

ABlawg: The Year in Review, 2015

It is that time of year again – time for ABlawg to put together a compilation of our highlights from the past year. It is also the 10th anniversary of the [Clawbies](#), and we have included a list of some of our favourite Canadian Law Blogs here as well.

Milestones and Numbers

ABlawg hit the milestone of 1000 all-time posts this fall, with Nigel Bankes achieving a personal milestone of 200 all-time posts this year. One hundred and fifty-two (152) posts have been published on ABlawg so far in 2015, written by 48 different authors. We welcomed a number of new bloggers this year: new faculty and sessional colleagues [Anna-Maria Hubert](#), [Michael Nesbitt](#), [Erin Sheley](#) and [Lisa Silver](#); students [Scott Allen](#), [Hannah Buckley](#), [Jennifer Cox](#), [Alex Grigg](#), [Elysa Hogg](#), [Elliot Holzman](#), [Caroline Law](#), [Ashton Menuz](#), [Ian Pillai](#), and [Heather White](#); and guest bloggers [Meinhard Doelle](#), [Glen Luther](#), [Mansfield Mela](#), [Avnish Nanda](#), and [Seamus Ryder](#).

The posts that generated the most traffic to ABlawg were [Jennifer Koshan](#) and [Alice Woolley](#)'s contributions on *R v Wagar*, [2015 ABCA 327](#), a sexual assault decision that led to a complaint to the Canadian Judicial Council. The post that gathered the most comments was Saul Templeton's [Trinity Western University: Your Tax Dollars at Work](#) (and see Prof Templeton's other posts on Trinity Western [here](#) and [here](#)).

New Look

On June 1 2015, ABlawg unveiled a [new look](#), incorporating the University of Calgary crest and colours into our new header of the iconic Lake Louise, and making it easier for readers to tweet ABlawg posts.

Ebooks

On June 30 2015, we launched the first in a series of ebooks, gathering together posts in particular areas of law as a service to our readers. Our [first ebook](#), compiled by Nigel Bankes, concerns oil and gas contracts. Our [second ebook](#), compiled by Jonnette Watson Hamilton and Jennifer Koshan, was on equality rights. A third ebook, being compiled by Jennifer Koshan, deals with the rights of farm workers in Alberta and will be released before ABlawg goes on hiatus for the holidays. Other ebooks that are currently planned will cover oil and gas leases, the Alberta Energy Regulator, and carbon law and policy.

ABlawg and the New Provincial and Federal Governments

Alberta's new NDP government made some important policy decisions soon after its election in spring 2015 and introduced several Bills in the fall, leading to the following ABlawg posts:

- Shaun Fluker posted [commentary](#) on the long-awaited decision of Alberta Environment and Parks to protect the Castle Wilderness area.
- James Coleman [posted his take](#) on Alberta’s new [climate plan](#), asking whether Alberta can be a model for Texas on climate change. See also some earlier posts on this topic, Shaun Fluker’s [What Policy Direction should Alberta Follow on Carbon Emissions?](#) and [Province of Alberta Announces a Two-Step Process for Developing a New Climate Change Policy](#) by Nigel Bankes.
- Jennifer Koshan posted her [analysis](#) of Bill 6, the [Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act](#), and provided links to previous ABlawg commentary on the issue of farm workers’ rights. In spite of the controversy over Bill 6, this post received the most Facebook likes of any ABlawg posts in 2015.
- Jennifer Koshan and Jonnette Watson Hamilton posted [commentary](#) on Bill 204, the [Residential Tenancies \(Safer Spaces for Victims of Domestic Violence\) Amendment Act, 2015](#), which proposes to amend Alberta’s *Residential Tenancies Act* to make it easier for victims of domestic violence to terminate their leases.

We also published commentary relevant to some of the most contentious issues in the federal election campaign:

- Shaun Fluker posted [The Niqab, the Oath of Citizenship, and the Blurry Line between Law and Policy](#), which commented on the now infamous decision in *Canada (Citizenship and Immigration) v Ishaq*, [2015 FCA 194](#).
- Hannah Buckley posted [commentary](#) on Bill 24, the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*, [SC 2014 c 22](#), in which the Conservatives expanded the government’s ability to revoke Canadian citizenship.
- Martin Olszynski and Alex Grigg [published](#) their research on the impact of Bill C-38, the omnibus budget bill, on fisheries habitat protection, concluding that the former Conservative government had “all but abdicated its role in protecting fish habitat in Canada”.
- Maureen Duffy [posted](#) on the Conservatives’ handling of the Omar Khadr file, and we also [posted](#) an open letter to members of Parliament on [Bill C-51](#), which was signed by several faculty members.

