

Indigenous Communities and Social Enterprise in Canada

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to understand Indigenous social enterprise in a “current state snapshot” and in a complex historical context. Specifically, the authors begin by placing into theoretical context social enterprises serving Indigenous communities. The framework for Indigenous social enterprise is related to theories of Indigenous entrepreneurship and “quadruple bottom line” organizations. The authors explain the role of culture as an under-researched element and as a critical component of Indigenous social enterprise. The article also highlights gender leadership of social enterprise in Indigenous communities. Finally, the article provides three case studies that exemplify Indigenous social enterprise in Canada.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, les auteurs cherchent à comprendre les entreprises sociales autochtones dans leur état actuel ainsi que dans la complexité de leur contexte historique. Plus précisément, les auteurs commencent leur article en situant dans un contexte théorique particulier les entreprises sociales desservant les communautés autochtones. Le cadre utilisé pour décrire ces entreprises a des liens avec des théories sur l'entrepreneuriat autochtone et sur les organisations à quadruple résultat. Ensuite, les auteurs représentent la culture comme étant à la fois un élément insuffisamment étudié et une composante critique de l'entreprise sociale dans un milieu autochtone. D'autre part, ils rendent compte de la prédominance des leaders féminins dans ces entreprises. Finalement, ils présentent trois études de cas illustrant l'entreprise sociale autochtone au Canada.

KEYWORDS / MOTS CLÉS : Indigenous; Aboriginal; First Nations; Entrepreneurship; Culture; Social enterprise; Canada / Autochtone; Aborigène; Premières Nations; Entrepreneuriat; Culture; Entreprise sociale; Canada

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous communities in Canada include First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities. Social enterprise in Indigenous¹ communities in Canada is shaped by population and geographic distribution, history of colonization, and local and global economic factors. The Indigenous population of Canada consists of 4.3 percent of the total population and, according to the most recent national census, is the fastest growing population group in Canada (Turner, Crompton, & Langlois, 2011). There are more than 600 Indigenous communities spread geographically across the country, each with unique relationships to three components: the land; municipal, provincial, and federal governments; and non-Indigenous communities. Some communities exist across provincial and international boundaries, having relationships with multiple state and national governments. Many Indigenous communities dispute jurisdiction over traditional land by all three levels of government and, therefore, can often have an oppositional relationship with those governments. The diversity of Indigenous communities has led to the formation of a wide range of social enterprise interactions; this has substantially influenced the development of social enterprise and the broader social economy across Canada.

The Indigenous social economy in Canada plays a significant role in local economies. It includes multi-tiered cooperatives such as Arctic Cooperatives Limited (ACL) (Quarter, Mook, & Armstrong, 2009); community-owned organizations such as the Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation (Anderson, Dana, & Dana, 2006); the corporate division of the Membertou Band (Johnstone, 2008); and numerous forms of Indigenous-based social-purpose businesses (Quarter, Mook, & Armstrong, 2009). The leadership of social enterprise intersecting with Indigenous communities can take different forms. A number of social enterprises, which were started by non-Indigenous individuals, are now led by Indigenous individuals, such as ACL. Indigenous community members have also started and continue to manage a broad range of social enterprises throughout Canada. At the same time, there is a significant proportion of social enterprise in Canada that serves Indigenous populations but that is not led or managed by Indigenous individuals.

Although there is a substantial volume of research on Indigenous populations, the relationship between Indigenous communities and social enterprise within the broader social economy is an under-researched area (Wuttunee, 2009). The purpose of this article is to contribute to this nascent body of research.

Indigenous population and geographic distribution

The geographical distribution of Indigenous communities in Canada is relevant to the understanding of Indigenous social enterprise. Although the province of Ontario has the highest Indigenous population in absolute numbers, the Indigenous population forms only 2 percent of Ontario's total population. Indigenous populations form a higher percentage of the territories of Nunavut (86%), Northwest Territories (52%), and the Yukon (23%), as listed in Table 1 (Turner, Crompton, & Langlois Canada, 2011).

The variety of Indigenous people's experiences with colonization has deeply affected the subsequent development of Indigenous social enterprise throughout Canada. This development has been different for each province and territory. In southern First Nations communities, European farmer-based cooperatives were utilized as a tool of colonization by solidifying European settlement over traditional First Nations land, simultaneously excluding First Nations people from involvement in these cooperatives. As described by Fairbairn (2004), initial cooperative development in Canada and all of North America was not inclusive of, or intended for, the benefit of Indigenous communities. In contrast, cooperatives in northern Inuit communities were not established as bottom-up European settler-based organizations, but were top-down, government-

initiated structures utilized for creating dependent classes and effectively limiting the movement of traditionally nomadic communities (Mitchell, 1996). As a result, Canadian formal cooperative business structures were incorporated in the northern territories several years after cooperative structures were established in the southern provinces. In contrast, the current establishment of cooperatives in Canada’s northern territories within Inuit communities (per capita) is the highest among the country’s Indigenous communities (Belhadji, 2001). The growing population of Indigenous communities, as well as the increasing proportions of Indigenous populations in many provinces, is likely to have a profound effect on the number and diversity of social enterprises in Canada.

