Challenging the New Canadian Myth: Colonialism, Post-colonialism, and Urban Aboriginal Policy in Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

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ABSTRACT

If one were to take a brief look around most contemporary cities in Manitoba, including those outside of Winnipeg, one would likely see that all is not well in the delicate relationship between the Canadian state and Aboriginal peoples. Academics studying this have diagnosed several issues each of which accounts for some of the challenges plaguing this relationship. While some authors look to jurisdictional indecision and a lack of constitutional clarity as the culprits, others argue these troubles are more closely related a more fundamental issue, notably the lack of recognition of the right to self-determination for Aboriginal peoples, urban or otherwise.

In Manitoba, Winnipeg has received a great deal of academic attention in this matter; however, smaller regional centres have not been as thoroughly studied. Using data gathered from in-depth interviews in Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba, this thesis suggests that the issues identified thus far by academics may all have merit, but that most fail to identify the underlying issues that to this day deeply influence the Canadian state-Aboriginal relationship. This thesis, therefore, contends that it is colonialism, with its constituent elements of racism and unbalanced power relations, that is acting subtly behind the scenes of contemporary urban Aboriginal public policy in small Manitoban cities. The form that colonialism has taken in the contemporary Canadian policy landscape may not be clearly organized or effectively orchestrated, but its foundational parts are still very much active.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

It may seem to many Canadians that colonialism is a relic of the past, a past of fur traders and European explorers from which contemporary Canadians are far removed. Indeed, colonialism has a long history in Canada, dating back to early European conceptions of the land now known as Canada. Explicit colonial policy in Canada began in 1763 with the Royal Proclamation, and found clear expression with the tabling of the White Paper in 1969. This major degree project explores through policy the relationships between the Canadian state and urban Aboriginal peoples. In particular, this research seeks to track colonialism throughout this relationship, denying that colonialism exists only in the past, and drawing on neo-colonial and post-colonial theory to argue that colonialism is alive and well in Canadian urban Aboriginal policy.

It is not within the scope of this project to establish whether urban Aboriginal policy implemented across Canada is post-colonial. Rather, this project focuses on the Manitoba context, and the Thompson and Brandon contexts in particular. Research on urban Aboriginal policy in large urban centres across Canada has already taken place and continues. Winnipeg is an example of a large city with a significant body of research dedicated to its Aboriginal population (for examples, see United Way, 2004; Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy, 1998; Walker, 2006; Distasio & Sylvester,

2004); however, smaller cities outside Winnipeg have received far less academic attention. As two major regional centres of Manitoba outside of Winnipeg, Thompson and Brandon (representing the Manitoba north and south respectively) provide unique insight into the urban Aboriginal policy-making process outside of Winnipeg. Although this project is not a comparative analysis of policy between the two centres and instead attempts to better understand urban Aboriginal policy outside of Winnipeg, comparisons between policies and processes in both cities is nearly inevitable. This research, then, tracks colonialism through the history of the Aboriginal-Canadian state policy relationship, bringing those relationships to bear on the cities of Brandon and Thompson, Manitoba.

Research used by this project was conducted as part of the SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) on *Multilevel Governance and Public Policy in Canadian Municipalities*, directed at the University of Western Ontario by Professor Robert Young. The particular research that forms the basis of this project was part of a project within the MCRI that focused on urban Aboriginal governance and public policy in Manitoba, led by Dr. Ryan Walker from the University of Saskatchewan. Essentially, this project uses a post-colonial lens to analyse an existing data set.

Data used in this project was collected from fifteen interviews conducted with representatives from Aboriginal political and service organizations and municipal, provincial and federal governments in both cities. Participants were selected based on

their association or involvement with the policies and programs selected for examination. Before the particular policies were chosen for examination, a scan was conducted of existing urban Aboriginal policies and programs in Thompson and Brandon. Out of this scan, policies were selected that were thought would provide the most insight into the state of the urban Aboriginal policy landscape in those cities.

1.2 Statement of Purpose

Interest in urban Aboriginal policy has been on the rise recently (Todd, 2002). As a result, researchers have attempted to gain a greater understanding of a wide range of issues facing urban Aboriginal peoples, from governance and self-determination to social problems and economic development (see Chapter 2.0 for more detail). However, little research seeks to understand current public policy as stemming from colonialism. Several projects do see the current condition of urban Aboriginal peoples as a result of colonial processes, but few extend that argument, failing to apply it to current public policy.

Two prominent Aboriginal authors do just that, arguing that Canada is still a colonial state exploiting Aboriginal peoples, whether on- or off-reserve. Taiaiake Alfred (1999) in his work *Peace, Power and Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* makes a powerful argument that Aboriginal peoples must reject the destructive colonial forces, as exhibited by the Canadian state, and embrace traditional Aboriginal values, beginning a long process of healing.

Howard Adams (1999) in his book *Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization* writes, along the same vein as Alfred, that the Canadian state uses colonial tools at its disposal, such as power over history, ideology, and legal and political institutions, to maintain the oppression of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Both of these authors draw on a strong tradition begun by Harold Cardinal (1969) in his work *The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians*. Just as the works by Alfred and Adams are responses to the current issues facing Aboriginal peoples, so was Cardinal's work. In particular, Cardinal wrote in response to the White Paper, an extreme expression of assimilationist policy put forward by the Trudeau government in 1969. All of these important works are powerful and eloquent arguments against the colonial power of the Canadian state, whether set in 1969 or in 1999, and it is these works that inspire this research.

However, instead of replicating these, this project seeks to extend their concepts of Canadian colonialism, integrating urban post-colonial theory as understood by Leonie Sandercock (2003) in *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21ˢᵗ Century*. In this book, Sandercock sketches what a post-colonial city might look like. This project uses her concept of a post-colonial city, merged with the arguments on Canadian colonialism brought forward by Alfred, Adams and Cardinal, to analyze urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba. Doing so brings these theories out of the broad

national context and into a policy-specific local context. The purpose of this research, then, is to test the applicability of these theories – discussed in more detail in the literature review – in a particular local context.

The purpose of the review is to establish a broad framework, grounded in post-colonial theory, within which to examine specific policies in Thompson and Brandon. The literature review for this project, therefore, begins by establishing a theoretical framework of colonialism and post-colonialism. Following that, the review traces colonialism through the historical relationship between Canada and the country's urban Aboriginal peoples. The final sections of the literature review are devoted to conducting an analysis of the current trends in urban Aboriginal policy with a view to understanding the role, if any, that colonialism plays in them.

1.3 Key Research Questions

1) Who is involved in the policy-making process? How are they involved?

2) Who has the most influence over the policy-making process in Thompson and Brandon?

3) How is influence exerted in the policy-making process?

4) Are there any signs of a power shift in the urban Aboriginal policy landscape? If so,
   what is the nature of that shift, and who is gaining power and who is losing it?

5) Does the current state of urban Aboriginal policy fit with what the literature suggests?

1.4 Significance of Research

The significance of this research emerges from two viewpoints: policy analysis and theoretical analysis. Looking at policy analysis, this research brings a greater understanding of urban Aboriginal policy outside of the major Canadian urban centres. This project serves to expand the existing base of knowledge about urban Aboriginal policy and policy-making in Canadian municipalities. Planners will have a more developed body of literature to make use of when attempting to understand urban Aboriginal issues.

Using the theoretical analysis viewpoint, this research further develops the existing literature on urban Aboriginal issues, adding, in turn, a post-colonial thrust. By merging international post-colonial and urban post-colonial theory with theories of colonialism and Aboriginal policy in Canada, this project advances both veins of theory. Thus, in addition to providing planners and policy makers with an expanded body of work addressing urban Aboriginal policy, this project provides those planners and policy-makers with a new framework with which to understand this policy.

1.5 Biases and Limitations

Regardless of the theoretical framework for this project, it is being conducted by a member of a colonizing group. In the most fundamental sense, this is work by a white man about Aboriginal peoples. As a white man brought up in a colonial society, I carry with me the inherent assumptions and biases of my society in ways I have yet to understand. I have spent most of my life thus far unaware of the ideology that I was brought up believing. Even having now recognized many of the assumptions that I had previously taken as truths, it would be unrealistic to presume that I could ever truly eschew all biases of the white European worldview. This work, therefore, is conducted with the understanding that I am from a colonizing group, and as such, that my analysis of the data may be influenced.

This project also has a number of limitations. The first of these limitations is that the research examines colonialism as expressed through public policy. However, while colonialism may be found absent in policy, it may yet remain strong in more subtle social relationships. Hints of these relationships have manifested themselves through the interviews after interpretive readings of the data. Nevertheless, it is not the express goal of this research to seek those more subtle, non-policy relationships.

One of the most obvious limitations to this project is geographical. The MCRI research took place in Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba. As such, the findings of the analysis are unique to those cities. These are not case studies meant to be extrapolated to the wider

Canadian context. Rather, these are local studies that attempt to understand better the nature of Aboriginal-state relationships in those local settings.

In addition to these limitations, the scope of the MCRI project did not allow for an examination of all policy areas. Instead, a general scan of policy was conducted and the policies selected were thought to capture most accurately the current state and emerging trends in urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon. As a result of this decision, certain policy fields were not examined in detail. It is therefore impossible for this project to claim that its findings apply to all areas of urban Aboriginal policy.

The final limitation of his project comes from the differing purposes of this project and the MCRI. While the MCRI focused on trying to determine the quality of public policy in Canadian municipalities, this research project looks in particular for colonialism in Aboriginal-state relationships. Because this research views the data collected for the MCRI through a different analytical lens, there may be occasions when that data limits the depth of post-colonial analysis possible.

2.0 ABORIGINAL POLICY AND THE CANADIAN STATE

2.1 Introduction

While contemplating multi-cultural policy and Aboriginal peoples in 1983, author Pierre L. Van Den Berghe wrote that "I favor a policy of cultural *laissez-faire*, in which the state, while protecting the right of *individuals* to express their religious, linguistic and other forms of cultural pluralism without harassment or interference, yet refrains from explicitly recognizing special rights to any particular *groups*. The crux of the matter is the primacy of individual rights over collective ones" (Van Den Berghe, 1983: 248, emphasis in original). At first glance, it is easy to dismiss this argument as a product of its time. Yet, over a decade earlier, this argument – one of individual equality trumping collective special status – was made by the White Paper as tabled by the Trudeau government. Important to note here is that this theory reflects European values which emphasize the primacy of individual rights over the granting of special collective rights to any group. The above quote can therefore be seen as representing the imprinting of dominant European worldviews on a colonial setting, and, in particular, on a colonized people.

Still, many Canadians, whether consciously or unconsciously, are convinced of the primacy of individual rights and apply this logic to Aboriginal issues, choosing to deny Aboriginal claims to collective distinct rights. To some Canadians, Aboriginal peoples should be treated no different than any other non-Europeans. As Tom Flanagan, a

prominent Canadian scholar on Aboriginal issues, argues in his book *First Nation?*

Second Thoughts, "Europeans are, in effect, a new immigrant wave, taking control of

land just as earlier aboriginal settlers did" (Flanagan, 2000: 6). This reveals a deeply

embedded notion that it is the descendents of settlers who are in fact the rightful

occupants of the land now known as Canada; this view carries within it the notion that

Europeans are just as naturally entitled to the land as are Aboriginal peoples. Such a

concept is central to how the neo-colonial story of Canada is told and retold,

reconstituting the realities of the past into a coherent theory of natural European

sovereignty. This is one of the most powerful tools of a colonial state.

But for many Aboriginal peoples, Canada is very much a colonial state that uses many

tools, including the rewriting of history, to exploit and oppress Aboriginal peoples

(Alfred, 1999; Adams, 1999; Cardinal, 1969). The Métis author Howard Adams

summarizes his concept of Canadian colonialism as follows:

> ...the relations of white society with Métis communities can best be
> described in terms of power relations wherein the dominant society
> controls and monopolizes important cultural institutions, the legal and
> political apparatus, and the class structure. It is through this monopolistic
> control of social machinery that white capitalist society enforces the
> destruction of minority cultures. (Adams, 1999: 9)

And cities are far from immune from this process. Cities have been critical in the

establishment of the colonial state and continue to be epicenters where the effects of

colonialism are, in some cases, most pronounced (Sandercock, 2003). For many

Aboriginal peoples, the evidence of the devastating impact that colonialism has had on

Aboriginal peoples is abundant in urban centres. In many Canadian cities, and especially

in western Canada, Aboriginal people now represent a significant proportion of urban

populations (Peters, 2000; Statistics Canada, 2008). According to recent censuses, the

population of Aboriginal peoples in urban areas is growing rapidly (Guimond, 2003;

Statistics Canada, 2008). As of 2006, 54% of Aboriginal peoples reside in urban areas

(Statistics Canada, 2008) and form distinct parts of many vibrant urban communities.[1]

But life in urban areas presents Aboriginal peoples with some unique challenges. Among

these are higher unemployment, lower levels of education, higher incarceration rates,

greater housing need and poorer health than non-Aboriginal Canadians (Hanselmann &

Gibbins, 2003; Graham & Peters, 2002). These are clearly the signs of a colonized

people, an idea echoed by several authors (Alfred, 1999; Adams, 1999; Cardinal, 1969).

Grassroots responses to these challenges have emerged in cities across Canada and are

having a positive impact (United Way, 2004). Among these, theories of the urban self-

government as an expression of the inherent right to self-determination show promise for

forging a new, post-colonial path in urban Aboriginal public policy. The various orders of

Canadian government have also responded to these challenges with a variety of policy

initiatives; yet, it is widely recognized that public policy formulated thus far has largely

been a failure (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003).

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[1] Statistics Canada data is itself an expression of colonialism since it uses the definitions of Aboriginal peoples as established by the Canadian colonial state. The Assembly of First Nations has criticized the accuracy the results from the 2006 Census and suggests that the census failed to count over 200,000 registered Indians. Also important according to the AFN is the Statistics Canada practice of including non-status and status-Indians in the same category as First Nations. The AFN argues that doing so has led to the spurious conclusion that more First Nations reside in urban areas than not (AFN, 2008).

For Aboriginal peoples in Canada, the end of direct European colonial rule did not bring with it the withdrawal of non-Aboriginals and the reinstatement of Aboriginal-run governments. Instead, it confirmed what had been a long-established practice in Canada: internal colonialism. The record of this form of colonialism can be seen in the policies developed for Aboriginal peoples throughout the history of Aboriginal-state relations, and which found expression most clearly in such policies as those found in the Indian Act and the White Paper. These policies and others have acted (and continue to act) as tools of the Canadian colonial state that has oppressed Aboriginal peoples for well over a century. But, what is the state of current urban Aboriginal policy? Is Canada truly post-colonial, or has the oppressive status quo been maintained in the contemporary policy landscape? This chapter will attempt to shed light on the current state of urban Aboriginal policy by conducting an analysis of policy relationships between Canada and the Aboriginal peoples living within its borders. Although much of this chapter must perforce discuss Aboriginal policy broadly, this is not the primary intention here. Nevertheless, modern urban Aboriginal policy cannot be understood without first establishing its background in policies as they have evolved to the present day. In doing so, it is hoped that some light will be shed on the above questions.

2.2 A Note on Voice and Terminology

Whenever a non-Aboriginal person writes about Aboriginal issues, challenges related to voice appropriation emerge, and rightly so. Racism and racist policies have been

evidenced in many works about Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal peoples. I am not Aboriginal. As indicated above in the limitations of the study, the biases of my culture will inevitably find expression in my writing. However, in this paper, I do not attempt to speak as an Aboriginal person or on their behalf, nor do I try to relate the experiences of urban Aboriginal peoples past or present. This I could not do, nor would it be right for me to try. Instead, this paper seeks only to gain a more thorough understanding of the role(s) of colonialism in contemporary Canadian urban Aboriginal public policy. In doing so, it is hoped that this paper will fill a gap in knowledge about the state of contemporary urban Aboriginal public policy.

Terminology referring to Aboriginal peoples is complex. The term 'Aboriginal' itself means different things in different countries (Fleras, 2000). For the most part in Canada, Aboriginal peoples have not been allowed to define themselves, but have instead been defined by government. Although these very definitions are expressions of colonialism, no other definitions have yet emerged that have gained significant support or widespread use. For the purposes of this paper, then, the definition of 'Aboriginal' found in the Constitution Act of 1982 will be used, referring inclusively to Indian, Inuit and Métis people (Constitution Act, 1982, s. 35(2)). Where used, the term 'Indian' refers to status Indians according to the Indian Act, as does the term 'First Nations people/person'. Further breakdowns of Indian status are used only when necessary. The terms 'indigenous' and 'native' are not used in order to avoid further confusion.

2.3 Colonial or Post-colonial?

In the opening paragraph of his seminal work, *The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians*, Harold Cardinal argues that "the history of Canada's Indians is a shameful chronicle of the white man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust" (Cardinal, 1969: 1). This view of Canadian history is distinct from the concept of the country's history held by most non-Aboriginal Canadians. To these people, one view of Canadian history sees the land as a barren wilderness that was open to be conquered by the white settlers (*not* colonizers). In this view of Canadian history, Aboriginal peoples played little or no role. They were simply caricatures painted into the background of Canadian history, concealed behind the noble settler civilizing the virgin Canadian wilderness.

Another version of Canadian history conceptualizes the settling of Canada as a duly considered, peaceful process that protected Aboriginal peoples in Canada, especially when compared to the relatively violent conflicts south of the Canadian border. Historian Sarah Carter notes that "...these assumptions are central to the way Western Canadians have identified themselves, to the virtues that they ascribe to themselves..." (Carter, 1999: 101).

Even modern concepts of the city are not free from these stories and the values they contain. Joel Kotkin argues that "the evolution of cities embodies the story of humanity

as it rose from primitive origins to impose itself on the world" (Kotkin, 2005: xv). Kotkin takes this argument further and characterizes cities as centres of art, culture, commerce, religion, and by extension, civilization. This characterization presents a powerful story of dichotomy, of civilized cities versus primitive hinterland, of civilized versus uncivilized peoples.

