Gender and Aboriginal Governance
in Edmonton and Winnipeg's Housing Sectors

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The number of Aboriginal people in Canada's cities, especially in the West, is growing steadily (Peters, 2005; Statistics Canada, 2008; Lamontagne, 2004). Under current political-economic conditions, many of these people, whether new arrivals from reserves or young people born in the city, face a myriad of economic and social hardships including homelessness, unemployment, and intergenerational poverty (RCAP, 1996 v.4, c.7; Graham and Peters, 2002; Rexe, 2007; Peters, 2007: 214). Winnipeg and Edmonton are prime examples of a cities dealing with these problems (Walker, 2006A; Silver, 2008; Peters, 2005). There, like elsewhere, Aboriginal women are especially burdened with responsibilities such as child-rearing, and disproportionately constitute a large number of single parents, thus increasing the poverty and isolation they experience (CCPA-MB, n/d; McCracken, 2004; UNPAC, 2005; Mann, 2005; Skelton, 2002). Having adequate, suitable, and affordable housing, something which a significant number of Aboriginal people lack, and securing Aboriginal control over its governance, has been identified as vital first steps in addressing many of their cultural, political, and economic problems (RCAP, 1996 v.4, c.7; Morris, 2002; Sgro, 2002B; Walker, 2006A). The dissertation on which I am currently working and, discussed in this paper, asks how the governance of urban housing services and programs differentially affects Aboriginal women and men in Canada's political economic climate, and what kind(s) of Aboriginal control over housing governance can lead to better outcomes.

It has been made clear that the resistance of many Aboriginal people to public participation will continue, as will a reluctance to participate in the governance of housing projects, if "participation" and "development" are based solely on mainstream (ie. Euro-Canadian, "whitestream," or colonial) terms, criteria, cosmologies, or concepts (Silver, 2007; Rust, 2007; Silver et. al., 2006; Walker, 2006B; Silver, 2004; Altamirano-Jiménez, 2004). Thus, my project examines how the governance of urban housing projects can be not only gender-conscious (to the effects on women and men) but also conscious of Aboriginal peoples' particular rights, needs, and aspirations flowing from different experiences and views (Peters, 2007; Green, 2006; Silver et. al., 2006).

I focus on the housing field, as one area among many in which governance can be studied, because a recent longitudinal study found that 70% of over a thousand Aboriginal people who had recently moved to Winnipeg considered housing to be the most important issue that they face (Distasio, 2004). Housing has been called "one of the pillars of the social democratic welfare state" (Walker 2006A: 2349; Chisholm, 2003: 6) and has been identified as being "key" to improving urban Aboriginal lives (RCAP, 1996 v.3, c.4; Morris, 2002). Inadequate housing can cause poor educational attainment, reduce employment, impact people's health, and increase mobility which negatively affects children's mental health and scholastic achievement (Stokes, 2004).

In the next section, I will briefly detail a history of Canada's housing field, interweaving it with a history of Aboriginal people's movement to urban areas. It will be seen how Aboriginal people have often been largely left out of the governance of urban housing fields. When possible, I will focus on the two cities of my case studies, Edmonton and Winnipeg. I will then explain the concepts of governance I will be using for my study, followed by a discussion of my data analysis and data collection methods. I will conclude with some very brief observations on what I have learned so far, though it is still too early to arrive at any conclusions.

It is claimed that there were few Aboriginal people in Winnipeg from 1901 to 1951 (Loxley, 2000). Histories of Edmonton convey the same message; they even give the misleading impression that First Nations people disappeared from the immediate area in 1885 (Cashman, 1956; Edmunds, 1943; MacGregor, 1975). While Métis people have lived in what is now Winnipeg for over a century, they were not considered to bear any Aboriginal rights and were, nominally, considered nothing other than 'Canadian' by the state until the past few decades (Loxley, 2000). First Nations people with status, on the other hand, were deemed formally and symbolically outside white, Canadian citizenship and society until they were deemed "acceptable" enough to become full citizens via enfranchisement. This was both a "reward and punishment" (Voyageur, 2000: 88). It is important to note that Aboriginal people did have frequent contact with urban Canadians. More recent historical sources, especially those that actually make use of Aboriginal people's own stories, rather than white perspectives, show how First Nations and Métis people participated in urban economic life and visited cities for many reasons (Coutu, 2004; Goyette, 2004; Hesketh and Swyripa, 1995). How this separation played out during these Aboriginal people's eventual transition to urban areas, and to Canadian social citizenship, will be demonstrated here in the context of the national housing field.

