14 Tabloid Expo

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The headline 'Man and His Broad: Hookers Descend on Sexpo 67' filled the cover of the 27 May 1967 issue of *Tab International*, a sensational weekly newspaper published in Toronto (see plate 24). One month after the opening of Expo 67, *Tab* described the migration to Montreal of thousands of prostitutes, heading there to serve the tourist populations who were arriving along overlapping routes. This 'great trek of U.S. prostitutes,' *Tab* suggested, had been going on for months: 'They worked their ways north and east, stopping in towns on the way to make expenses and eating money.' Many of the prostitutes, it was claimed, had set up temporary practice in Toronto, waiting out the time until Expo opened. *Tab International* estimated that 25,000 prostitutes were advancing on Montreal, in search of revenues expected to exceed \$250 million.

The hookers' descent on Montreal was one of several invasions predicted or observed by the popular newspapers that covered Expo 67. The imminent arrival of pickpockets, counterfeiters, motorcycle gangs, east coast American gangsters, and rats produced waves of alarm in press coverage of the fair throughout 1967. This coverage relished the use of statistics to convey the scale of these threats to the physical and moral well-being of the fair and its host city. Three thousand Hell's Angels, one million dollars in counterfeit bills, seven thousand abandoned children, seventy-eight nurses, five million rats – these numbers brought credibility and gravity to ongoing speculation about the fair's vulnerability to a variety of perils. As one moved down the scale of journalistic prestige, from mainstream daily newspapers to the tabloid weeklies that flourished during the 1960s, the scale of these dangers seemed to become the most spectacular feature of the world's fair, the most consistent reason for its newsworthiness.

Covering the Fair

Tab International's treatment of Expo 67 was obviously idiosyncratic, set against the coverage of the fair that appeared in other magazines and newspapers. The sense that Expo 67 was both significant and photogenic had led well-known mainstream magazines like *Life* and *Paris Match* to fill their covers with images of Expo, while picture-dominated magazines like *National Geographic* and *Look* announced extensive coverage of Expo prominently on their covers.² The most

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familiar images from the fair – those of Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome and the monorail transportation system, for example – circulated across a wide variety of periodicals, quickly conveying the futurism that was a core theme of press coverage of Expo. That futurism was evoked, as well, in mainstream Montreal newspapers like *Le Devoir*, *La Presse*, the *Montreal Star*, and the *Montreal Gazette*. These papers gave Expo 67, at its key moments, the spectacular coverage it so clearly seemed to warrant but also distributed the fair's various events and features throughout well-established sections of the paper, like those devoted to youth, fashion, entertainment, municipal politics, and women.

The focus of this article is the treatment of Expo 67 by tabloid newspapers published in Montreal.³ These have been chosen so that we might trace the contours of a popular discourse on the world's fair that lacked, for the most part, the high-minded humanism and scientific futurism characteristic of coverage that appeared in more respectable venues. In the 1960s, the tabloid newspapers of Montreal (and of Canada more generally) seemed to reach their highest levels of brazenly lurid expressivity. This was the decade in which bold new popular papers like the Journal de Montréal emerged to capture the attention of commuters for whom Montreal's Metro system would be built. It was the period, as well, in which Montreal's tabloid paper Midnight came to be distributed throughout English-speaking North America, riding a boom in supermarket tabloids that left several newspapers (such as the New York Enquirer, now renamed the National Enquirer) disengaged from their origins as urban sensation sheets. During the 1960s, the weekly, Montreal-focused *Allo Police* rose to prominence from among the dozens of journaux jaunes which had been launched alongside it during the vice and corruption panics of the 1950s. Allo Police outlived virtually all of these papers, serving as a key chronicler of Montreal's criminal undergrounds and popular sensations for half a century.

The Media Ecology of World's Fairs

World's fairs function at several levels as complex media environments. The bestknown examples of media phenomena at world's fairs have been those technological spectacles designed explicitly to display emergent media forms within a broader imagining of possible futures. The World of Tomorrow building at the 1939 New York fair and the Labyrinth pavilion at Expo 67 are considered key events in the emergence of now-familiar media experiences (those of television and large-format cinema, respectively). Attractions like these condensed within themselves the broader thematics and marvels of their host fairs, standing metonymically for emergent regimes of sensory experience. At a more banal level, the media environments of world's fairs will include a wide range of infrastructural, functional elements, installed to ensure the smooth passage of information, people, and things through the space of a fair. Like other miniature worlds (cruise ships and military bases, for example), world's fairs have stimulated the development of media to serve (and exploit) the people within them, from signage and wayfinding systems through specialized daily newspapers and broadcasting stations. In this respect, expositions are complex semiotic machines, generating vast

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quantities of information to support their various levels of operation. The media infrastructure of the 1970 Osaka World's Fair, for example, included eighteen information boards, nineteen post boxes, seventy thousand copies of a special guidebook for those using wheelchairs, ten thousand guidebooks in Braille, fifty closed-circuit remote-control TV cameras, one hundred emergency phones, and seven thousand telephones. Expo 92, in Seville, Spain, featured an online daily newspaper and electronic messaging system maintained by IBM in what was to be a model for the urban information systems of the future. The Coca-Cola pavilion at New York's 1964-5 world's fair hosted a radio station, K2US, run by amateur radio enthusiasts throughout the duration of the fair.4

