

**Submission for Public Consultation regarding Systemic Racism and  
Discrimination in Montreal**

October 30, 2019

TO: OCPM

RE: Submission for Public Consultation regarding Systemic Racism and Discrimination  
in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*

FROM: Donovan King, Griffin Tours and Haunted Montreal

Dear OCPM,

My name is Donovan King and I am a City of Montreal licensed tour guide, History teacher (EMSB) and tourism operator (Griffin Tours and Haunted Montreal).

I am making a lengthy written submission to follow up on a session I attended with the OCPM on the same topic where small groups identified problems and potential solutions to tackle systemic racism and discrimination in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, I proposed that the City of Montreal should update its policies on tour guiding by scrapping an outdated by-law (G-2). This by-law forbids anyone from leading a guided tour unless they attend a Eurocentric program at the ITHQ that is extremely competitive to get into, requires bilingualism, costs over \$2200, takes 8 months, and fails to teach about Indigenous history, issues, perspectives, and vocabulary.

Needless to say, this has resulted in a monopoly of tour guides estimated at 98% white with zero Indigenous guides among its membership. This lucrative career is therefore largely denied to racialized and Indigenous people. Furthermore, when tourists visit our city, they learn a whitewashed version of history, as taught by the I.T.H.Q., which only further extends the systemic racism and discrimination plaguing Montreal. I should know. I graduated from its systemically racist tour guiding program. Every single student in my graduating class was white and the vast majority were francophone.

As such, my submission touches on the following topics proposed by the OCPM: Culture, Employment and Entrepreneurship, and The Fight Against Inequality and recommends that the City of Montreal immediately rescind by-law G-2.

The submission contains an overview of some of the systemic problems and the stakeholders who maintain them.

Firstly, we believe the City of Montreal needs to scrap by-law G-2.

Secondly, as members of *Tourisme Montréal*, we have been asking them to engage with the [2019 UN Year of Indigenous Languages](#). Instead, they have been promoting “Bonjour” in all marketing campaigns with nary a sign of “Kwe Kwe” (“Hello” in the Mohawk language).

Lastly, there needs to be a transition to indigenize and diversify the Montreal tourism industry to comply with the Calls to Action and Calls to Justice of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and M.M.I.W.G. report.

The bulk of my arguments can be found in three Appendixes:

### **APPENDIX 1: Letter asking City of Montreal to rescind By-Law G-2**

Summary: Griffin Tours asks Montreal to rescind By-Law G-2 so it can hire Indigenous Guides

### **APPENDIX 2: Letter of Complaint about Discrimination and Responses**

Summary: Letter of Complaint regarding a personal incident of exclusion and discrimination to the ITHQ and McCord Museum and their responses

### **APPENDIX 3: A Call to Action**

Summary: [A Call to Action](#) to Make Tour Guiding in Montreal / Tio'tia:ke Compliant with Truth and Reconciliation

Please help us diversify our tourism industry to be more indigenous, racialized and authentic by recommending that the City of Montreal scrap by-law G-2!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Donovan King, MFA, BEd, BFA, DEC, ACS

[Irish Montreal Excursions](#)

[Haunted Montreal](#)

## **APPENDIX 1: Letter asking City of Montreal to rescind By-Law G-2**

### **Summary: Griffin Tours asks Montreal to rescind By-Law G-2 so it can hire Indigenous Guides**

Montreal's first postcolonial tour company has been launched! Griffin Tours aims to deliver real, unadulterated history on its entertaining and educational Hidden History walking tours, ghost walks, haunted pub crawls and unique experiences. Heeding many Truth and Reconciliation initiatives, Griffin Tours takes special efforts to learn about and share Indigenous history and to work with Indigenous educators and communities. It also aims to update Montreal's Tourism Industry by making it less colonial and more inclusive of diverse voices and perspectives, especially from marginalized communities.

Montreal's tourism industry is facing an unprecedented crisis as Truth and Reconciliation initiatives demand inclusion of Indigenous voices in cultural milieus. In Montreal, it is illegal for progressive tour companies to hire Indigenous guides due to an outdated 1960s-era by-law (G-2). This creates a serious problem for companies wishing to engage with the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Calls for Justice from The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the UN Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Griffin Tours wishes to participate in these important decolonization efforts, so is now calling upon Montreal's Minister of Indigenous Relations, Marie-Eve Bordeleau, to advise Mayor Valerie Plante to immediately scrap the outdated and arguably racist legislation.

Griffin Tours is also reaching out to other major stakeholders in the Canadian Tourism Industry to make them aware of the issues and to ask for their support in ensuring Indigenous tour guides can operate legally and unmolested on their traditional territories across Canada. Please find below a letter from Griffin Tours to Montreal's Minister of Indigenous Relations explaining the rationale of the situation and imploring her to act immediately on this urgent file.

Sent Monday, October 30, 2019

Dear Marie-Eve Bordeleau,

I am writing to you today on Orange Shirt Day in your official capacity of Montreal's Commissioner of Indigenous Relations to ask for your advice.

My name is Donovan King and I am a City of Montreal licensed tour guide, History teacher (EMSB) and tourism operator (Griffin Tours, Haunted Montreal, Secret Montreal and Irish Montreal Excursions).

I would like to request your advice and opinion about a legal dilemma I am facing in Montreal's tourism industry. In a nutshell, I have crafted a new "Hidden Histories of Montreal" walking tour, which was launched under the banner of Griffin Tours.

As engaged Montrealers, the postcolonial tour is our response to the [Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#), [Calls for Justice from The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) and the [UN Global Code of Ethics for Tourism](#).

Based on Indigenous history as told by several *Kanien'kehá:ka* Elders, this is Montreal's first-ever guided walking tour that attempts to conform with Truth and Reconciliation initiatives. I am pleased to report that our postcolonial tour has to date received [acclaim](#), both in its proto-type stage at the Blue Metropolis and Bloomsday Festivals and more recently as a professional walking tour.

Indeed, recently the postcolonial tour was also covered on APTN National News: [Local guide calls for revisions to Montreal's colonialist monuments](#) (Lindsay Richardson. July 3, 2019.) I also discussed these issues on [CKUT Radio with Sarah Deshaies](#) on August 15, 2019.

In any case, I am now in the hiring stages for tour guides for the new "Hidden Histories of Montreal" walking tour. For the sake of authenticity and truth, I absolutely need to hire Indigenous guides who understand colonization and its devastating results.

The problem is that outdated **Montreal by-law (G-2) makes it illegal for me to hire Indigenous guides** unless they have completed a questionable program at the ITHQ that has been [exposed as outdated and Euro-centric](#). To my knowledge, not a single Indigenous guide has ever been accepted into or graduated from the program.

According to a survey in 2016, Montreal has around 35,000 urban Indigenous citizens and the numbers are growing quickly. Montreal is, without a doubt, the most Indigenous city in Quebec. All eleven First Nations and Inuit peoples in the "province" are represented here, along with many other First Nations and Métis from across North America, or Turtle Island, and beyond. It is very unusual that there doesn't seem to be

even one Indigenous guide operating legally in *Tiotà:ke* due to the City of Montreal's by-law G-2.

As such, I am writing for your advice today. My question is:

How can I hire Indigenous guides when it is illegal to do so under Montreal by-law G-2, which seems to stand in the way of Truth and Reconciliation initiatives?

If I understand correctly, your mandate at the City of Montreal includes:

“To guide and advise the city and the mayor on any issues affecting the relationship between the city and Indigenous communities.

To promote the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

To develop training for city employees.

To develop a reconciliation strategy for the City of Montreal with various internal partners to implement a paradigm shift and to include an “Indigenous perspective” in the city's policies and action plans.”

(Page 94, *MMIWGI Supplementary Report for Quebec*).

As such, I am hoping to make you aware of many serious discrepancies between Montreal by-law G-2 and TRC initiatives, and request that you help to resolve the issue in your role as Montreal's Commissioner of Indigenous Relations.

As you know, in 2016, the City of Montreal firmly committed to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and declared its commitment to becoming a “Metropolis of Reconciliation”.

This commitment includes the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action and the unanimous endorsement of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, signed by the City on August 21, 2017.

Here are some of the policies that the municipal reconciliation strategy is based on, which appear contrary to by-law G-2:

2. The Transversal Process of Reconciliation: A global process that affects all City departments and incorporates an "Aboriginal reflex" into the development of projects or programs that could impact Aboriginal peoples.

3.2. Improving the visibility of the Aboriginal presence in the city of Montreal, recognizing its historical past, present and future presence.

5. Support for Aboriginal cultural development in urban areas.

6. Support for the economic development of members of Aboriginal peoples in Montreal.

Furthermore, *Call to Action 79 ii* of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* asks us, as members of the arts community, to help revise policies to better integrate Indigenous history and perspectives in the heritage and history milieu:

We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:

Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada's national heritage and history.

We also take the *Calls for Justice from National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* very seriously, including the following:

### **Calls for Media and Social Influencers**

6.1 Ensure authentic and appropriate representation of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Support Indigenous people sharing their stories, from their perspectives, free of bias, discrimination and false assumptions, and in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive way. Increase the number of Indigenous people in the industry. Take proactive steps to break down the stereotypes that hypersexualize and demean Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people

### **Calls for Justice for All Canadians**

15.2 Decolonize by learning the true history of Canada and Indigenous history in your local area. Learn about and celebrate Indigenous peoples' history, cultures, pride and diversity, acknowledging the land you live on and its importance to local Indigenous communities, both historically and today.

15.4 Using what you have learned and some of the resources suggested, become a strong ally. Being a strong ally involves more than just tolerance; it means actively working to break down barriers and to support others in every relationship and encounter in which you participate.

15.5 Confront and speak out against racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia and transphobia, and teach or encourage others to do the same, wherever it occurs: in your home, in your workplace, or in social settings.

15.8 Help hold all governments accountable to act on the Calls for Justice, and to implement them according to the important principles we set out.

Lastly, the *UN Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, demands:

2.2 Tourism activities should respect the equality of men and women; they should promote human rights and, more particularly, the individual rights of the most vulnerable groups, notably children, the elderly, the handicapped, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples;

9.3 Any natural or legal person, provided he, she or it has the necessary abilities and skills, should be entitled to develop a professional activity in the field of tourism under existing national laws; entrepreneurs and investors - especially in the area of small and medium-sized enterprises - should be entitled to free access to the tourism sector with a minimum of legal or administrative restrictions;

Given that Montreal by-law G-2 stands in opposition to all these important policies and recommendations, there is obviously a major problem for businesspeople and educators like myself, who want to engage in the Truth and Reconciliation process, as recommended by Senator Murray Sinclair.

The by-law prevents my company, Griffin Tours (e.g. a “legal person”), from hiring Indigenous guides. Therefore, it appears that this outdated piece of Drapeau-era legislation needs to be rescinded as a colonial relic of the past - or it must be vastly reformed to ensure diversity and inclusion in the tour guiding milieu, especially of Indigenous voices.

Because I had such serious concerns about the constitutionality of Montreal by-law G-2., I hired acclaimed human rights attorney Julius Grey to do a legal analysis of this antiquated legislation. I have attached Me. Grey’s analysis, along with by-law G-2, for your consideration.

Please note that on page 8 of the analysis, Me. Grey points out that the by-law is “clearly overbroad” and violates “legitimate speech” (Freedom of Expression, a protected *Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* value):

“By-law G-2 outright prohibits anyone from giving tours even for free. This means that people cannot give friends or family a tour of their neighborhood, an architect student cannot show anyone around Montreal and convey what he has learned, licensed teachers cannot conduct field trips and **Indigenous Elders are legally blocked from leading tours on their ancestral territory**. The by-law is clearly overbroad and cannot be left in place because of the adverse effect this might have on legitimate speech.”

Given these challenging circumstances, I am hoping you can advise me as soon as possible about whether or not the City will rescind by-law G-2 or find another solution in order to allow me to hire Indigenous guides.

