



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



nawl National Association
of Women and the Law

anfd Association nationale
Femmes et Droit

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Message from the Chair of the National Steering Committee

This is my last message as Chair, which comes with mixed emotions. I'm proud of the fact that I leave this role with an organization that has a strong National Steering Committee that reflects Canadian women's diversity, a stable and effective staff complement, and has been making a significant contribution to national conversations about changes needed to ensure that the law works for all women in the country.

At the same time, I worry about the fragmentation of the women's movement in Canada. I study constitutional history in the early 1980s, when women spoke in a unified manner through its national organizations. It was able to accomplish much through that unity – increased abortion access, pay equity and laws against sexual harassment, combatting sexual assault, and other matters too numerous to name comprehensively. Yet, that seeming unity papered over the fact that the movement was not as attentive as it could have been to issues of discrimination against lesbians, BIPOC women, working-class women, women with disabilities and others.

The feminist movement today is not just one movement but a multiplicity of different movements coalescing around different issues of mutual interests. There's a vibrancy to that but also the potential of "divide and conquer" strategies being used to forestall real change towards the emancipation of women (and humankind). That is why initiatives like The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform, spearheaded by NAWL, are so important. The Chanterelle Alliance promises to ensure that NAWL and other like-minded organizations can successfully advocate for feminist law reforms that advance equality for all women.

Amongst the changes we've celebrated this year leading into our 50th anniversary in 2024, is hiring three new team members, including a new Director of Legal Affairs. With this new complement, we were able to address critical issues in our three priority areas: violence against women, reproductive justice, and women's rights and the climate crisis. I am particularly proud that our Director of Legal Affairs represented NAWL in key legislative discussions affecting family law, gun control, and abortion.

We've achieved so much over these 50 years. However, the issues that we are addressing in 2023 are in some ways not so different than those at NAWL's founding. This illustrates that not only must we continue to press for progress, but we also need to protect what we have already achieved from regressive political movements taking shape globally. As we look forward, it's my hope that feminists will refrain from the temptation to engage in internecine and counterproductive debates and tackle the real enemies of change: patriarchy, colonialism, white supremacy, and other intertwined systems of oppression we know too well. NAWL's 50th anniversary will be a unique opportunity for our organization to reflect on the past five decades of advocating for feminist law reform in Canada. Since 1974, NAWL has been at the forefront of driving transformative changes in women's rights. The organization's dedication has not only propelled the advancement of these rights but has also fought growing threats to our hard-earned progress.

As I pass the baton to two new co-chairs, I am amazed by the milestones we have achieved, the challenges we have overcome, and the unwavering dedication of our staff and volunteers. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to lead and that our future is such in good hands.



Kerri Froc

*Chair, National Association of Women
and the Law (NAWL)*

OUR VISION

Women's substantive equality is fully realized and supported by laws and policies in Canada; power is equitably shared in all areas of our lives.

OUR MISSION

The National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL), founded in 1974, is a not-for-profit feminist organization that works to achieve substantive equality and the realization of human rights for all women in Canada through legal education, research, strategic intervention, coalition work, and feminist law reform advocacy, particularly at the federal level.

NAWL has a 49-year history of working on its own and in collaboration with other women's equality-seeking organizations to impact law and public policy on a wide range of issues, achieving several notable feminist law reform victories in Canada, including:

- The adoption of sections 15 and 28 in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Amendments to the Criminal Code regarding sexual assault laws, rape shield legislation and criminal harassment legislation
- The successful intervention in *Friesen v Friesen* before the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan
- Positive changes to legislation affecting the rights of victims of sexual assault



See also [NAWL's Big Impacts video](#) highlighting some of its achievements since 1974.



OUR GOALS

| GOAL 1

NAWL helps change laws that negatively impact women's lives

It works to advance women's human rights and substantive equality in the three priority areas of ending violence against women, reproductive rights, and the climate crisis.

| GOAL 2

NAWL is collaborative

It understands its own unique privilege and power. Working collectively, it is a skilled convener, relied on for both its specific expertise and its capacity to bring together the diverse voices required to effect intersectional feminist law reform.

| GOAL 3

NAWL is thriving

It is a healthy, growing, and sustainable organization regardless of political climate.

| GOAL 4

NAWL is a voice at the table

It effectively responds to legislative proposals, tabled legislation, significant legal cases, and other national issues that could advance or hinder the realization of substantive equality.

OUR VALUES

NAWL's work is rooted in intersectional feminism and human rights, informed by the following values:

ANTI-OPPRESSION

We address and challenge all forms of oppression that affect women in intersecting, compounding, and distinct ways. These systems of oppression take many forms, including patriarchy, gender norms, white supremacy, xenophobia, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, and colonialism.

RECONCILIATION

We recognize that colonialism, both historical and ongoing, continues to subject Indigenous women and girls to violence, harm, and socio-economic disadvantage. We are committed to advancing decolonization in all aspects of our work and to working in solidarity with Indigenous women's organizations and communities.

GENDER-INCLUSION

We use the term women inclusively. Further, we recognize that patriarchy and gender-based discrimination impact the rights, dignity, and well-being of not only cisgender women but also of transgender, Two-Spirit, gender non-binary, and gender-non-conforming individuals. We seek to act in solidarity with organizations advancing substantive equality and gender justice broadly defined.

