

At the Forks: Where Indigenous and Human Rights Intersect

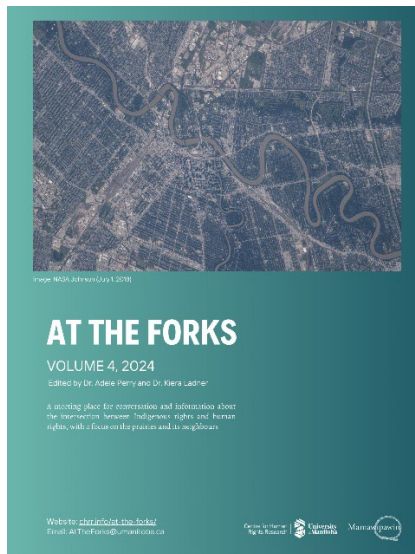
Volume 4

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Introduction to Volume 4

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This is a rolling issue of *At the Forks*, the fourth volume of a project that began in 2021. This was a time of social distancing, changing patterns, and public health regulations adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal was to develop a platform for accessible, engaging research that speaks to the pressing questions for people who live where the Centre for Human Rights Research (CHRR) works, and territories and communities connected to them. These include Indigenous people, lands, and waters amid a colonial project that has not ended. These also includes questions of justice for migrant people, whether of the early twentieth century or today. Our questions also include the histories and rights of people as gendered subjects at a moment

when reproductive rights and the rights of people to make decisions about their gender presentation and care are under threat.

These questions and concerns have been threaded through the first three volumes of *At the Forks*. They are also here in his most current issue. Karlee Sapoznik Evans and Anne Lindsay provide a germinal analysis of forced and arranged marriages at residential schools. This research has already received [media attention](#), and for good reason. The findings here dovetail with those of the [October 2024 report of the Special Interlocutor on Missing Children and Unmarked Graves](#). The research of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada changed the landscape of how we understand Canada's past and present. But there is still much more to learn about residential schools and what we might think of as their many afterlives.¹

This analysis appears alongside Laura Majendaagoz's reflection on questions of water governance and Indigenous sovereignty. This piece is in part a response to

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the work of Jeffrey Ansloos, who asks us to connect settler colonialism, global extractivist capitalism, and the conditions that make Indigenous life unlivable. The response to this, Majandaagoz argues, is to “enhance First Nations’ self-determination over our lands, waters, and lives” (p. 3). These are points that we need to keep in mind as [Canada tries to walk back its commitment to provide drinkable water on reserves](#), and campaigning settler politicians [promise to “unlock” and fast-track mineral development](#) in Annishinaabeg lands.

This issue of *At the Forks* also includes an annotated bibliography drawing together published works on gender, reproduction, and care in Canada. This bibliography was produced by the students in Adele Perry’s honours and graduate seminar that met in the winter term of 2024 at the University of Manitoba. Taken as a whole, it reminds us of the need to frame discussions of gender, reproduction, and care broadly. The bibliography speaks to the interdisciplinary and transnational character of relevant research. It also suggests how we might consider questions of care, gender, and reproduction alongside one another, as components of a robust definition of reproductive and bodily rights. These are points that can help us can help us to bear witness to grave threats to reproductive and bodily justice that are occurring [south of the border in 2025](#).

Notes

[1] This borrows African American historian and theorist Saidiya Hartman’s framing of the afterlives of slavery. See Saidiya Hartman, *Lose your Mother: A journey along the Atlantic slave route* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

About the Author



[Dr. Adele Perry](#) is director of the Centre for Human Rights Research and distinguished professor of history and women’s and gender studies. She is a historian of colonialism, gender, race and western Canada in the 19th and 20th centuries. From 2003 to 2014, Perry held a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair and she is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and past president of the Canadian Historical Association.