

MCC, Gender, and Service in Quebec: A Case Study¹

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Entering the front door of the AIDS hospice Maison Nazareth on a spring day in 1991, Annie Brosseau felt her protective shell of courage breaking up like the winter's ice on the St. Lawrence River. For the previous two years, the hospice, located in downtown Montreal, had been fulfilling its mission to assist homeless people living with AIDS to die with dignity.² Annie's innate compassion brought her into relationship with her host, himself living with HIV, as he revealed that the most senior of the ten individuals in the hospice had succumbed to an AIDS-related illness earlier that morning.³

A few months earlier, a similar tragedy had touched Annie and her husband Jean-Victor Brosseau personally when the former pastor at the church they had attended in Fresno, California, while studying at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, lost his brother-in-law to AIDS. In North America, HIV infection most often affected men of "une préférence sexuelle différente des autres" (a sexual preference different from others), as she delicately put it.⁴ Montreal was geographically distant from their former church, yet the grief experienced by the Fresno community brought home the knowledge of how close this disease was to the church.

With her former pastor's grief heavy on her heart, Anne felt a call to set aside her own sense of justice in order to learn to walk with, better understand, and love those who were suffering. In her role as editor of *Le Lien des Frères mennonites*, the French publication of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, Annie became a leader among the Frères Mennonites (FM)—as Mennonite Brethren were

known in Quebec—for how she confronted this difficult issue.⁵ With a compassionate heart, she told her readers, “L’Église doit être bien informée et s’efforcer de prévenir les courants de mensonges concernant le Sida. . . . L’ignorance doit constamment être remplacée par la connaissance et les faits.” (The Church must be well informed and seek to prevent the spread of misinformation about AIDS. . . . Ignorance must be met consistently with knowledge and facts.)⁶

Annie and her husband, the pastor Jean-Victor Brosseau, were among the FM leaders whom the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren sent to Winnipeg and to Fresno to be educated as Mennonite evangelicals. Upon their return to Quebec, Annie became editor of *Le Lien*. Her involvement with the publication coincided with important developments in the establishment of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) presence in Quebec. Along with Claudette Leblanc, another editor of *Le Lien*, and MCC’s first regional representative in Quebec, Deborah Martin-Koop, Annie played a key role in transforming the local MCC organization from a community of volunteers who came from the rest of Canada to serve in short-term service assignments to a ministry shaped and led by French Québécois leadership.⁷ Simultaneously, these women were instrumental in the transformation of the FM as a provincial conference of the Canadian Mennonite Brethren.⁸

Mennonites in Quebec: A Separated People

Ontario Mennonites of Swiss extraction established La Maison de l’amitié (House of Friendship) in Montreal’s Plateau neighbourhood in 1973.⁹ They were stimulated by the Quiet Revolution that had begun in 1960, when Jean Lesage’s Liberal government implemented a program of secularization that was accompanied by profound social upheaval. The vacuum resulting from the reduced influence of the Roman Catholic Church allowed for Mennonites to minister alongside “evangelists of various forms from hippies known as ‘Jesus Freaks’ to traditionalist women with head-coverings, and from very sectarian fundamentalists to student university organizations.”¹⁰ Ontario Mennonites brought their well-established tradition of inter-Mennonite service to their work in Montreal, including work through MCC.¹¹

In spring of 1991, Deborah Martin-Koop, in her role as MCC regional representative in Quebec, placed Crystal Klassen at Maison Nazareth, thus adding her story to those of the more than fifty MCC volunteers serving in Quebec service agencies up to that point.¹² These Quebec volunteers (*bénévoles*) offered orientation to new

immigrants. This included family services such as day care as well as language classes, community meals, and outings for the immigrants arriving in the area. MCC also developed a prison ministry.¹³

The Mennonite Brethren mission benefited from the revival that burst forth with the loosening hold of the Roman Catholic Church and aligned itself with the evangelical movement in Quebec that sponsored the Sermons from Science pavilion at Expo '67. In 1960, when the Mennonite Brethren conference established its mission in Quebec, there were only six other evangelical denominations, comprising a mere fifty French-speaking congregations. By 1984, it is estimated there were a thousand men and women, mostly young, in the ten newly formed FM (Mennonite Brethren) congregations. By the late nineties, Mennonites were among the thirty evangelical denominations that coloured Quebec's highly secular society. Among the 350 congregations in the province identifying as evangelical, the ten FM congregations provided the foundation for Mennonite Brethren evangelism in Quebec.¹⁴