ALLYSHIP AND ACCOUNTABLE COLLABORATION

As a legal organization, we are committed to partnering with other feminist, Indigenous, and social justice organizations in a manner that recognizes our own privilege and power. We aspire to be good allies: to listen, to foster mutual respect and to amplify the voices of those in our movements and communities that have been historically silenced or disadvantaged. This requires us to be generous with our own expertise and to value the distinct expertise and experiences of allies working alongside and with us to advance substantive equality in Canada.

GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

NAWL is an incorporated non-profit organization that is governed by a National Steering Committee (NSC) made up of a maximum of 12 volunteers. Since its founding in 1974, NAWL has used its unique research and educational strategies to raise public awareness about legal issues affecting women.

NAWL has a nationwide membership and network of lawyers, law students, academics, and other individuals who share a commitment to gender equality.

NAWL briefs and papers are developed by staff, in consultation with diverse working groups comprised of subject-matter experts.

National Steering Committee (NSC)

We are governed by a National Steering Committee that functions as our Board of Directors.

- Kerri Froc (*Chair*)
- Martha Jackman (*Past chair*)
- Naomi Telfort (*Treasurer*)
- Amanda Therrien (*Secretary*)
- Lise Gotell
- Danica Jorgenson
- Sabaa Khan
- Jennifer Khor
- Alisa Lombard
- Cheryl Milne
- Zahra Taseer
- Julia Tétrault-Provencher



Top row: Kerri Froc (*Chair*), Amanda Therrien (*Secretary*)
Middle row: Sabaa Khan, Danica Jorgenson, Lise Gotell, Zahra Taseer, Julia Tétrault-Provencher
Bottom Row: Martha Jackman (*Past chair*) Tiffany Butler (*Executive Director*), Suzanne Zaccour (*Director of Legal Affairs*)

► Learn more about the members of our National Steering Committee at <https://nawl.ca/about-us/#nsc>

NAWL Staff, Consultants and Volunteers in 2022-2023

- **Executive Director** Tiffany Butler
- **Consultants and Senior Advisors** Julie Shugarman, Susan King, Joanne Moser
- **Director of Legal Affairs** Suzanne Zaccour
- **Communications** Deirdre O'Beirne Rosaeg
- **Finance Administrator** Merry Sun
- **Translation** Maxime Mariage, Catherin-e Viens
- **Research, Legal Interns, and Volunteers** Desiree Tan, Helen Richards, Aleah McCormick, Aliyyah Jafri, Averi Winn, Gabrielle Vincent, Gemma Dingwall, Kate White, Léa Desjardins, Madeline Tater, Melanie DaCosta, Rose Ghaedi, Renée Manderville, Toni Pascale, Sarah-Claude L'Ecuyer, Élizabeth Martel
- **Website Support** Full Blast Creative, The Public Studio



Working Groups

Our heartfelt thanks go to the members of our working groups, who dedicate their time and energy to guiding us through the legislative reforms affecting our three priority areas. Their legal expertise is invaluable in helping us develop strong intersectional positions on issues that affect women. The working groups also help us ensure that all our positions align with our core values and adopt a strong anti-oppression perspective.

PRIORITY 1:

Ending Violence Against Women

- Lise Gotell, Chair
- Pamela Cross
- Jennifer Koshan
- Janet Mosher
- Zahra Taseer
- Amanda Therrien
- Wanda Wieggers



PRIORITY 2:

Reproductive Justice

- Julia Tétrault-Provencher, *Chair*
- Kerri A Froc
- Frédérique Chabot
- Karin Galldin
- Myriam Pigeon



PRIORITY 3:

Women's Rights and the Climate Crisis

- Sabaa Khan, Chair
- Lauren Marshall
- Melanie Snow
- Shi Tao Zhang

2022-2023

ACTIVITIES IN REVIEW

In 2022-2023, NAWL continued to lead and support feminist law reform, strengthen feminist capacities, expand and diversify the network of feminist and equality seeking organizations, lawyers, academics, students, and activists working together to advance the equality rights of all women in Canada.



A Growing Team

In August 2022, NAWL welcomed Suzanne Zaccour as Director of Legal Affairs. Suzanne recently completed her doctoral degree at Oxford University. She is a feminist author and researcher interested in sexual and domestic violence, family law, animal rights, and gender and language.

Sprint to 50

In 2022, NAWL introduced a new organizational strategic plan, *Sprint to 50*, which acts as a guiding star for the next three years, setting out the course for our organization in the lead-up to our 50th anniversary in 2024.



KEY PROJECTS

In 2022-2023, NAWL worked on several major projects, including:

- **Proactive Approaches to GBV in the COVID-19 context: the Feminist Law Reform Project**

A one-year project funded by the Canadian Women's Foundation to address gender-based violence issues increased by the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Sustaining Law Reform in Canada: Building NAWL's capacities to strengthen its Fundraising and Diversify**

In the final year of this four-year project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, NAWL strengthened its governance, increased its communications, and launched its strategic plan: *Sprint to 50*.

