



**LEAF**  
30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
**TIMELINE**  
1985 >>> 2015

Women's Legal Education and Action Fund  
Fonds d'action et d'éducation juridiques pour les femmes

**30 Years of Working Together Towards Equality**

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) is a national, charitable, non-profit organization, founded in 1985. LEAF's founding mothers created LEAF to defend the equality rights enshrined in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Over its thirty years, LEAF has achieved many important victories in the courts and advanced substantive equality for women and girls in Canada. LEAF's leadership in litigation and law reform has opened doors to addressing reproductive freedoms, pay equity, employment, housing, immigration, family law, sexual violence, sexual orientation and disability accommodation for women and marginalized groups.

LEAF recognizes and shares the celebration in women's advancement with allied organizations in Canada that have worked towards change. We recognize the personal sacrifices of women who have championed these causes on behalf of all women. We also recognize the volunteers, legal counsel and our donors for their support and encouragement.

For more information about LEAF, visit [leaf.ca](http://leaf.ca)



Your generosity helps LEAF, but more than that, it also helps build a better and fairer Canada.

**April 17, 1985**

Enactment of section 15, the equality rights section of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) is founded.

*Canadian Newspapers Co. v. Canada* – SCC upholds the validity of Criminal Code provision allowing a sexual assault complainant to apply for a publication ban on her name.

*Weatherall v. Canada* – SCC finds that female corrections employees are not prevented from conducting cross-gender searches of inmates.

*Janzen v. Platy Enterprises* – SCC rules that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination.

*Andrews v. The Law Society of British Columbia* – SCC makes first decision on the meaning of section 15 of the *Charter*; adopts LEAF's definition of substantive equality.

*Daigle v. Tremblay* – SCC affirms women's control of their own bodies; rejects injunction against abortion.

*Brooks v. Canada Safeway* – SCC rules that pregnancy discrimination is sex discrimination.

Submission on Canada Customs' seizure of lesbian and gay materials.

*R. v. M. (M.L.)* – SCC holds that lack of resistance does not equal consent to sex.



1986

1987

1988

1989

1990

1991

1992

1993

1994

1995

1996

*Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights vs. A.G. of Ontario* – LEAF wins wage protection for domestic workers.

Challenges to *Vital Statistics Acts* in BC, ON, PEI – LEAF actions enable women to keep their names after marriage.

*Shewchuk v. Ricard* – LEAF advocates for fairness in family law.

*Blainey v. The Ontario Hockey Association* – Ontario Court of Appeal (ONCA) allows girl to proceed with human rights complaint for right to play on boys' team.

*C.N.R. v. Canada [Action Travail des Femmes]* – the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) finds that systemic discrimination in the hiring of women is unlawful.

Submission on the 1987 Constitutional Accord (Meech Lake Accord).

Submission to the Ontario Task Force on Mandatory Retirement.

*Albrecht v. Albrecht* – Ontario court rules a divorcing woman is entitled to division of the couple's Canada Pension Plan credits.

*R. v. Keegstra; Canada v. Taylor* – SCC agrees that hate propaganda violates equality rights.

Submission on the constitutional validity of Bill C-43: An Act Respecting Abortion.

*Sullivan and Lemay v. R.* – SCC holds that the fetus is not a legal person.

*R. v. Seaboyer and Gayme* – SCC strikes down the rape shield law, prompting new sexual assault legislation.

*Moge v. Moge* – SCC rules that a woman is owed ongoing spousal support from her husband.

*Norberg v. Wynrib* – SCC finds there is no consent when doctors trade drugs for sex.

Submission on Bill C-49: An Act Respecting Sexual Assault.

*Thibaudeau v. R.* – SCC finds that child support payments are taxable income; law reform initiatives ensue.

Submission on Federally Sentenced Aboriginal Women and the Healing Lodge.

*Gordon v. Goertz* – SCC allows mother to relocate when her custody is in the best interests of the child.



Women's Legal Education and Action Fund | Fonds d'action et d'éducation juridiques pour les femmes

Your generosity helps LEAF build a better and fairer Canada for women and girls!

Please donate today at [leaf.ca](http://leaf.ca)

Connect with us:



Donate | Become a LEAF Member | Volunteer  
Become a LEAF *pro bono* Lawyer | Partner

**LEAF Branches:** Calgary | Edmonton | Halifax | Ottawa  
Prince Edward Island | Sudbury | Toronto | Windsor

**West Coast LEAF** is a separately incorporated registered charity affiliated to LEAF. Visit [www.westcoastleaf.org](http://www.westcoastleaf.org)

t 416.595.7170; toll free 1.888.824.LEAF (5323)  
f 416.595.7191 | e [info@leaf.ca](mailto:info@leaf.ca)

[www.leaf.ca](http://www.leaf.ca)

*Winnipeg Child and Family Services v. G.* – SCC affirms that a fetus is not a legal person and rules that a pregnant Indigenous woman could not be detained in addictions treatment.

*R. v. R.D.S.* – SCC clears Nova Scotia's first Black woman judge of bias for taking judicial notice of racism.

*Eldridge v. British Columbia* – SCC agrees that health care must be provided without discrimination to people with a disability.

