

FOCUS: ABORIGINAL IDENTITY VS. ORIGIN/ETHNICITY

Prior to 1996, users of Census materials were instructed to classify as Aboriginal any respondent indicating Aboriginal origins/ethnicity (in whole or in part) and/or Indian Act registration. In 1996 a new question was added to the Census that asked if respondents identified themselves as belonging to one of the three Aboriginal groups recognised by Canada's Constitution: i.e. (North American) Indians, Metis, and Inuit. Based on the new definition, respondents are considered Aboriginal if they indicate Aboriginal identity and/or Indian Act registration.

Nationally in 1996, approximately 1.1 million people indicated Aboriginal origins, either as a single response or part of a multiple response to the Census ethnicity question. But only 800,000 indicated that they identified with an Aboriginal group. Following release of the 1996 Census, the federal department of Human Resources Development commissioned an analysis of the characteristics of the 300,000 Census respondents who indicated (partial) Aboriginal origins but not identity.

Statistics Canada reported back that this group, which is concentrated outside the Prairie provinces, and especially in large urban centres like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, differed substantially from the 800,000 Aboriginal identity population. In fact, in terms of education, employment and income, they were on average better off, not only than the Aboriginal identity population, but also than the average Canadian.¹

19,095 people in Manitoba indicated Aboriginal ancestry but not identity in 1996. In 95% of cases they indicated Aboriginal as part of a multiple response, and in 5% of cases indicated Metis or North American Indian as a single response. However, the difference between Manitoba Aboriginal counts using the two definitions is only 13,000, not 19,000.²

Much attention has been paid to the exclusion of the non-identity group from the Aboriginal population, as defined by Statistics Canada. But there is another aspect that has attracted little attention. Use of the ethnicity question appears to have excluded from previous Aboriginal counts a substantial group of people, not registered under the Indian Act but reporting Metis or North American Indian identity.

This is probably due to how "complicated" the ethnicity question is, and the different ways that people understand the question when filling out their Census forms. It may be that people are filling in a single origin response when a multiple response would be more appropriate, or it may simply be that the origin/ethnicity question is particularly unclear to people of mixed ancestry or people in multi-ethnic families. Statistics Canada, obviously unsatisfied with its clarity, has changed the wording of this question in each of the past four Censuses.

In Manitoba, about 45,000 people indicated Metis identity in 1996 (including registered Indians who indicated Metis identity). Of these, most also indicated Metis as either a single response or part of a multiple response to the ethnicity question. However, about 40% gave a single response to the ethnicity question, and in 6,070 cases (13%) the single response given was something other than "Metis."³ Under pre-1996 Census definitions, these 6,070 people would not have been counted as Metis.

Of these, 2,985 were located in Winnipeg, and 3,085 outside. 1,860 wrote in "Canadian" as a single origin/ethnicity response in 1996. No one knows exactly how to interpret the "Canadian" response, though these people would not have been tabulated as Metis, or even Aboriginal, on earlier Censuses had they responded in this way. Similarly, 1,020 Metis-identity people gave "French" as a single response, and 615 gave "English." They also would not have been considered Metis or Aboriginal by previous Censuses regardless of their actual ancestry.⁴

A further 2,155 Metis-identity people wrote in a "North American Indian" nationality as their sole response, many in the north but also 880 in Winnipeg. On earlier Censuses, these people would have been considered either Status or non-Status Indians, not Metis.

In short, the 1996 change from ancestry to identity as the basis for Aboriginal counts not only excluded significant numbers of people previously considered Aboriginal. It also included for the first time significant numbers who were previously not considered Aboriginal, or else were ascribed to the wrong Aboriginal group. This includes non-Status Indians as well as Metis.

The Aboriginal populations captured by the 1991 and 1996 Censuses are, to a significant degree, two different populations, with close to 25,000 Manitobans having been reclassified from Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal or vice versa. The 1996 Census population consists of those persons who consider themselves to be Aboriginal. Earlier versions consisted of those persons considered by Statistics Canada to be Aboriginal. It's fairly clear who would know better.

¹ Briefing notes prepared by Statistics Canada in relation to HRDC's National Aboriginal Resource Allocation Model.

² Manitoba government special tabulation of 1996 Census data. Thanks to Harvey Stevens for this analysis.

³ MMF special tabulation of 1996 Census data.

⁴ Incidentally, this group also would not have been included in the population sampled for the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, which included an identity question. This means the APS undercounted this (largely Metis & non-Status) group as well as persons (largely Status) actually missed by the 1991 Census.

(add to demographics chapter)

EXTERNAL MIGRATION

Aboriginal people in general migrate between provinces in about the same numbers as other Canadians. About 3% of Status and Metis residents of Manitoba in 1996 lived in another province five years earlier, compared to 4% of the total population.

There is a modest but longstanding trend of net Aboriginal out-migration from Manitoba to other provinces, but the effect on Manitoba Aboriginal demographics is negligible.

In 1996, 120,090 Aboriginal people residing in Manitoba were born in Manitoba, or 93.4%. Just 8,270 (6.4%) were born out of province and 260 (0.2%) outside Canada. By contrast, 13.4% of all Manitobans were born in other provinces, and a further 12.4% were born outside Canada.ⁱ

ⁱ Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, "Manitoba Aboriginal People: A Statistical Profile 1996," 1998, p.11, 22.

DISABILITIES

Disabilities refer to difficulties experienced in performing an activity in a manner or within the range considered normal for human beings. Types of disability include limitations in mobility, agility, hearing, seeing, speaking, and limitations imposed by a learning disability or mental illness.

According to 1996 Census data, 10.6% of Manitobans of all ages reported a long-term disability. The percentages for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Manitobans were similar: 10.2% and 10.7% respectively. However, as in the case of mortality and many other health statistics, the relatively low Aboriginal percentage is because of the younger Aboriginal population. The likelihood of experiencing a disability increases with age.

In every age group, Aboriginal people were more likely than non-Aboriginal people to report a disability – usually between 1.5 to 2 times as likely. Metis people in particular reported high rates of disability:

PERCENTAGES REPORTING LONG TERM DISABILITIES: 1996 CENSUS

| <i>Age Group</i> | <i>Non-Aboriginal</i> | <i>Reg. Indians</i> | <i>Metis</i> |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <i>0-14</i> | 2.8 | 5.1 | 4.6 |
| <i>15-29</i> | 3.9 | 5.3 | 6.1 |
| <i>30-64</i> | 9.8 | 14.8 | 17.2 |
| <i>65+</i> | 34.4 | 50.6 | 46.5 |

Aboriginal people within any specific age group are more likely than other Canadians to have hearing, sight and/or speech difficulties. Mobility disabilities occur at similar rates for both populations.¹

Among First Nations people under age 65, disability rates are far higher off reserve than on, and highest of all in the city of Winnipeg. This is presumably for reason of access to health care services; that is, persons with disabilities are more likely to migrate to urban centres.² In Winnipeg, this may lead to the illusion that First Nations disability rates are much higher than non-Aboriginal rates. In fact, 9.4% of registered Indians in Manitoba report a disability, compared to 10.7% of non-Aboriginal people, again because of the younger age profile.

PERCENTAGES REGISTERED INDIANS WITH DISABILITIES: 1996 CENSUS

| <i>Age Group</i> | <i>On Reserve</i> | <i>Off Reserve</i> | <i>Winnipeg</i> |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <i>0-14</i> | 3.4 | 7.4 | 8.1 |
| <i>15-29</i> | 3.4 | 8.0 | 8.2 |
| <i>30-64</i> | 12.2 | 18.6 | 19.8 |
| <i>65+</i> | 53.2 | 45.1 | 41.8 |

13,015 Aboriginal Manitobans reported a disability on the 1996 Census. Of these, 7,630 were Status Indians, 4,605 Metis, and 710 Non-Status or other

Aboriginal. Only 3,640 disabled Aboriginal people normally resided on-reserve, or 28%. 9,330 lived off reserve, including 5,280 in Winnipeg.³

Aboriginal communities and organisations express concern regarding mental health service for their people. Although hospital utilisation rates for mental disorders of Status Indians are less than total Manitoba rates, it may be that this is influenced by the availability of services in rural and remote areas. However, in the Winnipeg core area, Status Indian hospitalisation for mental illness for the ages between 10 and 34 is more than double for other Winnipeggers in that age group.⁴

FAS/FAE

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and the related condition of related Fetal Alcohol Effects, are neurological impairments which result in delayed growth, intellectual and behavioural disabilities, and in the worst cases (FAS) facial abnormalities. The danger is greatest during the first trimester, before women often realise they are pregnant. It has been estimated by the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse that the lifetime cost to society of one FAS child is as much as \$1.4 Million.⁵

In February 1997, results were announced of a study of 179 children at one on reserve Manitoba school. The researchers alleged that 11 children were found to be diagnosable as FAS and another six as FAE, from which it was estimated that almost 10% of the students had features of alcohol related damage. If so, this would be 50 times the world and Canada-wide rate of about 0.2%.⁶

However, the 1999 National Report of the First Nations and Inuit Regional Health Survey cautions that:

Although a few case studies suggest that FAS is more common among Canadian Native children than non-native children, there is yet no good evidence to support this conclusion. For instance, researchers have studied FAS in Native communities without including a non-native comparison group. When a comparison group has been included, it is not clear that criteria for FAS have been applied consistently to both groups. To date, a valid comparison of the prevalent rates of FAS for Natives and non-Natives has not been carried out.⁷

Interestingly, researchers for the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY, 1994-95) found that, of the 17.1% of mothers who had consumed any amount of alcohol during their pregnancy, most were older (age 35-39), and more affluent and highly educated than average – a profile hardly resembling Aboriginal mothers. The NLSCY found no correlation between alcohol use during pregnancy and post-natal complications, though its sampling method was not targeted to capture FAS/FAE sufferers.⁸

Only 20 children in the entire Winnipeg School Division #1 have been “diagnosed conclusively” with FAS or FAE. However, school officials claim “there are many more who haven’t been diagnosed who suffer the same learning disabilities.”⁹ Apparently, more research is required before the extent and impact of FAS/FAE can be understood.

¹ Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, “Backgrounder: Social Development,” based on 1994 Statistics Canada information.

² During a 1996 inquiry, agencies for the disabled and disabled Aboriginal participants pointed to a lack of services in outlying Manitoba communities. See Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, “Aboriginal Persons with a Disability: Training and Employment Challenges,” 1996, p. xi, 51. See also the report of the Provincial Aboriginal Youth Conference, “Windows to the Future: Time for Change,” pp. 16-17 (Workshop 19: Disability Awareness)

³ Unpublished 1996 Census material. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.

⁴ Brian Gudmundson, “Urban Aboriginal Health Care Utilisation: A Comparative Study of Status Indians and Other Winnipeg Residents,” University of Manitoba, 1993. Quoted from Manitoba Northern Affairs, “Profile of Manitoba’s Aboriginal Population, 1995, p. 18.

⁵ Greg Pindera, Staff Writer, Winnipeg Sun, February 1997.

⁶ Winnipeg Free Press, Winnipeg Sun, February 25 and 26, 1997.

⁷ First Nations and Inuit Regional Health Survey National Steering Committee, 1999, p. 17.

⁸ Workshop on “Vulnerable Babies,” Ottawa, November 10, 1997. Rates of smoking during pregnancy, by contrast were higher for low SES mothers, including single parents. The NLSCY excluded on reserve residents, but over 4% of respondents were off reserve Aboriginal people.

⁹ Alexandra Paul for the Winnipeg Free Press, September 9, 2000.

CHAPTER THREE: CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Researchers are increasingly focusing upon the effects of the environment and life experiences in the early childhood years, especially ages 0-3, on long-term life outcomes. The way that children are cared for in these years “influences problem solving, language acquisition, coping skills and productivity for the rest of their lives.”¹

The federal departments of Human Resource Development Canada and Statistics Canada have launched a massive “National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth” which will follow a group of 23,831 children, located across Canada and aged 0-11 in 1994-95, until they reach adulthood. The study is designed to look into the “black box” of child development to see which supposed “at risk factors” are responsible for negative outcomes, and how these factors interact:

While we are certain that family financial resources are associated with many aspects of child development, we are not as certain of the various ways the influence is transmitted. It can be through nutrition, stress, health care, access to material goods, self-esteem, neighbourhood influence, and so on.²

Briefly, preliminary results from the first “cycle” of surveys suggest that individual risk factors (such as single parent families, low education of parents, low household income, parental depression, lack of social supports or family “dysfunction”) have very limited effects on academic and behavioural outcomes.

However, the effects of at risk factors appear to be cumulative rather than additive, so that children with multiple risk factors show significantly more negative outcomes than children with fewer risk factors present. It has been estimated that two or three risk factors increase the chances of negative outcomes fourfold, and four risk factors tenfold.³ However, parenting styles can positively or negatively impact outcomes to some extent, so that “children in at-risk situations who enjoyed positive parenting achieved scores within the average range for children in Canada.”⁴

This is significant, precisely because, as we have seen, large numbers of Aboriginal children in Manitoba find themselves in multiple risk situations. Single parent families, teen parents, less than grade 12 education, incomes below the LICO, parental incarceration, health problems and disabilities, foster placements and children in care – each of these sorts of issues have been demonstrated by evidence to be more likely to “find” the Aboriginal family. The at-risk factors are themselves interrelated, and often appear together -- for example, single mothers

with low educational attainments, low income, poor urban neighbourhoods and frequent moves.

During the 1990's, the federal government has provided funding for a number of initiatives offering subsidised day care and developmental services for Aboriginal pre-schoolers. Health Canada's Head Start program was initially targeted at off-reserve Aboriginal people, and has more recently added an on-reserve component. As well, since 1997, Human Resources Development Canada has provided funding for on-reserve child-care centres for parents pursuing training or employment. There are public day care centres on each of 62 Manitoba First Nations, administered by local officials.

CHILDREN IN CARE OF CFS AGENCIES

In Manitoba in 1996, 13.2% of Aboriginal children aged 0-14 were not living with their parents, a figure about seven times that for non-Aboriginal children. This proportion is ordinarily higher on reserves and rural off-reserve locations, and lower in urban areas.⁵ Of the many possible reasons for children not living with parents, apprehension by child and family services may be the most common, particularly among Status Indians. Of 32,000 Status Indians aged 0-14 found by the 1996 Census, about 3,000 were in the care of child and family services.

Manitoba places children into care at a high rate in general: 16.6 per 1,000 children, as compared to 9.7 in Saskatchewan and 10.0 in Alberta.⁶ These children ordinarily reside in foster or group homes. The number of children in care rose steadily to about 5,300 in 1994/5, and has remained at this level each year in the late 1990's. Aboriginal children are over-represented among children in CFS care.

Of 5,389 total children in care on 31 March 1997, 3,071 or 57% were Status Indians. An additional 326 or 6.1% were Metis, and 362 or 6.7% Non-Status or Inuit.⁷ So, Aboriginal children, representing about 20% of the child population, were at least 70% of the children in care (a further 417 children, or 7.7%, were not determined to be either Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal).

Mandated child and family services for off reserve Aboriginal children are under provincial jurisdiction, and are currently administered by the mainstream CFS agencies. In Winnipeg, Aboriginal children currently account for about 70% of the children in care.⁸ According to a 1998 Winnipeg CFS report, the number of Aboriginal children in its care tripled over the previous decade, while the number of non-Aboriginal children in care declined.⁹

Manitoba Metis children are not particularly over-represented among children in care, except in the Parkland region (i.e. Dauphin/Swan River), where they were 53% of the children in care in 1997 (63 of 118 children). The largest number of Metis children in care are in Winnipeg (192 of 326), but this is only 7.2% of

children in care of Winnipeg CFS.¹⁰ Children (aged 0-14) identified as Metis in the Census are 5% of the children in Winnipeg.

By contrast, both Status and non-Status Indians are extremely over-represented among children in care. For example, in Winnipeg in 1997, the 987 Status children in care represented 37% of children in care, though Status children were only 6.3% of the child population. A Status child in Winnipeg is therefore six times as likely to be removed from the family as the average child.

Province-wide, the over 3,000 Status children in care were distributed among agencies as follows:

INSERT STATUS CFS CHART

Since the 1980's, First Nations-controlled child and family service agencies have been mandated to serve the on reserve population.¹¹ There are currently seven agencies, as indicated on the above chart. In 1997, 1,609 Status children were in the care of these agencies, or 53% of Status children in care. Because 58% of Status children live on reserve, this indicates that on reserve Status children are less likely to be taken into care than off reserve. But the difference is slight.

The over-representation of Status children in care carries over into later admissions to youth custody. Just as 57% of children in care are Status, so 1,120 of 2,330 (48%) of admissions to custody in 1997 were Status. But 81% of the Status youth admitted to custody were off reserve, and less than 10% of total youth admissions to custody were on reserve Status youth.¹² So, while on reserve youth are almost as likely as off reserve youth to be taken into the care of CFS agencies, the First Nations run agencies have proved to be much more likely to succeed in diverting Aboriginal youth away from conflicts with the law.

The Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission appointed by the provincial government in 1999 made as its first recommendation the extension of Aboriginal-controlled CFS agencies off reserve. In February 2000, the province signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Manitoba Metis Federation that will lead to the establishment of a province-wide child and family services system for Metis people, including adoption services.¹³ A similar MOU was subsequently signed with First Nations regarding mandated services for off reserve members.

¹ Manitoba Children & Youth Secretariat, "Strategy Considerations for Developing Services for Children & Youth," March 1997, p.6.

² On reserve populations are excluded from the sample of the NLSCY. Metis and off reserve Aboriginal are included in the sample in numbers proportionate to their share of the population. Because of the child/youth demographic of the Aboriginal population, they are 4.3% of the sample. See Human Resources Development Canada, "Growing Up in Canada: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth," 1996, pp.16-18. Quote from p.33.

³ Michael Rutter, "Resilience in the Face of Adversity: Protective Factors and Resistance to Psychiatric Disorder," In *British Journal of Psychiatry* Vol. 147, 1985. As quoted in Manitoba Children & Youth Secretariat, "Strategy Considerations for Developing Services for Children & Youth," March 1997, p.6.

⁴ Human Resources Development Canada, "Growing Up in Canada: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth," 1996, p. 109. Parenting styles may reduce but do not eliminate the negative impact of low SES. "Negative parenting" is defined "harsh parenting" (showing frequent anger or annoyance at the child), inconsistency in discipline, and lack of positive interaction between mother and child. Of the three, harsh parenting by mothers appears to have the strongest negative impact. Father's parenting practices, by and large, were not captured in NLSCY questionnaires.

⁵ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, pp.33-34.

⁶ Manitoba Children & Youth Secretariat, information package dated September 1997, unpaginated.

⁷ Manitoba Department of Family Services Child & Family Support Branch.

⁸ Manitoba Children & Youth Secretariat, "Strategy Considerations for Developing Services for Children & Youth," March 1997, p.17. See also Canadian Red Cross Society, Winnipeg Region, "Vulnerable Youth Needs Assessment," December 1995, p. 9: "In 1994/95, Winnipeg Child and Family Services had a year end case load of 2755 children. Of those, 40 percent were permanent wards (i.e. they will not be returning home) ...Of all permanent wards in 1995, 69.1 were Aboriginal." Winnipeg CFS served a total of 5,388 children in care in that year.

⁹ Winnipeg Free Press, June 2, 1998: "Aboriginals in CFS custody on increase" (sic).

¹⁰ There may be under-counting of Metis children by the mainstream CFS agencies.

¹¹ On March 31, 1997, The on reserve CFS agencies also had in care 53 non-Status Indian children, but only one Metis child. The seven Inuit children in care were all under the mainstream CFS agencies.

¹² INSERT FOOTNOTE FROM YOUTH CORRECTIONS

¹³ Manitoba Government News Release, February 22, 2000.

CHAPTER FOUR: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Grade nine completion is often considered an indicator of basic functional literacy. Research shows that completion of grade 11 is the first point at which further educational attainment is rewarded by increased earnings in the labour market. Certification of graduation from grade 12 is mandatory for almost all new employment positions, with most requiring some post-secondary education or training.

The Conference Board of Canada reports that "corporations expect about 92% of new employees to have at least completed secondary education; 23% should have community college diplomas and 24% university degrees."¹ This is a conservative estimate. The conventional wisdom is that 70% of new positions will require post-secondary education or training.

The current educational profile of the Aboriginal population does ^{not} remotely resemble emerging labour market requirements. This is a young population, and growing at more than twice the rate of the non-Aboriginal population. 20% of Manitoba children aged 0-14 are Aboriginal, and will join the working age labour force over the next 20 years, where they will comprise 20% of new labour market entrants. The educational profile of today's Aboriginal youth is of crucial importance to the province's economic future. Unfortunately, the indicators are not encouraging.

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY

The level of primary and secondary education of Manitoba's Aboriginal people is improving, but still lags significantly behind that of the general population. 12.4% of Aboriginal youth aged 15-29 have less than a grade nine education, compared to 15.1% of Aboriginal people aged 30-39 and 18.3% of those aged 40-49. This indicates improvement, but by way of contrast only 1.9% of the non-Aboriginal population aged 15-29 have not completed grade nine.

There has been a long-term trend toward increasing educational attainment, for Aboriginal people as for all other groups in Manitoba. A literacy survey undertaken in Manitoba by the Metis National Council asked its respondents aged 15+ about their highest educational attainment, and also that of their mothers and fathers. The largest group of Metis respondents (43%) fell into the grade 9-11 group, followed by grade 5-8 (18%) and grade 12 (17%). Of their parents, however, the largest group fell into the grade 5-8 range (34% of mothers and 30% of fathers, followed by grade 9-11 (about 21%) and grade 1-4 (about 12%).²

In recent decades, increases in the numbers of Aboriginal people completing grade nine have been slow and uneven. Despite school construction on reserve and increasing Band involvement in education, there remains a wide gulf

between educational levels of Status Indians on and off reserve, and between Status Indians and Metis. 16.8% of Metis aged 40-49 have not completed grade nine, and 27.1% of Status Indians. For those aged 15-29, 16.8% of Status Indians and only 4.6% of Metis have not completed grade nine. Of Status Indians aged 15-29 and residing off reserve, 9.8% have not completed grade nine, compared to 21.5% on reserve.³

Low educational attainment continues to be associated with geographic isolation. In 1991, the five First Nations with the highest percentage of adults aged 15+ who had not completed grade nine were all communities accessible year-round only by air. Of the 15 First Nations with the highest percentage, 11 were accessible only by air. In all of these communities, over 50% of adults had less than a grade nine education.⁴

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

Only 33.7% of Aboriginal youth aged 15-29 have completed high school, and another 53.9% have some high school, whether or not they're still attending school. 48.9% aged 30-39 have completed high school, and 48.1% of those aged 40-49. Only among those aged 50+ are lower high school completion rates seen (22.4%). The low rate of high school completion among Aboriginal youth is cause for concern. It may indicate recent deterioration in educational gains that were made in the period before the 1990's,⁵ though of course many youth non-completers are still in school or will return as adults to complete grade 12 or equivalent.

44.7% of Metis aged 15-29 have completed high school, compared to 62.7% of non-Aboriginal youth. Among Status Indian youth, 36.1% off reserve and 25.2% on reserve have completed high school. In the city of Winnipeg, 35.7% of Status Indian youth and 47.8% of Metis youth have completed high school.