The media environments in which world's fairs participate extend beyond these self-contained systems, however. Typically, world's fairs are built on the edges of cities and transform the broader media ecologies of the urban centres that host them. World's fairs are occasions for the local media of host cities – their newspapers and television stations, for example - to reinvent themselves and adjust their relationship to their cities. Local news organizations may become providers of globally circulating content, syndicating photographs and television footage to media outlets around the world. Likewise, they may serve a translation function, explaining the fair to locals or the city to its visitors. Montreal's English-language newspapers, read by visitors to Expo 67 from across Canada and the United States, assumed a new - if short-lived - importance during the duration of the exposition. Among other functions, they became key venues through which local businesses announced their products and services to tourists, through promotional rhetoric that linked their offerings to the broader attractions of Expo 67. World's fairs may divert and extend the media systems of their host cities with effects which are often permanent. Expo 67 spurred the building of Montreal's Metro system, itself a *medium* in an expanded sense of the term. The announcement of the Metro's construction hastened the development of media directed at commuters, from tabloid newspapers like the Journal de Montréal through the large display advertisements which turned Metro cars into surfaces emblematic of a consumerist modernity.5

The media environments of world's fairs thus include both the planned, circumscribed media infrastructures produced for fairs and the more informal mixes of media characteristic of their host cities. One way of capturing this difference is through the distinction, developed by Doevendans and Schram, between 'creation' and 'accumulation' cities. As planned, miniature urban worlds, world's fairs are very much 'creation' cities, environments whose elements are all built more or less simultaneously and thus appear of equal age. In this, they are different from what the same authors (following Bruno Fortier) call 'accumulation' cities, places given form and character through the slow overlaying of the new upon the residual or outmoded.6 Without exception, the cities hosting world's fairs have been 'accumulation' cities, urban environments of significant age whose media ecologies took shape in the sedimentation of media forms upon each other over time.

As 'creation' cities, world's fairs tend almost naturally to orient themselves towards the future and the speculative. Their host cities, in contrast, as sites of accumulation, impose upon these futuristic environments frameworks of understanding that often seem residual, unchanging, even archaic. The coverage of world's fairs in host city media is typically shaped by long-standing traditions of journalistic commentary and by well-entrenched templates that meet each new urban event as a challenge to the tenor and stability of city life. The difference between these orientations is at its starkest where the moral character of a fair is at stake. Imagined by their planners as places for the reinvention of collective life, world's fairs usually evoke, for their host cities, the spectre of moral and administrative disorder.

It is common to refer to world's fairs as 'dream worlds,' but these environments usually lack the palimpsestic layering of traces which led Freud to find, in 'accumulation' cities such as Paris or Rome, models for the psyche and the work of dreams.⁷ To find such layering, we must look instead at the host city itself, and the ways in which its deeply rooted fears and fantasies come to be interwoven with the sensations offered by its world's fair. Evidence of this interweaving, I will suggest, could be found in the most sensationalistic and popular of Montreal's newspapers. All through 1967, these newspapers covered Expo in ways that tied concerns over the fair's security and moral well-being to an ongoing history of perils and sensations which had marked Montreal's history in the postwar period.

Newspapers and World's Fairs

Pieter von Wesemael has argued that the first world's fairs 'reflected the switch from a book culture to an image culture in the Western world.'8 This switch was not simply the result of technological modernization, as if image-based and audio-visual media merely took over the functions of print. This switch occurred as fairs came more and more to offer their own versions of the marvellous, rather than drawing together pre-existing marvels from elsewhere in the world. The exhibitions of the earliest world's fairs, von Wesemael suggests, were dominated by objects and specimens acquired from such worlds as those of manufacturing, scientific experimentation, or colonial exploration. These artefacts became meaningful through the accounts of them published elsewhere, in newspapers and magazines. Since the late nineteenth century, however, explanation has been built more and more into the structure of exhibitions themselves. World's fairs have come to be filled with media-based displays which offer their own protocols of instruction and reduce the need for external commentary. These newer fairs, in von Wesemael's words, 'also reflected changing notions on popular education: from pedantic conveyance of information to a passive audience ... to self-realisation and image creation in which the public itself plays the active role.'9

With these changes, the role of newspapers or other print forms in rendering a world's fair intelligible has seemed less and less clear or significant. By the time of Expo 67, world's fair pavilions were dominated by photography, film, and electronic display systems. These media either provided their own, contextualizing information about phenomena on display or served as principal attractions in their own right. Expo 67 is remembered today for the rich variety of its

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audio-visual sensations, for the ways in which McLuhanist technophilia, satellite communications, videotape, and cinema screens large and small were felt to join seamlessly as constituents of an emerging media ecology. The city on whose borders Expo unfolded, however, was one in which the newspaper remained the primary vehicle for news and information. Confronted by the spectacle of Expo 67, newspaper coverage could not help but seem semantically impoverished and redundant, as if the pedagogical richness of the exhibition left little for journalistic reportage to explain. It is difficult, reading Montreal newspapers' coverage of Expo 67, to reach any clear and coherent sense of the experience of particular exhibitions. While the specimens and manufactured objects of the late nineteenth-century fair were easily captured in photographs or engravings, themselves effectively framed within the pages of newspapers or magazines, the large-scale, integrated multimedia displays typical of later fairs lent themselves poorly to such coverage.

