

Pay Equity in Québec

A Right Unknown to the Women Workers Who Need It Most

JENNIFER BEEMAN

Dans cet article on lit que l'application de la loi sur l'équité salariale du Québec en vigueur depuis 1996, n'a pas été efficace dans plusieurs milieux de travail. L'auteure a interviewé 36 femmes non-syndiquées dans plusieurs industries et leur réponse révèle une discrimination basée sur le sexe, une méconnaissance des termes inscrits dans la loi et un scepticisme général face à la bonne foi des employeurs peu enclins à l'appliquer.

The right to equal pay for work of equal value is a fundamental right of Québec women workers since the adoption of the *Québec Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1976. Article 19 of the Charter names this right of women workers explicitly. Recourse in cases of discrimination, including pay discrimination, under the Charter is based on individual complaints to the Québec Human Rights Commission with the often complex burden of proof falling on the plaintiff. The process is long, complex and costly.

Given the continued undervaluing and underpaying of women's paid work and the little progress made in redressing the wage gap between men and women, a proactive pay equity law became a major issue for the women's movement and the union movement in Québec. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, unions in Québec fought for the adoption of pay equity programs in unionized workplaces.

In 1989, a coalition in favour of pay equity, of which the Conseil d'Intervention Pour Accès Des Femmes Au Travail (CIAFT) was the official spokesperson, was created. In 1992, the Québec Human Rights Commission published a report on pay equity recognizing the limits of Article 19 of the Charter in correcting pay inequities, especially those experienced by non-unionized women workers, and calling for the adoption of a proactive pay equity law "to combine in practice the universal application and the effectiveness of the process."

The Women's Bread and Roses March in 1995 gave a final push to the pay equity demand of women's groups and unions and in November 1996, the groups won a major victory with the adoption of the *Québec Pay Equity Act* which went into effect one year later. Modelled on the *Ontario Pay Equity Act* of 1987, the Québec law is based on the recognition of systemic wage discrimination regarding women's traditional paid work and requires workplaces of ten employees¹ or more to undertake a pay equity process that compares the value and salaries of predominantly female jobs with those of predominantly male jobs and to correct unjustifiable pay gaps. The burden of proof is thus removed from the shoulders of individual women workers who under the Charter system must

try to prove that they are victims of wage discrimination and placed on the shoulders of employers who must prove that they do not practice wage discrimination.

Seven years after the *Québec Pay Equity Act* came into effect, CIAFT began to evaluate the gains resulting from the implementation of this legislation and the obstacles that remain in correcting the undervaluing and underpaying of women's work in the labour market, with a particular focus on non-unionized jobs. Extensive interviews with 36 workers occupying a variety of female jobs in many sectors including manufacturing, food production, retail, building maintenance, daycare, hospitality services, business services, garment work, office work, and work in the cultural sector were conducted in June 2003 to determine the perceptions non-unionized women workers in female-dominated jobs have of the *Québec Pay Equity Act* and its relevance to their lives. Further research was conducted using existing Statistics Canada data, to document and analyze average wages in Québec for women, and men, in female-dominated occupations according to gender and unionization.

The data presented in this article will demonstrate that the *Québec Pay Equity Act*, enacted in 1996, has been ineffective in addressing wage disparities in many workplaces.²

While certain women workers in specific companies and sectors have made significant gains since 1996, especially some unionized women workers in large companies, it has become clear that the *Québec Pay Equity Act* is poorly designed to help non-unionized women workers in female job ghettos correct wage inequities. This is particularly so for non-unionized women workers in small businesses with 10 to 49 employees. In Québec, according to Statistics Canada data for 2002, 38 per cent of salaried women workers are unionized, and 83.7 per cent of unionized women work in the public sector (Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey).

The *Québec Pay Equity Act*

The *Québec Pay Equity Act* applies to all organizations and businesses employing ten salaried workers or more. The requirements that employers must meet are modulated according to the size of the business with organizations of 100 employees or more having the most requirements to fulfill. Businesses with less than ten employees must be free of wage discrimination based on gender and remain subject to the Québec Charter of Rights and Freedoms system of recourse.