- **Feminist law reform in Quebec**

A one-year project supported by Chambre des notaires du Québec to organize a two-day workshop on feminist law reform in Quebec and produce a video promoting the content of the workshop on climate justice action.

- **Adapting and Accelerating Intersectional Feminist Law Reform for a Post-COVID-19 Future**

In the second year of this three-year project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, NAWL was able to implement several key initiatives, including:

- » Building The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform in partnership with Luke's Place
- » Organizing Feminist Law Reform workshops in Yukon and Quebec
- » Improving NAWL's law reform tools, including by updating *A Woman's Guide to Money, Relationships, and the Law in Ontario*.

- **Friesen v Friesen intervention**

Supported by the Court Challenges Program, this project allowed NAWL to intervene in the 2022 Friesen v Friesen case at the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan. The case raised important legal issues regarding the interpretation and application of new Divorce Act provisions, especially in cases involving a parent's relocation.

LEGAL BRIEFS AND TESTIMONIES

In the last year, NAWL effectively responded to legislative proposals, significant legal cases, and other national issues that could advance or hinder the realization of substantive equality. We testified before House of Commons and Senate committees to lend feminist legal expertise to Canadian lawmakers.

NAWL was called on to comment on Bill C-28, regarding the defense of extreme intoxication, on Bill C-21, regarding gun control, and on Bill S-5, regarding publication bans. We also testified at the National Assembly of Québec on Bill 12, regarding the rights and parentage of children conceived by sexual assault.



BILL C-28: EXTREME INTOXICATION DEFENSE

In October 2022, we testified before the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, and in December , we testified before the Senate's Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs regarding Bill C-28, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (self-induced extreme intoxication)*.

Bill C-28 was introduced in response to the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision *R v Brown* which declared s. 33.1 of the *Criminal Code* unconstitutional. The unanimous decision in *Brown* created a legislative gap, reopening the possibility for an accused to raise self-induced intoxication akin to automatism as a defence for violent offences, including sexual assault. To address this gap, the federal government hastily introduced Bill C-28, which was designed to create a standard of criminal negligence whereby individuals who voluntarily become extremely intoxicated can be held legally responsible for offences committed while in that state.

Despite the purported objective of the amendments to protect the public – particularly women and children – NAWL's feminist critiques of Bill C-28 raised serious and lasting concerns with respect to the practical application of the law and the justice owed to victims of intoxicated violence. NAWL explained that, even without a valid defence, the availability of an accused being able to claim extreme intoxication could unduly influence the victim, police, and prosecutors in their decision to report, charge, and plea bargain. NAWL also described the difficulties that the Crown would likely face in attempting to prove criminal negligence under the revised legislation. Finally, NAWL called for a commitment to documenting the use of the defence and a reviewing of the law within three years.

Both the House of Commons and the Senate committee referred to our testimony in their report and echoed our recommendation for a three-year review of the bill. Moreover, our advocacy on this issue sent a strong message regarding the importance of meaningful consultations with feminist groups before Parliament proposes and adopts legislation.

BILL C-21: GUN CONTROL

NAWL was a strong voice at the table on the issue of gun control. We submitted a brief and worked closely with several MPs and Minister Mendicino's office to propose improvements to Bill C-21, *An Act to amend certain Acts and to make certain consequential amendments (firearms)*.

With Bill C-21, the Government proposed comprehensive gun control legislation, including several provisions that specifically address situations of domestic violence. NAWL made many concrete proposals to strengthen and clarify the domestic violence provisions. Virtually all of our proposed amendments were adopted by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and then by the House of Commons.

Thanks to these amendments, the provision on licence revocation when someone has committed violence is now strengthened and clarified. A licence must be revoked when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that an individual may have engaged in family violence. Moreover, the bill had no timelines for reacting to danger and domestic violence. Thanks to the adoption of our recommendations, there is now a statutory duty to act within 24 hours. NAWL also proposed important definitions to clarify the meaning of "family violence" and "protection order". Our proposed definition of family violence, which was adopted, makes clear that family violence includes coercive control or non-physical violence. Furthermore, the bill allowed people whose license is revoked to dispose of their firearm however they pleased – for example, by giving it to their roommate or friend. Following the adoption of our proposed amendments, gun owners will now have to return their firearms to the authorities instead.

The next step is the study and adoption of the bill by the Senate, which NAWL will be monitoring in 2023-2024.

BILL S-12: PUBLICATION BANS

NAWL successfully collaborated with the government and other feminist groups and lawyers regarding publication bans legislation in the context of S-12, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Sex Offender Information Registration Act and the International Transfer of Offenders Act*.

A publication ban is a court order which, in the context of a criminal trial, prohibits anyone from revealing the identity of a victim, witness, or justice system participant. One of the aims of this order is to enable victims of sexual assault to participate in the criminal process without fear of the media disclosing their identity.

While publication bans are intended to protect victims, the group of survivors [My Voice, My Choice](#) has highlighted the fact that they can be problematic for victims who wish to share their stories. Some victims/survivors have even faced criminal charges for revealing their own identity.

