

# aboriginal policy studies



## *Editor's Introduction* *aboriginal policy studies*

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# Editor's Introduction

Dr. Chris Andersen

We would like to welcome our readers to volume 7, issue 1 of *aboriginal policy studies*. This issue contains seven articles, one commentary, 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 have emphasized in previous introductions—and as we 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, urban Aboriginals in central and eastern Canada, or issues pertaining specifically to Indigenous women.

In the first article, Jodi Bruhn explores the manner in which the tripartite agreements are created among First Nations, provincial governments, and federal governments for the purposes of delivering policies and services for First Nations communities. Analyzing a range of tripartite agreements in a number of service delivery areas, Bruhn argues that while these agreements have varied widely in a number of key characteristics, provisional evidence exists that at their best, they do offer the potential for positive and respectful relationships between the party signatories (First Nation and governments).

Following Bruhn, Morency et al. undertake a complex demographic analysis of Aboriginal fertility rates in Canada. Through an analysis of available data sources, they provide not only an empirical overview of the evidence of Aboriginal fertility, but also a sophisticated methodological discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of data sources. A descriptive analysis demonstrates a higher fertility rate for Aboriginal women (particularly Aboriginal women under 30), though the multivariate analysis that follows complicates this picture in productive ways.

Also engaging in research regarding Aboriginal youth, Wilk *et al.* set out to explore the correlations between physical sport and off-reserve Aboriginal youth. They note that while the literature on this relationship has produced a number of predictive factors, those tend to lack context. Undertaking an analysis of the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, they lay out a range of factors that correlate with Aboriginal youth involvement in sport and physical activity (at least for those living off-reserve), and they conclude by noting the potential importance of emphasizing factors that have an impact on Aboriginal female youth involvement, and the importance of positive family context.

Following Wilk *et al.*, Hansen and Hetzel explore the experiences of addiction recovery among urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth associated with an art-based recovery centre located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. They discuss dominant addiction recovery models and suggest that, at least in their qualitative analysis, addiction recovery programs benefit from an emphasis on the social inclusion of Indigenous youth, and should focus on allowing youth to improve their lives and on providing a sense of community.

In the fifth article, Ruth Amir undertakes a complex discussion of the notion of genocide through an engagement with a number of analytical sites: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's positioning of residential schools as a form of cultural genocide, the UN's (in her view, unnecessary) "tiering" of physical and cultural genocide, Canada's views on the meaning and contours of genocide, and, finally, the manner in which this shields the Canadian state from a true accounting of the impacts of cultural genocide.

In the sixth article of this issue, Jérôme Melançon undertakes an analysis of the Idle No More movement in the context of social movement literature. Focusing on the political philosophy that undergirds key texts spawned by the INM movement, Melançon investigates its goals and modes of action as a form of anti-colonial collective action, arguing that at its root, the phenomenon of IDM elides the goals and modes of action in which the Canadian state typically engages, to launch an emancipatory challenge to the roots and thus foundational legitimacy of the Canadian state.

In the seventh and final article, Miller *et al.* document the knowledge and experiences of healthcare professionals and researchers in Australia regarding the barriers they face in controlling parasitic infections (*strongyloides stercoralis*) in Australian Indigenous communities. Through a series of semi-structured interviews with healthcare professionals and researchers, the authors highlight such barriers as institutional racism, poor health promotion, lack of awareness/education, socioeconomic determinants, and the existing healthcare system's policy and procedures.

Following the peer-reviewed articles, Chantelle Richmond provides a commentary on the creation and growth of Ontario's Indigenous Mentorship Network. Pointing to the seemingly ubiquitous health inequities experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada, Richmond explores how Ontario's Indigenous Mentorship Network's commitment to research, teaching, and capacity building that supports applied community-based approaches to Indigenous health research can help to build the inequities that currently exist in many communities.

Finally, Mary Jane McCallum and Yvonne Boyer document the racism experienced by Indigenous healthcare users in Canada by highlighting of two recent reports—*Tubal Ligation in the Saskatoon Health Region: The Lived Experience of Aboriginal Women* (regarding the forced sterilization of many Indigenous women); and *Out of Sight: A Summary of the Events Leading Up to Brian Sinclair's Death and the Inquest that Examined It and the Interim Recommendations of the Brian Sinclair Working Group* (which explored the factors that resulted in the death of an Aboriginal patient in a Winnipeg hospital). The authors highlight these reports in particular to demonstrate the serious problem of racism in healthcare in Canada, and they call upon the various health care authorities and stakeholders to develop more effective and explicitly anti-racist policies.

This issue also includes a foundational document that provides a genealogy of the creation and growth of aboriginal capacity in health research, beginning with the growth of the Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments (ACADRE) centres and their evolution into Network Environments for Aboriginal Health Research (NEAHRs).