

The Dalhousie Arts and Social Sciences Society (DASSS) strongly condemns trivialization of Indigenous experiences of genocide<sup>1</sup> at the hands of the Canadian colonial government, stigmatization of transgender people, and promotion of sexist discrimination or stereotypes. DASSS sends our voice in solidarity with Acadia students who are impacted by Acadia University's slow response to public concerns regarding Rick Mehta and hesitancy to address and discipline him for his actions. On behalf of the society, we reaffirm our dedication to upholding the rights of Indigenous and transgender students, as well as all female students, and call for more institutional accountability for the actions of professors of our Nova Scotian higher learning institutions. DASSS wishes to protect the safety of students and their right to not feel targeted within their own classrooms and universities. We call upon all Nova Scotian universities to fulfill their responsibilities to affirm these rights for their own students through transparency and accountability.

DASSS fully supports emphasizes the importance of supporting transgender, non-binary and two-spirit peoples, who are most likely to face hate-based violence due to discrimination and ignorance.<sup>2</sup> As well, we wish to recognize the struggles that women, especially BIPOC women, face in academia due to the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes.<sup>3</sup> We additionally want to remind all university students and staff that Gordon Residential School in Saskatchewan, Canada's last residential school, was closed only 22 years ago in 1996.<sup>4</sup> These tools used by the government to commit genocide are not ancient history, but rather the reality for thousands who were taken from their homes and cultures. We believe that as educational institutions, universities have a responsibility to recognize and uphold information which is widely academically considered to be up-to-date and factual regarding these sensitive societal, historical, and cultural issues. Further, we believe that professors within our universities share this same responsibility for academic integrity.

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<sup>1</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada(2015) Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=890>

<sup>2</sup> National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (2017) Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV Affected Hate Violence in 2016. Retrieved from <https://avp.org/resources/reports/>; Passante, L., Potskin, J., Ristock, J., and Zuccole, A. (2017) Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Two-Spirit/LGBTQ Canadians Experiences of Migration, Mobility, and Relationship Violence. *Sexualities*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716681474>

<sup>3</sup> Wang, M. and Degol, J. (2017) Gender Gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM): Current Knowledge, Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Directions. *Education Psychology Review*, 29(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9355-x>

<sup>4</sup> Larsson, P. (2014, September 9). Gordon's Residential School. Retrieved from <http://eugenicsarchive.ca/discover/institutions/residential/54>