Table 1: Population and percentage of Indigenous people by province and territory in Canada, 2011

Province or territory	Population count (in thousands)	Percentage
Newfoundland and Labrador	36	7.1
Prince Edward Island	2	1.6
Nova Scotia	34	3.7
New Brunswick	23	3.1
Quebec	142	1.8
Ontario	301	2.4
Manitoba	196	16.7
Saskatchewan	158	15.6
Alberta	221	6.2
British Columbia	232	5.4
Yukon	8	23.1
Northwest Territories	21	51.9
Nunavut	27	86.3
Canada	1,401	4.3

Social enterprise surveys and Indigenous social enterprise

Recently, a number of broad provincially based social enterprise surveys have been utilized toward the development of the British Columbia and Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance project (BALTA). The project’s purpose is to highlight the importance of interactions between social enterprise and Indigenous communities in Canada. In surveys, Hall, Elson, and Wamucii (2013) indicate that 37 percent of Alberta’s and 33 percent of British Columbia’s social enterprises served Indigenous clients (2014a). Related reports indicate the following percentages of surveyed social enterprises that served Indigenous communities in other provinces: 29 percent in Manitoba (O’Connor, Elson, Hall, & Reimer, 2012); 28 percent in New Brunswick (Hall, Elson, & Wamucii, 2014b); 16 percent in Nova Scotia (Tarr & Karaphylis, 2010); and 22 percent in Ontario (Flat, Daly, Elson, Hall, Thompson, & Chamberlain, 2013). Table 2 summarizes the findings of each provincial survey in comparison to the previously reported Indigenous population (Turner, Crompton, & Langlois, 2011), indicating a pattern of engagement between Indigenous communities and social enterprise in Canada that is proportionally much greater than the Indigenous population.

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Table 2: Indigenous population and social enterprise serving Indigenous communities, select provinces in Canada

Province or Territory	Indigenous population, 2011 (in thousands)	Indigenous population, 2011 (percentage)	Social enterprise serving Indigenous communities* (percentage)	Year of social enterprise survey
Nova Scotia	34	3.7	16	2010
New Brunswick	23	3.1	28	2014
Ontario	301	2.4	22	2013
Manitoba	196	16.7	29	2012
Alberta	221	6.2	37	2013
British Columbia	232	5.4	33	2014

* Note that given the exclusion of band-owned organizations from the provincial social enterprise surveys, the reported numbers for social enterprise are likely to under-represent the percentage of social enterprises serving Indigenous populations.

One explanation for this strong relationship between social enterprise and Indigenous communities is that social enterprises serve marginalized populations, and Indigenous populations do face multiple forms of marginalization in Canada. Ornstein (2006) analyzed the “vertical mosaic” or socio-economic profile of various ethno-racial groups in Toronto, Canada’s largest city. Toronto is also the city with the largest Indigenous population, and Ornstein found that the Indigenous community experienced the greatest level of socio-economic marginalization. This finding is confirmed by more recent and detailed research provided by the Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council, 2011). For example, the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (2011) reported that Indigenous individuals constitute 29 percent of the homeless population in Toronto, but only 2.5 percent of the general population in the city. Further, Fleury (2002) found that Indigenous people living off-reserve are one of the groups at highest risk of social exclusion in Canada. More broadly, Indigenous communities across Canada face a number of socio-economic issues related to poverty, deeply rooted in colonialism, which ultimately results in a reduced average lifespan compared to non-Indigenous populations (Palmater, 2011). The Indigenous community is diverse, not only in terms of demographics, but also in terms of socio-economic conditions. The First Nations communities of Membertou in Nova Scotia (Johnstone, 2008) and Osoyoos in British Columbia (Anderson, Dana, & Dana, 2006), for instance, are relatively economically successful (in part due to their community-owned social enterprise strategies), whereas many other communities face persistent socio-economic issues.

Given this range of issues, a clear distinction needs to be made between the different types of social enterprises within Indigenous communities. There are five basic types of Indigenous social enterprise organizations, based on leadership and clientele:

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1. Social enterprise led by Indigenous individuals exclusively serving Indigenous clients.
2. Social enterprise led by Indigenous individuals serving Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients.
3. Social enterprise led by non-Indigenous individuals exclusively serving Indigenous clients.
4. Social enterprise led by non-Indigenous individuals serving Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients.
5. Social enterprise led by non-Indigenous individuals exclusively serving non-Indigenous clients (these are ethno-specific organizations, such as a Ukrainian credit union).

The fourth type of social enterprise is the most prevalent type interacting with Indigenous communities in Canada, as demonstrated by provincial social enterprise surveys. There are two significant issues with non-Indigenous origins of social enterprise affecting Indigenous communities. The first, rooted in colonial ideology and practice, is a “deficit”-based viewpoint, where Indigenous communities are perceived as requiring external “help.” The strengths of Indigenous communities are undervalued, and solutions from non-Indigenous origins are overvalued. Second, this view of social enterprise is based on a market failure or “heterogeneity” theory (Salamon, Sokolowski, & Anheier, 2000), which positions social enterprise as a response to market failures and fills gaps where a purely market-based system was ineffective. Given this, Salamon, Sokolowski, and Anheier (2000) suggest that a more appropriate model for understanding the development of social enterprise is a “social origins” theory of the civil sector (p. 15), which we find relevant, but ultimately inadequate, for re-conceptualizing appropriate forms of social enterprise in Indigenous communities.

A “social origins” theory of social enterprise assumes that development in social enterprise in broader Canadian society is mirrored by development in Indigenous communities. This theory does not adequately account for racial or ethnic differences. In the book *The Revolution Will Not be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* (Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, 2007), the authors make the case that the mainstream civil sector often acts against Indigenous interests and requirements for fluid organizational coalitions needed to move toward the goals of Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty. While having a significant presence in Indigenous communities, the development of social enterprise in these communities has not necessarily paralleled the trajectory of the growth of social enterprise or the broader social economy in non-Indigenous communities in Canada. In conjunction with what is increasingly viewed as population genocide and the historical suppression of Indigenous culture, different types of long-established Indigenous entrepreneurship, including socially oriented Indigenous enterprises, were historically suppressed, limiting the formation of traditional Indigenous organizations for a long period of Canadian history (Carter, 1990). Rather than a “social origins” theory, then, more appropriate models for describing Indigenous social enterprise include “Indigenous entrepreneurship” and “quadruple bottom line organizations,” which will be explained in detail in the conceptual analysis section.