To address this issue, the government drafted Bill S-12, which, among other things, reforms the publication ban regime. The aim of this bill is to ensure that victims/survivors were better informed of their rights, that they could have a publication ban withdrawn when they wished, and that they were less at risk of being criminalized. When the bill was introduced in the Senate, it immediately became apparent that, in its first iteration, it would fail to accomplish these goals. This is why NAWL worked collaboratively with the government and other feminist groups and lawyers to improve the bill.

NAWL participated in numerous meetings with the government, submitted a brief jointly with our partners detailing changes that needed to be made to the bill, and testified before the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

NAWL was pleased that the Senate Committee adopted all the amendments proposed by the government to address the issues we raised. In its current version and thanks to these changes, the bill:

1. ensures that victims who violate a publication ban on their own identity are no longer criminalized;
2. clarifies and simplifies the process for revoking or varying a publication ban;
3. guarantees better access to justice by requiring judges and prosecutors to consult with and inform victims.

The next step is the study and adoption of the bill by the House of Commons, which NAWL will be monitoring in 2023-2024.

► Read our brief [here](#)

BILL 12: CHILDREN CONCEIVED BY SEXUAL ASSAULT

On March 28th, 2023, NAWL participated in the Specific consultations and public hearings on Bill 12, *An Act to reform family law with regard to filiation and to protect children born as a result of sexual assault and the victims of that assault as well as the rights of surrogates and of children born of a surrogacy project*.

Bill 12 is a Quebec bill tabled in reaction to a story about “Océane” (a pseudonym), who was sexually assaulted by her roommate and, as a result, gave birth to a child. Even though her assailant was found guilty and sent to jail, he brought her to court to be recognized as the child’s father. Bill 12 was meant to allow a child conceived by sexual assault to object to having their bond of filiation recognized with regard to the person who sexually assaulted their mother.

While we were generally supportive of the bill, NAWL raised several important issues regarding sections of the bill that were unclear, ineffective, or problematic. Some of our concerns were addressed through amendments adopted by the committee, although our position is still that the law does not sufficiently protect victims of sexual violence, especially in the conjugal context.

► Find our brief here (in French only): nawl.ca/bill-12/

#WOMEN4GUNCONTROL CAMPAIGN

NAWL created the #Women4GunControl coalition and organized a letter-writing campaign enabling Canadians to ask their MP to support a ban on assault-style firearms. Thirty-one feminist organizations joined our coalition, and over 500 individuals participated in our campaign and helped us raise awareness of the gendered dimensions of gun violence. Within the course of this campaign, NAWL wrote open letters to decisionmakers, we published an op-ed in The Hill Times, and we commissioned a poll showing that the vast majority of Canadians, and women especially, support stronger gun control measures. Our advocacy aimed at changing the conversation around gun control legislation, addressing disinformation by the gun lobby, and spotlighting the issues of women’s safety and intimate partner violence.



FAMILY LAW INTERVENTION AT THE SASKATCHEWAN COURT OF APPEAL

On February 15th, 2023, NAWL intervened in a family case before the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan, *Friesen v Friesen*. The Court was called to interpret new provisions of the Divorce Act regarding family violence as well as relocation. Given that over 90% of parents who intend to relocate with their child are mothers, NAWL felt that it was important to offer the court a feminist interpretation of the law. NAWL argued that the *Divorce Act* must be interpreted in light of the value of gender equality, that courts cannot order shared parenting when a parent intends to relocate, and that courts must be careful not to let gender stereotypes colour their interpretation of a mother's request to move with her child.

While the Court of Appeal ultimately did not permit the mother to relocate with her daughter, it cited and relied heavily on the framework NAWL proposed for deciding whether a parent should be authorized to relocate with their child. NAWL believes that the work we did in this case will benefit many women, in Saskatchewan and perhaps across Canada, who wish to pursue better economic opportunities, escape intimate partner violence, and better care for their child by relocating to another city.

- ▶ Read our factum here: <https://nawl.ca/nawl-intervenes-in-an-important-family-law-case/>
- ▶ Read the Court of Appeal decision here: <https://canlii.ca/t/jxb5s>



OTHER ADVOCACY

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AWARENESS IN LEGAL EDUCATION

In December 2022, NAWL submitted, jointly with Luke's Place, a letter to the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to demand that intimate partner violence education be included in the National Requirement. The National Requirement is a standard that determines whether law school graduates can be admitted to a law society in a Canadian common law province or territory. NAWL believes that intimate partner violence is a crucial topic that affects a lawyer's practice regardless of their field and that should thus be a mandatory part of their legal education.

► Read our letter here:
<https://nawl.ca/letter-to-the-federation-of-law-societies-of-canada/>

PROTECTING VICTIMS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AGAINST PARENTAL ALIENATION ACCUSATIONS

In December 2022, NAWL submitted a brief in response to the UN's Call for inputs by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, regarding "Custody cases, violence against women and violence against children". Twenty-eight feminist and legal organizations endorsed our submission describing the phenomenon of mothers who have experienced intimate partner violence being accused of "parental alienation" in family court.