In Canada's early years, with its emphasis on territorial expansion, there was little discussion of housing. However, during the depression of the 1930s, a few housing projects were started by the federal government; the *Dominion Housing Act* of 1935 was short-term and centred on the goal of creating jobs through home-building (Chisholm, 2003: 5; Falkenhagen, 2001: 4). Later, the 1938 *National Housing Act* (NHA) was created to provide housing loans and finally committed the federal government to providing housing to its citizens (and not just to creating jobs) (ibid.; Chisholm, 2003: 5). Thus, "housing, nutrition, and education" became the goals of Canadian social security and the state sought to protect (albeit unevenly) Canadian's citizenship rights (Chisholm, 2003: 6).

This welfare state framed "welfare as a right of the community, rather than as a charity for a stigmatized minority" (Cronin, 2007: 183). Yet, Aboriginal welfare dependence began at colonization, not with the budding welfare programs of the 1930s and 1940s. The early state expropriated land, separating Aboriginal peoples from their natural and cultural resources. They were provided with welfare "relief" rather than economic development. This hindered community development and kept them outside the mainstream economy, dependent on foreign social security. Aboriginal people were seen as "wards and cheap labour" not citizens (Cronin, 2007: 186-187). Attempts to replicate European family structures in Aboriginal societies disrupted kinship and tribal relations, weakening their power to govern.

After World War II, many urban neighbourhoods were left to deteriorate and were purchased by slum landlords. In response, the first comprehensive *National Housing Act* was passed in 1944. This led, two years later, to the creation of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), a crown corporation designed to administer the *National Housing Act* and the federal government's housing policies and programs (Falkenhagen, 2001: 7). Because of the depression and war, the CMHC was immediately backlogged and saw little resource support from the provinces. Its early focus was on providing loans and some home building (ibid.: 8).

As more Aboriginal people moved to cities, the racism and discrimination they faced caused them to congregate in the poorest areas and most lacked the resources to move away from these places (Silver, 2006). By the mid 1950s, there was a growing realization of the poor living conditions of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg but the city was unable to help because "little was

known about them" (Loxley, 2000: 85, citing the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, 1954). Urban Aboriginal people still lived outside the welfare state. Yet, as more moved into urban areas in the 1950s and 1960s, they were seen as a "problem" by the federal government and white society (Peters, 2000: 249). Cities wanted Aboriginal people out in an attempt to "keep down welfare rolls" (ibid.). They were viewed as inherently (due to culture) incapable of urbanizing. This urban/rural, white/Aboriginal parallel dichotomy persisted (ibid.).

By the 1960s, general public dissatisfaction with housing policies was visible. In 1968, the federal government sought to bring communities into the process through a better plan for community development, where a more collective (in this case, neighbourhood-based) approach is taken (Chisholm, 2003: 7). 1960 also marked Aboriginal people's formal political entrenchment as Canadian citizens. But suddenly being formally "included" in a predominantly non-Aboriginal society did not mean that their housing needs would be addressed. In this way, throughout the 1960s and 70s, Aboriginal people were brought into mainstream organizations, perpetuating colonization. Cronin, citing Yu (1994) calls this "bureaucratic welfare colonialism," characterized by its short term funding, no accountability, and being purposely assimilative (2007: 187).

By 1968, national housing groups started to form in response to rapid urbanization and the rising costs of housing (Falkenhagen, 2001: 10). The next year's infamous White Paper is also widely seen as the catalyst for the politicization of Aboriginal people in Canada (Voyageur, 2000: 81). Prior to 1960, their political struggles were primarily local and could not use the state as a tool for change (Wotherspoon and Satzewich, 2000: 226). After the White Paper and the creation of more political Aboriginal organizations, the resulting bureaucratization of these groups led to a focus on civil and political rights rather than social welfare, leading to some resentment of the predominantly male leadership (2000: 237).

As a response to the deterioration and racialization of some urban areas, the CMHC's $200 million budget for low-cost housing in 1970 led to Aboriginal housing developments such as Kinew housing in Winnipeg. Before that, there were only 196 units in all of Canada built for off-reserve Aboriginal people under the NHA (Falkenhagen, 2001: 13, 20). Yet, many of the Aboriginal projects in the early 1970s were unsuccessful and short-term (ibid.: 21). With the Trudeau government propped up by the NDP, the NHA was revamped with more funding, its authority was re-centralized under federal control, and new housing programs were started (Falkenhagen, 2001: 21). The Neighbourhood Improvement Program (1973-1978) conducted more urban renewal work with municipalities and resident involvement. The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) was also created to repair and convert housing with a greater focus on adequacy standards (Falkenhagen, 2001: 23). Falkenhagen describes the RRAP as "finally a community-based alterative to the large-scale, government-owned public housing projects" (2001: 26). Funding was also secured for more cooperatives.