MANITOBA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES, 1996 CENSUS:

| Age | Non- Aboriginal | Metis | Status Off Reserve | Status On Reserve |
|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 15-29 | 62.7 | 44.7 | 36.1 | 25.2 |
| 30-39 | 77.2 | 57.4 | 53.7 | 40.6 |
| 40-49 | 73.7 | 50.7 | 52.2 | 41.4 |
| 50+ | 44.9 | 27.1 | 25.8 | 14.8 |

Respondents, especially aged 15-29, may be in school or may later return to school.

Over-all, just 38.2% of Aboriginal adults aged 15+ had completed grade 12 at the time of the 1996 Census, compared to 61.2% of the non-Aboriginal population. This is up from 33.3% in the 1991 Census (though as noted, these figures are not directly comparable).

POST-SECONDARY

In 1996, about half of Aboriginal adults aged 30-49 had completed high school. Of these, large numbers had pursued post-secondary education or training of some sort. For example, 23.5% of all Metis aged 40-49 had completed some sort of non-university training, as had 19.2% of all Status Indians aged 40-49. For both groups, by the age of 40 a large majority of high school graduates had some post-secondary training/education, of which more than half had completed a certificate or degree.

Only 7.7% of Aboriginal people aged 15+ have their high school certificate and no further post-secondary. There appear to be two entirely different typical educational trajectories for Aboriginal people – about half do not complete high school, and another group, almost as large, pursues post-secondary education/training. The large gulf between the two groups means that moving a person from the first to the second group may require a whole series of education and training “interventions.”

Aboriginal graduates who have pursued post-secondary education are more likely to attend community colleges or other non-university education or training, relative to the non-Aboriginal population. While non-Aboriginal people are as likely to pursue university as non-university post-secondary (24.6% vs. 25.0%), Aboriginal people are twice as likely to pursue non-university post-secondary – 23.2% vs. 11.0% for the Metis, and 18.1% vs. 10.2% for First Nations.

Aboriginal attendance and completion rates for non-university post-secondary approach non-Aboriginal rates, especially among Metis and off reserve Status Indians. Of adults aged 15+, 19.9% of non-Aboriginal people have completed, compared with 17% of Metis, 14.5% of off reserve Status, and 10.5% of on reserve Status. These patterns are consistent among age groups, suggesting little recent change in trends:

NON-UNIVERSITY POST-SECONDARY COMPLETION RATES

| <i>Age</i> | <i>Non-Aboriginal</i> | <i>Metis</i> | <i>Off Reserve Status</i> | <i>On Reserve Status</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>15-29</i> | 13.0% | 11.2% | 9.9% | 6.2% |
| <i>30-39</i> | 26.1% | 24.6% | 19.8% | 17.2% |
| <i>40-49</i> | 25.4% | 23.5% | 21.2% | 17.6% |

Note that a Status Indians on reserve and aged 15-29 has less than half the non-Aboriginal chance of completing non-university post-secondary, but a 40-49 has 70% the chance. This is, again, due to higher educational participation among older Aboriginal people. For the same reason, lower completion rates among Aboriginal youth aged 15-29 do not necessarily suggest a deteriorating trend. Many will complete later in life.

By contrast, far fewer Manitoba Aboriginal people attend university, and fewer still complete. Only 2.9% of Aboriginal people in Manitoba aged 15+ have completed a university degree, and only 1.8% on reserve, compared to 12.6% of the non-Aboriginal population. This represents about 1,100 Status Indian, 1,000 Metis, and 100 non-Status Indian university graduates in the province. By Census figures, both the number and proportion of Aboriginal university graduates has declined since 1991, but this is due to the change in the definition of "Aboriginal."⁶

By way of contrast, 7% of Aboriginal people aged 25-34 in Saskatchewan have completed a university degree, the highest rate west of New Brunswick. This has been attributed to the "long term presence of Aboriginally oriented institutions of higher learning in that province."⁷ The Manitoba rate, 3%, is similar to rates in Quebec, Ontario, Albert and B.C.

The majority of Aboriginal university graduates are female. 3.7% of Aboriginal women aged 15+ have completed a university degree, compared to 2.1% of Aboriginal men. In Winnipeg, 4.9% of Aboriginal women have completed a degree, and a higher proportion of women aged 30-49.⁸ Of all Aboriginal people aged 15+ in Winnipeg, 4.3% had completed a degree, but for ages 30-39 this rises to 5.3%, and for ages 40-49, 7.7%.

Non-Aboriginal people complete more years of education, and earlier, but more Aboriginal people continue their education later in life. Nationally, in the 25 to 34 age group, 12% of Aboriginal people were full-time students in 1996, compared to 6% of the non-Aboriginal population. For ages 35 to 44, the figures were 7% and 3% respectively. Nationally, 45% of Aboriginal students attending higher education are 25 years or older, compared to 14% of the general population.

Metis youth are more likely to complete a university degree by age 30 than are Status Indians (2.7% vs. 0.7%). However, Status Indians are more likely to attend or complete university during their lives than Metis – especially Status Indians residing off reserve. This is due to Band support for post-secondary, funded through the federal Indian Affairs department, which is not available to Metis and non-Status Indians.⁹

PERCENTAGE WITH SOME UNIVERSITY, OR COMPLETED DEGREE

| <i>Age</i> | <i>Non- Aboriginal</i> | <i>Metis</i> | <i>Status Off Reserve</i> | <i>Status On Reserve</i> |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>15-29</i> | 30.0 | 11.2 | 10.2 | 5.0 |
| <i>30-39</i> | 29.7 | 12.8 | 18.2 | 12.6 |
| <i>40-49</i> | 30.4 | 12.6 | 20.0 | 15.0 |
| <i>50+</i> | 14.7 | 6.5 | 8.3 | 3.6 |
| <i>All 15+</i> | 24.6 | 11.0 | 13.5 | 7.8 |

LABOUR MARKET TRAINING

Before the mid-1990's, funding for labour market training and living allowances for trainees was provided for the most part through the federal Human Resources Development department (HRDC) and its predecessors. More recently, however, the federal government has withdrawn from purchase of labour market training, and authorities have been devolved to the Manitoba government and to Aboriginal organisations. HRDC and other federal departments, including Indian Affairs, continue to deliver youth employment initiatives.

In 1997, HRDC signed large umbrella agreements with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Manitoba Metis Federation to administer employment and training funds earmarked for Aboriginal clients; they in turn distribute the funding to local offices throughout the province. In 1999, HRDC signed a similar agreement with the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resources Development, with funding earmarked for Winnipeg Aboriginal clients.

Also in 1997, Canada and Manitoba signed a Labour Market Development Agreement to deliver employment and training initiatives under the 1996 Employment Insurance Act, to all Manitobans including Aboriginal people. The following year, Canada and Manitoba signed a Memorandum of Understanding permitting off reserve Aboriginal people to remain on social assistance while on training.

In 1997-1999, xxx Aboriginal people received employment and training assistance through the Aboriginal agreements in Manitoba, and xxx have found jobs as a result.

These agreements fund, among other things, community college and job training projects falling within the category of non-university post-secondary education. Census data to be collected in 2001 will indicate whether and to what extent Aboriginal control of these programs is increasing Aboriginal participation and completion rates. This data will start to become available in 2003.

¹ S. Loizides and J. Zieminski for the Conference Board of Canada, "Members' Briefing: Employment Prospects for Aboriginal People," November 1998, based on a 1998 survey of 300 "very large companies" employing over 1,000 employees. 92% of companies had increasing Aboriginal workforce representation as an explicit objective but only half reported a strategy for achieving this.

² Metis National Council, "Needs Assessment Study on Literacy for Metis People," p.65. Study undated on author's copy.

³ Unpublished 1996 Census data.

⁴ 1991 Census data, as analysed by Literacy Partners of Manitoba. Two First Nations had 75% or more adults who had not completed grade 12. 19 First Nations had rates exceeding 50%, or almost one third of First Nations in Manitoba. These 19 First Nations had higher rates than any other Census District in Manitoba. A non-First Nation municipality occupied #20.

⁵ This was the conclusion of Kaufman, Thomas & Associates, in association with Mendelson & Associates, "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues," 2000, p.11. However, their evidence was insufficient to support the conclusion, given high adult Aboriginal attendance rates. Because of the importance of the question of whether high school completion rates are increasing or declining, this is an area in which further research/analysis would be useful.

⁶ In 1991, 3.2% of Aboriginal-origin people aged 15+ had completed a university degree, compared to 2.9% of Aboriginal-identity people in 1996. In 1991, there were reported to be 2,305 Aboriginal graduates, compared to 2.9% times 79,410 = 2,300 in 1996. As there have been several hundred Aboriginal university graduations since 1991, this again demonstrates the danger of comparing 1991 and 1996 Census figures.

⁷ Kaufman, Thomas & Associates, in association with Mendelson & Associates, "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues," 2000, p.12.

⁸ Figure not available to author. For ALL Aboriginal people aged 15+ in Winnipeg, 4.3% had completed a degree, but for ages 30-39 this rises to 5.3%, and for ages 40-49, 7.7%.

⁹ See Chart. For most socio-economic statistics, if you set up a chart with columns in this order, the figures will rise or fall from left to right, with Metis falling between non-Aboriginal and Status. The higher university enrolment among Status Indians than Metis is extremely unusual, particularly given that more Metis have completed high school, which is a prerequisite.

FOCUS ON YOUTH

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Nationally, 57% of Aboriginal youth aged 15-24 lived in two-parent families, 25% in lone parent families, and 18% in non-family settings. However, less than 20% of rural and reserve youth live in lone parent families, and over 30% in urban settings, especially large cities. In Winnipeg, 34% of Aboriginal youth live with lone parents, consistent with numbers in other large Prairie cities.¹

Aboriginal youth are more than three times more likely to live with a lone parent as non-Aboriginal youth. They are also more likely to be lone parents – 3.4 times as likely nationally. Manitoba has a larger percentage of Aboriginal youth that head lone parent families than the national average: 6.4% vs. 5.1%.

However, this also varies according to location. 2.7% of reserve youth and 2.4% of Aboriginal rural youth are lone parents, less than twice the non-Aboriginal figure of 1.5%. By contrast, 8% of Aboriginal youth in large cities are lone parents. At 10.7%, Winnipeg has among the highest rates of Aboriginal youth lone parents. Because 90% of these lone parents are female, this means that one fifth of Aboriginal female youth are lone parents. Of all lone parent families in Winnipeg headed by youth, 39.7% are Aboriginal youth.

INSERT CHART YOUTH LONE PARENT

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Manitoba has the lowest rate of school attendance among Aboriginal youth of any province or territory in Canada, by a considerable margin. Only 44.1% of Aboriginal youth aged 15-24 were attending school either full or part time, at the time of the 1996 Census. The national average for Aboriginal youth was 50.4%. Manitoba also had one of the widest gaps in school attendance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth. Aboriginal youth were 74% as likely to be attending school; in other provinces besides Quebec (71%), Aboriginal youth were 81% to 86% as likely.²

Because of the close relationship between educational attainment and later socio-economic outcomes (see CHAPTER 6: LABOUR AND INCOME), this suggests that the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal life outcomes will continue to widen in Manitoba, relative to the rest of the country.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF MANITOBA ABORIGINAL YOUTH AGED 15-24³

| | <i>N. Amer.</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Metis</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>All</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | <i>Indian</i> | | | | <i>Manitobans</i> | |
| <i>Attending full time</i> | 5,625 | 39 | 3,560 | 41 | 76,685 | 50 |
| <i>Attending part time</i> | 515 | 3 | 575 | 7 | 10,310 | 7 |
| <i>Not attending school</i> | 8,445 | 58 | 4,555 | 52 | 66,010 | 43 |

INSERT CHART YOUTH SCHOOL ATTEND (LONE PARENT CHART 2)

Nationally, about two thirds of Aboriginal youth aged 15-24 and not attending school had not completed high school, compared to 39% of non-Aboriginal youth. In Manitoba, Aboriginal youth were 51% as likely as non-Aboriginal youth to have completed high school certificates and/or undertaken post-secondary education. Only in P.E.I. (45%) and N.W.T. (39%) were the odds lower. In Saskatchewan and Quebec the odds were 53%, in Alberta 59%, in B.C. 67%, and Ontario 70%. The national average was 57%.⁴

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

Of the 56% of Aboriginal youth not attending school in 1996, only 51% were participating in the labour market, either employed or looking for work. Therefore, fully 27.4% of Manitoba Aboriginal youth were neither attending school (even part time) nor participating in the labour market (even as unemployed persons looking for work). This core "youth at risk" group is larger in Manitoba than in any other province, including provinces with larger Aboriginal populations. While proportionally similar to Saskatchewan (26.3%), it is proportionately 50 to 60% larger than in B.C., Alberta, Ontario or Atlantic Canada.

INSERT CHART 3

Of Manitoba Aboriginal youth not in school but who do participate in the labour market, 35.5% were unemployed at the time of the 1996 Census (about 10% of the total Aboriginal youth population). Adding the unemployed to the above group yields the number neither attending school nor employed.

37.5% of Manitoba Aboriginal youth were neither in school nor employed in 1996, a larger proportion than any other province or territory. Saskatchewan had the second largest proportion of youth in this at risk group (35.3%), followed by Quebec and Newfoundland (32%). In Ontario, B.C. and Alberta, less than 30% of Aboriginal youth were neither in school nor employed.

INSERT CHART 4

The Manitoba Aboriginal youth unemployment rate of 35.5% is close to the national average of 34.4%. However, because the overall Manitoba unemployment rate is very low, the differential between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth unemployment is much higher than in most provinces. An Aboriginal youth in Manitoba in 1996 was 3.5 times as likely to report unemployment as a non-Aboriginal youth. This compares to 3.7 times as likely in Saskatchewan, but only 3 times in Alberta, 2.5 time in B.C. and 2.1 times in Ontario.⁵

Aboriginal youth unemployment rates (unlike general Aboriginal unemployment rates) are higher on reserve and lower off reserve, especially in larger cities. In

Winnipeg the Aboriginal youth unemployment rate in 1996 was 28.8%, not much higher than the overall Winnipeg Aboriginal unemployment rate of 25.2%. Winnipeg's Aboriginal youth unemployment rate was average among major cities -- markedly lower than Thunder Bay (42%), Regina and Saskatoon (both 33%), and little higher than Edmonton (28%), Ottawa-Hull (27%) and Toronto (26%). Still, Winnipeg Aboriginal youth were 2.2 times as likely as non-Aboriginal youth to be report unemployment.⁶

It is encouraging to note that Aboriginal youth unemployment rates in Winnipeg have been declining since 1981, albeit slowly. Of youth aged 15-24, the unemployment rate was 33.7% in 1981, 30.8% in 1986, and 28.9%.⁷ The unemployment rate was 28.8% in 1996, but as noted the 1996 excluded persons of partial Aboriginal origin but not identity, and included many people missed in 1991. The reduction in the actual youth unemployment rate from 1991 to 1996 was probably greater than 0.1%.

Because official unemployment rates do not include discouraged workers, or those who attend school because of a perceived lack of employment alternatives, some economists regard employment rates as a superior measure of market success. Because of low labour market participation among Aboriginal youth in Manitoba, employment rates are low even though unemployment rates are average.

Only 32.8% of Aboriginal youth not attending school full-time were employed in 1996, lower than any province or territory except Saskatchewan (28.7%). The national average was 38.5%, and rates exceeded 40% in Ontario, Alberta and B.C. Similarly the employment rate of Winnipeg Aboriginal youth (33.8%), was lower than other large cities except Thunder Bay (27%), Regina and Saskatoon (both 29%). Aboriginal youth employment rates exceeded 40% in Ottawa-Hull, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver.⁸

Disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth in employment and labour market participation rates diminish or disappear among youth with higher levels of education. Nationally, an Aboriginal youth with less than high school is 70% as likely to participate in the labour market, and 52% as likely to be employed, as a non-Aboriginal youth. The odds increase to 88% and 77% for high school completers, and 94% and 80% for those with a post-secondary certificate. Aboriginal youth with a university degree are 107% times as likely as non-Aboriginal youth to participate in the labour market, and 95% as likely to be employed.⁹

Those Aboriginal youth who reported full time, full year (FTFY) employment in the year preceding the Census did so at rates of pay very similar to non-Aboriginal youth – 98% off reserve and 96% overall. However, only 5.1% of Manitoba Aboriginal youth did work FTFY; and Aboriginal youth were only 37%

as likely as non-Aboriginal youth to be employed on this basis. This rose to 60% as likely in Winnipeg, where 8% of Aboriginal youth worked FTFY.¹⁰

Youth employment by industry sector varies according to location. Generally speaking, 15% of employed Aboriginal youth are in the public sector, and only 8% of non-Aboriginal youth. On reserve, however, 35% of employed youth are in the public sector, mostly band offices and schools. Aboriginal youth are also more likely to be employed in the public sector in off reserve rural areas. But the differential between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth public sector employment disappears in urban areas. While urban Aboriginal youth are more likely to be employed by federal, provincial or municipal governments, they are less likely to be employed in public education or health.¹¹

CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

According a September 2000 article in the National Post, there are an estimated 37 gangs in Manitoba, with 1,896 active members, as well as 1,239 "inactive members" who have had no police contact for at least two years.¹² This appears to be a greater number of gang members than any other province including Ontario or Quebec (though no estimate is available for B.C.). But the Manitoba gang activity, much more than any other province, is largely street gangs who actively recruit members, as opposed to biker or mob gangs which limit their inner circle. So the numbers may be misleading in terms of the scale of gang related activity.

According to a spokesperson from the Winnipeg Police Service Street Gang Unit, the street gangs are mistakenly identified as native youth gangs: " 'there is no such thing as a native gang. There is no such thing as a youth gang,' he said, noting most members are adults between 21 and 24 and none of the gangs is exclusively ethnic or racially based."¹³

Large numbers of members of prominent gangs such as the Indian Posse and the Manitoba Warriors are, however, Aboriginal youth, and a number of native organisations exist for the purpose of trying to prevent Aboriginal youth from joining gangs or supporting Aboriginal people attempting to leave gangs. It would appear that a significant minority of Winnipeg's Aboriginal youth population is involved with gangs, but difficult to estimate the size of this group.

Agency and youth respondents at focus groups for the Red Cross Society's 1995 "Vulnerable Youth Needs Assessment" observed that:

Gangs often meet the needs of youth that are not being met at home. Gangs provide a type of family, a sense of belonging, and ironically, a sense of safety. In youth discussions, some commented that gangs were there for them when no one else was; when they were on their own, gangs provided food, money, a place to stay, and friendship. These youth soon realised, however, that they were then expected to participate in criminal

and violent activity by the gang. Several respondents that work with high-risk youth say the gang forced their clients into pushing drugs and prostitution.¹⁴

Aboriginal youth, whether gang-affiliated or not, are far more likely to run afoul of the law. For Aboriginal youth aged 12-17, there were a total of 1,263 admissions to youth correctional facilities in 1997/98 (some youth were admitted more than once). This represented over 70% of all admissions to remand. Controlling for population, Clatworthy and Mendelson (1999) have estimated that youths are 12.4 times as likely to be admitted to a youth facility if they are Aboriginal (22.4 times as likely if female). Older youth aged 20-24 were calculated to be 11 times as likely to be admitted to a provincial adult correctional facility if Aboriginal.¹⁵

¹ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, pp.37-38.

² Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.55-58. The chart below, comparing provincial/territorial school attendance is from this source.

³ Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, "Manitoba Aboriginal Persons: A Statistical Profile 1996," 1998, p.11. In this chart, "North American Indians" includes both Status and Non-Status.

⁴ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.66.

⁵ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.72.

⁶ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.73.

⁷ 1981, 1986 and 1991 figures from Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Manitoba's Aboriginal Population Characteristics 1986-91," Unpublished draft dated February 1996, unpaginated appendix.

⁸ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.74-75.

⁹ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.76.

¹⁰ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.78-80.

¹¹ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.85.

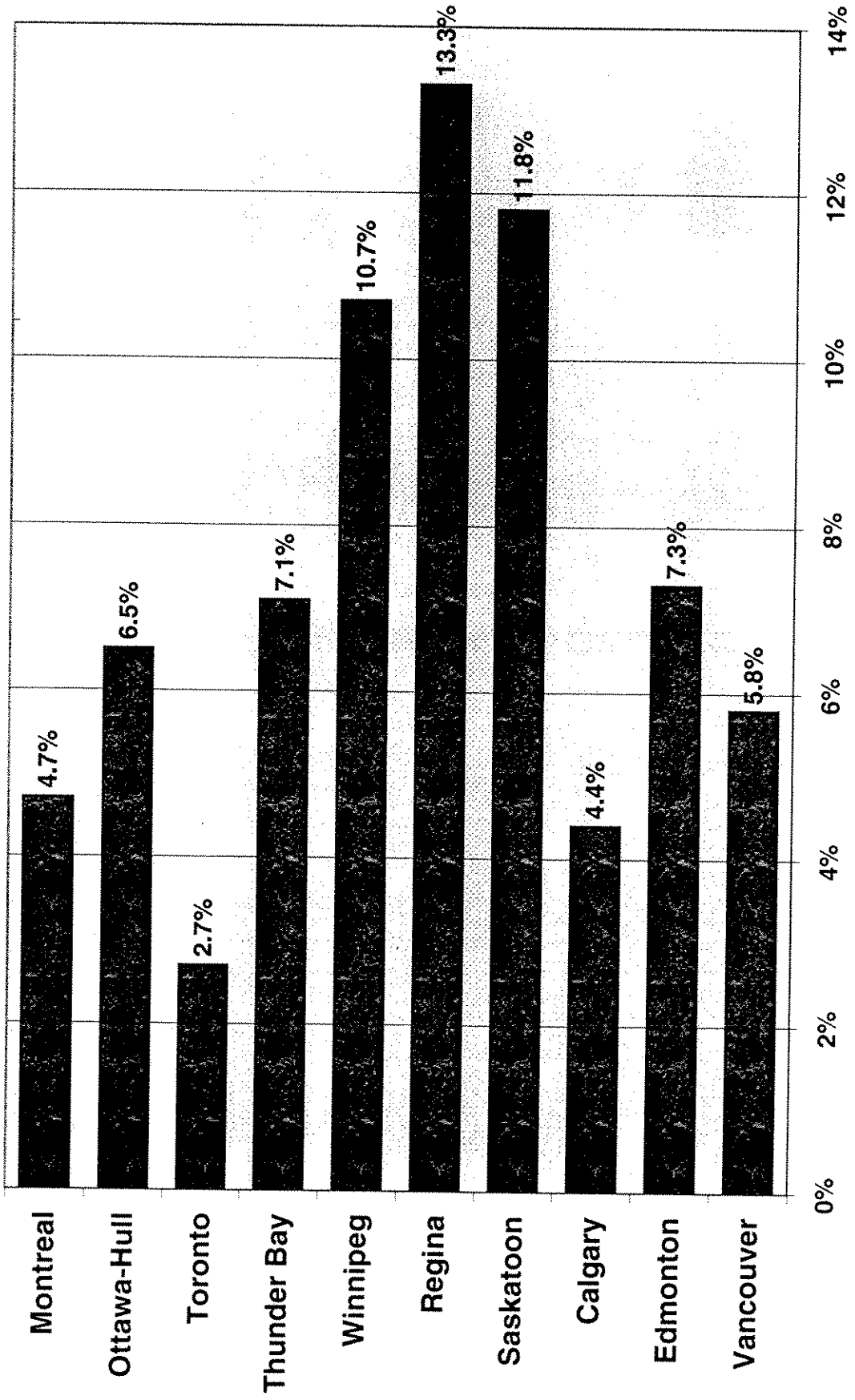
¹² National Post Online @ [wysiwyg://Network_Page.73/http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html](http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html) September 15, 2000. A recent Winnipeg Free Press article identifies the number of active gang members at 1,575 in 1997 and 1,560 in 1999 – about 300 lower.

