



The eQuality Project - Review Report 2015 – 2022

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CONTENTS

01 02

OUR MISSION

EQUALITY
IN REVIEW

04 07

RESEARCH
IN REVIEW

POLICY
IN REVIEW

11 15

OUTREACH IN
REVIEW

EQUALITY
IN NUMBERS

17

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE CREATE A NETWORKED ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY CAN PLAY, LEARN, COMMUNICATE, AND PARTICIPATE EQUALLY, FREE FROM SURVEILLANCE, AND IDENTITY-BASED HARASSMENT.

EQUALITY IN REVIEW

Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey reflect on the beginnings, challenges, and surprises of seven years of eQuality.

Why did you create The eQuality Project?

The eQuality Project finds its origins in The eGirls project that Val and Jane previously co-led. The young women we spoke to in eGirls regularly told us about their concerns with privacy and equality in networked spaces, and also that they were tired of adults always focusing on what kids should do or not do to deal with those concerns, instead of on what adults (especially corporations) should be doing to help improve the situation. When we spoke about these findings we were constantly being approached by others who shared these concerns. So, we asked ourselves, what would a rights-respecting digital environment that helps kids to fully benefit from our digitally networked world look like? And we assembled a dream team of folks who shared our concerns.

What was the most gratifying part of the eQuality Project?

The Art Exchange Workshops. It's been such a privilege to be in the room when groups of young people share their perspectives and mobilize their concerns about online spaces to create a project that gives them voice.

What was the single most frustrating part?

At the beginning, we found that we were often struggling with the constraints imposed by university policies that had been designed for traditional research projects. When the eQuality Project started, the partnership model was a new experiment and it's been a pleasure over the past eight years to see how our four universities have taken up the challenge and developed new policies and practices to enable strong inter-sectoral collaboration. It took a lot of elbow grease but the encouraging part was the ongoing willingness of the

teams of people who worked with us at each university to make it happen!

What lessons did you learn over the course of the eQuality Project?

If you want to know what's going on with young people in networked spaces, talk to them. Policy work and education are so easily pushed in directions that make sense to adults, but to really take children's online rights seriously, they have to be at the table, and they need to be heard and understood. Amazing things happen when you take this one simple step.

Which philosophies or methods worked particularly well for the eQuality Project?

Thanks to the guidance of our youth partners, we've seen just how effective youth participatory action methods and community research can be, both to create new knowledge and to create a strong public dialogue with and about young people's needs.

Did you have any surprising project outcomes?

When we created our concept mapping project to see how teens construct the meaning of privacy, we started by documenting the information our phones know about us. Even though we're all surveillance scholars, we were surprised by the granularity of the data (such as the direction the phone is facing, the air pressure around the phone). It was also fun working with Tommy Cooke at Queens to help young people visualize where those data go. Although we expected tech companies to collect it, it was eye-opening to learn that all GPS data are automatically transmitted to military satellites owned by the US, Russia and China on an ongoing basis.

What would you like to see as a long-term outcome of the eQuality Project?

We've been blessed with an incredible team of students who have worked tirelessly on the project, whether they were providing research support or helping us create self-help videos and other educational tools. Many have gone on to continue to do youth work in the field. Their dedication and sensitivity to privacy/equality issues will make a real difference as they continue with their own career paths.

How did the structure of the Project partnership contribute to the eQuality Project?

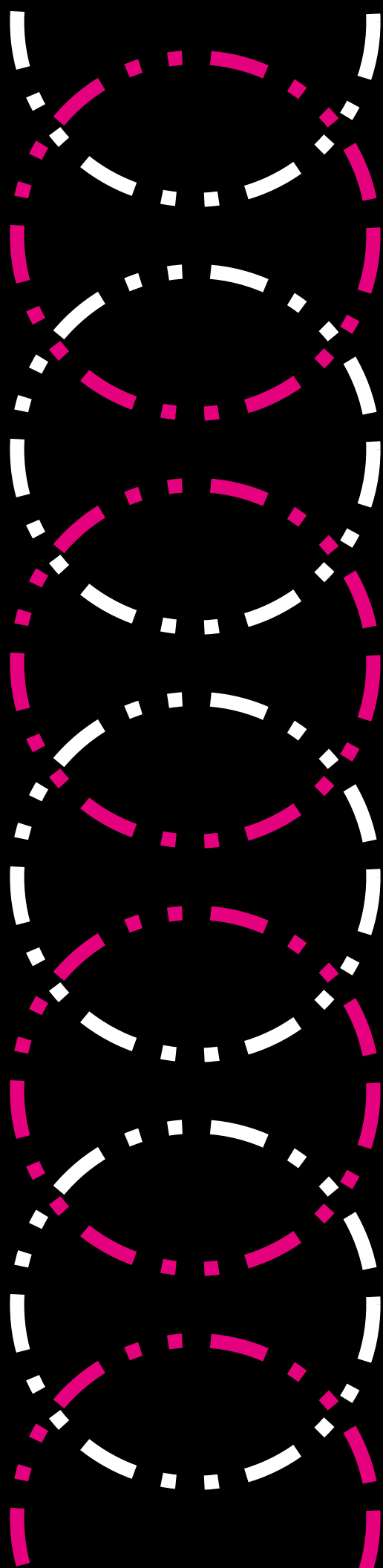
We are blessed with fabulous partners - a dream team. Although our organizational chart is amazing what really makes this partnership work is the commitment and good will of the people we have the honour of working with.