These versions of Canadian history and the role of cities are dominant narratives that influence how non-Aboriginal Canadians (and Aboriginal peoples themselves) imagine themselves, and how they perceive themselves in relation to Aboriginal peoples in this country. These are stories of who has power and who does not. Particularly, these narratives help non-Aboriginal Canadians hide from themselves their own role in the Canadian colonial apparatus.

Judith Innes understands these narratives not simply as 'stories' but instead as 'myths'. Here, the term 'myth' is understood as providing the shared meanings, values, images and emotions that act together in a community to create collective action (Innes, 1990). To her, myths are the link between knowledge and policy action. Since raw scientific knowledge is too difficult for most to understand, let alone to translate into policy, most successful policy "…comes packaged with a story (though often one that is not explicit) that has a meaning to the actors and that links actions to valued things and to expected results" (Innes, 1990: 24). Innes lends further import to the notion of the myth by arguing that the strong emotions that myths carry with them are often necessary to overcome

"...objections by groups which may be harmed" (*ibid*: 25). The dominant Canadian narratives described above fit Innes' understanding of myths. These Canadian myths, based on prevailing values and strong emotions, have been used to establish understandings of Aboriginal-non-Aboriginal relationships. And it is also these myths that have been used by the colonial state to overcome the objections of Aboriginal peoples.

Two fundamental questions emerge from the above discussions: what is 'colonialism'? And, what does it mean to be 'post-colonial'? Colonialism generally refers to the period of European post-Renaissance expansion wherein the development of colonies was "...coterminous with the development of a modern capitalist system of economic exchange..." (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000: 46). In this economic relationship, colonies were established primarily to provide raw materials for the expanding economies of colonial powers. To be sure, colonies had been established prior to this period, but post-Renaissance European colonialism, with its unique economic imperative, is of particular interest to this paper, since it is out of this period of colonialism that the modern Canadian state evolved (*ibid*). Clearly, Canada was for most of its history a colony of Great Britain. But, the above purely economic definition disguises the true depth and effects of colonialism. To facilitate colonialism meant that "...the relation between the colonizer and the colonized was locked into a rigid hierarchy of difference deeply resistant to fair and equitable exchanges, whether economic, cultural or social" (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000: 46). At the heart of colonialism, then, is the

exploitation (economic, cultural and social) of the colonized. This is especially true where the colonized are not of the same race as the colonizer, as is the case in Canada. According to Adams, Canadian colonialism "...is a complex system of racial, cultural and political domination..." (Adams, 1999: 7). Racism is a crucial part of the construction of the Canadian colonial state. Historically, race (and racism) was used as a justification for the asymmetrical power relations between the colonized and the colonizer (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000). Colonized indigenous peoples were deliberately constructed as inferior to the colonizer. This concept of racial hierarchy became so institutionalized in the imperialist mindset that as imperialism developed further at the end of the nineteenth century, so did theories such as Social Darwinism, claiming that colonized peoples were genetically pre-determined to be inferior (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000). As such, the construction of race by the colonizer is the cornerstone of successful colonization.

According to Adams (1999), Aboriginal peoples began to feel themselves inferior, succumbing to the elaborately constructed dichotomies of inferior/superior or savage/civilized. As Cardinal argues, using gender-exclusive language characteristic of the time, "tell a person long enough and often enough that he is inferior, and likely he will eventually accept the false image you thrust upon him" (Cardinal, 1969: 5). So, colonialism not only crafts a new understanding of Aboriginal peoples in the minds of non-Aboriginals, but also functions the same way in the minds of Aboriginal peoples themselves.

But colonialism requires more than just pervasive racism. As described above, it requires a complex system of oppression, albeit one grounded by race and racism. To achieve colonial success, the state has a large role to play. Indeed, it may be seen as the leading role. Cardinal (1969) describes Aboriginal peoples as the pawns in the game of colonization controlled by the Canadian state, which employed "...the missionaries, the police, the Hudson's Bay Company, and its own Indian Agents as salesmen for its own pacification programme" (Cardinal, 1969: 53). Adams takes this concept one step further arguing that government uses the tools mentioned above to create a colonial ideology. Adams sees government institutions, such as the judicial system and the education system, as powerful tools used to impose a colonial ideology on both colonizers and the colonized. In Canada, this ideology is one based on "...the glorification of competition, individualism, greed and the pursuit of power and wealth" (Adams, 1999: 40). Taiaiake Alfred (1999) expresses this notion of colonial control through ideology by suggesting that white society maintains its control over Aboriginal peoples not through overtly racist laws but "...through endless references to the 'market', 'fiscal reality', 'Aboriginal rights', and 'public will'" (Alfred, 1999: xiii). Colonialism, therefore, is maintained not only through overt racism, but through racism deeply embedded within the Western mindset itself. Colonialism in Canada, then, is an overt, premeditated system of oppression (racial, cultural, social and economic) that exploits Aboriginal people for the benefit of non-Aboriginal colonizers (settlers).

And cities were an integral part of the colonial process in Canada. Sandercock (2003) argues that the process of city-building in colonial states required the establishment of "...a whole range of spatial technologies of power such as the laws of private property, the practices of surveying, naming, mapping, and the procedures of urban and regional planning" (Sandercock, 2003: 24). These technologies represented the implementation of imperialism in the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples. Sandercock also implicates the modern city in the colonial process, noting that modern cities are both expressions of colonial mentalities and also sites of anti-colonial resistance (Sandercock, 2003). The racial inferiority ascribed to Aboriginal peoples that is so central to colonial success is expressed in their relegation to urban peripheries and in the deliberate exclusion of Aboriginal peoples from urban decision-making processes (Sandercock, 2003).

Post-colonialism is a more difficult concept to encapsulate. The term itself has a strong temporal element which suggests that colonialism is in the past and has run its course. In general, this term is applied on an international scale to countries that have declared independence from their former colonial rulers (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000). In this sense, Canada became post-colonial in 1982 with the patriation of the Constitution Act. However, although the colonial relationship between the Canadian state and Great Britain may have changed, the colonial relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state did not. While on an international scale few formal colonies exist, a state of colonialism can persist if the colonial apparatus initiated by the colonizer remains, leading to what is described as 'internal colonialism' (Adams, 1999). If one accepts this

understanding of post-colonialism on the international scale, then in this view, a country may be post-colonial while at the same time maintaining colonial relationships within itself. This contradiction presents a challenge to the generally used notion of a post-colonial state.

If post-colonialism refers, on an international scale, to the independence of formerly colonized countries, then if post-colonialism were to be applied within a country, it would suggest that an internal post-colonial state could be reached if the colonized peoples were able to act upon their independence. But, as mentioned above, the act of independence itself does not constitute an end to colonialism. Leonie Sandercock (2003) argues along these lines, noting that the commonly used concept of post-colonialism acknowledges the formal act of independence, but fails to acknowledge that "...a colonial mentality, and governmentality, has lingered on in other forms" (Sandercock, 2003: 23). Instead, a state of internal post-colonialism, in its fullest sense, must involve the deconstruction of all aspects of colonial mentality and the colonial state. According to Sandercock, this involves at its core a complete rewriting of the Canadian foundational mytho-poetic 'story' in a way that respects and embraces Aboriginal viewpoints and worldviews (Sandercock, 2003).

The following sections will attempt to establish whether or not a new Canadian story is being written, and thereby, if Canada is post-colonial. This analysis will begin by

conducting an examination of relevant policies throughout the history of Aboriginal-Canadian state relations.

2.4 An Historical Perspective on Colonialism in Canadian Aboriginal Policy

As an academic field that has developed recently, post-colonial studies concentrate on examining the effects of colonialism on societies and cultures (Ashcroft, Gareth & Tiffin, 2000). The following section will attempt to apply this concept to the examination of the past policy relationships between Canada and its urban Aboriginal peoples. To a limited extent, the following section will be divided into what are sometimes referred to as the various 'stages' of colonization. These stages should be seen not as reflections of clear and consistent colonial policy. For, as Cole Harris writes in his book *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*, colonial policy was far from consistent or methodical. Instead, these stages should be looked upon as a means of understanding broad and significant shifts in colonial relationships.

By the time the first settlers of the colonial powers set foot on the territory now known as Canada, the first and perhaps one of the most lasting colonial acts was already complete. Canada had been declared *terra nullius*, explained by Marlene Brandt Castellano as the concept wherein Canada was understood to be "...an empty land in which settlers planted law and government, and over which nation-builders pushed iron rails from sea to sea..." (Castellano, 1986: 3). The lands these settlers wrestled from the firm grip of the

wilderness and brought to civilization were seen, for all intents and purposes, as empty. According to this argument, there were certainly no civilized occupants of this territory who warranted recognition or sovereignty. Further to this argument, the European worldview put a great deal of weight on the use of the lands now known as Canada. The settlers of this land made the assumption that "most of the land they encountered…was waste, waiting to be put to productive use: or, where Native people obviously were using the land, that their uses were inefficient and therefore should be replaced" (Harris, 2002: 265). This policy paved the way for the establishment of the colony. Through this single critically important action, Aboriginal peoples were effectively declared unworthy of the lands upon which they had lived for millennia. For Europeans at that time, there was no moral impediment to claiming this land. No one was here.

However, the maintenance of this policy in practice proved difficult. The reality on the ground meant that settlers were vastly outnumbered by the Aboriginal occupants of the land. And, as settlers from various European colonial powers competed for control of territory, they required the help of Aboriginal peoples (Ray, 1996). Military alliances were formed and trade relationships were solidified. This is the stage of relations between colonizers and the colonized sometimes referred to as *contact and cooperation* (Castellano, 1986). Fragile white colonies were unable to forcibly assert sovereignty over territories outside of established colonies (Lawrence, 2003). As a result, colonists and Aboriginal peoples signed treaties "to cement relations of peace and friendship and to formalize their commitment to share the land as neighbours" (Castellano, 1986: 3). This

era, with its emphasis on maintaining good relations with Aboriginal peoples, gave birth to another of the foundational documents that have helped form Aboriginal-state relations, the Royal Proclamation of 1763. In this document, the British Crown, having recently defeated the French at Quebec in 1759, formally recognized Aboriginal title to their traditional lands west of existing colonies (Tennant, 1990; Schouls, 2003). Importantly, though, the document also established the process for the extinguishment of Aboriginal title. Aboriginal lands were held collectively and could only be sold to the Crown after a public meeting (Tennant, 1990). So, while the Proclamation – quite contrary to the concept of *terra nullius* – recognized Aboriginal title to the land, it also paved the way for their dispossession from the land, and opened the way for the colonization of the west. The Royal Proclamation performed two simultaneous functions, both critical to the establishment of a colonial state: it maintained peaceful relations with Aboriginal groups while they still remained a military threat, and concurrently opened the door for further colonization.

Considering the above understanding of the Royal Proclamation, it is not surprising that once the relations of power had been judicially encoded against Aboriginal peoples, the stage known as *displacement and assimilation* began (Castellano, 1986). This stage is often characterized as one wherein colonization was vigorous and its effects on Aboriginal peoples devastating. Here, not only were Aboriginal peoples removed from their land, and thereby their sustenance, but their cultures were also attacked. Central to this process were two pieces of legislation that continue form the bases for Aboriginal-

state relations: the British North America Act of 1867 (or Constitution Act, 1867) and the Indian Act.

The establishment of the Canadian state through the Constitution Act of 1867 represented the formalization of colonial control over Aboriginal peoples. In the Constitution, all powers had to be accounted for between the provinces and the central government. This effectively squeezed out any remaining political power given to Aboriginal peoples through the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and established the judicial dominance of the Canadian state (Schouls, 2003). This judicial dominance enabled the government to shift its priority for Aboriginal peoples to assimilation. Schouls (2003: 41) argues that political, educational and religious institutions were united by their assertion that "…Indians could be incorporated into the Canadian community of politically equal citizens only if assimilated into the general population". Through this Act, the federal government began the construction of the Canadian colonial apparatus. "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" were now under federal government control. No longer were Aboriginal peoples sovereign.

The Indian Act, which came into force in 1876, was (and remains) the ultimate expression of government control over First Nations people and also the ultimate expression of assimilation. The Indian Act has been the tool through which the federal government asserted the authority it gave itself over Aboriginal peoples. The federal

government would, from 1876 onward, determine who was an Indian and who was not (Fleras, 2000).

Author Bonita Lawrence notes that the Indian Act has come to be much more than simply a piece of legislation. According to her, the Act is "...a regulatory regime [that] provides ways of understanding Native identity, organizing a conceptual framework that has shaped contemporary Native life in ways that are now so familiar as to almost seem "natural"" (Lawrence, 2003: 1). Aboriginal identity was a particular target for the Indian Act. By arbitrarily establishing who was an 'Indian' and who was not, the Act fundamentally altered Aboriginal identity. The Act gave benefits to those who fell under its definition of 'Indian' while denying benefits to those who did not (Lawrence, 2003). By denying the rights of non-status Indians and Métis peoples, the Indian Act effectively divided the Aboriginal population along new lines. Lawrence further asserts that these processes of regulation of Aboriginal identity are central to the colonization process.

> These systems forcibly supplanted traditional Indigenous ways of anchoring relationships among individuals, their communities, and the land-erasing knowledge of self, culture, and history in the process. Native identity has been categorized and "measured" according to racist and sexist criteria; these categories are then used to divide communities and to deny entitlement to land to certain groups of Native people. (Lawrence, 2003: 24)

Identity reconstruction, then, enables the colonizer to appropriate Aboriginal lands while simultaneously dividing any Aboriginal opposition (Lawrence, 2003).

The government would also regulate Indian lands as well as band governments. Traditional Aboriginal political voices were effectively eliminated (Fleras, 2000). Castellano states that "the Indian Act deposed traditional leaders and dismissed Aboriginal law as mere "customs" (Castellano, 1986: 4). Aboriginal governments were replaced by white forms of government. The Act also institutionalized sexism, allowing only men to vote in band elections and eliminating the Indian status of Indian women who married non-Indian men. Indians themselves became wards of the state. Ray (1996, pg. 204) states that the Indian Act was "...designed to teach Native peoples democratic principles, while it protected their interests...the reality was that the act allowed the federal government to interfere in all aspects of Indians' lives". Roger Gibbins and J. Rick Ponting reiterate this view of the Indian Act by comparing it to earlier treaties. They argue that "...the treaties and the Act are not two sides of the same coin – while the former provide a limited form of protection, the latter provides a comprehensive mechanism of social control" (Gibbins & Ponting, 1986: 21). The breadth of this control cannot be overstated. Nearly every aspect of Aboriginal life was regulated by the Indian Act. In line with the concepts of colonialism described earlier in the paper, the Indian Act effectively "...created a special class of people designated solely on the basis of their race, and it established a means for governing them autocratically" (Ray, 1996: 205). In this sense, the Indian Act is the ultimate act of colonization.

Christianity was also very much a colonial force used against Aboriginal peoples. The church played such an important role the colonial mindset that it is the very concept of

'civilization' is often seen as being based on Christianity (Gibbins & Ponting, 1986). As a result, "...the entwinement of the Christian church with the administration of Indian affairs was virtually inevitable" (Gibbins & Ponting, 1986: 27). Residential schools represent the culmination of the colonial state using the church as a tool for oppression and assimilation. Religious education of Aboriginal peoples had existed for many years prior to the establishment of these residential schools (Cardinal, 1969). But residential schools – by removing a child entirely from his or her normal social, cultural and physical environment – had the greatest impact. It was at these schools that the colonizer's ideology was imposed on the colonized, denying any validity in traditional Aboriginal worldviews. Residential schools did not seek simply to enlighten Aboriginal children to western worldviews, but sought instead the outright destruction of Aboriginal cultures, communities and ways of living (Aflred, 1999). In an interview with Taiaiake Alfred, the interviewee, an Aboriginal activist from British Columbia, characterized the impacts of residential schools as follows:

> On one level the family gets broken up; on the next level the community gets broken up. That's a big factor. But on the individual level it's even worse...you end up going back home and it's as if the community had blown up, as if a bomb had been dropped in the middle of the village and we were just salvaging the leftover pieces, trying to stick them back together. (Alfred, 1999: 8)

Although residential schools were ultimately unsuccessful in their attempt to eradicate Aboriginal cultures, they caused profound damage that has yet to be fully appreciated or addressed.

Assimilation remained the cornerstone of the relationship between the Canadian state and

Aboriginal peoples through the first half of the twentieth century, and often force was

used to prevent Aboriginal expressions of their distinct cultures and traditions (Ray,

1996).

The economic prosperity brought on by the Second World War saw the beginning of an

urbanization trend in Canada (Frideres, 1998). Before WWII, relatively few Aboriginal

people resided in Canadian cities; however, after the war, numbers began to increase

rapidly. By 1960, nearly 15% of the Aboriginal population lived in urban areas (Frideres,

1998). Non-Aboriginals saw this influx of Aboriginal peoples as a serious problem.

Aboriginal peoples were characterized as a great financial burden to cities, and brought

with them inner-city decay (Peters, 2000). Most academic opinion of the time spoke of

the incompatibility of Aboriginal culture and the city. The white city and the Aboriginal

reserve were conceptualized as two irreconcilable settings, one for whites, and one for

Aboriginal peoples. It was in this environment that policy in urban areas remained

focused on assimilation (Frideres, 1998).