Quantifying Indigenous social enterprise

Statistics indicate the significant differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities based on the following factors: race, education, child care, food security, health, housing, emergency services, employment, environmental pollution, access to financial services (Palmer, 2011), and other types of services that typically involve social enterprise. As such, statistics of the Indigenous community in Canada should be interpreted with caution; the collection of Indigenous population statistics has not generally benefited Indigenous communities. Indeed, as highlighted by Walter and Anderson (2013), all statistics have value systems embedded in the collection and use interpretation that is entrenched within them. With these caveats in mind, in this section we review the few attempts at quantifying Indigenous social enterprise in Canada.

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In terms of quantifying social enterprises in Indigenous communities, it is important to recognize the legal organizational structures followed by different Canadian governments and researchers. These have proven to be a source of weakness in accounting for the environment of Indigenous social enterprise. First, there is no nationally recognized status for social enterprise, making the measurement of social enterprise numbers particularly difficult. Social enterprise organizations can be incorporated as nonprofit or for-profit entities, and simultaneously can be incorporated as cooperatives. Second, the type of business that can be considered an Indigenous social enterprise is contested. Quarter, Mook, and Armstrong (2009), for instance, included cooperatives such as Arctic Cooperatives Limited (ACL) and Indigenous band-owned businesses, such as Makivik Corporation, in the definition of social economy organizations. Hammond-Ketilson and MacPherson (2001) completed a survey and research-based study of formally incorporated Indigenous cooperatives, which can be considered social economy businesses and social enterprises (Quarter et al., 2009). However, there are a large number of Indigenous organizations that exhibit characteristics of cooperatives but are not formally registered as cooperatives. For example, Indigenous drumming groups as described by Tulk (2007), singing groups, and artist collectives exhibit collective ownership and operation principles similar to cooperatives but are not typically incorporated.

The primary objective of Indigenous drumming, singing, and other cultural groups is the maintenance of culture, and revenues are typically earned as a secondary objective to cover costs. Many of these groups are not formally incorporated with federal or provincial governments and earn revenues in the grey market, thus making qualification of these groups more difficult. The broad BALTA project surveys of social enterprise in Canada reviewed in section 1.2 did not include Indigenous band-owned organizations, although these organizations also provide goods and services similar to other social enterprises across Canada (Quarter et al., 2009). Indeed, Anderson, Dana, and Dana (2006) argue that the majority of Indigenous economic activity should be considered to be social enterprise. Anderson et al. (2006) argue that Indigenous businesses employ Indigenous individuals who are marginalized, and therefore would fit the definition of social enterprises that employ marginalized groups. Anderson et al. (2006) further contend that the fact that many Indigenous businesses are owned by the band rather than an individual strengthens the case that these organizations are community owned and operate for the benefit of the community. Different subsectors of Indigenous economic activity have also been studied. For example, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business surveys Indigenous business, but does not include many types of nonprofit organizations (CCAB, 2011). Other than the study on Indigenous cooperatives by Hammond-Ketilson & MacPherson (2001), which is specific to cooperatives, there exists no *comprehensive* inventory of Indigenous social enterprise in Canada, due to the issues outlined in this section.

A further wrinkle in attempting to account for Indigenous social enterprise—especially using non-Indigenous concepts, models, and taxonomies—rests with the issue that social economy organizations started and developed by Indigenous communities are qualitatively different from other social economy organizations across Canada (Diamantopoulos & Findlay, 2007). Moreover, qualitative differences from non-Indigenous social enterprise can teach us much about broader possibilities for the model. An initial literature review of social enterprise in Indigenous communities reveals innovative combinations of social, environmental, and cultural goals, which can be instructive for social enterprise models used elsewhere. For example, the integration of culture into organizational and socio-economic goals has been described by Findlay and Wuttunee (2007), and the use of “quadruple bottom line” indicators (economic, social, environmental, and cultural) has been described by Orr, Weir, and the Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Integrated Research Program (2013), a topic addressed in this article. Cornthassel (2008) described Indigenous communities’ “sustainable self determination” as holistic integration of cultural and environmental values and that described how economic, social, cultural, and environmental values are not separable for Indigenous communities.

Social economy leadership in Indigenous communities is also markedly different in terms of leadership by gender, with a greater percentage of social economy organizations in Indigenous communities being led by women (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2013a) (see “Leadership of Indigenous social enterprise through the lens of gender” below for more details on this unique feature of Indigenous social enterprises). “Wicked problems,” by their very nature, cannot be resolved by a single individual or by one a singular solution that fits all contexts (Buchanan, 1992). Thus, the solutions to many wicked problems may be found in understanding the qualitatively different set of values used as a basis for Indigenous knowledge and applied to the development of Indigenous social economy organizations.

HISTORICAL, IDEOLOGICAL, AND COLONIAL CONTEXTS OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN CANADA

The history of Indigenous communities over the past few centuries is inseparable from their relationships to the land and to non-Indigenous settlers. The history of social enterprise in Canada is also inseparable from the history of Indigenous communities. Indigenous communities have always practised communal forms of organization, where the entire community shares resources and production requirements. As described in a comparative review of the Canadian nonprofit and voluntary sector: “The earliest voluntary activity in Canada occurred among the Aboriginal peoples who inhabited the land for thousands of years prior to European settlement” (Hall, Barr, Easwaramoorthy, Sokolowski, & Salamon, 2005, p. 21). This conclusion is supported within the context of cooperatives by Curl (2012): “The first North Americans to practice collectivity, cooperation, and communalism were, of course, Indigenous” (p. 15). Originating in nineteenth-century France, one of the earliest twentieth-century applications of the term “social economy” was by the Swedish anthropologist Kalervo Oberg in 1931. While researching Tlingit communities in Alaska, Oberg described an economy that integrated social values into daily production and consumption activities. The communitarian value system that sustained Indigenous communities for a long period of time can be seen reflected in Indigenous organizations, including social enterprise.