How would you rate the success of the eQuality Project?

12 out of 10. And only because our partners and youth researchers have been more creative and committed than we could possibly have imagined when we started 8 years ago.

If you could wave a magic wand and change anything about the eQuality Project, what would you change?

Evaluating tools and conducting research became much more difficult with the pandemic always in the background, so our first thought is to make that whole two years go away. However, the pandemic also gave us an incredible insight into the role of technology in education. Our magic wand would make every policymaker working in connection with Canadian schools read the results of our YPAR project on education during the pandemic. Our youth researchers articulated just how important strong, trusting relationships between teachers and students sharing real time and space are to education.



RESEARCH IN REVIEW

A look back at some of our favourite research deliverables from the last seven years of the eQuality Project.

How Teens Make Privacy Decisions About Photos on Social Media

In 2016 – 2017, we worked with eQuality partner MediaSmarts on a project funded by the Privacy Commissioner of Canada entitled To Share or Not to Share: How Teens Make Privacy Decisions About Photos on Social Media (PDM). The PDM Project investigated the ways in which Canadian youth make decisions concerning personal data and reputational privacy through the selective sharing of images and videos on social media platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram.

We recruited a diverse group of 18 young people between the ages of 13 and 16 living in Ottawa, and asked them to keep a diary of photos they shared with others online over a one-week period. We then asked them to categorize each photo as: photos they would be comfortable sharing with lots of people; photos they would be comfortable sharing with only a few people; and, photos they would not be comfortable sharing with anyone.

Interestingly, sharing photos was less about expressing themselves and letting other people know what they were interested in, and more about posting content that appealed to “everyone.” However, when they wanted to connect with friends, they selected “private” media like instant messaging or texting, precisely because the private nature of the platform meant they could relax and be themselves.

Defamation Law in the Age of the Internet

In 2017, we published the results from Defamation Law in the Age of the Internet: Young People’s Perspectives, funded by Law Commission of Ontario (LCO). We

conducted interviews with 20 participants between the ages of 15-21 about their online experiences with truth and falsity, reputation, anonymity, and the quality and utility of existing mechanisms for responding to defamatory attacks.

We received a ringing endorsement of the importance of privacy, as well as privacy protections to support the transparent management and protection of users’ information. In addition, informational control was seen as essential to the ability to build different reputations for different online audiences. Participants felt that while untrue statements could hurt their reputations, true statements that violate confidentiality and privacy could be just as harmful. The true, but harmful, situations described by our participants often involved cases of non-consensual disclosure of intimate images of girls and young women.



Global Kids Online:

In 2018, as part of the Global Kids Online project, The eQuality Project launched the Canadian Kids Online project (CKO) in collaboration with UNICEF Canada and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. We conducted a survey with approximately 250 young

people between the ages of 11 and 17 to better understand the online experiences of Canadian young people, as well as their knowledge of online privacy issues and how that knowledge affects their online interactions.

The survey was comprised of two parts that examined the ways in which the online environment can amplify both risks and opportunities experienced by young internet users, and how youths' sensitivities to online privacy issues related to those risks and opportunities that they experienced.

This is What Diversity Looks Like

In 2018, eQuality Project researchers organized focus groups across Canada to better understand what young internet users think of online privacy, and what steps they take to protect it. The data revealed much about the social norms that young people rely on to regulate their self-representation and to control their audiences in order to protect their privacy on social media platforms. In 2020, the research team reopened the project by conducting several focus groups with new Canadians. Once again, the data continued to counter the stereotypical argument that young people are a largely disinterested group when it comes to online privacy, and that they don't attempt to control the flow of their personal information and data.

