

Ad IDEM
CANADIAN MEDIA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
2026 Annual Conference
November 6-7, 2026
Queen Elizabeth Hotel
Montreal, QC

Friday, November 6, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 **Conference Registration – Queen Elizabeth Hotel**
Continental Breakfast

9:00 – 9:10 **WELCOMING REMARKS**
President: Tess Layton

9:10 – 10:25 **Cross Country Check-Up**

A conference favourite! In this session, the CMLA's regional board representatives will take us through some of this country's important media law decisions from 2025/2026.

10:25 – 10:45 **Break**

10:45 – 11:30 **In a land where the truth is not a defense:
Lessons from Quebec on Defamation**

Ask most Canadian lawyers whether a true statement can be defamatory and the answer will likely be an emphatic "no." In Quebec, however, the answer is "it depends." Quebec courts have developed a unique approach to protecting reputation, privacy, and freedom of expression that differs significantly from the common law framework familiar to lawyers elsewhere in Canada. This panel will explore the practical implications of those differences for media organizations, litigators, and in-house counsel focusing on what practitioners in the rest of Canada can learn from Quebec's experience with the equivalent of the « responsible communication » defense.

Moderator: Patrick Bourbeau, La Presse

Panelists: Christian Leblanc, Senior Partner *Fasken*
Veronique Belley, *CBC/Radio-Canada*
Genvieve Gagnon, *CBC/Radio-Canada*

11:30-12:00 **Keynote** - Marie-Mode Denis

Marie-Maude Denis is an investigative journalist and host working for CBC/Radio-Canada in Montreal.

12:00 **Lunch Break**

1:30 – 2:30 **The Ban is Back: When exceptional becomes easy**

[Degradation of proceedings, ease of getting, publication bans, dilution of sherman estate, s 648]

Moderator: Iain MacKinnon, *MacKinnon Law*

Panelists: Iris Fischer, *Blakes, Cassels & Graydon LLP*
Sean Moreman, *CBC*
Genvieve McSween, *CBC/Radio-Canada*

2:30- 3:15 **Legal Issues in Visual Investigations**

This panel will provide insight into a form of journalism that may be less familiar to its novelty and relatively limited (but growing!) use in Canada. Visual investigations are difficult and often complex, requiring specialized knowledge and training for journalists.

Moderator: Katarina Germani, *Senior Legal Counsel, Media Law, CBC Law Department*

Panelists: Litsa Sourtzis, *Executive Producer, CBC Visual Investigations*
TBD

3:15 - 3:30 **Break**

3:30 - 4:15 **Constitutional challenges impacting the media**

This past year has seen a number of important constitutional challenges to legislation impacting the media - including to provisions of the YCJA and Ontario's "ag-gag" legislation - as well as a groundbreaking civil suit brought by a journalist against state authorities for the alleged violation of Charter rights. This panel will take stock of the state of this litigation and consider its broader impacts for the media.

Moderator: Justin Safayeni, *Stockwoods LLP*

Panelists: Evan Cribb, *McEwan Partners*
Ryder Gilliland, *DMG Advocates*
Andrea Gonsalves, *Stockwoods LLP*

4:15 - 4:30 **Update on AI**

Saturday, November 7, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast

9:00 – 10:00 **Attacks on Free Expression: The US perspective**
Moderator: David Hutt K.C., *Burchell Wickwire Bryson*

Panelists: Alison Schary, *Davis Wright Tremaine, Washington DC*
Dana Green, *New York Times*

10:00 - 10:30 **Legal and Ethical considerations in telling victims stories**
486.4 and 486.5 Publication Bans

Moderator: Eve St. Laurent, *CBC/Radio Canada*

Panelist: Marie Caloz, *CBC*
TBD

10:30-10:50 **Break**

10:50-11:45 **Pre-Pub Challenge**

In this interactive panel, test your knowledge of pre-publication scenarios and issues.

11:45 - 11:50 Closing Remarks