Social enterprise in Canada through the lens of race

The social economy in Canada is often described through a framework of issues arising from income inequality and class relations; social enterprise is positioned as one possible solution to these issues. The development of the social economy is rarely analyzed through a framework of race, ethnicity, and nationality. As the social economy (or civil sector) was developed in Canada in settler communities, there was a simultaneous suppression of Indigenous community populations, economies, organizations, and culture—through outright warfare, social dislocation to reserves, and residential schools. The development of cooperatives illustrates this intersection of class and race in the development of the social economy in Canada. In an extensively researched book, *Empire and Cooperation: How the British Empire Used Cooperatives in Its Development Strategies, 1900–1970*, Rhodes (2012) describes how cooperatives were a more socialist, labour-oriented form of organization and were instrumental in establishing trade across the British Empire. Just as cooperatives were integral to the British Empire and global colonization, they were important to Canada’s federal and provincial governments in local colonization of Indigenous communities.

As Fairbairn (2004) has also shown, cooperatives were an integral part of the process of colonization in North America. Cooperatives in North America were based on the experience of European immigrants and were an economic response to monopolies, established by the ruling class and political elites, which did not serve the

needs and aspirations of lower-class European immigrants. However, initial cooperative development in Canada and in most of North America was not inclusive of, or intended for, the benefit of Indigenous communities (Fairbairn 2004). The first organizations with cooperative characteristics were established in English Canada in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Macpherson, 1979). While Indigenous communities had been practising cooperative forms of organization for centuries before European contact, the first *incorporated* Indigenous cooperative in Canada was in the province of Saskatchewan in 1945, as part of post-war development by settler communities. This was one of several top-down government-driven initiatives. Another example is the Kinoosao cooperative organization of Saskatchewan (see Quiring, 2006, 2007 for details), which, from the beginning, was set up without any substantial consultation with the local Indigenous communities.

Mitchell (1996) describes the top-down government-led establishment of cooperatives across northern Canada as an instrument for settling semi-nomadic Indigenous populations and creating economic dependency. The development of social enterprise including cooperatives exhibited ethnicity-based dynamics within European settler society itself. For instance, there are important differences between organizations originating from English, Irish, Scottish, and French communities, and organizations formed by eastern and northern European immigrants. In most cases the same organizational forms such as cooperatives, which enabled establishment of collective worker or consumer power within settler societies, also consolidated settlement of traditional Indigenous land and restriction of Indigenous economic activity. An analysis of the history of social enterprise in Canada solely based on class dynamics, without an analysis of the simultaneous intersection of race dynamics, is therefore insufficient for explaining the development of Indigenous social enterprise.

Leadership of Indigenous social enterprise through the lens of gender

The effects of colonization and poverty have varied depending on gender and age. Women and youth face additional socio-economic disadvantages within the Indigenous community (Kuokkanen, 2011). Kuokkanen (2011) suggests that the social economy, and specifically the role of women in the social economy, is an integral part of revitalizing Indigenous communities. Therefore, a second intersectional framework for understanding Indigenous social enterprise involves understanding the critical importance of Indigenous women in the development of social enterprise in Indigenous communities in Canada. This importance can be effectively explained using the example of Friendship Centres.

There are 117 Friendship Centres across Canada, acting as social and cultural hubs for Indigenous communities. The majority of Friendship Centres are registered as charities and nonprofit organizations under federal and provincial legislation, having explicit social, cultural, and community mandates. Friendship Centres also provide income generation activities, including sales of products and services by the local Indigenous community. The final section of this article presents a case study of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, where goods and services are also provided by the Friendship Centre to the broader non-Indigenous community. Moreover, Friendship Centres are often the first formally incorporated Indigenous social enterprises in most Canadian cities, and have been the incubator for additional Indigenous social enterprises. A deeper understanding of Friendship Centres, therefore, is useful for understanding Indigenous social enterprise.²

Friendship Centres are different in origin and function from other ethnocultural centres developed by immigrant communities in Canada. Urban centres in Canada are typically located in places that were meeting points or sites of established Indigenous communities before colonial settlement. Although the non-Indigenous settler-designed urban environment may be different from the original Indigenous community setting, urban centres in Canada are the geographical and historical home for many Indigenous persons. For Indigenous individuals, migrating to a city is thus part of an established pattern of movement through traditional land. As described by

Howard-Bobiwash (2004), urban Indigenous migration in Canada was a form of resistance to oppression and surveillance, which was occurring on Indian reserves. Today, Friendship Centres provide social, cultural, and economic connections for new Indigenous migrants and established urban Indigenous residents, and they provide different services required by families and individuals. Individual Friendship Centres across Canada focus on different programs that support local community needs. These programs have evolved over time, including health, youth, family, community, employment, education, culture, justice, housing, economic development, sports and recreation, and language programs (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2013b). Friendship Centre health programs are usually allocated the majority of funding. However, the mix of funding allocation varies based on demand, and other programs play a critical role in the basket of services provided by Friendship Centres (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2013b). Economic development programs, in turn, receive one of the highest points of contact per program, including bingo halls, hostels, and cafeterias (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2011). Importantly, economic development programs often provide critical revenue required for other programs, a model practised by other social enterprises in Canada.

The experience of Indigenous women through colonization, followed by the subsequent building of foundational structures for Friendship Centres in urban areas, have been central forms of resistance to race- and gender-based oppression (Howard-Bobiwash, 2004). Undoubtedly, Indigenous women have experienced the most negative aspects of colonialism, and have been very active in resisting the effects of colonialism through formal and informal social organizations, such as via the establishment and participation in Friendship Centres. The current leadership and staffing of Friendship Centres reflects the underpinning of women's leadership, as 66 percent of executive directors and 72 percent of the staff are women (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2013b). Although Indigenous women built Friendship Centres, these centres serve the entire community, including men, youth, and families. In many cases programs are also open to non-Indigenous individuals of any race or background. Thus, the history of colonialism and its antagonistic relationship with Indigenous women's leadership has had a substantial influence on the formation and development of Friendship Centres and other Indigenous social enterprises.