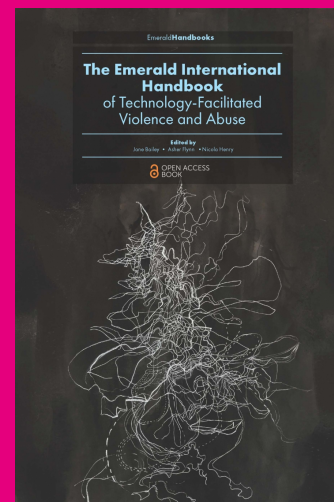
The Canadian Yearbook of Human Rights

Published by the University of Ottawa's Human Right Research and Education Centre (HRREC), The Canadian Yearbook of Human Rights is a yearly collection of research concerning human rights issues in Canada. The yearbook provides comprehensive coverage of this research, and for the 2017 – 2018 issue, the eQuality research team compiled a special section focused on big data and algorithmic discrimination. This special section included papers on topics ranging from the decision-making processes implemented by big data-driven algorithms and their impact on human rights; algorithmic discrimination; the importance of privacy related to big data collection; how the policies of social media platforms can fail users when it comes to hate speech and harassment; and, the right to be

forgotten.

Mapping Young Peoples' Understandings of Privacy in the Networked Environment

In 2019, the eQuality Project research team initiated a project to investigate young peoples' knowledge and attitudes concerning the data that smartphones collect on their users, such as: location data (both static/active, current/historical); banking information (accounts, PINs, etc.); personally-identifiable information (what users look/sound like); and, information regarding content (browsing history, files down/uploaded). Researchers broke the items down into a list of 51 "stimulus items" and asked teens to group them into piles, and conducted focus groups wherein all items were then sorted from least to most privacy sensitive according to audience – i.e. information known/accessed by family/friends; teachers/classmates; and, governments/strangers/corporations. eQ researchers then engaged the participants in discussion concerning their experiences with privacy.



Emerald International Handbook on Technology-Facilitated Violence and Abuse

In 2019 – 2020, Jane Bailey partnered with Nicola Henry (RMIT University) and Asher Flynn (Monash University) to co-edit a collected volume that investigates and highlights international perspectives on technology-facilitated violence. The collection consists of chapters submitted by legal scholars, activists, and researchers from around the world including North and

South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. The volume, entitled *International Handbook on Technology-facilitated Violence and Abuse*, is available in hard copy, and also via online open access thanks to eQ collaborator Anne Cheung's generous contribution of a portion of her Hong Kong Research Council grant (which focused on privacy as a response to cyberbullying). The book features chapters by a number of eQ team members, including Jane Bailey and Raine Liliefeldt; Anne Cheung; Suzie Dunn; Kristen Thomasen; and Chandell Gosse.

Ed-Tech & App Privacy

In 2020, The eQuality Project worked with the Canadian Teachers' Federation to draft and develop a nation-wide survey of teachers across Canada, one section of which involved a discussion of educational technology that teachers employ in the classroom. Based on the results of that section, The eQuality Project worked on an analysis of privacy policies across a broad range of educational apps and platforms that teachers have been using. Once the preliminary analysis was completed, the research team followed that up with a further analysis of the privacy and data practices that teachers are using across Canada. This secondary analysis helped expand and explore the policy issues that relate to online learning and data stewardship in the education sector across the country.

#ConnectionChallenge

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the creation of a new socio-technical environment around the world. Lockdowns of varying degrees of severity around the world sequestered people into limited social bubbles and led to a rise in working or attending school remotely. This shift to online work and learning led to a new level of social isolation. In the midst of the first lockdowns in Canada, one group of young people in Kingston explored the nature of this new socio-technical reality, specifically, the ways in which a reliance on technology and networked devices for communication and socialization effected their sense of connection to themselves and others.

Three years earlier, this same group of young people

worked with eQuality's Valerie Steeves and Brock University's Valerie Michaelson to create the #DisconnectionChallenge – a two-week project that explored how media use effected their relationships and sense of connection to themselves, friends, families, and nature. With this new project – the #ConnectionChallenge – the group investigated the challenges of maintaining meaningful connections with friends and family via solely digital means after the closure of schools, universities, and workplaces across Canada. Not only did this project focus on the maintenance of close relationships, it also highlighted the everyday instances of human connection that are often undervalued or overlooked, such as simply being in a public space surrounded by strangers and the background noise of modern society.

COVID & Ed-Tech Teacher Interviews

In February 2020, The eQuality Project partnered with the Alberta Teachers' Association to launch the #DisconnectChallenge in Alberta. This two-week activity involved over 11,000 participants keeping a media diary for one week, followed by a one-week media fast.

Following the completion of the #DC Alberta, eQuality Project researchers investigated the experiences and challenges teachers faced with respect to the use of learning technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic. We interviewed teachers from across the country to gain insight into their perspectives not only on the types of education technology that they employed, but also the ways that connection and disconnection have shaped young Canadians' experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, and whether that has changed during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our main areas of interest involved: the use of educational technology and applications; learning via networked devices; how the process of consciously disconnecting from networked learning environments informed young people's sense of connection; and, how the COVID-19 pandemic changed both their teaching practices as well as young people's experiences of learning through technology.

POLICY IN REVIEW

A look back at some of our favourite policy deliverables from the last seven years of the eQuality Project.