¹³ Quoted from National Post Online @ [wysiwyg://Network_Page.73/http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html](http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html) September 15, 2000.

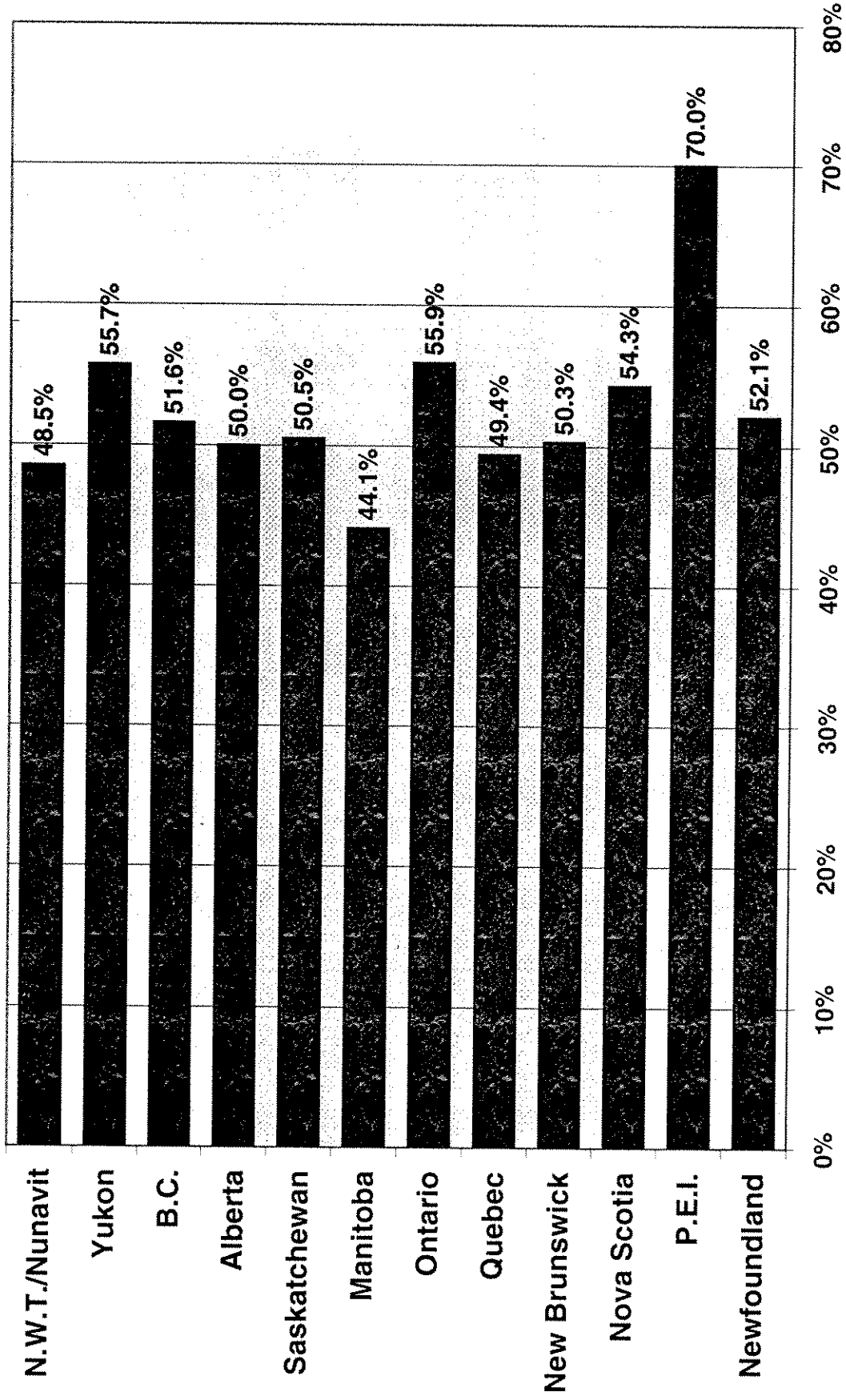
¹⁴ Canadian Red Cross Society, Winnipeg Region, "Vulnerable Youth Needs Assessment," December 1995, p.19.

¹⁵ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.46-49.

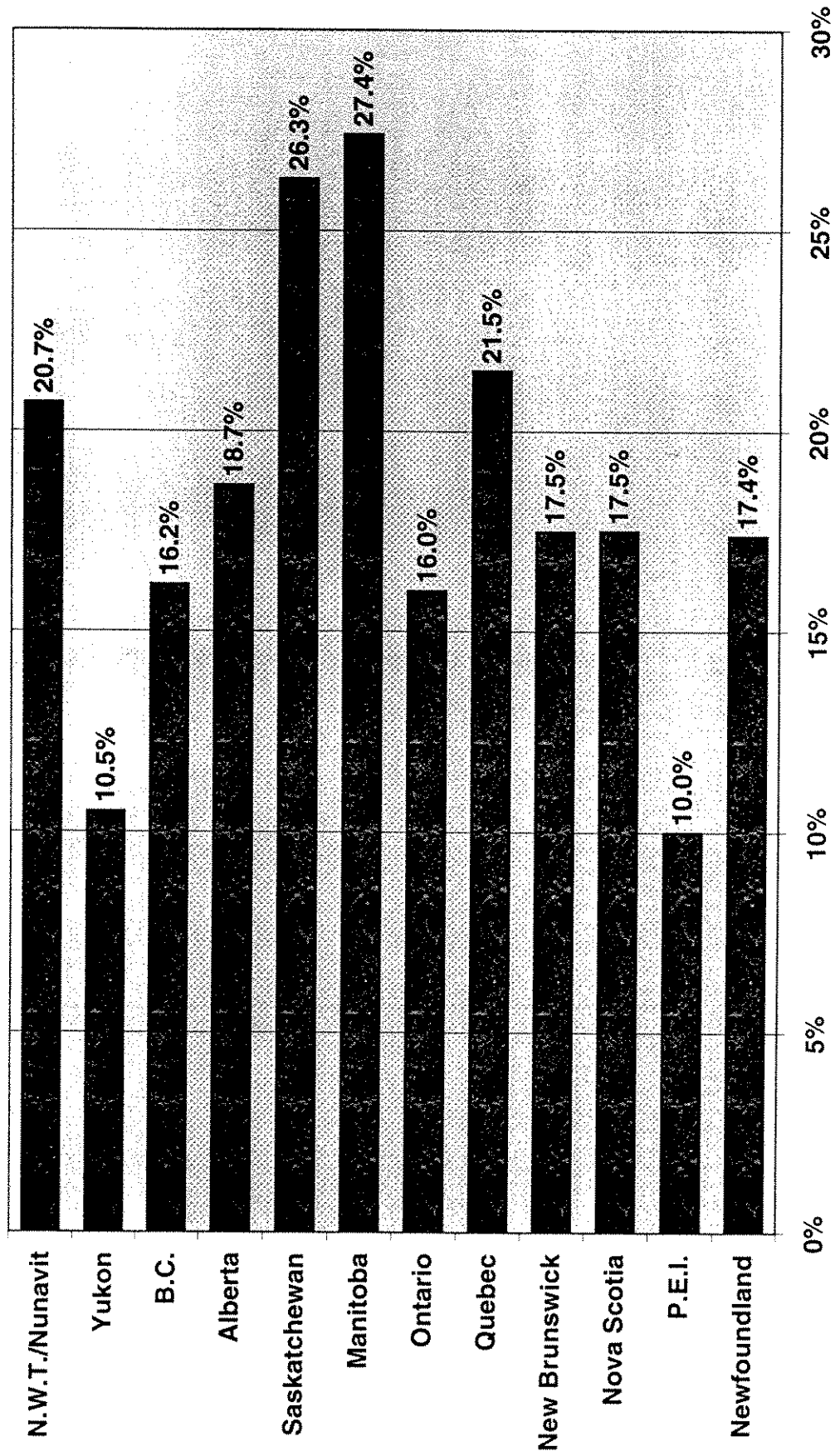
% of Aboriginal Youth (15-24) Heading Lone Parent Families, 1996



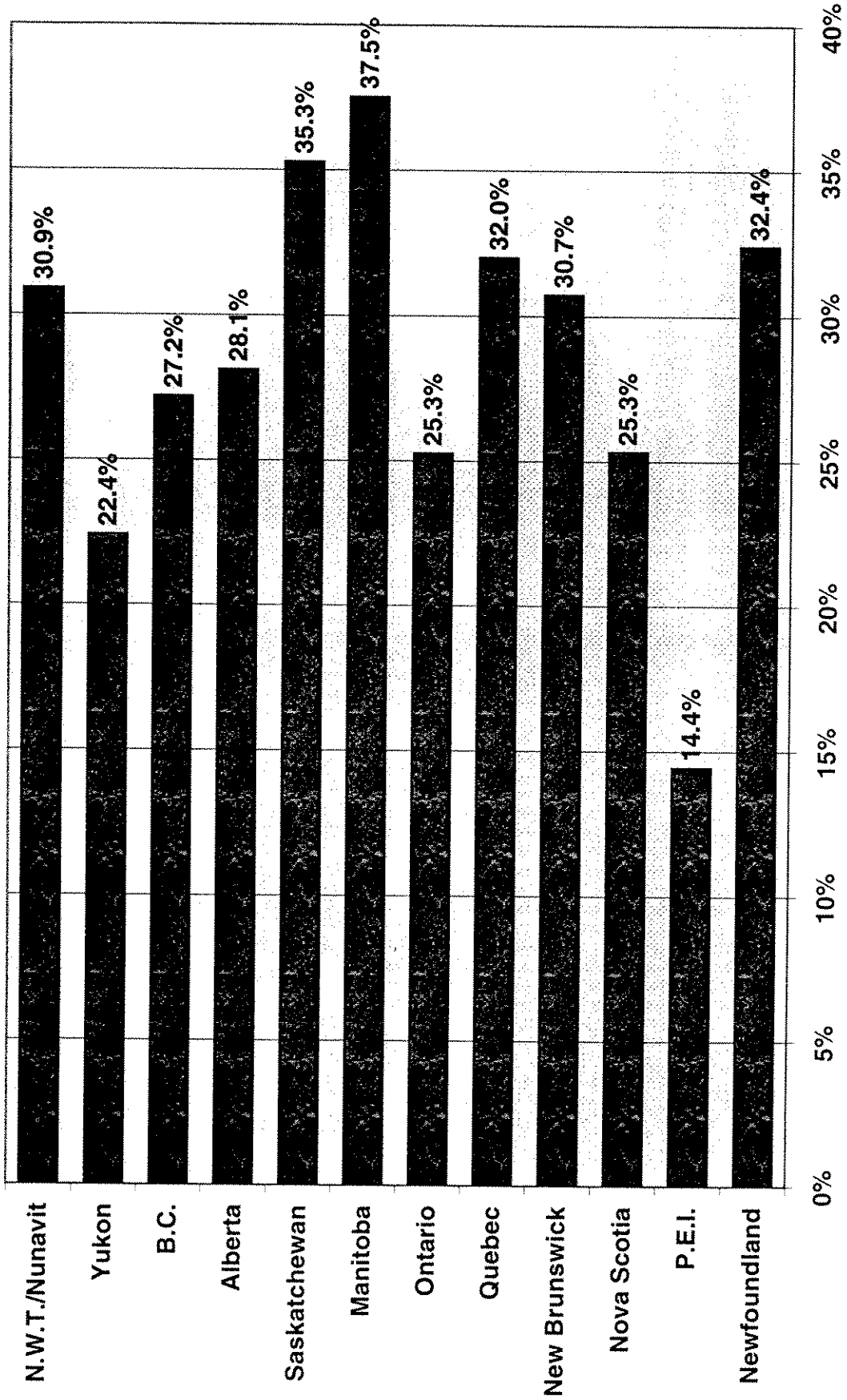
% of Aboriginal Youth (15-24) Attending School, 1996



Aboriginal Youth (15-24) Neither Attending School Nor Participating in the Labour Market, 1996



Aboriginal Youth (15-24) Neither Attending School Nor Employed, 1996



CHAPTER FIVE: JUSTICE

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF THE ABORIGINAL JUSTICE INQUIRY

According to information compiled by Indian Affairs and by the RCMP, and summarised in the 1991 report of Manitoba's Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (AJI), Indian Reserves in Manitoba and Canada in 1990 had rates of reported crime of 1.5 to 1.8 times the provincial and national rates.¹ These are average figures, of course. Crime rates vary widely among First Nations; with some being unsafe and others having crime rates less than the provincial average.

Aboriginal crime rates off reserve cannot be quantified, since a crime rate by definition relates to a geographic area and includes large numbers of "unsolved" crimes. The federal Solicitor General Canada department estimates that "70% of all Aboriginal people sentenced to penitentiaries are either residents of urban (non-reserve) communities, or committed their offences while off-reserve." This is not significantly different from the national off reserve Aboriginal demographic.²

Therefore, what limited empirical exists suggests that, broadly speaking, Aboriginal crime rates, encompassing all manner of reported Criminal Code and statutory violations, are something less than twice the non-Aboriginal crime rates.

Yet the AJI also found that Aboriginal people in 1990 comprised over half of all inmates in Manitoba's provincial and federal correctional institutions. Mathematically, if Aboriginal people were 1/10 of the population but 1/2 of the prison population, this meant that the Aboriginal incarceration rate at that time was nine times that for non-Aboriginal people.

The difference between the crime and incarceration rates is the result of a series of individual decisions made at each stage of the process, between the time a crime is reported to police, and the time when an Aboriginal person is released from prison after having been convicted of that crime. The AJI defined "systemic discrimination" as "the application of a standard or criterion, or the use of a 'standard practice,' [which] creates an adverse impact upon an identifiable group that is not consciously intended."³

The Inquiry found that Aboriginal individuals sent before Provincial Court faced, on average, 25% more charges than non-Aboriginal people did. 22% of Aboriginal people faced four charges or more. They were, on average, 1.34 times as likely to be held in pre-trial detention. Aboriginal women were 2.4 times as likely to be held as non-Aboriginal women. Overall, the AJI found that "Aboriginal detainees had a 21% chance of being granted bail, while non-Aboriginal detainees had a 56% chance."⁴

Aboriginal people spent, on average, 1.5 times as long in pre-trial detention province-wide. In Winnipeg the average detention was two times as long as for

non-Aboriginal people, and in Thompson 6.5 times as long. Aboriginal youth under 18 years in pre-trial detention were held an average of 29.3 days, compared to 10.8 days for non-Aboriginal youth.

Aboriginal inmates were found to have spent far less time with their lawyers before and during their trials, especially when trials were conducted in remote communities by the fly-in circuit courts. In many cases, persons with an Aboriginal first language were unable to communicate effectively with police and lawyers, or to follow court proceedings. Having interpreters present only partially alleviates this difficulty, because many Canadian legal words and concepts do not translate well into Aboriginal languages.

The AJI identified a number of informal factors that may militate against Aboriginal people in court. For example, each court case typically involves a number of court appearances, at which the case is remanded to a future date. When these appearances do not occur in the accused's community, this may involve costly travel from remote communities for the accused and any witnesses who need to attend. Costs are not reimbursed, and failure to appear can add to the accused's legal troubles.

Legal Aid will cover legal expenses only where the charge potentially leads to imprisonment or loss of employment. Therefore, "many Aboriginal people appear to have developed a record of relatively minor offences prior to their first incarceration."⁵ These prior offences are considered at sentencing hearings.

Further, in those serious cases heard before the Court of Queen's bench, Aboriginal citizens are less likely to be called to form part of a jury panel, and if called are far more likely to be "eliminated by stand-asides and challenges advanced by lawyers." Further, jury trials are heard in only six Manitoba communities, "none of which is Aboriginal."⁶ Aboriginal accused will likely face non-Aboriginal juries, as well as judge and lawyers.

Aboriginal people before Provincial Court pleaded guilty in 60% of cases, compared to 50% for non-Aboriginal people. If convicted, they were 2.5 times more likely to be sentenced to some form of incarceration if convicted. Aboriginal women were more than five times as likely to be incarcerated as non-Aboriginal female offenders.

In bail and sentencing hearings, judges may take employment and income status into account. With less access to employment, Aboriginal people are more likely to be considered a flight risk, and less likely to have a steady employment history or the effect of a loss of employment upon dependants factored into the judge's decision. The AJI linked pre-trial detention to "more convictions and harsher sentences, as the sentencing judge already knows that the police and, in many cases, another judge have found the offender should be in jail."⁷ Figures from 1996 show that, nationally, 70% of Aboriginal inmates in provincial jails were

unemployed at the time of arrest, as compared to 47% of non-Aboriginal inmates.⁸

Also, at the time the AJI reported, fine defaulters made up about 25% of the prison populations at any given time, and 60% of fine defaulters admitted to jails were Aboriginal.⁹ Again, Aboriginal men who defaulted on fines were twice as likely to be incarcerated as non-Aboriginal, and Aboriginal women more than three times as likely. The average amount of the fine defaulted was \$201.20, and the average length of the resulting incarceration was 23 days.¹⁰

The court and inmate records examined by the AJI showed no difference between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders in the average number of previous convictions, which might otherwise have explained differences in the length of incarceration. Nor were the number or seriousness of charges found to adequately explain the difference in incarceration rates.¹¹

HISTORICAL INCARCERATION RATES

Having examined historical reports to Parliament made by the Superintendent of Penitentiaries, the AJI found that:

...The proportion of "Indians" and of "Indian half-breeds," and of the other various equivalent designations that appeared in the reports for 1900, 1913, 1932-33, 1934-35 and annually until the 1949-50 report, in the Manitoba penitentiary population reflected no more than the Aboriginal proportion of the Manitoba population in this period. The Aboriginal proportion of the Manitoba penitentiary population increased in an extraordinary fashion during the decades after 1950.¹²

By 1965, Aboriginal people comprised 22% of inmates at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. This increased to 33% in 1984 and 46% in 1989. In that same year, the Aboriginal portion of the population in all Provincial institutions was 57%. At the Portage Correctional Institute for Women, 67% of inmates were Aboriginal, and 61% in institutions for young people. Over all, 56% of inmates in federal and provincial institutions were Aboriginal in 1989.¹³

According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, the national numbers of sentenced admissions to custody peaked in 1992-93 after a decade of growth, and have since declined on a year-to-year basis due to reductions in the numbers of adults charged. This is linked to decreasing crime rates in the 1990's. However, the incarceration rate per 10,000 adults charged has continued to increase during the 1990's. Further:

The over-representation of Aboriginal persons in the federal prison population is worsening. Aboriginal persons accounted for 11% of admissions to federal penitentiaries in 1991-92, 15% in 1996-97 and 17%

in 1997-98. (Aboriginal persons represent 2% of the adult population in Canada.)¹⁴

In Manitoba, where Aboriginal persons comprise 9% of the adult population, they accounted for 61% of sentenced admissions¹⁵ to federal or provincial custody in 1997-98, up from 55% in 1995-96. This compares to 72% in Saskatchewan (which has a similar demographic), 39% in Alberta, 16% in B.C., and under 10% in other provinces.

On October 5th, 1996, when the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics conducted a one-day "snapshot" of all inmates on-register in federal and provincial adult correctional facilities, 61% of inmates in Manitoba were Aboriginal.¹⁶ This figure is higher than the 55% of admissions in 1995-96, for the reason that Aboriginal inmates are serving, on average, longer sentences with less chance of early release. Therefore, they accumulate in prison.

If trends observed in the mid-1990's have continued, the current self-identified Aboriginal proportion of the prison population in Manitoba is probably close to 70%.

In short, the past 50 years have seen the Aboriginal portion of the male prison population in Manitoba rise from under 10% to approximately 70%.¹⁷

Among the female prison population, Aboriginal over-representation is even greater. The AJI reported, quoting a study done by the Elizabeth Fry Society, that 71% of Manitoba female inmate population in the early 1980's was Aboriginal; by 1988 this had risen to 85%:

The situation at Portage is not unique. In Saskatchewan it has been estimated that treaty Indian women are 131 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Aboriginal women are, while Metis women are 28 times more likely to be incarcerated. ...Statistics collected by the Portage Correctional Institute for Women show that at least 80% of the inmates had suffered either physical or sexual abuse; 40% reported both.¹⁸

Another trend in the 1990's has been the increasing prevalence of street gang activities in prison. The Hughes Report on the 1996 riot at Headingley observed that the "gang problem" emerged very rapidly in the period from 1992 to 1994. "Members of these gangs, especially the Indian Posse and Manitoba Warriors, actively and often violently recruit new members while incarcerated..."¹⁹

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

In 1997-98 the average cost to keep an inmate in a Manitoba provincial facility was \$101.73 per day, and in federal penitentiaries, \$128.35 per day (respectively, \$37,130 and \$46,850 per year).²⁰ These are operating expenses

only, largely salaries and benefits of corrections officers and support staff, and do not include the capital costs of prisons, nor the operating costs of police, courts, prosecution or legal aid.

During the 1990's there has been increasing interest by both federal and provincial officials in reducing incarceration rates, especially for Aboriginal people, by developing and encouraging alternative sentencing. According to Solicitor General Canada:

Canada's incarceration rate is higher than most other Western democracies. We imprison 129 out of every 100,000 of our citizens. While this is less than some countries such as the United States (645), it's above countries such as France (110), England (104), Germany (95), Austria (86) and Norway (84). ...But adult Aboriginal people are incarcerated more than eight times the national rate. In Saskatchewan, the adult incarceration rate is over 1,600 per 100,000, compared to 48 per 100,000 for adult non-Aboriginals.²¹

In September 1996, federal Bill C-41 created a new sentencing disposition, called "the Conditional Sentence of Imprisonment," available to courts in the case of "low risk offenders" sentenced to less than two years. Once a sentence to imprisonment has been made, the court may order that the offender serve this sentence in the community under supervision, provided that certain conditions are met. Bill C-41 also introduced alternative measures for community supervision of offenders. The intent of the Bill was to reduce provincial and territorial admissions to prisons, and therefore reduce prison populations.²²

Alternatives to incarceration for low risk offenders include:

- Restitution to victims,
- Community Service Orders,
- Mediation Services, and
- Electronic monitoring (in use, for example, in Saskatchewan).

