



# The Canadian Institute of Workplace Harassment and Violence

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Canadian Institute for Workplace Harassment and Violence Supports Courageous Lawsuit Filed by Dr. Adèle Mercier Against Queen's University**

*Calling Out the Cost: When Misguided Investigations Inflict Lasting Harm on Employees*

**Toronto, ON** — The [Canadian Institute for Workplace Harassment and Violence](http://workplaceharassment.ca) (CIWHV) stands in support of Dr. Adèle Mercier, a distinguished professor and philosopher, in her legal action against Queen's University and several senior administrators, students, and members of the Board of Trustees. The [lawsuit, filed recently in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice](#), alleges defamation, negligence, abuse of process, harassment, and intentional infliction of mental suffering. None of the allegations have been proven in court.

Dr. Mercier is an internationally respected scholar in logic, linguistics, and the philosophy of language. Her legal claim stems from her delivery of a final, optional lecture in an advanced philosophy of language course at Queen's University on the linguistic and philosophical treatment of slurs. According to the [Statement of Claim](#), despite providing advance content and trigger warnings and teaching within a scholarly, respectful, and critical framework, Dr. Mercier was subjected to what she describes as a malicious and prolonged investigation by Queen's University and specific senior administrators.

"We are seeing a growing trend where workplace codes of conduct, originally designed to promote safety and respect, are being weaponized by institutions and employers to silence, punish, or expel employees who express unpopular or misunderstood views. This case is a textbook example of procedural tools being turned into instruments of retaliation," said Linda Crockett, Founder and Chair of [CIWHV](#).

The [claim](#) alleges that Queen's University allegedly failed in its duty of care, misused its investigative procedures, and facilitated reputational harm, personal trauma, and professional isolation. Despite being vindicated by the eventual outcome of the investigation, Dr. Mercier alleges that she experienced lasting damage to her health, reputation, and career.

[CIWHV](#) commends Dr. Mercier for her courage in seeking justice and accountability not only on her own behalf but on behalf of all educators, scholars, and workers facing institutional harassment for engaging in difficult but necessary discourse.

“We support Dr. Mercier’s decision to bring her case forward publicly,” Linda Crockett added. “Her courage sends a clear message: intellectual freedom must not be sacrificed at the altar of performative equity or administrative overreach. Academia must be a place where complex, uncomfortable, and vital ideas can be discussed responsibly and not punished punitively.”

As a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating workplace harassment and violence, [CIWHV](#) continues to advocate for transparency, procedural fairness, and the right of all workers, including educators, to carry out their duties free from targeted campaigns of retaliation and harm.

**About the Canadian Institute for Workplace Harassment and Violence (CIWHV):**

*The Canadian Institute for Workplace Harassment and Violence is a national not-for-profit organization (currently applying for charity status) that provides funding and guidance to employees in financial distress due to workplace psychological harm, including harassment, racism, discrimination, and bullying. We assist harmed workers in accessing the health and legal support they need through education, funding options, and systems navigation. Our goal is to empower employees to exercise their legal rights, prevent further harm, and support their recovery.*

*Beyond supporting individuals, we are committed to driving positive systemic change so that all Canadian employees have equal access to adequate services and protections. By helping workers assert their rights and access the resources they deserve, we contribute to creating accountability and influencing much-needed changes in legislation. This is how we foster safer, healthier workplaces across Canada.*

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

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