

A Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography

This literature review and annotated bibliography is part of a comprehensive research project investigating the depth and type of involvement between First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies and the Voluntary Sector. The literature review begins with an introduction which provides an overview; a longer annotated bibliography follows citing the references most relevant to the research topic. Additional references are also cited, these are not as important and telling as those in the annotated references section but do hold some importance in realizing a complete picture of life as an Aboriginal person in Canada.

Introduction

The Voluntary Sector Initiative project undertaken by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada researches the relationship between the voluntary sector and First Nations child and family service agencies (FNCFSA) serving on reserve residents in Canada. First Nations peoples residing on and off reserves continue to face significant social exclusion which manifests as an overrepresentation for a myriad of socio-economic risks. For example, Aboriginal children and youth experience high rates of suicides, infant mortality, abuse, unemployment, drop out rates, teen pregnancy, homelessness, poverty, and admission to foster care. Social exclusion also sets in play a situation where Canada's Aboriginal peoples face significant barriers to culturally sensitive service access which are essential to the restitution of well-being to recover from the expropriation, oppression, and racism that continue to impact the lived experience of Aboriginal children and youth.

On reserve services, in all shapes and forms, are mainly depended on the federal government for funds. Funding formulas and agreements between communities and the federal government are one sided affairs. The government dictates the terms of the agreement, what is minimum coverage, and how to access funds. There is no consultation or partnership with communities in creating a funding agreement or formula to best meet the needs of individual communities. The conditions are set up by the government with a take it or leave it approach. Some provincial money does trickle into reserve coffers but such funds are sought out by the specific First Nations and are not entitlements. First Nations can look to outside foundations or programs and attempt to access funds through proposals. Where outside funds cut off, the community itself steps in. Civic engagement through volunteering and fundraising in-community is a large part of many Aboriginal lives. Fifty-fifty draws in order to buy someone a wheelchair are not rare occurrences. But when the community is already experiencing large amounts of poverty, it is overtaxing to expect them to fill in where the voluntary sector does in mainstream society.

With limited government funds, foundation funds, and community fundraising, a pool of resources is realized. This pool must fund projects, programs and staff for such services as police and justice services; lands, resources and environment programs; community development projects, economic development; employment and education including upgrade training, post-secondary education, and band schools; and social services including housing and child welfare. The funds from the government, the main source of

resources, provides a minimum amount, and unrealistic minimum, leaving many families without adequate support.

If any community is in need of access to the services and resources of the voluntary sector it is the Aboriginal community. It simply is not sound to expect a community that has experienced such profound colonial impacts to provide for themselves solely on the basis of government programs while the rest of Canada benefits from the additional services of the voluntary sector and a much more developed corporate sector.

First Nations child and family service agencies are in unique positions. They are frequently relied upon as the only service provider on reserve. They are also under staffed, under funded, and over worked. The voluntary sector is in a position to help alleviate some of the burden. They are also directed by a mandate to help care for fellow Canadians. This mandate does not stop at the on reserve border and thus building collaborative relationships is a mutual responsibility of the voluntary sector and First Nations.

FNCFSAs are funded by the federal government and receive their authority from their respective provincial child welfare statutes. This places them in a precarious position, where one government holds the jurisdiction, and the other funding, with no obvious connection between the two. FNCFSAs face high service demands, limited funds and resources, and a restriction to provincial/territorial child welfare legislation which is foreign and often incompatible with First Nations traditional and customary forms of child care. They are often called upon to meet a myriad of community needs as they are often the first culturally based agency on reserve resulting in additional stresses to the already limited financial and human resources.

First Nations communities are diverse in terms of geographic location, cultural grouping and socio-economic conditions and thus they have different services and agencies. Services vary depending on a First Nations' population size, economic well-being, infrastructure, and degree of self-government/self-determination. Some are better off, others are in desperate need. Some communities have child care, health units, economic development offices, educational facilities, sports programs, arts programs, senior facilities, and support for persons with disabilities resident on reserve. Others do not. Services are provided when economic capacity develops and the provincial and federal governments support it. As these conditions are subject to fluctuating economic and political forces there is no standardization of services. This can result in situations where children and youth located on reserve receive an inferior range of services as compared to off reserve residents. The impact of colonization and assimilation is still felt today. Many socio-economic stresses are felt daily by First Nations in general, and by First Nations children, youth, and families in particular.