Organizations and businesses with 100 employees or more must form a pay equity committee made up of two-thirds employee representatives (of which 50 per cent must be women) and one third employer representatives. The employer must propose a pay equity plan that conforms to the requirements of the law. The committee is required to make two information postings that workers are encouraged to study and comment, the first after the elaboration of the plan to be used and the second after the job evaluations and comparisons are made and the salary adjustments are calculated. The employer must then make the adjustments and maintain an equity pay structure over time. The information from the postings

should allow workers to ask questions about the process and if they are not satisfied with the results to undertake official recourse through the Pay Equity Commission.

In businesses with 50 to 99 salaried workers, however, the employer is not required to form a pay equity committee unless there is a union present which requests one. Nevertheless, the employer must follow the

productive (not generating profits for firms), that it is based on qualities that are innate for women as opposed to developed through training, that it is not physically or mentally demanding, and that it carries few responsibilities. The best people to dispel these prejudices by articulating the demands of their work due to their intimate knowledge of it are women. And thus their participation

While certain women workers have made significant gains since 1996, it has become clear that the *Québec Pay Equity Act* is poorly designed to help non-unionized women workers in female job ghettos correct wage inequities

same requirements for carrying out the pay equity plan, make the same postings as those required for organizations with 100 employees or more, and make the appropriate wage adjustments as well as maintain pay equity.

Businesses with 10 to 49 salaried workers have the fewest requirements laid out in the law, but do have an obligation to produce results. So, they are not required to form a committee nor does the law lay out specific requirements about how they are to go about achieving pay equity. But they must post the results at the end of their process, make appropriate wage adjustments, and maintain pay equity within their businesses.

Two fundamental values that the law seeks to put into practice are an active participation by women workers in the pay equity process and a more accessible system of support and recourse for workers through the Pay Equity Commission.

The participation of the workers most directly concerned affected by pay equity is considered essential to counter the prejudices around work performed mainly by women such as secretarial work, work in nursing, education and early childhood development. Prejudices regarding women's work still abound: that it is not

in the process is crucial.

Unfortunately in the *Quebec Pay Equity Act*, for businesses with less than 100 employees, verification of women's involvement is done through the information postings, which can scarcely be qualified as genuine participation. Further, non-unionized women workers can find participation on a pay equity committee very challenging given their lack of expertise in a highly technical field and the power relations that can exist within the committee.

In Québec, a full one quarter of the female workforce is employed in businesses with less than ten employees (who are not subject to the law). Another 22 per cent are in businesses with 10 to 40 workers which are required to produce results in pay equity but are not imposed any regulations on how this is to be achieved (Bienvenu).³ Furthermore, the Act does not require employers to send the results of their process to the Pay Equity Commission, so there is no official oversight of the results or gathering of information on who has undertaken the process and what it has changed for women. These are major flaws in the legislation.⁴

Another major flaw in the legislation is that it does not address the problem of pay inequality, that is

unequal pay between men and women occupying the same job (with the same qualifications and seniority).⁵ As we will see from the research, this remains a problematic issue.

Dynamics of Wage Discrimination

CIAFT's objective in the qualitative component of our research was

I work for a garment manufacturer. There is no union. When workers were interested in unionizing, they [the employers] found out, I don't know from whom, but those workers were fired... After, there was a kind of meeting. The boss said "we're one family, and the salaries, they are all about the same." But sometimes there are raises and there are some who had

*cents, and then it was lowered 25 cents. Once it was 15 cents, then it was raised again by 25 cents. There was an Italian woman who told me that she got 25 cents. But the black women in the back, they always got five cents.*⁶ (Sewing machine operator)

In this description we can see all the problems raised: the low salaries, very small raises, arbitrary management of wages and blatant discrimination between the workers based on race. According to this worker, the production quotas for the garment workers were very high, and if a worker didn't achieve them, she was let go. So production between workers was very similar and did not justify the differences in wages. Finally, the employer clearly articulated the law of silence about pay that serves to divide the workers and reinforce his total control over the workers.