Our first “Hidden Histories” walking tour was on Saturday, August 24 and I led it personally. My hope is to have some Indigenous guides hired and trained by early October so I can focus more on my teaching duties.

Thank you for your consideration in advising me what to do. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Donovan King, MFA, BEd, BFA, DEC, ACS

[Griffin Tours](#)

[Haunted Montreal](#)



## **APPENDIX 2: Letter of Complaint about Discrimination and Responses**

### **Summary: Letter of Complaint to the ITHQ and McCord Museum and their Responses**

This is a letter of complaint I sent to both the McCord Museum and the ITHQ after an incident of exclusion and discrimination by the A.P.G.T. The responses from both institutions are also included.

Letter of Complaint to the ITHQ and McCord Museum and Responses

Donovan King <optatif@gmail.com>

Attachments

Sat, Feb 16, 9:04 PM

to info.mccord, info, studio,

Dear McCord Museum Directors and I.T.H.Q. Senior Management,

Letter of Complaint to the McCord Directors and I.T.H.Q. Regarding Discrimination and Exclusion at the Museum

CC: Kent Monkman

Dear McCord Museum Directors and Senior Management at the I.T.H.Q.,

I am an Irish-Montreal tour guide and a huge fan of the McCord Museum, founded by fellow Irish-Montrealer David Ross McCord. McCord and I have a lot in common, including an obsession with Montreal history and being advocates in regards to Indigenous issues, such as challenging misrepresentation and discrimination.

As the founder of tour company [Irish Montreal Excursions](#), I frequently bring clients to the McCord Museum and when I studied History at McGill with Professor Bryan Young, author of *The Making and Unmaking of a University Museum: The McCord, 1921-1996*, I had the opportunity to put on white gloves to study delicate old documents about the ghost of Simon McTavish in your museum's fabulous archives! These were great memories of the museum that I will forever cherish.

I am writing to you today, both McCord Museum Directors and Senior Management at the I.T.H.Q., to reach out about a very ugly experience of discrimination and exclusion I suffered last night, Friday February 15th, at the McCord Museum.

Just after 4 p.m., I entered the McCord museum to lead a tour of private VIP clients to visit the outstanding Kent Monkman Exhibition, *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*. My clients are considering opening a postcolonial museum and are very interested in works like Monkman's, which "shock and demolish popular beliefs; challenge heteronormativity and gender binaries; contrast the glorification of Roman Catholicism with the deep distress it causes; scorn the opulence of colonialism on

Indigenous lands; and recall the effects of the treaties that forever changed the course of history."

We were very impressed with the caliber of the work and the fact that the McCord Museum is highlighting postcolonial approaches and decolonization in the arts and cultural milieu.

Just before we were about to leave at 5 p.m., I wanted to pop in to the Annual General Meeting of the APGT, an association of "professional" tour guides I joined last year, which was being held at the McCord Museum. My objective was simply to renew my membership card and find out why their administrators were failing to communicate effectively with me and other members who had expressed concern.

Indeed, since October, 2018 APGT administrators started causing problems because I, like David Ross McCord, advocate on behalf of important Indigenous issues. The APGT's poor communication began after I complained about an APGT tour guide using racist language such as "savage" and "squaw" to describe Indigenous people on the APGT's Facebook page and about another APGT guide who defaced the Mohawk symbol of the white pine on Montreal's flag by replacing it with a loaf of white bread and then posted it on Facebook.



I was personally devastated at this act of cultural vandalism, heartily "liked" by other APGT and ITHQ members. The whole point of adding the White Pine was as an act of reconciliation between the City of Montreal and the Mohawk First Nation, on whose unceded territory the metropolis exists. Former Chief Christine-Zachary-Deom was [honoured](#) for updating the flag, and the defacing of her work by an "Ambassador of the City" is the ultimate insult, in my humble opinion.

In response to my complaint, APGT Board Member Elyse Levesque told me not to post "any activist comments" and then blocked me after I posted a CBC article about 9 year old children studying Truth and Reconciliation. When I asked why I was banned, they refused to answer, leading to many more unanswered questions. Overall, the quality of communication continued to deteriorate. For example, one Director named Martin Coutu offered to meet with me but then stopped communicating when I told him I wanted an Indigenous and Black representative included.

They finally stopped sending me email in December, again, without a word of explanation. This was after I requested a Safe Space policy because I was being cyber-bullied by some APGT members and suffer from a life-threatening disability called Major Depressive Disorder that can be triggered by such offensive behaviour.

When I heard through a colleague about the annual AGM at the McCord Museum yesterday, I asked the APGT why I had not been invited. Again, there was no response, leading me to believe that I am being discriminated against for my political convictions. As I mentioned, I am a vocal advocate of Truth and Reconciliation in Montreal's outdated tour guiding system (see Media links below).

It is outdated because a monopoly of mostly-white tour guides exists due to an old by-law called G-2 that excludes people from guiding legally unless they complete a course at the ITHQ, which has been described as Eurocentric. For example, it would be illegal for a Mohawk Elder to give a guided tour on the un-ceded territory we live on unless he attended a course that doesn't accurately reflect his First Nation and fails to teach guides a single word of Mohawk. With 2019 being the UN Year of Indigenous Languages, one would hope Montreal tour guides would at least be able to say "Hello" and Indigenous guides could operate legally.

Due to the discrimination, I consulted Human Rights attorney Julius Grey and he sent a letter to the APGT Board demanding the end of the discrimination and the restoration of my human rights to Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Association as a paying member of the APGT with a permit (attached).

In any case, getting back to my visit to the McCord Museum with my postcolonial clients, following our inspiring visit to the Kent Monkman collection, I asked my clients to wait for a few moments so I could renew my membership card and try to get some information.

However, as I approached the room to renew my permit, two McCord Museum security guards blocked the way and said I was not allowed in. I showed them my membership card and they said it didn't matter. In front of my clients, this was very embarrassing, as I'm sure you can imagine.

When I asked to speak with the person who was instructing the McCord guards to exclude me, APGT Board member Elyse Levesque burst forth from the room and began insulting and berating me in front of my clients. When she noticed one of my clients, a

young cameraman, had started filming her unprofessional behaviour, she became very aggressive towards him. She yelled that she was calling the police and then broke into his personal space and insisted that he delete his footage, despite it having been paid for by my clients!

I was shocked that an "Ambassador of the City" would behave like this, especially in an Irish-Montreal museum against an Irish-Montreal guide and his clients. The fact that Elyse Levesque would put on such a de-humanizing spectacle in front of my clients violates just about every rule of professionalism in the APGT Code of Ethics and By-Law G-2, in my humble opinion. I was especially disturbed and intimidated when, in a loud voice, Elyse repeatedly threatened to call the police, despite the fact that I was there for what I thought was a routine bureaucratic procedure. I felt like I was being treated as some sort of criminal when I had simply wanted to update a permit.

Given that Elyse Levesque is both a Board Member of the APGT and a Professor at the ITHQ in tourism, I would have expected some restraint and professionalism in both communication and behaviour, and certainly not the degrading and intimidating performance she put on in front of my clients and colleagues.

Needless to say, we left the McCord Museum deeply shaken by this disturbing experience of exclusion and discrimination. I know it was not the McCord Museum's intention of having this episode unfold, but I wanted to make the museum aware of it nonetheless because it made the McCord Museum look really bad in the eyes of my clients. They were shocked that what had started out as a wonderful afternoon enjoying postcolonial Indigenous art ended up with discrimination and exclusion against an Irish-Montreal tour guide who is working hard to update the tour guiding system to include Indigenous voices and diverse postcolonial perspectives. The irony was not lost on my clients.

To make matters worse, according to APGT guides who were allowed to attend the meeting, in a speech Elyse Levesque made comments about me to my peers that were mis-representative and quite likely defamatory. One guide described her discourse as a "hatchet job" against me personally and as "character assassination".

In future, I recommend the McCord Museum vets the associations it books more carefully, because the APGT, in its exclusion, discrimination and the outrageous performance by Board member Elyse Levesque certainly damaged the brand of one of my favorite museums, in the eyes of both my clients and myself. Instead of leaving with giddy feelings of delight and profound reflection from the Kent Monkman exhibition, we left feeling hurt, dejected, intimidated and harassed. The young cameraman was especially shaken that his personal space and his work had been violated. He felt that the museum was unable to provide a Safe Space, and I agree with him wholeheartedly. The same guards who insisted on my exclusion did absolutely nothing to prevent Elyse from harassing my client, which I felt was unprofessional.

As an Irish-Montreal tour guide and History teacher, I hope to see the McCord Museum's progressive policies on education extended to other museographical standards including your booking services and security policies to avoid embarrassing incidents of discrimination in the future. According to your website:

" The McCord Museum is a museum for all Montrealers, a social history museum that celebrates life in Montreal past and present: its history, its vision, its people, its communities. Montreal is proud of its reputation as a welcoming, inclusive city open to the world. A cultural institution with strong ties to its community, the McCord Museum has a responsibility to promote and develop this openness."

By hosting the APGT, an organization that is a closed monopoly of mostly-white guides that excludes its own members who promote inclusion and Indigenous rights, the McCord Museum's stated educational goals were not met in this case.

I would appreciate a response to this letter from the McCord Museum about the experience of discrimination and exclusion I suffered at the museum, assisted by McCord security guards, no less.

I would also appreciate an apology from the I.T.H.Q. for allowing one of its tourism professors to discriminate against and exclude me all the while intimidating and harassing my clients in a museum.

If Montreal is going to be a true "City of Reconciliation", the I.T.H.Q. is going to need to revise its tour guiding program in line with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and ensure its professors act with the utmost professionalism, especially while operating in public in the tourism milieu.

To be successful, Montreal needs to be respectful and inclusive of Indigenous voices and perspectives, especially in the tour guiding system. When there isn't a single "Ambassador of the City" who is Indigenous, it is quite clear that there is systemic racism at work which urgently needs to be addressed.

In the spirit of Kent Monkman's wonderful Indigenous art, I personally feel we should open a dialogue about these pressing issues in order to make Montreal a more welcoming, open and inclusive city in both our culture and tourism sectors.

Sincerely,

Donovan King

p.s. Kent, I hope you don't mind me CCing you. I just wanted you to know about this disturbing and ironic situation at the museum that is hosting your amazing exhibition and to see if you can potentially help our city resolve these urgent issues.

**Media Links:**

CBC Radio One – Daybreak with Mike Finnerty. [Interview with Donovan King of Haunted Montreal](#). November 2, 2018.

The Eastern Door. [Guide Wants Full History Of City During Tours](#). Lachlan Madill. November 2, 2018.

CityNews Montreal. [TV interview with tour guide Donovan King](#), November 2, 2018.

CBC Indigenous. [Montreal tour guide wants more Indigenous history incorporated into industry training](#). Jessica Deer. November 8, 2018.

McGill Tribune. [Montreal tour guide highlights indigenous history](#). Leyla Moy. December 5, 2018.

University of Calgary Alumni Association. [Careers in Motion: King of Montreal's Hidden Histories Donovan King, MFA'04](#). Deb Cummins. December 11, 2018.

Response from the McCord Museum

Pascale Grignon <pascale.grignon@mccord-stewart.ca>

Wed, Feb 20, 5:28 PM

to Info, me

Dear Mr. King:

We are pleased that you appreciated your visit to the Kent Monkman exhibition and that you recognize the McCord Museum as a museum open to the city and the world. Representation of First Peoples cultures and history has always been central to the mission of the McCord Museum as the custodian of an extraordinarily rich Indigenous Cultures collection, which is a crucial part of our history.

The McCord is a place of openness and dialogue; we believe in the benefits of considering different points of view. For this reason, we were very sorry to learn of the incident that took place last Friday. Thank you for sharing your version of events. In light of your letter of complaint, we must clarify a few points, including the distinction between

the McCord's exhibition rooms, which are open to all, and its rented rooms. It is important to note that customers who rent rooms for private functions—as was the case of the APGTQ on Friday—are in charge of their own guest lists.