This was clearly the height of housing projects under the welfare state. In 1974, the Rural and Native Housing Project was created in order to build or rehabilitate 50,000 housing units for Aboriginal people in five years. It was implemented in cooperation with the Native Council of Canada the (forerunner of the Congress of Aboriginal People) and other Aboriginal service organizations (Falkenhagen, 2001: 28-29). Yet, by 1976, there were signs of problems with this program; there was low Aboriginal involvement and results were not materializing (ibid: 30).

During the welfare state's best days, Aboriginal people had differential access to services, depending on their (sometimes very remote) location. Access also varied by status, class, and

gender (Wotherspoon and Satzewich, 2000: 95). This unequal access to the profits of Canada's development, paid for by Aboriginal people, were premised on racialized conceptions of citizenship.

Although the 1970s saw more local community involvement in projects, the provinces felt that the federal government was overstepping its jurisdiction and interfering in their municipal domains (Chisholm, 2003: 8). In response, provinces created their own housing agencies and in 1985, new federal/provincial agreements on funding were reached with the Mulroney government.

The recession of the late 1970s/early 1980s also led to restraint in spending. Cooperative and non-profit building stopped in 1984 (Falvo, 2007: 9). In 1986, the federal government announced that it would only focus on those explicitly in core need, not on mixed-income neighbourhoods or on middle-income homes (Chisholm, 2003: 9).

Peters claims that by the 1980s, the old "incompatible culture" issue about assimilating Aboriginal people into urban areas disappeared. According to the government, poverty was now understood not as a result of culture but from a lack of education and unemployment (2000: 252). Whether the general population actually believes this or not is debatable. But by the late 1980s, there was even some recognition by the governments that universal public services were failing urban Aboriginal people. Service programs were too assimilationist, had uncertain funding, unclear mandates, and no cultural relevance (Peters, 2000: 253). But many programs today still cannot get past the Aboriginal/urban false dichotomy; policy-makers still see no place for Aboriginal culture in the city and so Aboriginal people and their needs are subsumed under general 'urban poverty' issues (Walker, 2006A). Urban Aboriginal self-government is still circumscribed by governments that will not fund it sufficiently.

There have been exceptions; from 1978 to 1993, the CMHC's Urban Aboriginal Housing Project (UAHP) helped fund 92 Aboriginal housing corporations, creating or rehabilitating 10,301 units (Chisholm, 2003: 41). However, this was one of the many housing programs extinguished by the Chrétien government in its landmark 1993 budget.

One of the first social welfare areas to be cut by the Chretien government was housing; the 1993 budget withdrew the federal government from all new social housing projects except those on reserve, which were still reduced (Chisholm, 2003: 10; Falvo, 2007: 11; Falkenhagen, 2001: 55). Up until that date, the federal government had built 600,000 social housing unit which amounted to 6% of Canada's housing stock (Falvo, 2007: 11).

With the end of the UAHP, Aboriginal people outside of the remaining social or Aboriginal housing corporations had to "make their way in the market" (Chisholm, 2003: 41). This means dealing with record-high rents and short supplies in addition to discrimination that still causes many to move to neighbourhoods characterized by structural decline, aggressive policing, boarded windows, drugs, and violence (Chisholm, 2003: 41). The RCAP stated that this withdrawal left a significant void (ibid: 42). Aboriginal people require capital to build up a resource base in order to partner with government or private agencies; during the 1978 to 1993 period, stronger Aboriginal groups were able to use the UAHP to form connections with the community and three levels of government. Also, these projects used "Aboriginal spiritual values" in housing which strengthened communities and culture (ibid.). Another problem is that that the National Aboriginal Housing Association, created to lobby for more funding and Aboriginal control over housing, wanted to deal directly with the federal government for housing and wanted the provinces out of the field. However, the CMHC wanted the provinces to be

included in housing projects in order to secure the extra funding (Falkenhagen, 2001: 57). A solution was reached where tripartite negotiations now occur between the federal government, provincial government, and local Aboriginal communities.

      1993 can be seen to represent the triumph of the neoliberal political economic paradigm, characterized here by major fiscal restraint, treating citizens as customers of the state, and leaving people to the market to secure their housing needs which had once been considered a goal of social citizenship (Brodie, 1996; Brodie, 1997; Green, 1996; Jenson and Phillips 1996; Denis, 1995; Burt, 1999; Jenson & Phillips, 1996; Pierre, 1995; Valentine and Vickers, 1996). Hackworth and Moriah show how the "common sense revolution" affected housing (2006: 511). This ideology attacked social housing in three ways. First, responsibility (and yet, not autonomy) was downloaded to municipal housing projects while regulations were downloaded to the provinces. Second, resources for municipal housing projects were cut by both the federal and provincial governments. Finally, and possibly for the better according to some, this resulted in entrepreneurship by some housing developments. However, the ability to be entrepreneurial was significantly uneven among developments (2006: 518).

