

ABORIGINAL POLICY RESEARCH FORUM January 14, 2008

Description:

Sponsored by the York University Knowledge Mobilization Unit¹, this 1-day virtual conference on Aboriginal Policy Research links Aboriginal research expertise at York, Lakehead, Laurentian and the University of Victoria with public servants in Ontario and BC.

The forum features academic and Aboriginal perspectives² on a range of subjects identified through consultation with OPS ministries. Presentations will be introductory - outlining a subject area, describing community partnerships and research capacity and/or gaps in current research and knowledge (including traditional and indigenous knowledge and other forms of knowing). It is hoped that the conference will help to identify areas for further learning and exchange.

Presenters and audiences at each site will be linked to each other allowing for electronic interaction.

Objectives:

1. To provide an overview of community/university research partnerships providing expertise and perspectives on key OPS policy-relevant subjects.
2. To encourage further dialogue among researchers, their community partners, service providers and the OPS
3. To facilitate knowledge mobilization of academic aboriginal research to research users.
4. To enrich to dialogue amongst communities, service providers, academics and the OPS.

¹ **Knowledge Mobilization at York:** York's KM Unit provides services and funding for faculty, graduate students and community & government organizations seeking to maximize the impact of academic research and expertise on public policy, social programming and professional practice. Working in partnership with the KM Unit at the University of Victoria, York's KM Unit is supported by grants from SSHRC and CIHR and from the Office of the Vice-President Research & Innovation. For more information please contact kmunit@yorku.ca or 416-736-2100 x88876.

² CIHR, SSHRC and NSERC have articulated their policies on research involving human subjects in the Tri-Council Policy Statement on [Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#). Specifically Section 6 outlines the principles for research involving Aboriginal people. Building on these principles, the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples Health recently released their Guidelines for [Health Research Involving Aboriginal People](#). Participants in the conference are expected to adhere to the Articles in these Guidelines and the Principles of the Section 6 in the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

AGENDA (Eastern Time)

- 09:30-10:00 Technical set up and test
09:30-10:00 Registration and networking [local (in person) introductions]
10:00-10:05 Technical orientation (David Phipps, York University)

Welcome & Introductions

- 10:05-10:15 Welcome and Site introductions (Stan Shapson, York University)
10:15-10:25 Welcome from Policy Innovation and Leadership (Scott Thompson or Janet Mason)
10:25-10:30 Introduce moderator (Stan Shapson, York)

Context

- 10:30-10:45 **Setting the Stage**
Jeff Reading, Moderator, University of Victoria & CIHR IAPH
- 10:45-11:05 **Historical overview of native communities present in Ontario and treaty arrangements**
William Wicken, (York University)
- 11:05-11:15 **Q&A**

Challenges and Strategies for tackling health, education and economic outcomes

- 11:15 –11:35 **Decolonizing Health and Education Research: Centering Indigenous Knowledges**
Sheila Cote-Meek (Laurentian University) & Sonia Isaac-Mann (National Aboriginal Health Organization)
- 11:35-11:55 **LE,NONET - Achieving Success after many hardships; A project to support the success of Aboriginal Students at the University of Victoria**
Roger John and Chris Lalonde (University of Victoria)
- 11:55-12:15 **Metis perspectives of retaining Aboriginal students in health education**
Michele Parent (Laurentian University)
- 12:15-12:35 **Toward A Pedagogy of the Land: Indigenous Knowledge Instructors to Public School Teachers**
Celia Haig Brown (York University) and Kaaren Dannenmann
- 12:35-13:00 **Q&A**

Lunch and Local Discussion

Government-Aboriginal Relations

1400-1420 **Alliances, the Urban Aboriginal Task force and Ethics**
Kevin Fitzmaurice (University of Sudbury) and Angela Recollet, Ontario Urban
Aboriginal Task Force

1420-1440 **Q&A**

Break

Aboriginal NGOs as agents of social, cultural and economic renewal

15:10-15:30 **Woodland Gardens (Caribou, Blueberries, Walleye and Wild Rice) and
Social, Cultural and Economic Renewal**
LeBlanc, J., Atlookan, N., Atlookan, S. & McLaren, B. (Lakehead University)

