

MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL STUDIES

PUBLIC REFORMIST ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN WINNIPEG

by

Albert William Pyke

submitted to  
the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree of Master of Arts

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## CHAPTER I

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

#### Basic Purpose

The basic purpose of this research is to determine, empirically, the extent to which Winnipeggers hold "reformist" attitudes towards "urban development".<sup>1</sup> In doing so some evidence will be provided about the basic ideas and ideals of contemporary urban reformers (as defined below) at least as they apply in one setting. Secondary purposes of this research are to determine how consistent Winnipeggers are in holding these views; the degree to which their views vary in terms of their basic social and demographic characteristics; and the degree to which their views correlate with their political knowledge and voting behavior.

The problem confronted by this research is that the literature provides few, if any, attempts to determine what the basic tenets of reformism are, to show the degree to which public officials and/or the general public hold such views, or the degree to which their political behavior might be affected by such views. Since the reformers expect and encourage citizen activity (such as electing reform candidates), a crucial question is the degree to which the public holds reformist views, and/or is amenable to understanding and acting on reform ideas.

This thesis attempts to address this inadequacy in order to advance the understanding of contemporary urban reform in Canada as an

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<sup>1</sup>Both "reformism" and "urban development" are explained and defined in this and the next Chapter.

important political phenomenon. Concomitantly, it contributes to the development of political methodology by the creation and testing of a "reformist" attitude scale, by the application of particular survey research methods, and by the use of only-recently available computer programmes.

#### Problem Context And Basic Concept

The rapid growth of Canada's metropolitan areas in the postwar period has been accompanied by considerable and growing opposition to the nature, direction, and underlying assumptions of urban government -- particularly as it effects the physical development of these metropolitan areas. This opposition does not have any overall organization, but rather is dispersed among journalists, citizen groups, active politicians, and academics. It is further dispersed among urban centers, a fact which leads to distinctly local orientation and activities. This opposition can be broadly referred to as "reformist" and its ideas and ideals as "urban reformism".<sup>2</sup>

The central ideas and ideals of the reformists are epitomized by the general orientation of the periodical, City Magazine<sup>3</sup>, as well as by such books as Lorimer's Real World of City Politics and Gutstein's Vancouver Ltd.<sup>4</sup> The basic tenets of this literature are that

<sup>2</sup>These terms are used in some of the literature, especially by Toronto writers such as J. Lorimer and Jon Caulfield, cited below.

<sup>3</sup>[Discontinued from late 1979 to summer, 1980] but published 8 times yearly by The Charlottetown Group Pub. Co. in Toronto, from 1974 to 1979.

<sup>4</sup>James Lorimer, The Real World of City Politics (Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, 1970); Donald Gutstein, Vancouver Ltd. (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1975).

city councils operate in the interests of major property owners and the property industry, to the severe disadvantage of most citizens, and that this is basically and fundamentally wrong.<sup>5</sup>

The reform literature contains a complex and varied assortment of ideas and ideals as to what constitutes needed reform. This research study focuses on what could be called the "moderate reform" position -- a position which predominates in the literature and which is clearly its central or, at least, its most widely-supported orientation.<sup>6</sup> The core ideas and ideals of this central reform position could be summarized as follows:

- (a) the protection and/or improvement of neighborhoods.
- (b) the protection and/or provision and/or improvement of accessible parks and recreational facilities.
- (c) opposition to freeways and support of mass transit.
- (d) opposition to grandiose cultural and sports projects and support of local or "mass" cultural and sports activities.
- (e) opposition to high-rises and skyscrapers, and high-density zoning.
- (f) opposition to the destruction of older buildings for historical and/or economic and/or social reasons.
- (g) opposition to growth for growth's sake.
- (h) support for positive social action to assist the poor, and/or undertrained and/or impoverished.
- (i) support for more comprehensive planning and control approaches.

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<sup>5</sup>James Lorimer and Evelyn Ross (eds.), The City Book: The Politics and Planning of Canada's Cities (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1976), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>For documentation, please see Chapter II, as well as the urban reform bibliography.