The destruction of Aboriginal cultures would ironically find its most overt policy

statement in a document written under the Trudeau Liberal government in 1968, a

government which had come to power promising a "just society" (Gibbins & Ponting,

1986). As a policy document, the White Paper, published in 1969 under the formal title of

the "Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy", was the result of an

inability to reconcile the sometimes mutually exclusive notions of 'special status' and 'equality' (Tennant, 1990). In the end, the White Paper emerged clearly embracing the idea of equality at the cost of rejecting all special status (Gibbins & Ponting, 1986). In effect, the White Paper proposed to eliminate Aboriginal peoples as a distinct people with distinct rights. According to David Nicholson (1984) the White Paper showed that the "…federal government was openly committed to a process of assimilation, integration, and elimination of Indian peoples in Canada" (Nicholson, 1984: 60). All legal protections that had maintained the distinct status of Aboriginal peoples would be eliminated (Ray, 1996; Schouls, 2003; Fleras, 2000). Instead, Aboriginal peoples would be treated as all other Canadians are treated. In this "just society" the same policies would apply to all Canadians. There would be no more Aboriginal policy. With one stroke, the federal government proposed to deny any responsibility it had for Aboriginal peoples. In his work written in express opposition to the White Paper, Cardinal argued that "the federal government, instead of acknowledging its legal and moral responsibilities to the Indians of Canada and honouring the treaties that the Indians signed in good faith, now proposes to wash its hands of Indians entirely…" (Cardinal, 1969: 1). Hitting at the heart of the policy's colonial roots, Cardinal further states that the White Paper is "…a thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation" (Cardinal, 1969: 1). The core of that statement is not assimilation, but extermination. For, assimilation is only the name for the means by which the federal government proposed to eliminate Aboriginal distinctiveness altogether, thereby taking the final colonial step of owning and controlling all of Canada to the exclusion of Aboriginal peoples. The notion of equality enabled the

government to sidestep any questions of unextinguished Aboriginal title and, in effect, to deny the distinct existence of Aboriginal peoples altogether.

But, unlike reaction to previous policies, Aboriginal resistance to the White Paper was loud, organized and unequivocal. Arthur Ray argues that, contrary to the intention of the government, the White Paper galvanized Aboriginal leaders in protest (Ray, 1996). Instead of eliminating Aboriginal peoples through assimilation, the White Paper brought forward new Aboriginal organizations and brought to an end over a century of formal assimilationist policy (Gibbins & Ponting, 1986). Aboriginal policy was left without a coherent *modus operandi* and a decade of policy confusion was the result (Fleras, 2000).

Court cases through the 1970s and 80s, such as the *Calder* case, forced the federal government to rethink its position in relation to the existence of unextinguished Aboriginal title (Ray, 1996; Fleras, 2000). In the *Calder* case, the Nisga'a, who had initiated the action, asserted that their Aboriginal title to the land had never been extinguished (Ray, 1996). In opposition to this view, the Crown argued that Aboriginal title had been implicitly extinguished by colonial land legislation. In 1973, after having been appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, the *Calder* case was lost with only three of seven justices supporting the notion that Aboriginal title could only be extinguished explicitly through treaties and, therefore, that Nisga'a title had never been extinguished. The support of those three justices, however, was a critical turning point (Tennant, 1990; Ray, 1996). With its early, albeit qualified, support for Aboriginal rights and title, the

Calder decision began to provide new direction for how the Canadian government would interact with Aboriginal peoples (Fleras, 2000). From that point on, the notion of unextinguished Aboriginal title was taken seriously, and the federal government began negotiations with Aboriginal peoples in those areas where title had not been explicitly extinguished (Macklem, 2001).

The 1980s also saw a critical development in policy related to the Métis people and to non-status Indians. Until the constitutional negotiations that took place prior to the patriation of the Constitution in 1982, Métis people were not officially considered Aboriginal. In that sense, they were not truly recognized as a distinct nation with a distinct culture (Chartier, 1994). Considerable lobbying on the part of Métis political organizations saw the Métis people included in the official definition of Aboriginal and a commitment was made for further conferences with the federal government and provinces to discuss Métis issues such as social services and self-government (Chartier, 1994). Although it was hoped that these negotiations, coupled with the constitutional recognition, would eventually lead to a new relationship between Métis people and the federal government, the negotiations eventually failed and little concrete action on the part of the federal government has taken place.

The disoriented policy relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state that had been caused by the resounding rejection of the White Paper persisted into the end of the 1980s and early 1990s. It was at that time that Aboriginal peoples turned to

more desperate tactics to safeguard what they viewed as their inherent rights. Highly public confrontations ensued across Canada, with perhaps the most notable of those being the Oka crisis (Land, 2001). The very public nature of this confrontation brought issues of Aboriginal rights to the attention of the general Canadian public. And the failure of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords brought Aboriginal issues to the attention of government (Land, 2001). The response of the federal government to these crises occurred in 1991 with the creation of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (Cairns, 2000). According to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the purpose of the Commission was to "…help restore justice to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to stubborn problems" (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2004). The recommendations of the report are centred on four concepts: "a renewed relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada; self-determination as expressed in new structures of self-government; self-reliance through restoration of a land base and economic development; and healing…" (Castellano, 2001: 6). On the surface, this appears to have been a fundamental policy shift from one of dramatic inequality and oppression to one based on mutual respect and understanding, self-government and land rights.

Such a reconfiguring would most certainly have put Canada on the road to post-colonialism. However, instead of abrupt action on the recommendations of the Royal Commission, which were published in 1996, "…the federal government's first response to the Royal Commission was deafening silence" (Land, 2001). When action was

eventually taken, it failed to meet the recommendations of the report and most often consisted simply of greater injections of funding to existing programs (*ibid*). Coincidentally, the federal government's inaction took place at a time when Aboriginal issues had receded from the attention of the general public (*ibid*). It could be argued, then, that the very reason for the creation of the Royal Commission was not to respond to the moral injustice of colonial oppression, but instead to create a tactic to assure the Canadian populace that something was indeed being done. Taiaiake Alfred (1999) speaks directly to this state of affairs. He argues that the federal government has become skilled at "redefining without reforming" (Alfred, 1999: xiii). Essentially, argues Alfred, the federal government has created a post-colonial vocabulary of change that it uses when discussing Aboriginal issues, but the vocabulary is not reinforced by any concrete action. Instead, the federal government is "...letting go of the costly and cumbersome minor features of the colonial relationship and further entrenching in law and practice the real bases of control" (Ibid: xiii). Summing up his viewpoint on the true meaning behind the rhetoric around the concept of a 'renewed relationship', Alfred states the following:

> The rusty cage may be broken, but a new chain has been strung round the indigenous neck; it offers more room to move, but it still ties our people to white men pulling on the strong end. (Alfred, 1999: xiii)

A peculiar omission of the Report is urban Aboriginal peoples. Although the report speaks of a new relationship, the relationship described within the document is one that presents several challenges to urban Aboriginal peoples and communities. The vision presented in the RCAP report is one that sees a renewed relationship leading to self-government, which requires economic self-reliance and healing (Land, 2001).

Unfortunately, this vision of land-based self-governing and self-reliant Aboriginal communities neglects the large urban Aboriginal populations for whom this form of renewed relationship meant little or nothing. In essence, the 1996 report released by the Commission devoted relatively little attention to urban Aboriginal issues (Andersen & Denis, 2003; Cairns, 2000). The primary focus of the report was on a nation-to-nation focus between the federal government and First Nations with land bases. Analysis of urban Aboriginal communities was relegated to their socio-economic and demographic issues (Cairns, 2000; Hanselmann, 2001), again, defined by Ottawa. In that sense, any fundamental change in the relationship between the federal government and urban Aboriginal peoples was not even on the agenda for discussion. Although Métis and non-status Indians had achieved recognition in the Constitution Act 1982, there seemed little evidence of any relationship change. There still appears to be no clear direction for urban Aboriginal policy in Canada.

Urban Métis people also face some new uncertainties about their status as a result of the recent Supreme Court decision on the *Powley* case, which was initiated when two Métis people in the Sault Ste. Marie area were charged with hunting without a license (Métis National Council, 2004). In the end, after several unsuccessful appeals by the Province of Ontario, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that there are inherent Métis hunting rights protected under S. 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982 provided those involved in the hunting pass a particular test (Métis National Council, 2004). Although some Métis organizations see the *Powley* decision as confirming that they have inherent rights

protected by the constitution (Métis National Council, 2004), the decision also defined

who is and who is not Métis. Such a definition may further fragment the Métis population

in urban areas between those who fit the definition and those who do not (Peters, 2003).

As is the case in the *Powley* decision, the courts have had some impact in the Aboriginal

policy arena. Cases such as *Delgamuukw* and *Marshall* have established inherent rights to

Aboriginal self-government as well as hunting and fishing rights (Land, 2001; Fleras,

2000). But such decisions, although important for First Nations, do little to address the

needs of urban Aboriginal peoples.

Promises abound regarding a new relationship between Canada and the Aboriginal

peoples, but little action seems to have occurred. The federal government retains a firm

hold on the reins of power and shows no signs of giving any considerable part of that

power away. What progress has been made in Aboriginal policy tends to focus on land

rights and pays scant attention to the unique needs and concerns of urban Aboriginal

peoples. The roots of Canadian colonialism appear to run deep and show no signs of

withering. This section has attempted to analyze the historical policy relationship

between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples and has documented a firm

colonialist tendency throughout. The following section analyzes the major trends

emerging in urban Aboriginal policy and argues that there are two dominant trends: the

use of jurisdictional authority as colonial power, and the emergence of urban Aboriginal

self-determination.

2.5 Jurisdictional Indecision as Colonial Power

As mentioned earlier, the division of powers in the 1867 Constitution Act was complete and was integral in crafting a strong base on which to build assimilationist policy that would extinguish Aboriginal peoples as a threat to the colonial state. However, drafters of the Constitution Act in 1867 could not have predicted the influx of Aboriginal peoples to cities, nor the issues that such an influx would present. As a result, the responsibility for urban Aboriginal people is far from being clearly defined in the Constitution. No level of government seems to want to assume that responsibility, creating a jurisdictional vacuum in which each level of government tries to avoid responsibility for urban Aboriginal affairs (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003; Hanselmann, 2001; Graham & Peters, 2002).

Section 91 (24) of the Constitution Act of 1867 states that the federal government is responsible for "Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians". Ottawa argues this does not account for Indians who are simultaneously Aboriginal peoples and urban dwellers. The federal government has taken a narrow interpretation of this responsibility and maintains that it bears primary responsibility only for Indians on reserve. According to the federal government, the provinces are responsible for off-reserve Indians and all other Aboriginal peoples (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003). Conversely, the provinces maintain that all Aboriginal peoples are the responsibility of the federal government and that the provinces

bear the same responsibility to urban Aboriginal people as they do to all other provincial residents (Hanselmann, 2001).

In the face of this jurisdictional confusion, neither level of government is willing to create any major new policy initiatives targeted towards Aboriginal people for fear that such a move would acknowledge its responsibility. Hanselmann and Gibbins (2003: 80) note that while in most cases "...the federal and provincial governments jealously guard their policy domains, in this case both orders of government avoid taking responsibility for urban Aboriginal policy". The impacts of this question of jurisdictional responsibility on urban Aboriginal policy have been negative. For the most part, urban Aboriginal policy is neglected in favour of on-reserve Aboriginals, or is geared only towards urban status-Indians and Inuit (Graham & Peters, 2002). Where policies do exist, they are often unevenly applied (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003).

Perhaps one of the most critical aspects of this situation is that debates about jurisdiction appear not to involve Aboriginal peoples at all. These debates are instead conceived of as debates over which legitimate – or dominant – level of government holds sway. The debate, then, is not neutral, but is itself an expression of colonial power relationships wherein the dominant settler governments hold the future of colonized Aboriginal peoples in their hands. It is in this sense that the current jurisdictional indecision is not only a product of colonialism but also reinforces colonialism.

Recent developments in urban Aboriginal policy might be indicative of efforts to resolve this jurisdictional dilemma. Instead of one level of government taking responsibility for urban Aboriginal affairs, all three orders of government (federal, provincial and municipal) are working together to address urban Aboriginal issues (Hanselmann & Gibbins, 2003). Hanselmann and Gibbins (2003) term this cooperation between orders of government "intergovernmentalism". It must be emphasized that the intergovernmentalism exhibited thus far has been entirely informal. No official responsibility for urban Aboriginal affairs has been taken on by either level of government involved in such cooperation. But, if intergovernmentalism is only understood to mean the cooperation of three levels of Canadian government, then, while it moves the urban Aboriginal policy agenda forward, such a move will be limited, because, at its core, these governments are extensions of settler dominance over Aboriginal peoples. Hanselmann and Gibbins have identified this challenge as the greatest current weakness to intergovernmentalism. Without the equal and strong voice of Aboriginal peoples, intergovernmentalism as a policy process remains at risk of alienating itself from the very community it purports to serve.

Recently, we have been witness to what appears to be Aboriginal peoples being given the responsibility to deliver programs previously delivered by federal or provincial governments (Walker, 2008; Alfred, 1999). There may be a temptation to call this responsibility 'jurisdiction', and, based on that assumption, to jump to the conclusion that settler governments are decolonizing. But, there is a critical difference here that needs to

be drawn between 'responsibility' and 'jurisdiction'. The provinces and federal

government may delegate responsibility for service or program delivery without giving

up legal authority over that program or service. Alfred (1999) argues in fact that this

delegation of responsibility is a colonial ploy wherein federal and provincial governments

appear to be accommodating Aboriginal peoples, but are not in fact giving away any real

power. He further argues that in some cases this ploy is used to create Aboriginal people

who "…behave like bureaucrats and carry out the same old policies" (Alfred, 1999: xiii).

Instead of a white face on a colonial government, this ploy would instead put an

Aboriginal face on colonial policy. Alfred goes on to suggest that the strategy is more

insidious, arguing that this superficial power-shift will move the burden of responsibility

for the success or failure of these programs and policies onto the Aboriginal

organizations that implement them. The culmination of Alfred's argument is that

Aboriginal organizations are being set up for failure by the Canadian state so that it can

maintain its grip on power over them.

Augie Fleras (2000) suggests that current jurisdictional issues can only be solved by a re-

working and re-thinking of the constitutional principles underlying the relationship.

According to the author, the current attempts by all levels of government to resolve the

jurisdictional dilemma on an issue-by-issue basis will remain ineffective if the underlying

constitutional principles remain unchanged. Taking this line of argumentation further,

without exposing and eradicating the roots of colonialism in current Canadian

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jurisdictional power arrangements, any resolution of the jurisdictional dilemma will only be a thinly-veiled repositioning of the status quo.

Although opinions may differ on how the jurisdictional dilemma faced by the orders of Canadian government ought to be resolved, there is general agreement that the gridlock has been and continues to be harmful to urban Aboriginal policy and, therefore, by extension, to urban Aboriginal peoples themselves. In reaction to this jurisdictional vacuum, Aboriginal peoples from across Canada have been actively seeking to stake their own claims to jurisdiction. They are seeking some measure of control over their futures through self-government. The following section will explore this topic in more detail.

2.6 The Challenges of Urban Self-Government

The main thrust of the RCAP report, as discussed earlier, was the establishment of self-governing, self-reliant First Nations. Although the Commission examined urban Aboriginal issues in some detail, the report and its recommendations failed to include meaningfully urban Aboriginals (Cairns, 2000). This meant that while self-government was discussed as a viable option and a desirable direction for land-based First Nations, it was viewed as unattainable for urban Aboriginals. This is an unfortunate failing, since in that report self-government is viewed as the implementation of the inherent right to self-determination, not only for landed First Nations (Fleras, 2000). Nonetheless, a recent upswing in interest in urban Aboriginal issues has begun the process of imagining what

urban Aboriginal self-government might look like and has the potential to provide a new direction for urban Aboriginal policy (Todd, 2002).

Peters (2003) outlines two primary forms of potential urban Aboriginal self-government. The first sees urban Aboriginal peoples as part of larger First Nations or Métis governments. In this approach, self-government agreements with First Nations and Métis would be extended into urban areas. Jill Wherrett and Douglas Brown (1994) call this the "extra-territorial model". The 1999 court decision in the *Corbière* case has lent some merit to this form of self-government. This extended voting rights in band elections to band members off reserve and has forced band governments to include their urban residents in band affairs (UBIC, 2000). However, this model does not account for the effectiveness of self-government when an urban resident's home nation is across the country, nor does it account for all those urban Aboriginal peoples who are not band members (Peters, 2003).

The second model discussed by Peters (2003) derives self-government through urban Aboriginal institutions. Jurisdiction in this model shifts its emphasis away from territory and into areas of culture, such as education, health and training. This model acknowledges that the urban Aboriginal population forms "communities of interest" instead of nations, thereby embodying a diversity of Aboriginal peoples, instead of distinct "nations" (Walker, 2008). Assumed is that all municipalities have the same level, or at least an adequate level, of urban Aboriginal institutional development. However,

levels of institutional development vary widely across the country both in cities of similar sizes and between larger cities and small urban areas (Peters, 2003). For instance, Brandon, Manitoba, with a relatively small population cannot support the same level of institutional development as can Winnipeg.

While these models might themselves be seen as attempts to reject colonialism, the critiques of these models reveal that they carry with them several powerful colonial assumptions. The critiques focus on two fundamental issues: fragmentation and capacity. The former is derived from the composition of the urban Aboriginal population itself, which is extremely diverse and consists of status Indians as well as non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit peoples. Each of these groups has divergent interests and relates to the various levels of Canadian government differently (Peters, 2000). For instance, status Indians are eligible for particular government programs that non-Status Indians and Métis are not. It is important to note here that this problem is in itself the result of the colonial processes wherein Aboriginal identity has been redefined and Aboriginal groups fragmented.

