

The case of Patrick Provost and Nicolas Derome

 reinfoCovid.ca/laffaire-de-patrick-provost-et-nicolas-derome



THE PATRICK PROVOST AND NICOLAS DEROME CASE

Academic freedom at risk



Réinfo Covid Québec, a collective of thousands of caregivers, doctors, scientists and citizens, has set itself the goal of promoting debates around issues related to the health crisis. Since its launch in June 2021 Réinfo Covid Québec has organized several private meetings and press conferences with numerous specialists, in order to enlighten the public and offer a point of view absent from the information conveyed in Québec.

This was the case of **Patrick Provost** (full professor in the Department of Microbiology-Infectiology and Immunology of the Faculty of Medicine at Université Laval) and **Nicolas Derome** (Molecular biologist, full professor in the Department of Biology at Université Laval)

who took the floor with Réinfo Covid Québec in order to question public health decisions, more specifically concerning the vaccination of children. Nicolas Derome appeared in a special video on the vaccination of 5 to 11 year olds on November 25, 2021 and Patrick Provost appeared in a panel of doctors and scientists on December 7, 2021.

While Laval University presents itself as an institution that encourages the academic freedom of the teaching profession and recognizes that a social debate is crucial to nourish critical analysis, we were extremely surprised and disappointed to find that this University had suspended and intimidated these professors following their speeches.

The stakes are high, because it is neither more nor less than muzzling all people with a critical discourse on the health crisis. The message sent to academics could not be clearer: speak out publicly and you will be severely punished, even fired.

We were made aware by the professors themselves, because the university asks them that we remove the videos:

Quebec, June 21, 2022

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To whom it May concern,

On June 13, I was summoned by my employer, Laval University, to ask you to "withdraw your (my) intervention (during the press conference of December 7, 2021) from the Réinfo Covid Québec site and from any another platform on which this intervention could end up".

Please note that this request from my employer was contested by grievance, which will be the subject of a court decision. In the meantime, I have no other choice but to ask you to withdraw this capsule since, failing that, Université Laval informs me that it could impose on me "other more severe administrative and disciplinary measures that could go until dismissal.

Thanking you for your attention to this, please accept my best regards.

For our part, we consider this withdrawal request inadmissible for the following reasons:

- First of all, these videos aim to convey information to the public about the usefulness, effectiveness, risks and ethics of childhood vaccination, which is fundamental;
- It is the moral and ethical duty of any scientist to present a critical opinion and also to discuss the risks associated with vaccination in children;
- It is about freedom of expression and the precautionary principle;
- The speeches were rigorous, supported by up-to-date scientific literature;
- The experts demonstrated great professional ethics.

All these reasons justify in our opinion that these videos are not withdrawn, because they are of public interest and contribute to the debate. We are currently studying all possible options with our lawyers. You will find by clicking on the button below the response letter that we sent to them explaining why we refuse to remove the videos.

HERE IS OUR RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST TO REMOVE VIDEOS

Obviously, we do not intend to stop there and **we will do everything possible to support these two professors, it is about academic freedom, essential guarantee of freedom of expression** : if universities muzzle their professors, as do the various professional orders, we are entering a dictatorship.

OPEN LETTER FROM PATRICK PROVOST

On June 22, 2022 Patrick published an opinion letter in the Journal de Montréal: The true portrait of COVID-19 in Quebec . His letter, which went viral on all social networks, was taken down two days later. A decision by Quebecor which, like all mainstream media, is not inclined to public debate on this issue. However, his letter sets out, based on available public data and in a simple and factual manner, certain findings on the management of the health crisis.

UNIVERSITIES AND PRIVATE INTERESTS

Like many others, Université Laval has many private donors. We will therefore not be surprised to discover several pharmaceutical companies involved in the manufacture of vaccines such as Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Sanofi. Could this have influenced Laval University in its choice to sanction and silence its professors? The doubt remains especially when we note that the University has removed the said donor page from its website. This page is fortunately still accessible on web.archive.org .

This is undoubtedly what motivates Patrick Provost to set up an independent university council which aims to deal with the lobbies of large companies at the Universities.

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MANY SUPPORTS

The case of Patrick Provost and Nicolas Derome had the effect of a thunderclap in the university environment. Many voices have been raised to denounce this situation of unprecedented censorship. The [Quebec Federation of University Professors \(FQPPU\)](#), the [Union of Professors and Professors of Laval University \(SPUL\)](#), the [Scientific Director of the Science and Technology Observatory](#), the [Minister of Higher Education](#) and several others have denounced this serious breach of academic freedom.

We hope that this case will allow a real debate on the issues related to the health crisis. If you would like to speak out like Patrick and Nicolas did or simply collaborate on our mission, do not hesitate to [join the Réinfo Covid Québec collective](#). We have groups of scientists, doctors, lawyers, social sciences and humanities, etc. Our main mission is to connect professionals and encourage public speaking for a fair and proportionate health policy in Quebec.

NEWSPAPER

[2022-07-01 : Exclusive: 'We Need to Be Allowed to Ask Questions,' Says Canadian Prof Suspended for Questioning COVID Shots for Kids](#)

[2022-06-30: Letter to the Minister of Higher Education regarding censorship at Université Laval](#)

[2022-06-30: 15 billion \\$\\$\\$ later and still the Omerta?](#)

2022-06-30 : Union says Université Laval prof's suspension for anti-vax comments violates academic freedom

2022-06-29: The Patrick Provost affair or the heresy of health dogma

2022-06-28: Beware of the “authoritarian turn” of universities

2022-06-24: The true portrait of Covid-19 in Quebec

2021-12-31: Patrick Provost and his team: top 5 scientific discoveries for 2021 / A new form of RNA?