- (j) participatory democracy in lieu of special political ties to the property industry.
- (k) support for public housing.
- (l) protection of the physical environment.<sup>7</sup>

In general, moderate reformists have sought to bring an end to the service-oriented approach to urban government with its emphasis on property, property values, and property interests; and to replace it with a people-oriented approach to urban government with an emphasis on their needs, their homes and communities, their environment, and their wants.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, of the "radical" solutions, the least radical would greatly de-emphasize the role of the car in shaping the city, and would scatter and mix in a balanced way industry, commerce, shopping and residences.<sup>9</sup> The more radical solutions would end the influence of international and multi-national corporations on the development of the city<sup>10</sup>, and/or would replace a capitalist economy with citizen-owned and operated businesses and industries.<sup>11</sup> The moderate, less-radical, and more-radical approaches overlap and complement each other to varying degrees.

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<sup>7</sup>A detailed justification of this summary is provided in Chapter II.

<sup>8</sup>An overall impression of the reform literature is found in the Bibliography under "Reform Literature".

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Lewis Mumford, The Urban Prospect (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1968), and Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: Vintage, 1961).

<sup>10</sup>Henri Aubin, City For Sale (Toronto: Lorimer, 1977).

<sup>11</sup>Murray Bookchin, The Limits of the City (New York: Harper Row, 1973).



This current reform movement is considerably different from that of the 1880-1920 reform period. While high principle and great dissatisfaction with the existing order characterize both reform movements, the essential or core aspects of the two reform periods are different. Then, the emphasis was on efficient government structured along City-Manager forms, on non-partisan politics and elections, and the ending of corruption.<sup>12</sup> Today, the emphasis has come full cycle in the first two instances with citizen participation in decision-making and partisan politics ascribed as solutions to localized problems (within the city) and non-responsive government, respectively.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, while corruption is not a current issue of any major proportions, there is a major concern with the "special privileges" accorded the property industry.<sup>14</sup>

Urban Reformism will be defined as "an interrelated set of ideas and ideals designed to improve urban government by reorienting it around its citizens instead of its major property owners and businesses".

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<sup>12</sup>See, for example, the urban reform section in A.J. Artibise and G.A. Stelter (eds.), The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History, 2nd publication (Toronto: MacMillan, 1979); and B.A. Brownell and W.E. Stickle (eds.), Bosses and Reformers: Urban Politics in America 1880-1920 (Boston: Houghton Miffler Co., 1973).

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, John Sewell, Up Against City Hall (Toronto: Lewis and Samuel, 1975), especially Chapter 3.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., especially p. 168; and James Lorimer, A Citizen's Guide to City Politics (Toronto: Lewis and Samuel, 1972), especially pp. 4-5.

## Related Concepts

### (1) Urban Development

"Urban development" is used here in its broad sense, that is, including its social, cultural, economic, and political aspects. The literature sometimes uses it in the more restricted sense of economic or property development (that is, the physical development of the city),<sup>15</sup> but it is probably more commonly used in the broader sense.<sup>16</sup> One of the essential assumptions of the reform movement is that the different aspects of development are inseparable, and that therefore, the "politics" of urban development is inherent in the operations of urban government.<sup>17</sup>

Urban development will be defined as "an interdependent, multiple-faceted concept of social, political, cultural and economic change in urban centers".

### (2) Attitudes

The concept of attitude has been the most important concept in social-psychology since the 1920's and has been an important concept in political psychology and political behaviour since the 1950's. Despite this, the concept is still considered to be too variable and too complex

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<sup>15</sup> See, for example, R.W. Collier, Contemporary Cathedrals: Large Scale Developments in Canadian Cities (Montreal: Harvest House, 1974).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, N.H. Lithwick, Urban Canada: Problems and Prospects (Ottawa: C.M.H.C., 1970).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Christopher Leo, The Politics of Urban Development: Canadian Urban Expressway Disputes (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1977).

to enable general agreement on its exact nature.<sup>18</sup> However, widespread consensus does exist on a number of the most important aspects of the concept as follows:

- (a) It is a latent process which mediates between a stimulus (object, aspect, or symbol) and a response (behaviour) and as such is covert, abstract, and necessarily inferred (from cognitions, affections, and conative responses).
- (b) It is learned.
- (c) It is essentially evaluative, although it is affected by cognitive and conative perceptions and is *virtually inseparable from them*.
- (d) It is probably synonymous with "feelings", and is closely linked to "beliefs" and "opinions" (basically cognitive concepts) and to "values" (which have additionally the property of social sanction).
- (e) Attitudes change with time in response to new cognitions, experiences and values.
- (f) They are easier to measure than they are to define.<sup>19</sup>

Basically, then, attitudes are seen as a mediating process, with cognitive and motivational components, which predispose a person to evaluate some symbol, or object or aspect of his world in a favourable or unfavourable way.