From what we understand, the Museum guard stepped in to calm things down and to reiterate the rights of each of the parties on the premises: in other words, the APGTQ's right to refuse admission to its private event and your right to circulate through the Museum, outside the private event.

We must also point out that the Museum, far from being discriminatory, allowed a demonstration concerning your position with respect to the APGTQ to be held on its premises, in order to enable all sides to express their points of view.

You should know that we, like you, wish to promote inclusion and contribute to making the voices of Indigenous communities heard. We support them in their efforts to make their voices heard. It's essential to recognize that Indigenous peoples must be the first sources of interpretation of their own history.

As you stated in your letter, it was not the McCord Museum's intention of having this episode unfold. It was the guard's intention simply to calm things down in order to enable everyone—you and the other visitors—to visit the Museum in an atmosphere conducive to discovery.

We hope that this unfortunate experience will not dampen your desire to visit the McCord Museum in the future.

Yours truly,

Pascale Grignon

Director, Marketing, Communications and Visitor Experience

McCORD MUSEUM | STEWART MUSEUM

2175, Victoria St., Montréal (Québec) H3A 2A3

T. 514-861-6701 ext. 1279 | [www.mccord-museum.qc.ca](http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca)



Response from the ITHQ

Marie-Josée Lestage <Marie-Josée.Lestage@ithq.qc.ca>

Fri, Feb 22, 3:36 PM

to Francine, me

Dear Mr King,

We received the letter of complaint you sent through the ITHQ website on February 16th, 2019.

We are sorry to hear about the conflict you have with the APGT, but the ITHQ is not related to the Facebook page you are referring to in your letter. Also, the members of the APGT you spoke to when you visited the McCord Museum were not representing the ITHQ at the time.

At the ITHQ, we are proud to celebrate all communities and we recognize the important place of the First Nations in Quebec's history. Therefore, in the sessions to come, we will make sure that the Montréal Tourist Guide program and teachers describe the city's past and current indigenous reality accurately.

Best regards,

Marie-Josée Lestage

Responsable des relations publiques

Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec

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## **APPENDIX 3: A Call to Action**

### **Summary: A Call to Action to Make Tour Guiding in Montreal / Tio'tia:ke Compliant with Truth and Reconciliation**

A detailed analysis about systemic racism and discrimination in Montreal's Tourism Industry that examines some of the key players and stakeholders and their roles in the currently outdated system. The I.T.H.Q., Tourisme Montréal, the City of Montreal and the A.P.G.T. (cartel of tour guides) all have a role in maintaining the current system. The City created by-law G-2 that grants the monopoly, the I.T.H.Q. has a monopoly on training guides, Tourisme Montréal receives funding to promote the guides and the A.P.G.T carries out the monopolized tours at the expense of racialized and Indigenous people, whose stories are rarely told to visiting tourists. This Eurocentric policy dynamic marginalizes these communities via systemic racism and discrimination and continues a cycle of whitewashed history being presented to visitors. The paper is also a Call to Action to make tour guiding in Montreal / Tio'tia:ke compliant with Truth and Reconciliation initiatives.

## **A Call to Action to Make Tour Guiding in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke* Compliant with Truth and Reconciliation**

"Systemic racism exists throughout society. We're all recipients of that teaching, we've all been exposed to it. It is harder to combat because people don't realize they are doing it."

- Myrna Lashley

"Before the healing can take place, the poison must be exposed."

- Thomson Highway

*An áit a bhfuil do chroí is ann a thabharfas do chosa thú.*

Your feet will bring you to where your heart is.

~ *Irish Proverb*

### Some important stakeholders in the tour guiding industry in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*:

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke  
Former Kanien'kehá:ka Chief Christine Zachary Deom  
Steve Bonspiel, Editor of The Eastern Door  
Kahnawà:ke Tourism  
Marie-Josée Parent, Montreal minister responsible for Reconciliation  
Mélissa Mollen-Dupuis, Educator employed by the A.P.G.T. regarding indigenous issues  
2.0 (Montreal Tourist Guides / Guides touristiques de Montréal)  
Myrna Lashley, Expert on systemic racism, McGill University  
Victor Boyle, Director of the Irish Monument Park Foundation  
Caitie Moynan, Administrator of Irish Montreal Excursions  
Dr. Jason King, Irish Heritage Trust  
Monique Gray Smith, Award-winning children's author  
Marc Miller, Federal MP, Sud-Ouest  
Melanie Joly, Federal Minister of Tourism  
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**Tourisme Montreal**  
**I.T.H.Q.**

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## Introduction

Dear Stakeholders,

Before explaining why I am writing today, I would like to acknowledge that I wrote this paper/call to action on the un-ceded traditional indigenous territory of *Tio'tia:ke*, part of the traditional domain of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, the custodian of these lands and waters. This document is also destined mostly for recipients living on the un-ceded territory of *Tio'tia:ke*. I apologize in advance that this document is not yet available in Kanien'keha (or French). I was somewhat rushed in writing it.

My name is Donovan King and I am a cultural worker, history teacher, historian and tour guide. As a historian and licensed History teacher (trained at McGill University) and a licensed tour guide, trained at the *Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec* (I.T.H.Q.), my areas of interest include historiography, post-colonial history and the history of oppression. I am presently the historian for the Irish Monument Park Foundation and the founder of Irish Montreal Excursions, a small tour guiding company that explores the marginalized history of the Irish in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*.

As a teacher, historian and a tour guide, I take issues of Truth and Reconciliation very seriously, especially because we were not taught History in a satisfactory manner in high school. The curriculum was extremely Euro-centric and reduced First Nations to caricatures, all the while neglecting to mention cultural genocide against First Nations people all across Canada, including Québec, such as [colonial redface shows](#) or the horrors of the Residential School system.

Furthermore, several members of my family have mixed Kanien'kehá:ka and Irish ancestry, which means when someone attacks or is ignorant about the Kanien'kehá:ka or other First Nations or Irish people, I make extra efforts to try and educate them with the knowledge and skills I have acquired as both a historian and teacher.

The reason I am writing today is because I believe the laws governing tour guiding in the City of Montreal border on racism because they forbid Kanien'kehá:ka and other First Nations people from operating in the traditional territory of *Tio'tia:ke* unless they complete a questionable, Euro-centric training program at the I.T.H.Q. I believe my friend, Dr. Myrna Lashley, an expert on systemic racism, when she [states](#) "Systemic racism exists throughout society. We're all recipients of that teaching, we've all been exposed to it. It is harder to combat because people don't realize they are doing it."

There are many issues related to tour guiding in the City of Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke* that urgently need to be analyzed, such as misrepresentation of Kanien'kehá:ka and other First Nations people by licensed guides, questionable and Euro-centric training of tour guides at the I.T.H.Q., and the inability of the A.P.G.T. (*Association professionnelle des guides touristiques*) to discipline members who make racist comments and create racist imagery directed against First Nations or respect fundamental human rights.

Although there are many more issues, within the scope of this paper I want to outline three points of concern I have with the current City of Montreal tour guiding system, which I feel is discriminatory.

The problem lies in the fact that so many Other guides are excluded from operating legally, such as First Nations tour guides and Elders, History teachers, minority culture guides (e.g. Black, Jewish, Irish, etc.), Montreal knowledge specialists, Jane's Walk organizers, unlicensed LGBTQ guides, etc. This document analyzes three such issues with a call to action to resolve them:

**Issue 1:** Legal issues surrounding the exclusion of Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk), First Nations and Other legitimate tour guides in the City of Montreal / Tio'tia:ke

**Issue 2:** Questionable training practices of tour guides by the I.T.H.Q.

**Issue 3:** The organization representing tours guides (A.P.G.T.) discourages and censors discussion about Truth and Reconciliation and appears to have challenges confronting internal systemic racism and following the law and its Code of Ethics. It also violates human rights of Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Association, apparently to protect members of its monopoly from anti-racist discourse.

I believe that these are three major issues that are important to examine because the City of Montreal has publicly expressed a desire to become a City of Reconciliation. To do so, it will need to ensure the inclusion of the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) and other First Nations and marginalized culture tour guides, the updating of historical curriculum and teaching standards at the I.T.H.Q., and the creation of mechanisms to allow Freedom of Expression and Association while stamping out racism among a small minority of guides within the A.P.G.T., which is embarrassing the tour guiding profession, the City of Montreal, and is disrespectful to the Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation.

I don't claim to have all the answers, but rather I am hoping to open up a respectful dialogue among all stakeholders in the tour guiding milieu in Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*, including decision-makers, educators, tour operators and guides and the people they (mis)represent, and experts on systemic racism, Truth and Reconciliation and anti-oppression.

Lastly, as a post-colonial historian and theatre artist who sometimes tackles systemic discrimination head-on, I have been frequently attacked and censored in the past by organizations and individuals I am critical of. I really hope this doesn't happen again in this case and encourage the creation of safe spaces where constructive dialogue can be held without fear of intimidation, molestation, censorship or discrimination.

As such, please don't shoot the messenger, but instead examine the thorny, post-colonial issues with the goal of trying to resolve them if you think they are important.

**Issue 1: Legal issues surrounding the exclusion of Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk), First Nations and Other legitimate tour guides in the City of Montreal / Tio'tia:ke**

According to the City of Montreal's notorious [Montreal by-law G-2](#) (BY-LAW CONCERNING TOURIST GUIDES), it is illegal for Kanien'kehá:ka and other First Nations tour guides to operate in the City of Montreal / Tio'tia:ke without obtaining a permit from the I.T.H.Q.



**R.B.C.M.**  
**c. G-2**

**BY-LAW CONCERNING TOURIST GUIDES**

**1.** In this by-law, the following words mean:

"guided tour": a guided tour of historic sites, buildings and monuments, picturesque places or of a cultural character;

"to guide": to act as a tourist guide;

"tourist guide" or "guide": a person who holds a certificate of qualification as such, issued by an institution accredited by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de la Science, and designated by the executive committee.

**2.** No guided tours may be conducted without the permit referred to in article 7.

This means that non-Kanien'kehá:ka / First Nations guides are currently the only guides operating in the City of Montreal / Tio'tia:ke legally because no indigenous tour guide has ever attended the I.T.H.Q. *Montréal Tourist Guide Program*, to my knowledge.

It is alarming to note that Montreal by-law G-2 also excludes other guides, including History teachers, guides from minority ethnic groups (Jewish, Irish, Haitian, etc.), those with specialist knowledge about the city, Jane's Walk organizers, AirBNB guides from the LGBTQ community, etc.

If it is illegal for First Nations to offer guided tours on their own un-ceded traditional territory without obtaining a license from a Euro-centric institution, there is a serious problem. The exclusion of First Nations guides results in sometimes gross misrepresentation of First Nations by white guides, some of whom are still using racist language like "savages" and "squaws" to describe Kanien'kehá:ka people.

## Issue 2: Questionable training practices of tour guides by the I.T.H.Q.

According to the City of Montreal's [No 1 - Ordinance](#) related to by-law G-2, the I.T.H.Q. is the only educational institute that can award a tour guiding license in the City of Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*:

G-2

ORDONNANCE — No 1 — ORDINANCE	
(Règlement sur les guides touristiques (6501) — article 10, paragraphe a).	
(By-law concerning tourist guides (6501) — article 10, paragraph a).	
À la séance du Comité exécutif de la Ville de Montréal, tenue le 22 janvier 1986 (86 01066),	At the meeting of the Comité exécutif de la Ville de Montréal, held on January 22, 1986 (86 01066),
le Comité exécutif décrète:	the Comité exécutif ordained:
1. — L'Institut du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie du Québec est habilité à délivrer le certificat de compétence de guide touristique.	1. — The Institut du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie du Québec is authorized to issue tourist guide competency certificates.