      The late 1990s saw vacancies in many major cities fall to less than 1% (Chisholm, 2003: 11). Partially in response, but also in order to re-establish some federal presence in housing and social welfare, the federal government created the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) in 1999, part of its National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) for "strategic investments that address homelessness" (Falvo, 2007: 1). This 'social investment' funding (Giddens, 1999; Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2003; Dobrowolsky, 2006) has proved to be more flexible than past projects with the federal government seems reluctant to tell provinces how it should be spent (Falvo, 2007: 12). Both programs were ended in 2007 and replaced by the Harper government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) (ibid.; HRSD, 2008). Today, the HPS provides $269.6 million for two years in order "to establish the structures and supports needed to move homeless and at-risk individuals towards self-sufficiency and full participation in Canadian society" (HRSD, 2008). Both Edmonton and Winnipeg are partners in HPS projects.

      Thus, social investment projects for Aboriginal people are seen in targeted funding for band councils and transfers to the provinces in order to fund Aboriginal social assistance (and promote "social cohesion"), usually with a focus on Aboriginal children (Dobrowolsky, 2006: 193). To date, these programs have not accounted for large sums of money but signal a shift from at least part of the neoliberal paradigm. However, as these do not make use of gender-based analysis to see how women are differently affected, they still focus on simple identity targeting, not an intersectional approach (Dobrowolsky, 2006: 194; McCracken 2004). Without strong Aboriginal women's groups to influence spending, projects will still more than likely be simple, limited-time service delivery. And whether we have moved beyond difference-blind approaches to equality remains to be seen. Certainly, the current federal government still has trouble differentiating between formal and substantive equality for women and the services needed to address their barriers to full social citizenship (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2006).

      The situations of Aboriginal women are doubly complicated here; they must fight for their rights as women and as a people, as citizens of a nation (Kuokkanen, 2008: 230). Aboriginal women must try to get the attention of white society (including the federal government) *and* Aboriginal leadership (Voyageur, 2000: 81). Citing Linda Gerber (1990: 69), Voyageur says that Aboriginal women face a "multiple jeopardy"; restoring cultural practices

will mean fighting both racism and sexism as Aboriginal life is often framed as male (Voyageur, 2000: 83). Part of the problem for these Aboriginal women is that, as I have argued, the state is racialized; it has a history of European colonialism. It is a legacy that comes from slavery and the dispossession of Aboriginal lands that shapes political economy and the population today (Jhappan, 2007: 28). Today, the "universal liberal individual" is based on the white male norm and this has allowed "white colonists to treat Indigenous people [and women] as sub-human, enabling them to appropriate Indigenous lands in the name of patriarchal white sovereignty" (Moreton-Robinson, 2007: 88). Those in power promote race-blindness because believing in the formal equality of citizens, without recognizing their different abilities to access citizen rights, preserves the status quo.

As an example, in Winnipeg, neither the provincial nor municipal governments use gender-based analysis for housing and the Affordable Housing Initiative does not target women (McCracken, 2004). This is despite the fact that housing issues are gendered and have impacts on women (McCracken, 2004; Stokes, 2004). Housing has a differential effect on women's health, well-being, and economic security (McCracken, 2004; Stokes, 2004, Findlay & Wuttunee, 2007, Skelton, 2002; UNPAC, 2005). Aboriginal women face disproportional effects of poverty, colonization, violence, legal history, are more often single parents, seniors, doing unpaid work, and living with a disability (Peters, 2006: 318; UNPAC, 2005; Rexe, 2007). These unique needs create different housing needs. Like women in all demographic groups, Aboriginal women are much more often the primary care-givers for children and the number of Aboriginal single mothers is notably high (Skelton, 2002). This creates additional burdens including getting evicted if one's family gets too big for a rental unit or having a harder time finding housing that is large enough (CMHC, 2005). Further, some landlords particularly discriminate against renting to single mothers and/or Aboriginal people (CMHC, 2005; RCAP, 1996 v.3, c.4).