"Parental alienation" theory refers to the belief that, when a child does not want to see their father, it is because they have been improperly influenced by their mother. This belief system, which lacks a scientific basis, is increasingly being used to punish mothers who are seen as "hostile" or "vindictive", or who oppose contacts between the child and the father. Research shows that, while "parental alienation" presents itself as a gender-neutral theory, it is mothers who are more likely to be found alienating, and that victims of intimate partner violence are particularly at risk.

The Special Rapporteur cited NAWL's brief in its report, and she recommended that states legislate to prohibit the use of parental alienation or related pseudo-concepts in family law cases.

FEMINIST LAW REFORM WORKSHOPS

In 2022, NAWL launched a series of Feminist Law Reform Workshops across the country.

The goal of the Feminist Law Reform Workshop series is to bring NAWL's FLR 101 course, which is an open-access online course, to life. Everyone, from law students, social justice advocates, activists, and grassroots organizations, should have the opportunity to engage in feminist law reform to advance substantive equality rights for all women.

Topics addressed in the workshops include feminist law reform through an intersectional lens:

- who to influence and how,
- what is feminist law reform and how to get involved,
- how to effectively apply important advocacy tools like briefs, petitions and op-eds.



In 2022-23, NAWL's Director of Legal Affairs Suzanne Zaccour coordinated workshops in two locations:

Whitehorse (Yukon) SEPTEMBER 2022

NAWL had the pleasure of holding two feminist law reform workshops in Whitehorse, Yukon, in September 2022. The attendees – local decision-makers, activists, advocates – had the opportunity to learn from incredible speakers who are leaders in their fields.

PART 1: Feminist Climate Action Now! Campaign Creation Workshop

Participants attended a presentation on feminist climate action by Madeline Tater and Aleah McCormick, two law students interning with NAWL.

Afterwards, participants engaged in interactive activities related to this topic. Using a workbook created by NAWL, they created signs, photos and videos on the theme «Feminist Climate Action Now!» and discussed coalition-building strategies as well as the effective use of social media to advocate for feminist law reform.



PART 2: Feminist Law Reform Workshop

Several outstanding speakers gave presentations at this workshop, including:

- Martha Jackman (Past-chair of NAWL), Professor of constitutional law at the University of Ottawa where she teaches in the French Common Law program. She publishes and lectures extensively on social and economic rights, equality, and the Canadian Charter.
- Pamela Cross, Advocacy Director of Luke's Place and a well-known and respected expert on violence against women, who is known for her work as a researcher, writer, educator and trainer.
- Michelle Friesen, City Councillor, proudly serving as the first Indigenous woman on council for the City of Whitehorse which rests on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and her family's First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- Emily Tredger, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Whitehorse Centre, who sponsored a private member's bill creating safe spaces in schools for 2SLGBTQIA+ children and youth, which passed in Spring 2022.
- Lesley McCullough, a respected lawyer who has practiced in Yukon for over three decades, the great majority of it with the Government of Yukon. She has also been the Acting Director of the Yukon Human Rights Commission and presently runs a public clinic providing legal advice to persons dealing with workplace sexual harassment issues.
- MP Brendan Hanley, a Canadian politician and physician, who represents the electoral district of the Yukon as a member of the Liberal Party of Canada.

Workshop topics included writing legal briefs and op-eds, an introduction to feminist law reform and advice on how to interact with MPs. We were also honoured to welcome Elder Betsy Jackson, who started the workshop with an opening prayer.



Québec NOVEMBER 2022

In November 2022, NAWL was pleased to host two feminist law reform workshops at Université Laval. Participants included members of several feminist organizations, local activists and staff members of a provincial political party.

These workshops were made possible thanks to funding from the Chambre des notaires and Women and Gender Equality Canada, and through a partnership with COMRADES.

PART 1: Feminist Law Reform Workshop: **#EarthNeedsFeminism**

During this workshop, participants were able to attend a lecture by Dr Sabaa Khan, Chair of NAWL's Women's Rights & the Climate Crisis working group and member of NAWL's National Steering Committee. A lawyer and Executive Director of the David Suzuki Foundation for Quebec and Atlantic Canada, she has held several advisory positions in the fields of international trade law and environmental governance.

Simultaneous interpretation in Quebec Sign Language was provided at the event, enabling two Deaf participants to attend. Participants also carried out interactive activities on feminist climate justice, including the production of photos and videos sharing why "Earth Needs Feminism".



PART 2: Feminist Law Reform Workshop

During this one-day workshop, participants heard presentations from several exceptional speakers, including:

- Martha Jackman (Past-chair of NAWL), Professor of constitutional law at the University of Ottawa.
- Mélanie Lemay, Co-founder of Québec contre les violences sexuelles.
- Julia Tétrault-Provencher (member of the NSC and Chair of the Reproductive Justice working group), lawyer and human rights consultant.
- Alexandra Dupuy, a doctoral student in linguistics at Université de Montréal whose research focus on feminist and gender studies.
- Nellie Brière, a recognized specialist in digital media and online social strategies.

A variety of topics were covered, including how to use international law as a lever for change, how to use social media to campaign for feminist law reform, and how to write effective op-eds and briefs.



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive:



“A turning point in my life! Instructive / motivating/inspiring.”



“So impressed by the quality of the presenters.”



