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Review of *Aboriginal Title and Indigenous Peoples:  
Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*. Edited by Louis  
A. Knafla and Haijo Westra.

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**Aboriginal Title and Indigenous Peoples: Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.** Edited by Louis A. Knafla and Haijo Westra. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010. vi + 267 pp. Notes, bibliography indices. C\$85.00 cloth, C\$32.95 paper.

This volume contains a number of intelligent, insightful essays that, as a collection, are meant to offer comparative perspectives on Aboriginal title issues in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. A relatively limited number of the essays actually engage in direct comparison, although David Yarrow's examination of the place of Indigenous jurisdiction in Australia and Canada, Kent McNeil's scrutiny of the source and content of Indigenous land rights in Australia and Canada, and Louis Knafla's superb introduction are welcome exceptions. Most of the other chapters frame a set of comparisons by engaging with issues in a single jurisdiction, although some are also devoted to specific topics farther removed from the book's main thrust. Many of these are nonetheless interesting, and there are chapters by seasoned academics as well as new writers in the field. Significantly, the book crosses disciplinary boundaries: law, history, anthropology, and other disciplinary approaches are represented, with some chapters addressing the intersections of these disciplines.

Because of its emphasis on Aboriginal title and associated issues, the collection bears on the Great Plains more implicitly than directly, with the exception of a piece by Japanese academic Kenichi Matsui on negotiations around Aboriginal water rights on the Canadian prairies in the early 20th century. Nonetheless, the book's indirect bearing on the Great Plains remains largely relevant, with perspectives on general issues concerning the foundations

of Aboriginal title and discussions of the very nature of judges' engagement with Indigenous rights relating indirectly to Indigenous rights in the Great Plains region.

Although *Aboriginal Title* does not state the point directly, its papers had their origins in a conference held at the University of Calgary in 2003. A seven-year delay from the authors' first engagement with the themes to the time of publication is unfortunate, despite the fact that there has obviously been some serious effort at updating and including subsequent literature. The papers are nonetheless framed somewhat in the mindset of a few years ago or end up focusing on adjudicated cases from the early 1990s. Sophisticated though their comments are, delayed dissemination of academic work is unfortunate.

Overall, this collection offers a welcome contribution to the growing literature on comparative Indigenous rights frameworks. Its essays will be of interest within academic and nonacademic contexts, and it should help stimulate further thinking that crosses national and disciplinary borders while addressing issues of interest to the Great Plains. **Dwight Newman**, *College of Law, University of Saskatchewan*.