Having graduated from the I.T.H.Q. *Montréal Tourist Guide Program* in 2017, I left the institution with serious concerns about its History course, which I consider distorted and lacking in crucial historical facts. I had also had concerns about the (lack of) qualifications of the History teacher. To make matters worse, I was also upset that there was no Kanien'keha language component.

Firstly, the I.T.H.Q. does not teach guides that we are on un-ceded indigenous territory or mention the fact that *Tio'tia:ke* is the original name of the territory on which the City of Montreal now exists. This means that licensed guides are not even aware of whose traditional territory they operate on and are unaware of its original name.

Secondly, the I.T.H.Q. does not teach tour guide students any of the Kanien'keha language, meaning guides operating in traditional Kanien'kehá:ka territory cannot even say a simple "hello" or "goodbye" in Kanien'keha. According to the [A.P.G.T. website](#), guided tours are not available in Kanien'keha:



### Which languages are spoken by the guides in Montréal?

Nearly all members are bilingual (French and English) and many speak one or more of the following languages: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Dutch, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

Lastly, the I.T.H.Q. does not hire history teachers from the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation or any other First Nation. In fact, the History teacher who taught the class of 2017 not only was a descendant of colonizer culture with potentially biased views, but was also lacking in official qualifications - he was a practicing tour guide who does not hold a *brevet d'enseignement* (teaching license).

Overall, some components of the I.T.H.Q. program were unsatisfactory: by omitting crucial historical facts about the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation being custodians of their traditional land and failing to teach students a single word of the Kanien'keha language, the program struck me as being both outdated and extremely Euro-centric.

As a result, guides trained by the I.T.H.Q. are not acknowledging that we are on unceded indigenous territory, cannot speak a single word of Kanien'keha, and sometimes misrepresent the Kanien'kehá:ka people as "Les Iroquois", "Indians", "Les Agniers", "Savages", "Squaws" and other outdated (and sometimes derogatory) colonial terms.

The results of a sloppy education can have devastating effects in the real world, and today not a single First Nations guide is legally operating in the City of Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke*, and instead First Nations are mis-represented by guides mostly with European ancestry.

Furthermore, the I.T.H.Q. was unable to provide a safe and positive learning environment for all students. I felt personally uncomfortable due to the misrepresentation of First Nations and neglect of the Mohawk and Irish in the History course, where there were plenty of maps of "New France" but none of *Tio'tia:ke*. While I can't speak for other students, as a teacher I know that marginalized students are often made to feel unsafe, excluded and disrespected when their communities are under-represented or misrepresented in a classroom, which can be extremely harmful to learning.

In conclusion, much work needs to be done to ensure tour guides operating in the City of Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke* are aware of critical historical facts, make territorial acknowledgements, know at least some basic Kanien'keha vocabulary, and not misrepresent the Kanien'kehá:ka people and other First Nations with outdated colonial terminology (and ideology).

**Issue 3: The organization representing tours guides (A.P.G.T.) discourages and censors discussion about Truth and Reconciliation and appears to have challenges confronting internal systemic racism and following the law and its Code of Ethics. It also violates human rights to Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Association. apparently to protect members of its monopoly from anti-racist discourse.**

For me, this is where things get personal, largely because I am a member of the A.P.G.T. but am excluded from communicating with my peers on their *Guides Touristiques de Montréal* Facebook page due to my political convictions (a human right protected under the Quebec Charter of Values). This decision to censor me was made by A.P.G.T. administrators, and I feel it is discriminatory and seriously harms my ability to carry out my profession of tour guiding effectively.

Most tour guides in Montreal are represented by the A.P.G.T., which holds a sort of monopoly on tour guiding in the city as a result of by-law G-2. Some guides jokingly refer to it as "the cartel" because it eliminates any potential competition from those lacking in I.T.H.Q. qualifications.

Perhaps not surprisingly, by-law G-2 is enthusiastically promoted on the A.P.G.T. [website](#).



WELCOME TO MONTRÉAL ! ▾ OUR ASSOCIATION ▾ ACCREDITED GUIDE ▾ MEMBER

## BY-LAW G-2

Montréal is one of only two Canadian cities to require municipal license from tourist guides prior to entering the profession. According to the municipal by-law, only the tourist guides possessing a Montréal municipal license are permitted to guide within the territory of the City of Montréal. This license must be renewed each year. The APGT, the tourist guide agencies, and Tourisme Montréal jointly promote graduated guides to perform guided tours.

The A.P.G.T. is the only game in town as far as Montreal tour guide associations go because its members constitute a monopoly of tour guides in the city. Monopolies are

extremely rare in the 21st Century because historically they have been viewed as greedy and exclusive, and as such have frequently been broken apart to create a more equitable playing field for everyone else.

One can learn a lot about the culture of an organization simply by following its Facebook page. I used to enjoy reading and posting on the "members-only" *Guides Touristiques de Montréal* Facebook page moderated by the A.P.G.T. Members exchanged information, jokes, opinions and updates about all things tour guide related in Montreal.

I belonged to this group for over a year without incident, although I did note some subtle cyber-bullying by A.P.G.T. guide Norman Boivin (a white, male member from the majority francophone community) picking on a visible-minority guide of Chinese origin. I supported the Chinese guide by assisting her with online research, all the while keeping a wary eye on the aggressive online troll.

Everything exploded one day when I posted a [Montreal Gazette article](#) about an indigenous McGill student and athlete who denounced the racist name of his sports team: "Redmen". The A.P.G.T. guide, Norman Boivin, declared: "*NON! JUSTE NON!*". When I inquired "*Pourquoi pas?*", a cyber-war of sorts was triggered.

Norman Boivin started attacking me because I posted sources that rationalize the decision to retire the racist name "Redmen" from McGill varsity sports teams. I was shocked when he called me a "troll" for posting information, and then called for the A.P.G.T. to strip me of my tour guiding license!

Some A.P.G.T. guides who support Norman Boivin rallied to his defense and then some of them started defending the racist word "Redmen" and began using openly racist language against the Kanien'kehá:ka people. A.P.G.T. moderators had to intervene after some A.P.G.T. guides defended racist ideology and used racist terms such as "savage" and "squaw" to define Kanien'kehá:ka people.

In the past, the A.P.G.T. has received complaints about this sort of racist language and discourse. For example, **on May 18, 2017**, a letter of complaint, from a conscientious local citizen, was sent via email to the A.P.G.T. and *Tourisme Montréal* (see APPENDIX A).

"Good afternoon,

I live in Montreal and work in Old Montreal.

Tuesday of this week, as I was walking by the statue of Maisonneuve in front of the church, I could hear an English speaking tour guide telling his group (of about 20 tourists) about the 'savages'.

He kept on talking and **repeating 'savages' (with emphasis) and then I realized he was referring to our First Nations people.**

I was at first very ashamed that we (Montreal) are referring to our native people this way- and the impression it must leave with the tourists. After all, we invaded their land and they were just defending themselves.

I did not react at that time- so I did not see which/if any 'badge' the tour guide had, therefore I am unable to say for whom he worked.

But I feel it is your responsibility to make sure ALL tour guides do not continue to refer to our natives as 'savages'.

I will return every day during my lunch hour to that square- with my camera so if I see/hear this sort of language again- I will be able to film it. (if I do film this, I will send you a copy).

**I sure hope that you are able to remedy this situation asap.** Because it is not kind nor fair and I am embarrassed to be associated this.

Please advise your employees not to refer to them as savages.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this."

The A.P.G.T Vice-President at the time, Louis Poirier, denied that A.P.G.T. guides were at fault without providing any evidence.

"Voici la réponse de Louis Poirier :

you could have cross my path as much as the path of many touristic guides all of whow would have used those words not to describe the First Nations members but to describe the "*Compagnie des Messieurs de Notre-Dame pour la Conversion des Sauvages en l'île de Montréal*" -which was the exact name of the organisation of laymen and clergymen behind the foundation of our beloved city in the 1640's.

This is accurate to use the word "salvages" in this specific case and in this specific case only if we want to be as precise as possible when time come to talk about history. Using the expression "First Nation" to describe the name of this organisation wouldn't be accurate because that was not its name and the expression was not even created in the 1640's!!

Any other time, we would describe the natives as members of the First Nations and if possible describe them using the name of their nation.

Second of all : we do not employ guides. The members of our association are all self-employed and well aware of the distinction between the term "First nation" and "salvages".

I too, regret to hear about this and I can assure you that whoever was using this term was either one of ours using it to describe the context of Ville-Marie's foundation or not one of our member !!

If ever you come across another guide speaking of the First Nations using the word "salvages" make sure to understand the context in which it's used and if you feel in any way offended please verify if that person have either the City of Montréal's touristic guide permit and the A.P.G.T. membership card as well. Every official touristic guide should have the city permit visible at all time and the same with our members.

However and unfortunately not all Montréal's touristic guide are members of the A.P.G.T.

Don't hesitate to write back if necessary.

Yours truly

Louis poirier  
vice-président"

I personally believe that it probably was an A.P.G.T. guide for many reasons.

Firstly, the A.P.G.T. does active surveillance to try and prevent "illegitimate" guides from operating on the *Place d'Armes* and throughout the City of Montreal.

For example, one afternoon in the spring of 2016, for purely educational purposes, I was delivering a walking tour of Old Montreal to my History students. As someone who trained at McGill University for 4 years to teach History and English, I hold a *brevet d'enseignement*, or a teaching license.

In any case, while I was in the magnificent wedding chapel of the Notre-Dame Basilica explaining the talent and significance of sculptor Charles Daudelin, I was interrupted by a rude woman. She was wearing a microphone-device, similar to tools used by tele-marketers, and had an A.P.G.T. permit on a lanyard dangling around her neck. She began waving the permit in the air and hollered, into her microphone:

*"Monsieur, vous n'avez pas le droit! Il faut avoir un permis pour faire les visites guidées!"*

(Hey Mister, you don't have the right! You need a permit to give guided tours!)

Extremely embarrassed by this untimely and rude interruption in the middle of my class, I explained:

*"Madame, je suis professeur d'histoire, formé à l'Université McGill. Ce sont mes étudiants."*

(Madame, I am a History teacher, trained at McGill University. These are my students.)

As this horrible A.P.G.T. guide scowled at me, a priest appeared on the scene, shocked at what he had just witnessed: the unprofessional violation of a sacred space by an A.P.G.T. member, who berated a legally-qualified History teacher during his class, in front of both his students and her clients, with a tele-marketer-style microphone no less!

Needless to say, this experience was so outrageous and disturbing that I went online to see if there was any truth in what the rude A.P.G.T. guide had screeched into her microphone in the sacred wedding chapel.

I was shocked to learn that she was technically correct, given the monopoly on all tour guiding created by Montreal By-Law G-2.

The A.P.G.T. explains its program of monitoring and harassment of other "illegitimate" guides on its [webpage](#). In 1993, a policy of harassment against non-licensed tour guides was created and implemented by the A.P.G.T.: "Annual surveillance began to verify legitimate guides... Surveillance is carried out voluntarily during the busy season by the Executive board members of the APGT."

With the *Place d'Armes* being one of Montreal's most frequented spots by A.P.G.T. tour guides, I find it highly unlikely that an "illegitimate" tour guide would be tolerated operating on the square, especially given the A.P.G.T.'s policies of active surveillance and public harassment against History teachers, First Nations guides, Jane's Walk volunteers and other "illegitimate" operators.

Secondly, there is a serious discrepancy between the words of the conscientious citizen who complained and the answer supplied by former A.P.G.T Vice-President Louis Poirier. The complainant had described the following racist scene unfold to the horror of his eyes, describing the offensive tour guide: "He kept on talking and **repeating 'savages' (with emphasis) and then I realized he was referring to our First Nations people.**"

Former A.P.G.T. Vice-President Louis Poirier responded that it was probably an "illegitimate" unlicensed guide, despite the fact that the A.P.G.T. does active surveillance to prevent this. He suggested that were it an A.P.G.T. guide, the racist language was used for legitimate reasons because the colony of Ville-Marie was founded by the "Compagnie des Messieurs de Notre-Dame pour la Conversion des Sauvages en l'île de Montréal". In English, this translates as the "The Society of Notre-Dame of Montreal for the Conversion of Savages of New France".

