*Indigenous Research Sovereignty*

A special edition of Environment & Planning: F

In her germinal work, *Decolonizing Methodologies,* Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999, 1) describes the problematic relationship many Indigenous communities have with research, “the word itself, ‘research,’ is probably one of the dirtiest…in the Indigenous…vocabulary. When mentioned in many Indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful.” Overcoming this long-standing distrust of ‘research’ has been the effort not only of Smith, but of a long list of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics who endeavor to decolonize not only the associated principles, protocols, and practices of science, but the ontological frame that polices academic research (Chilisa, 2019; Wilson, 2009; Kovach, 2010). Increasingly, Indigenous geographers are calling for Indigenous leadership in research activity to meet the environmental, social, and health research needs of our communities (Louis, 2007; Coombes, Johnson, and Howitt, 2014; Hunt, 2014). Taking leadership in the research enterprise requires more than merely addressing research methods though, it means asserting Indigenous sovereignty over all aspects of the process. We have identified eight areas related to asserting sovereignty over the research process: setting the agenda, relationship building, cultural protocols, research permitting, practices and methods, data sovereignty, evaluation, and dissemination and seek articles representing all eight areas for this special edition of Environment & Planning: F.

Asserting Indigenous sovereignty over research must begin with identifying and setting the agenda by communities themselves. “Indigenous peoples have been employing systematic methods for learning and teaching about the natural world for thousands of years, sometimes utilizing techniques familiar to us today and sometimes not,” Johnson et al (2014:13). Whether we call this systematic engagement with the natural world ‘science’ or not, it was constantly guided by a desire to better live within a balance between humans and our non-human relations. This reciprocal appropriation dictated every protocol and practice. Research was predicated upon understanding the relationships between relatives and perceiving the place-based struggles of co-existence (Larsen and Johnson, 2017). We seek to explore how tribal lifeways assist in establishing a research agenda based upon today’s desire to better live within a balance with the world around us. Reestablishing this balance may regard human diet and health, guarding the well-being of our treasured relatives, or protecting the freshwater necessary to carry all life.

We seek articles that will address all areas of Indigenous research sovereignty from around the globe and encourage early-career academics and Indigenous authors to submit their work for consideration.

Timeline: Abstract submission by October 15, 2021 – Invitations for full paper submission will be sent by November 15, 2021 – Completed papers due by March 1, 2022.

Special edition guest editors: Dr. Jay T. Johnson (University of Kansas), Dr. Renee Pualani Louis (Universities of Kansas and California-Davis), Dr. Melissa Nelson (Arizona State University), Dr. Mark Palmer (University of Missouri-Columbia), and Dr. Joseph P. Brewer (University of Kansas)