Alternatives to incarceration based upon traditional First Nations and Metis justice practices fall under the general rubric of "Restorative Justice." These include:

- Victim and Offender Mediation,
- Circle Sentencing,
- Family Group Conferencing, and
- Community Sentencing Panels.²³

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics data indicate that, nationally, prison admissions declined by 8% from 1995-96 to 1997-98, while admissions to community-based sanctions increased by 3%. Also, prison admissions for fine default decreased by 24% from 1996-97 to 1997-98. In Manitoba, just 208 persons were imprisoned for fine default in 1997-98, a decrease of 77% from the

previous year. Also in 1997-98, 526 conditional sentences were imposed, indicating that this new sentencing disposition is being used to reduce the rate of imprisonment for fine defaults, and to substitute community-based sanctions.²⁴

As a final note, increased use of conditional and other community-based sentencing not specifically targeted at Aboriginal people does not necessarily decrease the Aboriginal portion of the prison population. In fact, to the extent that Aboriginal offenders are disproportionately convicted of offences against the person as opposed to property, or deemed by correctional authorities to be at high risk to re-offend, then the increased use of community sanctions for non-violent or low risk offenders will actually increase the relative incarceration rate of Aboriginal people. This may account for part of the observed increase in this rate during the 1990's.

The Province of Manitoba provides funding for a number of Restorative Justice initiatives, including the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) First Nations Justice Strategy, the St. Theresa Point Aboriginal Youth Court, the Hollow Water Community Holistic Circle Healing Project, the Aboriginal Ganootamaage Justice Services of Winnipeg, and mediation services in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. A number of these initiatives are cost-shared with the federal government.

¹ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter4.html, p. 3. INAC measured a national crime rate on-reserve of 165.6 per 1,000 population, compared to a Canadian crime rate of 92.7 per 1,000. Manitoba crime rates for areas policed by the RCMP in 1989-90 were 100.3 off-reserve and 150.5 on-reserve.

² See www.sgc.gc.ca/Efact/eaboriginal.htm, p. 1. According to the 1996 Census, 29.05% of Canadian Aboriginal people live on reserve, though Census statistics undercount reserve populations and in particular 77 reserves not enumerated by Census takers. See Kaufman, Thomas & Associates: "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues," 1999, p. 7.

³ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter4.html, p. 13.

⁴ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter6.html, p. 8. See also Chapter 4, p. 14-15.

⁵ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter8.html, p. 23.

⁶ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter9.html, p. 3, 8.

⁷ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter4.html, p. 19.

⁸ Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 5, p. 10.

⁹ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter3.html, p. 20.

¹⁰ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter10.html, p. 23.

¹¹ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter4.html, p. 15, 19.

¹² Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter3.html, p. 20-21.

¹³ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter4.html, p. 14.

¹⁴ Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 4. See also Statistics Canada, "Adult Correctional Services in Canada 1997-98," Cat. No. 85-211-XIE, p. 24.

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, "Adult Correctional Services in Canada 1997-98," Cat. No. 85-211-XIE, p. 25, 53. Also, Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 5, p. 5. It is important to note that Manitoba counts admissions to custody differently from other provinces/territories. As explained in Juristat, "in Manitoba, these [sentenced admissions to custody] represent the front door status. In other words, people who enter the front door as arrestee or remandee status, and proceed through to being sentenced in this period, are not counted in these admissions." [Ibid.] In other jurisdictions, such persons would be represented as two or more admissions: for example, as arrested, then as remanded, then as sentenced. As a result, Manitoba admissions figures are not comparable to other jurisdictions, and are inaccurate as regards numbers of sentenced admissions to custody. By the same token, figures from other jurisdictions are inaccurate regarding total numbers of admissions to custody. The general effect of this, for comparative statistical purposes, is to underestimate Manitoba's penal admission numbers, and perhaps to underestimate Manitoba's proportion of Aboriginal admissions, relative to other jurisdictions.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 5, p. 9.

¹⁷ The Manitoba government in 1999 appointed an Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission to review progress to date on implementation of the AJI recommendations, and to make recommendations based on this review. In its June 30, 2000, report the Commission observed that Aboriginal overrepresentation in male, female and youth facilities have increased since the AJI report. While declining to make an overall estimate, they noted that the most recent figures indicate that Aboriginal people make up 60% of the population in Headingley, 82.4% in Portage Correctional Centre for Women, 85% at the Agassiz Youth Centre, and 80.3% at the Manitoba Youth Centre. See www.ajic.mb.ca/reports/secondquarter.html.

¹⁸ Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, November 1991, @ www.ajic.mb.ca/volume1/chapter13.html, p. 18, 19.

¹⁹ Jim Silver, "Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty In Winnipeg's Inner City," 2000, p. 128.

²⁰ Statistics Canada, "Adult Correctional Services in Canada 1997-98," Cat. No. 85-211-XIE, p. 21.

²¹ See www.sgc.gc.ca/Efact/emyths.htm, p.2; also www.sgc.gc.ca/Efact/eaboriginal.htm, p. 1. International statistics were provided by Council of Europe, Council of Penological Co-operation, September 1, 1996.

²² Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 5, p. 2. Also, see Department of Justice Canada Performance Report for the period ending March 31, 1998, p. 18.

²³ For definitions of these terms, see the Solicitor General Canada web site at

www.sgc.gc.ca/Efact/ealtincarceration.htm and www.sgc.gc.ca/Efact/erestjustice.htm.

²⁴ Statistics Canada, "Juristat: The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics," Cat. No. 85-002-XIE Vol. 19 No. 5, pp. 4, 6, 10.

CHAPTER SIX: LABOUR AND INCOME

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted and reported monthly by Statistics Canada is the most commonly cited source for key labour market indicators. Its July 2000 report shows Canada-wide unemployment rates falling steadily from 9.5% in January 1997 to less than 7% in each month in 2000. Total employment has increased from 13.6 million to 14.9 million. At 5.1%, Manitoba had the lowest unemployment rate of any province in July 2000, and its employment rate of 64.5% was second only to Alberta at 67.8% (seasonally adjusted figures).¹

However, the Labour Force Survey excludes on reserve Status Indians, and does not distinguish between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in off-reserve settings.² For Aboriginal people, the five-year Census provides the best snapshot of labour market characteristics.

As with previous Censuses, the 1996 Census clearly showed that Aboriginal people are, on average, less likely than other Manitobans to participate in the labour market. Where they do participate, they are much more likely to be unemployed: that is not working but actively looking for work. Where they are working, employment is more likely to be intermittent and not secure, and average yearly wages are considerably below average.

THE ABORIGINAL LABOUR FORCE

Overall, Manitoba's labour market participation rate of Aboriginal adults aged 15+ was 54.1% in 1996. This is down from 59.6% in 1991, though part of the difference is the more restricted "Aboriginal identity" group captured by the 1996 Census. The Census whose wording most closely relates to the current wording was 1981.³ In that year, the labour market participation rate was 55.9%. Clearly, there has been no increase in Aboriginal labour market participation from 1981 to 1996.

The 1996 Aboriginal unemployment rate was 25.3%. This is up from 20.0% in 1991 and 23.9% in 1981.⁴ Therefore the employment rate has fluctuated from 42.5% in 1981, to 47.7% in 1991, to 40.4% in 1996. Deficiencies in the 1991 data may account for the apparent "spike" in the 1991 rate. There is no evidence of improvement in Aboriginal labour market statistics in 1981 to 1996, and there may have been some deterioration.

The Aboriginal unemployment rate in Manitoba in 1996 was 325% that of the total population. The national relative unemployment ratio was 243%, and only in Saskatchewan was the ratio higher, at 361%. Similarly, Manitoba had the second lowest relative participation rate among the provinces. Aboriginal people were 81% as likely as the total population to participate in the labour market, compared to a Canadian average of 90% as likely.⁵

The actual number of unemployed people in Manitoba in 1996 who identified themselves as Aboriginal was 11,065. The number is large in comparison with the Aboriginal labour force, but small as a percentage of the total Canadian unemployed population. In no province or territory does the number of unemployed Aboriginal people exceed 15,000.⁶

It will be a significant public challenge merely to maintain current Aboriginal employment rates in coming years, due to the large numbers of young Aboriginal people entering the labour market. A 1998 Conference Board of Canada report⁷ estimated that an additional 160,000 Aboriginal people would need to find work by 2006 to maintain employment levels – a 50% increase in the number employed. The report added that Manitoba and Saskatchewan would be particularly challenged, due to larger Aboriginal relative to total population, and lower projected job creation than other provinces such as B.C., Alberta and Ontario.

On the other hand, Manitoba's recent job creation record has been strong, unemployment is now the lowest among the ten provinces, and its Aboriginal labour force is the province's most under-utilised human resource. There is nothing inevitable about this. 50% of the employees of Northwest Company are currently Aboriginal, and 14% of Syncrude employees in northeast Alberta – a proportion exceeding the local share of the population.⁸

The 1991 Aboriginal Peoples' Survey asked respondents about problems they encountered in looking for work. Nationally, 77% of Metis and 80% of North American Indians indicated they encountered one or more problems. The most frequently cited problem was that there were few or no jobs in the area where they lived (62% of Metis and 66% of First Nations). 42% of Metis and 41% of Indians said their education or work experience did not match the available jobs. 22% of Metis and 27% of Indians said they did not have enough information about available jobs. 18% of Indians and 11.5% of Metis said "being an Aboriginal person" was a problem in finding jobs, and about 15% of women said they could not find anyone to look after children while they searched for jobs.⁹

It is important to understand that labour market indicators vary significantly for Aboriginal people depending on group and location. Studies showing higher labour market participation and lower unemployment off reserve than on reserve tell only part of the story, because the off reserve component includes Metis as well as Status Indians, and both urban and rural off reserve locations. National studies, showing higher participation and lower unemployment among Aboriginal people off reserve than on, do not apply in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The difference between on and off reserve indicators in these two provinces is less than in other provinces,¹⁰ and disappears entirely when we look at just the Metis, or just Status Indians.

METIS LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

On many socio-economic variables, Metis people rank somewhere between the mainstream population and First Nations. Labour market participation is one variable where the Metis resemble non-Aboriginal more than First Nations people. In Manitoba as a whole, the labour market participation rate for adults over the age of 15 years was 66.4% at the time of the 1996 Census. The Metis rate was 65.4%, while among registered Indians the participation rate was 46.9%. Metis youth and adults in Manitoba participate in the labour market in numbers not substantially different from non-Aboriginal people (67.7%).¹¹

However, the Metis unemployment rate in 1996 was 19.7%, approximately three times the non-Aboriginal unemployment rate of 6.4%. As a result only 52.5% of the adult Metis population was actually employed or self-employed at the time of the Census, compared to 63.3% of the non-Aboriginal population. The high unemployment rate does not appear to discourage this group from seeking to participate in the labour market – there is little evidence of the “discouraged worker” among Metis.¹²

In Southern Manitoba outside Winnipeg, the Metis participation rate actually appears to exceed the non-Aboriginal rate: 68.1% versus 67.7%. But the Metis unemployment rate was again more than three times the non-Aboriginal rate: 17% versus 5.1%. The story is similar in the city of Winnipeg, though here the participation rate is a little lower and the unemployment rate a little higher: 66% and 20.4% for Metis aged 15+. For Metis women in particular, the unemployment rate is significantly higher inside Winnipeg than outside.

The employment situation for the Metis is worse in the north. Here only 59.1% of Metis youth and adults participate in the labour market, of whom fully 23.4% were unemployed in 1996. This is compared to 73.4% and 5.9% for non-Aboriginal people, and 46.7% and 29.9% for Status Indians. In Northern Manitoba, there is more similarity between Status and Metis labour market patterns than there is in the south or in Winnipeg.

As we have seen, of the minority of Metis people who reside in the north (19%) about half are in small communities adjacent to First Nations. These communities share with their neighbours the same structural economic problem: the lack of an economic base sufficient to employ more than a minority of the potential labour market force. The employment rate for Metis aged 15+ in Northern Manitoba is 45.2%, compared to 69.1% for non-Aboriginal people and 32.7% for registered Indians.

Metis women are less likely to participate in the labour market than are men: 57.7% versus 73.2%. The 15% differential between male and female rates is similar to the differential for non-Aboriginal people (61% vs. 75%) and for Status Indians (40% vs. 54%). However, Metis women who did participate in the labour

market reported considerably lower unemployment in 1996 than did Metis men: 16.2% vs. 22.5%.

INSERT METIS LABOUR FORCE CHARTS

Note: North/south differences are less apparent in the above charts broken down by MMF Region, because the Northwest, Interlake and Southeast Regions span the north/south boundary as defined by Manitoba Northern Affairs and as used in this book. There are "north/south" socio-economic differences WITHIN these three regions.

For the Metis, as for other groups, education is a powerful determinant of labour market participation and employment/self-employment rates. A Manitoba literacy survey undertaken by the Metis National Council found that, of high school graduates with or without post-secondary education, between 55% and 70% were actually employed at the time of the survey, and 70% to 80% were labour market participants. The majority of those not in the labour market indicated they were attending school.

By contrast, of those with grade 9-11, about 30% were employed and 64% participated; thus, their unemployment rate exceeded 50%. Of those with less than grade 9, only about 16% were employed and 32% participated, though it must be pointed out that a large number in this group were retired.¹³

INSERT MNM CHART

FIRST NATIONS LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

It is frequently assumed that the burgeoning Aboriginal population in Winnipeg and other western cities is the result of employment and income prospects in the cities drawing workers from rural and northern reserves where few jobs are available. However, we have already noted that there is no evidence of a net migration trend to Winnipeg during the 1990's. In fact, there has been a small net out-migration from Winnipeg to reserves.

Labour force statistics from the 1996 Census show why. Among Status Indians aged 15+ and residing in Winnipeg, less than 30% were employed at the time of the Census. Only 45.6% of respondents reported labour market participation, a figure 20% lower than either the non-Aboriginal or Metis work force. Of these workers, 34.7% were unemployed and looking for work. That was almost five times the unemployment rate of non-Aboriginal people. For Status Indians in Winnipeg, there was definite evidence of a "discouraged worker" effect in 1996, as evidenced by the low labour market participation rate.

By way of comparison, the labour market participation rate of Status Indians on reserve was 45.7% - exactly equal to the Winnipeg number. Of these, 30% were unemployed at the time of the Census, or 4.7% less than in Winnipeg. As a result

the employment rate on reserve was 32%, or 2.3% higher than in Winnipeg. Therefore, Winnipeg's economy, as related to First Nations people, was unlikely to act as a magnet for job seekers from reserves.¹⁴

In fact, the employment situation of the Status Indian population in Winnipeg is dire. 37.4% of non-Aboriginal people aged 15+ were not employed, but most would have been in school or retired. Some (though less than in previous years) were full-time homemakers. By contrast, 70.3% of Status Indians aged 15+ were not employed – of these, fewer were of an age to retire, fewer in school, and fewer still in two-parent families able to exist on one income.

INSERT TWO CHARTS LF STATS MANITOBA & WINNIPEG (FULL PAGE)

Also contrary to common belief, there is little over-all difference between employment figures for northern and southern reserves. The average employment rate for Status people living in northern reserves was 31.7%, compared to 33.3% in southern reserves. The northern participation rate was 45.8%, compared to 45.7% in the south; and the unemployment rate 30.8%, compared to 27.2%. Proportionally, numbers dependent on social assistance on southern reserves actually exceed those in the north. This is not to say there is not a great deal of variety in employment situations among individual northern or southern reserves.

The highest employment rates for Status Indians are found off reserve outside Winnipeg: 37.9% in the north and 39.9% in the south. Unemployment rates are also lower. This does not necessarily mean job prospects are better in places like Thompson, Brandon or The Pas than they are in Winnipeg or on reserve. We've also noted very high net mobility rates from off reserve to Winnipeg, and from off to on reserve, as well as very high gross mobility flows. It appears that many people may be moving to these areas to find employment, and moving back when employment ends – thereby "exporting unemployment" from off reserve areas outside Winnipeg.

Also, because participation and employment rates, and income levels, have traditionally been higher for Status Indians in these areas than in Winnipeg or on reserve, their continued exodus from these areas to reserves and to Winnipeg has the result that off reserve labour market indicators are declining. The traditional difference between on and off reserve labour market indicators for Status Indians is steadily shrinking.

In short, there is little demonstrable difference in the overall employment and unemployment situations for Status Indians inside or outside Winnipeg, on or off reserve, or between northern and southern parts of the province. High unemployment and intermittent employment generally increase mobility rates for this population, particularly off reserve, but there is little structural economic reason to move in any one direction as opposed to any other.

On reserve, employment rates for women and men are unusually similar: 31% for women and 33% for men. As elsewhere, women on reserve are less likely than men to participate in the labour force (40% vs. 51%), but report much lower levels of unemployment than do men (22% vs. 36%). This may be because many of the Band administered functions are in fields where women are disproportionately represented, such as health, education, and office administration.

Status women in Winnipeg maintain similar labour market attachment as women on reserve (39%), but report much higher unemployment (32%). Therefore the employment rate drops to 26%, compared to 31% on reserve.

By contrast, labour market participation and employment rates for Status men in Winnipeg are slightly higher in Winnipeg than on reserve. The unemployment rate for men is about the same in both contexts: 36% on reserve and 37% in Winnipeg.

INSERT MALE/FEMALE CHARTS, FULL PAGE

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Between 1981 and 1996, the number of self-employed Aboriginal people in Manitoba has grown by about 7% per year, more than twice as fast as the Canadian average. Aboriginal self-employment has also risen twice as fast as Aboriginal employment in general. It has been estimated that one in four net new Aboriginal jobs created since 1981 have been the result of the rise in self-employment. 46% of Aboriginal businesses hire additional full-time workers.¹⁵

In 1996 there were 2,355 self-employed Aboriginal people in Manitoba, or about 3% of the population aged 15+. 1,520 or 65% were Metis, and another 790 were First Nations, both on reserve (355) and off (435). Therefore, Metis are about four times as likely to be self-employed as First Nations people are. About 60% of Aboriginal-owned businesses are located in rural Manitoba. Over one third of self-employed Aboriginal people are female, a much higher proportion than in the general population.¹⁶

While the percentage of Aboriginal adults who are self-employed is still only half the Canadian average, the number of young Aboriginal people under 30 who are self-employed is rising rapidly. By 1996, the proportion of Aboriginal workers in this age group who are self-employed was higher than that for all Canadians.¹⁷

By industry sector, 15.5% of self-employed Aboriginal people were in retail and wholesale trade, 14.6% in fishing and trapping, 13.7% in construction, and 10.1% in agriculture. In other sectors, fewer Aboriginal people were self-employed.¹⁸

There exists an array of Aboriginal development corporations to provide assistance in starting up businesses, affiliated with Tribal Councils and the Manitoba Metis Federation. As well, direct government assistance is available through Manitoba Industry, Trade & Tourism, and Aboriginal Business Canada (ABC), an arm of the federal Industry department. A 1996 national study of businesses assisted by ABC found that:

Based on the total assistance provided to both active and closed firms, the cost per full-time job is \$28,388 ...17.4% of assisted businesses achieved a significant profit [and] 19.4% achieved a small profit ...Viability varies substantially among industry sectors. The strongest results were achieved in Business Services (67.6%), Construction (63.4%), Retail Trade (61.0%), and Transportation (57.6%).¹⁹

However, most self-employed Aboriginal people used neither development corporations or government assistance to finance their business start-ups. According to information compiled in the Aboriginal Peoples' Survey, 70% of Metis and 66% of First Nations people who owned their own businesses in 1991 were self-funded, or received funding from family and friends. 30% of Metis and 24% of First Nations people went to a bank or trust company. More First Nations people than Metis were financed through an Aboriginal development company (12% vs. 5.5%) or through the federal government (5.6% vs. 3%), while Metis were more likely to receive assistance through the provincial government (7% vs. 3%).²⁰

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSFER INCOME

Because of lower employment rates, Aboriginal people are six times more likely to be dependent on government transfer payments, especially social assistance. According to 1996 Census data, government transfers were the major source of income for 30.8% of Aboriginal people in Manitoba aged 15+, as compared to just 5.1% of non-Aboriginal people.

There are differences among Aboriginal groups, corresponding to differences in employment rates. Government transfers were the major source of income for 20.1% of Metis and 37.5% of registered Indians. Employment was the major source of income for 64.1% of non-Aboriginal people, 56.8% of Metis, and 36.4% of registered Indians.

Employment was the major source of income for 35.6% of Status Indians on reserve, and of 33.4% in Winnipeg. Government transfers accounted for 40.2% on reserve and 39.9% in Winnipeg. For Status Indian families, whether on reserve or in Winnipeg, approximately as many families rely on transfers as employment. The highest local rates of dependence on government transfers are found among Status women living in Winnipeg (43.8%), and among Status residents of southern reserves whether female (46.3%) or male (42.5%).

In 1996, the median individual income²¹ for non-Aboriginal people aged 15+, including all sources of income, was \$18,258. For Metis the median income was \$12,219, for Non-Status Indians \$10,620, and for Status Indians \$8,029. For Status Indians in Winnipeg, the median income was \$8,850, off reserve outside Winnipeg \$9,714, and on reserve \$6,755.

One reason these income figures are so low is that only 1/3 of Aboriginal people reporting employment income worked full time, full year (FTFY) in 1995, compared to 1/2 of the total population. Nationally, the average (not median) income of FTFY Aboriginal workers was \$29,684, 21% lower than the national average,²² but much higher than the majority of Aboriginal people, who are supported by intermittent or part-time employment and/or social assistance.

For the Metis, there was little difference in median income inside or outside Winnipeg (\$12,263 in Winnipeg). Due to the higher cost of living in Winnipeg, the average Metis person has a lower standard of living in Winnipeg than outside (see below).

The median income for non-Aboriginal women was \$14,238, or 57.5% of the median male income of \$24,751. The gap between Aboriginal male and female incomes is far less for Aboriginal people. Province-wide, the median Aboriginal female income is \$8,977, or 83.8% of the median male income of \$10,717.

In Winnipeg, the median income of Status women actually exceeds that of Status men: \$8,996 vs. \$8,410. This highly unusual statistic reflects the large numbers of single mothers on social assistance, at rates unavoidably exceeding the amount that can be earned through employment. The median income of Status men in Winnipeg, from all sources, is less than one third that of non-Aboriginal men (\$8,410 vs. \$25,797).

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

When we speak of an Aboriginal household whose major source of income is government transfers, this household almost certainly is relying either on social assistance or on various old age benefits. While the net effect of government transfers is a redistribution of income toward the lower income sectors, individual government transfer programs differ greatly in their redistributive effect.

In 1991, 13% of Canadian households received income under the Statistics Canada low-income cut-off (LICO). These households received 68% of social assistance expenditures,²³ 38% of child tax credits and 26% of OAS/GIS/SPA (old age) benefits. However, they received just 14.5% of Canada/Quebec pension plan benefits, and 11.5% of Unemployment Insurance benefits.²⁴ Child tax credits are not a primary source of income, and few Aboriginal people are over age 65. For the vast majority of Aboriginal people, dependence on

government transfers means dependence on social assistance, supplied through the Province off reserve and the federal department of Indian Affairs on reserve.

More individuals and families received social assistance at some point during the year than the number who indicate on the Census that transfer payments are their primary source of income year-round. On reserve in Manitoba in 1996, 35.6% told the Census that transfers were their primary source of income. However, the 1995 Indian Affairs social assistance rate on reserve in Manitoba, "defined as the monthly average number of beneficiaries divided by the total on-reserve population for that year,"²⁵ was about 53%. In other words, in any given month 53% of on reserve families are on social assistance for at least part of the month.