In the spirit of the Québécois "respect for freedom of conscience and religion," local Mennonite Brethren leaders quickly asked for a Quebec church with its own powers of decision-making, including representation on national boards and control of their own budgets.¹⁵ Their insistence on a French-language paper distinct from the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* provided a forum where they could communicate in their own voice with formal reports of local, national, and international concern. Members also shared their testimonies and the issues unique to them as Québécois Mennonites.¹⁶

Building a church in a society that had developed "a high level of distrust towards all forms of organized religion" required strategic vision.¹⁷ The MB mission approach included educating their leaders to become Mennonite evangelicals. Their Anabaptist leanings made them distinct from other evangelical denominations in the province. Developing a solid denominational presence also involved sending promising young leaders out of the province to study at MB schools in Winnipeg and Fresno. These Québécois returned home transformed. Returning as evangelicals shaped by Anabaptist thinking, they influenced the Quebec churches in thinking more broadly. While reconciling with their own heritage as former Catholics, they moved the FM towards Anabaptist ways of being Christian.¹⁸

Implicit in the vision of the young Frères Mennonites trained in Fresno was an attempt to steer the developing leadership of the Association des Églises des frères mennonites du Québec (AEFMQ), known in English as the Quebec Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches, away from its historic distrust of attention to societal and material needs. The FMs turned to members of the Mennonite

Conference of Eastern Canada and the General Conference Mennonite Church as they began what was to become a meaningful relationship with MCC.¹⁹ The young women who edited *Le Lien* and represented MCC in Quebec would play an integral role in this rapprochement, ultimately transitioning the Frères Mennonites to an evangelism that included social ministry.

Les Frères Mennonites Find their Voice

The 1970s were a turbulent time in Quebec. The decade opened with the October Crisis, when the Front de Libération du Québec kidnapped British trade commissioner James Cross and Quebec labour minister Pierre Laporte. The murder of Laporte prompted the federal government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau to impose Canada's War Measures Act. This suspended civil liberties for the first instance outside of wartime. In October and November 1970, police took the unprecedented action of searching over three thousand homes. In many of these houses, small children were present. Police detained 457 civilians. People were terrified.²⁰ In these frightening times, historian Bruce Guenther notes, "the 'salvation only' message preached by many evangelical groups" was seen to be "inadequate for addressing" the pressing "social problems" in the province.²¹ The Frères Mennonites were no exception.²²

Even as tensions were escalating between Quebec and the rest of Canada, vigorous debates on women's leadership unsettled the Canadian Mennonite Brethren and left many feeling confused. According to Douglas Heidebrecht, this resulted in a "divergent interpretation of the restrictions on women's participation and practical application." Yet the belief that women's leadership was to remain subordinate to a male senior pastor persisted.²³ In Quebec, FM women gained voice in these difficult times through their denominational French publication.²⁴

Claudette Leblanc and Annie Brosseau were converts of the mid-1970s. Each had studied at the Institut Biblique Laval (IBL) and demonstrated their literary skills in brief testimonies published in *Le Lien*.²⁵ Leblanc left her work as a library technician to take the paper's editorial lead between 1984 and 1989. She was followed by Annie Brosseau, who had recently returned to Quebec from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, where her husband Jean-Victor had completed a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. Despite experiencing the trepidation of one whose work had been primarily in the domestic sphere, Annie would continue as editor for the next thirteen years, until 2002.²⁶

Even as Canadian Mennonite Brethren were debating women's ministerial leadership, *Le Lien* reflected the well-articulated feminist movement that was part of the massive social upheaval in Quebec.²⁷ Acknowledging the increased volume of women's voices appearing in the paper, in February 1986 Leblanc exclaimed: "Un autre numéro sur les femmes, direz-vous! Pourquoi pas? Elles représentent souvent plus que la moitié de l'Église (53% chez nous) et leur rôle n'est pas encore clair pour tous. Il importe donc d'y réfléchir ensemble." (Another issue on women, you say? Why not? They often make up more than half of the church (53% here) and their role still isn't clear for everyone. It is necessary to reflect together.)²⁸