The difficulty for newspapers of covering Expo 67 was only partially rooted in the challenge of translating richly sensorial experiences into the quiet, diminished languages of print. Newspapers also confronted the problem of the fair's temporal rhythms. At one level, Expo 67 was a monumental, static cluster of symbolic forms, visited by flows of people whose character differed only in minor ways from day to day. Daily variation, during the fair's existence, was quite minimal once the fair had been built. Variety came mostly in the form of visits by foreign dignitaries or celebrities, whose presence received substantial coverage in Montreal's newspapers. Appearances by the famous usually came on the special focus days of their home nations, but these focus days offered little else that was newsworthy (and, by mid-summer, their sequence had come to seem monotonous). Celebrity visits gave a weak but persistent sense of temporal sequence to the life of the fair.

A stronger sense of newsworthiness was found, not in the marvellous events constitutive of the fair's spectacle, but in all those ways in which Expo 67 became like a city or partook of the 'cityness' of Montreal. Newspaper coverage of the fair often seemed preoccupied by problems of order and administration, by the logistical problems which the fair had confronted since the announcement that it would be built. One might have expected that these logistical problems would have been specific to the fair, meaningful only in terms of the unprecedented project of building so monumental an environment on Montreal's edge. In fact, lines of association quickly linked most of these logistical challenges to deeply rooted problems more typical of the administration of city life. These problems of administration, in turn, were linked to the more enduring question of the city's well-being and that of its citizens.

On the cover of its 23 April 1967 issue, the weekly tabloid newspaper *Le Petit Journal* (then in its forty-first year of publication; it would last until 1978) claimed, in blaring headlines, 'La province menacée – La Pégre internationale et l'Expo' (The Province under Threat – The International Mafia and Expo). Below these titles ran four ribbons of text naming the specific dangers with which, according to *Le Petit Journal*, the Mafia sought to infest Montreal during the duration of Expo 67: 'Règlement de comptes. Narcotiques. Traités des

blanches. Prostitution. Homosexualité organisée. Fraude. Fausse monnaie. Faux chèques. Fausses cartes de crédit. Jeux organisés. Barbotes. Lotéries. Bookies. Hold-Up. Cambriolages. Protection. Extorsion. Chantage. ¹¹ On the first interior page, *Le Petit Journal* repeated a Toronto journalist's claim that Montreal was the international headquarters of organized crime and had been so since 1952. ¹² This reference to 1952 could not help but resonate profoundly with readers. This was the period when mayor-to-be Jean Drapeau and others led the Comité de Moralité Publique, dedicated to the eradication of vice and crime from Montreal, and when a Commission of Inquiry, chaired by Justice Caron, held hearings on municipal corruption.

According to a widely shared, present-day belief, the rush by Mayor Jean Drapeau to prepare Montreal for Expo 67 led to the mass closing of Montreal's jazz clubs, the destruction of many of the city's working-class neighbourhoods, and a general sanitization of the city's nightlife and popular culture. This account condenses a long sequence of events which, since Drapeau's election to the mayoralty in 1954, had transformed the city in more gradual ways. Among these events was the completion in 1964 of Place des Arts, one of several attempts to move the core of the city's commercial and cultural energies further to the east, into more francophone neighbourhoods. This sequence includes, as well, the extension of the Ville-Marie Expressway in the early 1970s, an act that led to the destruction of urban fabric and several hundred homes in the city's Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district. These events unfolded over a decade or more and represent the city government's acquiescence to North American planning doctrines and developer pressure much more than they manifest the push to clean up Montreal for Expo 67.

In the tabloid press' coverage of the world's fair, in any case, one finds little sense that Montreal, in 1967, had been cleaned up or its characteristically vice-ridden character diminished. Go-go and topless bars were mentioned more frequently than jazz clubs in the tabloid newspapers of the mid-1960s, and the corruption of city officials seemed less prevalent during this period than the unscrupulous practices of businesses seeking to profit from Expo. The long-standing sense of Montreal as a city of low civic virtue and unstable authority persisted.

Le Journal de Montréal

The *Journal de Montréal* began publication on 15 June 1964, three years before the opening of Expo 67, when publisher Pierre Pelardeau used a strike at *La Presse*, Montreal's best-selling French-language daily, as the pretext for launching a newspaper that would compete with it. As a tabloid paper aimed at those who rode to work on public transportation systems, the *Journal de Montréal* had, as its primary focus, Montreal life and its sensations. In a decade marked by an ascendant internationalism, and by rich public debate over the transformations unfolding in Quebec, the *Journal de Montréal*'s preoccupation with low-level disruptions of municipal life (crimes, strikes, and moral transgressions) risked appearing old-fashioned and parochial. Nevertheless, the *Journal* was the first of Montreal's newspapers to be printed using new offset technology, and the crisp photographs that filled its front pages made the paper resonate more strongly with the image

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culture of the time than most of its competitors. By 1967, when the Metro was running, full of its readers, the *Journal de Montréal* was among the artefacts of Montreal life which seemed to best express that year's fluid modernity.