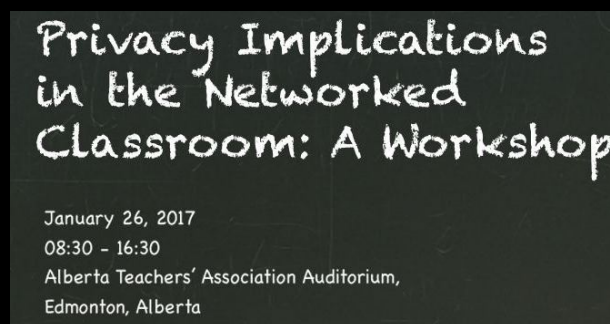
Open Society Foundation:

In 2015, at the request of the Open Society Foundation in the United Kingdom, eQuality researchers prepared a report on big data discrimination and young people, which included a set of policy recommendations for actors working on human rights issues related to big data. Key takeaways included: the need for algorithmic transparency to ensure that discriminatory big data analytics can be held to account; and, the need to proactively address the underlying roots of discriminatory outcomes produced in the big data environment.

South Korean Delegation:

On October 9, 2015, Jane Bailey, Valerie Steeves, Leslie Shade, Sarah Heath, and Dillon Black, met with a delegation from Korea to discuss the human rights challenges young people face online. The delegation was particularly interested in innovative legal and educational approaches to better help young Koreans navigate online commercialism and harassment. The group discussed Canadian legislation and jurisprudence, explored the empirical results of The eGirls Project and eQuality partner MediaSmarts' Young Canadians in a Wired World research project, and shared best practices around education and outreach.

The delegation included representatives from the National Human Rights Commission of Korea, the Korean Ministry of Justice and the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission of the Republic of Korea. The meeting took place at the offices of eQ partner Human Rights Research and Education Centre and included involvement from the Centre's Director John Packer and Assistant Director Viviana Fernandez.



Privacy Implications of the Networked Classroom:

In 2016, the eQuality Project co-hosted the Privacy Implications in the Networked Classroom workshop with the Alberta Teacher's Association, the Big Data Surveillance Project, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta. The workshop grew out of three eQuality initiatives: eQ's analysis of qualitative data collected as part of a Canadian Teachers' Federation survey of over 4,000 teachers across the country, which provided a snapshot of the ways in which networked learning tools embed surveillance into the classroom, often disrupting the social relationships at the heart of education; eQ's examination of educational software that uses algorithms to "sort" students for learning, which underscored the need for clear privacy guidelines to help school boards negotiate appropriate privacy standards when they are licencing new learning programs; and, eQ's examination of the transition in Ontario's education policy from "zero tolerance" to "safe and accepting," which revealed an ongoing emphasis on surveillance and monitoring to address issues such as cyberbullying, rather than proactive initiatives to address underlying issues such as discrimination.

Over 70 people—including teachers, school administrators, school board officials and privacy officers—attended and participated in discussions on the privacy implications of: the use of technology in schools; educational software in and outside of schools; and education law and policy on cyberbullying. The workshop concluded with a panel discussion highlighting tools to help educators promote privacy in the classroom and in board policy. After the workshop, over 80 members of the general public attended an evening lecture on new Canadian and American research on the privacy challenges raised by networked classroom technologies and educational software, as well as insights on education law and policy designed to protect students from cyberbullying.

Legal Briefs Module:

In 2017, the eQuality Project created an online module to inform Canadians about the legal ramifications of cyberbullying and cyberviolence. Breaking down the provincial, territorial and federal laws, and Canadian constitutional challenges, the module addresses issues such as: human rights law; educational law; civil litigation; administrative and regulatory law; and, criminal law, providing a thorough examination of Canadian legal responses to cyberviolence.

A variety of legal responses have been proposed and adopted to address these issues at all levels of government, and while some of these responses have been based on pre-existing laws, others have had to be created directly in response to Internet-related developments. As discussed in the module, the complexity of these issues, and the underlying equality issues that are often at stake, necessitate the adoption of a multi-pronged approach. Furthermore, when these issues affect young people, except in the most serious cases, responses ought to be weighed more strongly in favour of human rights and educational approaches rather than criminal law.

Cyberviolence: Criminal Case Law Module:

Developed in 2018, the Cyberviolence: Criminal Case Law module provides access to the ways that Canadian criminal law responds to technology-facilitated violence

and harassment. It provides an in-depth and organized overview of existing case law from across Canada, for both legal researchers and members of the general public. The module is structured to direct the user towards the information that would be most useful to them.

The “Interested Citizen” category is organized by behaviour – for example, Bullying and Cyberbullying, Excessive Control and Monitoring, Harassment, and Voyeurism. The goal is to provide individuals with behaviour-based case law summaries for those who may be victims of technology-facilitated violence. The “Legal Researcher” section is designed to provide legal researchers with a comprehensive database of Canadian criminal case law. Divided by criminal charge, this section provides summaries of recent cases, as well as direct links to the full text judgments published on CanLii’s website. In addition to the case summaries, users can also follow the “All Content” link to view the case law summaries of all cases included in the module.



