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Introduction

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Editor's Introduction

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We would like to welcome our readers to volume 5, issue 1 of *aboriginal policy studies*. Due to the complex relationship among fiscal year, academic year and calendar year, volume 4 only contained one issue. This issue is the first of three planned issues for volume five, and contains three articles, two commentaries (though, as we will explain, we did something different with the commentaries this issue), a book review and a foundational document. As usual, the various contributions to this issue continue to follow the journal's broad scope, which is to publish "original, scholarly, and policy-relevant research on issues relevant to Métis, non-status Indians and urban Aboriginal peoples in Canada." As we emphasized in previous introductions—and as I will continue to emphasize until it is resolved—*aps* welcomes relevant submissions from *all* geographical and political regions of Canada. We still do not receive an adequate number of submissions on issues pertaining to Métis policy, nor do we receive an adequate number of submissions on urban Aboriginal issues in central and eastern Canada.

This issue's first article, written by Marci Snyder, Kathi Wilson and Jason Whitford, examines a long-standing issue in urban Aboriginal policymaking in Canada, namely, the service gap between urban Aboriginal need and desires. Through in-depth interviews with participants moving between First Nations and Winnipeg, Manitoba, Snyder and her colleagues demonstrate how the disconnect among federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government, as well as between urban Aboriginal stakeholders and community organizations, affects resource allocation and the structure of urban Aboriginal service delivery and how, in turn, this has an impact on the overall effectiveness of urban Aboriginal service delivery.

In the second article, Paul Bowles investigates a little-studied element of urban Aboriginal life, the financial behaviour and experience of urban Aboriginal individuals. Using three focus groups with a total of thirty participants, Bowles explores the broader growth of discussions about the importance of Canadian financial literacy and "fringe" financial institutions (such as so-called "payday" lenders), and their impact on urban Aboriginal individuals. Bowles's findings reveal a high degree of self-taught financial literacy among Aboriginal focus group members, as well as good budgeting skills limited by low incomes rather than lack of financial literacy. Bowles also demonstrates convincingly that financial institutions must do a better job of welcoming low-income and Aboriginal clientele.

Finally, the third article explores childbearing experiences for First Nations women living within 75 km of a large urban centre (Edmonton). The author interviews participants to identify the gaps and issues that currently exist between modern Western medicine and Indigenous traditional approaches to childbirth, particularly as here, mother and child were removed from their community contexts to hospitals in Edmonton. Weibe, Barton, Auger, Pijl-Zieber, and Foster-Boucher demonstrate that although this removal worked well from

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a Western medical perspective, it had an impact on the sense of cultural safety that First Nations mothers felt. Weibe et al. suggest that policy principles harmonize the existing gaps between Indigenous and Western birthing practices in the interests of promoting better health outcomes for mothers and babies, as well as for the family and community at large.

In addition to the three articles, this journal issue also contains its usual commentary section. However, in this issue we have tried something new, in two senses. First, much of our policy commentary tends to take place at a "parachute" level, speaking to provincial- and even national-level trends. While these commentaries have offered crucial examples of the more academically oriented pieces in our article sections, these arguably miss the real human dimension involving those on the receiving end of Canada's policies as they relate to Métis, non-status Indian and urban Aboriginal communities and individuals. In the first commentary, Métis graduate student Jesse Thistle writes of his experiences of drug addiction and homelessness. With searing prose and heartbreaking dignity, his commentary gives voice to the experiences of the growing number of Aboriginal individuals who have or are facing these issues, whether directly or through family and extended family.

The second commentary marks another departure from the journal's usual practices. We have archived a recent Twitter discussion on the meaning and boundaries of Métis identity, a matter that is crucial to the creation of policy related to a wide spectrum of services involving self-identifying Métis. Métis scholar Dr. Adam Gaudry (Department of Indigenous Studies, University of Saskatchewan) used the @IndigenousXca Twitter account (which features a different Indigenous host each week) to inaugurate a discussion on issues relevant to the debate about who is and is not Métis, why people call themselves Métis, and how colonialism has affected these issues. To provide context for this multi-media commentary, Gaudry explains his Twitter discussion framework, which allows readers to connect each 140-character tweet and sub-tweet piece to a larger picture of the Métis policy puzzle. The format of the commentary also speaks to the influence of social media on policy and academia.

Finally, volume 5, issue 1 includes a book review by Marc Woons, FWO Doctoral Fellow, Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Belgium of Michael Asch's award-winning *On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada*. This is followed by our foundational document, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. This report is in the public domain, and we are reproducing the document in full to encourage submissions to *aboriginal policy studies* that explore and engage the policy implications connected to these Calls to Action for Métis, non-status, and Urban Aboriginal peoples.