In the Journal's coverage of Expo 67, we may distinguish between events planned in advance, covered as evidence of the fair's rich eventfulness, and those which emerged as unexpected disruptions of its unfolding. The difference between these two is a familiar one in studies of the press – between news generated by press releases, on the one hand, and stories written by reporters working journalistic beats, on the other. In January 1967, for example, the Journal reported, from official announcements, on a contest to name the universal youth pavilion, on the coming revival of the Broadway show Hellzapoppin at Expo, and on expected visits to the fair by General de Gaulle, the president of Italy, and more than one hundred thousand French tourists. 13 These stories typically received no follow-up; they were brief and presented in ways that offered no apparent connection to other events.

In the second category of coverage, however, we find news stories that organized themselves into cycles and unfolded over several days. These stories typically followed investigative arcs which led from the uncovering of transgressions through a narrativization of their impact. Throughout January, reporters covered on claims that a 'lodging racket' would raise the rents of city-dwellers in order to force them from homes that might be rented more profitably to tourists. Fears of a housing crisis were covered within journalistic narratives that pursued multiple lines of connection. One such line led from the 'lodging rackets' to strikes by public workers, which would add to a more general sense of civic crisis, for example. Another joined coverage of such rackets to fear of infiltration of all levels of Expo activity by organized crime. 14 In the cycles of coverage which took shape here, we find the constant mobilization of issues that had preoccupied Montreal throughout the 1960s and the constant assertion of their interconnection. In this coverage, there is a regular back-and-forth between the world's fair, as both an expression and test of civic purpose, and the broader drama of Montreal's struggles with criminality and disorder.

These overlapping cycles of coverage would continue through and past the month of April, when the fair opened. During February and March, the sense that threats to the city's moral and legal order were emerging on several fronts was clear in the Journal's treatment of preparations for Expo's opening. In these treatments, we may glimpse the particular moral relationship of a world's fair to its host city that has characterized most international expositions. On the one hand, there is a sense that the endemic moral disorder of the city must be controlled so as to prevent it from contaminating the ordered space of the fair. On the other hand, as a festive occasion detached from the order and responsibilities of everyday life, a fair represents the constant threat (or promise) of a moral loosening that might act as a corruptive force upon the city.

For earlier world's fairs, as Robert Rydell has shown, this tension was condensed within the morally suspect 'midway' districts, which had no obvious (or credible) pedagogical function and, arguably, stood as zones of mutual contamination between city and fair.¹⁵ Expo 67's version of the 'midway' (La Ronde), however, played only a minor role in the moral dramas in which fair and city were embroiled. The 'zone of contamination,' in Montreal's case, was the more dispersed circuit of nightclubs, bars, and hotels which seemed both left over (from Montreal's days as a 'wide-open' city) and newly arisen (as entrepreneurs at all levels of legality sought to exploit the presence of tourists). In February and March, the *Journal de Montréal* reported regularly on the pre-Expo invasion of Montreal's night-time economy by youth gangs, counterfeiters, prostitution rings, and car thieves from Vancouver.

The most tightly woven cycle within this coverage had to do with the various manifestations of Montreal's sex industry. Throughout 1967, all of Montreal's newspapers reported on the efforts of police to control the spread of 'topless' dance clubs throughout the city. The expanding popularity of such clubs had little direct relation to Expo, and similar controversies erupted throughout North America during this period. Nevertheless, the wave of topless clubs was seen by newspapers in the context of a more widespread outburst of immorality challenging Expo's reputation as a family destination. At the same time, and predictably, the fair itself was blamed for an influx of prostitutes and for the establishment of networks of 'call girls à go-go' in the vicinity of the Expo site.¹⁶ Nowhere was the connection between fair and city expressed more schematically than on the cover of the Journal's edition of 27 April, the day before Expo 67 opened (fig. 14.1). The top of the page carried the large headline 'La Régie ferme sept cabarets' (The licensing board closes seven cabarets). Below it, beneath the image of dozens of national flags assembled majestically, the paper announced 'Enfin, L'Expo!'

Of all the Expo-related stories published in the *Journal de Montréal* during May, the first full month of the fair's operation, most either cover disruptions to the life of the fair or concern Expo's smooth functioning. A striking feature of this coverage overall is that so little of it concerns the spectacle of the fair or the technological marvels for which it has come to be studied and remembered. (Throughout 1967, the *Journal de Montréal* wrote more about the price of food at Expo 67 than about its media installations.) The fair's journalistic eventfulness seemed to consist of a succession of visits by public figures. Otherwise, we see the ongoing cycle of reports on crime and corruption give way, at least in part, to stories in which drama and insecurity stem from the insinuation of international geo-politics into the environment of the fair. (Threats of attacks on the Cuban pavilion, and uncertainty over the fate of the Kuwait pavilion, in the light of Canada's positions on Israel, unfolded over several days in the early weeks of the fair.)