Another element that emerged from the qualitative research was the relation between employment equity and pay equity. All the women workers we met with emphasized the gender segregation within their workplaces. They described how men and women rarely occupied the same jobs. In some workplaces where men and women worked similar jobs, they officially had different titles and in theory slightly different tasks, that were used to justify higher wages for the men. However, according to the women, in practice there is little difference between jobs. The workers described practices of job discrimination that were as tenacious as those of pay discrimination, but we can also see in their descriptions how the two problems are intertwined.

One worker described a particularly blatant case of employment discrimination that became one of pay discrimination. She worked for a jewellery manufacturer where the women worked exclusively assembling the jewellery and the men moulded the pieces. According to this worker, there is no difference in skills or strength required for the two positions.

"When workers were interested in unionizing, they found out ... those workers were fired....

The boss said 'we're one family, and the salaries, they are all about the same.' But there are some who had 25 cents [raise], another had five cents."

to determine whether non-unionized women workers were aware of the *Quebec Pay Equity Act* and the rights enshrined therein. We began by asking the workers to tell us about their salaries, and their perspective on pay practices and wage discrimination.

More than half the women we met earned minimum wage or just slightly more. Overall, the salaries were very low. Wage increases were rare and for the workers who did receive them, ranged from five cents to twenty-five cents an hour. None of the workers were eligible for benefits such as health benefits or pensions associated with their jobs.

According to the women interviewed, the situation regarding their wages is made nebulous by the fact that wage systems are not codified or transparent. The majority of the women workers had witnessed arbitrary treatment and unjustifiable differences in wages between men and women in their workplaces, and also between women workers themselves. Furthermore, many their employers had explicitly prohibited their employees from discussing their wages with each other. One worker described how her employers managed salaries and the dynamics of discrimination at work:

25 cents, another had five cents [pay raise]. It's never the same. Once, my first year, I think I earned \$7-something [an hour]. They brought me into the office. I had a good output and he [the employer] said, "I'm increasing your pay by one dollar an hour. You seem to do good work." But he said, "You can't tell anyone or I will have to let you go."

Every year you have a raise. But you have five cents, she has 25 cents. But for the black women, it's always five cents. One of my friends [who is black] told me that she has been working there for 18 years, but she had, I think, \$8 an hour. I couldn't believe it. I told her, "Do something. Go see the boss." I said, "All the years you've been here, that's not possible." Because I earned more than she did and it was not that long I was working there. She said, "I went to the office once. He told me if I wasn't happy, the door is there."

But the salaries are very low. Whether you are starting, whether you're new or not new. The first year when they had me come into the office to tell me, "We're giving you a dollar more," I didn't think that was right, because the other years, they gave me a raise of 50

BR-6: *In my workplace, as soon as you try to negotiate your salary, they fire you. There were two [women workers] who left that way. Where I work, the women assembled jewellery. [One worker] changed positions, she said, "Well, I have a new position. I am not supposed to have it because it's a man's place. But because I have it, I would like a raise." Two weeks later they found a pretext to fire her.... She had worked there for six years.*

Q: *Do you know if in your company men earn the same salaries as women?*

BR-6: *No.*

Q: *They earn more?*

BR-6: *Yes.*

Q: *For the same work?*

BR-6: *No, they mould the pieces. The women assemble the pieces. It is the women who do almost all of the work. But we're not paid the same salary. One [woman worker] left because of that ... because of the salary, she left. (Jewellery assembler)*

This case illustrates how a salary is often attributed to a worker, and in particular to her gender, as opposed to the job the person is occupying. When a woman was finally promoted to a "man's position" of moulding jewellery, she was not offered the corresponding pay raise she should have had, thus transforming a problem of employment equity into one of pay equity. When she put forward her right for equal pay she was unjustly fired, demonstrating the employer's total disregard for the rights of the women workers.

