

leadership, career, and business development services, and mentoring for youth. Shortly after meeting Shimo in 2011, Grimanis left the corporate world to focus on Up With Women.

Both women work at reframing their negative experiences and are fiercely committed to social justice. Shimo, who is of Caucasian and Japanese descent, lived with her mother in a run-down home in North London with no immediate family nearby, no heat, phone, or hot water. The house was eventually condemned, and they moved into social housing with her mother's emotionally manipulative boyfriend.

"Each night, [my mother] came home from whatever job she had and cried," Shimo recalls. "Sometimes we would pack up our suitcases and get ready to leave. Then we would unpack again; my mother didn't want to move into

a homeless shelter. I think that those experiences of feeling helpless and trapped by poverty have undoubtedly shaped me and all that I do."

Shimo sits on the advisory board of Up With Women and volunteers with First Nations youth organizations. Her latest book, part memoir and part history, is called *Invisible North: The Search for Answers on a Troubled Reserve*. It is inspired by the injustice and hope experienced by those on the Kashechewan First Nation, and is slated for publication this fall.

As for Grimanis, she's preparing for her third and final Guinness Book of World Record as the first woman to pull a jet plane. She'll attempt the feat on May 14, 2017—Mother's Day—as a testimony to mothers' resilience.

"It's hard enough being in a shelter as a single person feeling broken and like

there is something wrong with you, but these mothers feel incredibly guilty," says Grimanis, noting that many mothers unfairly blame themselves for having their children in a shelter, when often they've fled home to keep their children safe. She and Shimo just had their first child, and, fittingly, their anonymous sperm donor wrote on his intake form that homelessness is the thing that bothers him the most.

It's the same feeling of anger and frustration that drives Grimanis to help other women with lived experience of poverty. "You can be incredibly traumatized from what happens to you, or you can use that pain, anger, and memory of loneliness and make it your fuel," she says. "This is what will drive you harder than anything else and bring you the opportunity to change other's lives as well." **Q**

SPOTLIGHT

Equal earth

Communities combat environmental racism in Nova Scotia

BY MICHAELA CAVANAGH

THE PEOPLE OF THE Sipekne'katik First Nation in Nova Scotia didn't know Alton Gas was building a gas storage facility in their backyard along the Shubenacadie River until they saw the pipeline construction.

The government of Nova Scotia gave Alton Gas the go-ahead on the solution processing, or brining, project without consulting the community. If they had, the project would never have started, says Dorene Bernard, a Mi'kmaq activist and traditional Indigenous knowledge teacher. Had anyone approached the First Nation about an environmental study or a traditional use study, she adds, "they would've got the answer: 'you can't do this.'" Enter ENRICH: the Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities, and Community Health Project. Established in 2012, ENRICH works in communities like the Sipekne'katik First Nation to address environmental racism in the province.

One of the group's recent projects created a colour-coded map of Indigenous and Black communities throughout the province. "The map is convincing," says Dr. Ingrid Waldron, ENRICH's director. "It shows,

without a doubt, that these communities are close to polluting industries and toxic waste facilities."

Waldron defines environmental racism as greater exposure of primarily low-income, racialized, Indigenous communities to waste disposal sites. "If you put [waste facilities] in a low-income, racialized community, there's going to be very little pushback," she says, "because these are individuals with no voice." Part of ENRICH's mandate is to empower community members to push back. In one Black Nova Scotian community, for example, a water monitoring project trains residents to test their own water.

The structural nature of environmental racism means it's much easier to prevent than to reverse. Despite ENRICH's efforts, progress is slow. Waldron and others are now working to develop a provincial Environmental Bill of Rights, designed to address environmental racism, which was introduced into the Nova Scotia Legislature in May. Meanwhile, the Sipekne'katik First Nation continues to fight for the health of its river, fish, and land. "Where are our leaders on this?" Bernard asks. "Where is the government on this?"

D.I.Y.

Restorative resistance

Harsha Walia on how to stave off activist burnout

BY MICHAELA CAVANAGH

Harsha Walia is a Vancouver-based activist and author who's been organizing around anti-racism, feminist, and anti-imperialist campaigns for more than 15 years. By day she works at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre in Vancouver, one of the busiest drop-in centres in the country. Here, Walia offers advice on how to fan that activist fire and avoid burnout.

1 ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESTORATIVE POWERS OF RESISTANCE: How can movements actually take care of all of us? That's what burnout ends up being—people who feel they have to create a separation between themselves and the work that they're doing. One question we need to ask is, "How can movements themselves become forms of healing?"

2 SPEAK UP: We all have different needs and ways to define what being taken care of means to us. A big part of stopping burnout is the ability to voice our needs, and have them at least be validated, if not met. Just being able to name those needs without them being trivialized is important.

3 BE MORE ATTENTIVE TO EMOTIONAL LABOUR AS REAL WORK: Oftentimes the work of checking in on people is not actually talked about as part of our organizing work, because it's seen as separate from it. It's important to engage in collectively discussing emotional labour, doing it more openly, and dividing that labour more intentionally across gendered lines.

4 UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE: We heal through strengthening our relationships, through being honest and vulnerable together, and through finding strength in vulnerability. Isolation is not what provides healing or liberation, because isolation is the logic of capitalism and colonialism.

5 PUT SELF-CARE IN CONTEXT: Sometimes there's overemphasis on the individual, neoliberal aspect of self-care—the idea that we should only care about ourselves and not worry about other people. For me, collective care is more liberating: How do we care for everybody? That includes caring for ourselves and other people, but also acknowledges those are intertwined and you cannot have one without the other.

THIS 50

By the numbers

This Magazine tidbits and trivia

1966 1 Number of times Captain America appears on *This* covers

The year *This Magazine* is *About Schools* was founded

287 75 How much, in cents, the inaugural issue of *This Magazine* is *About Schools* cost in 1966

Issues of *This Magazine* ever printed, including the one you're holding right now

5 Number of Mounties that have appeared on *This* covers, including that one time we dressed up Barack Obama as a Mountie. Thanks, Photoshop!

1976 8 The number of different *This* cover logos in our 50-year history

The year *This Magazine's* remaining founders, Satu Repo and George Martell, leave *This*

20 Number of animals that have graced *This* covers, including two pigs, one goat, several birds, some beavers, and one Pikachu

2 Number of robots that have appeared on *This* covers

2 Also the number of times Margaret Atwood's work appeared on our covers >>>