With only minor fluctuations, this balance of disruptive and non-disruptive events would characterize the *Journal*'s coverage of Expo 67 throughout the summer and autumn. Pickpockets were apprehended; a gang of Hell's Angels was dissuaded from attending the fair when the Sûreté de Québec demanded a security deposit of \$3,000 per person. In mid-summer, tragic or criminal events (like the death of four people returning home by bus from Expo) assumed the character of *fait divers*, less connected to broader questions of Montreal's moral or civic health than was typical of stories earlier in the year. This link between the moral worlds of the fair and the city was renewed in August, when the wave of

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14.1 'Enfin, L'Expo!' Cover of *Le Journal de Montréal*, 27 April 1967. Courtesy of Le Journal de Montréal.

bank robberies involving Monique la Mitraille (Machine-Gun Molly) seemed to interweave Montreal's long-standing reputation as wide-open city with an Expoinduced sense of insecurity. As a celebrity criminal who might have sprung from the popish imagination of Andy Warhol or Jean-Luc Godard, Machine-Gun Molly seemed part of the carnival of Montreal's Expo summer.

Midnight and Allo Police

The Montreal-based tabloids *Allo Police* and *Midnight* were founded within months of each other, the former in 1953, the latter in 1954. *Allo Police* was one of several sensational papers introduced in Montreal in the 1950s to capitalize on a collective interest in vice, corruption, and criminality. Collectively, these papers were known as the *journaux jaunes*, and while their coverage of municipal crime, vice, and corruption expressed the preoccupations of Jean Drapeau's reform movement of the 1950s, they themselves were frequently condemned as symptoms of the city's moral decline. ¹⁷ *Midnight* had been started by a teenager named Jo Azaria as a guide to goings-on within Montreal nightclubs. The paper's concern with nightlife led smoothly to an interest in eccentric sexualities, and from there to coverage of crimes which were invariably sexualized.

By the late 1950s, *Midnight*'s focus and that of *Allo Police* had converged, as both concerned themselves with violence, vice, and sin transpiring in and around Montreal. The two papers then occupied roughly adjacent spaces within the broader intertextual space of print culture sensationalism. Both newspapers, at some level, were mostly concerned with crime, but crime functioned during these years as the French cultural historian Dominique Kalifa has described it: rather than a specific set of acts, it was the foundation of a broad, intertextual collective imagining, through which danger and excitement, night-time and solitude, legality and passion are held together within a roughly coherent aesthetic. ¹⁸ *Allo Police* had been launched to capitalize on public interest in crime and corruption, *Midnight* to chronicle the semi-illicit pleasures of nightlife. The radius of each newspaper's concern came to overlap more and more with that of the other as the 1950s unfolded.

After 1960, however, *Midnight* began its rise 'upwards,' out of Montreal's urban netherworlds and into the more abstract space of international celebrities and social issues (such as the rise of 'The Pill') with no notable connection to place. The disengagement of *Midnight*'s reporting from Montreal corresponded to the paper's own shift in distribution and audience. By the early 1960s, it had joined with other titles (like the *National Enquirer*) in the supermarket tabloid revolution that were now directing their appeal to potential buyers across the North American continent. *Allo Police*, in contrast, would move noticeably 'downward,' into the ever-murkier worlds of Montreal-based criminality. We might best understand the divergence of *Midnight* from *Allo Police* in the 1960s in terms of the changing focal length of these newspapers' observation of Montreal. *Allo Police*'s mid-level overview of the city in the 1950s, when it was able to link individual crimes to larger questions of governance, seemed to give way, in the 1960s, to a tight, up-close view of crimes and other sensations. This close-up view

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rarely pulled back any more from a crime site or circumscribed neighbourhood to link crimes to broader questions of the city and its disorders. *Midnight*, by contrast, kept pulling back to a position from which Montreal was no longer visible.

By 1967, the differences between the two papers were strikingly evident in their front pages or covers. As Midnight moved into the abstract social space of the North American English-language weekly tabloid, its covers and surfaces came to seem flatter, less adorned, as if they were meant to be glimpsed in a hurry. Unitary messages were stamped upon them in large typefaces. Allo Police, on the other hand, developed modes of surface presentation that strained to communicate an ever more intense busyness. With no opportunities for international distribution available to it, it would strive to convey the rich eventfulness of Montreal through increasingly cluttered layouts. The covers of Allo Police, from the 1960s into the 1970s, became more and more broken up, filled with arrows and pictures. Typefaces of descending sizes worked to pull readers from headlines into the detailed event structures of the city in which it was anchored.

The issues of Midnight and Allo Police that appeared in the week following the opening of Expo 67 are striking for the absence of any reference to the fair on the covers, and this fact betrays the broader insignificance accorded it by these two papers. Midnight, born in Montreal and still published there throughout the 1960s, made no mention of Expo 67 in any of the twenty-six issues published during the run of the exposition. Allo Police acknowledged Expo 67 more regularly, but, even here, coverage was less frequent than one might have predicted. In fifty-two issues published during 1967 – half of them during the time of the fair - and amid hundreds of articles on Montreal or its environs, Allo Police published only sixteen articles that offered any significant connection to Expo 67.19 Many of these connections, it should be noted, seemed forced or obscure. Three of these articles simply juxtaposed Expo's healthy spectacle with the misery or murder transpiring just beyond its boundaries and made the latter their principal focus. Another handful of articles dealt with the low-level logistical problems of Expo: the lost and found office in which crutches and brassieres piled up; the first aid service that treated calluses and headaches. Across these articles, one sees the effort to find in Expo 67 the challenges posed by the banal and the quotidian.