“Super relevant. I really liked the variety of speakers.”



“Super interesting, informative, mobilizing and encouraging. Thank you so much!”



“I loved the workshop. It's my favorite of the year!”



“I really enjoyed this workshop and would recommend it without hesitation.”



“Very diverse expertise. Very focused on mobilization, activism and concrete means, which is much appreciated! Inspiring!”



“I am grateful for the safe space, the connections and opportunities to interact in every part of the workshop. Thank you for your amazing work!”



“The diversity of guest speakers, topics and presentations made it dynamic, interesting and relevant.”



“It is sincerely one of, if not THE best training day: super concrete, panelists and very relevant participants.”



“This has been a great opportunity to network and learn more about feminist work.”

Working collaboratively with our allies

In 2022-2023, NAWL worked together with other feminist, Indigenous, and social justice organizations to effect intersectional feminist law reform.

Some examples of our cooperative work include:

The Chanterelle Alliance

In cooperation with Luke's Place, NAWL launched The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform, with funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada. The Alliance will bring together diverse voices and help coordinate feminist organizations in advancing a robust, proactive, feminist law reform agenda in Canada.

The Chanterelle Alliance is guided by an advisory board consisting of 12 leading feminist and equality-seeking organizations:

- Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights
- Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS)
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)
- Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW)
- DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN)
- Luke's Place
- National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL)
- Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale
- The Enchanté Network
- Women of the Métis Nation
- Women's Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF)
- Women's Shelter Canada (WSC)

Knowing that we are stronger together, The Chanterelle Alliance will foster new collaborations, allowing us to share resources, coordinate our demands and amplify our collective and individual work nationwide to build a safer, more just world for all women, and trans, Two-Spirit and gender diverse people regardless of their race, Indigeneity, immigration status, disability, or socio-economic status.



Coalition for Environmental Rights

NAWL is proud to be a part of the Coalition for Environmental Rights alongside the following organizations:

- Amnesty International
- Black Environmental Initiative
- The Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities & Community Health Project (The ENRICH Project)
- Women's Healthy Environment Network (WHEN)
- Breast Cancer Action Quebec
- Canadian Association of Black Lawyers (CABL)
- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)
- EnviroMuslims
- KAIROS
- Ontario Black Doula Society (OBDS)

Together, we called on the Senate and the Senate Select Committee in June 2022 to stand up for the rights of communities and families and remove any qualifying language to the right to a healthy environment from Bill S-5, Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act.

No New Abortion Legislation campaign

Concerned that introducing federal legislation that would try and enshrine a right to abortion would likely bring on unintended consequences that would harm abortion seekers and providers, NAWL and Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights [launched a campaign](#) in August 2022 to seek endorsements from Canadian organizations, institutions, and academics in support of ending access barriers instead of introducing a new abortion law. In total, 64 organizations and 35 feminist academics endorsed our campaign.

NAWL's Executive Director Tiffany Butler co-authored an op-ed on this issue ("Turning a medical procedure into a political one': Why a law protecting abortion in Canada would do the opposite", The Star, January 2023).

Women for Gun Control Coalition

NAWL initiated and convened the #Women4GunControl Coalition to address the gap and missing women's voice in the gun control debate. NAWL organized an informational townhall, inviting the feminist sector to attend and learn about the technical aspects of the bill, to dispel the rampant disinformation circulating in the debate, and to invite women's and feminist organizations to join a coalition.

The coalition brings together 33 organizations concerned about gun violence against women:

- National Association of Women and the Law | L'Association nationale Femmes et Droit
- YWCA Canada
- Fédération des femmes du Québec
- Women's Legal Education and Action Fund | Fonds d'action et d'éducation juridique pour les femmes
- Ending Violence Association of Canada | L'Association canadienne pour mettre fin à la violence
- Canadian Federation of University Women | Fédération Canadienne des Femmes Diplômées des Universités
- Women's Shelters Canada | Hébergement femmes Canada
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women
- Fédération des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes
- National Council of Women of Canada
- Luke's Place Support and Resource Centre for Women and Children
- Canadian Women's Foundation | Fondation canadienne des femmes
- Persons Against Non-State Torture
- Wisdom2Action
- West Coast LEAF Association
- Association féministe d'éducation et d'action sociale
- Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes
- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- South Asian Women's Community Centre | Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques
- Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic
- SOS violence conjugale
- Québec contre les violences sexuelles
- Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale
- Regroupement québécois des centres d'aide et de lutte aux agressions à caractère sexuel
- Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses
- Service d'Entraide Passerelle
- Centre Victoria pour femmes
- Alberta Council of Women's Shelters
- Newfoundland & Labrador Sexual Assault & Crisis Prevention Centre
- The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies | L'Association canadienne des sociétés Elizabeth Fry
- Network of Women with Disabilities NOW
- Halton Women's Place
- Informed Opinions | Femmes Expertes

Moreover, NAWL's brief on gun control legislation Bill C-21 was relied on by other organizations in their testimony before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

NAWL also supported the advocacy group PolySeSouvient throughout the legislative process.