According to Gordon Christie (2003) this argument of fragmentation is also reflected in jurisprudence. The author proposes that it is likely that any claim for Aboriginal self-government, whether urban or not, would have to stem from the self-government rights held by Aboriginal communities prior to European contact. Urban Aboriginal communities, then, would have to fulfill a test established from the *R. v. Van der Peet*

decision. To fulfill the requirements of the test, the urban Aboriginal community claiming self-government rights would have to prove a reasonable link between it and a pre-contact self-governing Aboriginal community, which, in most cases, would be difficult (Christie, 2003). This case in particular demonstrates the critical role that the courts play in maintaining colonial mechanisms of identity fragmentation.

The second critique of concepts of urban Aboriginal self-government is centered on the capacity of urban Aboriginal peoples themselves. This argument is founded on the problematization of urban Aboriginal peoples. John H. Hilton addresses this question of capacity for self-government by noting that "many Aboriginal communities remain in the grip of desperate social problems wrought by a century of colonialism, and, as a result, they are ill-equipped to forge ahead quickly with any new arrangements..." (Hylton, 1994: 247). Tom Flanagan, a prominent critic of Aboriginal self-government, states that "in practice, aboriginal government produces wasteful, destructive, familistic factionalism" (2000: 7). Both of these arguments bring into question the capacity of Aboriginal peoples, whether off- or on-reserve, to effectively govern themselves.

This question of capacity is brought into the urban context, albeit in a much less confrontational way, by Peters (2003). The author argues that the comparatively low levels of education and other socio-economic indicators may reduce the capacity of Aboriginal populations to a level lower than what their overall population would suggest.

It should be noted, however, that the author does go on to state that in many urban centres, there are examples of successful self-governing Aboriginal institutions.

To truly appreciate the injustice of these critiques one must understand the current challenges facing urban Aboriginal peoples as a product of colonialism. It is impossible to deny that urban Aboriginal peoples face difficult challenges on many fronts, such as education, employment, crime, alcoholism, and maintenance of cultural identity (Peters, 2003; Siggner & Costa, 2005; Siggner, 2003). Acknowledging those challenges is important, but seeing only those challenges is a falsehood. The processes of colonialism at the hands of a dominant, white settler society have been central in the emergence of these contemporary challenges. The colonial lens reveals a great deal about the assumptions made by the above critiques of self-government. Throughout the Canadian colonial past, it has not been uncommon to see declarations that Aboriginal peoples, due to the inferiority of their race, do not have the capacity to manage their own affairs. The afore-mentioned critiques of capacity bear a striking resemblance to those past arguments. They may not openly declare that the question of "capacity" is really a question of "race", but their vision of Aboriginal peoples tells us as much.

As an emerging issue in urban Aboriginal policy, self-government may yet play an important role. However, while urban Aboriginal peoples struggle to assert their right to self-determination, colonialism – with racism at its core – is acting against them in an attempt to maintain the oppressive, exploitative status quo.

2.7 Analytical Framework

The arguments contributed by the authors reviewed in this chapter have informed the development of the analytical framework for the thesis. Several key arguments that form the core of this framework are discussed below. This framework, then, focuses on examining existing policies within these the arguments made by the authors listed below. That is to say, the policies are examined looking at Aboriginal involvement in policy processes, Aboriginal engagement with Canadian government in that process, and also how these policies and the people involved with them help or hinder the deconstruction of state control over Aboriginal peoples.

Taiaiake Alfred writes that "colonialism is not an abstract notion, but a set of real people and relationships and structures that can be resisted and combated..." (Alfred, 1999: 79). He argues that to begin to combat colonialism, one must first acknowledge the truly unjust and unbalanced power relations between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state. Alfred calls for a rejection of colonial apparatus at every level and realignment to traditional Aboriginal values and systems.

Augie Fleras (2000) clarifies what this new realignment might look like. Fleras makes a persuasive argument for a new kind of relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state, one based on the notion of Aboriginality that recognizes the inherent right

of Aboriginal self-determination as one of the three founding peoples of this land. Fleras calls this new paradigm *constructive engagement*. This new paradigm "is focussed on establishing non-dominating relations of relative autonomy between fundamentally autonomous peoples by constructively engaging with differences in a spirit of give-and-take" (Fleras, 2000: 107). This is in opposition to the status quo, which emphasizes adversarial jurisdictional negotiations of 'who gets what'.

Calvin Hanselmann and Roger Gibbins (2003) also recognize that the current system is not working for urban Aboriginal peoples. In particular, they note that urban Aboriginal policy seems to be effected without meaningful participation by Aboriginal peoples. While the process they call *intergovernmentalism* is taking place with the three levels of Canadian government, it often leaves out Aboriginal voices.

2.8 Final Thoughts

An examination of public policy can reveal a great deal about the values and priorities of government, and urban Aboriginal policy is no exception. An examination of past policies has revealed one consistency throughout the shifting Aboriginal-state policy landscape of the past three hundred years: colonialism. In Canada, colonialism has had an enormous effect on Aboriginal peoples. Through deliberate policy measures such as the Indian Act and the White Paper, the federal government systematically dispossessed Aboriginal peoples of their land while also attempting to destroy their unique cultures

and heritages. And while assimilation has become an admitted failure of public policy, and has disappeared in the federal policy vocabulary, colonialism still remains, albeit hidden from the view of most Canadians. Government rhetoric emphasizes the establishment of a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state, but its lack of concrete action in this area suggests that this new relationship is no more than hollow rhetoric.

More recent trends in urban Aboriginal public policy also show the signs of a persistent colonial mentality and governmentality. Some authors argue that the current state of jurisdictional indecision is an act of colonial oppression. Urban Aboriginal self-determination shows some promise for recognizing the long-ignored rights of urban Aboriginal peoples, leading towards a new policy paradigm, but its critics are loud. Instead of arguing about the inherent superiority of the Eurocentric worldview and the white race, contemporary arguments focus on questioning Aboriginal "capacity" in an attempt to maintain the status quo. It would appear that capacity and power remain serious obstacles standing in the path of urban Aboriginal policy progress.

So, now we are left with a new Canadian myth, a myth in which the Canadian state has righted its misguided ways and has founded a new relationship with Aboriginal peoples. But, unlike Innes' understanding of myth, this myth appears to be simply a falsehood.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Methodology

The literature for this research has established both the theoretical framework for the project as well as its direction. The point of view taken in the literature review has also set this research firmly in the critical social science approach (CSS). According to Newman (1997), CSS falls in many ways in between the two other approaches to social science research: interpretive social science (ISS), and positivist social science (PSS). PSS tries to understand the social world in the same way that the natural sciences try to understand the natural world. That is to say, PSS combines "deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity" (Newman, 1997: 63). To PSS, reality is a concrete, observable concept that is independent of the researcher and of the research subjects. Conversely, ISS does not see social science as rational process of deductive reasoning based on natural laws, but instead sees reality as socially constructed (Newman, 1997). While for PSS the goal of social science research is to observe and document "the universal laws of human behaviour" (Newman, 1997: 63), the goal of ISS is to "develop a deep understanding of social life and discover how people construct meaning in natural settings" (Newman, 1997: 68-69). In contrast, CSS has the goal of uncovering "the real structures in the material world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for

themselves" (Newman, 1997: 74). Key to the CSS approach is historical analysis. CSS research examines the past in order to gain perspective on current conditions. To CSS, "the social world is full of illusion, myth and distortion" and it these illusions, myths and distortions that allow one group to hold power over another (Newman, 1997: 75). The post-colonial theoretical framework for this project takes the same stance, arguing that myths and illusions have allowed and continue to allow for the oppression of Aboriginal peoples by the Canadian state. In this sense, this research is grounded in critical social science.

Although this project is closely aligned with CSS, there is one aspect of this research that draws instead from ISS. According to CSS, the researcher seeks to be detached from what he or she is observing. I reject this concept, embracing instead the ISS notion that the researcher and research subjects are both inter-related parts of the inquiry process.

3.2 Research Method

As mentioned above, the data used for this project was gathered from fifteen focused interviews conducted within the larger MCRI project. In his work *Inquiry by Design: Environment/Behaviour/Neuroscience in Architecture, Landscape, and Planning*, John Zeisel devotes considerable time to the discussion of focused interviews. As he sees it, the in-depth interview method is highly suited to discovering a "respondent's personal definition of complex E-B situations" (Zeisel, 2006: 256). So, the strengths of the

interview are exhibited in terms of both the flexibility it provides and the depth of meaning it can uncover. Interviews can be used to discover a subject's definition of a situation, the strength of their feelings about that situation, as well as their intentions as they related to the given situation (Zeisel, 2006). The data gathered from in-depth interviews comes in the form of the lived experiences of research subjects and is, therefore, unique, just as the subject is unique. Moreover, each subject will interpret the questions posed to them in different ways (Neuman, 2000). According to Neuman (2000), they do this to "make them applicable to their ideosynactic, personal situations or to make them easy to answer" (Neuman, 2000: 276). While often an advantage, this characteristic of the method can also be seen as motivation not to use it. Since the data gathered is highly individual, it does not lend itself to quantification, comparison, or generalization. This project does not seek to generalize or to quantify the data gathered from these interviews, but seeks instead to gain a better understanding – based on the lived experiences of interview subjects – of the role of colonialism in urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon.

However, before focused interview could begin, a scan of urban Aboriginal policy was done in each of the two cities. Several policies or programs were selected that were felt would best represent the status and trends in urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon. See *Appendix A* for a description of each of the selected policies. Representatives of local organizations engaged with these policies were then contacted to confirm their willingness to participate in the research process. Once confirmed, two

copies of the consent form (see *Appendix B*) were signed by both the researcher and the research subject before the interview was begun.

In total, fifteen interviews were conducted in Thompson and Brandon, with seven taking place in Brandon and eight in Thompson. Participants represented a variety of relevant organizations and government agencies, including Aboriginal service organizations, and Aboriginal political organizations. The participants selected held a range of positions, but most were in management positions with their respective organizations. The age of participants was approximately between thirty-five and fifty, with women and men being relatively evenly represented.

Another aspect of the in-depth interview that must be examined is the role of the interviewer. In such interviews, the researcher is also a member of society and, as such, is an active participant in the interview (Neuman, 2000). This aspect of the in-depth interview method is of particular concern here, as the researchers were of a different race and background than the interview subjects. This puts a burden on the interviewer to build a relationship based on the mutual expression of lived experiences. Unfortunately, the timeframe for this study did not lend itself to the long-term building of relationships.

The lack of a previous relationship with selected interview subjects was almost immediately a barrier to the successful completion of interviews. In many cases, prospective interview subjects would simply avoid contact. Several techniques were used

in an attempt to overcome this barrier. Foremost among these was the use of early interview subjects as contacts to other prospective interview subjects. In most cases, after early interviews were complete, the interview subjects would offer their assistance in contacting other prospective subjects, "vouching" in a sense, using their pre-existing relationship as a basis for further interviews.

But such assistance required that trust be built between the interviewer and early interview subjects. This short trust building process occurred in two phases. The first phase was the initial meeting. Certain cultural sensitivities needed to be understood and employed here. For instance, a soft handshake instead of a firm grip, and inquiries into family and hometown connections instead of inquiries into job titles helped to bring a sense of informality and cultural awareness to the interview process that aided in breaking down any apprehension in the interviewer-interviewee relationship.

Second, how the interview itself was conducted was important in establishing trust in early interviews. A sense of informality was consciously fostered in order to make the interview subject as comfortable as possible in answering questions, and also to remove any lingering notion of the interviewer as untrustworthy or threatening. Once an acceptable level of informality had been established, two probing techniques appeared to work most effectively: reflection probes and addition probes. Within those two probes, encouragement and attentive silence were the two most commonly used techniques.

Even with the building of trust with early interview subjects and their aid in contacting other prospective subjects, some selected interview subjects were very difficult to contact. This may be again the result of the lack of a pre-existing trust relationship, but was also likely a problem because of a uniquely small city issue. Unlike in larger urban centres, in smaller cities (such as Thompson and Brandon) many of the selected interview subjects are not full-time employees of one organization, but are instead spread out between several jobs. Due to their mobility, contacting these individuals was a unique challenge, and one that was never entirely overcome. In some cases, if telephone or email contact was unsuccessful, a physical site visit to the organization was necessary.

3.3 Research Instrument

This thesis makes use of three interview guides that were developed as part of the larger MCRI research project. As such, the principal investigator of this thesis had no role in their development. One interview guide was developed for Aboriginal service organizations, one for Aboriginal political organizations, and one for government officers and politicians. See *Appendix C* for each of these interview guides. Each of the interview guides was divided into two major sections: questions about policy processes, and questions about the quality of implemented policies. It should be emphasized that the interview guides were used simply as guides, and as such the questions were not strictly followed. Certain questions applied to certain policies and programs, while others did not. Also, interview subjects often addressed questions in the interview guide before they

had been asked. Therefore, although the interview guides provided some consistency in what data was being targeted for collection, there was significant variation among the interviews.

3.5 Analysis

The data analysis took place using two data sources: notes taken during the interview process, and text documents published on the policies selected for analysis. Each of these data sources will be discussed in separate sections, but analysed using the same techniques. Both data sets have been coded according to the process established by Neuman (1997). This involves three stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding is performed during the researcher's first look at the data collected. The goal of this stage is to identify themes from within the data and to assign those themes codes. Since this is only an initial analysis of the data, the researcher must be open to changes in the codes identified pending subsequent analyses. Axial coding follows open coding and seeks to deepen the analysis of the identified codes. The main focus of axial coding is to examine in depth and to organize the codes developed during open coding, seeking to identify the 'axis of key concepts'. In this stage, the researcher "...asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories or concepts that cluster together" (Neuman, 1997: 423). In the final, selective coding stage, the researcher has already established major themes in the data and looks for cases that might be illustrative of these themes or of

differences between them. These cases are used to elaborate on the relationships within and between the major themes (Neuman, 1997).

In order to generate an analysis with greater depth, the researcher has also conducted further data analysis using methods suggested by J. Mason in *Qualitative Researching* (2000). The researcher conducted three readings of the data: literal, interpretive, and reflexive. A literal reading was undertaken to extract important themes in the literal content of the data gathered. Reading the data interpretively has allowed the investigator to "read through or beyond" (Mason, 2000: 149) the text, or in between the lines, so to speak. This reading has revealed themes that were not evident in the first, literal reading. A third and important reflexive reading was undertaken by the researcher to explore his role in data generation and the interpretation of that data.

These two methods of analysis should not be considered to be in any way separate. Rather, they can be understood more accurately as two simultaneous processes, wherein literal, interpretive and reflexive sensibilities are brought to bear on each pass through the data. The results of these analyses have been synthesized into conclusions about the extent and nature that colonialism has taken in contemporary urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon.

4.0 POLICY SETTINGS

4.1 Thompson, Manitoba

Thompson, Manitoba – located in northern Manitoba approximately between the northern tip of Lake Winnipeg and the city of Churchill, Manitoba – is a regional hub for the north, having a population of 13,446 (Statistics Canada, 2008). Residents of these surrounding communities, mostly Aboriginal, frequent Thompson where they can access services not available in their more remote communities. Without this temporary population, Thompson still maintains a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal residents. According to Statistics Canada, approximately 30 percent of Thompson residents – or 5,000 individuals – are of Aboriginal identity (Statistics Canada, 2008). This population is, for the most part, composed of status Indians from the surrounding Aboriginal communities. The Métis population in Thompson is significantly smaller than the status Indian population. With such a high proportion of Aboriginal residents, Thompson provides an interesting setting in which to examine Aboriginal – non-Aboriginal relationships expressed through policy.

Thompson was founded in 1956 in conjunction with the discovery of a large ore deposits in the area and the resulting mining development. The largest single employer in Thompson is Vale Inco (previously known as the International Nickel Company), the mining corporation that founded the city over fifty years ago. Inco currently employs

approximately 1,500 people, representing over 10% of the city's population (Vale Inco, 2007).

Thompson's regional function is strengthened by the presence of key regional industries and public services, notably health care and education. The Burntwood Regional Health Authority is based out of Thompson, providing medical care for much of northern Manitoba out of the hospital located in Thompson (Burtwood Regional Health Authority, n.d.). The main campus of the University College of the North is situated in Thomspon (University College of the North, 2008). The University of Manitoba also maintains a presence in Thompson, basing a Faculty of Social Work in the city to serve the unique needs of northern communities (University of Manitoba, n.d.). These regional industries, in addition to others, contribute to the regional function that Thompson plays in the north of Manitoba.

In addition to studying Thompson as a regional centre with a large Aboriginal population, the city has also been selected as a site where the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) will be implemented (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008). Being one of the largest scale urban Aboriginal policies in Canada, the UAS was selected as a topic for study in this thesis. The UAS is a federally funded program aimed at addressing three broad national-level policy areas: improving life skills; promoting jobs, training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2005). The UAS is active in a number of cities across Canada,

and in two cities in Manitoba (Thompson and Winnipeg). Although policy priorities are set at the national level, a local committee, formed with representatives of the three levels of Canadian government along with Aboriginal service and political organizations, guides the implementation of the UAS at the local level. This is achieved by setting local priorities after community consultation. According to several interview participants in Thompson, the housing emerged as a local priority. As a result, the UAS, in partnership with the province of Manitoba and others, funded the construction of eight student housing units targeted towards single mothers.

4.2 Brandon, Manitoba

The city of Brandon is Manitoba's second largest city and is located in the south west of the province. Brandon serves as a regional hub for surrounding communities, including some Aboriginal communities and has a total population of approximately 41,511(City of Brandon, Population Statistics, n.d.). Brandon University, with its over 3,200 students, is located in the city and is a draw for many Aboriginal peoples (City of Brandon, 2008). However, when compared Thompson, Brandon has a relatively lower resident urban Aboriginal population. Only approximately 10% of Brandon residents are of Aboriginal identity, though in terms of numbers, the urban Aboriginal populations of the two cities are comparable (Statistics Canada, 2008). As of 2006, the total Aboriginal identity population in Brandon was 3,725 (Statistics Canada, 2008). Nevertheless, Brandon is a very different policy setting than is Thompson. Instead of presenting an opportunity to

study urban Aboriginal policy in an urban area with a large Aboriginal population, Brandon provides just the opposite, allowing us to see how urban Aboriginal policy is undertaken in smaller municipalities with lower urban Aboriginal populations. There are also significant numbers of immigrants and visible minorities in Brandon. According to the 2006 Census, there are 2,050 foreign-born residents in Brandon, and a visible minority population of 955 (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Brandon is also home to several regional economic opportunities, such as large industries and regional public sector functions. Several large and medium scale industries are located in Brandon. For example, Maple Leaf Pork is located in Brandon and employs over 1,400 residents. However, the city's largest employer is the public sector Brandon Regional Health Authority, which employs approximately 2,000 full-time and part-time residents (City of Brandon, n.d.).