The contours of the problem of low wages for women is complex, illustrated by the fact that when recruiting women workers in predominantly female jobs for our focus groups, we also ended up with a sample of workers, many of whom occupied jobs at the bottom of the ladder in their workplace. This in itself is not a problem addressed by the *Pay Equity Act*; the fact that

women comprise the majority of workers in low level jobs in their workplace is considered a problem of employment equity or one of problems related to career choices and professional training for women. However, we can ask whether the wages are particularly low precisely because the jobs are predominantly filled by women, despite their not being necessarily "typically female"

process, the workers doubted that it would ever lead to pay increases for women. As one worker put it:

The problem with that is that it can never be proven. Because the salaries are not something that is known in the end. If they do it or not, if they respect [the law].... It's so easy to lie in a small business. If I look at where I work, there are

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jobs particularly many manufacturing, maintenance or food industry jobs. If this is the case, pay equity legislation in theory should rectify part of the problem.⁷

Pay Equity: A Right Unknown?

Of the 36 workers interviewed, only one was capable of articulating pay equity as paying women in predominantly female jobs the same salary as men in predominantly male jobs of equal worth. A minority of Canadian-born women thought it was equal pay for equal work and those same workers were aware of the existence of the law. But the majority were not able to formulate an idea of what it was. None of the immigrant women workers except one knew what it referred to and had never heard of the law on pay equity. Only the worker who knew what it was knew of the existence of the *Pay Equity Act*, and none of the workers we met were familiar with the Pay Equity Commission.

Once we explained what exactly pay equity is and the contents of the law, the women found it interesting, but were immediately sceptical that employers would ever undertake such a process in good faith. Without outside surveillance or control over the

26 workers. They [the employers] are going to say anything to their advantage. It would have to be someone who comes from the outside to evaluate, a government organization, someone objective, because if you get the company to do it, they are going to evaluate to their advantage. (Project coordinator)

The women workers who took part in our research, having had a wide variety of experience in the labour market, especially in more difficult jobs at the bottom of the job ladder, had many personal experiences of other serious violations of the rights at work: unpaid overtime, unpaid "training" days, a variety of illegal acts following a maternity leave (job loss, a cut in wages upon a worker's return to work), racial discrimination and insults on the job, salaries lower than the minimum wage, and firing without just cause were some of the experiences of these workers. They emphasized to us that the lack of political will to enforce the respect of workers' rights is creating an extremely difficult climate for workers. Many pointed specifically to the lack of job security and the ability of employers to fire employees for any reason with impunity as the basic

Table 1: Occupations with the most women in Quebec, 2001 and 1991, their required level of education and percent concentration by gender.

Occupation	Rank		Level of education	Population 15 years and older		Concentration by gender	
	2001	1991		2001	2001	1991	2001
Women							
Secretaries (except legal and medical fields)	1	1	B	95 075	143 325	97.7	98.3
Salespeople, retail	2	2	C	76 625	79 895	58.7	58.7
Cashiers	3	3	D	62 650	60 270	86.5	88
Bookkeeper	4	5	C	56 600	50 665	87.8	81.6
Nurses	5	6	A	50 395	48 365	91	91.4
Elementary school teachers	6	8	A	45 095	39 970	86	85.8
Daycare workers	7	20	B	39 610	15 325	95.7	95.9
General office workers	8	4	C	39 265	54 705	83.2	79.1
Food and beverage workers	9	7	C	38 690	46 590	79.1	80.9
Servers at counters, kitchen help	10	12	D	34 880	28 520	60.5	56.8

*For level of education, A refers to a four-year undergraduate diploma, B refers to a collegial diploma, C refers to a high school diploma and D refers to general knowledge.