As a tour guide, I can guarantee that there is no need to say this expression more than once (and it should be framed in a postcolonial lens as racist). However, the intelligent citizen who complained that day described the racist event as a guide repeating the word "savages" **again and again.**

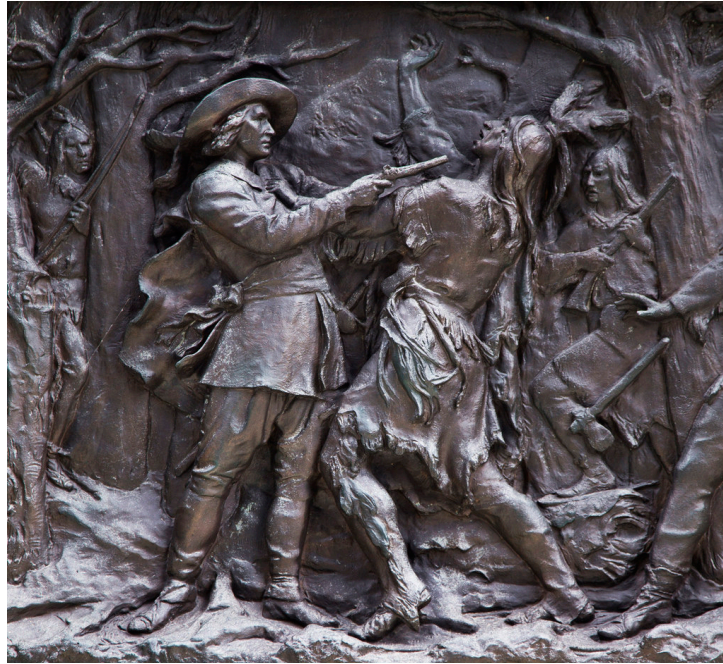
I personally find the excuses of the A.P.G.T. very dishonest and intellectually weak. Instead of accepting responsibility for this racist performance in the heart of Montreal's famous *Place d'Armes*, the important issue was swept under the carpet. This act of denial effectively prevented A.P.G.T. tour guides from holding a dialogue about systemic racism in the Montreal Tourism Industry and its devastating effects on the City of Montreal's brand image.

This harms tour operators, like the companies I run, resulting in less profits and fewer employment opportunities for guides and actors. Why would any 2.0 tourist ever want to visit a city that has been tainted by racism, by "Ambassadors", no less, as the A.P.G.T. guides fancy themselves to be.

Lastly, some APGT guides use words like "savage" and "squaw" to define the local First Nations on Facebook pages, defend racist ideology like the word "Redmen" for a varsity sports team, refuse to make a territorial acknowledgement and make serious efforts to limit discussion about Truth and Reconciliation.

It would seem natural that they would use the same terminology and outdated ideology during guided tours, especially given that racist symbols in the *Place d'Armes* were designed to foster and prompt discriminatory, Euro-centric discourse. One needs only to look at the violent, racist and derogatory images depicted on sculptor's Louis-Philippe

Hébert's *Maisonneuve Monument* (unveiled in 1895), in the centre of the *Place d'Armes*.



As such, the guide who used racist language to put on the horrible and derogatory performance, and was complained about by a conscientious citizen, was almost certainly an A.P.G.T. member, in my humble opinion.

To make matters worse, one of the A.P.G.T. guides who defended the racist ideology on the *Guides Touristiques de Montréal* Facebook page actually posts anti-Kanien'kehá:ka racist imagery on his personal Facebook page (see Appendix B).

Furthermore, on the evening of the cyber-war, I was also harassed by an APGT guide named Frédéric Gangé, who demanded that I "cordially stop posting political comments" on the A.P.G.T.-moderated Facebook page.

THU 9:20 PM

Monsieur King, Mon nom est Frédéric Gagné, je suis guide de Montréal et membre de l'APGT. Je vous demande cordialement de cesser vos commentaires politiques sur la page Facebook des guides de Montréal. Moi aussi j'ai des opinions politiques et quand je juge qu'elles valent la peine d'être partagé, je les publie sur ma page personnelle, pas sur la page de mon association professionnelle. Merci de votre attention.

I was quite shocked that an A.P.G.T. guide would send me an offensive message suggesting I should not exercise my right to Freedom of Expression when dialoguing about important historical matters, like Truth and Reconciliation, with my fellow tour guide colleagues. Freedom of Expression is a cherished First Nations, Canadian and *Québécois* value that is enshrined in the *Haudenosaunee* Great Law of Peace, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the *Charte des valeurs québécoises*, after all.

Exasperated, I decided to take action. Given the questionable and Euro-centric history course offered to tour guiding students at the I.T.H.Q. and the fact that some tour guides appear to be openly racist, I believe that the Kanien'kehá:ka and other First Nations people and Other marginalized cultures are being seriously misrepresented by white tour guides trained at the I.T.H.Q.

I wrote a letter of complaint to the A.P.G.T. about anti-Kanien'kehá:ka racist language being used by some guides on the Facebook page, and while moderators did delete comments such as "savages" and "squaws" being used to describe Kanien'kehá:ka people, I also was told that the A.P.G.T. would not accept any "activist comments" (*Tout commentaire militant ou activiste*) on the Facebook page which it moderates. A.P.G.T. spokesperson Elyse Lévesque suggested: "limit your personal opinion, especially if it may offend other guides" (*limiter votre opinion personnelle, surtout si elle peut offenser d'autres guides*). (APPENDIX C)

Exacerbating matters, the current board of the A.P.G.T. (including Martin Coutu, Jean-Philippe Riopel, Françoise Bâby, André Faribault, Martine Robitaille, Louis Trudel, Elyse Lévesque and Ronny Pangia,) claims it has no mechanism to correct the misinformation received by the guides during their training at the I.T.H.Q. or to discipline tour guides who create racist imagery or who use racist language:

"We are neither a professional order, nor a political party with a party line, nor a mandatory union, nor even an employer with the power to demand anything from its members."

*(Nous ne sommes ni un ordre professionnel, ni un parti politique avec une ligne de parti, ni un syndicat obligatoire, ni même un employeur ayant le pouvoir d'exiger quoi que ce soit de ses membres.)*

Indeed, the A.P.G.T. also appears to be at odds with its own Code of Ethics (APPENDIX D):

**3.04 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD KEEP UP-TO-DATE SO AS TO BETTER INFORM THE VISITORS.**

**3.10 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE:**

**A) ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL WORK BY SHARING HIS OR HER KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE;**

**B) MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS, THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION, TO THE APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL BODIES;**

**C) PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL MEASURES.**



When I suggested, as part of the Truth and Reconciliation movement, that guides should acknowledge the fact that we are on un-ceded Indigenous territory, the A.P.G.T. stated: "We do not want members to "educate" others through their own opinions." (*Nous ne souhaitons pas non plus que des membres en "éduquent" d'autres à travers leurs propres opinions.*)

I then mentioned Montreal By-Law G-2, which governs tour guiding in Montreal

95-246, a. 31.

8. In the discharge of his duties, each tourist guide must:

(4) convey information strictly in accordance with historical, geographic, economic, social and cultural **facts. (my emphasis)**

When I explained that it is an undisputed fact that we are on un-ceded traditional Indigenous territory, I was met with denial by many of the A.P.G.T. tour guides.

I was very surprised, given that all universities in Montreal, Mayor Valerie Plante, former Kanien'kehá:ka Chief Christine Zachary Deom and many other major institutions and prominent individuals acknowledge this fact as a matter of both respect for First Nations and traditional protocol. For example, this territorial acknowledgement is often mentioned before important official meetings, such as those held by the Executive Committee of the City of Montreal.

Indeed, according to the A.P.G.T. spokesperson: "Everyone has their subjective reality, formed by their baggage of knowledge, their personal experience, their family and social history, as in each class, each group of workers, each society. We wish that everyone respects the reality and the opinions of others."

*(Chacun a sa réalité subjective, formée par son bagage de connaissances plus ou moins grand, son expérience personnelle, son histoire familiale et sociale, comme dans chaque classe, chaque groupe de travailleurs, chaque société. Nous souhaitons que chacun respecte la réalité et les opinions des autres.)*

By suggesting that A.P.G.T. guides are governed by "their subjective reality" instead of objective facts, as demanded by Montreal By-Law G-2, it seems clear that the A.P.G.T. misunderstands or is refusing to embrace key elements of Montreal By-Law G-2.

To drive the point home, the A.P.G.T. spokesperson then stated the following Kafkaesque words: "If this is not clear enough for you, I invite you to stop participating in the discussions." (*Si cela n'est pas assez clair pour toi, je t'invite à ne plus participer aux discussions.*)

I was further shocked that the A.P.G.T. actually changed its policies on its Facebook page following this disturbing incident. Originally, the page description had stated:

"We can exchange anything: news, events, or websites relevant to our business; last-minute information, for example on the state of the traffic or accidents that could hinder our business; any questions you may have that the Guide Community might have an answer to."

*(On peut y échanger n'importe quoi : des nouvelles, des événements, ou des sites internet pertinents à notre métier ; des informations de dernière minute, par exemple sur l'état de la circulation ou les accidents qui pourraient entraver notre métier ; toute question que vous posez et à laquelle la communauté des guides pourrait avoir une réponse.)*

Following the cyber-war between anti-racist and racist discourses, the A.P.G.T. decided to ban all activist comments (*Tout commentaire militant ou activiste.*).

I asked the A.P.G.T. to clarify its definition of an "activist comment", given that many guides had shared articles about political issues and had expressed their activist opinions in the past on the Facebook page without any censorship. The A.P.G.T. administration did not respond.

I continued posting articles on the Facebook page with caution, not knowing if articles I posted or comments I made would be deleted if they were seen by moderators as "activist".

I was utterly stunned on October 25, 2018, when I was actually banned from the *Guides Touristiques de Montréal* Facebook page after posting a [CBC article](#) about Montreal children studying Reconciliation with award-winning author Monique Gray Smith. Her pedagogical children's book, *Speaking Our Truth*, was written "to help young people understand the impact of residential schools.

As an educator, I was bewildered by the fact that 9-year-old children are mature enough to openly discuss Truth and Reconciliation in their classroom and yet adult A.P.G.T. tour guides, some of whom misrepresent First Nations with racist terminology on a daily basis, refuse to do so.

Needless to say, I was quite disturbed that the A.P.G.T. seems unable to distinguish between facts (objective reality) and opinions (subjective reality), and actually takes measures to limit facts that may be offensive to tour some guides, such as the fact that Montreal sits on the un-ceded Indigenous territory the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation (the legitimate custodians to these lands and waters), and the fact that Truth and Reconciliation is an official policy of the Government of Canada.

By changing its policies to override enshrined human rights to Freedom of Expression and Association to protect potentially racist guides from anti-racist discourse, I believe that the A.P.G.T. is demonstrating a serious lack of professionalism which results in serious harm to the City of Montreal and the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation.

## Recommendations and Conclusion

If we are to succeed at Truth and Reconciliation, we are going to have to reflect on how systemic racism affects our current worldviews and behaviours, and adjust these accordingly to become more inclusive and welcoming of diversity, truth and reconciliation.

As such, I decided the best course of action would be to contact all of the stakeholders I could think of on the topic of tour guiding and reconciliation in the City of Montreal / *Tio'tia:ke* to try and start resolving these thorny issues.

As a legally-qualified History teacher and City of Montreal tour guide, I wanted to make a series of recommendations to the stakeholders to get the ball rolling.