The Rat Invasion

The longest article which Allo Police devoted to Expo 67 appeared in its issue of 12 February, more than two months before the fair opened: 'Tout est mis en branle pour éviter l'envahissement des iles de l'Expo par 5 millions de rats de Montréal' (All efforts underway to avoid the invasion of the Expo islands by five million rats from Montreal). Over three pages long, this article raised the fear that millions of rats, which normally scurried around the Port of Montreal, might invade the Expo 67 site to harvest the abundant scraps of food left there by tourists. Like the tourists themselves, Montreal's rats were said to have arrived from elsewhere, from innumerable places of uneven character. Brown rats, Allo Police told its readers in a detailed history, had their origins in Asia but had invaded Europe in 1727, then been introduced to the United Kingdom by ships arriving from the Orient. From

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14.2 The tabloid *Allo Police* used a range of graphic forms in its coverage of a possible rat invasion of the Expo site.

Image from Allo Police, 12 February 1967.

Courtesy of Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.

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England, the brown rat had followed the routes of seafaring vessels, invading port cities and using the docks and warehouses of marine commerce as its favourite refuges. Leaving the Montreal harbour, *Allo Police* suggested, rats might make their way to the Expo site through subterranean pathways.

Allo Police, like other crime-oriented periodicals, mobilized an eclectic range of graphic forms in its reporting (fig. 14.2). Some of these (like maps or scientific drawings) marshalled the authority of official documents; others evoked entertainment forms like the adventure book or film serial. To show the impending rat invasion, and the ways in which it might be stopped, the paper used comicstrip-like drawings, zoological illustrations, maps displayed as battle plans, and reassuring, film-still-like photographs of officials busy on the telephone. Many of these images, like the encyclopedic rows of different rat specimens, added to the archaic character of this coverage. Indeed, Allo Police's alarm over possible rat plagues, and the heroic efforts of the soldier-scientists who fought them, seemed to be the stuff of a late nineteenth-century science-adventure novel. The Allo Police article elaborated an invisible world unknown to most citizens and to even fewer tourists: a world of anonymous but heroic vermin fighters; hidden, subterranean transit ways; and large oceanic freighters filled with cargo of dubious provenance.

The Journal de Montréal, too, covered the threatened rat invasion in depth, in a story that ran from the cover of its 11 February issue ('Des millions de rats envahiraient Montréal,' read the headline) through a lengthy story on page two. Like Allo Police, the Journal invoked the precedent of medieval, rat-based plagues which had ravaged cities like Paris and Hamburg, then moved to comfort readers with the assurance that North American rats were of a different sub-species than those of Europe and Asia. It becomes clear, however, from the Journal's coverage, that the threat of rats had more to do with labour politics in Montreal than with the imminent opening of Expo. The Journal de Montréal emphasized what Allo Police had not mentioned at all, that the threat of rats followed the announcement of a strike by Montreal's garbage collectors – a strike which, city officials claimed, would leave trash on the city's streets and attract millions of rats to feast upon it. Allo Police's alarm over a possible rat invasion of the Expo site seems to have been the product of its own sensationalistic speculation. Mainstream Montreal dailies, like the Montreal Star, La Presse and Le Devoir, covered the threatened strike with no mention whatsoever of a possible rat invasion.²⁰

Allo Police's story on a rat invasion stands for broader cultural impulses, however. Its focus on the port of Montreal recalls the writings of French author and critic Pierre Mac Orlan, who, in the 1930s, elaborated the notion of a social fantastic. The social fantastic is a sensibility that finds mystery and magic on the edges of cities, in the ports, railway stations, and shadowy underpasses that mark the arrival of people or sensations from far-off, exotic places. The social fantastic often presumes, as well, the knowledge systems of obscure specializations or discredited sciences. Over four pages, Allo Police seemed to revel in the idea of rats, brought here by foreign freighters, disrupting and contaminating the official grandeur and ceremoniality of Expo 67. At the same time, the article celebrated the quietly toiling rat specialists whose secret knowledges and magic potions

might ultimately save the city and its fair from this imminent invasion (fig. 14.3). *Allo Police*'s coverage set in place a system of marvels that countered the celebrated spectacles of Expo 67 itself. Indeed, throughout the twenty-six weeks of the fair, *Allo Police* never contained a word about the attractions of Expo 67, as if it found no reason therein to be impressed. The ideological core of the fair – its monuments to humanism and celebration of clean new audio-visual environments – seemed far less interesting to both *Allo Police* and the *Journal de Montréal* than the forms of detritus or moral transgression that gathered in its shadow.

We may account for *Allo Police*'s silence about the technological marvels of Expo 67 in terms of the newspaper's explicit specialization in crime and vice, but this does not diminish the peculiarity of that silence. Dominique Kalifa has written that the great modernizing transformations of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century left, as one of their residues, a nostalgia for the medieval Paris of subterranean labyrinths and secret sanctuaries.²² Against an official image of ongoing progress, the popular culture of the crime novel or the tabloid press produced a topography of the city which left it full of hidden mysteries that modernist transparency and illumination could not erase. *Allo Police*'s stories of rat tunnels, rooming-house murders, and crutch repositories condense almost all of these thematics, implicitly setting these archaic, sinister phenomena against the carefully controlled environment of the island exposition.