Further, in looking at how Aboriginal women are often forced to choose between their gender and "loyalty" to their people, Green explains the intersectionality of oppression on Aboriginal women. Not only are they oppressed as women *and* as Aboriginal people, but they are oppressed as *Aboriginal women*; they experience unique discrimination at what Green calls a "nexus" (2001, 729; Laroque, 1997). In light of this understanding of the intersectionality of race and gender, traditional gender-based analysis must be replaced "in favour of more complex, layered analyses which account for the multifaceted intersections of race, gender, class, and other variables. Such theories must give space (though not necessarily primacy) to experience [and] subjectivity" (Jhappan, 1996: 22). Thus, Creese and Stasiulis say that feminists should be employing "intersectional forms of analysis, which consider how different systems of stratification and their associated discourses and ideologies intersect, [and] provide a more complex sense of the multidimensional nature of power, privilege and inequality" (1996: 8). Understanding the subjective nature of identity means that analyzing race and gender separately is not enough. We must understand the "interaction of gender and race [that] produces a distinct result" as racism is relevant and inseparable from sexism (Jhappan, 1996: 26, 56). Whether housing programs under the social investment state can do this remains to be seen.

Finally, one should recognize the social investment potential of the Kelowna Accord, negotiated by Martin's government, all provincial governments, and with Aboriginal consultation, which would have invested over $5 billion in projects for Aboriginal peoples (Patterson, 2006). Over a fifth of this money was to be spent on housing infrastructure (on and off reserves). The Accord has not been approved by the current federal government. The 2008

Speech From the Throne (entitled *Protecting Canada's Future*) was silent on housing except for a promise to remove "barriers to participation in the economy and society" by extending the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (Governor General, 2008). Likewise, it was silent on Aboriginal peoples except where it stated that the federal government will, meeting Giddens' view of integrating people into the market, "take steps to ensure that Aboriginal Canadians fully share in economic opportunities, putting particular emphasis on improving education for First Nations" through partnerships (ibid.).

As can be seen, housing programs in Canada, and Aboriginal peoples' (limited) role within their design have changed over the years. First Nations people were non-citizens, then reluctant citizens, then customers of the state, and are now potentials for profitable investment strategies. Yet these concepts rarely open room for non-colonial participation in the governance of housing. The less visible stories of Aboriginal women's places in these histories must be further explored in order to understand their racialized and gendered places of subordination in Canada's current political economic system and how this plays out in the housing field.

In order to see how Aboriginal collectives govern themselves in urban areas, a definition of self-government must be articulated. Relying the Institute on Governance's definition of governance and its normative principles of "good governance," as well as a variety of authors on urban Aboriginal self-governance (Graham et al., 1998; Hawkes and Maslove, 1989; Cassidy and Bish 1989; Peters, 2005; Todd, 2000/2001; Peters, 1992; Mountjoy, 1999; Graham, 1999; Clatworthy et al., 1995; Wherrett and Brown, 1995; Murphy, 2005), I have defined urban Aboriginal self-government as a collective authority or jurisdiction over decision-making (and policy development) for a particular group with a determined membership that provides input, and to whom decision-makers are accountable. Normatively, equity in input will be necessary in order to articulate the diverse goals of the collective. Fluid descriptions of self-governance also include control over the resulting organization, management, and work flowing from collective decisions, understood here as the administration of service delivery. This can also include involvement in delivery of services itself. Authority and jurisdiction will require control over secure and non-conditional funding.[1] The right for Aboriginal people to self-govern is inherent and mandates an obligation for a particular level of autonomy and non-interference from Canadian state government. Self-government in housing exists when Aboriginal people act collectively to deal with housing interests in order to meet goals of group membership. This requires the authority and financial ability for accountable decision-makers to try to meet stakeholders' material and cultural needs through the delivery and administration of housing services. It may be that not all self-government projects will meet this description but it is a goal against which government initiatives can be measured.

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[1]Wherrett and Brown state that there are six elements of self-governance: membership, governing structures, jurisdiction, access to lands and/or resources, financing, and intergovernmental relations (1995: 97-107). This crucial financing point is expanded by Hawkes and Maslove's principles of funding: financing must suit the distinctive structures of self-government, fit the economic characteristics of the community, include economic development in order to build capacity, be concerned with equity among communities, and be conditional only when meeting national standards (cited in Wherrett and Brown, 1995: 106-107).

The one normative aspect I want to address here, that I do not think is adequately addressed in the literature cited above, is the issue of equity. Questions relating to this are central to my exploration of issues of gender and citizenship. Normatively, Helgason warns that self-government must be inclusive and "empower *all* constituent groups, especially the most vulnerable" (1995: 137, emphasis added). Further, self-government should provide "mechanisms and resource allocations for the design and delivery of a holistic and comprehensive strategy" in order to eliminate poverty and marginalization (ibid.). He also says that self-government must be accountable in its performance and outcomes. This may mean that self-government projects will need to start from scratch and redesign their strategies if they based on existing programs that maintain poverty and patriarchal white power. A focus on healing and reconstruction means that self-government should be based on Aboriginal values, philosophies, and practices (Helgason, 1995: 138). This includes the principles of sustainability and cultural appropriateness which must be discussed within their historical contexts. Ultimately, self-government will require an accessible dialogue among all Aboriginal people, not just elites and government representatives (Helgason, 1995: 139).