### I.T.H.Q.

1. Work with local First Nations to completely overhaul the Euro-centric History curriculum.
2. Hire a licensed History teacher, especially one with a First Nations background.
3. Introduce basic Kanien'keha language training for tour guiding students.
4. Ensure students visit a First Nations community as part of their training.
5. Acknowledge on the website that the I.T.H.Q. is on un-ceded indigenous territory.
6. Review the entire program to make sure it complies with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and seek approval from local First Nations leadership.
7. Create a course to re-educate licensed guides on matters of Truth and Reconciliation. Note that this should be free because the I.T.H.Q. omitted crucial historical facts in its History course. (See APPENDIX F for important topics that were excluded in the I.T.H.Q. course.)
8. Review andragogical approaches to education at the I.T.H.Q. to ensure students of all backgrounds, especially indigenous students and students from minority ethnic groups and other marginalized communities are guaranteed a safe and positive learning environment where they are accurately represented.

## **Tourisme Montréal**

1. Create a program to get tour companies *Tio'tia:ke*-ready. Like the China-ready program, *Tourisme Montréal* should certify companies that make efforts at Truth and Reconciliation and contribute to the City of Montreal's goals of becoming a City of Reconciliation (e.g. websites translated in Kanien'keha, basic Kanien'keha language training for staff, sensitivity training, cultural training, etc.)
2. Acknowledge on the website that *Tourisme Montréal* is on un-ceded indigenous territory.
3. Pay closer attention to unprofessional behaviour at the A.P.G.T. and intervene if necessary.
4. Consider de-certifying the A.P.G.T. and embrace **2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/Guides touristiques de Montréal)**, a new association that has been created as an ethical alternative to the A.P.G.T. While it is still informal in structure, it respects Freedom of Expression legislation, has Safe Space and Netiquette policies, and works hard to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and build bridges between First Nations and those operating on their traditional territory in the tour guiding milieu. (see APPENDIX E)
4. Review the entire organization to make sure it complies with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and seek approval from local First Nations leadership.
5. Actively promote Montreal as a city of reconciliation and acknowledge that *Tio'tia:ke* is the original name of the territory in Kanien'keha.
6. Make links with local First Nations, especially the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, to cross-promote tourism initiatives.
7. Demand from the City of Montreal that First Nations guides be allowed to operate as tour guides on their traditional territory, even without a license obtained at the I.T.H.Q.
8. Immediately engage with the 2019 UN Year of Indigenous Languages by including the endangered Kanien'keha language in all marketing and promotion campaigns.

## **A.P.G.T.**

1. Publicly apologize to the Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation and the City of Montreal on behalf of the A.P.G.T. tour guides who used racist language online and defaced the sacred Haudenosaunee symbol of the White Pine on the City of Montreal's newly-inclusive flag and posted it on Facebook.

2. Respect Freedom of Expression and Association of all members, freedoms which are enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Quebec Charter of Values and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Great Law of Peace.
3. Learn the difference between facts and opinions and start respecting by-law G-2 and the A.P.G.T. Code of Ethics.
4. Discipline A.P.G.T. members who use racist language or create racist imagery (e.g. ask the City of Montreal to rescind their permit until they are properly re-educated.)
5. Review the entire organization to make sure it complies with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and seek approval from local First Nations leadership.
6. Create a Netiquette policy on the Facebook page to avoid future racist comments.
7. Insist that all licensed tour guides be re-educated to be aware of Truth and Reconciliation initiatives, learn basic Kanien'keha language skills and First Nations History approved by First Nations scholars.
8. Revise the APGT Code of Ethics to make it explicit that all A.P.G.T. tour guides are to do a [territorial acknowledgement](#) at the beginning of all guided tours.
9. Change the structure of the organization to ensure the A.P.G.T. can legally discipline or expel tour guides who exhibit racist behaviour.
10. Start dialoging with **2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/Guides touristiques de montréal)**, the new tour guide association that embraces 21st Century values.
11. Un-censor guides who have been blocked from the A.P.G.T.-moderated Facebook pages due to their political convictions.
12. Consider dissolving the A.P.G.T. if it is unable to modify its unprofessional behaviour.

### City of Montreal

1. Revise or scrap by-law G-2 to ensure First Nations guides (and History teachers, ethnic minorities, knowledge specialists, Jane's Walk volunteers, etc.) are able to guide legally in the City of Montreal without harassment or molestation from APGT members or fines from the City of Montreal.
2. Ensure that all currently-licensed tour guides be re-educated to be aware of Truth and Reconciliation initiatives, learn basic Kanien'keha language skills and First Nations History approved by First Nations scholars.

3. In collaboration with local First Nations, take measures to truly make Montreal a City of Reconciliation (e.g. incentivize businesses to learn how to say basic phrases like hello and goodbye in Kanien'keha, re-label important geographical features to include their original Kanien'keha names, such as Mount Royal, prioritize First Nations vocabulary when re-naming streets and creating parks and other attractions.)
4. Certify other institutions to offer programs in tour guiding.
5. Adjust the maximum salaries tour guides can receive (\$27/hour) to a minimum of \$50/hour to fall into line with other cities in North America and Europe and to attract a higher standard of tour guides into the profession.
6. Begin exploring ways to adjust legislation to ensure Kanien'keha is included as an official language used and supported by the City of Montreal. It is important to remember that due to governmental policies of cultural genocide against First Nations, Kanien'keha is only spoken by 3500 people on the planet, versus 1.5 billion English-speakers and 225 million French-speakers. The City of Montreal definitely has a role to play in protecting and reviving this endangered ancient Indigenous language that is at risk of extinction.
7. Instruct *Tourisme Montréal* to immediately engage with the 2019 UN Year of Indigenous Languages by including the endangered Kanien'keha language in all marketing and promotion campaigns.

#### Other Stakeholders

Support dialogue between all the stakeholders with a focus on how to reform the City of Montreal's tour guiding industry to make it compliant with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and adopt the best practices concerning the inclusion of Indigenous tourism and updating the entire industry.

Be available to assist the reformation of the policies of the abovementioned organizations, such as by providing education, Kanien'keha language training, marginalized historical facts, etc.

If possible, act as moderators, policy-makers, facilitators and speakers to ensure a smooth flow from the outdated and somewhat racist system we have now to what I call **Montréal 2.0**, a city that embraces 21<sup>st</sup> Century values, such as Freedom of Expression and Truth and Reconciliation, which are properly demonstrated to tourists by the Ambassadors of the City, or tour guides.

\*\*\*

I thank you for all for taking these concerns very seriously and hope a dialogue between all stakeholders can be had soon.

I think the next step is to see who wants to participate in this dialogue, so please email me at [optatif@gmail.com](mailto:optatif@gmail.com) if you would like to be included and I will make the necessary arrangements.

Sincerely,

Donovan King, MFA, B.Ed, BFA, ACS, DEC

History teacher, historian, cultural worker, tour guide (excluded A.P.G.T. member)

Founder and Owner of [Irish Montreal Excursions](#) and [Haunted Montreal/ Montréal hanté](#)

## APPENDIX A

### Letter of complaint sent via email to the A.P.G.T. and *Tourisme Montréal* on May 18, 2017:



info@apgt.ca

to info

Tue, Jun 13, 2017, 4:46 PM ☆ ↩ ⋮

Chers membres,

Votre CA s'occupe de différents sujets ... voici un exemple.

Une plainte qui vient d'une citoyenne qui travaille dans le vieux Montréal nous a été envoyée le 18 mai dernier.

La personne a envoyé la même plainte à Tourisme Montréal. Ces derniers se sont naturellement tournés vers nous en disant qu'il s'agit probablement de quelqu'un qui n'est pas guide. On peut être fiers de la confiance que nous accordons les gens de Tourisme Montréal en ce qui concerne notre contenu rigoureux.

Nous vous faisons connaître le contenu de cette plainte afin de vous y sensibiliser. Rappelons nous tous de faire preuve de délicatesse lorsque nous utilisons le mot "sauvage" car celui-ci peut effectivement offenser, s'il n'est pas mis dans son contexte historique.

Voici donc la plainte reçue suivie de la réponse de notre vice-président Louis Poirier car j'étais à l'extérieur.

Remarquez que je n'aurais pas si bien dit ... Bravo Louis !

Sachez que la personne est informée que nous, les guides touristiques membres de l'A.P.G.T., sommes tous avisés et que nous nous engageons à bien refléter l'histoire.

Good afternoon,

I live in Montreal and work in Old Montreal.

Tuesday of this week, as I was walking by the statue of Maisonneuve in front of the church, I could hear an English speaking tour guide telling his group (of about 20 tourists) about the 'savages'.

He kept on talking and **repeating 'savages' (with emphasis) and then I realized he was referring to our First Nations people.**

I was at first very ashamed that we (Montreal) are referring to our native people this way- and the impression it must leave with the tourists. After all, we invaded their land and they were just defending themselves.

I did not react at that time- so I did not see which/if any 'badge' the tour guide had, therefore I am unable to say for whom he worked.

But I feel it is your responsibility to make sure ALL tour guides do not continue to refer to our natives as 'savages'.

I will return every day during my lunch hour to that square- with my camera so if I see/hear this sort of language again- I will be able to film it. (if I do film this, I will send you a copy).

**I sure hope that you are able to remedy this situation asap.** Because it is not kind nor fair and I am embarrassed to be associated with this.

Please advise your employees not to refer to them as savages.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this.

Voici la réponse de Louis Poirier :

you could have cross my path as much as the path of many touristic guides all of whom would have used those words not to describe the First Nations members but to describe the "Compagnie des Messieurs de Notre-Dame pour la Conversion des Sauvages en l'île de Montréal" -which was the exact name of the organisation of laymen and clergymen behind the foundation of our beloved city in the 1640's.

This is accurate to use the word "salvages" in this specific case and in this specific case only if we want to be as precise as possible when time come to talk about history. Using the expression "First Nation" to describe the name of this organisation wouldn't be accurate because that was not its name and the expression was not even created in the 1640's!!

Any other time, we would describe the natives as members of the First Nations and if possible describe them using the name of their nation.

Second of all : we do not employ guides. The members of our association are all self-employed and well aware of the distinction between the term "First nation" and "salvages".

I too, regret to hear about this and I can assure you that whoever was using this term was either one of ours using it to describe the context of Ville-Marie's foundation or not one of our member !!

If ever you come across another guide speaking of the First Nations using the word "salvages" make sure to understand the context in which it's used and if you feel in any way offended please verify if that person have either the City of Montréal's touristic guide permit and the A.P.G.T. membership card as well. Every official touristic guide should have the city permit visible at all time and the same with our members.

However and unfortunately not all Montréal's touristic guide are members of the A.P.G.T.

Don't hesitate to write back if necessary.

Yours truly

Louis poirier  
vice-président

Voilà, nous comptons sur vous !  
Bonne soirée!

Chantal Doiron  
présidente

Association professionnelle des guides touristiques de Montréal  
[www.apgt.ca](http://www.apgt.ca)





## APPENDIX B

This scandal has triggered what can only be described as a "white bread" cultural war between dominant colonizer and marginal colonized cultures, notably the Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation and the Irish.

It started with the screenshot taken of A.P.G.T. member and licensed tour guide Michel Ménard's Facebook Page (October 21, 2018).

