

December 15, 2014

ABlawg: The Year in Review

It is the time of year for making lists, and at ABlawg we have decided to put together a compilation of our highlights from 2014. It is also the season for the Canadian Law Blog Awards ([Clawbies](#)), and we have included a list of some of our favourite blogs as well.

A Series of Series

In 2014 ABlawg ran several series of posts on important judicial decisions and legislative developments in Alberta and Canada more broadly. These series provided an opportunity for the authors to discuss the nuances and impacts of these developments and to share that dialogue with ABlawg readers. Our series covered the following:

- April / May 2014: Students in Law 696: Constitutional Clinical wrote a series of posts on the constitutionality of the exclusion of Alberta farm workers from the [Employment Standards Code](#); [Labour Relations Code](#); [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#); and [Workers' Compensation Act](#). The posts gained attention from the media (see e.g. [here](#) and [here](#)), other [blogs](#), [opposition parties](#) and the [PC leadership candidates](#).
- July / August 2014: Posts by Nigel Bankes, Jennifer Hocking, Jennifer Koshan, Kirk Lambrecht, Q.C., Sharon Mascher, Martin Olszynski, and Jonnette Watson Hamilton on [Tsilhqot'in Nation v British Columbia](#), 2014 SCC 44 and [Grassy Narrows First Nation v Ontario \(Natural Resources\)](#), 2014 SCC 48 covered issues including the scope of Aboriginal title, treaty rights, and the duty to consult, and the demise of the interjurisdictional immunity doctrine and the "lands reserved" head of section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act 1867*. Faculty, students, research associates and guests discussed this commentary and the underlying decisions in a roundtable discussion in July.
- September 2014: A series of posts by Nigel Bankes, Shaun Fluker and Martin Olszynski on [Syncrude Canada Ltd. v Attorney General of Canada](#), 2014 FC 776 commented on the first Canadian case challenging the constitutional validity of federal greenhouse gas regulations, reviewing administrative law, constitutional and climate change issues.
- October / November 2014: Posts by Shaun Fluker, Jennifer Koshan and Martin Olszynski on [Ernst v Alberta \(Energy Resources Conservation Board\)](#), 2014 ABCA 285 and [Ernst v EnCana Corporation](#), 2014 ABQB 672 reviewed developments in Jessica Ernst's litigation against EnCana, the ERCB, and Alberta Environment for harms flowing from hydraulic fracturing and breach of the *Charter*. The posts led to media interest (e.g. [here](#)).

- November / December 2014: This series by [Nigel Bankes](#), [Sarah Burton](#) and [Ronaliz Veron](#) discussed Bills introduced in the [Third Session of the 28th Legislature of Alberta](#), and generated lots of comments by ABlawg readers.
- Even if two posts do not a series make, we must also mention the posts by [Joshua Sealy-Harrington](#) and [Alice Woolley](#) on the Jian Ghomeshi affair in October and November 2014, which broke records for ABlawg hits (almost 6000 hits combined to date) and Facebook likes (over 500 likes). The previous record was also held by a 2014 post, [U of C and U of A Law Profs' Submission to the Law Society of Alberta on Trinity Western University Law School](#), which garnered 1285 hits the day it was posted.

Broadening our Scope

ABlawg was very pleased to be one of the blogs featured in the launch of [Can LII Connects](#) in April 2014, and all ABlawg posts on Canadian judicial decisions are now cross-posted to this site, expanding our audience.

ABlawg also welcomed some new bloggers this year. [John-Paul Boyd](#), Executive Director of the U of C affiliated Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family, launched an excellent new blog on [Access to Justice in Canada](#), and we have been cross-posting some of his commentary on ABlawg. [Sarah Burton](#) joined the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre as a research associate, and has also been posting on access to justice issues on ABlawg. Over the summer, students from Student Legal Assistance contributed blogs on criminal and family issues to ABlawg (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)).

Measuring Impact

A number of ABlawg posts were cited, excerpted and reprinted in judicial decisions, professional publications, legal arguments, law review articles, and the blogosphere, a sampling of which follows:

- On [Can LII Connects](#) in May 2014, Nate Russell posted a comment on blog posts that had been cited in judicial decisions, and all were written by ABlawg bloggers: John-Paul Boyd, Jonnette Watson Hamilton and Alice Woolley
- Another post by Alice Woolley, [Defining Prosecutorial Discretion \(With an Invitation to the Court to Re-define Abuse of Process\)](#), was cited in *R. v. R.B.*, [2014 MBQB 179](#)
- The Council of the Innu of Ekuanitshit cited Martin Olszynski's post [Federal Court of Appeal Reviews CEAA "Justification" Determination for Lower Churchill Falls](#) in its application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada
- Jonnette Watson Hamilton's post [Constraining a Landlord's Ability to Terminate a Residential Tenancy by Raising the Rent](#) was reposted on the blog [Access Review](#)
- Linda McKay-Panos' post [Supreme Court of Canada Expresses its Opinion on Alberta Privacy Case](#) was featured in *Alberta Views* May 2014 column "Eye on Alberta: Advocacy Trumps Privacy" (print edition at p 10)

- [Assisted Suicide and Adverse Effects Discrimination: Where Will the Supreme Court Go in Carter?](#) by Jennifer Koshan and Jonnette Watson Hamilton was excerpted in the Canadian Bar Association [National](#) magazine
- A number of posts were re-printed in the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen (CAPL)'s [Negotiator](#): James Coleman's [Keystone XL Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Next Steps & Climate Impact](#); Martin Olszynski's [Revisiting Regulatory Negligence: The Ernst Fracking Litigation](#); and Nigel Bankes' [Competition for Underground Disposal Space, What happens when A sells B a working interest in the thermal or enhanced production from an oil and gas property and A or its successors in interest continue with primary production?](#), and [Alberta releases the Carbon Capture and Storage Quantification Protocol for Public Comment](#)
- Susan on the Soapbox, one of our favourite blogs, cited ABlawg comments by [Kathleen Mahoney \(here\)](#) and [Martin Olszynski \(here\)](#)

Our Favourite Canadian Law Blogs

- [Can LII Connects](#), for creating a comprehensive site for commentary on Canadian judicial decisions
- Paul Daly's [Administrative Law Matters](#), for excellent commentary on a challenging area of law
- [Susan on the Soapbox](#), for Susan's incisive and provocative commentary on the Alberta political scene
- Osgoode's [Institute for Feminist Legal Studies](#) (IFLS) blog, for its Twitter round-ups and virtual book clubs
- We also love [Slaw](#) (though it is not in the running for a Clawbie)

We encourage our readers to get in on the Clawbies by nominating your favourite Canadian law blogs. Instructions for how to do so are [here](#), and for those of you who don't have your own blog or Twitter account, we understand you can use the Clawbies "Contact us" page [here to email nominations](#).

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