The important role of Indigenous women in social enterprise has a long history. Pre-colonization Indigenous societies included a broad range of economic and leadership roles for women based on gender, clan, and family position. An integral part of the colonization process was to dismantle the conventional strengths of Indigenous society through physical and political violence inflicted to a great degree on Indigenous women through different forms of dispossession, including physical violence, economic dispossession, and social dislocation. Furthermore, the migration of Indigenous people from rural to urban centres has been led by women and is rooted in the intersection of resistance to colonization and patriarchy (Howard-Bobiwash, 2004).

It must also be emphasized here that Indigenous communities cannot be limited to the two socio-economic alternatives discussed or assumed most often in the neoclassical or liberal literature, i.e., a full-scale integration of Indigenous communities within the dominant neoliberal paradigm or a return to pre-colonial societies. In fact, Indigenous women in urban centres can be seen as central players in the development of a third alternative through Friendship Centres. These centres offer community service provisioning by and for the affected community, and even result in spinoff social enterprises and associated organizational structures that have Indigenous values as primary goals, with economic development and revenue-generating activities supporting the social goals by providing independent funding to fill gaps left from other sources. Additional examples of social economy organizations developed by Indigenous women include cooperatives (Findlay & Wuttunee, 2007; Hammond-Ketilson & MacPherson, 2001). The social economy and its social enterprise organizations,

therefore, can be seen as having enabling characteristics that can override the false binary of neoliberal economic integration vs. pre-colonized society to provide a third and viable alternative for community-based socio-economic structures.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Indigenous entrepreneurship

Anderson, Dana, & Dana (2006) have argued that the broad majority of Indigenous community business activities should be considered to be an instance of social entrepreneurship, since they involve social goals (and often include environmental and cultural goals) in addition to financial aims. Although there is no standardized definition of social enterprise (see introductory essay to this special issue), there are more convergent definitions of “Indigenous entrepreneurship.”

The conceptual framework of Indigenous entrepreneurship is useful in understanding Indigenous social enterprise (Anderson, 2011). Anderson states that Indigenous entrepreneurship has multiple goals in addition to economic self-sufficiency, including protecting land ownership and use, strengthening socio-economic circumstances, and revitalizing traditional culture. Anderson et al. (2006) are careful to point out, then, that an Indigenous individual who is simply a business entrepreneur with a singular goal of maximizing economic profits does not fit the definition of Indigenous entrepreneurship. To reiterate Indigenous entrepreneurship, therefore, is inclusive of economic, environmental, social, and cultural goals, with similarities to other forms of social entrepreneurship but with the important difference of including *culture* as an integral dimension. Moreover, Steyaert and Hjorth (2008) argue that social entrepreneurship has to be a force for social change rather than maintenance of current power relations. As such, Indigenous entrepreneurship can also be described as a process of changing the power dynamics between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, and as a form of decolonization.

One form of economic decolonization in Canada has been to utilize the changing environment for Indigenous rights and self-determination to enable rapid economic development, which includes subsequent social benefits to Indigenous communities. However, Kuokkanen (2011) has argued against implementing purely capitalist-based economic development for Indigenous communities, since it is a perpetuation of the system that was the economic driving force behind colonialism. According to Kuokkanen, economic development that is not based on social and cultural values has not had a substantially positive or lasting effect on the greatest issues affecting Indigenous communities and, disproportionately, Indigenous women, including domestic violence and lack of adequate housing and social services. For example, in the neoliberal form of economic development geared to or intersecting with Indigenous people or Indigenous land, the majority of resource development jobs have employed Indigenous men rather than Indigenous women. Additionally, development projects with primarily resource-based incentives and aims have provided gains to only a few people (mostly to non-Indigenous stakeholders) rather than establishing broader benefits to the Indigenous communities that are directly affected by these projects. While some Indigenous communities have themselves implemented these forms of resource-based economic development initiatives, these initiatives have not provided consistently expected social dividends, particularly for Indigenous women.

Another form of decolonization would be an attempt to return to pre-colonization subsistence economies. But re-adoption of Indigenous culture also involves a temporal element. Indigenous concepts of culture do change over time, as we have already pinpointed. Culture evolves within the system it lives in, and is never a “static” or

“finished” entity. Although Indigenous cultures have been damaged under colonialism, attempts at revival of Indigenous culture and social structure have not, on the whole, aspired to simply replicate pre-colonial systems. Instead, practices that are more akin to pre-colonial subsistence economies have been combined with contemporary technology and management practices to enable sustainable Indigenous economic practices. Cornthassel (2008), as was already cited, described sustainable Indigenous self-determination as holistic integration of cultural, environmental, social, and economic values and practices, cannot be separated according to Indigenous ways of thinking. With most Indigenous communities, transmission of cultural traditions and practices to future generations also involves shared goals of providing sustainable activities that protect the natural environment. Social issues are a component of self-determination. For example, the Indigenous Zapatista movement in Mexico, which has garnered wide interest among Indigenous peoples in Canada, involved explicit development of rights of Indigenous women before taking over town governments. In short, decolonization does not involve a return to a static version of Indigenous culture that reflects or attempts to revive wholesale a particular past time period, but rather tends to include modifications of Indigenous culture that reflect current contexts of time and space.