IN THE MEDIA

As a leading expert on feminist law reform in Canada, NAWL is consistently consulted by media on a range of issues. In addition to responding to requests, we proactively engaged with media on key legislations affecting Canadian women by sending out press releases and publishing op-eds.

Here is a selection of articles highlighting our engagement with the media:

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- » May 13th, 2022, The Star, ["Supreme Court of Canada ruling a setback for women"](#)
- » June 27th, 2022, National Magazine, ["Hurried passage"](#)
- » August 20th, 2022, Radio-Canada, ["Le cri du cœur d'une femme victime de viol qui veut protéger son enfant"](#)
- » October 18th, 2022, The Conversation, ["What Parliament refused to hear about Canada's new extreme intoxication law"](#)
- » February 23rd, 2023, CBC News, ["Quebec to allow victims impregnated by sexual assault to decide if father recognized"](#)
- » June 22nd, 2023, CBC News, ["'A life sentence': No escape from abusive relationships when navigating family court system, say victims"](#)

GUN CONTROL

- » April 21st, 2022, La Presse, ["Des mesures nationales sur les armes de poing réclamées"](#)
- » April 29th, 2022, La Presse, ["Treize recommandations pour mieux contrôler les armes"](#)
- » November 8th, 2022, NAWL press release, ["NAWL Takes Action on Gun Control Law"](#)
- » November 10th, 2022, La Presse, ["La mesure 'drapeau rouge' de C21 critiquée"](#)
- » November 22nd, 2022, The Canadian Press, ["Critics say red-flag provision in federal firearms bill could weaken public safety"](#)
- » March 23rd, 2023, La Presse, ["Trente organisations féministes réclament le retour des amendements"](#)
- » March 23rd, 2023, Hill Times, ["MPs' work on gun control misses target"](#)

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

- » May 5th, 2022, CBC News, ["Abortion rights activists watching case before N.B. courts"](#)
- » May 5th, 2022, The Canadian Bar Association ["How Roe differs from Morgentaler"](#)
- » June 27th, 2022, The Globe and Mail, ["Legislating abortion access in Canada would be a mistake"](#)
- » June 28th, 2022, The Canadian Press, ["What is the legal status of abortion in Canada and do we need a law? Experts weigh in"](#)
- » January 2nd, 2023, The Star, ['Turning a medical procedure into a political one': Why a law protecting abortion in Canada would do the opposite"](#)

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

- » August 12th, 2022, NAWL blog post, ["Can Youth in Canada Influence Law? They Already Do!"](#)
- » October 4th, 2022, Jurivision, ["Carbon Pricing Series: A Climate Justice and Feminist Perspective"](#)
- » December 15th, 2022, La Presse, ["Biodiversité et droits des femmes"](#)
- » March 23rd, 2023, The Star, ["Federal government failing to protect us from persistent chemical contamination"](#)

OTHER FEMINIST LAW REFORM ADVOCACY

- » April 23rd, 2022, The Canadian Press, ["Advocates want feminist spending review as feds insist no social-program cuts"](#)
- » August 23rd, 2022, The Conversation, ["How Québec's Bill 21 could be vanquished by a rarely used Charter provision"](#)
- » November 14th, 2022, The Conversation, ["Preventing use of the notwithstanding clause is a bad idea — and unnecessary"](#)
- » February 21st, 2023, Radio Canada, ["Obtenir justice à la cour des petites créances"](#)

THE YEAR AHEAD

We are feeling energized and determined for this upcoming year. NAWL looks forward to advocating in its three priority areas of feminist law reform: ending violence against women, reproductive rights, and women's rights and the climate crisis, and will be keeping its finger on the pulse of any legislative movements and reform impacting women in these areas.

Moreover, NAWL will continue to work towards its goal to be a healthy, growing, and sustainable organization regardless of political climate. We are working hard to secure additional funding to ensure the long-term stability of the organization while focusing on implementing our *Sprint to 50* Strategic Plan.

A GROWING TEAM

In 2023, our team welcomed two additional staff: Amalie Ascanius, Office Administrator; Thaïs Laborde, Communications and Development Officer.



CELEBRATING OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

In 2024, NAWL will mark its 50th anniversary. This milestone is a key opportunity to increase awareness of the organization's substantive contributions toward advancing gender equality for women.

Moreover, the anniversary program will be leveraged to present NAWL's ambitious vision to increase the impact of its feminist law reform expertise to advance gender equality, including in the areas of family law reform, ending violence against women, reproductive justice and protecting women's rights in the climate crisis, particularly those of Indigenous women, racialized women, women with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and women who are newcomers to Canada.

Finally, we will use this opportunity to re-engage with law students across the country, honouring their instrumental role in NAWL's history and founding. Our team will travel to many law schools in the fall, and we are excited to reintroduce the law student essay contest. Students will play a key role in our 50th anniversary celebrations by attending a feminist law reform workshop in Ottawa.



Celebrating the Legacy  Célébrer l'héritage
Defining the Future Définir l'avenir

ENHANCING FEMINIST LAW REFORM TOOLS

This year, NAWL will work to enhance Feminist Law Reform tools, including through updating our Feminist Law Reform 101 online course and publishing a Feminist Law Reform book club guide (inspired by the Yukon Status of Women Council FLR Book Club).