One of the elements that adds to the interest in examining urban Aboriginal policy in Brandon is the recent work completed in the city towards creating a vision of the direction in which Brandon should go in the future. This visioning process has resulted in a plan, entitled the *City of Brandon's Community Strategic Plan: Shaping Tomorrow Together*. The document considers many policy areas vital to the residents of the city, one of which is Cultural Diversity. In this arena in particular, the residents of Brandon have had the opportunity to engage in a discussion about the various cultures and peoples

present in their city. This, in addition to the other policies examined as part of this thesis, should provide for fruitful analysis.

Using data from both of these cities helps to complete the picture of urban Aboriginal policy in Manitoba, which has, until now, mostly been concentrated on Winnipeg. These two cities – one with a proportionately large urban Aboriginal population, and the other with the opposite – provide two dissimilar policy contexts in which to study urban Aboriginal policy and the operation of colonialism within it.

5.0 DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Text Analysis

The text documents analysed below provide insight not only into how colonialism is woven through government policy, but also – and of particular importance – into how the government perceives its role and projects its image. Certain policies have more documents that are easily accessible, such as the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) and the Urban Multipurpose Youth Centre program (UMAYC), but others have few or no text documents to analyse. As such, the analysis below will focus on these two large-scale urban Aboriginal policy initiatives that do have substantial text documentation. The only substantial municipally-driven policy in either Thompson or Brandon will also be examined, namely the Brandon Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Importantly, this analysis is to be taken together with the literature review (see Chapter 2) and the analysis of interview data that is provided later in this chapter.

Three themes emerged from the axial coding process: the terminology of empowerment, the terminology of power, and the terminology of exclusion. Each of the three themes will be dealt with below. These themes were selected from an array of codes derived using open coding. Some of the codes arrived at using open coding include: funding, youth, and Aboriginal culture.

Appendix A provides a description of each of the three policies and programs included in the text analysis: the UAS, the UMAYC, and the Brandon CSP. Since the perspectives sought from the text analysis were those of the government and Aboriginal organizations, documents put forward by these bodies were researched. All the text documents used in this analysis can be found on the internet, and range from brief descriptions of the policies analyzed to thorough analyses of these policies, their histories, their current states, and their potential.

5.1.1 Contradictions in Terms: Colonialism and the Terminology of Empowerment
Perhaps the most striking trend that emerged from an analysis of the available text documents on the UAS is the contradiction in terminology used. It should first be noted that the vast majority of UAS text documents are from federal government sources. Government sources, sometimes within the same document, describe their urban Aboriginal policy using two mutually exclusive languages. That is to say that in some cases, urban Aboriginal policies and programs are described using terminology of local empowerment, while, at other times, the government writes itself into a very central role.

The terms used to describe the UAS seem to pull in two different directions simultaneously. While some terminology tries to emphasize the role of local needs in the UAS process, other language lingers on the important role of government, especially in funding and monitoring. For instance, one text document describes the UAS as a strategy that is "designed to reduce the level of disparity between urban Aboriginal peoples and

other Canadians by better tailoring government programs to local needs and priorities"

(Service Canada, 2006, para. 1). When expressing this new role, the language used tends

to focus on words and phrases such as "local priorities", "community", "engagement",

and "partnership". These parts of the text documents reviewed on the UAS avoid using

the term "Government of Canada", seemingly trying to say that the UAS is a truly

grassroots strategy.

At the same time, however, another Government of Canada text document states that "in

2007, Canada's New Government decided to set priorities and make a long-term

commitment on Aboriginal issues by investing $68.5 million over 5 years to help respond

effectively to the needs of Aboriginal people living in key urban centres" (Indian and

Northern Affairs Canada, 2008: para. 2). In some cases, it seems as though there are two

stories being told in each document: one about how the UAS is a local initiative, and one

about how the Government of Canada, through its innovative funding and management

techniques, is responsible for the successes of the UAS. The second story features very

different characters. The protagonists are no longer local Aboriginal peoples and

communities, responding effectively to their "needs and priorities", but are instead the

various levels of Canadian government. The following quote represents a sample of the

story featuring the non-Aboriginal protagonists:

> The UAS is designed to improve policy development and program
> coordination at the federal level and with other levels of government. The
> Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians is the lead federal
> minister responsible for the UAS (INAC, 2005, para. 1).

Contradictions and tensions internal to these documents are perhaps expressions of the contradictions and tensions inherent the urban Aboriginal policy landscape, as seen in Thompson and Brandon. The federal government is attempting to legitimize its "new relationship" with Aboriginal peoples, but cannot disguise or resist controlling, monitoring and claiming responsibility for any progressive policy changes. This would confirm the findings of the literature review that the "new relationship" is a façade disguising what is an essentially unchanged colonial power relationship.

The tension described above was far less apparent in UMAYC documents. There are hints of tension, but certainly not to the same extent as what has been observed in the UAS text documents. One major distinction that appears between UAS and UMAYC documents is the way in which the role of the government is expressed. Whereas, in many of the UAS documents, the federal government was front and centre, especially when discussing funding, the government played a far less prominent role in UMAYC documents. Instead of the government, the UMAYC was the primary actor in these documents:

> Between 1998 and 2003, the UMAYC Initiative funded approximately
> 850 projects across Canada. Most reflect two key UMAYC principles:
> control "by youth, for youth," and response to local needs and priorities
> (Canadian Heritage, 2005, para. 26).

In the above excerpt from a federal government document about the UMAYC initiative, the UMAYC itself is the primary actor. Funding is directed from the UMAYC, and the key principles are UMAYC principles, not government ones.

In the case of the UMAYC, the terminology used is very similar to some of the language in UAS text documents. For example, the initiative is still concentrated on "local needs and priorities"; however, in the case of the UMAYC, there is no contradictory language that emphasizes the centralization of decision-making while discussing local needs. It also becomes clear through the language used in the UMAYC documents that youth play a critical role in all aspects of the UMAYC.

Another interesting theme that emerged from the analysis of UAS documents was the refusal of the federal government to accept responsibility for the failures of the UAS during the early years. Only in one document from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat were the shortcomings of the early UAS discussed, and even then, no blame was accepted or laid. Rather, these documents tend to focus on the need for more "horizontal management" or "increased coordination". These terms, instead of real people or real organizations, assume the blame for any problems encountered thus far with the program. Yet, the successes of the UAS are most certainly claimed:

> The enhanced UAS…represents a practical step which illustrates how
> Canada's New Government is moving in the right direction to ensure that
> Aboriginal Canadians living in cities across Canada have greater access to
> the skills and experiences they need to gain access to and succeed in an
> urban environment (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2008, para. 6).

Most certainly, the federal government is not willing to see itself or the roles it plays as some of the largest problems in the UAS program. Any difficulties are not the fault of

government, but are "coordination" or "management" problems. According to the analysis of these text documents, the government is unable to see the "big picture" of colonialism and its role therein. The government is not willing to examine the negative role it may be playing in the implementation of the UAS, and is far more inclined to seek out bureaucratic error. In other words, the roles of Canadian government in colonialism are not up for debate, but are to remain externalized. Canadian government, then, is engaged in hypocrisy, using the language of empowerment to maintain a status of fundamental disempowerment for urban Aboriginal peoples.

5.1.2 The Terminology of Power

Although text documents examined about the UMAYC did not involve the federal government to the same extent as was seen in UAS documents, there were still discernible differences between Aboriginal and government perspectives. These differences build upon the findings of the previous section, indicating that there are fundamental misunderstandings between Aboriginal organizations and the Canadian government in regards to the ultimate goals of urban Aboriginal policy and programming. This analysis was made possible because, unlike UAS documents which were dominated by federal sources, UMAYC document sources are distributed evenly between government and Aboriginal organizations.

The terminology used by Aboriginal organizations describing the UMAYC provided for the most lucrative analysis of the Aboriginal perspective on this policy initiative.

Certainly, both federal government and Aboriginal sources concentrated on the role of youth in the UMAYC; however, where government sources describe youth in a general way as involved in "planning, priority-setting, design, implementation, and management..." (Canadian Heritage, 2003: n/a), Aboriginal organizations see youth involvement from a cultural values perspective:

> These programs, services and activities will be structured in a manner that will empower Aboriginal youth to address the challenges they face and determine their own future with a sense of pride in a safe and culturally relevant environment (Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres, 2008, para. 2).

The above quote from the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres describing the UMAYC initiative place a different emphasis than do the descriptions provided by government sources. These descriptions appear to be more objective-driven and value-centred. In particular, the values and objectives expressed are focused on culture and self-determination.

This discrepancy between the ways in which Aboriginal organizations and government discuss the UMAYC policy initiative may be a result of the structure of the program itself. Where the UAS has created a policy table with many players, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, where government is featured prominently, the UMAYC has done nearly the opposite. The federal government is not a central figure in the UMAYC decision-making process, allowing Aboriginal organizations, such as the Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres and the Manitoba Métis Federation to express their values and objectives more firmly.

These discrepancies reveal a more troubling trend that sees Aboriginal organizations and Canadian government holding very different goals in relation to the same policies and programs. These divergent goals are perhaps reflective of the relationship between the two parties: those without power speak of empowerment and self-determination, while those with power speak of their own importance. Although the Canadian government sometimes uses the language of local empowerment to describe its policies and programs, the text documents here suggest that it is more concerned with promoting its central role as a funder and administrator, or, in other words, the roles of power and control.

5.1.3 The Terminology of Exclusion

Municipal governments also play a large part in urban Aboriginal policy relationships. After all, it is in these cities that urban Aboriginal policies are implemented. The municipal policy environments of both Bandon and Thompson were examined as part of this thesis project, but only in Brandon is there a written policy that can be examined substantively. The fact that there are no text documents available that are related to urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson is troublesome, especially given the proportion of the city's population that is Aboriginal and its status as a city selected for the UAS.

The document available in Brandon, the Brandon Community Strategic Plan (CSP), is the "...community's vision for the future, and indicates where the community will need to focus its energies over the next five years" (City of Brandon, 1997-2007, para. 2). The

CSP, a policy document that was developed by community members, has identified nine policy areas on which to focus: Agriculture, Economic Development, Cultural Diversity, Education, Environment, Health, Municipal Government, Recreation Leisure/Arts, and Youth. Out of these nine categories, Cultural Diversity has the most bearing on urban Aboriginal peoples in Brandon.

The statement that embodies the community-developed Cultural Diversity goals of the CSP is the following:

> Brandon will be recognized as a city that values and promotes cultural diversity (City of Brandon, 1997-2007, para 1).

The CSP goes on to outline the guiding principles of the Cultural Diversity category:

- Promoting racial harmony and respect for diversity,
- Fostering partnerships among individuals, groups and organizations,
- Sharing information and coordinating activities,
- Creating opportunities for cultural learning, and
- Building on community strengths

(City of Brandon, 1997-2007, para 4).

Both of the above excerpts express lofty goals for the city of Brandon and its residents. According to the guiding principles, the role of the CSP in Cultural Diversity is one of facilitation. The CSP is to "foster" and "promote", actions which do not take aggressive action or serious ownership over a policy area. Instead, looks to build on what already exists. The first of these goals sets the tone for the Cultural Diversity section of the CSP. "Respect for diversity" is a strong statement that conveys a particular vision of race relations in Brandon. This vision is nearly identical to the one that was expressed by Pierre L. Van Den Berghe in the quote at the introduction to Chapter 2. Individual rights

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are at the heart of this argument and are at the heart of the CSP Cultural Diversity vision. By respecting equally all cultures, none is provided special status. In this policy, Aboriginal peoples would be treated only as one among many "cultural groups" in Brandon, with no recognition of special status or any provision for unique relationships. This vision of the CSP for Cultural Diversity, although likely guided by the best of intentions, is inherently colonial. In it, Aboriginal peoples are treated as any other Canadian cultural group, and, although their cultures may be respected in this environment, no "special treatment" is seen as warranted.

This viewpoint is upheld not by what is written in the CSP, but by what is not written, by what is excluded. The Cultural Diversity component of the CSP spends a great deal of time discussing cultures, but, curiously, does not mention a single one. No one cultural group is given attention or unique policies that meet their particular needs. No one cultural group is recognized, perhaps, in order than none is recognized over and above another. This is an extension of the understanding – described in Chapter 2 – that all groups, Aboriginal or otherwise, are all equal. Clearly, the policy examined above, taken together with the lack of policy in Thomspon, suggest that municipal governments are using the terminology of exclusion to write Aboriginal peoples out of meaningful roles in their urban communities. This is a further example of Canadian government using its control over the writing of history and dominant perceptions to maintain the oppression of urban Aboriginal peoples as essentially voiceless in their own communities.

5.1.4 Final Thoughts

Unfortunately, text documents on a number of the policies and programs examined as part of this thesis project were not available, limiting the analysis to the two major federal urban Aboriginal policies and one municipal one: the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), and the Urban Aboriginal Multipurpose Youth Centre program (UMAYC), and Brandon's Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Even within this level of analysis, the characteristic relationships of colonialism have been identified.

The federal government, especially in the case of the UAS, seems entirely unwilling to release its grip on the program. The façade uncovered as part of the literature review to this thesis is upheld here. The terminology used by the federal government in describing the UAS is a strong example of how the much discussed new relationship is envisioned, and also of how sincere it is. "Community" and "engagement" and "local needs" are words and phrases frequently reiterated in the text documents examined. They show a federal government that wants to show that things are changing, that a new relationship with urban Aboriginal peoples is in place. However, even with all the talk of Aboriginal control and "horizontal management", the federal government still sees itself as being in rightful control of the process, setting national priorities, and making sure it is the most prominent of the two actors in the new relationship.

A further example of the role that the federal government sees itself playing is the unwillingness on the part of the government to accept responsibility for any challenges

encountered in the UAS thus far. Indications are that the colonial role of the federal government has changed from the overtly dominant colonizer, but remains firmly grounded in the patronizing big brother. The UMAYC stands in some contrast to this viewpoint, representing a federally funded program that appears to have given a great deal of leeway to the urban Aboriginal organizations involved to make their own decisions unencumbered by government priorities and desires.

These two large-scale policy initiatives seem indicate somewhat different trends, one based firmly in neo-colonialism, the other moving towards Aboriginal empowerment. The municipal perspective gained from the analysis of the Brandon CSP seems to fall in line far more closely with the former of the trends. The Cultural Diversity component of the CSP is dominated by terminology of exclusion, suggesting that individual rights are valued over collective ones, and that urban Aboriginal peoples are no different than any other unique cultural group represented in Brandon.

Text analysis can reveal what, through analysis of other sources, would have remained hidden. One can arrive at a construction, for example, of how the authors of these documents project themselves. The above analysis has revealed some interesting observations, and hints that colonialism is still present in the Canadian, and Manitoban, policy environment. However, what text documents do not reveal is how these policies are implemented on the ground. And, it is this perspective that is being sought from the

next section, devoted to the analysis of interview data gathered as part of this thesis project.

5.2 Interview Data Analysis

The data gathered from fifteen key informant interviews – taken in the form of notes – was analyzed according to the processes described in Chapter 3.5. Three themes emerged from these analysis processes: constructions of race and racism, power, and intergovernmental relations. A section of this chapter is devoted to each one of these themes and its analysis. Since the data was gathered using notes rather than recorder, quotes cannot be used. In their place, the responses of participants as noted by the interviewer are included from time to time. Where possible, data used to draw conclusions in the following chapter has been linked to particular questions referenced in footnotes. Since both the cities in this thesis are relatively small, confidentiality is a critical concern. In order to preserve the confidentiality of participants, they will only be identified by numbers attributed to them and referred to in footnotes. Their respective Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal status, the cities in which they reside, and their affiliation with organizations will not be revealed, as it may compromise the identities of participants in their communities.

5.2.1 Constructions of Race & Racism

As identified earlier in the literature review, the construction of race is an important component of internal colonialism. Early constructions of race focused on the creation of a dichotomy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, one that construed Aboriginal peoples as inferior and unable to make decisions for themselves. Based on this understanding of race, the Canadian colonial apparatus saw the imposition of the Indian Act as justified action: Aboriginal peoples needed taking care of.

Using the interviews and document research to analyze current urban Aboriginal policy, racism does emerge as an important theme. However, racism today has found expression through different avenues. In this new construction of race, Aboriginal peoples are not necessarily viewed as needing to be taken care of, but are instead viewed with fear. Several participants, especially in Brandon, spoke about the negative construction of the image of Aboriginal peoples in urban centres. According to some participants, the consistently negative portrayal of Aboriginal peoples by the media has resulted in the perception on the part of non-Aboriginals (and Aboriginal leaders, noted one participant) that Aboriginal peoples in urban areas are a threat and bring with them crime and social problems.[2] One interviewee argued that where Aboriginal housing is concentrated "is always the focus of negative media attention and racism from neighbours".[3]

Contributing to this construction of race is the lack of understanding that non-Aboriginal peoples have of Aboriginal issues. This was noted by several participants as a significant

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[2] This media construction emerged most clearly from Participants 2 and 5, Question 6, Interview guide 2.
[3] Participant 5, Question 6, Interview guide 2.

hurdle to policy-making progress. Question 3 of interview guide 1 revealed that one such

example of misunderstanding is the insistence by government representatives that any

and all urban Aboriginal programs and policies should be "pan-Aboriginal". That is, that

urban Aboriginal programs and policies should serve the needs of all Aboriginal peoples

in urban areas, and should not recognize the inherent differences between urban

Aboriginal communities. One participant suggested that "there is…a lack of

understanding that all the Aboriginal groups are different, with different cultures and

histories".[4] The argument put forward by several Aboriginal participants was that

policies and programs crafted to cater to all Aboriginal communities equally

fundamentally deny the unique characteristics of those communities. According to

several respondents, policy of this sort does not meet the needs of urban Aboriginal

peoples.