Submission on Bill C-46 – LEAF seeks to uphold Criminal Code protections for sex assault complainants' personal records.

*Vriend v. Alberta* – SCC finds that the absence of sexual orientation from Alberta human rights legislation is a violation of equality rights and orders that this ground be read in.

*Jane Doe v. Metropolitan Toronto Commissioners of Police* – Police negligent and in violation of equality rights for not warning women about a serial rapist.

*M. v. H.* – SCC rules that the definition of "spouse" in the Ontario Family Law Act cannot exclude same-sex couples.

*R. v. Ewanchuk* – SCC upholds principle that there is no implied consent and that no one has the right to sexually touch another without that person's clear consent.

*British Columbia (PSEERC) v. BCGSEU (Meiorin Grievance)* – SCC adopts LEAF's test for sex discrimination in the workplace proposed by LEAF, DAWN & CLC coalition.

*New Brunswick v. G. (J.) [J.G.]* – SCC agrees a single mother faced with losing custody of her children deserves access to legal aid.

*R. v. Mills* – SCC upholds a law that limits the accused's access to sexual assault complainants' personal records.



The Honourable Louise Arbour with youth at the 2008 Persons Day Breakfast Gala.

*R. v. Darrach* – SCC upholds Criminal Code provisions that limit the use of a women's sexual history as evidence.

*Blencoe v. British Columbia* – SCC agrees sexual harassment complainants should not be prejudiced by delay in human rights proceedings.

*Boston v. Boston* – SCC decision illustrating the need for law reform regarding pension division on separation and divorce.

*Falkiner v. Ontario* – ONCA strikes down the "spouse in the house" rule for welfare eligibility as discriminatory.

Ontario government lifts lifetime ban on welfare for those convicted of welfare fraud.

*NAPE v. Newfoundland* – SCC rules government discriminated against female workers by paying them unequal wages but declines to order payment.

*Auton v. British Columbia* – LEAF and DAWN Canada fight for children with autism to have equal access to health services.

*Blackwater v. Plint* – SCC rules on compensation for residential school survivors of sexual assault.

Submission of LEAF and LEAF Edmonton on Maternity and Parental Leave Provisions of the Canada Labour Code.

Submission on the Elimination of the Court Challenges Program.  
Submission on Bill C-10: An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Minimum Penalties for Offences Involving Firearms).

*Dickie v. Dickie* – SCC holds a father accountable for refusing to comply with family support orders.

*R. v. Spratt* – BC Court of Appeal upholds legislation providing bubble zones around abortion clinics.

*Honda Canada Inc. v. Keays* – SCC rules employers must conduct dismissals in good faith.

*Rick v. Brandsema* – SCC finds principle of unconscionability applies in the context of a separation agreement.

Submission on Pay Equity.

Submission on the Prohibition of Hate Speech under s.13 of the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Submission on Ending Sex Discrimination in the Status Provisions of the Indian Act, Bill C-3.

LEAF Submission to the Quebec National Assembly that Bill 94 uniquely discriminates against niqab-wearing women.

*R. v. J.A.* – SCC agrees that a woman must be conscious to consent to sex.  
*Withler v. Canada (Attorney General)* – SCC restates the test for equality rights.

*R. v. D.A.I.* – SCC agrees that sexual assault complainants with intellectual and other disabilities deserve access to justice.

*R. v. N.S.* – SCC rules on access to the criminal justice system for niqab-wearing sexual assault complainants.

Submission on Bill C-10: The Safe Streets and Communities Act.

Submission criticizing Bill C-31: The Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act.

*Whatcott v. Saskatchewan* – SCC agrees hate speech is a violation of equality rights.

*R. v. Ryan* – LEAF & CAEFS argue criminal law defences must address the realities of abused women's lives.

*Quebec v. A* – LEAF argues at SCC that common law spouses should have access to family law protections.

Submission on Sexual Harassment in the Federal Workplace.

Submission on Improving Representation of Women on Boards and in Senior Management of public companies.

*Johnstone v. Canada* – Federal Court of Appeal agrees discrimination against women with childcare responsibilities is family status discrimination.

*Tanudjaja v. Attorney General* – LEAF argues for a right to housing and insists that novel Charter claims should be heard on their merits.

*R. v. Kokopenace* – LEAF & Asper Centre argue at SCC that government must address systemic discrimination against Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system.

Submission on proposed amendments to the hate propaganda provisions in the Criminal Code in Bill C-13.

LEAF contributes to CCPA Report on Beijing +20.

LEAF continues litigation and law reform work regarding consent in sexual assault law, reproductive rights, violence against women, women's rights in the workplace, refugee health care, and religion and equality rights.

LEAF contributes to FAFIA Report to the UN Human Rights Committee regarding Canada's compliance with its ICCPR commitments; LEAF is a member of the Legal Strategy Coalition on Violence Against Indigenous Women.



Deborah Gillis and Suhana Meharchand at the 2014 Persons Day Breakfast Gala.



Public education is a key pillar in LEAF's approach to achieving substantive equality in Canada.



The Rt. Hon. Michaëlle Jean speaks at the 2012 Persons Day Breakfast Gala.