Submission to The Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women:

In April 2018, Jane Bailey appeared before the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women on her first official visit to Canada in order to assess the extent of the problem of violence against women and girls in Canada, as well as the measures being taken to stop it. The eQuality submission (co-authored by Jane Bailey, Valerie Steeves, and Suzie Dunn) focused on the regulation of online violence and harassment against girls; detailed the eQuality Project’s research relating to technology facilitated violence; highlighted Canadian legislative models and criminal jurisprudence; gave an

overview of service provider responses; and emphasized the need for proactive community-based responses to online harassment.

ETHI Submission:

In 2018, Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey were invited to make submissions to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics (ETHI) concerning the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). Their submissions highlighted the high level of concern that young people report with respect to reputational harm and privacy by drawing on the findings of eQ's Report on Decision-Making and Privacy: How Youth Make Choices About Reputational and Data Privacy Online (with MediaSmarts) and Defamation in the Internet Age report for the Law Commission of Ontario. Reputational harm is considered by many young people to be the greatest danger associated with networked media. Despite the fact that they have developed strategies to mitigate these dangers, young people are calling for mechanisms that enable them to control access to and use of the data that can be harvested from their online interactions to better protect them from instances of reputational harm.



R. v. Jarvis Intervention & Public Forum:

In February 2019, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled

on R. v. Jarvis –a voyeurism case in which a high school teacher used a hidden pen camera to surreptitiously record images focused mainly on the chest and cleavage area of several female students and one colleague. The main question that the Supreme Court had to consider was whether the women targeted had any expectation of privacy while on school grounds, or whether the right to privacy was lost “in public.” The Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC) intervened in the case and was represented in court by eQuality’s Jane Bailey and CIPPIC’s Director, David Fewer.

The Supreme Court found the teacher guilty of voyeurism, and following release of the decision, The eQuality Project, CIPPIC, and the Centre for Law, Technology and Society (CLTS), with support from the Shirley Greenberg Chair on Women and the Legal Profession, hosted a public panel discussion featuring a number of the advocates involved in the intervention, including Jane Bailey (The eQuality Project), David Fewer (CIPPIC), Suzie Dunn (The eQuality Project), Adam Goldenberg (Ontario College of Teachers), and Karen Segal (Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF)).

Presentation to NZ Privacy Commissioner:

In December 2018, eQuality’s Jane Bailey gave an invited presentation on The eQuality Project’s research findings at the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of New Zealand. Bailey’s presentation included eQuality’s research on youths’ attitudes towards online defamation and harassment, as well as recent Canadian legal examples of cyberviolence (including the recent Supreme Court Decision in R. v. Jarvis), as well as some of the materials that the eQuality research team had developed for individuals who have experienced online violence and harassment (eQ’s Legal Briefs and Tech-Facilitated Violence modules, available on the resources page of the eQ website). The New Zealand Privacy Commissioner, John Edwards, as well as representatives from his Office, the Office of the Ombudsman in New Zealand, and Netsafe (New Zealand’s not-for-profit online safety organization) attended the presentation.

Open Caucus Intervention:

In May 2018, eQuality's Valerie Steeves participated in the Open Caucus' session on the protection of private data. The Open Caucus is designed to be a non-partisan forum for discussion on issues of national importance, open to all who are concerned about the protection of private data, including members of parliament, parliamentary staff, senators, the media, and members of the general public. The discussion was focused on the possible changes that could be made to Canadian privacy law that would ensure that Canadians' private information is managed ethically and transparently by the Canadian federal political parties. The Open Caucus panel also included Daniel Therrien (Privacy Commissioner of Canada), Avner Levin (Professor and Dean of Toronto Metropolitan University's Ted Rogers School of Management), and Adam Kardash (Partner, Privacy and Data Management, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP).

Response to UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

In 2019, The eQuality Project's Valerie Steeves penned *Taking Online Rights Seriously: Ensuring Children's Active Participation in Networked Spaces*, an NGO Report submitted in response to the 5th/6th Review of Children's Rights in Canada (Convention on the Rights of the Child). In the report, Steeves highlights the work of The eQuality Project on (in)equality issues in the networked environment, as well as the problems with protective and corporate surveillance – issues that were highlighted in her work with MediaSmarts (Young Canadians in the Wired World), as well as The eGirls Project and The eQuality Project.

Steeves then broke down her concerns with the CRC's report – namely the paucity of references to online issues and how they intersect with the rights of children, especially with the concerning developments in corporate and protective surveillance, and the fact that the CRC report is focused mainly on the criminal aspects of online privacy. She highlighted the importance of online privacy when it comes to children's' opportunities for communication, education, and play.