1530-1550 **Gardening and Well-Being in Ginoogaming and Aroland First Nations**
Stroink, M., Rasevych, P. & Nelson, C.H. (Lakehead University)

1550-1610 **Q&A**

1610-1630 **General Observations (group)**

1630-1645 **Summary and Next Steps (Moderator)**

Post-Research Day Evaluation

LOCATIONS

Toronto:

York University, Osgoode Professional Development Centre, 1 Dundas Street West, Ste 2602

Local Contact: Krista Jensen, 416-736-2100 x 88847, kejensen@yorku.ca

Thunder Bay:

Lakehead University: Room: ATAC 5035

Local Contact: Lisa Norton, 807-343-8283, lnorton@lakeheadu.ca

Sudbury:

Laurentian University: FA181, Fraser Auditorium

Local Contact: Gisele Roberts, 705-675-1151 x 3866, groberts@laurentian.ca

Victoria:

Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, Government of British Columbia, Room W109D, 4000 Seymour Place

Local Contact: Laura Milne, 250-472-4377, kts@uvic.ca

Teleconference number and web streaming URL will be announced. If you wish to join the Policy Forum remotely by teleconference or by web streaming please e mail kmunit@yorku.ca and request connectivity information.

Registration and RSVP:

There is no cost for attending this event.

Academic and Community Partners:

- Please confirm your attendance to your local university representative, above.

OPS employees:

- Please register through the Policy Innovation and Leadership [calendar of events](#)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Ms. Nora Atlookan, BA, Bed

Ms. Nora Atlookan has been a community leader for several years in Aroland First Nation, having served on Band Council and as resource coordinator. She has contributed to research several times, most notably in helping to facilitate the anthropological study of the community by Dr. Paul Driben, published as “Aroland is our Home.” Indeed, the title of the publication was her contribution, reflecting Ms. Atlookan’s strong passion in maintaining the community of Aroland people in its current location. Ms. Atlookan has been a teacher at the secondary and primary levels, mostly in Aroland, serving over four decades, and finishing her career by creating the innovative concept for the new Johnnie Therriault Elementary School.

Sheila Cote-Meek

Sheila Cote-Meek (Teme-Augama Anishinabe) is the founding Director of Academic Native Affairs at Laurentian University. Her responsibilities include promoting and assisting with the development of Native academic programming across various disciplines, as well as the development of a Indigenous Education Centre which will be dedicated to Indigenous learning, culture and scholarly pursuit. She also holds an appointment as Associate Professor in the Native Bachelor of Social Work programme where she taught courses in Aboriginal research methodologies and community organizing. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

Kaaren Dannenmann

Kaaren is an Anishinaapekwe from Namekosipiink in northern Ontario (Trout Lake). She is a trapper, managing a family trap line, and head trapper instructor for Treaty #3. Kaaren administers Linda Lundstrom’s KIISHIK fund (in Red Lake) which carries out local initiatives that develop awareness of Aboriginal issues as well as supporting local efforts to revitalize traditional ways of being on the Land. Those efforts include programs that aim to keep Anishinaape culture and knowledge alive: language classes, trips to the trap line, setting fish nets, traditional games, canoeing, snowshoeing, ceremonies, seasonal feasts and other special events and gatherings.

Kaaren is a strong anti-racism worker and has developed partnerships with non-Aboriginal people and organizations to conduct de-colonizing/undoing racism workshops and trainings. She is committed to peace and justice and is part of several international efforts that support indigenous peoples’ struggle for rights to land, language, culture and economies.

She is the mother of three and a grandmother of five precious little ones.

Kevin Fitzmaurice

Kevin Fitzmaurice was a Research Associate as part of the Task Force Study and is now a professor within the Native Studies Department at the University of Sudbury. He is presenting with Angela Recollet of the Ontario Urban Aboriginal Task Force. Angela will be representing the Sudbury Community Resource Committee, Sudbury being one of the five sites of the Task Force.

