CANADIAN MEDIA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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

Thursday, November 5, 2026

7:30pm	Members are invited to meet at: LE VIEUX/ THE OLD DUBLIN PUB & RESTAURANT located at 636 Rue Cathcart, Montréal, QC H3B 9A9

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.

Moderator:	Nancy Rubin, *Stewart McKelvey*
Atlantic:	Amy Crosbie, *Curtis Dawe Lawyers*
Quebec:	Marc-André Nadon, *PFD Advocates*
Ontario:	Kaley Pulfer, *Lawson Lundell LLP*
Prairies:	Sean Ward, *Reynolds, Mirth, Richards and Farmer*
B.C.:	Ève St-Laurent, *Senior Legal Counsel CBC*

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*
Molly Krishtalka, *Krishtalka Litigation Inc.*
Genvieve Gagnon,*Chenette Litigation Boutique*

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

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

12:00 – 1:15 **Lunch Break**

1:15 – 2:15 **Ban Wagon: Is Everyone Jumping On?**

This panel will discuss the impact the SCC decisions in Sherman Estate and Silva/Coban have had over the past five years on the law of publication bans, sealing orders, anonymity orders, and overall access to court proceedings and court documents. Are publication bans easier to obtain since Sherman Estate? How often do privacy interests trump freedom of expression rights? Are anonymity orders becoming routine? At criminal pre-trial motions, are judges actually announcing that they are exercising their jurisdiction under s. 645(5) and therefore s. 648(1) automatically prohibits the publication of any information regarding the pre-trial?

Moderator: Iain MacKinnon, *MacKinnon Law PC*

Panelists: Iris Fischer, *Blakes, Cassels & Graydon LLP*
Louis Bouthillier, *Directeur des Poursuites Criminelles et Pénales (Quebec Crown's Office)*
Genevieve McSween, *CBC/Radio-Canada*
Justin Manoryk, *Toronto Star*

2:15- 3:00 **Legal Issues in Visual Investigations**

This panel will provide insight into a form of journalism that may be less familiar due 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*
Ivan Angelovski, *Senior digital forensic journalist| OSINT trainer, CBC News: Visual investigations*

3:00 - 3:15 **Break**

3:15 - 4:00 **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*

4:00 - 4:15 **AI Update - presented by *The Globe and Mail***

4:15 - 5:00 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Members only**

6:30 **Cocktail Reception – Auberge Le Saint-Gabriel**
426 Rue St Gabriel, Montréal, QC H2Y 2Z9

7:45 **Dinner Service – Auberge Le Saint-Gabriel**
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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*
Jack Browning, *New York Times*
Al-Amyn Sumar, *Ballard Spahr, Washington DC*

10:00 - 10:30 **Legal and Ethical Considerations in Telling Victims Stories**
486.4 and 486.5 Publication Bans

Three years after amendments to the Criminal Code came into force allowing victims or witnesses subject to a publication ban to be identified if they wish, the process for journalists wanting to tell their stories isn't always clear. This session will explore the evolving legal and ethical frameworks for reporting on victim stories, with a focus on sharing recent challenges and inviting members to share their experiences

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

Panelist: Marie Caloz, *CBC*
Justin Wee, *Dufresne Wee*

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.

Moderator: Dustin Milligan, *Senior Legal Counsel, Media Law, CBC Law Department*

11:45 - 11:50 **Closing Remarks**