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<sup>18</sup> See especially, W.J. McQuire, "The Nature of Attitude and Attitude Change", in G. Lindsay and E. Aronson (eds.), The Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. 3, 2nd ed. (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1969; Robyn M. Dawes, Fundamentals of Attitude Measurement (New York: John Wiley, 1972); and J.M.F. Jaspars, "The Nature and Measurement of Attitudes", in Henri Tajfel and Colin Fraser, Introducing Social Psychology (Middlesex: Penguin, 1978).

<sup>19</sup> McQuire, Dawes, Jaspars, Ibid., and also, William A. Scott, "Attitude Measurement", in G. Lindsay and E. Aronson (eds.), The Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. 2, 2nd ed. (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1968).

Attitude will be defined as "a mediating process, with cognitive and motivational properties, by which an individual is predisposed to evaluate some symbol, or object or aspect of his world in a favourable or unfavourable manner".

### (3) Consistency

The concept of consistency emerged from and is closely linked with the concept of attitude and attitude change. Research on consistency has become so widespread since the late 1950's, and so heuristically significant, that its importance is not really in question.<sup>20</sup> The core idea is simple enough -- individuals strive to achieve consistency among their cognitions (knowledges).<sup>21</sup> The core meaning of consistency is also straightforward -- consistency exists when two cognitions (knowledges) "follow logically" one from the other.<sup>22</sup> That is, one does not hold beliefs, attitudes, opinions, etc., or behave in ways which are logically contradictory one to the other.

There are both *intrapersonal* and *interpersonal* theoretical approaches, with emphasis on the first in the social-psychology literature.<sup>23</sup> Consistency in political research appears to stress the latter -- that is, the extent to which an individual is consistent across

---

<sup>20</sup>Shel Feldman (ed.), Cognitive Consistency: Motivational Antecedents and Behavioral Consequences (New York: Academic Press, 1966), pp. 1-2.

<sup>21</sup>Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), Chapter 1.

<sup>22</sup>Festinger, Ibid., Chapter 1.

<sup>23</sup>Feldman, Cognitive Consistency, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

multiple aspects of an idea, or concept, or ideology.<sup>24</sup> The two appear to be inseparable, and a person's attitudes would appear to be affected by both. *Internally*, a person strives for consistency between what he values, believes and does. *Externally*, he will try to some extent to adhere to socially-accepted norms, and to the components of the political ideology to which he is committed.

In this research, one's "consistency" is measured in terms of an external ideology, reformism; . . . an ideology which that person may have never heard of. Hence, interpretation must always be tempered by the potential illogic of this. Chapter V treats this in more detail.

Consistency will be defined as "the tendency to think or behave in ways that minimize the internal inconsistency among one's interpersonal relations, among one's intrapersonal cognitions, or among one's beliefs, feelings and actions".

### Conceptual Framework

This research attempts to operationalize and then test, the concept of reformism on a mass public -- in this case the public of Winnipeg.

The main research question, and the second research question, are descriptive, and relate to the public's reformist attitudes. The essential questions are, "*What* are reformist attitudes?" and "*How consistent* are they?"

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<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Norman H. Nie, S. Verba, and J.R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976).

The subsequent two research questions explore relationships between reform attitudes and properties on the one hand; and reform attitudes and behavior on the other. This is depicted in Figure 1.

Attitudes are viewed as dispositions, and intervene between socio-demographic variables (properties) and behavior.<sup>25</sup>

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

The hypotheses listed below tend to arise more from all of the readings in general, than from any particular research. The urban articles in the two Winnipeg daily papers, the attitude surveys, the studies on attitudes and consistency, and the literature on political participation all contributed to the formation of the hypotheses about the Winnipeg public's attitudes concerning urban reform and urban development. Each hypothesis, however, does tend to come from one particular segment of the literature more than the rest.