Celia Haig-Brown

Celia Haig-Brown is a professor in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto. She teaches courses in research methodologies and Community and Adult Education. Her most recent publication *With Good Intentions: EuroCanadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada* (2006) was co-edited with David Nock of Lakehead University. She is the author of *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School*, co-author of *Making the Spirit Dance Within: Joe Duquette High School and an Aboriginal Community*. Her research focuses on Aboriginal education and her current SSHRC funded project, Education as Regeneration: Processes of Decolonization, focuses on the place of Indigenous knowledges in educational institutions. She is also part of an international team evaluating Te Kotahitanga, an Aotearoa/New Zealand based project focused on Maori student achievement.

Sonia Isaac-Mann

Sonia is originally from Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation in Quebec. She holds a Master of Science degree in Medical Sciences – Public Health Sciences with a focus on Population Health, within the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Alberta. She also holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Bishop's University.

She has a strong understanding of Health Systems, Policy and Management, Fundamentals of Public Health, Data Analysis (SPSS) in Public Health, Population Health Research Methods – Qualitative and Participatory Approaches (QSR- N6), Determinants of Health, Multicultural Perspectives, Epidemiology, Research Methods in Human Ecology, Community Health, and Health Promotion – Aboriginal and Immigrant Issues.

She currently works as the Director of the First Nations Centre. She has a high level of understanding and expertise related to First Nations health research, health information, epidemiology, First Nations interpretation, and First Nations Cultural Frameworks. She has worked extensively on Tobacco Cessation, Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, HIV/AIDS, Addictions, and many other health issues that First Nations peoples are facing.

Dr. Brian McLaren

Dr. Brian McLaren is an Assistant Professor in the faculty of Forestry and the Forest Environment. His research involves applied projects in wildlife, forestry and conservation. He was part of the Major Collaborative Research Initiative (SSHRC MCRI) “Coasts under Stress,” an interdisciplinary study of fisheries collapse and ecosystem restructuring in Canada’s east and west coasts. Dr. McLaren currently continues the studies of wildlife stewardship he started in this MCRI research, applying them to northern Ontario communities. His field work conducted during NSERC Discovery research, which considers effects of predators on culturally significant herbivores, has had him initiate interviews with First Nations trappers in Aroland First Nation. Dr. McLaren has expertise in traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous foods in the forest garden, and some of the perceived environmental barriers to accessing forest-based foods. This expertise allows him to link the learning that takes place in the cultivated and forest gardens to a richer understanding of traditional ecological knowledge, relating it to sustainable forest and wildlife management.

Dr. Connie Nelson

Dr. Connie Nelson is a Professor in the School of Social Work at Lakehead University, a core member of the Masters of Public Health program, and Co-Director of the Food Security Research Network. She currently holds an external Strategic SSHRC grant to examine the association of social capital and food security in households in northern Canada. Both national survey data (CCHS and Aboriginal Survey) and various community-based qualitative approaches (e.g., observation, interviews, map building, focus groups) are utilized in this research. Dr. Nelson is well respected among aboriginal communities in Northwestern Ontario for her collaborative approach to community-based research. In the mid-eighties, she and colleague Dennis McPherson developed a concept, *Contextual Fluidity* for describing how formal indigenous workers negotiated the boundaries between formal and informal organizations and the two cultures of ‘decision-making’. *Contextual Fluidity* is based on complexity theory which embraces that life is unpredictable, emergent, evolving and adaptable (in contrast to machine like); recognizes that adaptation to change begins with being contextual and simultaneously fluid in one’s response to specific contexts; embraces density of networks that overlap in contrast to linear, predefined processes; builds on strengths, respects each person’s contributions, and builds open and trusting relationships. Contextual Fluidity will assist in the integration of TEK into western-based science perspectives by assisting in explaining that we can only act in time and space from who we are. Every point becomes a centre. All connections can both shift the patterns around us as we ourselves shift. These times of great complexity offer tremendous opportunity for transformation.