At first glance, this lack of understanding may appear innocent, as simply the result of an

individual failing to be properly informed. However, the lack of understanding between

Aboriginal peoples and government representatives may also be seen as an expression of

colonial processes of racism, wherein Aboriginal peoples and their perspectives have

been effectively written out of the affairs of state. These individuals may indeed have

failed to inform themselves properly, but their behaviour can be seen as part of a larger

colonial history that has marginalized Aboriginal peoples to the political, economic, and

social periphery of Canada.

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[4] Participant 2, Question 4, Interview guide 2.

This interpretation of the lack of understanding is evidenced perhaps most clearly in

Brandon. Whereas the pan-Aboriginal approach denies the uniqueness and diversity of

urban Aboriginal communities, policy in Brandon refuses to acknowledge urban

Aboriginal peoples altogether.[5] As indicated in Chapter 5.1, the city's Community

Strategic Plan – the city's community-driven vision for the future – devotes an entire

section to 'Cultural Diversity', but fails to mention Aboriginal peoples at all. Instead, city

officials stubbornly refuse to see urban Aboriginal peoples as at all different from any

other minority group in Brandon. Labelling this denial of Aboriginality as a "lack of

understanding" of Aboriginal issues is generous. This behaviour might also be

characterised as overt racism, or the deliberate exclusion of Aboriginal peoples from the

public face of Brandon. As one interviewee stated bluntly, "Brandon is a really racist

city".[6]

An especially interesting phenomenon that confirms the colonial role that race continues

to play in contemporary public policy is exhibited at the broader group level in the way in

which government officials and Aboriginal peoples view racism and their roles in it.[7]

Nearly all Aboriginal participants in Brandon spoke at length about the racism they face

in their city, whether through public officials or residents. It became clear after these

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[5] Question 1, 8 and 22 of interview guide 2, and questions 10 and 16 from interview guide 1 revealed this in
particular.
[6] Participant 5, Question 7, Interview guide 2.
[7] Responses to questions 20, 6 and 8, and 13 in interview guides 1, 2, and 3 respectively were helpful in
deconstructing these roles.

interviews that according to Aboriginal peoples, race is a big problem in Brandon.[8] In

fact, several participants noted that effective policy for urban Aboriginal peoples in

Brandon cannot be crafted until the issue of racism is tackled. One interviewee likened

any such attempt to "a band-aid solution".[9] Some participants went as far as to link the

lack of municipal urban Aboriginal policy to racism, instead of to a lack of understanding

of the issues.

Contrary to these findings, non-Aboriginal government representatives did not seem to

see their role as reinforcing or combating racism. Each of these representatives fully

acknowledged the troublesome relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

residents in Brandon. However, for these officials, racism seems to be something that

happens outside their spheres. Essentially, these officials see racism exhibited in their

community but fail to see their own role in it. One official interviewed saw and acted

against acts of racism in Brandon, going so far as to require cultural sensitivity training;

however, this same official failed to recognize the inherently colonial attitudes embodied

in the work they were conducting on a daily basis.[10] It would appear that for them, racism

is something that is done by other people to other people. This reveals an important

power relationship at play behind the scenes. Colonial power relationships are weighted

heavily in favour of the colonizer, or non-Aboriginal settlers in this case. In Brandon, it is

clear that Aboriginal peoples are feeling the effects of this unbalanced power

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[8] Participants 2, 5, 15, Question 6, Interview guide 2; Participant 3, Question 18, Interview guide 1;
Participant 6, Question 22, Interview guide 3.
[9] Participant 6, Question 22, Interview guide 3.
[10] Participant 1, Question 3, Interview guide 3.

relationship, as expressed through racism. Those holding the power, however, seem to have a far different understanding of racism, one in which their roles are obscured. This may be an indication that the nature of colonialism in contemporary policy has shifted from earlier forms. Many previous expressions of colonialism were clearly understood as such by settlers. However, the data analyzed above reveals that while Aboriginal peoples in Brandon feel the oppression of racism, government officials seem not to recognize it.

The colonial power relationships exhibited in race relations in settler societies become all the more powerful if those on the ground implementing colonial policies do not see them as such. This is certainly true in Thompson. It should be noted here that the construction of race and racism in Thompson is far less oppressive than in Brandon. Of the two communities, Thompson appears to have been the one in which urban Aboriginal peoples feel most recognized.[11] They are invited to government tables to participate and government representatives sometimes attend Aboriginal cultural events.[12] That is not to say, however, that colonialism and its inherent race constructions are not present. Instead of the overt racism felt in Brandon, racism in Thompson appears to be mostly systemic. For instance, in interviewing government officials, the capacity and preparedness of Aboriginal organizations was judged based on their level of conformity to government standards. Those organizations that were more versed in "playing the political game" of

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[11] According to the data from question 14 of interview guide 1 and question 2 of interview guide 2, urban Aboriginal organizations (both service and political) are involved in the policy process, though to differing degrees.
[12] Participant 12, Question 7, Interview guide 1.

Canadian government were viewed as "well-prepared;"[13] whereas, those organizations who refused to come to the negotiating table on the terms desired by Canadian government were seen as holding policy processes back. Here, racism is systemic. Urban Aboriginal peoples and their traditions and ways are not welcome at the government table. Aboriginal culture is something for festivals and ceremonies, but does not belong in negotiations on serious policy matters.

Based on this analysis, it is clear that the constructions of race – so integral to the proper functioning of the colonial apparatus – are still present. These are not just theoretical concepts with abstract results. These are real, tangible manifestations that have serious consequences for urban Aboriginal peoples on the ground in Thompson and Brandon. In Brandon, Aboriginal peoples are seen by non-Aboriginals as either a burden or simply as another minority group. Both of these constructions show two distinct threads of colonialism at work, both of which have evidenced themselves in the past. The first of these views Aboriginal peoples as unable to care for themselves. This construction provided the required moral impetus to institute the Indian Act. The second view of Aboriginal peoples reveals a vision of assimilation, where Aboriginal peoples are regular citizens, just as any immigrant group.

While quite different from the overt racism so easily linked to the colonial attitudes of a settler society in Brandon, racism (and therefore a particular construction of race) is

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[13] Participant 14, Questions 7 and 9, Interview guide 3.

present in Thompson. There, instead of going unseen by government, Aboriginal peoples

are frequently part of policy processes. But, it cannot be emphasized enough that these

processes are government driven and that to be seen as legitimate, obeying government

rules is necessary. This evidence backs up the viewpoint derived from the literature

review that current government policy is framed in "new relationship" rhetoric, but

essentially remains representative of a colonial status-quo. Indeed, in Thompson,

collaboration and consultation are occurring. The façade of a new relationship is there;

however, these collaborations only occur on government terms, at a government table

with government rules. Not everyone is welcome.

5.2.2 Power

Before delving into the analysis of data concerning power relationships, it should first be

made clear that race and its construction are critical components of power. They allow

one race to feel superior to another, sanctioning, in a way, exploitation and oppression.

Therefore, the above investigation of race should not be seen in isolation, nor should any

of these themes. Indeed, the three themes discussed in this chapter are highly interrelated

in ways that will be discussed later in the Synthesis section.

Power relationships emerge most clearly from the data based on a rough sketch of how

participants felt that Aboriginal peoples are involved.[14] Notable in the process, according

to some participants, is the absence of Aboriginal involvement early on in the policy-

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[14] Questions 1, 4, 7, 13 and 14 in interview guide 1, and questions 1, 2 and 5 of interview guide 2 were crafted to provide just such a sketch.

making process, particularly in the stages where issues are identified and priorities

determined. Most of the Aboriginal participants stated that service organizations were

simply involved in the implementation of policy that had been crafted by government

with no meaningful local Aboriginal input. The interview data further indicates that

Aboriginal political organizations appear to have more luck influencing policy before it is

implemented. Although the data gathered does not give a clear answer as to why that

impact was particular to political organizations, these organizations do seem to have a

closer relationship with government, especially with high-level officials. Unfortunately,

these political organizations are often not the same organizations that implement the

policies they influence. In the case of Brandon and Thompson, for the most part, those

who implement urban Aboriginal policy have little influence over its creation. One

participant aptly summarized his feelings on Aboriginal involvement by noting that

"there really aren't many Aboriginals involved in policy development".[15]

This finding falls in line with the circumstance, described in the literature review, that

Canadian government is downloading the responsibility for policy implementation to

Aboriginal organizations without giving up their power over policy creation. According

to the argument, made most powerfully by Taiaiake Alfred, the new relationship much

discussed by Canadian government is simply a façade that gives the appearance that

power is transferring to Aboriginal peoples, when, in fact, it remains firmly in the grip of

the government. As discussed in Chapter 2.0, Alfred further suggests that by shifting the

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[15] Participant 2, Question 10, Interview guide 2.

responsibility for some peripheral responsibilities, the Canadian state is intentionally shifting the burden of responsibility for the success or failure of these programs and policies onto the Aboriginal organizations that implement them, setting these organizations up, in a sense, for failure. The data gathered in Thompson and Brandon appear to agree with this argument, in that Aboriginal organizations in these two cities are being given the responsibility for the success or failure of programs that they have no real ability to shape. Alfred's argument is in many ways a worst case scenario, but at the very least, the data gathered in Thompson and Brandon indicates strongly that it is not Aboriginal peoples determining Aboriginal needs. Instead, their needs are being told to them and are being addressed by programs they didn't help create. Neither scenario is a positive one, and both point to a colonial mentality that is very much alive and well.

The funding relationship between Aboriginal organizations also serves to confirm the above argument. Funding played a disproportionately large role in almost every interview conducted, especially for service organizations.[16] For these organizations, operating programs given to them by government, funding was always a significant obstacle. Most funding was obtained on a short-term basis with strict evaluation attached. Programs were not guaranteed to run more than one year, as funding rarely spanned more than that period. In some cases, very valuable programs simply had to be abandoned for lack of funding. Long-term funding would allow for long-term goals to be established and long-term objectives reached. Short-term funding breeds the very opposite. Service providers

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[16] Questions 15 to 22 in all of the interview guides brought forward these funding concerns.

spent a great deal of time applying for funding and meeting the evaluation criteria that comes with funding, instead of spending that time administering those programs. One interviewee used the expression "to beg, borrow and steal" when referring to the efforts required to maintain funding levels.[17] Using funding as a means of colonial control, Canadian government is clearly maintaining an unbalanced power relationship wherein Aboriginal service organizations are given little control of critical resources.

Not only are important financial resources kept under government control, but funding is often only available on a competitive basis. In other words, Aboriginal organizations in the same vicinity compete for the same pot of funding. Here, instead of encouraging an atmosphere of cooperation, the predominant funding arrangement leaves Aboriginal organization competing amongst themselves, breeding in-fighting and leaving always a winner and a loser. And, in all cases except for the UMAYC program, it is not Aboriginal peoples deciding who wins and who loses, but government.

The previous two paragraphs outline two very difficult situations in which Aboriginal service providers often find themselves. It has been suggested that these characteristics are also found in funding for non-Aboriginal NGOs.[18] The claim that the two aforementioned situations are not specific to Aboriginal organizations may indeed be true; however, the ways in which these situations fit into Aboriginal-state relations are unique. Unlike other NGOs, Aboriginal organizations exist within the context of

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[17] Participant 15, Question 20, Interview guide 2.
[18] This was suggested in a conversation held at the MCRI conference, 2008.

particular government relationships – namely colonial ones – that have been discussed at length thus far. These funding circumstances cannot be removed from that context, so that, although both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal NGOs may face similar funding challenges, these challenges hold very different meanings to Aboriginal organizations.

The data gathered also points to important power relationships playing themselves out in how the government deals with the multiple Aboriginal organizations found in each of the cities studied. In Thompson, several participants suggested that the government favours certain Aboriginal organizations over others. These participants specifically noted that government favoured Aboriginal organizations that dealt with all Aboriginal people, embodying the government's own "pan-Aboriginal" approach to urban Aboriginal policy described earlier.[19] According to these interviewees, government is providing funding to pan-Aboriginal organizations, ignoring more established organizations that may have more established capacity. This was the case in a dispute between two major local Aboriginal organizations. The politicization of funding is another means by which government has the ability to exert its power over Aboriginal peoples. Essentially, politicizing funding creates an atmosphere wherein those organizations that disagree with government policy are left out of urban Aboriginal policy projects. It should be noted that evidence for this in the data is not entirely conclusive, although the answers to questions 5 and 7 in interview guide 3 point to this trend. Moreover, this trend was only in evidence in Thompson, and was not present in the

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[19] Questions 3, 5 and 9 in interview guide 1 provided the data for this conclusion. Most clearly articulated by Participant 12, Question 5, Interview guide 1.

data gathered for Brandon. A large part of this selective funding ties in with the ways in which government officials answered question 7 in interview guide 3. One official stated that "we welcome any established group that serves the urban Aboriginal community".[20] Answers to this question make it clear that these officials felt that not every Aboriginal organization was legitimate, and that the policy table was only a place for legitimate organizations. As mentioned previously, legitimacy was determined by non-Aboriginal standards of business-like behaviour. Not only are Aboriginal groups subjected to selective funding based on political agendas, but are further subjected to determinations of legitimacy, not by their constituents, but by Canadian government.

That Canadian state also appears to exert its power over Aboriginal peoples by maintaining firm control of the policy 'table'. Much of the language used by Aboriginal peoples in the interviews was language that indicates that power over who sits at the policy table is still very much in government control. These participants used words such as "invited" or "included" in reference to Aboriginal peoples in policy processes. Using these terms reveals that they feel that policy processes are not theirs. It was seen earlier that Aboriginal participants felt that they were not involved in critical portions of policy processes, but the results from these questions show that they feel that the process is *owned*, in a sense, by government. Being *invited* to the policy table or being *included* in policy negotiations is seen as great progress, and, in some ways, it is progress. However, even if the government is including Aboriginal peoples, the processes themselves are still

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[20] Participant 9, Question 5, Interview guide 3.

very much state-controlled. One participant made a powerful reference to the way in which this control over the negotiating table exerts power. Even though the policy processes in which the participant was involved was widely seen as inclusive, the participant noted that government representatives were always present at the table. This may seem innocent enough, but it is also these representatives who control the funding for projects. To this participant, these government officials, then, represented the state making sure that local policy decisions were made according to its agenda. There is no doubt that having government officials involved in policy processes is important, but there is a critical difference between *participating* and *controlling*. The policy table was seen by non-Aboriginal participants as a natural place for government, a place where progress meant that Aboriginal organizations could be included, but could not have ownership. A picture is emerging of state control over policy tables. In this picture, the state determines who sits at the table, and certain Aboriginal groups are more welcome than others.

For those organizations who make it to the policy table in the first place, there was a feeling that their participation and their opinions were not fully accepted.[21] It was argued that consultation and participation in policy processes is a form of 'tokenism' where the opinions of Aboriginal peoples are sought simply to uphold the status quo. That is to say, instead of being taken as valuable contributions to important policy processes, the

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[21] Participants 2, 5 and 7, Question 8, Interview guide 2; Participants 3 and 12, Question 34, Interview guide 1.

opinions of Aboriginal organizations were used to maintain the status quo of state power and Aboriginal oppression.

There are contrary opinions that were expressed among Aboriginal participants. Some saw the consultation in which they played a part as being constructive. Indeed, one policy arrangement that bucked most of the trends described above. Aboriginal participants in the UMAYC program were overall quite satisfied with its structure and processes. They felt, for the most part, as if their voices were heard and their input taken seriously. Interestingly, perhaps the most notable characteristic of the UMAYC program is that it is largely Aboriginal-managed. Funding is still obtained from Canadian government, but the decisions over 'who gets what and how' are made by Friendship Centre representatives. To be fair, the policy table of the UMAYC is relatively homogeneous when compared to the diversity of interests and organizations found at an UAS table. In that sense, the UMAYC policy process is far simpler and avoids some of the difficulties associated with broad consultation and involvement. However, participants noted especially that the distance from government involvement was a great asset. Decisions made without the pressure of government officials at the table were decisions these participants could claim some ownership over. In the case of the UMAYC, Aboriginal organizations are not guests at a non-Aboriginal table. Thus, although policy models may differ greatly, there are still valuable lessons to be garnered from the data about the UMAYC.

Much in the same way described in the previous section of this chapter, agents of the state did not seem to see their role in maintaining colonial power relations in any way. The example of questions on the topic of whether or not funding allows one party to control policy processes[22] shows a great deal about this gulf in understanding. In nearly all cases in both Brandon and Thompson, Aboriginal participants argued that the fact that government controls the money allows it to control policy processes. In some cases, however, this was seen not as necessarily negative, but instead as a *fait accompli*, or as 'business as usual'. Conversely, government officials argued, for the most part, that the government's control over the funds did not give it any unusual control over policy processes. There is clearly a chasm between the expression of power between Aboriginal participants and government ones. The nature and character of this chasm is not within the data to describe. However, such a gap does fit within the different mentalities of the colonizer and the colonized, or the oppressor and the oppressed. Harold Cardinal (1969) expresses the frustration of being on the receiving end of racism and colonial power relationships. As part of the colonial system, a system which is deeply engrained within Canada's settler society, it is easy to fail to see one's role in colonialism. It is far harder for those on the receiving end to miss it.