Table prepared by the Institut de la Statistique du Québec, based on data from the 2001 and 1991 Census of Statistics Canada.

Table 2: Occupations with the most men in Quebec, 2001 and 1991

Occupation	Rank		Level of education	Population 15 years and older		Concentration by gender	
	2001	1991		2001	2001	1991	2001
Men							
Computer professions	1	7	A-B	65 090	29 700	74.2	66.6
Truck drivers	2	3	C	58 330	49 360	97.7	98.6
Salespeople, retail	3	1	C	53 810	56 125	41.3	41.3
Directeurs of sales/ Management	4	2	2	46 225	54 705	63.3	65.8
Janitors	5	4	D	32 040	34 305	79.2	81.3
Mechanics	6	5	B	31 960	33 975	99.1	99.1
Workers in shipping and packing	7	11	C	31 730	26 820	90.6	91.9
Drivers-deliverers	8	9	C	26 790	27 930	92.8	96.7
Non technical sales representatives and wholesale	9	8	C	26 230	29 630	69.6	76.4
Stockboys	10	17	-D	25 850	20 960	71	73.6

*For level of education, A refers to a four-year undergraduate diploma, B refers to a collegial diploma, C refers to a high school diploma and D refers to general knowledge.

Table prepared by the Institut de la Statistique du Québec, based on data from the 2001 and 1991 Census of Statistics Canada.

Table 3: Average hourly wages of office work occupations according to gender, unionization and time worked, 2002

		Unionized Full-time	Unionized Part-time	Non-Unionized Full-Time	Non-Unionized Part-Time
Secretaries	Women	\$17	\$16	\$13	\$13
	Men				
Administrative personnel	Women	\$20		\$19	\$16
	Men	\$21		\$22	
Office supervisors	Women	\$19	\$26	\$16	
	Men	\$20		\$22	
Office workers	Women	\$17		\$14	\$11
	Men	\$19		\$13	\$9
Financial administration and insurance personnel	Women	\$17	\$14	\$15	\$12
	Men	\$25			

Data for Québec, Labour Force Survey, 2002

Table 4 : Average hourly wages for sales occupations according to gender, unionization and time worked, 2002

		Unionized Full-time	Unionized Part-time	Non-Unionized Full-Time	Non-Unionized Part-Time
Cashiers	Women	\$10	\$9	\$8	\$7
	Men				
Salespeople	Women	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$8
	Men	\$14	\$10	\$14	\$9
Wholesale personnel	Women			\$17	
	Men	\$20		\$18	\$11
Supervision sales	Women			\$12	\$9
	Men	\$16		\$14	
Personnel sales	Women	\$12	\$11	\$9	\$8
	Men	\$13	\$10	\$11	\$8

Data for Québec, Labour Force Survey, 2002

problem preventing workers from being able to assert their rights at work. The risk of being fired if they do so is omnipresent.

Data Analysis of Wage Gaps

The movement for proactive pay equity laws based its arguments on

the analysis of three different phenomena: the concentration of women in a relatively limited number of jobs that are typically female jobs, the undervaluing and underpaying for work of female jobs compared to male jobs of comparable worth and the persistent pay gap between men and women.

Data from the 2001 and 1991 Census illustrate the extent to which women remain concentrated in "female jobs." In these two tables of the top ten occupations for women and men, we see relatively little movement in the rank of the most important occupations for women between 1991 and 2001, while the rank of the

most important male occupations underwent greater change over those ten years. The ten occupations with the greatest number of women and the ten with the greatest number of men both saw the growth of one occupation for each sex: for women, the category of daycare workers jumped from twentieth to seventh place with a net increase of over 24,000 workers in this field. Like most of the other categories of wom-

en's work, the concentration of women compared to men is massive: 95.7 per cent of workers in this category are women. On the men's side, computer-related professions also saw a large increase in the number of workers in that field jumping in rank from seventh to first place with a net increase of over 35,000 workers. This category of workers also saw an increase in concentration in the number of men occupying these jobs: in 1991

two-thirds of workers were men and in 2001, almost three-quarters of workers were men.