Allo Police, the Journal de Montréal, and newer Montreal tabloids like Crime and the People, would dig to ever deeper, subterranean levels of Montreal life as Expo ended, the 1960s wound down, and the narrative of Montreal's modernization crashed with the debacle of the 1976 Olympics. Through the 1970s, the popular tabloid press increasingly offered an image of Montreal as a twilight world of full-time criminality, epidemics of drug use and violence, and a broadly based desperation. Already, in their coverage of Expo 67, these papers had disengaged themselves from the sunny optimism with which other, more official voices celebrated 'Man and His World.'

NOTES

Many thanks to Sara Spike for research assistance, and to the editors of this volume for very useful advice to guide my revisions. One of the joys and surprises in writing this article came with the discovery that the Rare Books Department of the McGill Library system holds a multi-year collection of *Allo Police*. Many thanks to the staff of the McGill Libraries and, in particular, Gary Tynski, for their expert help.

1 See, for example, '3,000 blousons noirs américains n'atteindraient jamais l'Expo ... Sur leurs motos ou autrement,' *Journal de Montréal*, 19 June 1967, 4; 'Les faux-monnayeurs voulaient distribuer un million de dollars,' *Journal de Montréal*, 11 March 1967, 1; '7000 enfants seront momentanément abandonnés sur la "Terre des hommes,"' *Journal de Montréal*, 26 April 1967, 2; 'Madame Montréal et ses trouvailles: les "petits soins" à l'Expo,' *Journal de Montréal*, 6 April 1967, 20; "Tout est mis en branle pour éviter l'envahissement des iles de l'Expo par 5 millions de rats de Montréal,' *Allo Police*, 12 February 1967, 9.

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14.3 A rat catcher applies noxious gas to a rat nest with Habitat 67 in the background. Image from Allo Police, 12 February 1967. Courtesy of Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University Library.

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- 2 The 20 May 1967 issue of *Paris Match* featured Buckminster Fuller's Biosphere on its cover, as did the 28 April 1967 issue of *Life* magazine. The 4 April 1967 issue of *Look* announced a 'preview' of the fair inside, but its only cover photo was of Jacqueline Onassis. The May 1967 issue of *National Geographic* featured long articles on Canada's centenary and Expo 67, but its cover photograph was of a Micronesian native in traditional clothing. Unsurprisingly, Canadian magazines like *Chatelaine* and *Maclean's* published many features on Expo 67, as did weekend newspaper supplements across North America.
- 3 The most succinct history of the term 'tabloid' is by John Osburn: 'Coined as a trademark for condensed medicines in 1884, the word was applied, in rapid succession, to smaller-than-average newspapers, compact airplanes and efficiency yachts, and the linguistic condensations of slang.' John Osburn, 'The Dramaturgy of the Tabloid: Climax and Novelty in a Theory of Condensed Forms,' *Theatre Journal* 46, no. 4 (1994): 507–22. For most of the twentieth century, 'tabloid newspapers' were half the size of the more respectable broadsheet. Their low cultural status generally derives from both their readership (commuters using public transit systems, who found their small size more convenient in crowded spaces) and their tone, which was sensationalist.
- 4 See *The World's Fair Exposition Information and Reference Guide*, http://earthstation9.com/index.html?worlds_2.htm (accessed 30 March 2007). Among many online sites describing the IBM installations at Expo 92, see 'IBM EXPO '92 Guest Services System,' http://musicman.net/exposum.html (accessed 9 July 2007).
- 5 Bill Marshall, 'Montreal between Strangeness, Home, and Flow,' in *Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context*, ed. Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice (Oxford: Blackwell), 206–16.
- 6 Kees Doevendans and Anne Schram, 'Creation/Accumulation City,' Theory, Culture and Society 22, no. 2 (2005): 29–43.
- 7 See, for a discussion, Karlheinz Stierle, *La Capitale des signes: Paris et son discours*, trans. Marianne Rocher-Jacquin (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2001); original publication, *Der Mythos von Paris: Zeichen und Bewufstein der Stadt* (Munich, Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1993), 8–9.
- 8 Pieter von Wesemael, Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798–1851–1970) (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001), 18.
- 9 von Wesemael, Architecture of Instruction and Delight, 18.
- 10 All issues of *Le Petit Journal* are now available in digital form from the website of the Bibliothèque National du Québec, http://bibnum2.banq.qc.ca/bna/petitj/ (accessed 1 June 2008).
- 11 Translation: 'Settling of Accounts. Narcotics. White Slavery. Prostitution. Homosexual Rings. Fraud. Counterfeit Money. Counterfeit Credit Cards. Organized gambling. Barbotes [Québécois gambling game]. Lotteries. Bookies. Hold-ups. Armed Robberies. Protection Rackets. Extortion. Blackmail.'
- 12 'Juges et policiers sont unanimes: la pègre est une monstrueuse réalité,' *Le Petit Journal*, 23 April 1967, 2.
- 13 'Les Canadiens restent jeunes longtemps: Grand concours ouvert à l'Expo pour les jeunes de 16 à 30 ans,' *Journal de Montréal*, 10 January 1967, 8; 'L'Expo ressucitera un spectacle qui fit les beaux jours du Broadway,' *Journal de Montréal*, 11 January 1967, 6;