Under this female leadership, *Le Lien* foreshadowed the FMs' gradual turn towards MCC. Articles in *Le Lien* were notable for a clear shift towards inclusivity previously absent in the publication.²⁹ Stories of women with disabilities,³⁰ abuse, addictions,³¹ celibacy,³² the identity crisis of evangelical women,³³ theological studies of women and the Scriptures,³⁴ women's call,³⁵ and reflections on women, society, and church³⁶ came to dominate its pages. Pencils in hand, Leblanc and Brosseau led their readers in embracing the Mennonite organization that was best placed, in the aftermath of the Quiet Revolution, to help the FMs to develop a practical Christianity. MCC offered tools and programming that could aid them in becoming a socially-minded church.

Mon pays, c'est l'hiver³⁷

In this time when poetry, song, films, and novels expressed growing nationalism and longing for identity among Québécois, FM leadership became intentional about embracing MCC.³⁸ In 1980, while studying at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, Jean-Raymond Théorêt, a promising young leader, authored a series on Philippians for *Le Lien*. Théorêt was candid about the culture shock that he and his wife Francine experienced when they arrived in Winnipeg. He expressed gratitude to the church there for practical assistance in paying bills, for providing a carpet so that their young son could play safely on the cold floor of their basement, and for an apartment, furniture, and help with repairing their car.³⁹ During his studies, the pieces he wrote for *Le Lien* on the love shown by action that was the "fruit de justice" that Jesus taught suggested future connections between the FMs and MCC.⁴⁰

When Ernie Dyck and his wife Lydia had established the Mennonite Brethren (FM) mission two decades earlier, they held

resolutely to his belief that the Great Commission to spread the gospel far outweighed social ministry.⁴¹ During a time marked by high political tension, many English-speaking evangelicals inside and outside the province fiercely opposed Quebec sovereignty.⁴² Meanwhile, Francophone evangelicals longed for a country—the yearning the singer-songwriter Gilles Vigneault expressed so well with his lyric “Mon pays, ce n’est pas un pays, c’est l’hiver.”⁴³ FM members were torn between their growing national identity and the Mennonite evangelicalism that had drawn them into its distinct cultural practices. Through missionaries like the Dycks and through their experiences of studying outside of Quebec, FM members encountered a community that showed them Jesus’s love while representing a different history that included music, fiction, and food.⁴⁴

After twenty-six years of ministry in Quebec, the Dycks’ departure in the summer of 1987 marked a turning point. The FMs were free to explore new ways of expressing the gospel in ways that would aid them, as evangelicals, to shift their focus from counting new converts to addressing the significant needs in their society.⁴⁵ To be sure, the sentiments of *Le Lien*’s farewell piece “Nous louons le Seigneur!” (We praise the Lord!) expressed deep appreciation for the Dycks’ ministry.⁴⁶ It also signalled the moment when, seven years after an MCC consultation at the church in Sainte-Rose, the agency placed a regional representative in Quebec.⁴⁷

Much soul-searching led Deborah Martin-Koop to apply for the position. Having grown up in Quebec, she was fluently bilingual.⁴⁸ A member of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada congregation in Joliette, she was an evangelical who held denomination to be less important than it was for many other Canadian Mennonites. Having previously served as an MCC volunteer, Deborah and her husband Robert Martin-Koop were called as pastors to the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal in 1980. During their seven years in ministry at the Mennonite Fellowship, the Martin-Koops played an integral role among the cohort of MCC volunteers in Montreal; the volunteers made up a large percentage of the congregation, which shared a home with the Maison de l’amitié.⁴⁹

In August 1987, MCC appointed Deborah Martin-Koop as Quebec regional representative and placed its Quebec headquarters at IBL, the Mennonite Brethren college in Saint-Laurent. With *Le Lien*’s editorial office also situated at the college, opportunities for connections between MCC and the FMs abounded, as the pages of *Le Lien* illustrate.⁵⁰ Indeed, *Le Lien* promptly brought reader attention to MCC by highlighting the organization’s work and its potential in the province in a variety of ways. This work included assisting with refugee resettlement, ministering with children and teens,

working with those with disabilities, standing with Indigenous people, aiding the homeless, attending to needs of battered women, assisting individuals with emotional challenges, and visiting prisoners.⁵¹

