

Reframing Indigenous Territories: Private Property, Human Rights, and Overlapping Claims [Abstract]

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This paper considers the implications of the powerful “overlapping territories” map produced by the government of Canada in its attempt to refute human rights violations charges brought by Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The map is at the core of Canada’s defense in that it suggests that overlapping indigenous territories negate claims of exclusivity over the land and therefore any kind of obligations the state may have in respect of human or other indigenous rights in those lands. Revealing the limits of cartographic abstractions of indigenous spatialities, as well as the perilous stakes for indigenous peoples when engaging in conventional discourses of territoriality, these issues have broad significance.

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