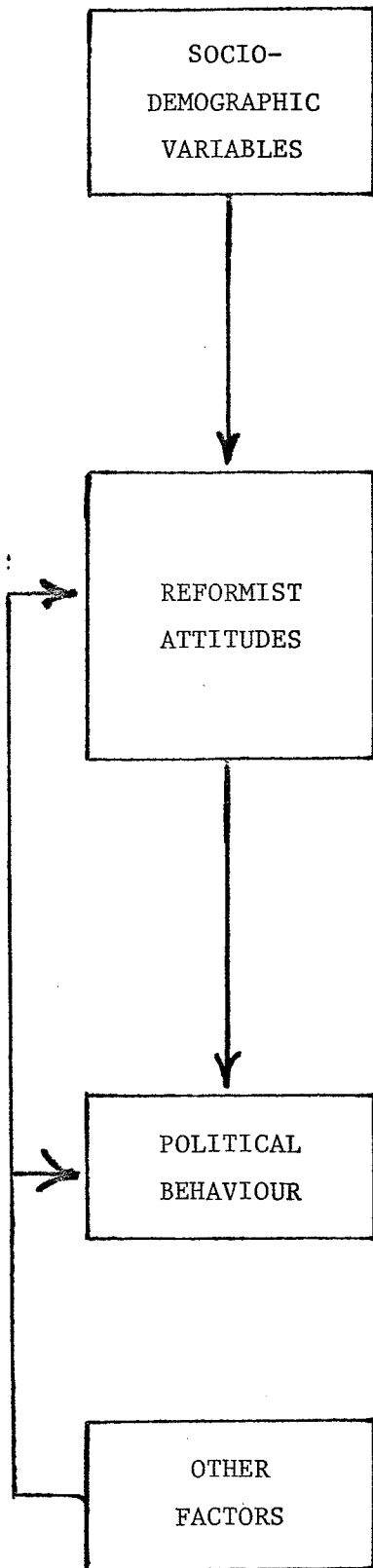
H1 was particularly influenced by the attitude surveys. The Vancouver Urban Futures Project, the C.M.H.C. National Study, and the Winnipeg Public Attitude Survey were particularly significant.<sup>26</sup> H4 was also partially the result of this literature.

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<sup>25</sup> Morris Rosenberg, The Logic of Survey Analysis (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1968).

<sup>26</sup> W.G. Hardwick, J.B. Collins, et al., Vancouver Urban Futures Project, 1 to 6 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1973), especially Appendix "A"; Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Public Priorities in Urban Canada: A Survey of Community Concerns (Ottawa: C.M.H.C., 1979), especially pp. 17-19; and Winnipeg Development Plan Review, Winnipeg Public Attitude Survey (Toronto: Ruston/Tomony and Associates, 1979).

Figure I-1. Graphic presentation of the relationship of the variables under study and the related research questions.



RQ#3 - To what extent are there differences in the reform views of various sub-groups?

RQ#1 - To what extent does the Winnipeg Public hold reformist attitudes towards urban development?

RQ#2 - To what extent are the Winnipeg Public's reform attitudes towards urban development consistent?

RQ#4 - To what extent are the Winnipeg Public's reform attitudes reflected in their reported civic voting behavior?

Other factors which are outside the scope of this study will influence the development of reformist attitudes. This involves such factors as rate of growth, specific issues or problems, degree of party competition, and reform leadership.

H2 and H3 were mostly the result of the consistency literature. Within this body of literature, the Nie, Verba, and Petrocik study was most influential.<sup>27</sup>

The remaining hypotheses arose out of both the reform literature and the political participation literature. Voting studies were particularly significant for H5 and H6.<sup>28</sup>

(1) Main Research Question

To what extent does the Winnipeg Public hold reformist attitudes towards urban development?

H1 - The Winnipeg Public is slightly reformist in its attitudes towards urban development.

(2) Second Research Question

To what extent are the Winnipeg Public's reformist attitudes consistent?

H2 - The Winnipeg Public tends to be consistent in its reformist attitudes across issue categories.

H3 - There are significant differences in consistency between sub-groups of the population, particularly sub-groups of income, education, occupation, and political involvement.

(3) Third Research Question

To what extent are there differences in the reform attitudes of sub-groups of the population?

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<sup>27</sup> Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, Changing American Voter, op. cit., all of the results presented throughout the book.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, David E. Repass, "Issue Salience and Party Choice", in American Political Science Review, LXV (1971), pp. 389-400.



H4 - There are significant differences in the reform attitudes of sub-groups of the population, particularly sub-groups based on income, education, occupation, political involvement, and area of residence.

(4) Fourth Research Question

To what extent are the Winnipeg Public's reform attitudes reflected in their reported civic voting behavior?

H5 - Voters tend to be less reformist than non-voters.

H6 - Supporters of the ICEC tend to be less reformist than supporters of the NDP and LEC.<sup>29</sup>

Assumptions

The assumptions underlying this research are as follows:

- (a) That public political attitudes in general, and urban reform attitudes in particular, are an important aspect of the urban political process.
- (b) That a population's attitudes can be assessed through the use of a random sample of that population.
- (c) That attitudes intervene between properties and behaviors.
- (d) That "urban development" is a multi-faceted concept.