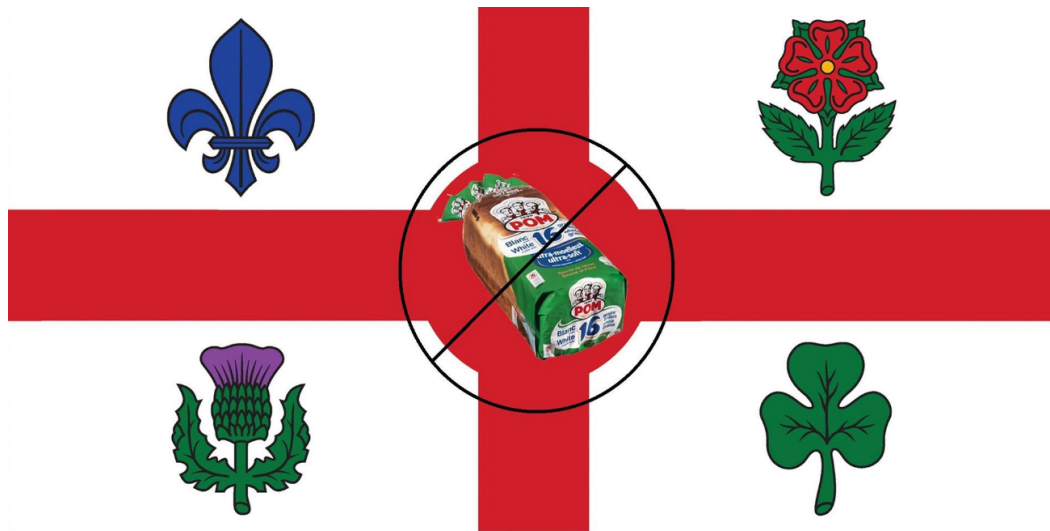
Note that the sacred Kanien'kehá:ka symbol of the White Pine, which was only recently added to the flag to promote peace, inclusion and reconciliation has been deleted and replaced with a loaf of white bread.

According to online research, white bread symbolizes: 1) something banal, unhealthy, and tasteless; 2) something that is plain and boring; 3) "white trash", 4) colonizer culture, and 5) white supremacy.

Even more disturbing is the fact that two A.P.G.T. tour guides, including the former Vice-President of the A.P.G.T and a professor at the I.T.H.Q., actually "Liked" the image on Facebook.



Graphic artists at **2.0** (Montreal Tour Guides/Guides touristiques de montréal) then culture-jammed the image to raise awareness about how inappropriate and racist it is:



Finally, one Mr. Sean Cassidy (*Cathair na Gaillimhe* - Galway City, *Éire*) emailed **2.0** a postcolonial correction of the location of the white bread on the flag (on November 14, 2018), with a fascinating historical explanation:

Sean Cassidy <seancassidy1984@yahoo.com>

Wed, Nov 14, 8:06 AM

to me

*Beannachtaí ó Éirinn!*

Mr. King, I have been following the international scandal unfolding with great delight in Montreal, Canada over the feathers your Irish Montreal Excursions walking tour company has ruffled! It is most amusing that it all started when you asked an NPO (Les amis de la montagne) for the real Native name of tourist attraction "Mount Royal" on the un-ceded lands of Tio'tia:ke - and they could not answer correctly!

I've greatly enjoyed the many media reports and following the international scandal on social media, as it involves a lot of dark Irish humour. We are laughing our arses off over here in Ireland over this witty and postcolonial Irish diasporan entertainment!

To make a contribution to the this absurd satire, I wanted to take issue with the image of Montreal's flag that was desecrated by a "professional" APGT tour guide, who deleted the Mohawk symbol of the white pine and replaced it with a loaf of white bread to the hearty approval of his APGT peers.

I was curious about this act of cultural vandalism, because it is not rooted in sound historical research.

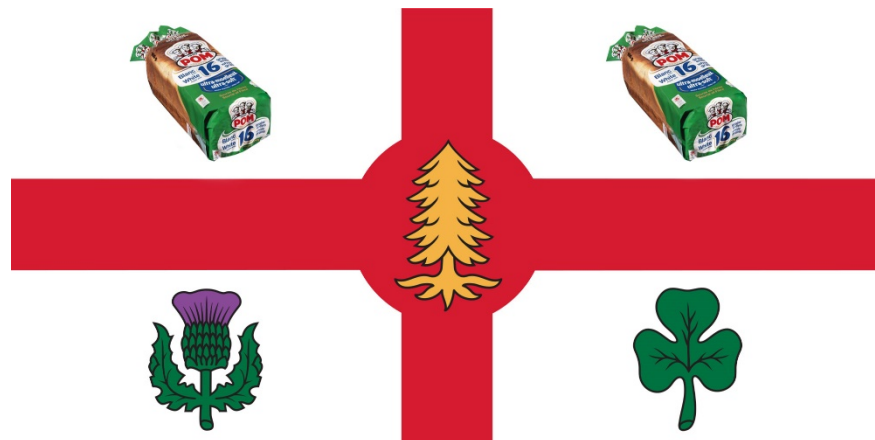
"The greatest thing since sliced white bread" may be a phrase we're all familiar with, however it may be less well known that white bread has been enjoyed for thousands of years and has frequently been used as a status symbol in the past.

For example, while starving Irish "tenants" were being forced off their lands by illegitimate and greedy British landlords during the Famine of 1847 (and being deported to foreign lands on rickety "Coffin Ships"), the colonial masters were said to dine on expensive and delicate white bread as their vulnerable "tenants" were forced to eat diseased, blight-stricken potatoes - and consequently died by the hundreds of thousands from hunger.

Make no mistake how ugly and unethical colonization is.

"White bread" symbolizes colonizer cultures and not the cultures of the colonized, like the Mohawk First Nation or the Irish.

Given what sounds like a sloppy education at the tour guiding institute, I have taken the steps to correct the ridiculous APGT image to make it more realistic and in line with the postcolonial history you are so desperately trying to teach your peers.



Please feel free to share it, especially with your peers who have "white bread" (e.g. colonizer) ancestry! ;o)

All the best,

Sean Cassidy

*Cathair na Gaillimhe (Galway City), Éire*

## APPENDIX C

### A.P.G.T. response to my official letter of complaint about overt racism among some A.P.G.T. guides.

En réponse à ton courriel Inbox x

info@apgt.ca  
to me

Sun, Oct 21, 12:01 PM (6 days ago)

French > English [Translate message](#) Turn off for: French x

Bonjour Donovan,

Nous avons bien lu ton courriel.

J'aimerais d'abord commencer par dire à nouveau que l'APGT est une association professionnelle qui a pour but de créer des partenariats avec des acteurs de la vie culturelle montréalaise, d'organiser des activités de réseautage, des conférences, des formations, afin de briser l'isolement, de créer un sentiment d'appartenance, en plus de prodiguer une police d'assurance aux membres. Chacun décide d'y adhérer ou non. De plus, puisque l'adhésion à l'APGT n'est pas obligatoire et que les guides touristiques sont tous des travailleurs autonomes, chaque membre est responsable du contenu qu'il prodigue et de la mise à jour de ses connaissances. Nous ne sommes ni un ordre professionnel, ni un parti politique avec une ligne de parti, ni un syndicat obligatoire, ni même un employeur ayant le pouvoir d'exiger quoi que ce soit de ses membres.

Les membres de l'APGT viennent en effet de divers milieux, ayant étudié dans divers domaines, avec sans contredit des compréhensions différentes des questions politiques et historiques. Notre diversité fait notre force, mais suppose aussi qu'on respecte les diverses formes de compréhension des questions historiques et politiques qui en découlent. Chacun a sa réalité subjective, formée par son bagage de connaissances plus ou moins grand, son expérience personnelle, son histoire familiale et sociale, comme dans chaque classe, chaque groupe de travailleurs, chaque société. Nous souhaitons que chacun respecte la réalité et les opinions des autres.

Comme tu le sais, pour ma part, je fais un mémoire de maîtrise en science politique sur les questions autochtones. J'ai lu et étudié le rapport dont tu parles, et de nombreux autres rapports, textes de lois, littérature militante et scientifique. Je suis sur le CA de l'APGT et je suis probablement parmi les guides qui ont le plus lu et étudié ces questions. Je ne souhaite pas que tu nous écrives un courriel à ce sujet, car je connais déjà très bien ces questions. Mon silence lors de vos discussions ne signifie pas que je ne trouve pas ça important. Il signifie simplement ce que c'est la position que je prends personnellement : d'être une alliée des questions autochtones, mais pas une militante, même si j'ai moi aussi des ancêtres autochtones. Bref, je suis très sensible à cette situation. Nous avons déjà organisé une formation avec Mélissa Mollen-Dupuis en mai, et je t'avais déjà mentionné sur Facebook que suite aux demandes que nous avons eues, nous allions en organiser une seconde. Chacun est libre de venir ou non à ces formations et d'appliquer ou non ce qu'il aura appris. Nous ne pouvons pas faire plus que d'organiser des formations à ce sujet.

Pour ce qui est du groupe Facebook, c'est très simple : nous acceptons des textes informatifs pouvant servir d'outils aux guides touristiques dans leur vie de tous les jours, mais nous ne souhaitons pas que les membres militent pour des causes sur ce forum. Nous ne souhaitons pas non plus que des membres en "éduquent" d'autres à travers leurs propres opinions. Encore une fois on tombe dans la subjectivité, car le monde de chacun, les limites de l'acceptable, les lois, les règlements, sont tous subjectifs. Sur le groupe Facebook de l'APGT, il s'agira des subjectivités de Ronny, Martine et moi, qui déciderons ce qui est acceptable ou non. Mais c'est assez simple, deux choses ne seront pas acceptées :

- Tout commentaire militant ou activiste. Il y a de nombreux autres forums propices au militantisme, incluant ta propre page personnelle que chacun peut décider de suivre ou pas, mais pas celui de l'APGT ;
- Tout commentaire irrespectueux envers un autre membre ou un groupe.


Si cela n'est pas assez clair pour toi, je t'invite à ne plus participer aux discussions. Comme tu le sais, les membres du CA sont bénévoles, et le temps que nous passons à gérer les conflits sur cette page Facebook, nous ne le passons pas à organiser des activités et à réfléchir à notre profession. Nous souhaitons que les commentaires activistes soient mis de côté afin d'éviter les conflits et ainsi pouvoir consacrer notre temps à autre chose. La seule chose que j'ai effacée, c'est un commentaire désagréable à ton égard, ainsi que tous les commentaires militants sous ma publication qui appelaient à la retenue et au respect, car je voulais garder cette publication dans le ton de son message, et je t'ai invité à nous écrire en privé.

Si tu n'es pas d'accord avec notre façon de gérer ce groupe, libre à toi de ne plus en être membre, mais nous n'allons pas justifier chaque action - encore là, subjective - que nous prendrons.

En espérant que cela réponde à tes questions.

Au plaisir, et bonne journée,

Elyse Lévesque  
Pour le CA de l'APGT  
Association professionnelle des guides touristiques de Montréal  
[www.apgt.ca](http://www.apgt.ca)



## APPENDIX D



Association professionnelle des guides touristiques,  
Chapitre de Montréal

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

#### **INTRODUCTION TO CODE OF ETHICS**

THE TOURIST GUIDE ACTS AS AN AMBASSADOR, REPRESENTING HIS OR HER REGION TO TOURISTS.

THE GUIDE'S DUTY IS TO PAINT A VIVID, ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE CITY OR REGION AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE.

THE GUIDE SHOULD HAVE A SOLID GENERAL EDUCATION AND KEEP ABREAST OF CURRENT EVENTS.

THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD ALSO DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS: DIGNITY, TACT, JUDGMENT, OBJECTIVITY, OPENNESS, COURTESY, PUNCTUALITY AND SO ON.