NAWL will also pursue our successful Feminist Law Reform workshop series by offering workshops across Canada.

WORKING TOGETHER

In doing its law reform work, and through The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform, NAWL looks forward to collaborating with partners and allies in 2023-2024.

NAWL is already working hard to build up The Chanterelle Alliance's membership with our co-convenor Luke's Place and with the help of our committed Advisory Group.

In addition, we are taking the opportunity of our travel to law schools across the country to meet and speak with legal academics and frontline service providers. This is a key opportunity for our team to learn about important legal issues that need to be addressed, especially gaps in the Divorce Act and challenges faced by domestic violence victims/survivors.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN AND THE LAW

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2023

	TOTAL 2023	TOTAL 2022
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 124,638	\$ 36,931
Accounts receivable	75,445	41,345
Prepaid expense	12,900	10,230
Charitable Trust for Research and Education	21,863	3,549
	\$ 234,846	\$ 92,055
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 54,551	\$ 42,969
Deferred revenue	116,785	13,190
	171,336	56,159
NET ASSETS	63,510	35,896
Unrestricted net assets		
	\$ 234,846	\$ 92,055

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023

	2023	2022
REVENUE		
Government grants	\$ 427,888	\$ 390,954
Other grants	94,233	—
Membership	830	852
Other income	14,549	25,921
	537,500	417,727
EXPENSE		
Accounting and legal	55,681	3,739
Occupancy costs	1,026	20,225
Office operations	31,204	6,382
Personnel	312,069	267,352
Professional services	62,228	95,317
Publicity and promotion	11,796	9,381
Travel and meetings	35,882	9,956
	509,886	412,352
NET REVENUE FOR THE YEAR	\$ 27,614	\$ 5,375

THE NAWL TRUST

HISTORY

In 1983, the National Association of Women and the Law Charitable Trust for Research and Education (the NAWL Trust) was established to complement NAWL's advocacy work. A registered charity, the NAWL Trust's mandate includes undertaking research and education on legal issues concerning all aspects of the social, economic and political life of Canadian women. It assists in the protection of women's civil rights and liberties by charitable means, as well as in the relief of poverty.

TRUSTEES

The NAWL Trust is composed of five (5) members appointed by NAWL's National Steering Committee. The Trustees are responsible for decisions regarding the allocation of funds.

The current [Trustees of the NAWL Trust](#) are:

- Kristen H. Douglas
- Michelle Flaherty
- Lorena Fontaine
- Martha Jackman
- Cheryl Milne

ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2022-2023, the NAWL Trust partnered with NAWL to deliver a key project supported by the Canadian Women's Foundation to address the legal response to gender-based violence in Canada in the COVID-19 context.

The pandemic has highlighted existing legal barriers to justice for survivors of gender-based violence and reduced victims' confidence in the justice system.

In addition, the NAWL Trust supported the ongoing work of updating *A Women's Guide to Money, Relationships and the Law in Ontario*.

DONATIONS

The NAWL Trust is a registered charity and relies solely on the generous donations of individuals and grants to fund its work.

Our sincere thanks go to all the donors who have supported the trust this year, in particular the Leacross Foundation, for their very generous donation.



Much as NAWL works to achieve substantive equality and the realization of human rights for all women in Canada (through legal education, research, strategic intervention, coalition work, and feminist law reform advocacy, particularly at the federal level), the Leacross Foundation is strategically committed to working with organizations who are similarly aligned, with a focus on creating academic, and professional opportunities for women who are intentionally pursuing careers in underrepresented sectors.

NAWL would also like to acknowledge the outstanding donation made in 2021 by feminist philanthropist and founding NAWL mother, Shirley Greenberg, which is still supporting our work today.

The NAWL Trust also gratefully acknowledges the University of Ottawa's *Programme de common law en français* (PCLF) and the Loran Scholars Foundation for their respective support of NAWL Trust internships in 2022-2023.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN AND THE LAW CHARITABLE TRUST FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2023

	TOTAL 2023	TOTAL 2022
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 89,392	\$ 1,074,224
Accounts receivable	3,679	
	93,071	1,074,224
INVESTMENT	1,013,816	
	\$ 1,106,887	\$ 1,074,224
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Due to National Association of Women and the Law	\$ 21,863	\$ 3,549
	21,863	3,549
NET ASSETS	1,085,024	1,070,675
Unrestricted net assets		
	\$ 1,106,887	\$ 1,074,224

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023

	2023	2022
REVENUE		
Donations	\$ 16,077	\$ 1,051,956
Grants	7,000	7,000
Foundation	10,000	—
Other income	1,495	—
	34,572	1,058,956
EXPENSE		
Office operations	769	82
Publicity and promotion	11,696	—
Professional services	7,758	7,598
	20,223	7,680
NET REVENUE FOR THE YEAR	\$ 14,349	\$ 1,051,276

THANK YOU

WE THANK THE FOLLOWING
INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS
FOR THEIR INVALUABLE SUPPORT:

NAWL MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

AND

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY CANADA



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Canada

CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION



CHAMBRE DES NOTAIRES DU QUÉBEC



LEACROSS FOUNDATION





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