The February 1989 issue of *Le Lien* featured none other than Deborah Martin-Koop's father, Tilman Martin. Readers learned of an evangelism that demonstrated Christ's love by being a presence to the most disenfranchised, namely, those imprisoned for their crimes. This version of the good news acknowledged that problems sometimes remained unresolved even after a conversion experience; Martin shifted evangelism's focus away from an increase in numbers of persons converted to a gospel concerned with the totality of an individual's experience. His prison ministry avoided judgement, embraced people of all faiths, listened to their stories, and shared in their pain.⁵²

Soon after Annie Brosseau became editor of *Le Lien*, a wound that had been festering for 270 years erupted in a land dispute at the town of Oka. Several members of the Saint-Eustache congregation, where Jean-Victor Brosseau was pastor, owned properties located in the middle of the fray and were caught in the cross-fire between three groups: the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) who had been pressing for acknowledgement of their ownership of the land for well over two centuries, land-grabbing developers who wanted to expand a golf course onto a revered Indigenous burial site, and the repressive apparatus of the state, including the provincial police, the RCMP, and the military. Some church members were forced to flee from their homes.⁵³ Esther Epp-Tiessen points out that when some among the Mohawks asked MCC for help, "the crisis brought MCC Canada into a whole new level of peacemaking." The organization became involved in responding to land disputes and armed conflict.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, tension continued to fester between French and English Quebecers and between Quebec and the rest of Canada.⁵⁵ In the aftermath of the failure in 1990 of the Meech Lake Accord to amend the Canadian Constitution, MCC Canada hoped to gain a clearer perspective on their Québécois co-religionists. The agency invited a dynamic young Quebecer to speak at its 1992 annual meeting in Bois-sevain, Manitoba.⁵⁶ Sonia Blanchette was a familiar face to some. She had studied at Mennonite Brethren Bible College a decade earlier, but her "red dress, high-heeled white boots and fur coat" and forthright manner accentuated her difference from the plainer western Mennonites. Blanchette's passionate appeal to the audience for their support for Quebec sovereignty resulted in a paper from the MCC Ottawa office. Bill Janzen recommended that MCC support "Québec as a distinct society," and further, that Mennonites urge

the federal government to give more space for concerns coming from Quebec. This bolstered the growing relationship between the Frères Mennonites and MCC.⁵⁷

By the 1990s, the mood in FM congregations had shifted as early growth in membership reversed. Pastors struggled with conflicts in their congregations and some resigned, leaving pulpits empty.⁵⁸ Women sought to have their voices heard. Other members struggled with unhealed personal issues.⁵⁹ With the evident decline in FM membership, Richard Lougheed notes, former “goals aimed at finding people outside the churches were replaced by an emphasis on encouraging personal faithfulness among members.”⁶⁰ The call for “l’édification plutôt que l’évangélisation” (edification over evangelism) was something the female membership of the FMs had known was necessary from the beginning.⁶¹

At the same time as the pages of *Le Lien* documented the institutionalization of the AEFMQ and its relationship with the broader Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada, the publication drew attention to the potential of MCC’s work in conflict resolution.⁶² An article described the counter-intuitive wisdom taught in conflict resolution workshops: “Pour avoir moins de conflits, il faut inviter les autres à être en désaccord” (To have less conflict, invite others to disagree). Conflict is inevitable, participants learned. It is necessary to express different views, for this can lead to constructive change in the congregations, in the workplace, and in the home.⁶³ Deborah Martin-Koop worked with churches, with women attending the annual women’s days, and with others through workshops, articles in *Le Lien*, and print materials.⁶⁴ For instance, in 1996, Lyne Dufresne, a former MCC worker, accepted the invitation to translate Mennonite teachings on the gospel message of peace/shalom in materials geared for youth and young adults. Significantly, the materials were launched at the Brosseaus’ church in Saint-Eustache, to a congregation deeply affected by the Oka crisis.