Quadruple bottom line organizations

In the social enterprise sector, the prominence of non-financial goals is often described in terms of multiple bottom lines. For example, double bottom line organizations involve and account for specific social and economic goals, inputs, and outputs. Triple bottom line organizations formally incorporate social, economic, *and* environmental goals into strategic and operational processes and accounting. Indigenous social enterprises will tend to also incorporate a fourth bottom line, *culture*, into organizational goals. Moreover, Indigenous organizations consider the social, economic, environmental, and cultural goals as integral to each other, rather than being separable items. Since a substantial component of the colonial project was destruction of Indigenous culture, the organizational response from Indigenous communities has been to bring culture to the forefront as a critical component of organizational strategy and operations. Research in Canada on a range of community economic development measures defined by Indigenous communities in a bottom-up rather than top-down process indicates the importance of culture (Orr & Weir, 2013).

The cultural dimension of Indigenous social enterprise has tended to be obscured by Western-based research on social enterprise, particularly because there is a tendency in the social enterprise literature to, at times, consider each separate business unit within the broader organization as a distinct social enterprise. Moreover, this taxonomic approach has obscured the interdependencies and connections between related social enterprises, including Indigenous ones. As described in the case studies of Membertou and the Osoyoos Indian Band in Canada that follow, the different lines of business need to be considered in a holistic manner to understand the multiple organizational dimensions and the interrelationships and interdependencies of the Indigenous social enterprise experience. A quadruple bottom line approach represents one method of achieving this goal.

As colonialism and settler colonialism (Veracini, 2011; Wolfe, 2006) were imposed as structures throughout the British Empire, in conjunction with a separation of Indigenous people from their land, a “specialization lens” of enterprises emerged. This lens has tended to categorize the evolution of Indigenous enterprises into two groups: those organizations that pursued strictly economic goals, and those organizations that primarily pursued social, environmental, or cultural goals or managed to achieve them as a secondary gain. Historically, Indigenous community economic development responses, however, have included more holistic and innovative combinations of social goals with environmental and cultural goals (Orr & Weir, 2013). Scrimgeour and Iremonger (2004), for instance, articulate the use of quadruple bottom lines for Maori social enterprise in New

Zealand, involving integrated economic, social, environmental, and cultural goals, while Cornthassel's (2008) notion of "sustainable self-determination" (i.e., enmeshed economic, social, cultural, and environmental values) underscores how the holistic worldview for Indigenous communities can be espoused in entrepreneurial activity. Dalziel, Matunga, and Saunders (2006) explain that since 2002, the quadruple bottom line approach has been adopted in the formal devolution of responsibility to local authorities in New Zealand.

The key differentiating factor between Indigenous social enterprise and other forms of social enterprise, then, is the integral and prominent role of culture that underscores a fourth dimension—a quadruple bottom line—for Indigenous social enterprise. In the volume *Hidden in Plain Sight: Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian Identity and Culture*, researchers Beavon, Voyageur, and Newhouse (2005) detail how Indigenous individuals and values have shaped a number of Canadian movements and institutions. The Indigenous philosophies and knowledge developed over time that enable societies to function for multiple generations have, the authors point out, influenced the development of current Indigenous organizations and governance structures, and they continue to be utilized as the basis for the operation of Indigenous organizations (Beavon, Voyageur, & Newhouse, 2005). However, the impact of Indigenous values on Canada's social economy and, conversely, the impact of Canada's social economy on Indigenous communities have not yet been researched in a systematic or holistic way. Understanding Indigenous values—especially cultural and environmental ones—that have been the basis of other, non-Indigenous social economy organizations will, we believe, enable an improved understanding of the broad diversity of the social economy in Canada and provide possible direction for some of the most difficult issues facing Canadian society. The case studies on Membertou and Osoyoos at the end of this article, for instance, demonstrate practices of quadruple bottom line organizations in Canada, which add rich texture to our understanding of the broader social economy today.

In short, the importance of culture as a distinct dimension from social and environmental indicators is important for a more complete understanding of Indigenous social enterprise, as our case studies will demonstrate. The effects of dominant culture on Indigenous peoples are often invisible to non-Indigenous individuals who are part of that dominant culture. Simultaneously, maintaining Indigenous culture in the context of the dominant culture is a daily struggle for Indigenous people. Indigenous social enterprise thus necessitates revitalization of Indigenous culture. At the same time, cultural knowledge and practice are intertwined with environmental and social knowledge and practice in Indigenous social enterprise. This intertwining underscores how cultural goals can be combined with social, environmental, and economic ones.

FRAMEWORK FOR CLASSIFYING INDIGENOUS SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN CANADA

To recap, the intersection of race, class, and gender have been experienced most acutely by Indigenous communities in Canada through colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy (Palmater, 2011). Although there is a significant quantity of research on the issues that have affected Indigenous communities, there is limited research on solutions to these issues provided by Indigenous organizations, particularly social enterprises, which are, in our view, a critical component of developing solutions based on community assets. Conceptualizing Indigenous social enterprises in Canada as positive social change, led by Indigenous peoples themselves, we must now focus on the existing assets of their communities and traditional knowledge as Indigenous-centred social economy organizations, rather than in a neocolonial deficit-based approach to community development. The development of organizations in Indigenous communities are explained through the basis of Indigenous entrepreneurship, which is qualitatively different from mainstream entrepreneurship (Dana & Anderson, 2007), as was previously outlined. In summary, Indigenous entrepreneurship is not simply

identifying Indigenous individuals who are entrepreneurs. Dana and Anderson (2007) propose that Indigenous entrepreneurship has multiple goals in addition to economic self-sufficiency, including protecting land ownership and use, strengthening socio-economic circumstances, and revitalizing traditional culture. These characteristics of Indigenous entrepreneurship differentiate it from mainstream entrepreneurship and are mirrored in the Indigenous community economic development literature through the identification of culture as a salient measure of community well-being (Orr & Weir, 2013). The characteristics of Indigenous social enterprise can thus be identified by the presence of the four interrelated dimensions of quadruple bottom line businesses, namely economic, social, environmental (incorporating land), and cultural dimensions.