Taking Action to End Online Hate:

In the summer of 2019, eQ partner Egale Canada appeared before The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to their study of online hate. Jane Bailey and Valerie Steeves, as well as eQ partners the Canadian Women's Foundation, and YWCA Canada, also filed written submissions to the Committee. *Taking Action to End Online Hate* is the result of the Committee's study, which focused on finding legal and rights-based solutions to the creation and dissemination of online hate on the basis of: race/ethnic origin, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. Jane Bailey, as a member of LEAF's Gender-Based Tech-Facilitated Violence Advisory Committee, participated in consultations with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice on these issues.

UN Report on Privacy & Children:

In 2020, The eQuality Project's Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey penned a submission to The United Nations Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, regarding Draft Special Comment No 25: Children's Rights in Relation to the Digital Environment. Steeves and Bailey opened their response with a series of general comments surrounding their research with young Canadians, concerning their experiences in the networked environment, including: the need for a strong rights-oriented responses to the issues that young people face online; a strengthening of regulations around targeted marketing, neuromarketing, and automated decision-making; the importance of privacy and equality; and, the negative impacts of surveillance and artificial intelligence.

Steeves and Bailey provided a series of recommendations in response to each paragraph of the Committee's report, informed by our research and outreach work with young people from across Canada, and requested that the Committee conduct an analysis that both recognizes the disparately negative impacts on children from equality-seeking communities and seeks to mitigate them.

OUTREACH IN REVIEW

A look back at some of our favourite outreach deliverables from the last seven years of the eQuality Project.

Online Harassment Panel & Workshop:

On February 15, 2017, The eQuality Project, in partnership with OCTEVAW, YWCA, CLTS, and HRREC hosted a public lecture entitled Open Participation is Power: The Movement to End Online Harassment. Designed to inform and engage the audience about the use of technology and gender as a platform to combat gender-based violence and end online harassment, the keynote address was presented by Jamia Wilson, Executive Director and Publisher of Feminist Press at City University of New York. We had 35 participants in attendance for the keynote address, which was followed by a community workshop attended by 42 participants featuring a WIKI-edit-a-thon with OCTEVAW and Ladies Learning Code, who showed the audience how to edit Wikipedia pages, followed by a panel discussion featuring Dillon Black, Raine Lilliefeldt, and Emily Flynn-Jones.

The Disconnection Challenge:

As a project, we're committed to listening to young people and giving them a chance to articulate their own needs for better online policy and practice. So, when we were approached with a YPAR project idea by a group of eight teens who were working with Valerie Steeves Valerie Michaelson, we jumped at the chance to work with them. The teens were interested in exploring the impact of their own social media use on their sense of connection to themselves, to others and to nature, and after reviewing our research, the group decided to go on a one-week media fast: avoiding social media platforms, Internet browsing (except for schoolwork), texting (save for their parents), and listening to music with headphones. They discovered that taking a break from social media gave them a chance to spend more time with friends and family, get

their homework done well in advance, "think deep thoughts," and spend more time outside. After the fast, they chose to cut back on some disclosure practices (such as feeding Snapchat streaks) and were much more deliberate and thoughtful about the information they shared online.

The group was excited by what they had learned, and wanted to share their experiences with others. We worked with them to create a three-minute video entitled #DisconnectionChallenge detailing their experiences, and the surprising results of their weeklong media fast. In the video, they challenge other youth to undertake their own media fast to see how disconnecting can have its upside.

Art Exchange Workshop:

In February 2017, The eQuality Project hosted an Art Exchange Workshop at St. Stephen's Community House. The workshop was led by eQuality's Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey, with support from Chloe Georas (from the University of Puerto Rico Law School) and Andy Villanueva (an award-winning filmmaker and member of eQuality's Youth Advisory Committee). Eleven young women gathered for two days to discuss online surveillance and equality issues. After reviewing a series of Imagination Primers that highlighted the ways youth artists have used online media to resist online harassment, surveillance, and racism, participants planned and executed art projects to promote a more just online environment.

In April 2018, eQuality Project researchers travelled to San Juan, Puerto Rico to facilitate two additional Art Exchange workshops: one in Georas' University of Puerto Rico class and another through a general call to the community. Participants were mentored by two art

professors throughout both of these events, and these interactions ultimately culminated in an art exhibition in San Juan's Diagonal art gallery in May 2018. Andy Villanueva filmed two documentary videos for the workshop and exhibition, featuring interviews with the artists about their experiences and the philosophy behind their work, as well as clips from the exhibition. Both are on the resources page of the eQ website.

Building on the 2018 workshops, The eQuality Project facilitated another workshop in Markham, Ontario in 2019 with the help of the Centre for Immigrant & Community Services, as well as a return trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico to facilitate a train-the-trainer workshop for teachers. Resulting pieces of art have included a broad range of media, including: still life; video, audio; and, physically immersive pieces. You can find more information on past workshops on The eQuality Project website.