For First Nations communities, their experiences have been those of conflict and conformity, death and destruction of a way of life and of family. The disruption of how to function as a family is an insidious one. Disease, residential schools, adoption (60s Scoop), and discriminatory child welfare policies and practices have all left their mark on First Nations families. First Nations communities need to find a new balance based on their cultural ways of knowing and being in order to sustain themselves.

The voluntary sector needs to acknowledge the history which has placed First Nations children, youth, and families in their present positions devoid of needed support.

Continued marginalization and inequality through the exclusion of on reserve residents as potential clients is unjust. This is not a matter of overlooking a group – it is a matter that fundamentally challenges all sectors of Canadian society to be socially inclusive and responsive to the Canadian values of equality, freedom, and justice. A founding society of Canada has been excluded, actively or passively, from these services if they are not receiving them. The question is why. Why are they excluded? What reasons does the voluntary sector have for this exclusion?

It really comes down to a question of quality of life. Why should crossing into an on reserve community in Canada mean crossing into conditions on parallel with partially developed countries? Why are First Nations people on reserve denied access to services and support the rest of Canada takes for granted? If the mandate of voluntary sector organizations is to help those at-risk and in need, why is a population in need being ignored? Should not the burden be on the voluntary sector to make themselves visible and available to residents?

Reconciliation and a process which supports First Nations communities in seeing to and taking care of their own peoples is the future. The role of voluntary sector organizations in this future is one of support. Their knowledge, experiences, services, and resources must benefit all Canadians. Partnerships and collaborations are key. If First Nations agencies are not able to meet all the needs of on reserve residents, it is not unreasonable to look to the voluntary sector for help.

We seek to help foster an inviting environment through professional development programs which enhance knowledge of First Nations and FNCFS, where benefits of collaboration are identified, and where solutions to collaboration barriers are presented. This research project is primarily interested in what the on reserve community is receiving in way of support from the voluntary sector. What services, programs, projects are being undertaken on reserve by non-Aboriginal voluntary sector organizations? Are there projects designed and delivered in partnership with First Nations communities and/or FNCFS? What format are such programs taking? What problems exist? If no program is underway, why is there no presence? What types of partnerships could exist?

A literature review and the construction of an annotated bibliography is the first step in the research process. Once the literature review is complete, the next phase of the project is the survey construction and distribution.

The survey phase will actually consist of three separate surveys, each one constructed to gather information from the voluntary sector, First Nations child and family agencies, and the government in order to uncover all perspectives regarding collaboration, programs, and funding.

As we wait for the surveys to be returned, we will interview key informants in the voluntary sector, from First Nations agencies, and from the government. The interviews will provide us with first hand experiences, accounts, and stories regarding past, present, and future collaborative relationships between First Nations child and family service agencies and the voluntary sector.

We will explore reasons why such initiatives have not been taken or looked into, and explanations of why the voluntary sector may be hesitant to cross into on reserve

communities. We are hoping to gather the type of information which would help us create workshops and curriculum to overcome this hesitancy.

Every researcher expects, or at least hopes for, a certain amount of support in terms of literature already in existence. Researchers go into their projects with a few articles and journals, a few books and chapters, under their arms to help lead them in the right direction, to help support their argument, to help them develop a theory. As with all research projects, this project began with a literature review. The review was conducted to help us refine our research objective, to provide a foundation from which our research would stem, and to get us up to speed on what has been done in the past and what is planned for the future. Sadly, and shockingly, we found very little. No support. No foundation. No theory. Nothing.

The sparseness of relevant material has made it difficult to compile a reading list. Over a month was spent searching for literature to help build this list. In terms of hours spent searching and reading in the library and online, close to 170 hours was spent exhausting all avenues. Libraries, archives, and periodicals were all examined. Online sources sought out include publications from foundations, organizations, and agencies from the voluntary sector and those organizations in contact with First Nations communities and agencies.