To carry out this project and study urban Aboriginal governance in my two case cities, I will conduct a thorough data analysis to discover how the governance of housing, and the political economic systems, affect Aboriginal women and men in Edmonton and Winnipeg. Primarily, the field analysis methods and theory of Pierre Bourdieu will be useful for looking at the effects of neoliberalism and the social investment state (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Swartz, 1997; Bourdieu, 1977; Chopra, 2003; Silver et. al., 2006). In this section, I will briefly detail Bourdieu's key concepts of habitus, field, capital, nomos, and doxa. I will then explain how I will apply field analysis to my project. I will conclude this section by showing what a field analysis approach may demonstrate in my study.

To begin, Bourdieu's notion of subjects' "habitus" (better understood as their 'dispositions') helps dispel the myth of the rational actor. It shows that agents' behaviour is the result of hierarchized relations to different forms of (cultural, economic, social) "capital" within fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 120). Bourdieu defines a "field" as a "network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions" (1992: 97). Each field follows its own logic and its rules are not explicit or codified (1992: 98). Rather, the rules (or "nomos") are implicit, historically shaped, and reflect the privileged interests of those who dominate the field (Chopra, 2003: 427). For example, policy makers and mainstream housing organizations dominate Aboriginal women, upon whom state "solutions" are imposed.

In turn, the nomos reflect the "doxa," the field's limit of what is thinkable and which sets boundaries to habitus (Chopra, 2003: 426). For example, the doxa that shape the housing field can include beliefs that people are ("equal") genderless, and raceless customers of the state, difference should not be accommodated (and deviance punished), individual self-reliance and self-responsibility, that "good housing" means owning detached homes, and other political economic consensuses, that ignore systemic inequality, described in my literature review.. These "truths" shape people's habitus, what they aspire for, and what they think is possible. They participate according to the distribution of valued forms of capital, such as education or prestige. People in the field can increase their capital by conforming with the "rules" and playing "the game," thus legitimizing its rules (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 99). Yet, they can gradually transform the field and how it impacts them by exchanging capital or discrediting others' capital.

This, says Bourdieu, is the nature of the struggle, or competition, for economic and political resources that people seek in order to seize power over the state (1992: 100). Agents' particular strategies depend on their position within the field, the distribution of the kinds of capital, and their perceptions of the field itself (1992: 101). In the end, subjective behaviours both shape and are shaped by the objective structures of the fields that contain them. Therefore, what is key is an investigation of both the objective, hierarchical relations (struggles) between actors within fields and the subjective dispositions of actors to adopt the rules and play the game.

I will carry out a field analysis in order to explore Aboriginal self-governance within Edmonton's and Winnipeg's housing fields. This will incorporate a gender-based analysis as I will remain attuned to the relational gendered dynamics, as reflected in my research questions and methods (McCracken, 2004; Findlay and Wuttunee, 2007; Status of Women Canada, 1998). My use of field analysis will involve three main areas of inquiry.

First, I will look at the objective relations between differently located, competing actors within the housing field in each city in turn. This will include state representatives, policy makers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizational elites, and Aboriginal women and men in the field. I will examine relations by investigating the uneven nature of their economic, cultural, and social capital, what forms of capital are valued in the field, and the "rules" of the housing field that shape behaviour and vice versa (Silver et. al., 2006: 7). I will see how different understandings of "good housing" or "citizenship" lead to conflict and tension within the field.

Further, when used in a multiscalar context like Canada, the relationality of field analysis shows how different scales create different identities and how they can intersect (Peters 2006; Walker 2006B; Ley, 2007). For example, Aboriginal treaties are recognized at the federal level while social citizenship identity is shaped by provincial services and local (city) communities. These different identities are often in conflict (Walker, 2006B). Aboriginal women constitute a further "imagined community . . . with a common context of struggle" (Peters, 2006: 317). Understanding Aboriginal citizenship and governance possibilities means understanding this scalar relationality within the field.