In an interview with *Le Lien*, Deborah Martin-Koop addressed MCC’s work with women. She stressed that around the world women were the most vulnerable even while the majority held primary responsibility for the well-being of their families.⁶⁵ As North American Mennonite Brethren continued to debate women’s leadership in the church, Martin-Koop, a former pastor of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, connected FM women with MCC’s Task Force on Women in Church and Society.⁶⁶ For FM women who could read in English, its newsletter, with stories on “child rearing, education, careers, church work, and finances” as well as “domestic violence, abortion, incest, and pornography,” revealed possibilities for addressing similar issues in their own lives.⁶⁷

Through women's days, workshops, and studies at the Institut Biblique de Laval, FM women explored a range of themes. They regularly reported on these experiences in the pages of *Le Lien*. For instance, in April 1992, Jeanine Lambert, known to readers for her reports on MCC's work, shared the devastating personal experiences that she carried in her body and her psyche. Lambert's column "Il était une foi" (once upon a time; *foi* playfully signals both time and faith)⁶⁸ appeared regularly in *Le Lien*. Echoing other articles published in the paper, she revealed her story of a childhood and youth that left scars caused by alcohol and drug abuse, incest, and emotional breakdown. She testified to the salvation that she found in turning to Christ, but also confessed that the scars remained.⁶⁹ Women also explored for themselves what the Bible said about female leadership. For example, the January 1992 issue featured Lucie Nantel-Leclair's thoughtful piece on women in contemporary society, which she had written for a class at IBL. Her biblical scholarship culminated in a clarion call for openness: "le racism, le sexisme et toute exclusion n'ont plus de place sous le régime de la grâce en Jésus-Christ" (racism, sexism, and all exclusion have no longer a place under the regime of grace in Jesus Christ).⁷⁰

By the late 1990s, the FM Comité des femmes pursued its decades-long goal of instructing women on how to live as faithful Christians through a new women's group, Femmes en action (Women in Action). Under the leadership of Ginette Bastien, these women organized workshops explicitly designed to empower other women to see themselves in new ways. Exposure to women from other parts of Canada and around the globe, some who worked hard to find a place in the church while others struggled simply to survive, expanded their perspectives. They embraced opportunities to learn from one another and to worship together. The Frères Mennonites also took opportunities to invest in their sisters who struggled by volunteering at Maison de Sophia, a safe house for women experiencing difficulties situated close to the FM church in Saint-Jérôme.⁷¹

In July 1996, after nine years devoted to MCC's work in Quebec, Deborah and Robert Martin-Koop accepted positions in MCC's office in Switzerland.⁷² Annie Brosseau's husband Jean-Victor succeeded Deborah as MCC regional representative in Quebec. In his new post, he continued to express the passion for evangelism he had demonstrated in his prior role as representative of the AEFMQ on the Evangelism Committee of the Canadian MB Conference.⁷³ Under his leadership "de la serviette du serviteur" (of the servant's towel), as he put it, and supported by Annie's faithful publicizing of MCC's work in the pages of *Le Lien*, the organization would flower with a

range of new programs indigenous to Quebec and new relationships with the *francophonie* in a variety of countries.⁷⁴

Conclusion

From the new MCC Quebec headquarters at the former Maison Nazareth located at 1212 rue du Fort, Jean-Victor and Annie Brosseau brought MCC more fully into the FM community. This included engagement in Quebec as well as in several francophone countries including Haiti, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Chad. The pages of *Le Lien* provide a wealth of information on the array of initiatives and programs that the couple established during Jean-Victor's time as Quebec regional representative. These included Harmonie, a program designed to draw French-speaking young adults to an intercultural experience in Montreal; the hiring of Congolese pastor Jean-Calvin Kitata as Coordinator of Peace and Justice; designing a Peace Festival and Vélo pour la paix (Cycling for Peace); supporting Femmes en action, workshops, and the creation of a centre for psychological and social assistance; establishing mediation and restorative justice services; creating programs for youth, including Service au soleil (Summer Service) and a Musicamp; opening a material resources centre; cooperating with the FM college to create a Centre d'études anabaptistes de Montréal (Montreal Centre for Anabaptist Studies); and, with the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, developing the Société d'histoire mennonite du Québec (Mennonite Historical Society of Quebec).⁷⁵

A fuller account of this expansive history of MCC's development under Québécois leadership still needs telling.⁷⁶ This exploration of gender and service, largely through the pages of *Le Lien*, provides answers about how the FM churches came to embrace MCC's ministry, and also how MCC influenced several young women, and through them, the churches. It demonstrates the essential role of these women during a time when Mennonite Brethren remained divided over women's ministerial leadership. It also illustrates the potential in *Le Lien* for the ongoing writing of FM history. For future researchers, *Le Lien* provides a rich source of historical data about MCC's history in Quebec and the francophonie.