When researching Aboriginal issues, a lack of information and literature is not surprising, but if the researcher is willing to widen his or her search a little in the hopes of fleshing out the reference list, a good sampling is possible. Not so for this project.

After examining the references concerning on reserve programs and initiatives through voluntary organizations, we expanded the investigation to include off reserve communities. Although the urban Aboriginal experience is not the same as on reserve life and living, enough similarities exist for useful information to be sought and made use of. We had a lot of difficulty in turning up relevant information.

We then decided any partnerships between non-Aboriginal organizations and First Nations communities would be of interest as examples and models of what types of collaborations are possible and what works best. It stands to reason that similar difficulties and access issues would develop between the two and could shed some light on the potential for partnerships between on reserve and voluntary sectors. Economic development and environmental initiatives proved to be the most fruitful. The problem here was that a lot of the literature was in the form of instructions and handbooks often from an economic development perspective. While some of this is of interest, most is not weighty enough to include in an annotated bibliography. Online searching has turned up next to nothing. We have searched and contacted many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations and come up empty handed. Informants identified a program here or project there involving First Nations, Inuit or Métis and the voluntary sector, but next to nothing is written about them.

We turned our attention towards other indigenous peoples in other countries to see if they could offer us any new information. Australia and New Zealand, as well as India, offered a few morsels. We have also expanded the voluntary sector references to include non-Aboriginal communities, specifically minority groups. The voluntary sector of England is very well developed. A few published reports of relevance did exist but nothing dealing specifically with the nature and extent of collaboration between

indigenous peoples and the voluntary sector. The most difficult problem we experienced in the search was finding ways to make connections between the sparse material out in circulation and our research project.

Some of the richest information was on the lived experience of Aboriginal peoples resident on reserve. Although this information is not specific to collaboration, it does provide context for the collaborative relationship. For examples, statistics and numbers reflecting the lives of on and off reserve Aboriginal life can be found in Beavon & Cooke (2002), Canada (2003, 2000, 1995a, 1995b), Elias & Demas (2001), Hagey, Larocque, & McBride (1989), Lemchuk-Favel (1996), Stevens (2003), and Norris, Kerr, & Nault (1996). Here, living conditions, mortality rates, economic conditions, and population statistics and projections are reported. These are the types of documents that are helpful in providing the reader with concrete numbers to help him or her understand the circumstances of Aboriginal life and standards. These are the documents used to support claims of need and risk. Chandler (2002) provides an example of what these numbers can mean once unpacked and followed through communities. He speculates on rates of suicide and why differences between communities exist.

Urban Aboriginal experiences are reported on by Hanselmann (2003). Community development and action is covered by Absolon & Herbert (1997). Cornell & Kalt (1992a, 1992b, 1989) provide an extensive series on economic development and American Indian reservations. The U.S. experience is not completely removed from the Canadian and proves useful. Elias (1995) and Stevenson & Hickey (1995) also examine economic development issues. Reimer & Young (1994) add the rural component into the mix. The end result is a picture of varied programs and approaches which provide insight into what the voluntary sector can achieve if other examples and models are to be trusted.

Bensen (2001) has compiled a collection of stories and poems from Aboriginals across North America speaking about and to their experiences and issues after being adopted. This first hand account of lives affected by the weaknesses of past and present child welfare systems is powerful. Such a personal collection of works is nicely complemented by a more research orientated document such as Durst's (2000) review of nine research projects funded by the government meant to explore social services issues and themes in Aboriginal communities. Allowing for personal and academic perspectives of the same subject brings into focus recurring themes and issues. Such issues can be addressed through the recommendations provided in McDonald, Ladd, et al.'s (2000) Joint National Policy Review and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Canada, 1996) solutions and possible scenarios meant to address and redress current and historical systematic and institutional inequalities in services, care, funding and orientation.