INAC social assistance dependency rates vary widely across the country, from 20-30% in Quebec, Ontario and Yukon, to 48-58% in the four western provinces, to a high of almost 75% in the Atlantic Provinces. These rates, on a national basis, have been increasing each year, from a national average of 35% in 1982 to 45% in 1994. Because the on reserve population is also growing rapidly, national expenditures have almost doubled. These trends are expected to continue in the foreseeable future.

However Manitoba, while it has one of the higher on reserve social assistance dependency rate, has seen little or no increase in this rate since the early 1980's. Manitoba's rate fell from 59% to 50% in 1981-83 and since then has fluctuated around 55% every year. Increases in the total number of recipients have mirrored increases in the overall on reserve population, and there is little reason to believe Manitoba's rate will increase between now and 2010.

By contrast, very high rates of increase in social assistance dependency have occurred in some other provinces, especially Alberta where the rate has increased from under 30% to over 50% in 1982-1994. The Alberta rate is forecast to surpass Manitoba/Saskatchewan rates between now and 2010. B.C. is also expected to increase its dependency rate. The rate in Atlantic Canada, already extremely high, is forecast to increase to over 85%.²⁶

INCOME ADEQUACY

With median incomes so far below the norm, one supposes that large numbers of Aboriginal individuals and families are living in poverty by Canadian standards. There is, however, no agreed on definition of poverty. The most commonly used indicator is Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs, which are based upon the relative proportion of family income spent on food, clothing and shelter, and which vary according to family size and size of community.

Critics of LICO's as a poverty indicator, most notably the Fraser Institute, argue that setting them based on 20% above what the average household spends on

necessities is arbitrary and misleading. Suddenly doubling the income of every family in Canada would not necessarily reduce the percentage of households with incomes under the LICO's. Therefore, they argue, what the LICO's measure is income inequality, not poverty rates.²⁷

For purposes of this book, we will concede that the LICO's measure income inequality, and not necessarily poverty or poverty rates in any absolute sense. The distinction, however, is moot to the extent that it is relative or perceived deprivation, and not absolute poverty, which works its deleterious effects on the life chances of low income people -- on health indicators for example, or educational achievement.

Regardless of possible inadequacies or biases in the LICO indicator, there are strikingly higher numbers of Aboriginal low income households in the west, and especially in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, than elsewhere in the country. 63% of Aboriginal children in Manitoba, excluding reserves, lived in households with incomes below the LICO. This is compared to 52% of Aboriginal children across Canada, 45% or less of Aboriginal children in provinces east of Manitoba, and 22.6% of non-Aboriginal Canadian children.²⁸

INSERT PROV LICO CHART

In all provinces the incidence of low income among Aboriginal children is substantially higher in the large cities than other off reserve locations. 72% of Winnipeg Aboriginal children live in low-income households, a figure comparable to Regina and Saskatoon. This drops to 65% in Edmonton, 59% in Calgary, 58% in Vancouver, 56% in Thunder Bay, 49% in Montreal, and 41% in Toronto and Ottawa-Hull. Winnipeg Aboriginal children are 3.3 times as likely to live in low income households as Winnipeg non-Aboriginal children, and 1.8 times as likely as Aboriginal children in Toronto.²⁹

Within Manitoba, the following chart compares the percentages of 1996 Census respondents with incomes less than the LICO, excluding reserves:

| | Non- Aboriginal | Metis | Non Status Indians | Status Indians |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>All Persons</i> | 18.0 | 41.0 | 52.3 | 66.2 |
| <i>Children aged 0-17</i> | 19.8 | 49.1 | 61.8 | 73.1 |
| <i>Adults >18</i> | 17.4 | 36.1 | 44.5 | 60.7 |
| <i>Single Parents</i> | 53.9 | 81.7 | 75.0 | 89.2 |
| <i>Couples with Children</i> | 13.0 | 29.7 | 43.2 | 52.7 |

In Winnipeg alone, the comparable figures are:

| | Non- Aboriginal | Metis | Non Status Indians | Status Indians |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
|--|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| All Persons | 21.4 | 51.4 | 61.2 | 75.2 |
| Children aged 0-17 | 23.5 | 61.7 | 51.7 | 82.2 |
| Adults >18 | 20.8 | 45.5 | 52.3 | 69.8 |
| Single Parents | 56.6 | 85.8 | 78.8 | 93.0 |
| Couples with Children | 15.0 | 37.8 | 52.2 | 65.6 |

For non-Aboriginal people, the low-income status rate in Winnipeg is 2-3% higher than the provincial average, reflecting a higher cost of living and/or a bias in the LICO indicator.³⁰ But for Aboriginal people, the urban/rural difference is much greater. 51% of Metis in Winnipeg have incomes under the LICO, and only about 30% outside Winnipeg. The Manitoba average for off reserve Status Indians under the LICO is 66%, and in Winnipeg alone, 75%. Regardless of any possible bias in the LICO indicator, Aboriginal people in Winnipeg clearly have lower average standards of living than their counterparts off reserve outside Winnipeg.

There are differences of about 10% between the Winnipeg and provincial figures for all Aboriginal persons, adults 18+, children 0-17, and for couples with children. Interestingly, the difference is only 3-4% for single parent families, or about the same as the non-Aboriginal urban/provincial variance. Aboriginal single parent families in Winnipeg do not appear to be substantially worse off than their counterparts off reserve outside Winnipeg.

In absolute terms, however, the low-income status rate for Aboriginal single parent families, inside or outside Winnipeg, is appalling. Provincially, 89.2% of off reserve Status Indian single parents (and their children) fall below the LICO, as do 81.7% of Metis single parents. While 52.4% of all off reserve Aboriginal people fall below the LICO, and 53.9% of non-Aboriginal single parents, the average figure for all off reserve Aboriginal single parents is 85.5%.

There is, by the way, nothing inevitable about low income for female-led single parent households. First World countries vary remarkably in this regard. The 1993 Luxembourg Income Study documented the proportion of households receiving income less than 50% of the country's median income, after transfers and taxes, and adjusted for family size. The differences reflect not market forces, but the political priority placed on reducing child poverty. Their results were as follows:

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES BELOW STANDARDIZED INCOME CUT-OFF

| Country | Female lone parent | Couples with children | All non-elderly households |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sweden | 6% | 3% | 12% |
| Netherlands | 11% | 5% | 5% |
| Belgium | 17% | 14% | 5% |
| Italy | 21% | 8% | 9% |
| France | 22% | 8% | 9% |
| United Kingdom | 30% | 15% | 12% |

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Germany | 39% | 6% | 9% |
| Canada | 52% | 11% | 15% |
| United States | 60% | 14% | 19% |
| Australia | 66% | 12% | 16% |

Source: *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty, CCSD, 1994*. The "households" column includes unattached individuals and excludes households where the head of household is over age 60.

Large numbers of Manitoba Aboriginal couples with children also fall below the LICO. For non-Aboriginal "traditional families," only 13% have incomes less than the LICO. By contrast, 38.6% of off reserve Aboriginal couples with children fall below the LICO. A slight majority (52.7%) of off reserve Status couples with children fall below the LICO, including 65.6% in Winnipeg.

Province-wide, the majority of Metis couples with children have incomes exceeding the LICO, a reflection of their higher labour market participation rate, which results in larger numbers of two income families. Still, 29.7% of Metis couples with children fall below the LICO, including 37.8% in Winnipeg.

Finally, the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg's "Child Poverty in Manitoba" 1998 Report notes that in Winnipeg in 1996:

...a single parent on social assistance with one child received an income that was 52% of the poverty line [ed.: LICO indicator]. A couple with two children received an income that was 56% of the poverty line. Between 1995 and 1996, families with children saw a decrease in their social assistance incomes: 1.0% and 5.8% respectively for a single parent with one child and a couple with two children.

The same report indicated that in 1996, the average "poverty gap" (i.e. the difference between family income and the LICO) was \$8,928 after government transfers, compared to \$17,368 before government transfers. Therefore, the effect of government transfers was to increase the average annual income of families having incomes below the LICO by \$8,440.³¹

ON-RESERVE INCOME

We have discussed comparative labour market and income statistics for Winnipeg and off reserve outside Winnipeg. It is more difficult to make valid comparisons with on reserve statistics, because we lack the analytic tools, concepts and data to fully describe and comprehend on reserve patterns of employment and income adequacy. The monthly Labour Force Survey reports specifically exclude on-reserve residents, and the Statistics Canada LICO is not applicable to on-reserve situations.³²

Just as income on reserve is relatively disconnected from employment, so is income adequacy disconnected from cash or gross income. This is true to the extent that:

- Housing and other goods and services are provided by the Band administration, and not directly purchased or rented by the user;
- Incomes are exempt from income tax, and goods and services from sales tax; and
- Resources traditionally extracted from the land, especially by hunting and fishing, may supplement income.

While these factors may make sustenance possible on reserve at lower income levels, it is also the case that store-bought food, fuel, and other goods that must be transported to often-isolated reserves will cost substantially more than in the southern urban areas. Similarly travel, where not subsidised by authorities as in the case of medical evacuation, can be much more expensive.

All of these factors, which in addition vary from reserve to reserve, complicate the development of concepts and data sufficient to analyse on-reserve income adequacy. It is commonly understood and accepted that many First Nations are impoverished communities, and perhaps extremely impoverished communities, but there does not appear to be any research which sets out to compare poverty levels and patterns among on and off reserve Aboriginal communities.

Having said this, the median income for Status Indian individuals aged 15+ and living on reserve in 1996 was \$6,755: for women \$6,266 and for men \$7,313. Incomes at this level are de facto non-taxable, due to personal and other exemptions and deduction. The tax-exempt status of on reserve earnings provides a tangible benefit only to Status people with above average incomes (though sales tax exemptions provide benefits to all).

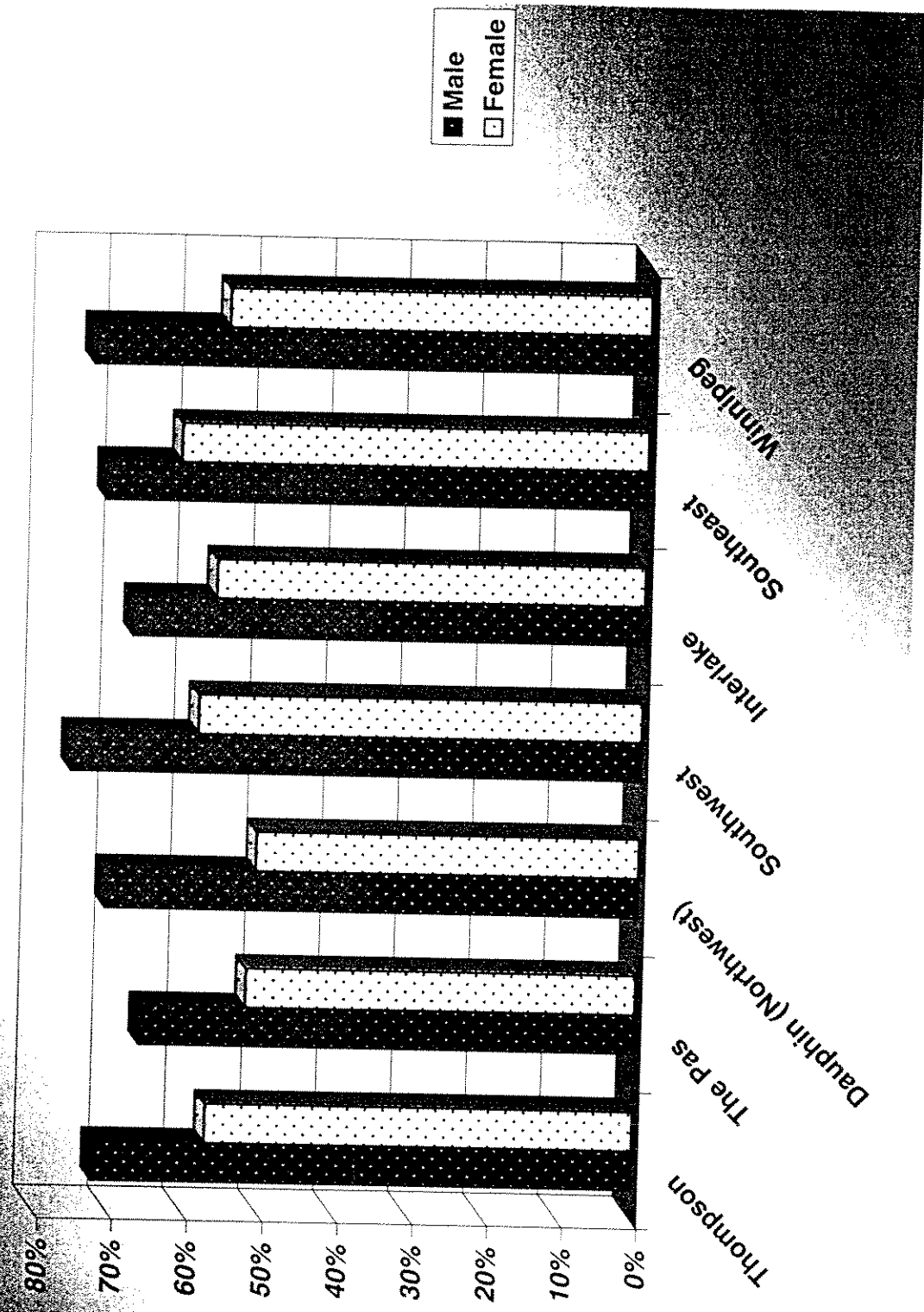
The on reserve median income was \$2,095 less than the median income of Status Indians in Winnipeg. The difference amounts to 23% of the Winnipeg median income of \$8,850. However, 58% of Status Indians in Winnipeg spend over 30% of their income on shelter costs, ordinarily covered by the Band administration on reserve. In fact, the proportion of income spent on housing generally increases among the poorest families, such as single parents.³³ Food and other consumables may cost more on reserve and especially in the north, but this may be offset by the availability of traditional resources.

In short, the Census provides no evidence that the incomes on reserve are either more or less adequate than among Status Indians in Winnipeg. In both settings, median incomes are extremely low by Canadian standards, and a majority of families and individuals subsist on incomes below an equivalent of the Statistics Canada LICO. All that can be said with any confidence is that Status Indians living off reserve outside Winnipeg appear to have a higher standard of living than their counterparts elsewhere, either in Winnipeg or on reserve.

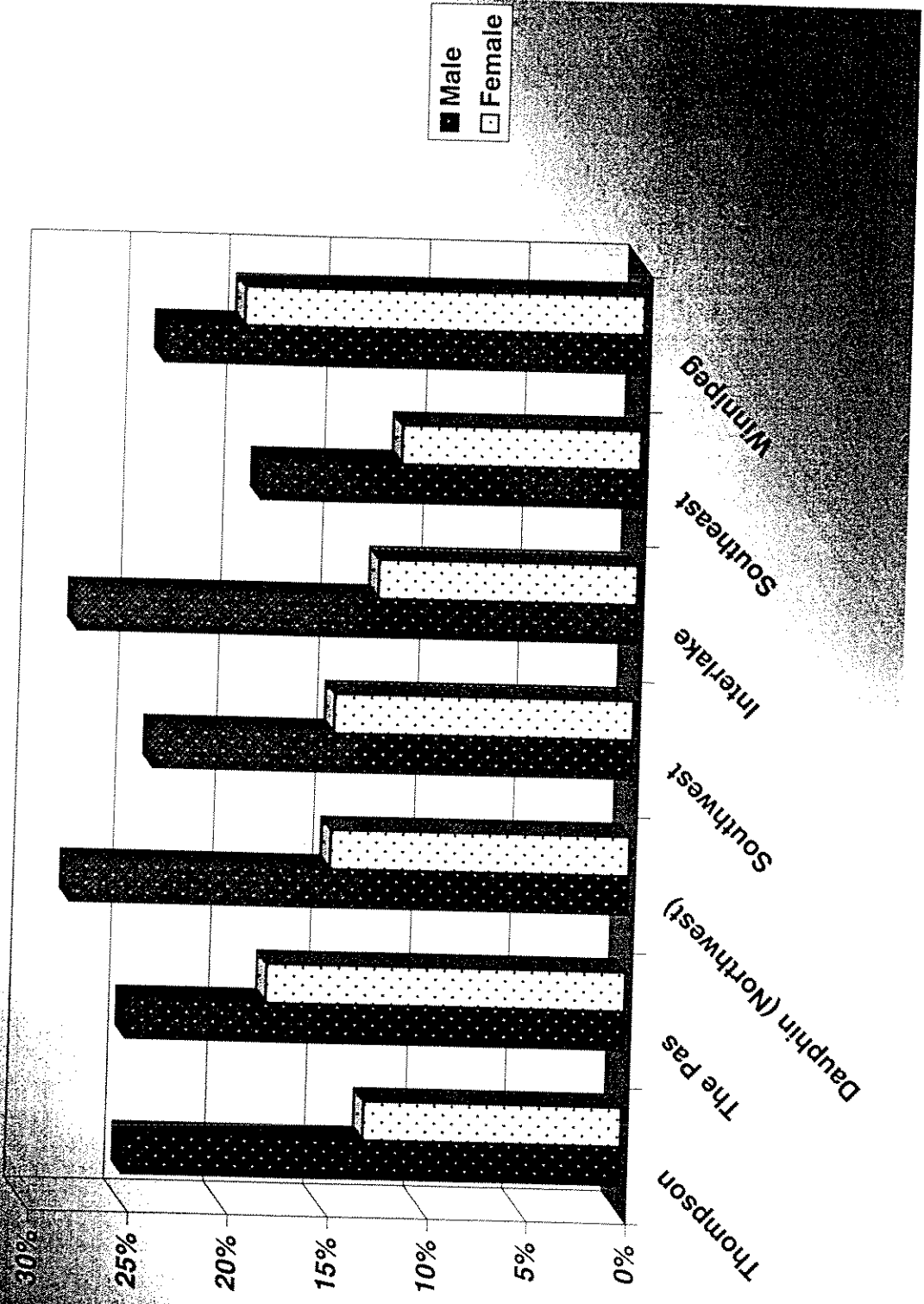
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- ¹ The employment rate equals the number of people employed at time of survey divided by the total population aged 15+. It equals the labour market participation rate, discounted by the rate of unemployment. Due to its objectivity, the employment rate is the best available indicator of availability of employment relative to population. Participation and unemployment rates include a subjective element.
- ² Because the Labour Force Survey is based on a relatively small sample, it is less reliable the smaller the aggregate population of the community for which it reports. The LFS is suitable for comparing unemployment and labour market participation rates at the Census Metropolitan Area level, and at the provincial level provided that the exclusion of on reserve communities is noted.
- ³ For discussion and analysis of variable Census wording, please see CMHC, "Canada's Aboriginal Population, 1981-1991," September 1996, p.2.
- ⁴ 1981 and 1991 figures from Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Manitoba's Aboriginal Population Characteristics 1986-91," Unpublished draft dated February 1996, p.7.
- ⁵ Mendelson & Associates, "Recent trends in Labour Markets for Aboriginal Peoples," November 1998, p.9.
- ⁶ Kaufman, Thomas & Associates, in association with Mendelson & Associates, "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues, 2000, p.10.
- ⁷ Conference Board of Canada, "Employment Prospects for Aboriginal People," by S. Loizides and J. Ziemiński, November 1998. SEE ALSO MENDELSON – CHECK REFERENCE
- ⁸ Conference Board of Canada, "Employment Prospects for Aboriginal People," by S. Loizides and J. Ziemiński, November 1998, p.20-21. Also, Kahtou, June 1999, p.6.
- ⁹ Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 89-547-XPE, "A Profile of the Metis," p.46-47. These are national figures. Respondents could report more than one type of problem, so totals exceed 100%.
- ¹⁰ Kaufman, Thomas & Associates, in association with Mendelson & Associates, "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues, 2000, p. 10.
- ¹¹ Unpublished 1996 Census data. The difference between Metis and mainstream labour market participation rate would widen somewhat if persons over the usual retirement age were omitted from the calculation, as more non-Aboriginal than Metis people are aged 65+. Those figures not available to the author. Against this must be offset the larger numbers of non-Aboriginal youth not in the labour market because of full-time attendance at school. So the adjusted labour market participation rates of Metis and non-Aboriginal people would still be similar.
- ¹² Mendelson et al (FIND REFERENCE) have applied the observation of simultaneous high participation and unemployment rates to the Aboriginal population as a whole, nationally. Unfortunately, First Nations labour market participation rates in Manitoba and Saskatchewan are much lower than the national average.
- ¹³ Metis National Council, "Needs Assessment Study on Literacy for Metis People," p.71. Study undated on author's copy.
- ¹⁴ It is not clear whether the employment situations on reserve has improved from 1991 and previous Censuses, because as noted these Censuses simply missed large numbers of people on reserve. It is also not clear how the employment situation for First Nations and other Aboriginal people has changed in Winnipeg, for the same reason. Presumably, people in worse economic circumstances would be easier to miss, skewing results from any comparison of existing statistics.
- ¹⁵ Industry Canada, "1996 Aboriginal Business Survey," @ strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/ra01605e.html.
- ¹⁶ Industry Canada, "1996 Aboriginal Business Survey," @ strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/ra01647.html.
- ¹⁷ Martin Cash, Business Reporter, for the Winnipeg Free Press, August 5, 1998. Statistics from 1981 and 1996 Census, in Industry Canada, "Aboriginal Entrepreneurs in Canada: Progress and Prospects," 1998. Also, Industry Canada, "1996 Aboriginal Business Survey," @ strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/ra01606e.html.
- ¹⁸ Industry Canada, "1996 Aboriginal Business Survey," @ strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/ra01647.html.

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- ¹⁹ Goss Gilroy Inc., "Financial Performance and Employment Creation Related to Firms Assisted by Aboriginal Business Canada – Final Report," February 1996, pp.iii-iv.
- ²⁰ Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 89-547-XPE, "A Profile of the Metis," p.45. These are national figures. Respondents could report more than one source of financing, so totals exceed 100%.
- ²¹ Median income refers to the income of "the average person"; i.e. the person in relation to whom half of the population earns less and half earns more. This is different from "average income," which is the total reported income divided by the number of respondents. Average income figures are several \$1,000 larger than median income figures, because a relatively small number of very wealthy people can raise the average considerably.
- ²² Statistics Canada, "The Daily," Tuesday, May 12, 1998, p.8 of 17.
- ²³ "The reason the figure is not closer to 100%, as one might expect, is that many households receive social assistance for only part of the year and earn enough during the remainder to raise their total income above the poverty line." Canadian Council on Social Development, "The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty 1994," p.97.
- ²⁴ Canadian Council on Social Development, "The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty 1994," p.96. All told, 75% of \$56 billion spent on transfer payments in 1991 went to households receiving more than the LICO.
- ²⁵ Four Directions Consulting Group, "Implications of First Nations Demography, Final Report," August 1997, p.69.
- ²⁶ Four Directions Consulting Group, "Implications of First Nations Demography, Final Report," August 1997, p.72; see also Appendix A: Regional Social Assistance Trends.
- ²⁷ For a comprehensive discussion of the debate regarding poverty indicators, please see "The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty 1994" published by the Canadian Council on Social Development. For purposes of this book, we will refer to people or families as "having incomes under the LICO" or "low income families" rather than families "living in poverty."
- ²⁸ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.90.
- ²⁹ Stewart Clatworthy & Michael Mendelson, "A Statistical Profile of Aboriginal Youth in Canada," 1999, p.91.
- ³⁰ The LICO varies according to family size and size of community. The highest LICO rate is set for communities, like Winnipeg, with more than 500,000 people. This is why poverty and child poverty rate comparisons between Canadian cities and provinces can be misleading. All cities with over 500,000 people are assumed for purposes of the LICO to have an equal cost of living, which is of course not true. Winnipeg rental and housing prices are much less than in centres like Toronto and Vancouver, so that an individual or family can subsist on a much lower income in Winnipeg. By the same token, Manitoba is often said to have one of the highest "child poverty" rates, simply because the majority of its citizens happen to reside in a city with over 500,000 people and a relatively low cost of living. In 1996 the LICO for a family of four living in Winnipeg was \$31,862.
- ³¹ Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Child Poverty in Manitoba: 1998 Report Card," pp.10-11. In many cases, of course, the pre-transfer income would have been zero.
- ³² See Statistics Canada, "The Daily," Tuesday, May 12, 1998, p.16: "The Statistics Canada survey that determines low income cut-offs... excludes these areas [on reserve, Yukon and Northwest Territories]."
- ³³ Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Child Poverty in Manitoba: 1998 Report Card," p. 19.

