



Capturing a Moment in Time

Editorial

Laura Forsythe | PhD

University of Winnipeg | Faculty of Education

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Our Inception

As we release the fifth *Pawaatamihk publication* in three years, I am reflecting on our collective journey. Our first circle of editors Drs Jennifer Markides, Cathy Mattes, Chantal Fiola, Lucy Delgado (née Fowler), PhD Student Lindsay Dupre, and I had a dream for our community. With no funding and no experience in starting an academic journal, we sat at the virtual kitchen table determined to fly the plane while we built it. We sat with Elder Verna Demontigny, who gifted us the name *Pawaatamihk*, which in Michif and Cree translates to “a group of people dreaming” or “collective dreaming.” With the incredible librarian Brianne Selman and a team of developers behind the scenes, we built our OJS. In community, we recruited Métis Thinkers, asking them to trust us with their work and allow us to share it with the world.

Our Reception

In *Pawaatamihk*'s first year, it published works of esteemed scholars Drs Anna Corrigan Flaminioⁱ, Allyson Stevensonⁱⁱ, Janice Cindy Gaudetⁱⁱⁱ and featured the work of master beader Jeannine Krauchi^{iv}. Shortly after publication, our readership took off as aunties and uncles could access the knowledge within our open-access journal via social media with no paywall. Thousands of views a month indicated to us we were answering the call for Métis scholarship^v. Scholars began citing the work, and our dream of lifting Métis scholarship became a reality. With all things Métis, politics reared its head at the 2023 Annual General Assembly of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF). Some in government or contracted by the MMF questioned our right to tell these stories and share this knowledge without their oversight. Emboldened by the knowledge that we are Otipemisiwak, meaning "the people who own themselves," we knew

that no one person or government, Métis or otherwise, had the power to silence the community of thinkers.

With this knowledge, combined with the rigorous editorial process our original circle developed, we gained confidence in our ability to share Métis academic study, research, narrative prose, creative tales, poetry, and real-life accounts that contribute positively to Métis Studies. For those unfamiliar, the appropriate editor from the Circle of Editors initially screens each submission for scope and quality. The manuscript then undergoes double anonymized peer review, where experts evaluate its validity, significance, and originality. Based on reviewers' feedback, the editor decides the piece's fate. If revisions are requested, authors submit a revised version for further review. Once accepted, the manuscript proceeds to copyediting, proofreading, and formatting before publication. Throughout this process, communication through OJS among authors, reviewers, and editors helps ensure the integrity and quality of the published work.

Another concern raised the issue of who is Métis and who we were publishing. All authors considered for publication must provide a community connection statement that includes kinship ties and responsibilities to the Métis Nation. Our circle of editors considers those with ties to the Red River settlement demonstrated through family lines, community relationships, connections to place, and citizenship as identifiers. If an author exaggerates or outright commits identity fraud, our policies indicate that we would retract the publication. We may consider an expression of concern if an article is under investigation. All retraction notices explain why the retraction occurred. All citations of the article would go nowhere and would appear as a hallucination citation. This ensures the author would not benefit from the fraud they committed. Since our inception and the publication of eighty-three authors, we have not required a retraction because of our rigorous community connection confirmation process.

Our New Circle

In the Fall of 2025, our circle of editors said goodbye to two of our original thinkers, Cathy Mattes and Lindsay DuPré. In their departure, we saw an opportunity to strengthen planning and mentorship. We invited PhD candidates Dawn Wambold and Erica Van Vugt, along with PhD student Stephanie Erickson, to the circle. Thinking of the future of Métis scholarship and the longevity we would be promoting, we worked with emerging scholars and the legacy that they could actualize over their long careers. In early 2026, we recognized that we needed another editor in the circle who could review French submissions, and we invited Dr. Mylene Gamache.

With our new circle, we continued the critical work of outreach and dissemination of the work created by the Métis thinkers featured in *Pawaatamihk*. Over our five editions, we published twenty-one academic articles, twenty-five poems, eight community stories, six visual culture pieces, and three book reviews. Amassing a total of eighty-two publications for individual Métis Thinkers. Métis Thinkers Network Knowledge Hub features every *Pawaatamihk* publication.

Our Future

In 2026, *Pawaatamihk* joined the Érudit, EBSCOhost, and ProQuest digital platforms, which function as research aggregators across diverse academic fields and increase our visibility. Due to our inclusion of thinkers outside the academy, we have additional sections that are not always recognized but are crucial to our community; we hope to share these sections internationally. In the coming weeks, we will also apply to be considered by the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) to be apart of the global open access infrastructure and the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE) to strengthen our knowledge on the pressing debates in the publishing world such as artificial intelligence, paper mills and editorial independence.

Pawaatamihk in 2026 received the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Aid to Scholarly Journals. After three years of funding the journal through discretionary funding from our institutions or personal funds, we now have three years of guaranteed funding. The journal employs a social media strategist, copyeditors, layout editors and attends conferences to recruit more thinkers. We continue to gain momentum. With years of experience now under our sashes, we are working to raise awareness of the journal both in and out of the Métis community. With hundreds of Métis academics across the homeland presenting at gatherings such as Mawachihitotaak: Let's Get Together in Calgary this September and Nakataymiihtowiin's *Exploring Wahkotowin* in Winnipeg, we hope our role in encouraging knowledge production and dissemination has only just begun.

Biography

Laura Forsythe is a Métis scholar at the University of Winnipeg in the Faculty of Education and co-founder of the Métis Thinkers Network Non-profit Organization. Forsythe's research focus is Métis-specific contributions to the academy, Métis inclusion efforts, and educational sovereignty. Forsythe's contributions include five edited collections, numerous peer-reviewed publications, and the co-creation of two Indigenous academic journals. She is a citizen of the Manitoba Métis Federation. Her kinship ties include the Huppe, Ward, Berard, Morin, Lavallee, and Cyr lines. Her ancestors worked for the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies, fought in the Victory of Frog Plain, and owned Lot 31, the site of a contemporary Métis space called Pakan Town.

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