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In Allan Greer, *From Folklore to Revolution: Charivaris and the Lower Canadian Rebellion of 1837*, there are two different kinds of charivaris discussed. In this article the types of charivaris distinguished are an opposition of an ill-fitted marriage and the other a political charivari. Both of these charivaris were used to threaten the targeted party to obtain the intended outcome of those who are acting for the charivaris. In respect to the marriage charivaris and the political charivaris there are many similarities and differences that will be discussed and how this use of power was put into play with the rebellion of lower Canada.

The charivaris in Canada was used as a form of treatment when there was a marriage that seemed to be mismatched. This means “either the groom was much older than the bride or vise versa, or else on of the partners had been previously married”[[1]](#footnote-1). A charivaris was then used to publicly shame the couple of their sins. The way a charivaris worked was that they would show up to your home, night after night, banging on pots and pans and requesting a monetary payment[[2]](#footnote-2). It is important to note that each night a charivaris would escalate their demonstration to put pressure on the married couple to get their expected outcome, which was payment[[3]](#footnote-3). It wasn’t until the payment was made that the charivaris would submit. An interesting question to be asked is how did the charivaris know if the marriage was out of sin and not out of love? The second type of charivaris was that of political manipulation.

A political charivaris acted the same way as a marriage charivari in the fact that they both acted in a form of manipulation to give up something. The political charivaris took placed in Lower Canada in 1837 when the “middle-class radicals of the ‘Patriot party’”[[4]](#footnote-4) wanted to have colonial independence. The reason the rebellions of 1867 were compared to a common charivari was because they behaved in a similar manner. The radicals would go to a home of a person who held any position of office and seek resignation[[5]](#footnote-5). In the case of a Lieutenant that was in the Militia, the charivari would come to his house and “began yelling in the most frightful manner… [and] threw stones at [his] house and broke the greatest part of [the] windows”[[6]](#footnote-6). Each night the charivari would come back with more force and more people until the Lieutenant handed in his commissions that the charivari would leave his family alone[[7]](#footnote-7). Even though the charivari was used to put fear in the opposing party, the intention of the charivari was not to harm anyone physically.

The two main differences between the two types of charivaris are that the political charivaris used stone-throwing and threats of severe violence[[8]](#footnote-8). Both marriage and political charivaris were intended to gain a result from the party who they were using the tactics for. In the marriage charivaris the intended outcome was to show the impurity of the marriage and to cause humiliation whereas, the political charivaris was intended to create dominance against an opposing party. In both cases of charivaris, the use of harassment was used to get the intended outcome.

1. Greer, Allan. "From folklore to Revolution: Charivaris and the Lower Canadian Rebellion of 1837." *Social History* 15, no. 1 (January 1990): 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid., 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)