The voluntary sector is explored in various works through various perspectives. Cameron, et al. (2002) offer up a look at the language of partnerships. Kanter (1993) is a theorist on collaboration and offers the reader a quick overview of partnerships and how they work best. Wooley (2001) summarizes the strengths and limits of the voluntary sector. The United Kingdom offers Kendall & Knapp (1996), Reading (1994), and Smith, Rochester, & Hedley (1995). Their voluntary sector is very well developed and their efforts in Black communities provide a contrast to Aboriginal communities in Canada. Interactions between the roles of the government and the voluntary sector are explored by Rekart (1993). Similarly, the potential for partnerships between the voluntary sector and other sectors is examined by Callard, Deboisbriand, Jabaopurwala, Roy, Sylvester,

Wagel, & Woodall (2001). Husbands, McKechnie, & Leslie (2001) provide the results from a scan of research on public attitudes towards the voluntary sector. Hall, McKeown, & Roberts (2001) provide statistics from the National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating. This quick look at civic engagement in Canada allows the reader to fill out their knowledge on the state of the voluntary sector.

The concept of social inclusion is explored by Bach (2002) and Wotherspoon (2002). Bach attempts to bring social inclusion into politics and as part of the public agenda by building it into society and its institutions. Wotherspoon examines social inclusion and its relationship and place in Aboriginal education. Fontaine (1998) provides the reader with a primer on modern racism in Canada, specifically the forms of racism and ways of functioning in relation to Aboriginal peoples. Lemont (1992) takes a look at American Indian constitutional and governmental reform. Social inclusion and racism are concepts one must understand in order to comprehend the lack of services and access problems faced by Aboriginal peoples in Canada. What is going on in the minds of voluntary sector leaders? What are they thinking when someone mentions on reserve clients?

Bird (1996) and Bird & Gandz (1991) discuss ethics. The ways in which people develop their own moral reasoning and judgment is explored. As are the means of implementing moral decisions in a business or corporate environment. Concepts such as moral blindness and deafness are also explored. The mechanisms of "good conversations", moral conversations, are outlined. The means of fostering social contexts and environments encouraging moral discussions, conversations, and interactions are explored. When attempting to puzzle out why the voluntary sector seems to be blind to the needs of on reserve peoples, such works are of importance. They help the reader to understand how reasoning works in relation to moral decisions.

These are the works of note uncovered through our literature review. The list is not all that lengthy but does provide an accurate picture of what can be found in a search of voluntary sector documents and Aboriginal experiences. This list reflects over a month of searching through libraries, archives, online, and through conversations with contacts. Every possible tangent and area was explored. What follows is an annotated bibliography of those texts which our literature review was able to find and include. Following the annotated bibliography is a listing of references we believed help round out the picture of on reserve life and experience. These additional references are not directly related to our research problem and question but do aid in painting a picture of the history and culture of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

Of the articles, books, chapters, and reports listed in the annotated bibliography and additional references, only one reflects this project and all its aims. Cindy Blackstock's unpublished paper entitled *Same country: Same lands; 78 countries away* (2003) researches the same topic but is limited to British Columbia while this project tackles all of Canada. Blackstock also had difficulty finding resources. She too found a limited amount of coverage, programs, and reports involving on reserve communities and the voluntary sector. It is this paper which sparked the current research program. It seemed infeasible for the whole of Canada to be ignoring an entire population at-risk. Blackstock sought to confirm her findings by expanding the research to include all provinces and territories. Her surveys formed the foundation for the construction of our own. A few questions were modified to reflect a national perspective rather than provincial. A few questions regarding funding were added. The survey constructed for government personnel is the only totally original survey. Blackstock's surveys and responses offered

us a look at what questions worked and which did not. Because of this, a testing of the surveys is not needed. Her research is our test.

This similarity of limited findings between the current literature review and Blackstock's research is not comforting. The lack of material is telling in and of itself. It also reinforces the claim that such research is necessary. Although it is encouraging to know we have probably not missed any works of importance, it is troubling to learn that reserves are not being considered by the voluntary sector as potential sites for outreach and program development. On reserve communities have become the hot potato the federal and provincial governments have been tossing about for decades. While funding is being cut to support services throughout Canada, the voluntary sector frequently steps up to fill the void. Not so for reserves. Reserves seem to have become a no-mans land where there is little infrastructure to support community in the face of government spending adjustments or reallocations.