Notes

- ¹ I would like to thank Annie Brosseau for her close editing of the manuscript, including vetting my translations of the French quotations. Thank you also to Deborah Martin-Koop, Richard Lougheed, Clara Maranzano, Zacharie Leclair, and the two anonymous readers for their sage comments.
- ² Debby Martin-Koop, "La Maison Nazareth: une maison d'hospitalité," *Le Lien des Frères mennonites* (hereafter *Le Lien*), Apr. 1991, 4.
- ³ Annie Brosseau, "Justice et Compassion," *Le Lien*, Apr. 1991, 8; Annie Brosseau, "Le Sida," *Le Lien*, Apr. 1991, 1–3.
- ⁴ A. Brosseau, "Justice et Compassion," 8.
- ⁵ In the summer of 1984, the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches established Quebec as a provincial conference, the Association des Églises des frères mennonites de la province du Québec (AEFMQ). Richard Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants in Quebec* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2022), 130.
- ⁶ A. Brosseau, "Le Sida," 3; A. Brosseau, "Justice et Compassion," 8.
- ⁷ Annie Blanchard Brosseau, interviews by Lucille Marr, Aug. 28, 2020, and Sept. 14, 2020; Debby Martin-Koop, interview by Lucille Marr, Oct. 20, 2020; Jean-Calvin Kitata, "L'histoire du Comité central mennonite Québec" (unpublished manuscript); Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 185.
- ⁸ For context on women's leadership among the Canadian Mennonite Brethren, see Douglas Heidebrecht, *Women in Ministry Leadership: The Journey of the Mennonite Brethren, 1954–2010* (Winnipeg: Kindred Productions, 2019).
- ⁹ Bruce Guenther, "Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants in Canada," in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 385–87; Lucille Marr, "A Lonely Outpost: The Mennonite Maison de l'Amitié of Montreal, 1973–2006," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 24 (2006): 149–67.
- ¹⁰ Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 98–99.
- ¹¹ I have developed this history in Ontario in *The Transforming Power of a Century: Mennonite Central Committee and its Evolution in Ontario* (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2003).
- ¹² D. Martin-Koop, "La Maison Nazareth," 4; Esther Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History* (Winnipeg: CMU Press, 2013), 101, 103; Robert Martin-Koop, "Quebec (Canada)," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1990, [https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Quebec_\(Canada\)](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Quebec_(Canada)).
- ¹³ Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee*, 101; R. Martin-Koop, "Quebec (Canada)"; Claudette LeBlanc, "Quand t'avons-nous vu en prison . . . ? entrevue avec Tilman Martin, aumônier protestant à la prison Archambault," *Le Lien*, Feb. 1989, 1.
- ¹⁴ Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 97, 183; Guenther, "Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants," 386; Ruth Dyck, "Le progrès de l'évangile dans la 'Belle Province,'" *Le Lien*, Sept. 26, 1980, 1.
- ¹⁵ Solange Lefebvre, "The Francophone Roman Catholic Church," in Bramadat and Seljak, *Christianity and Ethnicity*, 117.
- ¹⁶ Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 81.
- ¹⁷ Guenther, "Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants," 387; see also Lefebvre, "The Francophone Roman Catholic Church," 117.
- ¹⁸ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2020.