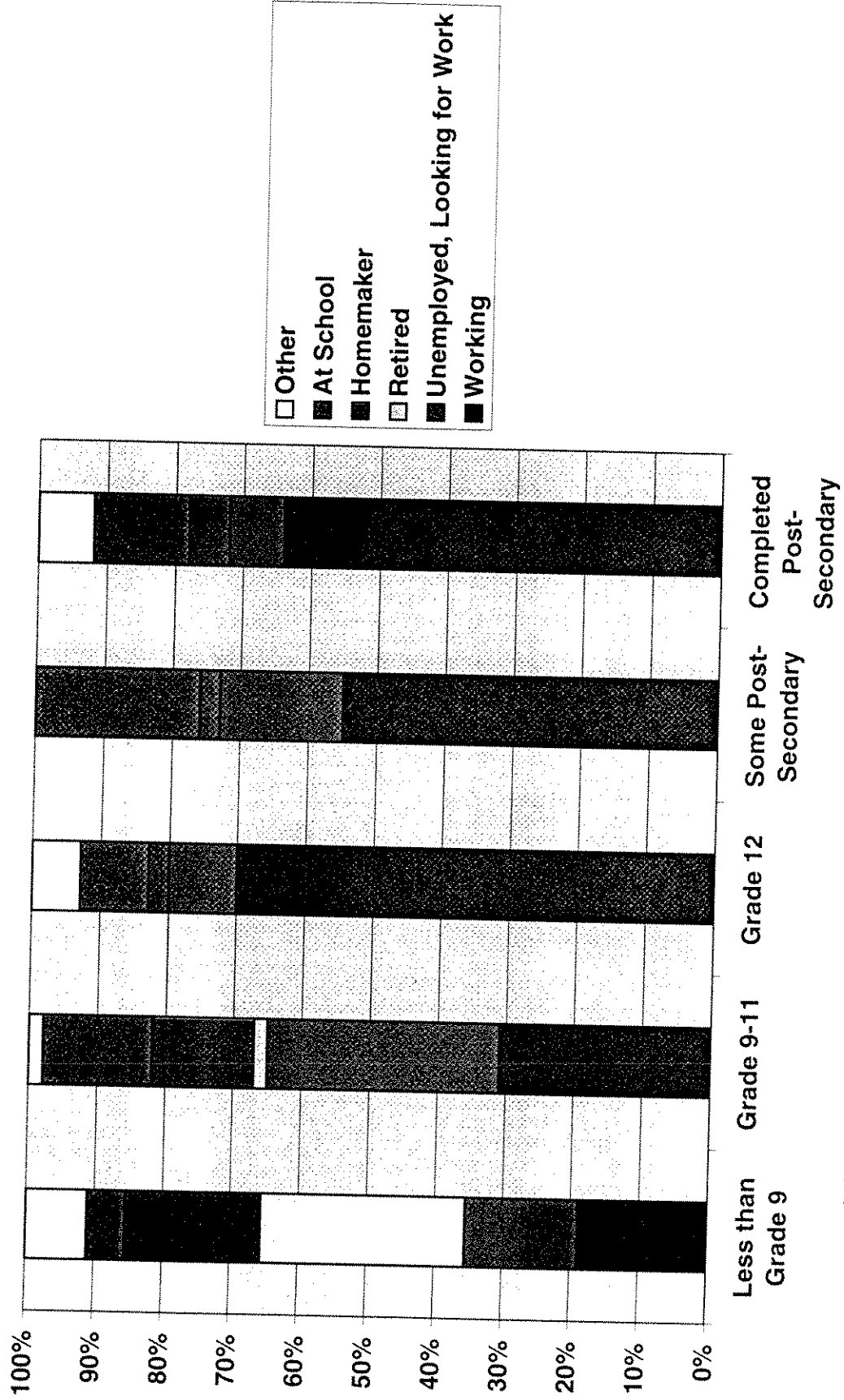
Labour Market Participation Rates of Metis-identity Population Aged 15+ by MMF Region, 1996



Unemployment Rates of Metis-identity Population Aged 15+ by MMF Region, 1996

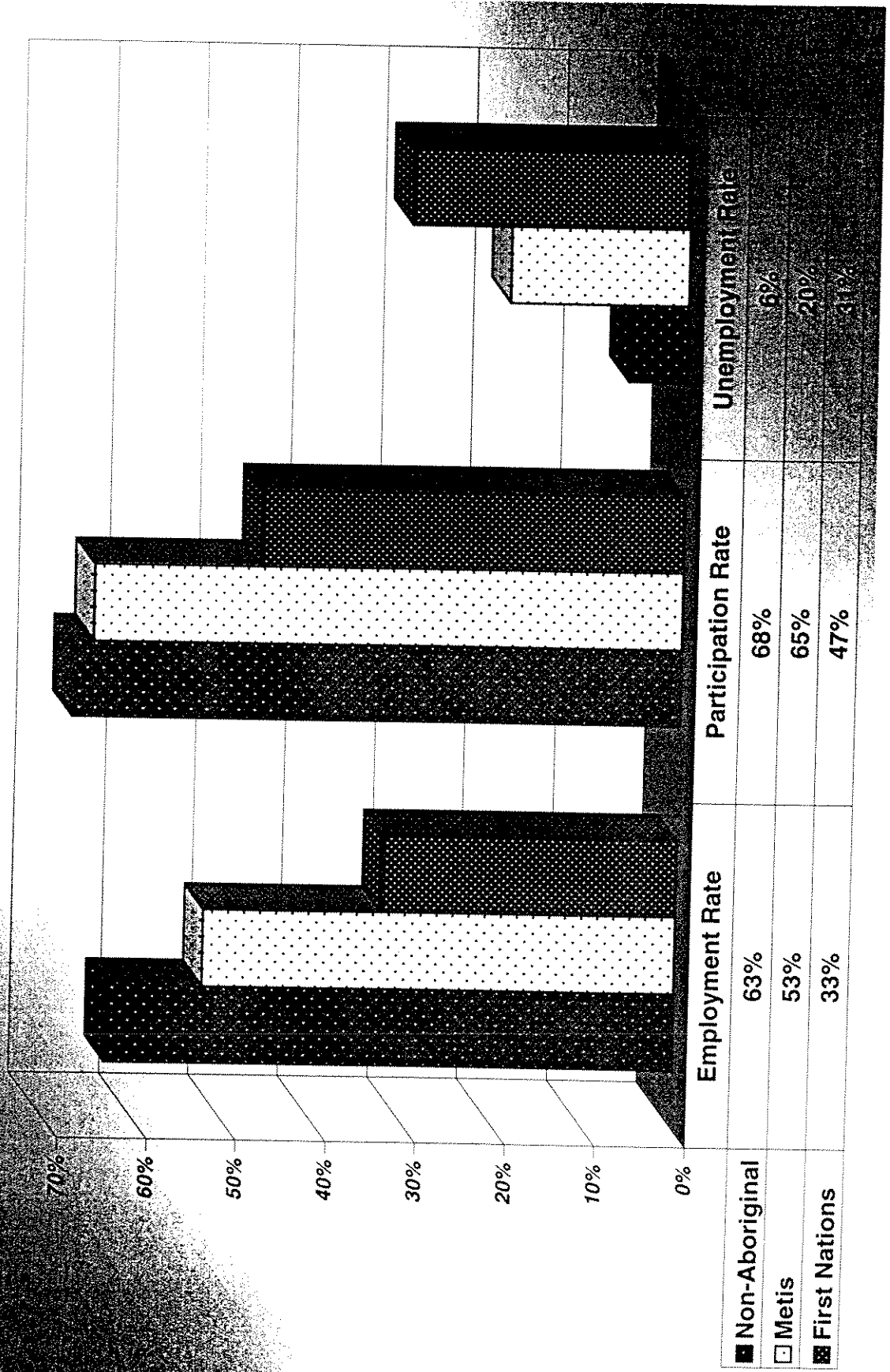


MANITOBA METIS LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITY AND EDUCATION



Adopted from Metis National Council Literacy Study

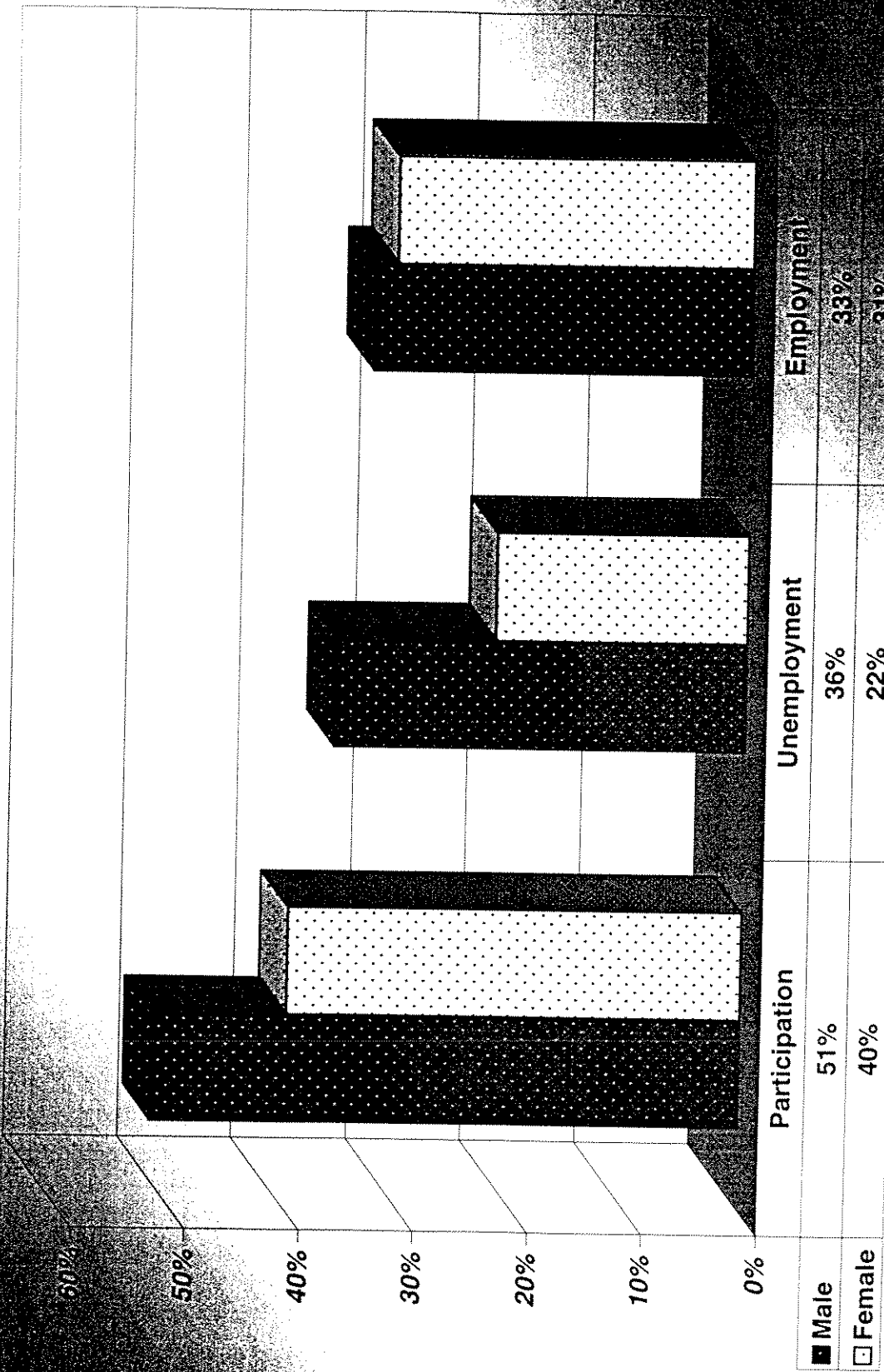
Labour Market Statistics for Manitoba 1996



Labour Force Statistics for Winnipeg 1996

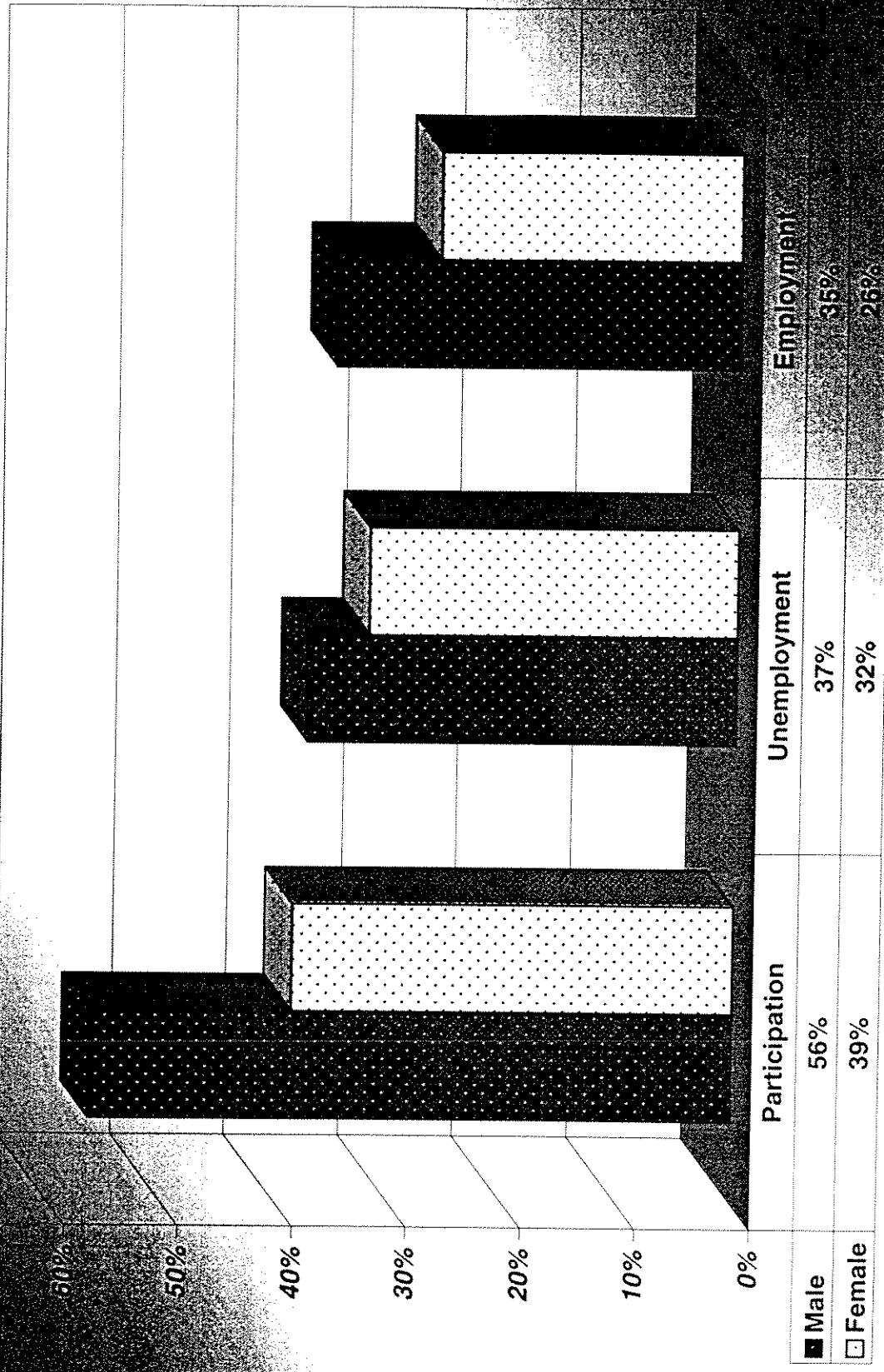


On Reserve Labour Market Participation, By Gender, 1996

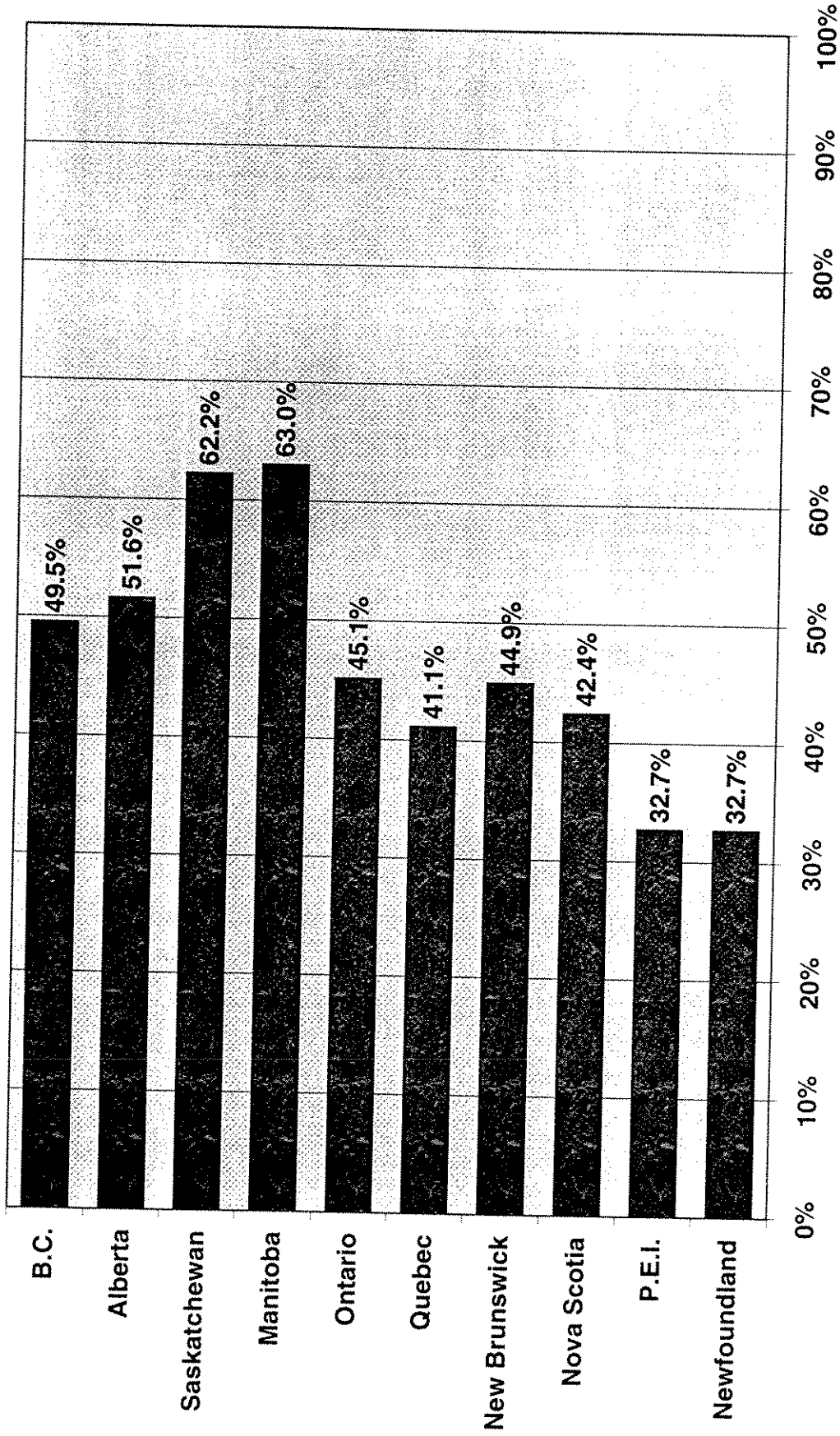


Male
 Female

Winnipeg First Nations Labour Market Participation, By Gender, 1996



% Off Reserve Aboriginal Children Residing in Low Income Households, 1996



FOCUS ON WINNIPEG

Fifty years ago, in the 1951 Census, only 210 of Winnipeg's population of 354,000 were indicated as registered Indians. The Metis were not counted in those days. By the time a comprehensive survey of Winnipeg's Aboriginal population was made in 1958, there were 1,200 Indians and 3,500 Metis. This was about 1% of the city's population, though the Metis were probably undercounted.

In 1958, 58% of the Indian population had lived in the city for less than three years. 20% of the Metis had lived in Winnipeg less than three years, and 45% had lived here more than 10 years. Most recent arrivals stated they had come to the city to find work, and 83% of men who indicated this reason were employed at the time of the interview. Overall, 55% of Aboriginal respondents were employed.¹ We have seen that this employment rate has since dropped to 42%, despite increased labour market participation of women.

Winnipeg's Aboriginal population has continued to increase -- due to the high birth rate and decreasing mortality rate, increasing Aboriginal self-identification and, prior to the 1990's, in-migration from rural areas. By the 1996 Census, 45,750 Winnipeg residents identified themselves as North American Indian, Metis or Inuit.

Of these, about 46% indicated registration under the Indian Act, and another 46% indicated Metis identity.² Winnipeg has the largest Metis community in Canada, comprising just over 50% of the Metis population in Manitoba. Non-Status Indians were the third largest group, at about 7%. The Inuit population in Winnipeg was only 120, yet this accounted for 50% of the total Inuit population in Manitoba.

INSERT chart

Between 1996 and 2000, the Aboriginal population in Winnipeg will have grown to approximately 50,000 – just over 7% of the population.

WINNIPEG IN RELATION TO OTHER CANADIAN CITIES

INSERT

As well as being the largest Aboriginal community in Canada, Aboriginal people in Winnipeg make up a larger proportion of the population in Winnipeg than most large Canadian cities. Aboriginal people comprise less than 1% of the population of Toronto and Montreal, 1.7% in Vancouver and 1.9% in Calgary, rising to 3.8% in Edmonton, 5.9% in Thunder Bay and 6.9% in Winnipeg. Only the Saskatchewan cities of Regina and Saskatoon have a higher proportion of Aboriginal people (7.1% and 7.5%).