Michèle Parent

Michèle attended the Collège de l’Outaouais, Hull, Québec where she completed her diploma in nursing (88). She attended the University of Lethbridge, AB to complete a Bachelor in Nursing (95), with a major in health education. Michèle completed a Master's

in Science (99) at the University of Toronto (Nursing) on the effectiveness of tuberculosis programs. While living in Toronto, Michèle worked at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and joined the Canadian College of Health Service Executives. Michèle is currently enrolled in a PhD program in Minnesota and her research focus is on teaching and learning with Aboriginal nursing students. Michèle is employed by Laurentian University and she works as professor and public health consultant. Her research interests are program planning and evaluation, and population health. She is Métis and a member of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada.

Peter Rasevych, MA, HBA, BA

Peter Rasevych is a Ginoogaming First Nation band member who is currently employed at both the First Nation in employment and training initiatives, and at Lakehead University as an instructor in the Department of Indigenous Learning and School of Social Work. He has been employed through the tribal council (Matawa First Nations Management) at Ginoogaming First Nation for the past four years. Coordinating employment and training projects for First Nation members and networking to include the other area First Nations (Aroland and Long Lake #58) have been among his accomplishments. He enjoys links with: the Longlac NorWest Community Health Centre, Dilico Ojibway Child and Family Services, Matawa Employment and Training, Lakehead University Food Security Research Team, and the Ginoogaming/Long Lake #58/Aroland First Nations' Community Health, Family Support, Economic Development, Management, and Employment and Training staffs, as well as the chiefs and councils of all three bands, and both school boards.

Jeff Reading

Dr. Jeff Reading earned his PhD in Public Health Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto. He is the inaugural Scientific Director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health, based at the University of Victoria. Dr. Reading is a full professor in the Faculty of Human and Social Development and a faculty associate with the Indigenous Governance Program. He was elected as a Fellow into the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. As a Fellow, Dr. Reading has achieved recognition of his leadership, creativity, distinctive competencies and commitment to advancing health sciences.

For more than two decades, Dr. Reading has dedicated his energy to enhancing knowledge and focus on the importance of Aboriginal health issues in Canadian society. As an epidemiologist, his research has brought attention to such critical issues as disease prevention, tobacco use and misuse, healthy living, accessibility to health care, and diabetes among Aboriginal people in Canada.

As an Aboriginal person, Dr. Reading personifies innovative and visionary thinking that encourages the meaningful involvement of community people working alongside multi-disciplinary teams of health researchers, each contributing their own perspectives and expertise. The long-term outcome of research activities aim to improve the health of

Aboriginal Peoples' living in Canada and work collaboratively to improve indigenous peoples' health globally.

Distinguished as a leading national and international expert in indigenous health research, his dedication to the pursuit of excellence in research is broadly recognized in academic and government circles and by Aboriginal leadership in Canada.

Angela Recollet

Angela Recollet represents the Sudbury Community Resource Committee holds the position of Native Education Manager with Laurentian University's Native Student Affairs.

Dr. Mirella Stroink

Dr. Mirella Stroink is an Assistant Professor of Social and Community Psychology and a core member of the Master of Public Health program at Lakehead University. Her research has been in the areas of culturally derived and ecologically situated values and understandings of the self, and the development of adaptive bicultural identification in second-generation immigrants and Aboriginal Canadian youth. Current research explores how the process of resolving value conflicts can increase bicultural identification and well-being by shifting aspects of implicit identity structure. A SSHRC internal research grant supported a series of studies indicating that Aboriginal Canadians who identify more strongly with Aboriginal culture have a unique and fundamentally inter-connected understanding of the self, and that this has implications for health and well-being. A grant from the Master of Public Health program also supported a pilot project on the health effects of forest and cultivated gardening in three First Nations communities that used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

William Wicken

William Wicken is Associate Professor of History at York University. His major publications include *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshall Junior* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002). He has testified as an expert witness regarding aboriginal and treaties rights in Atlantic Canada in fourteen cases, including *R. v. Donald Marshall Junior*, *R. v. Josh Bernard*, and *R. v. Stephen Frederick Mashall*, all of which were heard before the Supreme Court of Canada. He has also worked as a consultant and researcher for various aboriginal organizations and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec as well as for the National Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.