- ¹⁹ Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 185–86.
- ²⁰ *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “War Measures Act,” last edited Mar. 13, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/war-measures-act>. I would like to thank Vincent Monastesse for pointing me to Michel Brault’s film *Les ordres* (1974), which takes a close look at the experience of some of the civilians detained. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dlGOB366EY>.
- ²¹ Guenther, “Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants,” 387
- ²² Annie Brosseau stressed this point. Interview, Sept. 14, 2020.
- ²³ For a detailed analysis of these debates in the English Mennonite Brethren church, see Heidebrecht, *Women in Ministry Leadership*, esp. 152; Mennonite congregations had begun to ordain women in the late 1970s. See Marlene Epp, *Mennonite Women in Canada: A History* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008), 17.
- ²⁴ Guenther, “Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants,” 387–88; see Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, for a brief history of *Le Lien*, 179–80.
- ²⁵ Claudette Le Blanc, “Jésus en moi,” *Publication française du Herald*, Sept. 26, 1980, 4; Annie Brosseau, “Une Parole efficace,” *Publication française du Herald*, Feb. 27, 1981, 3–4; Line Salvas, “Nouvelles du Québec,” *Publication française du Herald*, Feb. 27, 1989, 3.
- ²⁶ Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 179; A. Brosseau, “Il y a du neuf,” *Le Lien*, Nov. 1989, 4; A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2020.
- ²⁷ “Notre mission, l’unité. Compte rendu de la convention annuelle et du ralliement 1990,” *Le Lien*, Oct. 1990, 1–5; Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2005), 47–58, 228; Heidebrecht, *Women in Ministry Leadership*, 102, 119–21.
- ²⁸ Claudette Leblanc, editorial comments, *Le Lien*, Feb. 1986, 2.
- ²⁹ I would like to thank Clara Maranzano for this observation.
- ³⁰ Leblanc, “Accueillie et accepté,” *Le Lien*, Feb. 1987, 1–2.
- ³¹ Jeannine Lambert, “Mon histoire,” *Le Lien*, Apr. 1992, 4.
- ³² Dufresne, “Le célibat, joie ou malheureux?,” *Le Lien*, Feb. 1987, 4.
- ³³ I have developed this in “Le Comité des femmes inter-églises, 1978–1998: A Compass for the Women of l’église des frères mennonites du Québec,” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 37 (2019): 105–18.
- ³⁴ See for instance Yolande Morel Bourdages, “Une journée pour les femmes,” *Le Lien*, June 1989, 7; Lucie Nantel-Leclair, “La femme chrétienne dans notre société contemporaine,” *Le Lien*, Jan. 1992, 1–3.
- ³⁵ Lyne Dufresne, “Si Dieu appelait . . .,” *Le Lien*, Oct. 1987, 6–7.
- ³⁶ Leblanc, “Les femmes se retrouvent,” *Le Lien*, June 1985, 5.
- ³⁷ *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Mon Pays,” last edited Mar. 4, 2015, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mon-pays>.
- ³⁸ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2020; “Au nom du Christ” *Le Lien*, Jan. 1985, 3.
- ³⁹ Jean Théorêt, “Impressions d’un séjour d’études à Winnipeg,” *Publication française du Herald*, Aug. 8, 1980, 4; see also Ruth Dyck, “Rendez-vous à Winnipeg,” *Publication française du Herald*, Aug. 1, 1980, 2.
- ⁴⁰ Théorêt, “Aperçus de Philippiens: Le discernement des choses les meilleures (Philippiens 1:11),” *Publication française du Herald*, Sept. 26, 1980, 3.
- ⁴¹ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2021; Lougheed, *Menno's Descendants*, 183.
- ⁴² Guenther, “Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants,” 388.