Second, I will analyze the field's actors' internalized dispositions (caused by institutions, the field's "rules," its unquestionable "truths," and subjects' socio-economic conditions) and the way that these behaviours are actualized within the field (Bourdieu, 1992: 105). Thus, I will shed light on whether the neoliberalization, radicalization, and gendering of the housing field has led to internalized dispositions that reinforce ideas of citizenship that limit or condition urban Aboriginal women's capacities to secure appropriate housing services. I will be looking at how and why each city's different actors attempt to gain capital (or in other words, how they try to get ahead) in the housing field.

Finally, central to this approach of thinking relationally is to situate oneself in relation to the field. I will remain self-reflexive in my study, understanding my "own location within the hierarchy of the field" and confront my place of privilege as a white, middle-class male (Silver et. al., 2006: 7; Green & Peach, 2007: 269). Reflexive methodology means situating my life, experiences, culture and race-ism in relation to my subjects, and to acknowledge my gaze (Moreton-Robinson, 2007: xxv). A failure to situate myself in relation to my subjects can lead me to miss, ignore, or devalue the points of view of different actors with levels of power different than my own. One must always reflect on the power relations between researcher and subject within the field or else the scope and quality of analysis will be limited.

Each city's housing field can therefore be seen as a social arena in which competition

centres around economic capital (such as funding to build or repair, to pay rent, or to buy a house), cultural capital (knowledge and skills to provide or secure appropriate housing), and social capital (prestige or access to sites of political power in housing policy). These forms of capital relate to each other as well. For example, more educational capital can lead to more social capital, economic capital to cultural capital, etc.

Hierarchized below the fields of government power, Aboriginal organizations and people are in a dominated position. "Whitestream" housing organizations have more valuable forms of capital than Aboriginal organizations and better relations with the government (Walker, 2006A). Likewise, predominantly white bureaucrats within the governments can dominate others with their economic and educational capital. My research may find that policy makers believe that they "know what's best" for Aboriginal women because of these valued forms of capital. Meanwhile, people with forms of cultural capital that place them closer to those affected by housing policies may know differently what Aboriginal women want in housing. This leads to a tension which I wish to explore.

In one study, Walker found that many non-Aboriginal peoples' seek to maintain the status quo of power for mainstream housing organizations. They support difference-blind housing projects because they believe that simply building more homes helps everyone equally; they don't necessarily recognize their own racism (2006A). In response, Aboriginal elites in Winnipeg have been able to form housing organizations when they have had access to valued forms of capital (Silver, 2008). But some Aboriginal elites may not recognize their domination over others which hampers Aboriginal sovereignty (Smith, 2005). Single, Aboriginal mothers, for example, may seek better housing, but because of their high mobility and dispositions to rent more often than own, they may lack the (educational, economic, or cultural) capital to compete in the housing field. Peters makes a similar argument about how scales shape relationships and identities of urban Aboriginal women (2006). She explains that scales are socially constructed, relational, contradictory, contested, and have material outcomes (2006: 315-316). Similar to the field analysis method, Peters shows how "scales through which social services are provided for First Nations women constituted them as certain kinds of citizens" (2006: 315).

It is important to recognize that Bourdieu's theories have been criticized by feminists for being overly deterministic and leaving little room for resistance (Lovell, 2000; McLeod, 2005). Yet, when looking at Winnipeg, Silver et. al. found that Aboriginal women can be at the front in organizing housing projects and that other avenues for empowerment exist through community development (2006). Aboriginal women's "resistances can be visible and invisible, conscious and unconscious, explicit and covert, partial and incomplete and intentional and unintentional" (Moreton-Robinson, 2000: xxiii). More study of the housing field is needed to see why this is so and whether all Aboriginal women have these opportunities. It has been argued that local, community-based public services may be better able to respect citizens' social and political rights and cultural and economic needs, despite the political economic climate, provided that certain funding and political projects are recognized (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2003). This strategy may prove useful as many, especially Aboriginal people and women, tend to participate more at the local level due to its accessibility and its capacity to allow for different conceptions of citizen participation (Jones, 1990; Lister, 1997; Silver et. al., 2006; Walker, 2006B; Todd, 2000/2001: 53). Political scientists often have a bias in looking at "official politics" (such as the state) instead of "unofficial politics" (such as community organizations) which are closer to the private sphere (Abu-Laban, 2002: 277). Contemporary concepts of political participation and citizenship must be re-thought in order to empower women and minorities. Looking only at retrenchment and the state misses important points such as those picking up the pieces of

political capital in order to self-govern, and the inherent jurisdictional conflicts that arise (Todd, 2000/2001). I expect to shed further light on how much of what kinds of capital are needed for positive changes for Aboriginal self-government and how the dominant political economy can be resisted by Aboriginal women.