Ghomeshi Effect:

In 2018, The eQuality Project and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity partnered to help launch The Ghomeshi Effect on a tour through Ontario and Alberta. The Ghomeshi Effect is a documentary dance-theatre performance that tackles sexual violence in Canada, particularly how it is handled in the legal system. Through an edited series of documented interviews, The Ghomeshi Effect uses a series of choreographed dance sequences paired with monologues to inform and interrogate the language used in the discussion of sexual violence – both within and without the Canadian legal system. The 2018 tour was launched in Ottawa, with the opening performance held at the University of Ottawa followed by a talkback with The Ghomeshi Effect artists and members of the art and sexual violence support community.

Cashing-In Module:

Everything that is posted online on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook can be, and frequently is, collected, sorted, and inserted into algorithms designed to sort users into specific categories. These algorithms allow corporations and governments to make judgements based on

extrapolated data and to place users into specific categories based on lifestyle, interests, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and other pre-selected categories. Not only can these algorithms make false assumptions about people based on extrapolated data, but they can also recreate and reinforce discrimination, biases and stereotypes based on the information supplied to them. The fact is that machine learning and algorithms are not objective calculation tools; they are only as good as the human programmers and the data supplied.

For example, a selfie at a favourite coffee shop (#espressoislife #deathbeforedecaf) will create a spiderweb of categorical associations based on numerous data points from that single post. Location data will be used to triangulate your location when you posted the selfie, which will be used to make several assumptions about you. Based purely on location data (from either WIFI or geolocation technology), numerous calculations can be made about the poster's socio-economic status, shopping preferences, mode of transportation, and more.

In 2019, the eQuality Project created a mock social media page in order to illustrate the ways in which data is collected, and how this data is used by algorithms to make judgements about internet users in ways that they do not suspect or realize. Although the page eQ created is fictitious, it highlights examples of algorithmic assumptions reported in the real world.

#DisconnectChallenge Alberta:

The eQuality Project partnered with The Alberta Teachers' Association and the Big Data Surveillance Project to coordinate the world's largest #DisconnectChallenge to date, involving over 11,000 students across Alberta, along with their teachers and families. The new initiative was based on the 2017 youth participatory action research (YPAR) project Steeves and Michaelson conducted with a group of teens in Kingston, Ontario. Plans are underway for the #DisconnectChallenge to return in a further expanded format across Western Canada post-pandemic.

The teenagers who instigated the original

#DisconnectionChallenge of 2017 worked again. Steeves and Michaelson to design a second YPAR project entitled the #ConnectionChallenge to investigate the challenges of maintaining meaningful connections with friends and family via solely digital means after the closure of schools, universities, and workplaces in Canada in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

You Are What We Make You:

In 2019, The eQuality Project partnered with David Phillips and Andrea Villanueva to adapt Phillips' ClusterF*cked Fringe Festival play into a 15-minute film entitled You are What We Make You. YAWWMY highlights the ways in which people are sorted and categorized by big data algorithms based on the information collected by corporations, how these data packets interact with each other, and how data manipulation can create vastly different outcomes for groups of users. By physically representing the kinds of assumptions big data algorithms make about tech users through the physical relocation of actors, YAWWMY visually explores the impact that discriminatory biases in these algorithms have on us all.

Screening Surveillance:

The Centre for Law, Technology and Society hosted the annual eQuality Project Lecture at the University of Ottawa and featured the work of sava saheli singh, a post-doctoral researcher with the Big Data Surveillance Project led by David Lyon at Queens University. singh presented and screened one film from her Screening Surveillance series, which she developed while completing her PhD at the Surveillance Studies Centre at Queen's University.

Screening Surveillance is a short film series that uses near-future fiction storytelling based on research to explore the potential societal scenarios that arise out of the increased use of big data surveillance and the loss of privacy. Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey joined sava for a Q&A session after the presentation and screening. CLTS recorded the event and posted it on their social media platforms.

Youth Speakers List:

In partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, The eQuality Project developed a list of youth speakers and allies that we have made available to our partners, stakeholders, and external interested parties. We sought to create a resource through which a diverse range of young people and their allies can amplify their messages, and allow The eQuality Project to help build a platform for the cross-promotion of discussions around issues of online (in)equality. A list of speakers, their biographies, and contact information are all available on The eQuality Project website.

Emerald International Handbook on Technology-facilitated Violence and Abuse:

In 2020, The eQuality Project's Jane Bailey partnered with Nicola Henry (RMIT University) and Asher Flynn (Monash University) to co-edit the Emerald International Handbook on Technology-facilitated Violence and Abuse – a collected volume that investigates and highlights international perspectives on technology-facilitated violence.