Further compounding the picture of power relations emerging from this analysis is that government is often inaccessible to Aboriginal organizations with limited budgets and

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[22] Question 10 in interview guide 1 and 3.

influence.[23] This may be a problem unique to Aboriginal organizations outside of major urban centres. For several participants in Thompson and Brandon, the ears of government were far away in Winnipeg or Ottawa. Making frequent trips to or maintaining offices in these locations was seen as cost prohibitive for most organization involved in this study. The MMF managed to avoid some of these issues and it appears to have more highly developed relationships with politicians. Also the size of the organization allows it to reach farther where smaller local organizations could not reach. For most participants, though, government was something that happened to them, not something which they had the power to influence. Where Aboriginal organizations ought to have been able to voice their frustration with the policy processes in evidence, they are unable to do so. In addition, according to participants, the federal government is becoming more centralized, making access more difficult.

The picture of power relationships painted by this analysis is not one that shows much balance between parties. The Canadian state is still firmly in control, exerting its power over Aboriginal organizations using a variety of strategies. To take a pessimistic view, Canadian government is deliberately using its power in every part of policy processes to maintain its grip on urban Aboriginal peoples, this includes using consultation as a veneer to disguise a system that still oppresses Aboriginal peoples. The needs of Aboriginal peoples are determined by the state, as are the policies that address those needs. The way in which these policies are enacted in programming involves Aboriginal peoples only in

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[23] Participants 2 and 13, Question 12 Interview guide 2; Participants 3 and 12, Question 24, Interview guide 1.

implementation, and only, argues Alfred, so that they are forced to take responsibility for any policy failures. And for most Aboriginal organizations, the routes open to make their voices heard by government are too expensive to take. This is the pessimistic view, a view that sees an extremely active and deliberate colonial state.

Another interpretation allows for some policy successes, such as the UMAYC, to be seen as evidence that the state is not purposefully setting up Aboriginal organizations for failure. This is a view that sees the state as muddling through, unable to recognize its own colonial ways, in an attempt to improve conditions for urban Aboriginal peoples. In the former interpretation, the state is insidious and conniving. In the latter, the state is simply misguided. In both instances, there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that colonial power relationships are still present in contemporary policy arrangements.

5.2.3 Intergovernmental relations

The research data has coalesced around the final theme of intergovernmental relations, a theme that examines the relationships between Canadian governments and how Aboriginal organizations fit into these relations. Understanding these relationships more closely will help create an image of the structure of how these orders of government interact with one another and with Aboriginal organizations, which may, in turn, reveal internal colonial power dynamics.

The majority of participants suggested that the federal government provided the greatest share of funding and that it also controlled policy processes (at least, from the perspectives of Aboriginal participants).[24] One participant connected funding directly to control over policy processes by stating that "whoever has the money will dominate the process".[25] Certainly, the provincial government also played a role in funding, but participants of the organizations involved in this study stated, for the most part, that the federal government was the primary funder and had the most influence over policy processes. The questions in the interview guides did not allow for a greater investigation of the details and methods of federal control beyond funding. It is also a possibility that the particular policies and programs that were investigated disproportionately represent federally funded programs, or that most programs in smaller cities such as Brandon and Thompson are federally funded. Nevertheless, participants identified the federal government as playing a dominant role in the local policy process, mostly through the control of funds.

It would appear that the provincial government in both cities played a supportive role to federal initiatives. In some cases, such as the UAS, they were funding partners, each contributing an equal amount to projects; however, even in that case, the program and its policies were federal. In most of the programs, the provincial government had an even more limited role, and in two of the policy areas it had no role whatsoever. That does not

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[24] These suggestions were recorded as the responses to questions 10, 1 and 10 of interview guides 1, 2 and 3 respectively.
[25] Participant 6, Question 10, Interview guide 3.

mean that it should be discounted as an important force in the policy landscape. Indeed, the province, though not often dominant, was frequently present at the policy table.

Municipal governments showed the most inconsistency in the study, sometimes displaying somewhat progressive policies, and sometimes very antiquated ones. Municipal officials in Thompson spoke inspiringly about the importance of the urban Aboriginal communities in the city and of their involvement in municipal affairs.[26] There was an Aboriginal councillor and Aboriginal involvement in several local policy committees. Municipal officials, such as the mayor, made appearances and participated in local Aboriginal ceremonies. Most Aboriginal participants in Thompson spoke very positively about their relationship with the municipal government. However, its influence at the policy table is limited. It is certainly invited to some of these provincial and federal policy tables and sometimes convenes its own policy discussions on municipal matters. The City of Thompson did play a role in facilitating the construction of eight housing units through the UAS program by providing access to lands. Still, the municipal government does not have much power to exert in large policy matters where it is seen as subordinate to federal and provincial concerns. Its role is perhaps more collaborative rather than directive in nature. Interesting to note here is that the level of government that has the least official jurisdiction over urban Aboriginal affairs is actively seeking involvement in the policy field, something not witnessed in the other two levels of Canadian government.

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[26] Participant 12, Question 7, Interview guide 1; Participants 9 and 12, Question 11, Interview guide 3.

In Brandon, the municipal government presents a different attitude than in Thompson, and as a result, its role in urban Aboriginal policy affairs is far more limited. Whereas in Thompson the municipal government has expressed a willingness and interest in being involved in urban Aboriginal policy, the very opposite is true in Brandon. There, the local government seems to have ignored urban Aboriginal policy (and peoples) entirely. Two plebiscites have been held to gather public opinion on Aboriginal proposals for a casino located in Brandon, both of which have engendered a great deal of ill will between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in the city. And that cannot be seen as a legitimate attempt to participate in urban Aboriginal affairs. A telling remark by one Aboriginal participant, when asked about municipal urban Aboriginal policy, was "there isn't much urban Aboriginal policy going on".[27]

Unlike on reserves, urban centres have no overarching Aboriginal government. Tribal councils and other Aboriginal political organizations sometimes try to fill that gap, representing the concerns of their constituents to other levels of government. These efforts seem to have met with some success. Both Aboriginal organizations with political dimensions involved in the study were more successful in finding a voice with the various levels of Canadian government than were service organizations. Aboriginal political organizations rely on close relationships with individual politicians, some quite

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[27] Participant 2, Question 1, Interview Guide 2.

influential.[28] "The more the politicians know your issues, the better," was one prominent response recorded on this topic.[29] This arrangement, however, means two things: when those politicians are replaced, a long relationship must be re-established; and, Aboriginal organizations, even political ones, seem to have some difficulty in going through more formal channels. In one sense, it is positive that these organizations are finding a voice, but the fact that this voice has to be found through other politicians is not such a positive statement. It reveals that these Aboriginal voices by themselves, without a powerful non-Aboriginal advocate, are not strong enough to make change.

Here again, in the realm of intergovernmental relations, there is a stark difference in the ways non-Aboriginal participants and Aboriginal ones view their relationships. Among government officials, all of whom were non-Aboriginal, intergovernmental relations were strong, and everybody was participating. Their view reflected Hanselmann's intergovernmentalism, discussed in the literature review. This is a view that sees all the levels of Canadian government working together to solve urban Aboriginal issues. In this arrangement, what is not said is that by working together, no one party has to take responsibility for the jurisdictional gap in which urban Aboriginal peoples find themselves. The latter view of intergovernmentalism is one which aligns more closely with the opinions expressed on the issue by the Aboriginal participants in this study. Several participants saw the issue as one of abandonment by each level of government, instead of as an expression of collective responsibility.

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[28] Participant 3, Question 1 and 2, Interview guide 2; Participant 12, Question 1 and 2, Interview Guide 1.
[29] Participant 12, Question 1, Interview guide 1.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

In an address to the Saskatchewan Writers Guild at their annual conference in 1990,

Jeannette C. Armstrong wrote the following:

> Imagine how you as writers from the dominant society might turn over
> some of the rocks in your own garden for examination. Imagine in your
> literature courageously questioning and examining the values that allow
> the dehumanizing of peoples through domination and the dispassionate
> nature of the racism inherent in perpetuating such practices. Imagine
> writing in honesty, free of the romantic bias about the courageous
> 'pioneering spirit' of colonialist practice and imperialist process. Imagine
> interpreting for us *your own people's* thinking towards us, instead of
> interpreting for us, our thinking, our lives, and our stories. We wish to
> know, and you need to understand, why it is that you want to own our
> stories, our art, our beautiful crafts, our ceremonies, but you do not
> appreciate or wish to recognize that these things of beauty arise out of the
> beauty of our people (Armstrong, 1998: 240, emphasis in original).

This thesis asks many of the same questions, though through a different voice, as the

above excerpt from Armstrong's work entitled "The Disempowerment of First North

American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing". In looking at

urban Aboriginal policy, we must ask ourselves, as non-Aboriginal members of a settler

society, how we have allowed the "dehumanizing of peoples through domination." This

thesis joins with others in attempting to answer this question, contending that the current

state of urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba is the culmination

of centuries of colonialism, and further, that this colonialism is still making its mark on

the contemporary Canadian policy landscape.

Through examination of literature, this thesis has attempted to illustrate how colonialist logic has guided Aboriginal policy, and more recently, urban Aboriginal policy. In doing so, this thesis has examined some of the milestones that have formed the basis for urban Aboriginal policy today, beginning with the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and ending with the recent declaration of a "new relationship" between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state. It would appear that the farther back in history one goes, the easier it is to uncover colonial logic. Overt racism and repression make their marks clearly. However, moving to more current times, the colonial logic of domination and exploitation is far more challenging to piece together. The colonial undertones to policies of assimilation or of a "new relationship" are often subtle and challenging to identify.

Thompson and Brandon, Manitoba, provided the locations in which to conduct an examination of contemporary urban Aboriginal policy outside of large urban centres, such as Winnipeg, where a large body of research is only growing larger. These two communities have not been analyzed for comparative purposes, but only to provide two different contexts in which to garner a better understanding of the workings of contemporary urban Aboriginal policy.

One of the most pronounced findings of this thesis is the confirmation of the persistence of a fundamentally unequal power relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state. As mentioned in the literature review, this unequal power relationship is fundamental to the colonial state; it allows the powerful to dominate and to exploit the

relatively powerless. As Armstrong writes, "once total subjective control was achieved over my peoples through various coercive measures and the direct removal of political, social, and religious freedoms accomplished, the colonization began" (Armstrong, 1998: 239). While relatively easy to accept as a past relationship, it may be difficult for many Canadians to see the manifestation of this power relationship in contemporary Canada. This thesis research, however, uncovered evidence that this unequal power relationship is still prevalent in the urban Aboriginal policy settings of Thompson and Brandon. In both these locations, representatives of the various levels of Canadian government clearly wielded a great deal of power over policy processes. In most situations, they strongly influenced, if not decided, whether or not there would be a policy "table", who would sit at that table, and what decisions would be made. For Aboriginal peoples, being part of these tables is a large step forward, an improvement from total exclusion. But, it is clear – with the exception of the UMAYC – that policy decisions are not theirs to make and that the futures of their peoples are not yet in their hands. Further evidence of this power relationship can be found in the means to which Aboriginal political and service organizations must resort in order to gain a measure of influence over policy processes. Here, individual relationships with political representatives, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, were critical to get their voices heard.

It should be noted here that domination and the exertion of power may find expression in several ways, including, among others, the capitalist economic system and oppressive bureaucracies. These means of domination are, in this case, so intertwined as to be

practically indistinguishable from one another. However, the possible roles of these other forms of domination cannot be ignored, even if they cannot be qualified in this thesis.

In a settler state, one of the critical ways in which such an unequal power relationship is established is through the use of constructions of race. It has been documented in the literature review of this thesis, as well as by many other authors, that Aboriginal peoples in Canada have been, and continue to be, the victims of racism, both overt and systemic (*see* Cardinal, 1969; Howard, 1999; and Alfred, 1999). Early constructions of race crafted a picture of the courageous pioneer versus the savage Indian. Later, this picture shifted to make way for the civilized settler and the uncivilized Aboriginal. Yet more recent constructions envision Aboriginal peoples as incapable of competently directing their own affairs, thus requiring the "help" of the Canadian state. This thesis has witnessed what is, perhaps, yet another facet of the Aboriginal-non-Aboriginal race dynamic. This is most starkly illustrated by the total absence of any mention of Aboriginal people in the Brandon Community Strategy Plan, a calculated omission reminiscent of the White Paper that sees urban Aboriginal residents of Brandon as simply one of many cultural groups, deserving of no special status.

An extension of this reluctance to recognize the special status of any single group over any other was also present in Thompson. Here, this construction of race was brought onto a smaller scale, with Canadian government officials adamantly refusing to acknowledge the vast diversity of urban Aboriginal peoples, favouring instead only policies that were

"pan-Aboriginal" in nature. The absurdity of the situations in Brandon and Thompson is that, while each is so different from the other, the construction of race in both cities serves to advance colonial relationships. In Brandon, Aboriginal peoples are being constructed as simply one of many cultural groups, and in Thompson, Aboriginal peoples are being constructed as one homogeneous group with identical needs. Both trends are troublesome, and point to the fact that constructions of race still play a fundamental role in how urban Aboriginal policy is created and implemented in Thompson and Brandon.

These two building blocks – unequal power relations and racism – provide the cornerstones for colonialism. But, they do not simply *happen* to Aboriginal peoples. Indeed, these manifestations of colonialism are implemented *by* individuals and governments. However, on several occasions, this thesis noted that these individuals appear, for the most part, to be unaware that they are contributing to contemporary Canadian colonialism. All of these representatives of Canadian government were quick to recognize the vast "challenges" facing urban Aboriginal communities, with some going farther to suggest that government has had some role in creating and maintaining those "challenges". However, not one government representative acknowledged that the program in which he or she was involved in administering or implementing played any role whatsoever in this process. To these individuals, it appears that *racism, colonialism,* and *exploitation* were words that did not apply to them and belonged to something else, whether to another era, or simply to another place. This inability for Canadians, even those intimately involved with government, to recognize their roles in maintaining

colonial relationships may be the greatest success of colonialism in the contemporary Canadian state. This result would agree substantially with Howard's analysis of colonialism in the current Canadian state. According to this theory, the state has successfully made use of the tools of colonialism – such as power over history, ideology, and legal and political institutions – to write colonialism into Canada's past. As a result, Canadians do not see racism and the results of unequal power relations, but see instead multi-culturalism and Aboriginal peoples who must be cared for.

Into this setting, the Canadian government has stepped boldly, claiming that there is a "new relationship" between it and Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This new relationship is supposedly based on the noble ideals of self-determination and self-government – at least for landed First Nations. The terminology used to describe this relationship from the Canadian government perspective frequently references words and phrases such as "local needs and priorities", "community" and "engagement". More equal power relationships are described using terminology like "horizontal management". However, while the new relationship may be flush with visionary ideals and effective marketing, it lacks real substance.

The fact remains that the policy landscape for urban Aboriginal peoples in Thompson and Brandon is only marginally better than it was in the recent past, with a seat at the table, but little true control over policy processes. Looking at the characteristics of the urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon in the context of the history of Aboriginal-

non-Aboriginal relations in Canada suggests that this "new relationship" is not new at all, but is instead a more subtle continuation of the past practices of a society that is, at its core, still a settler society.

That is not to say, however, that there are no positive policy arrangements from which to take some inspiration for change. In fact, the UMAYC program seems to represent just such inspiration. Its structure virtually removes Canadian government from the policy table, leaving decision-making in the hands of urban Aboriginal organizations responsible for implementation. And, according to those interviewed, it has been relatively successful, though certainly far from perfect. While other policies and programs fail to identify government as both part of the solution *and* part of the problem, the UMAYC does just that, delineating a limited role for Canadian government and, perhaps for the first time, ensuring urban Aboriginal control over an urban Aboriginal policy. One can only hope that the successful elements of the UMAYC policy are taken under advisement.

In many ways, it is tempting to see colonialism as a step by step process that was followed to the tee by colonial officials, and, more recently, by Canadian government representatives. This vision of colonialism, espoused by such authors as Alfred and Adams, sees officials with a clear process developed to meet a pre-determined end. And, indeed, this thesis points to the presence of many pieces of the colonial puzzle, reinforcing many of the conclusions reached by Alfred and Adams. However, Harris

(2002) suggests another view of colonial logic, noting that "colonialism spoke with many voices and was often deeply troubled about its own contradictions, while tending to override them with its own sheer power and momentum" (Harris, 2002: xvii). In this way, colonialism is not simple, and its logic is not always clear. While some policies may appear progressive, others may appear brutish. Both noble and insidious motivations may be at play simultaneously. And, perhaps it is this that best describes what we see today in urban Aboriginal policy: the contradictions of colonialism. The government declares a "new relationship" but enacts policies and programs that instead reinforce old relationships. Government officials are quick to describe at length the consequences of the unbalanced power relationships of the past, but fail to see the parts they play in reinforcing the unbalanced power relationships now. Contemporary colonialism in Canada may be confused, but it is very much alive.

The question that remains is whether or not urban Aboriginal policy in Thompson and Brandon is post-colonial. Sandercock (2003) argues that a colonial state is effectively post-colonial when its foundational mytho-poetic story is completely rewritten to embrace Aboriginal perspectives. For, according to Innes (1990), it is these myths that provide us with the commonly understandable "packaging" that enables policy action. It appears, from the data analysed in this thesis, that Canada's mytho-poetic story is being re-written and that this re-construction is having an impact on urban Aboriginal policy. Unfortunately, this emerging myth is nearly as state-controlled as the one it is replacing. Granted, Aboriginal people have a more prominent role, but, in most cases, it is still the

various levels of Canadian government that determine what that role is and how it is to be performed. Undeniably, there is a new Canadian myth under construction; but, at its core, rather than a sincere desire on the part of the Canadian state to shift fundamentally the balance of power towards equality, one finds, instead, a persistent colonial mentality that stubbornly refuses to let go.