In order to evaluate these relations within the housing field, I am currently interviewing policy-makers at the three levels of government in each city. I am also speaking to representatives from national and local Aboriginal organizations (including Aboriginal housing-based organizations, Aboriginal women's groups, and Aboriginal advocacy groups), and to representatives from local housing organizations. These interviews are for clarifying the housing situation for Aboriginal women and men, to ask how governments/organizations are responding to housing needs, to inquire about relations with other areas of the field, to ask why their organization does what it does, and what they believe can and should be done to improve the housing situation.

To compare ideas of governance expressed by government representatives, Aboriginal organizations, and Aboriginal women and men, I have put my interview questions into categories, based on the components of self-governance I addressed in my literature review: mission/goals, authority and jurisdiction, autonomy and funding, decision-making and policy-development, membership, input, accountability, management and administration, and service delivery. I also ask a series of normative questions about gender and race issues in the field.

I am mindful of the dangers of allowing representatives to speak for a diverse group of people (Tri-Council, 2005). As such, I am not characterizing the views of interview subjects from any organizations as reflecting the entirety of the views of their (real or assumed) membership. My goal here is a new level of detail regarding Edmonton's and Winnipeg's housing fields. I want to discover the effects of government and Aboriginal organizations' policies and go beyond the discourse of governmentality to try to see Aboriginal women's lived experiences that are easily left voiceless. Thus, focus groups with non-elites will allow me to shed light on the dispositions, experiences, subjectivities, and aspirations of more Aboriginal people and discuss what they think is "good housing" and "quality of life" in each city. It will also allow me to discover new controversies, confirm (or disprove) what elites and the mainstream are saying, and to bring up issues I may have missed.

I plan to have one focus group of approximately 10 Aboriginal women and one group of approximately 10 Aboriginal men in each city. Subjects will be people who identify as Aboriginal, who live in the city in question, and who are not representatives of any housing or Aboriginal organizations. Comparison of responses between my focus groups and interviews will help me come to conclusions about any differences between what political elites and people on the ground expect from governance in the housing field. However, direct questions will not be used in the groups as I want subjects to feel free to share their stories in a way in which they want to present them; a "life narratives" methodology (Jaccoud and Brassard, 2003: 134). This "life story" approach (Silver et al., 2006) is especially good for understanding oral histories, good when interviewing women, and has generated useful data for study (Silver, 2004). Other studies have found similar success with such focus groups (Silver, 2007; McCracken, 2004).

The interviews I have completed so far in Edmonton have shed some light on that city's housing field though it is still too early to carry out a complete field analysis, looking at the relationaltiy of all actors in the field. What I have learned so far, however, has been interesting and will shape how I interview future subjects. Some housing organizations have been reluctant to address racism within the housing field, despite indicating that it exists. One government

crown corporation involved in housing has so far indicated that they do not think that talking to me would be useful because they do not keep "ethnic statistics" and so they have nothing to say about Aboriginal people. I believe that this response makes talking to them that much more significant. Also interestingly, some key Aboriginal housing providers in the city have been experiencing serious financial issues and one is legally unable to speak to me until their problems are resolved. I am eager to follow up with these projects when they are able to speak as they will undoubtedly be able to address how the current economic situation has affected urban Aboriginal housing.

If urban Aboriginal people are going to be freed from systemic poverty and participate in urban economies on their own terms, then they are going to need to gain substantive control over their housing situations within the city. Any goals to this end must take into account the racist and gendered nature of this dilemma or else the resulting poverty will continue to foster intergenerational effects.

However, it is clear that we have a long way to go; the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) was recently "refocused" by the federal government to emphasize life skills, job training, entrepreneurship and women and children's issues (this last point essentially boils down to protection from crime, incentives to not enter into crime, and a plan to provide self-esteem counselling so that they can get jobs) (INAC, 2007; UAS website, 2008). Precise UAS projects are still left up to the cities but some cities, including Winnipeg, no longer have a UAS housing project, despite a continuing need. At the same time as this refocusing, Winnipeg's UAS was delinked from the guidance of the local Winnipeg Partnership Agreement (that guaranteed Aboriginal involvement) so that the government could enter into UAS partnerships with other (private sector) projects (UAS website, 2007B). Edmonton's UAS, meanwhile, has faced stalling by being passed between committees (Anderson-Gill, 2005: 29) though a recently redesigned housing strategy between the three levels of government in Edmonton may be showing some early signs of success.

I hope that further study will demonstrate how the governance of urban housing projects, despite the attempts of various governments to obscure gender and citizenship difference, can be not only gender-conscious but also conform to the needs and rights of urban Aboriginal peoples. A failure to do so would be a failure of Canada's governments to meet their commitments to self-government and to foster liveable cities for everyone.

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