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

Aboriginal people live throughout the city, however they are concentrated in the inner city.³ Here they account for over 20% of 14 different Census tracts, and about a third of all school age children. In one inner city census tract, the Aboriginal portion of the population exceeds 50%. By contrast, Aboriginal people do not comprise over 20% of any urban census tract in Canada, except a few in Regina and Saskatoon.⁴ It can be argued that the size, proportion and geographical concentration of Winnipeg's Aboriginal community make it qualitatively unique among Canadian cities.

This inner city area is one in which the overall proportion of children who are under the age of six has increased from 25.7% to 31.4% from 1981 to 1996. In the same period, the proportion of families headed by single parents has increased from 17.5% to 27.1%. The labour market participation rate has dropped from 63.5% to 58.4%, and for those single parents who participate in the labour market the unemployment rate has increased from 11.6% in 1981 to 24.3% in 1996.⁵ All of these trends are related to the increasing Aboriginal population in these neighbourhoods.

Researchers have found that the proportion of all inner city families with incomes under the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) has increased steadily from 32.6% in 1971, to 39.5% in 1986, to 50.8% in 1996. Among inner city Aboriginal households in 1996, the proportion was 80.3%. In fact, 64.7% of Aboriginal households in all of Winnipeg are below the LICO. Aboriginal households comprise over 20% of Winnipeg households with incomes under the LICO, though they are less than 7% of the population.⁶

Families with incomes under the LICO are often referred to, in the media or in government reports, as "living in poverty." While this designation is controversial, there has been a nine-fold increase in the number of families using food banks supplied by Winnipeg Harvest between 1987 and 1997. During this same period, the use of food banks across Canada has "only" doubled.⁷

...Poor families in Winnipeg have incomes *far* below the LICO ...The LICO for a household of three in Winnipeg is \$27,672. Winnipeg households with incomes below the LICO had an average annual income of \$13,717 in 1996 and \$12,211 in the inner city – less than half the level of the LICO.⁸

The core area of Winnipeg can be unsafe for its residents. Manitoba Health has reported that "the hospitalization rate for violence by others was 6.6 times higher in core area than for non-core area residents. The hospitalization rate for violence to self was 2.1 times higher."⁹

Aboriginal people rate Winnipeg as a less safe place than other Aboriginal communities. In the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 79% of reserve residents aged 15+ reported "feeling safe walking alone at night in their community," as did 83% of Metis living in communities outside Winnipeg. In Winnipeg, this number dropped to 65% for both Metis and Indians.¹⁰ The well-publicized rise of the street gangs in the early to middle 1990's, along with an outbreak of arson in the late 1990's, can only have heightened these perceptions since 1991.¹¹

NO TEXT, JUST INSERT MAP

Not surprisingly, Aboriginal people living outside the core area enjoy higher education and income levels, lower unemployment and more stable housing. The following chart gives data for Aboriginal people age 15+ in selected neighbourhoods, sorted by median income,¹² with Winnipeg total population data at bottom for comparison:

| | % Married | Education > Grade 12 | Moved in Past Year | Unemploy ment Rate | Median Income |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Downtown</i> | 14% | 33% | 45% | 38% | \$8,222 |
| <i>Pt. Douglas</i> | 17% | 23% | 41% | 41% | \$8,337 |
| <i>Inkster</i> | 32% | 31% | 35% | 29% | \$11,092 |
| <i>Seven Oaks</i> | 29% | 45% | 33% | 24% | \$13,087 |
| <i>River East</i> | 32% | 38% | 37% | 20% | \$13,436 |
| <i>St. Boniface</i> | 36% | 42% | 30% | 16% | \$14,821 |
| <i>St. James</i> | 33% | 41% | 36% | 13% | \$15,470 |
| <i>St. Vital</i> | 36% | 42% | 31% | 14% | \$15,579 |
| <i>Ft. Garry</i> | 43% | 51% | 28% | 14% | \$17,362 |
| ALL | | | | | |
| WINNIPEG RESIDENTS | 51% | 53% | 16% | 8% | \$19,950 |

In all neighbourhoods, Aboriginal people are more transient and have unemployment rates significantly above average. However, in suburban neighbourhoods, Aboriginal peoples' education and income levels approach city averages.

Married people with jobs and sufficient incomes appear to be following their non-Aboriginal counterparts out of the inner city, just as soon as they can afford the higher rents. In the inner city districts of Downtown and Point Douglas, only 14% and 17% respectively were married in 1996. This compares with province-wide averages of 34.5% for Metis and 32.3% for First Nations.¹³ Both single parents and unattached individuals are over-represented in the inner city.

FAMILY STRUCTURE IN WINNIPEG

A particular character of the Aboriginal population in Winnipeg is the very high proportion of single parent families. Though only 27% of Manitoba Status Indians

live in the city, one half of Status single parents live there (1,995 out of 4,005). The other side of the coin is that only 910 Status single parents (23%) live on reserve, though 58% of the total population is on reserve.

INSERT FAMILY STRUCTURE CHART

61% of First Nations families in Winnipeg are led by a single parent, and 41% of Metis families, as compared to 17.6% of non-Aboriginal families. First Nations families in Winnipeg are 4 times as likely to be headed by a single parent as families on reserve, and 3½ times as likely as non-Aboriginal families in Winnipeg. To the extent that Aboriginal children in single parent families are “at risk” of various negative life outcomes, these risks and these outcomes are centred in Winnipeg. Low income, substandard housing, and frequent residential moves (discussed elsewhere in this book) are particular issues for these families.

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES LED BY A SINGLE PARENT¹⁴

| <i>Location</i> | <i>Status Indians</i> | <i>Metis</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>All Manitoba</i> | 32.6 | 33.6 |
| <i>Winnipeg</i> | 60.8 | 41.1 |
| <i>Southern Off Reserve</i> | 48.0 | 24.0 |
| <i>Northern Off Reserve</i> | 46.1 | 30.9 |
| <i>Southern On Reserve</i> | 18.0 | N/A |
| <i>Northern On Reserve</i> | 12.4 | 16.7 |

Non-Aboriginal families tend to be led by a single parent because of divorce or widowhood. But Aboriginal single parents are on average much younger, and less likely to have ever been married. In Winnipeg, just 13% of non-Aboriginal single parents are aged 15-29. For Metis, the figure is 33%, and for Status Indians 37% (compared to 24% on reserve). Over 60% of non-Aboriginal single parents in Winnipeg are over 40, compared to 33% of Metis and 24% of Status Indians.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) is composed of seven regions; one of these, the Winnipeg Metis Association is specifically oriented to serve its members and other Aboriginal people residing in Winnipeg. There is also an Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, with affiliated service delivery agencies serving Aboriginal people in Winnipeg on a “status-blind” basis; i.e. regardless of registration under the Indian Act, or of Aboriginal group or national affiliation.

Program and service delivery to First Nations members residing in Winnipeg through Band or Tribal Council offices is problematic, due to the heterogeneity of this population. Bands belonging to the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council have approximately 3,300 members in Winnipeg, Southeast Resource Development Council 2,300 members, and Dakota-Ojibway Tribal Council 1,500 members. The other four Tribal Council each have less than 1,000 members in Winnipeg,

and the largest number of First Nation members (4,300) belong to Bands not affiliated with any Tribal Council.¹⁵

One unaffiliated Band, Fort Alexander or Sagkeeng First Nation, has over 1,800 members in Winnipeg. Peguis, in the Interlake, has just under 1,600 members in Winnipeg. No other Band has more than 1,000 members, although there are significant numbers of members from many -- such as Brokenhead (800), Fairford (700), Norway House (600), Fisher River (600), Long Plain (500), St. Theresa (500), Sandy Bay (450) and Pine Creek (400).¹⁶

During the 1990's, a number of service delivery agencies for Aboriginal people have located at the Aboriginal Centre, in the old Canadian Pacific railway station at the corner of Main Street and Higgins Avenue. These agencies deliver services in a "status-blind" fashion; that is, without regard to whether the person is Status or non-Status, Indian or Metis. During 1999, the MMF also located its provincial headquarters in this area, and an attractive new building called the Thunderbird House has been constructed. It is intended to be a spiritual and cultural centre for Aboriginal residents of Winnipeg.

¹ John Loxley, "Aboriginal Economic Development in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, pp. 84-85.

² The Status and Metis communities in Winnipeg are essentially equal in size. If persons indicating registration under the Indian Act but not Aboriginal identity are included in the count, the Status Indian count is slightly higher than the Metis; if not, the Metis count is slightly higher.

³ Defined as the area with McPhillips St. and Ingersol St. as the western boundary, McMillan Ave. (Fort Rouge) and Rue Marion (St. Boniface) on the south, Rue Archibald and the Seine and Red Rivers on the east, and Carruthers Ave. on the north. This translates to Downtown/Exchange District, the North End, Wolseley, the eastern half of the West End, and older areas of Fort Rouge and St. Boniface. Elmwood and Weston are not included, though they have large Aboriginal populations. Certain high income areas such as Wellington Crescent and Armstrong Point are included. See map in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 28. The 1996 population of the inner city was 108,695 -- down 24% from 1961, but fairly stable since 1981.

⁴ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, p.v.

⁵ D. Lezubski, J. Silver & E. Black, "High and Rising: the Growth of Poverty in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, pp. 31-33. Figures are for all inner city residents, not just Aboriginal residents.

⁶ D. Lezubski, J. Silver & E. Black, "High and Rising: the Growth of Poverty in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 39.

⁷ D. Lezubski, J. Silver & E. Black, "High and Rising: the Growth of Poverty in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 42. Also, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Child Poverty in Manitoba: Report Card 1998," p. 17. In March 1997, 5,626 children lived in homes that accessed Winnipeg Harvest, which distributed a total of 5,560,973 pounds of food in 1997, compared to 835,451 pounds in 1987.

⁸ D. Lezubski, J. Silver & E. Black, "High and Rising: the Growth of Poverty in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 48.

⁹ Quoted from Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, "Child Poverty in Manitoba: 1998 Report Card," p. 14.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada, Catalogue 89-533, "Language, Tradition, Health, Lifestyle and Social Issues: the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey," 1993, pp. 3, 4, 143, 153, 162, 173, 182.

¹¹ See for example John Loxley, "Aboriginal Economic Development in Winnipeg," in Solutions that Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 95: "The serious problems of the inner city became apparent in the late 1990's with extensive Aboriginal gang activity, a rapidly deteriorating housing stock and an outbreak of arson."

¹² Unpublished 1996 Census data. The median income for this chart is derived by averaging male and female median incomes.

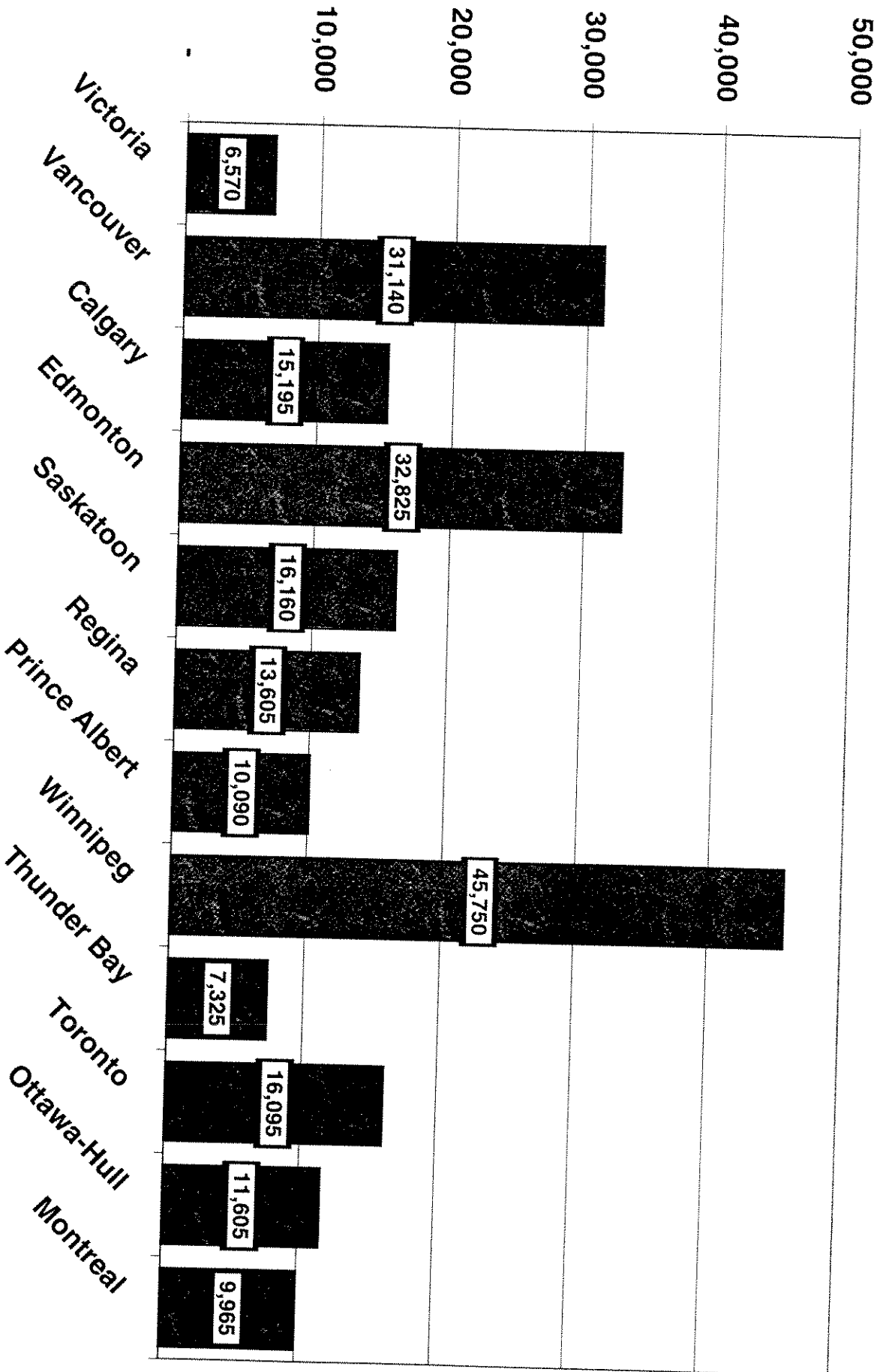
¹³ Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, Manitoba Aboriginal Persons: A Statistical Profile," 1998, p.8.

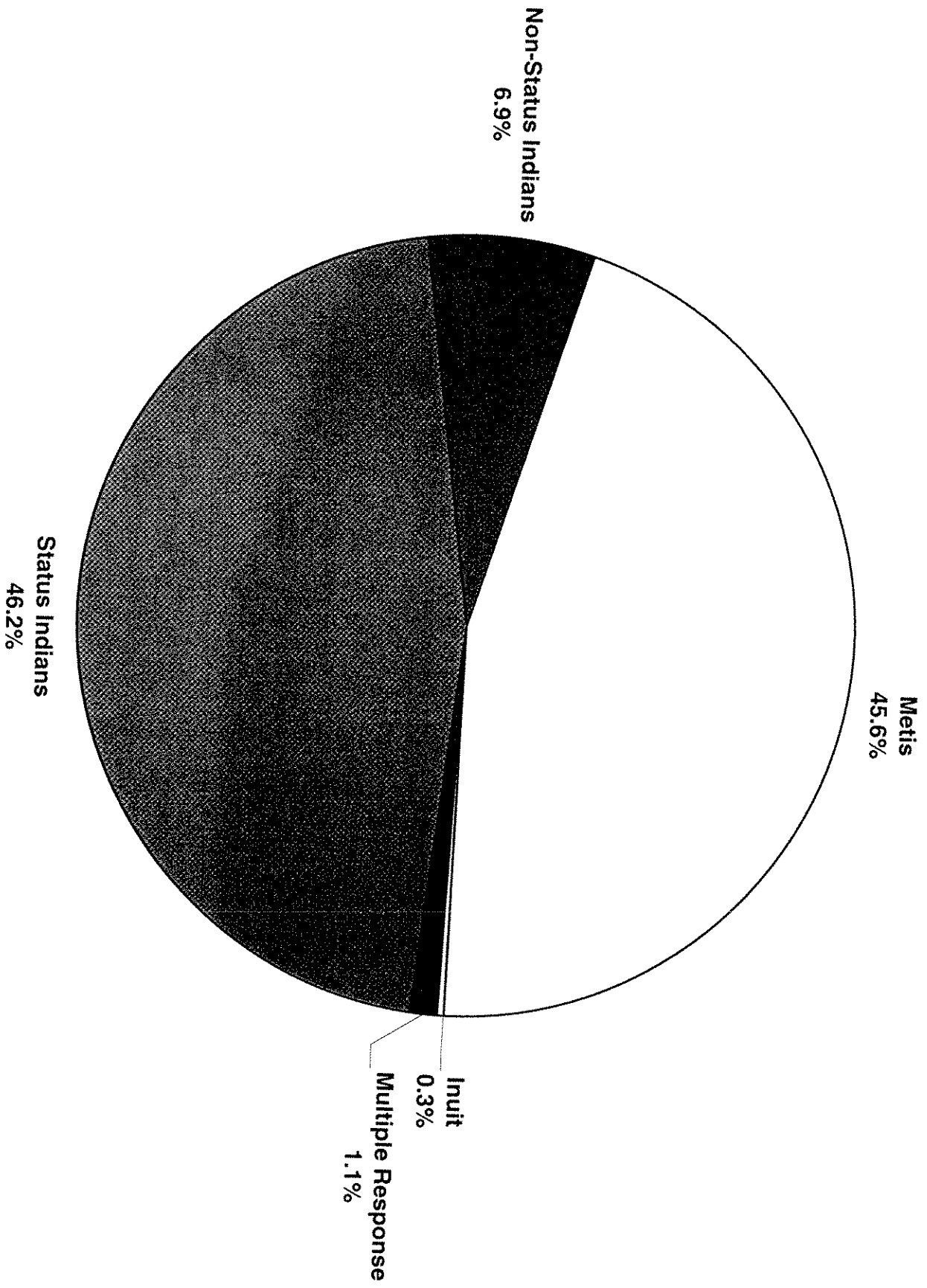
¹⁴ Unpublished 1996 Census data.

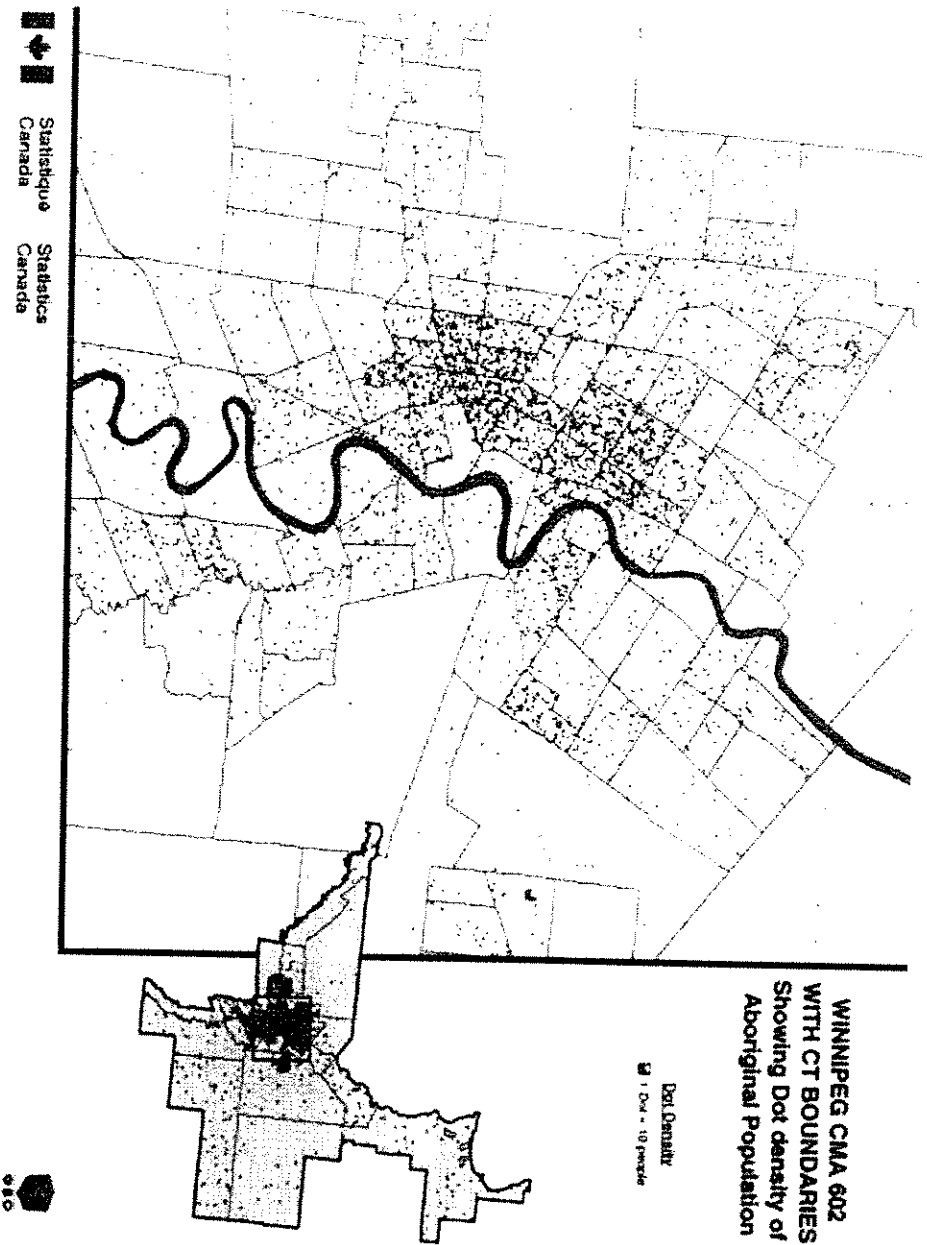
¹⁵ Norris, Beavon & Saunders for Indian Affairs Dept. Strategic Research, "Winnipeg's First Nations Members: Location, Migration & Population," unpublished draft, November 1999, p.11.

¹⁶ Norris, Beavon & Saunders for Indian Affairs Dept. Strategic Research, "Winnipeg's First Nations Members: Location, Migration & Population," unpublished draft, November 1999, p.17.