In our research, we then calculated the average hourly wages for most of occupations in the above tables to compare wages in women's jobs compared to wages in men's jobs based on data for Québec from the *Labour Force Survey, 2002*.⁸

Our first observation of the hourly wage averages is that men continue

Table 5 : Average hourly wages for occupations in education and health according to gender, unionization and time worked⁹

		Unionized Full-time	Unionized Part-time	Non-Unionized Full-Time	Non-Unionized Part-Time
Daycare workers	Women	\$15	\$15	\$11	\$9
	Men				
Teachers	Women	\$24	\$30	\$19	\$20
	Men	\$26	\$33	\$26	\$23
Nurses	Women	\$23	\$24		
	Men	\$24	\$27		
Health Technicians	Women	\$20	\$18	\$14	\$14
	Men	\$19			
Support Personal in health fields	Women	\$14	\$13	\$12	\$11
	Men	\$14	\$15		

Data for Québec, Labour Force Survey, 2002

Table 6: Average hourly wages in several predominantly male occupations according to gender, unionization and time worked

		Unionized Full-time	Unionized Part-time	Non-Unionized Full-Time	Non-Unionized Part-Time
Professionals in Natural or Applied Science	Women	\$26		\$28	
	Men	\$28		\$28	
Technicians in Natural or Applied Science	Women	\$19		\$18	
	Men	\$23		\$19	
Drivers of Heavy Equipment	Women				
	Men	\$20		\$15	
Mechanics	Women				
	Men	\$21		\$15	\$12

Data for Québec, Labour Force Survey, 2002

to receive systematically higher wages than women in the same occupation. These job categories are of course quite broad and include a range of specific jobs and sectors. However, the systematic nature of the wage gap within occupations presented here leads us to question whether women can assume they have achieved pay equality. Nikta Iyer, in her study of whether British Columbia should adopt proactive pay equity legislation to redress the pay gap between men and women raises exactly this point. She insists we have long assumed that the battle for equal pay for equal work has been won, which is not necessarily the case, and that we have to take a step back and continue fighting this battle for pay equality before taking on the pay equity battle (101). These findings support the need to re-examine the question of pay equality.

For our research on pay equity, we were also interested in comparing average hourly wages of predominantly male and female occupations. One of the most common comparisons for the purposes of pay equity is that of wages for generally female office workers with that of generally male blue-collar workers. We can see, in a comparison of secretaries and mechanics, that unionized mechanics earn 24 per cent more than unionized secretaries and non-unionized mechanics earn 15 per cent more than non-unionized secretaries. An even more striking comparison is that of daycare workers with natural and applied science technicians which is the category that covers all the computer technicians. Again, these categories require the same level of education, but one is overwhelmingly female and the other predominantly male: unionized applied and natural science technicians earn on average 53 per cent more than unionized daycare workers. Non-unionized science technicians earn over 72 per cent more in hourly wages than non-unionized daycare workers.

The jobs of childcare worker and

computer technician have been found to be of comparable worth although some economists consider that computer technicians have to be placed in a category apart given the wage bonuses they received in the 1990s due to the demand for the profession. Those bonuses were subsequently absorbed into wage structures, and despite there no longer being a shortage of these technicians, their wages remain above average. It can be argued that this is another example of the kind of preferential wage treatment accorded to men's jobs.

From the Statistics Canada data we can see the extent to which men continue to be paid more than women despite the fact that women are increasingly doing work of equal value. A discouraging example is the comparison between the growing female occupation of daycare workers and the growing male occupation of computer technicians within the science technician category. The 72 per cent wage gap in favour of men between non-unionized workers in these two occupations is significant. The wage gap averages clearly highlight the importance of unionization for non-unionized women workers to achieve equitable wages.

The logic of the labour market that pays men significantly more in wages for working with machines than it pays women working with people, which feminist activists have denounced for decades, is still deeply rooted in our society.

