



## Complaint under the Human Rights Act

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**Complainant**

Kendra Gould

**Respondent**

Saint Mary's University (SMU) and  
Society of Academic Freedom  
and Scholarship (SAFS)

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**Section and Nature of Complaint:**

5(1)(a)(f)(q): Provision of or access to  
services or facilities/ Publication /  
Aboriginal Origin

**Inquiry Case Number:**

19-2138

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**I, Kendra Gould, complain against Saint Mary's University and Society of Academic Freedom and Scholarship SAFS that in January 2019 the Respondent discriminated against me with respect to the provision of or access to services or facilities and publication because of my aboriginal origin.**

1. What is your protected characteristic(s)? Please explain.

My protected characteristic is my Aboriginal Origin. As an Indigenous student I was ridiculed for my ethnicity and my cultural history.

2. When did the alleged discrimination begin?

The discrimination began in January 2019 when an article written by John MacKinnon had been posted. The article had been brought to my attention on September 11, 2019.

3. Please provide example(s) of discriminatory treatment you say you experienced by the Respondent.

John McKinnon wrote an article about me, mocking me as a student and how disappointing my grades at university were. He then went on to write about how Saint Mary's University does not owe Indigenous peoples acknowledgement about unceded territory because the Mi'kmaq had nothing to do with founding the university. Then started to write about how Indigenous students who learn and got an education on the reserve need to stay on the reserve because we don't have the proper education for university.

4. Why do you believe the treatment you received is because of your protected characteristic?

I believe I received this treatment due to the fact that I am indigenous because of the way he expresses himself towards Indigenous people.

5. Do you believe you are the only person who has experienced this treatment? Please explain.

Yes.

6. How did this affect you?

I was fearful seeing this instructor in the school. I was afraid of retribution for reporting him. I felt that I was judged and labelled by the university for my indigenous ancestry and experience. I felt I was labeled as a Dumb Indian and made to feel I didn't belong in a post-secondary institution. I felt demeaned and embarrassed. I felt I was now mocked by the university by this professor's comments on Mi'kmaw history and experience.

7. How did you try to resolve the problem? Please explain.

I reported to the SMU president and was assured it would be addressed. I did not hear back from him or the university. I did get in contact with a dispute resolution person from the university months after the report. I contacted the Friendship Center and the Mi'kmaw Advisory committee for the university. They sent letters to the president to have it addressed. I did not receive word it was pulled down. No apologies or comments were received from the University.

8. When did you last have contact with the Respondent? What happened?

September 2019, I spoke with the SMU president Robert Summerby-Murray and he was sent letters from various professionals regarding the article and he has not responded. John McKinnon has not contacted me to apologize or acknowledge the harm. Raymond Sewell, Indigenous Student Advisor with SMU, and I met with Bridget Brownlow, Conflict Resolution Advisor with SMU on November 28, 2019 to address the treatment I experienced.

**I refer to all the above information and allege that these actions constitute discrimination on account of my Aboriginal Origin and that they are prohibited under Section 5(1)(a)(f)(q) of the Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act*.**

**I have read (or had read to me) the above allegations and to the best of my knowledge, the information is true and accurate.**

**Dated at \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, Town or Municipality)**

**on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day) (Year)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Complainant**

**I consent to the release to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (NSHRC) of all information and documents concerning me that the NSHRC considers necessary for its investigation, such as personnel records, documents, data, medical or hospital records which relate to this complaint. I also authorize the NSHRC to have such information examined by any person it retains to provide advice and assistance in dealing with my complaint.**

**Dated at \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, Town or Municipality)**

**on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month) (Day) (Year)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Complainant**