THIS CODE OF ETHICS COVERS THESE DESIRABLE TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

**CHAPTER I**

**DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO  
THE PUBLIC**

- 1.01 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD BE PUNCTUAL, ARRIVING AT LEAST FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES BEFORE THE SCHEDULED TIME OF DEPARTURE AND INTRODUCING HIM OR HERSELF TO THE PERSON IN CHARGE.
- 1.02 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD APPROACH THE GROUP OF VISITORS WITH COURTESY, AND DO HIS OR HER BEST TO GET TO KNOW THE VISITORS FROM THE START OF THE TOUR.
- 1.03 IN CARRYING OUT HIS OR HER DUTIES, THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD:
- A) BE IMPECCABLY DRESSED AND GROOMED, AVOIDING ELABORATE CLOTHING;
  - B) NOT CHEW GUM;
  - C) NOT SMOKE WHILE WORKING;
  - D) AVOID UNDUE FAMILIARITY OR USING TOURISTS' FIRST NAMES; THE TERMS SIR, MADAM AND MISS ARE MORE APPROPRIATE;
  - E) USE CLEAR LANGUAGE, ADAPTED TO THE VISITORS;
  - F) AVOID LOSING CONTROL;
  - G) NEVER USE QUESTIONABLE LANGUAGE;
  - H) NEVER GET INVOLVED IN A GROUP DISCUSSION;
  - I) AVOID IMPOSING PERSONAL OR POLITICAL OPINIONS; CRITICISM HAS NO PLACE IN A GUIDE TOUR;
  - J) ALWAYS SMILE, EVEN IN UNPLEASANT SITUATIONS.
- 1.04 WHEN HE OR SHE MUST RENDER A PARTICULAR SERVICE TO AN INDIVIDUAL, THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD BE SURE THAT IN SO DOING, HE OR SHE IS NOT ACTING TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE REST OF THE GROUP.
- 1.05 NO RELATIONSHIPS OTHER THAN THE PURELY PROFESSIONAL ARE APPROPRIATE IN THE CONTEXT OF A GUIDED TOUR.

- 1.06 THE TOURIST GUIDE'S BEHAVIOUR MUST REFLECT OBJECTIVITY, MODERATION AND DIGNITY.
- 1.07 THE TOURIST GUIDE MUST SHOW REASONABLE OPENESS AND DILIGENCE.

## CHAPTER 2

### **DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO THE EMPLOYER**

- 2.01 IT IS HARMFUL TO THE DIGNITY OF THE TOURIST GUIDE'S WORK TO OFFER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO A THRID PARTY WITH WHOM THE EMPLOYER HAS CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS.
- 2.02 IF THE TOUR GUIDE IS UNABLE TO FULFILL HIS OR HER COMMITMENT FOR A SPECIFIC DATE, HE OR SHE SHOULD CHECK WITH THE EMPLOYER ABOUT FINDING A COLLEAGUE TO ACT AS A REPLACEMENT.
- 2.3 THE TOURIST GUIDE MUST AGREE TO FULFILL THE CONTRACT AS DRAW UP, AND ASSUME IT FULLY, FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED, BARRING UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.

- 2.04 IN NO CASE IS THE TOURIST GUIDE TO CRITICOSE HIS OR HER OWN EMPLOYER IN THE PRESENCE OF CLIENTS.

## CHAPTER 3

### **DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO THE POSITION OF GUIDE**

#### SECTION 1

- 3.01 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD SUPPORT ANY MEASURE LOKIELY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES IN THE MILIEU IN WHICH HE OR SHE WORKS.
- 3.02 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD OBSERVE TO THE LETTER THE REGULATIONS FOR TOURIST GUIDES WHICH APPLY IN THE CITY OR REGION WHERE HE OR SHE WORKS:
- A) RENEW HIS OR HER PERMIT ANNUALLY WITHIN THE DEADLINE SET BY THE CITY;
  - B) CARRY HIS OR HER WORK PERMIT AT ALLTIMES;
  - C) PROMINENTLY DISPLAY THE GUIDE'S INSIGNIA.
- 3.03 BEFORE ACCEPTING A CONTRACT, THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD:
- A) CONSIDER THE LIMITS OF HIS OR HER SKILLS AND

APTITUDES AND THE MEANS AVAILABLE;

B) NOT UNDERTAKE TO GIVE A GUIDED TOUR FOR WHICH HE OR SHE IS INSSUFFICIENTLY PREPARED WITHOUT OBTAININF THE NECESSARY ASSISTANCES;

C) BE FAMILIAR WITH ALTERNATIVES ROUTES IN CASE OF ROAD WORK OR BLOCKED-OFF STREETS;

D) LEARN AND STUDY THE ITINERARY BEFORE THE DEPARTURE OF THE TOUR, ESPECIALLY IN THE CASE OF SPECIAL ITINERARIES.

3.04 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD KEEP UP-TO-DATE SO AS TO BETER INFORM THE VISITORS.

3.05 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS OR HER POSITION TO:

A) OBTAIN OR ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN ADVANTAGES FOR HIM OR HERSELF;

B) GIVE HIS OR HER WORK AN AIR OF COMMERCIALISM.

3.06 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD NEVER SOLICIT A TIP FOR THE WORK HE OR SHE HAS DONE; BUT IF A TIP IS OFFERED, IT

SHOULD BE ACCEPTED DISCREETLY.

## SECTION 2

### **RELATIONS WITH COLLEAGUES**

3.07 THE TOURIST GUIDE'S PERMIT IS PERSONAL AND NON-TRANFERRABLE; THE INSIGNIA SHOULD NEVER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE USED BY ANYONE OTHER THAN THE PERMIT HOLDER.

3.08 IN CASE OF CONTRACTS WHERE THE EMPLOYER CALLS FOR SEVERAL GUIDES, THE GUIDE SHOULD DO HIS OR HER UTMOST TO FACILITATE THE WORK OF HIS OR HER COLLEAGUES.

3.09 IF THE TOURIST GUIDE TAKES ON A CONTRACT INVOLVING ANOTHER GUIDE, HE OR SHE SHOULD ACT WITH DISCRETION RESPECT THE DUTIES OF EACH GUIDE.

## SECTION 3

### **CONTRIBUTING TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE POSITION OF GUIDE**

3.10 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD, WHEREVER POSSIBLE:

A) ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENET OF PROFESSIONAL WORK BY



SHARING HIS OR HER  
KNOWLEDGE AND  
EXPERIENCE;

B) MAKE  
RECOMMENDATIONS,  
THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION,  
TO THE APPROPRIATE  
PROFESSIONAL BODIES;

C) PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL  
MEASURES.

3.11 THE TOURIST GUIDE SHOULD  
TAKE RETRAINING COURSES  
OR PARTICIPATE IN OTHER  
ACTIVITIES RELATING TO HIS  
OR HER WORK.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINAL PROVISIONS

4.01 THIS CODE OF ETHICS  
CONSTITUTES, WITHOUT IN  
ANY WAY LIMITING, THE RULES  
OF THE ASSOCIATION  
PROFESSIONNELLE DES  
GUIDES TOURISTIQUES,  
CHAPITRE DE  
MONTRÉAL, GOVERNING  
GUIDED TOURS.

4.02 ANY DEVIATION FROM THESE  
RULES COULD BE CONSIDERED  
AS A FAILURE BY THE TOURIST  
GUIDE TO ADAPT HIS OR HER  
BEHAVIOUR OR WORKING  
HABITS TO THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF RELATIONS  
WITH VISITORS.

4.03 THESE REGULATIONS WERE  
ADOPTED BY THE MEMBERS  
AT A SPECIAL GENERAL  
MEETING ON JANUARY 30,  
1985, UNANIMOUSLY  
APPROVED, DULY MOVED AND  
SECONDES.

MODIFIED IN 1994 AND 2002.

## APPENDIX E

### **2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/*Guides touristiques de montréal*) Safe Space and Netiquette policies.**

#### 2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/*Guides touristiques de montréal*) Safe Space Policy

A safe space is “a place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome or challenged on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, language, political convictions or physical or mental ability - a place where the rules guard each person’s self-respect, dignity and feelings and strongly encourage everyone to respect others.”

\* Modeled after: <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/the-importance-of-safe-spa...>



## 2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/Guides touristiques de montréal) Netiquette Policy

2.0 (Montreal Tour Guides/Guides touristiques de montréal) does not accept members who deny historical facts like the Holocaust or the fact that Montreal sits on un-ceded indigenous land. We also have a strict Netiquette policy and will not tolerate racist language, harassment or discrimination based on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap. If you experience historical revisionism, cyber-bullying, racist language or discrimination, please contact a moderator immediately and we will remove the offending member.



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
HAVE SOME  
NETIQUETTE**

## APPENDIX F

# Proposed Postcolonial 2.0 Tour Guide Course

by Donovan King

*Updated February 14, 2019*

### Professors:

TDB

### Times & Location(s):

TBD

### Synopsis:

Tourism industries in colonial and colonized lands are rapidly updating themselves to conform with new standards in globalization. Next-generation tourists, thirsting for authentic experiences, are less and less likely to tolerate outdated tourism industry practices such as promoting colonialism and its relics without providing 21st century interpretations. In Montreal and other colonized cities, the Tourism Industry is only beginning to confront the process of decolonization demanded by the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Sadly, Montreal, usually a progressive and cutting-edge city, has missed the ball: During the 2019 UN Year of Indigenous Languages, neither *Tourisme Montréal* nor the A.P.G.T. are engaging, for example by promoting the endangered Mohawk language or teaching licensed tour guides its basic vocabulary, such as how to say "hello", as well Indigenous names for Montreal-area landmarks and territories. Indeed, instead of engaging with these critical issues in Tourism, the A.P.G.T. refuses to dialogue about them.

As such, I am creating this course to certify guides as 2.0-Ready, which will empower them to engage in a meaningful way with Truth and Reconciliation, demand \$50/hr from tour operators that comply with 2.0 Standards and also help Montreal's Tourism Industry become a world leader in the field instead of an outdated and colonial embarrassment.

### Course Content:

- Critical Thinking Skills
- Postcolonial Theory
- How to Differentiate Facts and Opinions
- How to Interpret Racist History, Sites and Monuments with a Postcolonial Lens

- Truth and Reconciliation Initiatives in Tourism
- Overview and Critique of Montreal's Current Tourism Industry Ecosystem
- Indigenous History and Perspectives
- Indigenous Protocols for Ambassadors
- Indigenous Montreal Today
- Basic Mohawk vocabulary and place names
- Decolonization and Indigenous Allyship
- Otherness in Tourism
- The 2.0 Tourist Profile (next-generation)
- How to Create Authentic Experiences
- Advanced Tour Guiding Skills
- Dramatization and Storytelling Skills
- Vocal Projection Techniques
- Basic Business Skills
- Marginalized Communities and Perspectives
- Ethical Tourism
- Human Rights Legislation and Responsibilities
- White Privilege, Settler Privilege and White Settler Fragility
- Settler Repatriation Initiatives
- Vision of Updated Montreal's Tourism Industry Ecosystem
- How to Lobby to Update Montreal's Current Tourism Industry
- The 2.0 Seal of Approval and Accreditation

Reading and Media Materials:

TBD

## APPENDIX G

Some recent media reports about these issues:

**\*\*\* PLEASE SHARE WIDELY \*\*\***

CBC Radio One – Daybreak with Mike Finnerty. [Interview with Donovan King of Haunted Montreal](#). November 2, 2018.

The Eastern Door. [Guide Wants Full History Of City During Tours](#). Lachlan Madill. November 2, 2018.

CityNews Montreal. [TV interview with tour guide Donovan King](#), November 2, 2018.

Montreal Times. [Montreal Haunted Mountain Tour](#). Deborah Rankin. November 6, 2018.

CBC Indigenous. [Montreal tour guide wants more Indigenous history incorporated into industry training](#). Jessica Deer. November 8, 2018.

McGill Tribune. [Montreal tour guide highlights indigenous history](#). Leyla Moy. December 5, 2018.

Irish Central. ["Green Season" celebrates and commemorates Irish in Montreal](#). Miles Murphy. March 15, 2019.

The Eastern Door. [Montreal Tourism To Better Reflect Native History](#). Lindsay Richardson. March 16, 2019.

CBC News TV – Montreal. [Great Famine Walking Tour](#). March 16, 2019. (clip runs 8:45 - 10:32)

CBC Montreal. [Dream of memorial park in Montreal to honour Irish famine victims inches closer](#). March 17, 2019.

Radio-Canada. [Bientôt un parc commémoratif à Montréal pour les victimes de la famine d'Irlande](#). 17 mars, 2019.

**\*\*\* PLEASE SHARE WIDELY \*\*\***