Conclusion

The women workers we met with emphasized the extent to which they had experienced or knew of wage discrimination due to gender as well as race in their workplaces. Despite the extent of problems related to wage discrimination, only one of the 36 workers we interviewed knew about pay law. None were however aware of the Pay Equity Commission which is the government body that oversees compliance with the law and rules on complaints by workers for non re-

spect of the law. In addition to this, the women emphasized the extent to which employers do not respect the rights of workers more generally, especially the prohibition against arbitrary or unjust firing. This lack of job security creates a context in which attempts to defend any labour rights puts workers in a very vulnerable position, dissuading them strongly from speaking out or taking actions to defend themselves.

The *Québec Pay Equity Act* which requires employers to compare the value and wages predominantly male and predominantly female jobs in their workplace has many weaknesses in its very formulation which hamper its effectiveness in correcting wage discrimination particularly for non-unionized women workers. Without systematic verification on the part of the Pay Equity Commission to ensure that pay equity processes are carried out according to the spirit as well as the letter of the law and by requiring employers whose processes are deemed inadequate to redo them according to strict criteria, non-unionized women workers will continue to be victims of significant wage inequities.

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¹Although many groups advocated for a universal law, businesses with nine employees or less were unfortunately exempt from the application of the legislation.

²Six focus groups were organized with a total of 36 women, of which 20 were immigrants. One group was composed entirely of seven women from a specific southeast Asian community. The other immigrant women were of either African or Latin American origin. At the time of the study in June 2003, salaries ranged from minimum wage \$7.30 to \$21.60/hour.

³These figures are based on 1995 data provided by the Secretariat de la condition féminine du Québec for

Bienvenu's study.

⁴For an excellent analysis of the strengths and weakness of the *Québec Pay Equity Act* for non-unionized women workers, see Claudyne Bienvenu.

⁵For a detailed analysis of the intentions of the legislator and the understanding that pay equality or pay equity had been achieved, see the Québec Superior Court judgement abrogating Chapter IX of the law, *Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec v. Procureur general du Québec*, January 2004.

⁶All citations are translated from the French and are our own.

⁷For more detailed information concerning pay gaps in Canada, see the work of Marie Drolet as well as the work of Leslie McAll.

⁸Statistics Canada makes available large data bases from their different

surveys, including data from the *Labour Force Survey*, which is a monthly survey where individuals remain in the sample for six months and supply information on a wide range of indicators. The *Labour Force Survey* is useful for analysis of salary comparisons because salaries are presented in terms of hourly wages, as compared to the Census revenue information which is presented in terms of annual income and does not allow for controlling of the question of the amount of time worked.

⁹Figures for wages have been rounded to the nearest dollar. Blanks in the tables are due to either having no sample or an unreliably small sample for those categories of workers.

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R. LEIGH KRAFFT

for want of you

out walking today
breathing in the scent of the grey
day
stumbling upon my grief
when I saw old gnarled trees
against the grey-blue waves
and I wept for you
yet again
knowing that you'd seen
your fair share of beauty –
many hued skies
many babies' smiling eyes
many forested days when the wind
sighs.

yet my heart aches
for want of you
as you were
when you knew me
from the beginning of the day
to the end,
and I,
you.

R. Leigh Krafft's poetry appears earlier in this volume.

JUDITH GROGAN-SHORB

String Theory

Cast from emptiness
into vacant space held
together by various
elongated coils of
hypothetical string, universe
unravels into infinity.

Seeking remnants of thread,
hints of skeins, shards of memory
answers to everything,
I travel through spacetime
to arrive at
the cusp of infinity.

Rumi invites me to the dance.
We bow to one another,
he hands me a strand:
like this.
Our task of rewinding begins.

Judith Grogan-Shorb works as a recruiter and trainer of ombudsmen. Her long-time interests include history and mythology, which are often lyrically reflected in her poetry.