Three illustrative examples of Indigenous entrepreneurship and quadruple bottom line businesses from across Canada are highlighted in the case studies that follow.

CASE STUDIES

The need for Indigenous social enterprise case studies

Just as the social economy is not reflected in formal educational curriculum in proportion to its size and importance in the economy (McMurtry, 2009), Indigenous enterprise is not reflected in educational resources in proportion to its importance. Battiste and Henderson (2000) describe the lack of Indigenous knowledge in education and convincingly argue that there is a high level of “benefit the Western world can derive from [Indigenous] knowledge and heritage” (p. 86). Battiste and Henderson (2000) further explain how important Indigenous knowledge is to the survival of our world, in terms of our relationship with nature as well as community well-being. The simultaneous under-representation of the social economy and Indigenous knowledge in education is related.

The minimization of different types of alternative and Indigenous organizational structures, value systems, and knowledge functions to maximize the importance of a single hegemonic and monocultural neoliberal economic value system. The most effective method of countering hegemonic education practices is to provide evidence of real alternatives. The alternatives provided must have multiple dimensions of diversity. Hence, there is a need for social economy and Indigenous social enterprise examples as case studies, so they can be incorporated into educational curricula and add further nuance to the broader landscape of social enterprise in Canada. In this spirit, in the remaining pages of this article we offer three brief case studies of prominent Indigenous social enterprise in Canada.

Membertou Band

The Mi'kmaw community of Membertou is named after Grand Chief Membertou (1510–1611). Membertou is located adjacent to the city of Sydney, Nova Scotia. Sydney is a coastal port city on Cape Breton Island and was previously dependent on the coal and steel industries. The legacy of the coal and steel industries include the Sydney Tar Ponds (which have required an ongoing multi-million-dollar cleanup effort) and high levels of unemployment after the decline of these same industries. Membertou is an urban First Nations community consisting of 1,400 people, which had experienced issues of high unemployment associated with the decline of local industries. Membertou's leadership has developed and implemented economic development plans that have led to nearly complete employment for band members. Membertou's long-term strategy involves not only developing the local economy, but also connecting to businesses in Nova Scotia's capital, Halifax.

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Membertou was restricted to a small area of reserve land as compared to its much larger traditional territories, and then forcibly moved from its original location at Kings Road Reserve in 1926 by the Exchequer Court of Canada (Membertou, 2015) to its current location. Membertou has used the current location to its advantage, due to its proximity to the centre of the city of Sydney, which provides access to a customer base of urban consumers. The Membertou First Nation has been successful in diversifying its economy to include a gaming centre, gas bar, business centre, convention centre, and hotel. One of the first businesses established on reserve land was the gaming centre, which generated revenues that provided capital to promote other businesses. Membertou's new business projects involve the purchase of land outside of the reserve. Membertou's approach to social enterprise involves employment of a marginalized population, Membertou band members, in a diverse group of businesses. In addition to nearly complete employment, band members receive a dividend from the profits of Membertou's businesses.

The Membertou Heritage Park is an important component in the portfolio of Membertou's businesses. Membertou Heritage Park provides a history of Membertou in the form of a museum and relates the history to current developments for Membertou, including evolving establishment of treaty rights through Canadian courts (Membertou Heritage Park, 2015). Maintaining the cultural heritage of Membertou has enabled the community to overcome adversity and develop economic strength from a strong cultural core. Membertou Heritage Park is one of the prominent tourist attractions on Cape Breton Island; it has inspired other First Nations in the region to develop cultural interpretation centres and local tourism industries. The facility provides a permanent location for the community to tell its story and highlight its culture from Membertou's own point of view, and also underscores the importance of Indigenous knowledge. As such, maintenance of culture has been an integral part of Membertou's social and economic development process.

Membertou has developed a financially successful portfolio of businesses that is appropriate to local ecology, and also provides employment and leadership development opportunities to its band members. Collectively, the portfolio of businesses exhibits quadruple bottom line characteristics.

Osoyoos Indian Band

The Osoyoos Indian Band is part of the Okanagan First Nation. It is located on a reserve in the Okanagan Valley adjacent to the town of Osoyoos, British Columbia, which is close to the border between Canada and the US. The Okanagan Valley has been inhabited by First Nations communities for centuries and is currently the main wine- and fruit-growing region of British Columbia. The region is a tourist destination with a number of wineries and other outdoor recreational amenities. The southern geographical location and mountainous terrain make the region ideal for wineries; one of the first businesses developed by the Osoyoos Indian Band was a winery.

The Osoyoos Indian Band has developed a diversified portfolio of businesses, including a winery, wine cellar, cultural centre, gas and convenience store, resort, spa, RV park, golf course, and business park. The band has purposefully become integrated into local and global economies, exporting its winery products and welcoming international visitors to its resort facilities. As Chief Clarence Louis explains, describing Osoyoos' social enterprise strategy, "The best social program is a job." Osoyoos' approach to social enterprise involves employment of a marginalized population, Osoyoos band members, in a diverse group of businesses. The band's strategy of increasing the number of businesses has provided employment for band members and diversified career possibilities that were previously assumed to be out of reach. Although similar jobs may have been available at other local businesses, band members were often excluded from jobs at non-Indigenous businesses due to structural racism issues, including lack of experience. At the band-owned businesses, band members can develop experience in a variety of positions. Revenues from the diverse portfolio of businesses

have also been utilized to build school buildings and community facilities. Having its own school enables the Osoyoos Indian Band to provide identity, building cultural knowledge in young band members. Band ownership and operation of a number of businesses enables young band members to see themselves in future careers as teachers, managers, and scientists through exposure to role models and employment opportunities in their own community. Having its own school building and community centre has also enabled the band to provide cultural education and opportunities for participation in cultural activities by young band members. Maintenance of culture has been an integral part of Osoyoos' social and economic development process.