This edited collection consists of chapters submitted by legal scholars, activists, and researchers from around the world including North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. In addition, the book features chapters by a number of eQ team members, including Jane Bailey and Raine Liliefeldt; Anne Cheung; Suzie Dunn; Kristen Thomasen; and Chandell Gosse.

The volume was published by Emerald Publishing in 2021 and is an online, open access publication.

Screening Surveillance - #Tresdancing:

The eQuality Project has partnered with the Big Data Surveillance Project (Queen's University) and the AI+Society Project (University of Ottawa) in order to co-fund the production of a fourth film in sava saheli singh's trilogy: Screening Surveillance (A Model Employee, Blaxites, and, Frames).

This fourth installment, titled #Tresdancing, follows a protagonist who is "caught" (read: mistakenly punished

by algorithmic proctoring technology) cheating on an online math test and is told to make up their grades by wearing surveillance eyeglasses. The glasses challenge them to “get points” by solving every day and in-the-moment math problems. Our protagonist is also part of a famous underground social media dance group who are known for trespassing illegally to create their videos. Hard choices ensue. This near-future scenario explores the impact that surveillance, algorithms, education technology, social media, and police surveillance have on families and young people.

Coded Bias:

The eQuality Project partnered with the Centre for Law, Technology and Society (University of Ottawa), the AI+Society Project (University of Ottawa), and the ACT Project (University of Montreal) to co-host a screening of Coded Bias, followed by a Q&A session with the film’s director, Shalini Kantayya moderated by sava saheli singh.

Coded Bias is a documentary film that explores the fallout of the discovery that facial recognition algorithms routinely fail to recognize dark skinned faces accurately – either misidentifying gender, or failing to recognize them at all. The film broadens this discussion surrounding bias in algorithms by highlighting real-life situations and stories that prove that AI systems and algorithms – whether used as oversight, security methods, or evaluation tools – are anything but “neutral.”

eQ eBook – Educational Modules:

In order to ensure that The eQuality Project materials will continue to be available and accessible after the end of the project, we have decided to produce an eBook under a creative commons license for the continued use, modification, and enjoyment of eQuality Project materials. Designed for teachers, community outreach workers, and parents, the eBook is designed to provide a compendium of materials to work with youth and to engage them in conversations around issues of privacy, surveillance, tech-facilitated violence, and equality. The Book is expected to be published in 2023, in electronic and paper formats.

The eQuality Project Monograph:

In order to mark the end of The eQuality Project, the eQ research team is also hard at work on a volume that will serve as overview of the research takeaways from the past seven years of interviews, focus groups, outreach projects, and work with our partners and stakeholders. It will be co-written by Valerie Steeves, Jane Bailey, Jacquie Burkell, Pris Regan, and Leslie Shade, and is expected to be published in 2023.

Young Canadians Parliament:

The eQuality Project recently partnered with Children First Canada to participate in their Young Canadians’ Parliament session. eQuality’s segment was focused on online privacy and surveillance. Developed in conjunction and conversation with our Youth Advisory Committee as well as our Youth Summit Advisory Team, the session was based on the specific experiences of young people.

eQuality Project Youth Summit:

Prior to, and during the COVID 19 Pandemic, our research participants worried about how the use of Ed-Tech raised questions about where their data were going when they used it, and why they were being required to use collaborative software to write stories or essays when it would be easier, and more private, to use their own personal laptops. The vast majority complained of schools reading their private emails or messages to classmates.

In order to respond to these concerns, we organized a Youth Summit where 34 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 from diverse backgrounds will sit down with key policymakers and participate in a deliberative dialogue process. The discussion focused on a case study, our recent #tresdancing film, to provide participants with a way to talk about artificial intelligence and its impact on their learning, privacy, and concerns about equality/equity/non-discrimination in education. The Youth Summit will be held on October 1st, 2022.

EQUALITY

THE NUMBERS

Research

92+

Publications

Workshop

40+

Participants

Policy

14

Publications

6K+

Tweets

22

Policy Interventions

Lesson

11+

Plans

YOUTH
SUMMIT

PARTICIPANTS

34

Conference

149+

Presentations

Research
Assistants

69

ADDITIONAL

\$294K

FUNDING

Partners &
Stakeholders

24

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Robert Porter (Years 3 - 6)
Chandell Gosse (Years 7 - 8)

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Robert Porter

OUR PARTNERS

The Alberta Teachers' Association
The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual
Diversity
Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest
Clinic
Canadian Race Relations Foundation
Canadian Teachers' Federation
Canadian Women's Foundation
Centre for Law, Technology & Society
Egale Canada Human Rights Trust

George Mason University
Government of Alberta
Human Rights Research and Education Centre
MediaSmarts
Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against
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Outside of the Shadows
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QUALITY?

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FRIENDS OF EQUALITY:

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of
Alberta
The Information and Privacy Commissioner of
Ontario
Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada



2015
2022