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- 'Le général de Gaulle aurait de plus en plus l'intention de visiter l'Expo,' *Journal de Montréal*, 18 January 1967, 6; 'Le President Italien à l'Expo en September,' *Journal de Montréal*, 25 January 1967, 7; Cent mille français à l'Expo,' *Journal de Montréal*, 25 January 1967, 6.
- 14 See, among others, 'Le directeur de la police de Montréal estime qu'il n'y aura pas de grève,' Journal de Montréal, 5 January 1967, 4; 'M. Leveillé voudrait un gel des loyers pour empêcher les propriétaires de chasser leurs locataires pour l'Expo,' Journal de Montréal, 16 January 1967, 6; 'Le gouvernment Johnson décide d'intervenir: fini le racket des logements pour l'Expo 67!' Journal de Montréal, 19 January 1967, 1; 'Le government Johnson décide d'empêcher le "racket" des logements pour l'Expo '67,' Journal de Montréal, 19 January 1967, 3; 'Un employé de l'Expo s'empare de 1,100 unités-primes,' Journal de Montréal, 25 January 1967, 5; '500 ouvriers déclenchent une grève éclair sur les chantiers de l'Expo,' Journal de Montréal, 27 January 1967, 8.
- 15 Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions*, 1876–1916 (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
- 16 See, for examples of such coverage, 'Un réseau de 'Call Girls à GoGo' aurait été mis à jour après une longue et minutieuse enquête,' Journal de Montréal, 24 July 1967, 11; 'De gentilles petites danseuses "topless" qui ne discutent pas,' Journal de Montréal, 23 May 1967, 6; 'Deux petites danseuses traduites en cour hier,' Journal de Montréal, 19 May 1967, 7; 'Un cabaret se transforme en studio et un avocat en cinéaste pour un film sur les topless ... Voilées,' Journal de Montréal, 2 May 1967, 5; 'Un juge choisit lui-même la vedette d'un film contestant l'obscenité des danseuses "Topless," Journal de Montréal, 18 April 1967, 7; 'L'avocat de 5 danseuses à gogo aux mini-cache-seins regrette de ne pas avoir de ... film à présenter,' Journal de Montréal, 1 May 1967, 3; 'La régie sévit: sept cabaretiers ont leurs permis suspendus pour ne pas avoir pu contrôler leurs clients et employés,' Journal de Montréal, 27 April 1967, 3.
- 17 See, for one discussion, Will Straw, 'Montreal Confidential: Notes on an Imagined City,' *CineAction* 28 (Spring 1992): 58–64, http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/programs/ahcs/montrealconfidential.htm (accessed 9 July 2007).
- 18 Dominique Kalifa, L'encre et le sang (Paris: Fayard, 1995).
- 19 'Pour l'Expo; seins nus, oui, "Phonies," no,' Allo Police, 26 March 1967, 19; 'James Bond règle les problèmes de l'Expo,' Allo Police, 16 April 1967, 15; 'Il y en a qui ont fait pas mal d'argent malhonnêtement avec l'Expo,' Allo Police, 10 September 1967, 11; 'Des "anges du diable" arrêtés à Montréal, 'Allo Police, 10 September 1967, 19; 'A Saint Michel: Pendant que ses trois enfants sont à l'Expo, il tue sa femme et se tire aussi une balle,' Allo Police, 3 September 1967, 15; 'Venue à Montréal pour l'Expo, elle se fait poignarder à onze reprises,' Allo Police, 27 August 1967, 7; 'Des maux de tête aux ampoules aux pieds, l'Expo prend soin de vos bobos,' Allo Police, 30 July 1967, 24-5; 'Perdus à l'Expo: béquilles, soutiens-gorge et dentiers,' Allo Police, 23 July 1967, 24-5; 'Pendant que la Brink's croule: L'Expo défie les voleurs de piller ses blockhaus,' Allo Police, 16 July 1967, 21; 'Avec l'Expo '67, il faut que vos enfants redoublenet de prudence durant les vacances,' Allo Police, 2 July 1967, 15; 'Bébé de trois semaines victime de la misère noire: à deux pas d'Expo '67,' Allo Police, 17 June 1967, 3; 'Du haut d'un 50e étage, il empêche des embouteillages à Montreal devant l'Expo,' Allo Police, 4 June 1967, 24-5; 'Le vandalisme à l'Expo,' Allo Police, 21 May 1967, 9; 'Tourists de Toronto, attention aux cabarets,' Allo Police, 21 May 1967, 19; 'Drame bouleversant, à deux pas

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- de l'Expo,' *Allo Police*, 7 May 1967, 7; 'Durant l'Expo, la police reste armée juxqu'aux dents,' *Allo Police*, 7 May 1967, 17–18.
- 20 A 1968 Canadian Press article confirms that an attack on rats in early 1967 was launched in an effort to save Expo from a rodent invasion. See 'Pill New Rat "War" Weapon?' Winnipeg Free Press, 6 March 1968, 34.
- 21 See, for example, Pierre Mac Orlan, *Images du fantastique social* (Saint-Cyr-sur-Morin: Édition Musée des pays de Seine-et-Marne et Association des Amis de Pierre Mac Orlan, 2000).
- 22 Dominique Kalifa, 'Crime Scenes: Criminal Topography and Social Imaginary in Nineteenth-Century Paris,' *French Historical Studies* 27, no. 1 (2004): 175–94.

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