- ⁴³ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2020; Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada*, 160–62.
- ⁴⁴ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2021.
- ⁴⁵ A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2021.
- ⁴⁶ Leblanc, “Nous louons le Seigneur!,” *Le Lien*, July–Aug. 1987, 1–2.
- ⁴⁷ Lougheed, *Menno’s Descendants*, 185.
- ⁴⁸ Lougheed tells the story of the efforts of Mennonite missionaries Tilman and Janet Martin and Harold and Pauline Reesor in *Menno’s Descendants*. See pp. 42–59.
- ⁴⁹ D. Martin-Koop, interview; Leblanc, “Le MCC au Québec,” *Le Lien*, May 1988, 4–5; Robert Martin-Koop, “Le rôle du père vu par de nouveaux pères,” *Le Lien*, June 1995, 2.
- ⁵⁰ Lougheed, *Menno’s Descendants*, 185; A. Brosseau, interview, Sept. 14, 2020; D. Martin-Koop, interview.
- ⁵¹ Leblanc, “MCC,” *Le Lien*, May 1988, 7.
- ⁵² Leblanc, “Quand t’avons-nous vu,” 1–2.
- ⁵³ “Témoignage de Claire Vanier-Paquette” tells the story from the perspective of members of the church at Saint-Eustache who were caught in the cross-fire, *Le Lien*, Mar. 1991, 6–7; *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Oka Crisis,” last edited July 9, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/oka-crisis>; Alanis Obomsawin’s documentary *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, produced by Canada’s National Film Board, gives a close inside look at the crisis from the indigenous perspective. See https://www.nfb.ca/film/kanehsatake_270_years_of_resistance/.
- ⁵⁴ Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada*, 189–90.
- ⁵⁵ Guenther, “Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants,” 387.
- ⁵⁶ Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada*, 161–62; *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Meech Lake Accord,” 7 February 2006, last edited Apr. 27, 2020, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/meech-lake-accord>.
- ⁵⁷ Epp-Tiessen, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada*, 161–62.
- ⁵⁸ Pierre Gilbert, “Comité des affaires spirituelles et sociales,” *Le Lien*, July–Aug. 1989, 6.
- ⁵⁹ Ginette Bastien, interview by Lucille Marr, Oct. 20, 2020; A. Brosseau, interview, Aug. 28, 2020; Nantel-Leclair, “La femme chrétienne,” 3–5.
- ⁶⁰ Lougheed, *Menno’s Descendants*, 91; see also Jean-Victor Brosseau, “Évangélisation,” *Le Lien*, Sept. 1993, 2.
- ⁶¹ Suzanne Denault, letter to Connie Wight, Nov. 1978, green binder, Archives of the Association des églises des frères mennonites du Québec.
- ⁶² Take for example the July–August 1990 special issue of *Le Lien*, “Édition spéciale: Convention annuelle et ralliement 1990 des églises FM du Québec.” The September issue focused on Mennonite World Conference and MEDA. See “Témoigner de Jésus-Christ dans le monde d’aujourd’hui,” 1–4.
- ⁶³ Renée Théorêt, “Les conflits dans l’Église,” *Le Lien*, Oct. 1989, 3.
- ⁶⁴ Bastien, interview. Deborah Martin-Koop, condensed by Annie Brosseau, “La résolution de conflit . . . notre style de vie,” *Le Lien*, July–Aug. 1994, 1–3; Deborah Martin Koop, “La paix . . . et si on la vivait,” *Le Lien*, Apr. 1996, 5.
- ⁶⁵ Claudette Leblanc, “Le MCC au Québec,” *Le Lien* (May 1988), 5.
- ⁶⁶ Heidebrecht, *Women in Ministry Leadership*, 199.
- ⁶⁷ Epp, *Mennonite Women*, 279; Ginette Bastien, interview.
- ⁶⁸ Annie Brosseau, email to the author, Feb. 28, 2022.

- ⁶⁹ Lambert, "Mon histoire," 4.
- ⁷⁰ Nantel-Leclair, "La femme chrétienne," 3.
- ⁷¹ Bastien, interview.
- ⁷² "Debby Martin-Koop," *Le Lien*, June 1996, 6; Annie Brosseau, "Francophone fraternité européenne," *Le Lien*, Oct. 1997, 3; D. Martin-Koop, interview.
- ⁷³ "Le comité central mennonite recherche un représentant au Québec," *Le Lien*, June 1996, 7; Jean-Victor Brosseau, "Représentant régional de MCC au Québec," *Le Lien*, Sept. 1996, 6; Jean-Victor Brosseau, "Évangélisation," *Le Lien*, Sept. 1995, 2.
- ⁷⁴ Annie Brosseau, "La convention annuelle de l'AEFMQ . . . ," *Le Lien*, Nov. 1996, 2; see for instance Jean-Victor Brosseau, "Tchad pour Christ," *Le Lien*, Oct. 1997, 1–2.
- ⁷⁵ Kitata, "L'histoire du Comité central mennonite Québec."
- ⁷⁶ Jean-Calvin Kitata's as yet unpublished manuscript provides a helpful beginning.