughs) continued a rejection of the city as "regional", puritan and usual.[43] Finally in the 1990s, a notion of Montréalité, a distinct post-national identity, crystallized between the poles of Canadian federalism and Quebec separatism and consequently demanded a history to support it.[44] From the mid twentieth century to today, Montreal continues to fashion its urbane, cosmopolitan and, particularly, *by-night* reputation into a lucrative municipal tool—a notion affirmed by *L'Association des Sociétés de développement commercial de Montréal*'s 2011 call for a "charte de vie nocturne" and *Tourisme Montréal*'s 2013 report on the "vie nocturne à Montréal".[45] An encapsulation of the urban experience in the form of statistics

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41 Walter Benjamin paraphrased in Salzani, *The City as Crime Scene*, 166.

42 As Bélanger observes "L'imaginaire montréalais a longtemps été—par contraste avec le rest d'une Amérique du Nord perçue comme "puritaine" et "froide"—celui d'une ville ouverte." Bélanger, *Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire,* 17.

43 There is little difference in the current notion of Montreal as a "sexy city" and the 1950s claim that "Montréal...passe pour la ville par excellence de la débauche au Canada" or that vice makes Montreal one of "des grandes métropoles". *Photo Journal,* 26 December 1953.Wallace, *Geography of Girl Watching*. Germain and Rose, *The Quest*, 3,9.

44 Claire Poitras observes that since the 1990s not less that 74% of articles in *Revue d'histoire de l'Amerique francaise* have centered on Montreal history. Cited in Barriault, *De la Montréalité,* 6.

45 "Une charte de vie nocturne pour Montréal réclamée". ICI Radio-Canada, 5 Oct 2011 <http://ici.radio-canada.ca/regi ons/Montreal/2011/10/05/010-montreal-charte-de-vie-nocturne.shtml> [date accessed, 10 June 2014]. *Vie Nocturne à Montréal: Service de la recherce.* Tourisme Montréal.

lies behind the city's renewed interest in (re)opening its "night" today as it did at the establishment of the Montreal Economic and Tourist Bureau in 1944 : "elle [la nuit] est porteuse de mystère, de possibilités, d'aventure et peut transformer l'ambiance urbaine du quotidien en une atmosphère de fête."[46]

Despite the increasing homogenization of Montreal's "openness"—a meeting of the "vernaculaire" of collective memory and the "spectaculaire" of neo-liberalism—its particular open city representation, "wide-open town" and "ville ouverte", continue to shape our understanding of the city today.[47] After the 1995 Quebec referendum, no event has re-ignited the open city industry in Montreal as have the provincial commissions of the 2010s, Bastarache and Charbonneau. Stimulated by the commissions perpetual revelations, press, politicians, entertainment industries and the city itself have presented municipal corruption in Montreal as a unique case before the public. Although Montreal only factors as a part of these provincial commissions—which are completely unremarkable, globally—attention has been directed to the city's "culture of corruption", its "vulnerable" status as a "ville viciée" and the legendary ville ouverte crime-busting saga of "Pax" Plante and Jean Drapeau.[48] In the wake of the aforementioned commissions, Montreal's current historical situation has been substituted for its encapsulated past: "Montreal, Still Scandal-Ridden?" ask the curators of *SCANDAL!* at the end of their exhibit—as if the only way to approach the city's present were through the spectacular-gaze of the open city.

Throughout this thesis an effort has been made to reveal the discursive formation of the open city as it developed in Montreal during the 1940s and '50s. Particular attention was given to the constructed nature of Montreal's open city representations of the 1940s and '50s: "wide-open town" and

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46 Ibid.

47 Bélanger, *Montréal vernaculaire/Montréal spectaculaire,* 13-14, 26.

48 Matiheu Lapointe, "De Cannon à Bastarache : la commission d'enquête comme manœuvre d'évitement" *HistoireEngagée.* 10 Feb 2012 <http://histoireengagee.ca/de-cannon-a-bastarache-la-commission-d%E2%80%99 enquete-comme-manoeuvre-d%E2%80%99evitement/> [date accessed, 10 June 2014]. *The Globe and Mail*, 27 December 2012. *Le Devoir*, 19 January 2013. *Le Devoir*, 30 April 2014.

"ville ouverte", and how they played into encapsulating a coherent urban experience of unique "openness" for Montrealers, then and even now. It is in my opinion that further scholarship on open cities should develop in one of the following manners: (i) a finer analysis of one aspect of the open city and its supporting institutions (*e.g.* the gambling den, brothel or club and its relation to the media, bureau of tourism and municipal coffer) (ii) a broader comparative analysis that puts forth, from the outset, the unremarkable situation of numerous twentieth century "open cities" (iii) a history of the term "open city" itself. Suzanne Morton with gambling, Will Straw with the journaux jaune and Mathieu Lapointe with a focused study of the CMP have been incredibly successful in reminding their readers of the imbricated local and global interests that form an urban imaginary, particularly in Montreal. As stated in my introduction, this thesis did not intend to write a history of Montreal's 1940s and '50s, but a history of the "open city" discursive formation as it operated in Montreal. The CHM's *SCANDAL!* exhibit shows that there is still a long way to go in de-sensationalizing Montreal's past. Perhaps the question "Montreal, who are you?" should not be motivating the historian's task.[49] As Italo Calvino cleverly observes in his *Invisible Cities*, "You take delight not in a city's seven or seventy wonders, but in the answer it gives to a question of yours."[50] It is perhaps time to close Montreal's open city history: there are still many wonders remaining.

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49 Jean-François Leclerc in *SCANDAL!*, 24.
50 Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*. William Weaver, trans. (Boston, 2013), 44.

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Private Collection of Will Straw

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Fouine
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The Globe and Mail
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