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8.0 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix A: Selected Policies

Thompson, Manitoba is the smaller of the two cities considered by this part of the study. Four main policy areas were examined in Thompson: the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, the Urban Multi-purpose Aboriginal Youth Centre program, and housing policy.

The Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) is a federally funded program aimed at addressing three broad national-level policy areas: improving life skills; promoting jobs, training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2005). The UAS is active in a number of cities across Canada, and in two cities in Manitoba (Thompson and Winnipeg). Although policy priorities are set at the national level, a local committee, formed with representatives of the three levels of Canadian government along with Aboriginal service and political organizations, guides the implementation of the UAS at the local level. This is achieved by setting local priorities after community consultation. In Thompson, the community consultation revealed that housing was a local priority. As a result, the UAS, in partnership with the province of Manitoba and others, funded the construction of eight student housing units targeted towards single mothers.

The Urban Multi-purpose Aboriginal Youth Centre program (UMAYC) is funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The program is administered and managed in

partnership with three different Aboriginal organizations: the National Association of Friendship Centres, the Métis National Council, and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. The goal of the program is to "...support and assist Aboriginal youth in enhancing their economic, social and personal prospects by supporting the development and enhancement of the skills and tools youth need to fully participate in, and contribute to their communities" (Gaspé Tarbell Associates, 2003: 3). In Thompson, the primary source for information on the UMAYC was identified as the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre. The local MMF was unavailable to provide insight into their involvement with the program.

Although the UAS has had a part in funding eight student housing units, it is not the primary urban Aboriginal housing provider in the city. The Keewatin Tribal Council (KTC) Housing Inc. fills that role in Thompson. Although KTC Housing represents eleven First Nations in the area surrounding Thompson, the housing that KTC provides is accessible to all urban Aboriginal peoples. The housing provided by KTC is funded entirely by the federal government through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). As a result of the 1993 freeze in funding for new social housing units, KTC has been unable to provide for the increasing number of urban Aboriginal peoples in need of affordable housing. In Thompson, the KTC maintains 67 housing units, but has a waiting list of over 200.

The City of Thompson places a great deal of emphasis on its relationship with the city's Aboriginal residents. The past two mayors of Thompson have made significant efforts to

build a strong relationship with the local Aboriginal community and surrounding First Nations. This is also reflected in the priority that the current Mayor places on urban Aboriginal policy, involving Aboriginal representatives on policy committees in areas such as housing. Still, however, the burden seems to be on Aboriginal organizations to seek accommodation and involvement in existing policy arrangements, instead of participating in the creation of new policy arrangements.

Similar policy areas to those studied in Thompson were also studied in Brandon, with one main difference. The UAS is not present in Brandon, as it has not been designated as a UAS city. As a result, instead of studying the UAS in Brandon, the city's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) was examined. UMAYC is an active program in the Brandon area where it is primarily implemented through the Brandon Friendship Centre. Housing was also examined in Brandon through two of the major local housing providers, the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Housing Inc. and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation.

Begun in 2004, Brandon's Community Strategic Plan is a vision of how the local community sees the city in the future. Volunteer committees were struck in order to examine the following areas: agriculture, cultural diversity, economic development, education, environment, health, municipal government, recreation, leisure and arts, and youth (City of Brandon, 1999-2007). Brandon's Community Strategic Plan was examined with particular reference to the city's vision for cultural diversity. It was felt that how

Brandon involved its urban Aboriginal community members in the city's future vision would reveal a great deal about its current urban Aboriginal policy landscape.

The above policies are seen to be of great importance to those who implement and administer them. The Brandon Friendship Centre, the local branch of the Manitoba Métis Federation, and DOTC Housing all place a great deal of value in the programs they provide. However, the City of Brandon does not place the same value on these programs as do the above organizations. The City, in fact, has no official policies related to urban Aboriginal peoples, not even in its CSP. Nor does the City provide any significant additional funding to these programs. Fundamentally, urban Aboriginal organizations are not involved in the local policy process, suggesting that the City of Brandon values more other policy areas.

8.2 Appendix B: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

<u>Consent Form</u>

Research Project Title: *Multilevel Governance & Public Policy in Canadian Municipalities – Provincial Policy Field Study, Urban Aboriginal in Manitoba*

Researcher: James Moore

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose & Procedure: The purpose of this thesis research is to examine how urban Aboriginal policy is made in Manitoba. Specifically it seeks to explain the quality of public policy in Manitoba municipalities as a function of the structure of intergovernmental relations through which it was formed and the involvement of social forces (community organizations, business associations) in policy making. Apart from documentary research, the basic research tool will be interviews with politicians, officials, and leaders of associations.

This thesis research is being conducted in conjunction with a larger nation-wide study led by Professor Robert Young at the University of Western Ontario and funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. There are over 70 researchers involved in the project across Canada, with several in Manitoba. But, the research methods, prospective participants and interview schedules are the same across the country. Dr. Ryan Walker from the University of Saskatchewan is responsible for examination of the policy field of 'urban Aboriginal' in the Province of Manitoba. My specific responsibility in this project is that of a Research Assistant conducting research in the municipalities of Brandon and Thompson. This research, then, is to be used for two purposes: as part of the SSHRC Major Collaborative Initiative, and as research for my thesis project on the same topic.

I would like to conduct an interview with you which would take roughly 60-90 minutes. The purpose is to gain your perspective on the policy making process in the field of urban Aboriginal affairs in your community, and more broadly in Manitoba. We can meet at a place of your choosing and the interview will be private between you and me.

Potential Risks: There are no foreseeable risks to you from participating in the study.

Potential Benefits: The results of this study may have an impact on the quality of public policy development as it pertains to the municipal – urban Aboriginal interface. Best practices may be shared as a result of this work.

Methods: With your permission, I would like to take notes during our interview. Notes will be typed up and stored in a locked filing cabinet and no one will have access to them except the principal investigator (James Moore). Once typed, the hand-written notes will be destroyed. Upon completion of my thesis, the typed notes will also be destroyed immediately.

Confidentiality: The data from this study will be analysed and that analysis may be published and presented at conferences. You will not be identified directly in publications or presentations of the work.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Principal Researcher: James Moore – (204)269-6659
Supervisor: Dr. Ian Skelton - (204) 474-6417

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

_____

Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature   Date

8.3 Appendix C: Interview Guides

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR <u>ABORIGINAL POLITICAL BODIES</u> (ACW, MMF, AMC, MRN)

Section One: Policy/Program-making

1. In your work in urban Aboriginal affairs (and mention specific policy fields the interviewee works in like Aboriginal Justice, Health & Wellness etc) do you have much contact with federal officials?

> - who?
> - how much?
> - Do you have much contact with federal politicians or is it just officials?

2. Do you have much contact with provincial government officials and politicians?

3. Are some policies and programs formed by representatives of all three levels of government working together?

> - which ones?

4. Are some policies and programs formed by representatives of the three governments **AND** Aboriginal political bodies like Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Métis Federation, and Mother of Red Nations Women's Council?

> - which ones?
> - which levels of government and which Aboriginal political bodies were involved?

5. Is the province concerned with this policy area (or program)?

> - how does the province exert its authority over municipal-federal relations in this field?

6. Is the provincial government generally constructive and helpful in this policy area? (remember to actually say the policy area(s) like Aboriginal justice, business & entrepreneurship, education & training, etc.)

7. Do politicians - municipal, provincial, federal, Aboriginal (e.g., ACW, MMF, AMC) - play much of a role in shaping policy in this field?

- is their influence generally constructive?
- how is it decided which Aboriginal political bodies are involved?
- does one level of government tend to favour some Aboriginal political bodies over others in the policy development process?

8. Do differences in which federal or provincial political party are in power play much of a role in shaping policy in the area of urban Aboriginal affairs (or in delaying agreement about policy)?

- has policy in the field changed significantly since the election of the federal Conservative government in 2006?
- what is the nature of the changes?
- has this been beneficial or not?

9. Do differences in which Aboriginal political bodies are involved in shaping policy affect the type of policy created?

10. Which level of government brings the most resources (people, expertise, money) to policy-making in this area (remember to specify the policy area(s))?

- does this allow them to dominate the policy process?

11. Some municipal, provincial and federal governments have increased officials' range of discretion in designing and implementing policy. Has this happened in your organization?

- what has been the effect on policy-making in this field?

12. In this policy area, is there much collaboration with other municipalities (this question is only for municipal officials or politicians)?

- does this help in relations with the federal and provincial governments?
- does it tend to improve public policy in this field?
- does it tend to slow down policy making and implementation?

13. Are you and your organization involved in policy-making in field X (e.g., Justice, Employment & Training, etc.)?

- do you play a significant role in making policy?
- do you deal mostly with the municipal, provincial or federal level of government, or Aboriginal political bodies?

- do you interact with representatives of all these governments (and political bodies) at one time, in joint meetings?
- do you deal with officials or politicians or both?

14. Policy-making involves several stages. Are you involved mostly at the policy design stage or when policy is implemented?

   - do you get to help determine the problem dealt with by new policies and programs, or do policies and programs just get given to you to deliver from other levels of government or Aboriginal political bodies?

15. Would policy-making be improved if you and organizations like yours were involved at the stage where alternative policies are defined and choices are made?

   - if possible, provide an example(s) from policies/programs you're aware of

16. Is there a mismatch between issues that are important in the urban Aboriginal communities and what the three levels of government or Aboriginal political bodies actually address with their policies/programs?

   - please provide an example(s)

17. What local groups are most influential in making policy in this field?

   - does business play a big role in this policy field at the local level (and the provincial and federal levels)?

18. When your wishes are in conflict with those of local business interests, do you and your allies lose?

   - are compromises made that take your views into account?

19. When your wishes are in conflict with those of non-Aboriginal Winnipeggers, do you and your allies lose?

   - are compromises made that take your views into account?

20. Is policy in this field fair to you and the people you represent?

   - who benefits most from these policies and programs?

21. Do you try to enlist help from sympathetic organizations that operate on a wider scale than yours does? (e.g., AFN, MNC, CAP, NWAC)

- does this sometimes work?

22. When you and your allies are likely to lose out in policy disagreements, do officials or politicians from the provincial and federal levels of government sometimes take your side?

23. When you are likely to lose out in policy disagreements, do you seek to get support from the provincial and federal levels of government?

24. Are there obstacles to you doing so (time, money, knowledge of the system and so on)?

Section Two: Evaluation of the Policy/Program

25. Was the issue or problem defined appropriately at the outset?

- by whom (what level of government, organisation or social group?)

26. Was the policy made in a timely fashion or were there delays?

27. Was the policy adequate in scope to address the problem it aimed to solve?

28. Did the policy fit well with other related policies and programs that you work with and deliver/administer here?

29. Was the policy innovative, or was it basically a continuation of something that existed before?

30. Was the policy implemented quickly and smoothly or were there problems in delivering it?

31. Is the policy effective in attacking the problems it was meant to address?

32. As far as you can tell, is the policy efficient? That is, are results obtained at a reasonable cost?

33. Is the policy equitable? Were all Aboriginal groups treated fairly? Did it help the well off or the disadvantaged?

34. How could the policy/program be made better?
- what are the main obstacles to this?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR <u>ABORIGINAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS</u>

<u>Section One:</u> Policy/Program-making

1. Are you and your organization involved in policy-making in field X (e.g., Justice, Employment & Training, etc.)?

> - do you play a significant role in making policy?
> - do you deal mostly with the municipal, provincial or federal level of government, or Aboriginal political bodies?
> - do you interact with representatives of all these governments (and political bodies) at one time, in joint meetings?
> - do you deal with officials or politicians or both?

2. Policy-making involves several stages. Are you involved mostly at the policy design stage or when policy is implemented?

> - do you get to help determine the problem dealt with by new policies and programs, or do policies and programs just get given to you to deliver from other levels of government or Aboriginal political bodies?

3. Would policy-making be improved if you and organizations like yours were involved at the stage where alternative policies are defined and choices are made?

> - if possible, provide an example(s) from policies/programs you're aware of

4. Is there a mismatch between issues that are important in the urban Aboriginal communities and what the three levels of government or Aboriginal political bodies actually address with their policies/programs?

> - please provide an example(s)

5. What local groups are most influential in making policy in this field?

> - does business play a big role in this policy field at the local level (and the provincial and federal levels)?

6. When your wishes are in conflict with those of local business interests, do you and your allies lose?

- are compromises made that take your views into account?

7. When your wishes are in conflict with those of non-Aboriginal Winnipeggers, do you and your allies lose?

- are compromises made that take your views into account?

8. Is policy in this field fair to you and the people you represent?

- who benefits most from these policies and programs?

9. Do you try to enlist help from sympathetic organizations that operate on a wider scale than yours does? (e.g., ACW, AMC, MMF, MRN, MB Assoc of Friendship Centres, etc.)

- does this sometimes work?

10. When you and your allies are likely to lose out in policy disagreements, do officials or politicians from the provincial and federal levels of government sometimes take your side?

11. When you are likely to lose out in policy disagreements, do you seek to get support from the provincial and federal levels of government?

12. Are there obstacles to you doing so (time, money, knowledge of the system and so on)?

Section Two: *Evaluation of the Policy/Program*

13. Was the issue or problem defined appropriately at the outset?

- by whom (what level of government, organisation or social group?)

14. Was the policy made in a timely fashion or were there delays?

15. Was the policy adequate in scope to address the problem it aimed to solve?

16. Did the policy fit well with other related policies and programs that you work with and deliver/administer here?

17. Was the policy innovative, or was it basically a continuation of something that existed before?

18. Was the policy implemented quickly and smoothly or were there problems in delivering it?

19. Is the policy effective in attacking the problems it was meant to address?

20. As far as you can tell, is the policy efficient? That is, are results obtained at a reasonable cost?

21. Is the policy equitable? Were all Aboriginal groups treated fairly? Did it help the well off or the disadvantaged?

22. How could the policy/program be made better?

      - what are the main obstacles to this?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR <u>FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL, MUNICIPAL</u> <u>OFFICERS & POLITICIANS</u>

Section One: Policy/Program-making

1. In your work in urban Aboriginal affairs (and mention specific policy fields the interviewee works in like Aboriginal Justice, Health & Wellness etc) do you have much contact with federal officials?

> - who?
> - how much?
>
> - Do you have much contact with federal politicians or is it just

officials?

2. Do you have much contact with provincial government officials and politicians?

3. Are some policies and programs formed by representatives of all three levels of government working together?

> - which ones?

4. Are some policies and programs formed by representatives of the three governments **AND** Aboriginal political bodies like Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Métis Federation, and Mother of Red Nations Women's Council?

> - which ones?
> - which levels of government and which Aboriginal political bodies were involved?

5. Is the province concerned with this policy area (or program)?

> - how does the province exert its authority over municipal-federal relations in this field?

6. Is the provincial government generally constructive and helpful in this policy area? (remember to actually say the policy area(s) like Aboriginal justice, business & entrepreneurship, education & training, etc.)

7. Do politicians - municipal, provincial, federal, Aboriginal (e.g., ACW, MMF, AMC) - play much of a role in shaping policy in this field?

> - is their influence generally constructive?

- how is it decided which Aboriginal political bodies are involved?
- does one level of government tend to favour some Aboriginal political bodies over others in the policy development process?

8. Do differences in which federal or provincial political party are in power play much of a role in shaping policy in the area of urban Aboriginal affairs (or in delaying agreement about policy)?

- has policy in the field changed significantly since the election of the federal Conservative government in 2006?
- what is the nature of the changes?
- has this been beneficial or not?

9. Do differences in which Aboriginal political bodies are involved in shaping policy affect the type of policy created?

10. Which level of government brings the most resources (people, expertise, money) to policy-making in this area (remember to specify the policy area(s))?

- does this allow them to dominate the policy process?

11. Some municipal, provincial and federal governments have increased officials' range of discretion in designing and implementing policy. Has this happened in your organization?

- what has been the effect on policy-making in this field?

12. In this policy area, is there much collaboration with other municipalities (this question is only for municipal officials or politicians)?

- does this help in relations with the federal and provincial governments?
- does it tend to improve public policy in this field?
- does it tend to slow down policy making and implementation?

Section Two: *Evaluation of the Policy/Program*

13. Was the issue or problem defined appropriately at the outset?

- by whom (what level of government, organisation or social group?)

14. Was the policy made in a timely fashion or were there delays?

15. Was the policy adequate in scope to address the problem it aimed to solve?

16. Did the policy fit well with other related policies and programs that you work with and deliver/administer here?

17. Was the policy innovative, or was it basically a continuation of something that existed before?

18. Was the policy implemented quickly and smoothly or were there problems in delivering it?

19. Is the policy effective in attacking the problems it was meant to address?

20. As far as you can tell, is the policy efficient? That is, are results obtained at a reasonable cost?

21. Is the policy equitable? Were all Aboriginal groups treated fairly? Did it help the well off or the disadvantaged?

22. How could the policy/program be made better?

- what are the main obstacles to this?

8.4 Appendix D: Ethics Approval

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

21 September 2007

TO: James Moore   (Advisor I. Skelton)
               Principal Investigator

FROM: Wayne Taylor, Chair

               Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: Protocol #J2007:097
               "Multi-level Governance & Public Policy in Canadian
               Municipalities - Provincial Policy Field Study - Urban Aboriginal
               in Manitoba"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the **Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board**, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement. This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- if you have funds pending human ethics approval, the auditor requires that you   submit a copy of this Approval Certificate to Kathryn Bartmanovich, Research Grants   & Contract Services (fax 261-0325), <u>including the Sponsor name</u>, before your account   can be opened.

- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at: http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/ethics/ors_ethics_human_REB_forms_guidelines.html) **in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.**