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<sup>29</sup>For an analysis of political groups in Winnipeg politics, see P.H. Wichern, "Winnipeg Elections: More of the Same, But Different", City Magazine, May-June, 1978, Vol. 3, Nos. 4 and 5.

### The Importance of This Research

Urban government is increasingly recognized as a critical and fruitful area of research. Urbanization continues unabated both in Canada and throughout the world. Problems in urban centers are reaching critical levels, thrusting themselves into federal and provincial politics. The dynamics of urban centers create fruitful situations for the study of political attitudes and political behavior.

In Canada, there are relatively few non-governmental research studies around, and the ones that are available tend to be institutional, and about Toronto.<sup>30</sup> Studies are needed on other centers both for comparative purposes and for generating new insights arising out of local cultures and traditions.

Canadian urban politics are becoming more partisan and more issue-oriented, a fact which the reform movement reflects. At the moment, the few studies that are empirical or attitude-oriented tend to reflect the traditional, property and service-oriented nature of urban government.<sup>31</sup> This study, which analyzes public attitudes towards the major issues of the day is, hence, both relevant and timely to the study of government and politics in Canada, particularly in its local urban manifestation.

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<sup>30</sup> Donald C. Rowat (ed.), Urban Politics in Ottawa-Carleton: Research Essays (Ottawa: Dept. of Political Science, Carleton University, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> One of the exceptions is C.M.H.C., National Urban Priorities, op. cit., a study which suffers from other serious limitations.

## Thesis Organization

Chapter II will provide a justification for the selection of the urban issues and the reform position on each.

Chapter III will provide the approach and methodology used in drawing the public sample and in analyzing the results.

Chapters IV to VII will provide the results of the four research questions in the order presented.

The final chapter presents a summary of the results, and the implications of the findings.

## CHAPTER II

### URBAN ISSUES AND URBAN REFORM

Large urban centers are beset by numerous major problems. Some of these problems, such as the deterioration of the downtown core area, are peculiar to the city, while others, such as unemployment and manpower training, are part of a much larger socioeconomic system.<sup>1</sup>

The problems of the city have been viewed from a number of perspectives. Some take an anti-urban or anti-city bias. They see the city as an exploitive, dehumanizing wasteland berift with smog, blight, crime and impoverishing experiences.<sup>2</sup> For others, at least in Canada, the problems of the city can be traced to the fragmentation of authority into a number of competing and uncooperative Boards, Commissions, Agencies, and Councils.<sup>3</sup> For still others, the problems of the city can be traced to the incredible political and financial power of a relatively small number of development companies around whom the fortunes of the city turn.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For a fuller discussion of city-specific problems, see N.H. Lithwick, Problems and Prospects, op. cit., Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup>For a summary, see Alan Shank and Ralph Conant, Urban Perspectives, Politics and Policies (Boston: Holbrook, 1975), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Stephan Clarkson, City Lib (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), Chapter 1.

<sup>4</sup>See, for example, R.W. Collier, Contemporary Cathedrals: Large Scale Developments in Canadian Cities (Montreal: Harvest, 1974), especially pp. 108-133; and Henri Aubin, City For Sale, op. cit.

The approach used here views the problems of the city as simply a series of problems arising out of the structure and makeup of the city. These problems, though numerous and critical, are seen as amenable to political resolution given the necessary human will and the necessary resources. The best approach to understanding and resolving these problems is seen as a matter of choice between alternatives . . . a matter of *how* these problems are to be resolved. Taken together, these solutions to particular problems provide the overall direction which the development of the city takes.<sup>5</sup> The critical questions, of course, are which alternatives are chosen!

#### The Urban Issues

There is considerable agreement as to what constitutes the central problems (or issues) of the larger cities. This is evident from the re-appearance of these issues in study after study.<sup>6</sup> This does not, of course, apply to the more radical solutions. Several comprehensive studies, references to which follow, provide the basis for initially selecting the central issues.

#### (1) Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation National Study

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation listed 21 local issues as well as 5 national issues in its most recent study of urban problems.

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<sup>5</sup>This approach appears more as an unwritten basic assumption to a wide number of authors than as a specific position of any one author.

<sup>6</sup>The issues do not necessarily share the same components, however, and nor are they necessarily given the same emphasis.