The Nk'mip Desert Cultural Centre is a prominent component of the portfolio of businesses. The cultural centre provides tours, self-guided nature trails, interpretive exhibits, visitor programs, a gift shop, and cultural events. The cultural centre has a favourable location beside the flagship resort, and Indigenous art is prominently displayed in front of all band businesses. The cultural centre is important not only in maintaining cultural continuity, but also in maintaining the local ecosystem with ongoing rattlesnake tagging programs. The entire portfolio of businesses has local eco-appropriate environmental elements, such as organic wine- and fruit-growing practices. Osoyoos has developed a financially successful portfolio of businesses that is appropriate to cultural history and local ecology, and which also provides employment and leadership development opportunities to its band members. Collectively, the portfolio of businesses exhibits quadruple bottom line characteristics.

Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

As discussed earlier in this article, Friendship Centres are often the first formally incorporated Indigenous social enterprises in most Canadian cities, and they have been the incubator for additional Indigenous social enterprises. The majority of Friendship Centres are registered charities or nonprofit organizations generating independent market-based revenues by offering goods and services to the public, and they have social and cultural purposes. Therefore, Friendship Centres are examples of Indigenous social enterprises. This case study describes the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT), one of the first Friendship Centres established in Canada.

Indigenous populations in Canadian cities such as Toronto have doubled over 25 years (1981 to 2006), whereas Indigenous populations in cities like Ottawa have increased by 40 percent over the same time period (Fitzmaurice, 2012). Toronto has always been a meeting place for different Indigenous communities, resulting in the establishment of the NCCT as one of the first Friendship Centres in an urban community in Canada. The NCCT provides a central meeting place for the Indigenous community in Toronto and a variety of cultural programs, including language classes that are key to continuation of culture. The NCCT also employs a number of full-time and part-time Indigenous individuals in its various programs, providing an employment-related social purpose.

A close examination of the historical establishment of Friendship Centres by Indigenous women provides examples of fundraising activities that would be described as mission-related revenue-generating projects in current terminology. For instance, the chapter by Anderson (2011) on grandmothers and elders in the book *Life Stages and Native Women: Memory, Teachings, and Story Medicine* describes Indigenous grandmothers who made baskets they could sell to support other activities. In *The Strength of Women*, Sayese (2011) indicates that Indigenous "ladies groups" mutually acquired skills in sewing, beading, and cooking to make money. Howard-Bobiwash (2004) details the pioneering efforts of Indigenous women such as Vera Johnston, Hettie Sylvester, and Lillian McGregor, who established the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT), including an urban market for Native arts and crafts, which provided financial and cultural support to the NCCT and the

Indigenous community in Toronto. The NCCT continues to operate the Cedar Basket Gift Shop, which generates revenue through the sale of handicrafts, CDs, and books. The NCCT is considering replicating the model of the Cedar Basket shop in high tourist areas such as the Toronto airport. Additional revenue-generating activities include rental of facilities and provision of meals for seniors at a low cost. The youth group at NCCT is starting up a new social enterprise to provide education, events, and skilled worker services. Through its economic activities, the NCCT has been able to generate sufficient revenues to purchase the building it operates in, thereby solidifying the relationship to land. In summary, NCCT is an example of a quadruple bottom line Indigenous social enterprise.

CONCLUSION

As described by McMurtry, Brouard, Elson, Hall, Lionais, and Vieta) throughout this issue, Indigenous businesses form a distinct type of social enterprise in Canada, led and managed by Indigenous communities. This article first explored the complex historical context of Indigenous social enterprise, where the precursors of social enterprise implemented by non-Indigenous settlers did not have a benign or positive effect on Indigenous communities. The economic motivations for colonization included dispossession of land and development of a compliant workforce; these motivations were behind the policies of physical violence, economic dispossession, and social dislocation, specifically imposed on Indigenous women. The gendered leadership of Indigenous social enterprise, mainly by women, was also described as a reaction to the intersection of patriarchy and colonization. A framework for identifying Indigenous social enterprise was then proposed through related theories of “Indigenous entrepreneurship” and “quadruple bottom line” organizations. The role of culture as it relates to Indigenous organizations as the fourth bottom line was then explained. The final section of this article then laid out three contemporary and illustrative cases studies of Indigenous social enterprise to provide an understanding of Indigenous social enterprise in a “current state snapshot.”

The factors influencing development of social enterprise in the context of Indigenous communities in Canada include the ability to convert different types of capital—including land, human, social, environmental, cultural, and financial capital—to meet holistic requirements of diverse Indigenous communities. Some Indigenous communities have taken the path of focusing on economic development first, and leveraging economic development to increase other forms of capital. Other Indigenous communities have taken the route of strengthening cultural foundations first and then building economic and other forms of capital from a place of strength of cultural identity. The future development of Indigenous social enterprise in Canada will ultimately depend on the ability of Indigenous communities to control their own resources, primarily related to land, but also including economic resources to develop businesses, human resources through education rooted in community-led and Indigenous methodologies, and applying cultural resources, including Indigenous knowledge. Moreover, Indigenous social enterprise rooted in Indigenous knowledge we believe will continue to demonstrate alternative organizational forms and alternative futures as positive examples that the broader social enterprise sector in Canada and beyond can learn from.

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NOTES

1. The internationally prevalent term “Indigenous” is utilized in the place of literature references to Aboriginal, Indian, and Native, unless a verbatim reference is required.
2. Friendship Centres may not explicitly consider themselves to be social enterprises. However, the majority of Friendship Centres are registered charities or nonprofit organizations, generate independent market-based revenues by offering goods and services to the public, and have social and cultural purposes, and therefore Friendship Centres would be considered to be social enterprises under most classifications.

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Membertou, <http://Indigenous.membertou.ca>

Membertou Heritage Park, <http://www.membertouheritagepark.com/index.asp>

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