ABlawg Impact

A number of ABlawg posts were cited, excerpted and reprinted in judicial decisions, the Alberta legislature, professional publications, and the blogosphere, a sampling of which follows:

- The [Website of the Alberta Courts](#), by Nigel Bankes, Jennifer Koshan, and Jonnette Watson Hamilton, led to coverage in the [Calgary Herald](#), [Legal Feeds](#), and [Slaw](#) of the decision of the Alberta Courts to forgo publishing decisions on their websites in January 2015.
- Alice Woolley's posts [The Top Ten Canadian Legal Ethics Stories – 2014](#) and [Liability and Lawyers](#) were reprinted in Canadian Lawyer magazine in January and October 2015.
- [Can the Homeless Find Shelter in the Courts?](#) by Joshua Sealy-Harrington was cited in [The Access Review](#) in May 2015.
- Maureen Duffy's post [A "Convicted Terrorist" By Any Other Name](#) was quoted by the Canadian Bar Association in its publication [The National](#) in May 2015.
- Jennifer Koshan and Jonnette Watson Hamilton's post [The Supreme Court's Latest Equality Rights Decision: An Emphasis on Arbitrariness](#) was reprinted by the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund ([LEAF](#)) in May 2015.
- [Alberta Court of Queen's Bench Overturns Human Rights Tribunal's Finding of Disability Discrimination in Employment](#), by Linda McKay Panos, was cited on [Slaw](#) in June 2015.
- ABlawg's [Equality Rights ebook](#) was featured on the [Oxford Human Rights Hub](#) blog in August 2015.
- Professor Jassmine Girgis' post [Indalex: Priority of Provincial Deemed Trusts in a CCAA Restructuring](#) was cited by the Quebec Court of Appeal in *Re Bloom Lake*, [2015 QCCA 1351](#) in August 2015.
- Nigel Bankes' sustained efforts on ABlawg for the past few years to have the Alberta Energy Regulator make its decisions more easily accessible paid off in September, 2015; see [The Alberta Energy Regulator Announces that It will Publish a Broader Range of Decisions](#).
- Shaun Fluker's post [Some Observations about Evidence in the Electronic Age](#) was reprinted in the September/October edition of [LawNow](#).
- Jonnette Watson Hamilton's post [Expensive, Complex Appeals from Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service Orders](#) was cited by Master W.S. Schlosser in *Cardinal v Amisk Housing Association*, [2015 ABQB 503](#) (CanLII) [in August 2015](#) and by Master James Farrington in *Abougouche v Miller*, [2015 ABQB 724](#) (CanLII) in November 2015.
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- ABlawg posts on the rights of farm workers were tabled by Alberta Liberal Party leader Dr David Swann in the Alberta Legislature on [December 7, 2015](#) during debate on Bill 6, the [Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act](#).
- A number of posts were re-printed in the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen (CAPL)'s [Negotiator](#): Nigel Bankes' [Crown Oil Sands Dispositions and the Duty to Consult](#), [Provincial Environmental Appeal Boards: A Forum of Choice for Environmental \(and First Nation\) Plaintiffs?](#) and [Implementing the New Liability and Financial Assurance Rules for Oil and Gas Operations on Federal Lands in the Arctic and for the East Coast Offshore](#); Shaun Fluker's [What Happens When an Insolvent Energy Company Fails to Pay its Rent to a Landowner?](#) and [What Happens When an Insolvent Energy Company Fails to Pay its Surface Rent to a Landowner? Part 2](#); Martin Olszynski's [Environmental Damages under Bill C-46 \(Pipeline Safety Act\)](#); and [Risk Allocation in Operating Agreements for Unconventional Resources](#) by Fenner Stewart and Tony Cioni

Our Favourite Canadian Law Blogs

ABlawg organized a roundtable on [Blogging and Legal Education](#) at the Canadian Association of Law Teachers conference in May 2015. We would like to recognize the other bloggers who participated in that roundtable as worthy candidates for the Clawbies in the category of Best Law School / Law Teacher blog:

- Paul Daly's [Administrative Law Matters](#), which continues to be a leading resource for administrative law;
- Craig Forcese and Kent Roach's [Anti-Terror Law](#) for its real time analysis of Bill C-51;
- The [University of Alberta Faculty of Law Blog](#), and in particular Moin Yahya's Magna Carta project featured there this year;
- University of Ottawa's [Blogging for Equality](#), a go-to resource for women's equality issues.

We encourage our readers to participate in the Clawbies by nominating your favourite Canadian law blogs. Instructions for how to do so are [here](#).

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