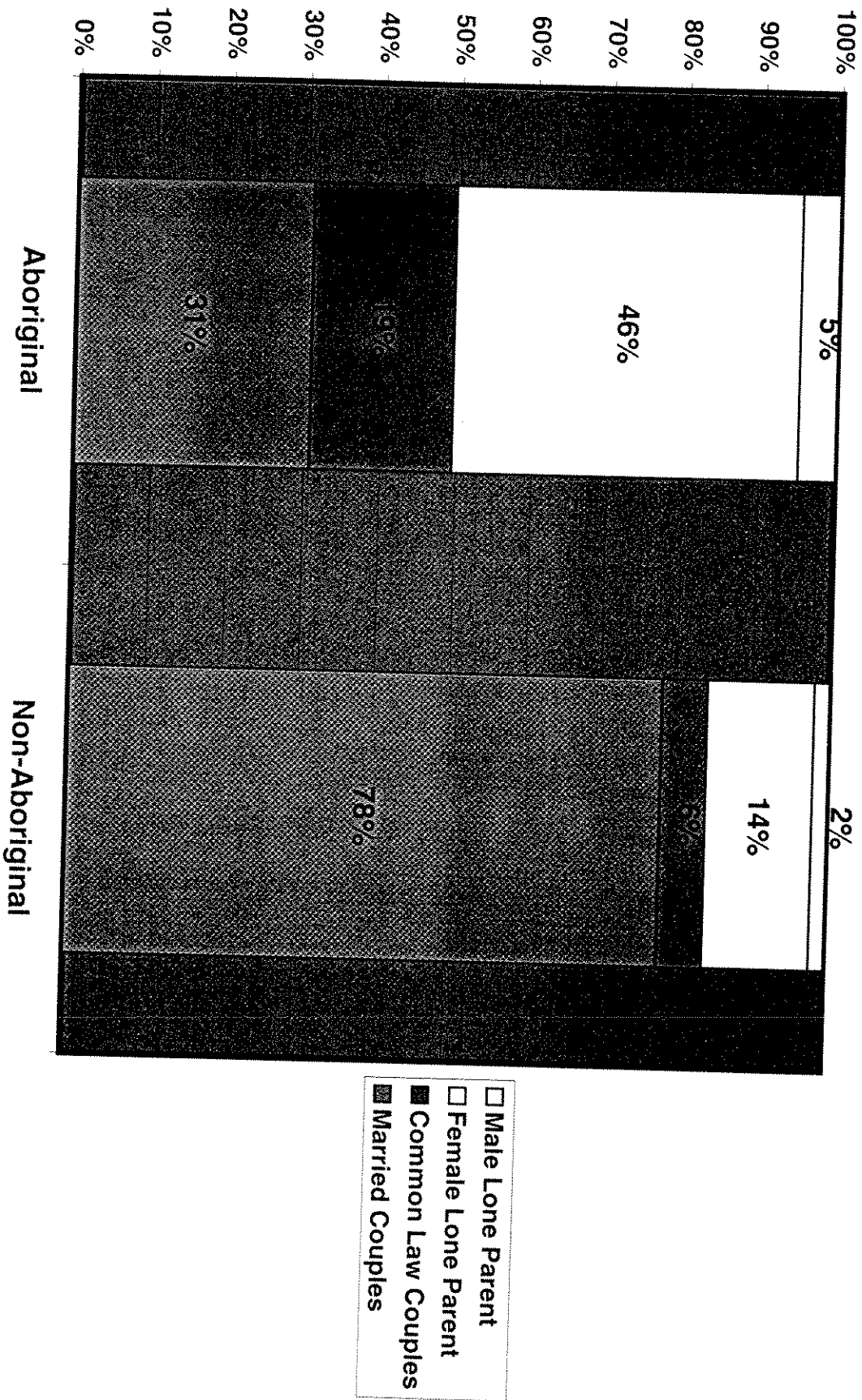
Canada's 12 largest Urban Aboriginal communities, Census Metropolitan Areas and Urban Agglomerations, 1996 Census







Family Structure of Winnipeg Children 0-14 (by % of children), 1996



CHAPTER SEVEN: HOUSING AND MOBILITY

HOME OWNERSHIP

With lower incomes, Aboriginal people have far lower rates of home ownership than non-Aboriginal people do. Where 77.6% of non-Aboriginal people in Manitoba reside in owner-occupied housing, the same is true of only 26.3% of Aboriginal people.¹ Metis have the highest rate of home ownership among the Aboriginal groups: 49.7%, compared to 33.6% for non-Status Indians and just 13.9% for registered Indians.

Almost half of registered Indians live in Band housing, including 84% of the on-reserve population. Bands also house 53% of the 670 Metis and 27% of the 895 non-Aboriginal people who reside on reserve. 51% of non-Aboriginal people on-reserve rent, and 21% own their homes.

Of the 79,510 Aboriginal people who live off reserve, including Winnipeg, 38% are homeowners and 62% renters. Again, this varies among the Aboriginal groups: 50% of Metis are homeowners as compared to only 24% of Status people. Metis in Winnipeg are more likely to be renters than their rural counterparts. 63% of Winnipeg Metis rent, as compared to 27% of non-Aboriginal Winnipeggers.

Only 16.7% of Status Indians in Winnipeg live in owner occupied housing, and 83.3% rent. Therefore, the distribution of rental housing in Winnipeg along with its pricing determines the distribution of Status Indians in the city, leading to an ethnic "ghettoization" effect.

Off reserve in Northern Manitoba, half of the Metis own and half rent. By contrast, in the south outside Winnipeg, 70.2% of Metis live in owner-occupied housing, which approaches the 84.7% figure for non-Aboriginal people in those areas. There is a similar north/south variation for Status people off reserve, although far fewer are homeowners: 29.3% in the north and 38.8% in the south outside Winnipeg.

SHELTER COSTS

A high percentage of family income spent on shelter costs is often an indicator of relative poverty, in the form of less disposable income. While families with lower income tend to rent or buy less expensive housing, local housing markets limit the degree to which shelter costs can be reduced.

Of non-Aboriginal Manitoba households who rented in 1996, 33% spent over 30% of their income on shelter; the corresponding figure for homeowners was just 9.6%. Part of this difference between renters and owners is a function of family income, and part is a function of the age of the home owner(s), older home

owners being more likely to have paid off their mortgages and own their homes outright.

Aboriginal people, as we have seen, have lower average incomes, larger families with more young children, and far fewer people in the older age categories. Off reserve, Aboriginal families are more likely to rent than own their homes. As a result, nearly half (48.3%) of Aboriginal renters spend over 30% of their family income on shelter costs (43% of Metis, 52% of Status Indians, and 53% of non-Status Indians). In Winnipeg, this figure rises to 55.5%: 50% of Metis, 58% of non-Status Indians, and 60% of Status Indians.

Therefore, 83% of Status Indians living in Winnipeg rent their homes, of which a majority is spending over 30% of their income to do so.

Among Aboriginal households renting accommodations in Northern Manitoba and in non-Band housing on reserve, the shelter cost "squeeze" is less common. In the north, 32% of 9,590 Aboriginal renters off reserve have shelter cost ratios over 30%, and 24% of 4,165 renters on reserve. However, most Aboriginal housing in the north and especially on reserve is Band housing, and a different set of problems is in evidence.

HOUSING CONDITION

Among non-Aboriginal households in Manitoba, 30.4% reported in the 1996 Census a need for "minor repairs" to their houses. 9.6% needed "major repairs," with 60% reportedly needing no repairs at all. While this determination is somewhat subjective, Aboriginal people in general tended to be less sanguine on the subject of their housing conditions. Across Manitoba, 32.9% of Aboriginal people lived in housing reported as needing minor repairs, and 27.1% in housing needing major repairs – three times the non-Aboriginal rate.

The figures for "major repairs" vary widely among locales and among Aboriginal groups. Province-wide, 18% of Metis (including both homeowners and renters) indicated the need for major repairs, as compared to 22% of non-Status and 32% of Status Indians. Among Status Indians, 19% indicated "major repairs" off reserve (16% in Winnipeg), compared to 41.4% on reserve. On reserve, an additional 30.7% indicated a need for minor repairs, leaving only 28% living in fully satisfactory housing.

Much of the housing stock in Winnipeg is relatively good, though old. People living in Winnipeg, and especially Aboriginal people, are less likely to consider their housing to be in need of major repairs than are people outside Winnipeg. 16% of Status Indians in Winnipeg indicated a need for major repairs, 15% of non-Status Indians, 12.5% of Metis, and 8.6% of non-Aboriginal residents. The average for all Aboriginal Winnipeggers is 14.5%. Aboriginal housing off reserve

outside Winnipeg fared worse at 22.9% needing major repairs, and on reserves worst of all at 41.4%.

For many social and economic indicators we have been examining, the Metis fare better than Status Indians do. Housing repair conditions outside Winnipeg are an interesting exception to this rule: the difference between the two groups disappears. 22% of Metis off reserve outside Winnipeg indicate a need for major repairs, as compared to 23% of Status people in the same areas. 42% of Metis houses on reserve needed major repairs, compared to 41% for Status Indians. By the same token, the gap between housing conditions for Metis within and outside Winnipeg is wider than for their First Nations counterparts.

The proportion of housing on reserve deemed to be in need of major repair is the same in the north and in the south, at 41.4%. Aboriginal housing off reserve, however, is inferior in the north, with 27.7% needing major repairs as compared to 19.4% in the south, or 22.9% in the south excepting Winnipeg.

CROWDING

One way that Census data may be used to measure crowding, and to assess whether or not a housing shortage is in evidence, is by measuring and comparing the number of persons per bedroom in households. Many households, of course, have one or fewer people per bedroom – in which case, the household may have “extra bedrooms” or bedrooms being used for other purposes. A house with one to two persons per bedroom is not necessarily overcrowded. But a house with more than two persons per bedroom almost certainly is, because it means that somewhere there are three or more persons sleeping in a single room, or else one or more persons sleeping in a room not intended to be used as a bedroom.

In non-Aboriginal households in Manitoba, 86% have one or less persons per bedroom, an additional 10% have two or less, and 4% have more than 2 persons per bedroom. The average non-Aboriginal household is less crowded than at any time in past history, and much less crowded than during the 1950-1970 “baby boom”.

By contrast, 59% of registered Indians have one or less persons per bedroom, 28% one to two, and 13% over two. The Metis numbers fall in between, actually closer to the non-Aboriginal than Status numbers: 78%, 16% and 6%.

All told, 10.3% of Manitoba's Aboriginal people live in overcrowded conditions according to this definition, or 13,000 people (not households), of whom 10,000 are Status Indians. By exactly the same definition, 35,000 non-Aboriginal people live in overcrowded conditions. Aboriginal people are three times more likely to be in this position, but part of this is the result of having younger and larger families.

In general, Winnipeg housing is slightly more crowded than outside Winnipeg, which reflects housing costs and the shelter cost "squeeze" described above. This is the case both for non-Aboriginal and Metis people. By contrast, among Status Indians, 10.4% live in households with more than two persons per bedroom in Winnipeg, 11.6% in off reserve situations outside Winnipeg, and 13.8% on reserve.

There is a very distinct north/south split. 14.5% of Aboriginal people in the north live in households with two or more persons per bedroom, compared to 5.8% in the south and 8.3% in Winnipeg. The apparent overcrowding of housing among Status Indians in the north applies in both on reserve (14.8%) and off reserve (17%) situations.

ON RESERVE HOUSING

We have noted that one half of Status Indians, and 84% of on reserve Indians, live in Band housing. 41% of this housing is deemed by occupants to be in need of major repair, compared to 22-23% off reserve outside Winnipeg, 14.5% of Aboriginal-occupied housing in Winnipeg, and 9.6% of housing occupied by non-Aboriginal Manitobans. Census evidence of overcrowding on reserve, however, is far less clear. 13.8% of reserve residents live in households with two or more persons per bedroom, slightly higher than off reserve situations (approximately 11% for Status Indians in or out of Winnipeg). In the north, overcrowding is actually more in evidence off reserve than on.

Through the 1990's, the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has spent in the range of \$150 million annually for on reserve housing nationally, supplemented by about \$110 million from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). According to INAC, its housing program was designed to provide subsidies to construction and major renovations projects, but due to restricted private capital,

...the prevailing legal and social limitations have meant that what was supposed to be only a subsidy has become the principle source of construction funding ...Reliance on federal subsidies ...(has) meant construction of smaller houses. Often these houses were built to minimal standards and not able to withstand severe weather conditions ...The lack of community-wide rental regimes on most reserves means that there are few if any resources with which to carry out essential maintenance and repairs. In combination with the often modest initial construction the result is a housing stock which has deteriorated rapidly.²

INAC funding subsidised construction of 18,000 new homes and renovation of 15,000 existing homes during 1990 to 1995 – a total of 33,000 homes out of 76,000 homes existing nationally on reserve in 1995 were affected.³ This was in

effect a 25% increase in the number of housing units on reserve over five years, a rate clearly exceeding the rate of population increase.

An alternate measure for crowding is number of persons per room, as opposed to bedroom. National figures for 1991 indicated that 11.4% of First Nations dwellings had over one person per room. While this was eight times the Canadian rate, it was a very significant decrease from 20.3% in 1986. In 1994/95, Health Canada reported that:

Recent data show major improvements in housing conditions, In 1994/95, six percent of First Nations dwellings lacked an adequate water supply, and 12% were without adequate sewage disposal, compared to 1986 when over 25% were without adequate water and 33% without adequate sewage disposal.⁴

To conclude, thirty years of "catch-up" housing construction on reserve have, to some extent, alleviated deficiencies in on reserve housing supply, and may have contributed to increased population stability and decreased migration to off reserve locations. However, housing condition and suitability on reserve remain serious concerns.

MOBILITY & MIGRATION

According to the 1996 Census, 53% of Aboriginal residents of Manitoba had moved within the past five years. This is compared to only 39% of all Manitobans. 25% had moved within the past year, compared to 15% of all Manitobans. However, Aboriginal people are not more mobile or migratory than other Manitobans, as is often supposed. Rather, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations demonstrate different patterns of mobility, and there are distinct differences in mobility rates among Aboriginal groups in different locations.

A great deal of this apparent movement consisted of changes of address within the same municipality, particularly movement from one rented accommodation to another in urban settings. We will refer to persons who lived at a different address within the same municipality one or five years previous as "movers," and those who lived in a different municipality as "migrants."

The following chart, broken down by group and place of residence in 1996, shows the percentages of Census respondents who had lived in a different municipality five years earlier:

| 1996 Residence | Non- Aboriginal | Metis | Status | Total Aboriginal |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Manitoba | 13 | 15 | 17 | 16 |
| Winnipeg | 10 | 9 | 21 | 15 |
| N. Off Reserve | 19 | 20 | 25 | 23 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|----|------|
| <i>S. Off Reserve</i> | 18 | 21 | 38 | 27 |
| <i>N. On Reserve</i> | N.A. | N.A. | 9 | N.A. |
| <i>S. On Reserve</i> | N.A. | N.A. | 16 | N.A. |

Aboriginal migration (as opposed to moving) rates are not much higher in Manitoba than non-Aboriginal rates, at 16% compared to 13%. Nationally, the overall Aboriginal migration rate is slightly less than that of the total population.⁵ In Manitoba, two significant Aboriginal groups show migration rates below the provincial average: Status Indians on reserve in the North, and Metis in Winnipeg. In both cases, only 9% of respondents lived in a different municipality five years earlier.

Metis migration rates throughout the province are about the same as non-Aboriginal rates. The higher over-all Aboriginal rate is entirely due to the movement of off reserve Status Indians: in Winnipeg, in the north, and especially in the south outside Winnipeg. On reserve populations, especially in the north, are remarkably stable.

At 21%, Status Indians resident in Winnipeg were twice as likely as Metis or non-Aboriginal residents to have moved from outside the city in the past five years. However, because there was a slight net out-migration of Status Indians from Winnipeg in 1991-96, this 20% of Winnipeg's Status population must be balanced against slightly larger numbers who moved from Winnipeg in 1991-96: to reserves, other off reserve locations, or out of the province entirely. This is "population flux," a movement of large numbers of people from one to location to another, but with little net migration trend.

The highest migration rates, for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike, are found among residents outside Winnipeg but not on reserve. About 20% of Metis and non-Aboriginal people here had lived in a different municipality five years earlier, but this rises to 25% of Status Indians in the North, and a very high 38% in the South.

Migration rates appear to be inversely correlated to net migration rates. Where migration is highest, off reserve outside Winnipeg especially in the south, there is a net out-migration. Where migration is lowest, on reserve especially in the north, there is a net in-migration. Winnipeg falls between the two extremes. The fact that 38% of Status Indians off reserve in the south lived in a different municipality five years ago, while at the same time, there was a net out-migration of 575 people, indicates that there is migration between southern off reserve localities on a large scale.

INSERT WPG MOBILITY CHARTS 7 & 8

Of the 37% of Status Indians living off reserve outside Winnipeg, who migrated in the past five years, 13% came from reserves and 6% from Winnipeg. 15% came

from other Manitoba locations, and 3% from outside the province. Of the 20% of Status Indians in Winnipeg who had migrated, 5% came from reserves, 9% from other Manitoba locations, and 6% from out of province. Finally, of 10% of on reserve Status Indians who had migrated, 4% came from Winnipeg, 4% from other Manitoba locations, and 2% from other reserves or out of province.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION

At the time of the 1996 Census, 1,400 migrants aged 15+ resided on reserve, 1,600 in Winnipeg, 1,600 off reserve in the south and just under 1,000 off reserve in the north. Though 35% of the total Aboriginal population resides in Winnipeg, only 28.5% of the migrants were found there. 25% of migrants were found on reserve, compared to 36.5% of the total Aboriginal population.

Therefore, the Aboriginal migrant population is disproportionately located in off reserve settings outside Winnipeg, especially small urban centres. In other words, the migrants cluster where Aboriginal-specific programs and services are least likely to be located.

Aboriginal migrants identified by the 1996 Census were, by and large, a young group, with 59% aged 15-29 and 23% aged 30-39. By contrast, only 42% of Aboriginal non-migrant adults were aged 15-29.

Parents, both lone or spouses, are over-represented among migrants. But these young families have fewer children than average, being in an earlier state of development, and therefore children are under-represented among migrants. Lone parent families are particularly over-represented among migrants to urban areas, especially Winnipeg where they form over half of migrant families.⁶

The migrants were relatively well educated, with 44% having grade 12 or better as compared with 38% of the non-migrant Aboriginal population. 46% of the Winnipeg/off reserve migrants had grade 12 or better, compared to 43% of Winnipeg/off reserve non-migrants. 39% of on reserve migrants had grade 12+, compared to 27% of non-migrants, so the differential in educational levels is strongest among those who have moved to the reserve from Winnipeg or other off reserve settings.

However, in Manitoba⁷ the labour force participation rate of the migrants is not significantly different from the non-migrants. In fact, among registered Indians it is actually slightly lower – 45% for migrants and 47.1% for non-migrants. The lower labour market participation rate of First Nations migrants is most pronounced in off reserve settings outside Winnipeg, and disappears on reserve.

Many people obviously moved for reasons other than to seek employment: for example for housing, education, family reasons or health care needs. Again, the notion of large numbers of Status Indians moving from reserves to urban centres

in search of employment is not supported – rather; labour market participants are slightly more likely to move from urban centres to reserves.

Among those Aboriginal people who have migrated and who do participate in the labour force, the unemployment rate is very high. Throughout Manitoba, the unemployment rate for migrant Status Indians is about 38% compared to 30% for non-migrants, and among the Metis 28% compared to 19% for non-migrants. Even on reserve, the unemployment rate is higher for migrants – 35% compared to 30% for non-migrants.

The difference in unemployment rates is most pronounced among Status Indians residing in Winnipeg, where an astonishing 48.8% of migrant labour market participants were unemployed in 1996, compared to 33.5% of non-migrants. Insofar as there were Status Indians moving to Winnipeg to find work in 1991-96, they were obviously not finding it.

In very distinct contrast, among Metis migrants to Winnipeg the unemployment rate was 18.2% compared to 20.4% for non-migrants in Winnipeg. But among Metis migrants to locations in the south outside Winnipeg, the unemployment rate was much higher: 31.5% compared to 15.2% for non-migrants.

With comparable or lower labour market participation rates, and usually higher unemployment rates, the employment rate of Aboriginal migrants is lower than non-migrants. Where there is no significant difference in employment between migrant and non-migrant non-Aboriginal people (64.7% vs. 63.3%) the overall employment rate for Aboriginal migrants was 35.8%, compared to 40.7% of non-migrants.

The employment rate of Metis migrants was 48.3%, and for First Nations migrants a mere 27.7%. Among First Nations migrants to Winnipeg, the employment rate in 1996 was only 21.3%! For migrants to reserves, the employment rate was 30.6%.

Because of relatively high unemployment and low employment rates, the average income of migrants tends to be considerably lower than non-migrants, particularly in Winnipeg, and much larger numbers are on social assistance.⁸

Statistics Canada has analysed the characteristics of Aboriginal migrants into Winnipeg against those of migrants moving from Winnipeg to other parts of the province or Canada.⁹ 14.9% of Winnipeg's Aboriginal people in 1996 had moved in during the past five years, while an equivalent of 16.9% of the 1996 population had moved out, for a net out-migration of 1.9%.

The out-migrants were concentrated in the 25-44 age group, while there was a very small net in-migration of youth aged 15-24. There was a net out-migration of Aboriginal people with less than a high school diploma and, surprisingly, also of

people with a post-secondary degree or diploma. There was a very small net in-migration to Winnipeg of people with grade 12 only. Both these facts lead to the conclusion that the only net in-migration into Winnipeg involves persons with grade 12 seeking higher education in Winnipeg, who then tend to move out when they complete. This is consistent with the low labour market participation rates of migrants into Winnipeg.

LOCAL RESIDENTIAL MOVES

Changes of residence within the same municipality account for most of the difference in apparent mobility rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

MOBILITY STATUS ONE YEAR AGO

| | <i>N. Amer. Indians</i> | <i>Metis</i> | <i>All Manitobans</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Non-Movers</i> | 77% | 73% | 85% |
| <i>Movers</i> | 16% | 20% | 10% |
| <i>Migrants</i> | 7% | 7% | 5% |

MOBILITY STATUS FIVE YEARS AGO¹⁰

| | <i>N. Amer. Indians</i> | <i>Metis</i> | <i>All Manitobans</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Non-Movers</i> | 47% | 45% | 60% |
| <i>Movers</i> | 35% | 39% | 26% |
| <i>Migrants</i> | 17% | 16% | 14% |

Metis people are actually more likely than North American Indians to indicate on the Census that they had a different residence one or five years ago.¹¹ However, this is simply because Metis people are more likely to live in the very large municipality of Winnipeg, where movements within the municipality are more likely. Of 37,405 Aboriginal people in Winnipeg aged 5+ in 1996, only 10,385 had lived in the same residence five years earlier.

A study of residential mobility done for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples based on 1986-1991 data found, that Winnipeg had the highest rate of Aboriginal moving of any major urban area in Canada – 72% of respondents in 1991 reported a different residence five years earlier. Clatworthy et al reported:

Aboriginal housing consumption was examined in relation to three commonly-accepted consumption standards: including affordability, adequacy and suitability ...Regardless of household type, Aboriginal households in Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg reported a considerably higher incidence of housing consumption deficiencies than those residing in other areas. Although moving represents an opportunity for the household to bring housing consumption better in line with needs and resources, most Aboriginal moves resulted in housing circumstances which continued to fail accepted consumption standards.¹²

In 1996, approximately 30% of Aboriginal households had moved from one Winnipeg residence to another in the past year alone. This is high compared to many major CMA's in Canada, but typical of Prairie CMA's:¹³

INSERT CHART MOVING BY CMA

Among major Canadian urban centres, Winnipeg has among the lowest rates of Aboriginal home ownership, and Aboriginal households who rent are approximately twice as likely to have moved in the past five years as those who own their homes.¹⁴

Probably, housing tenure explains most if not all differences in rates of intramunicipal moves between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal households, and among different types of Aboriginal households. Among Aboriginal lone parent households in Winnipeg, less than 10% own their dwelling unit, which is a lower rate not only than two-parent households, but also non-family households. Consequently, the five-year moving rate for Aboriginal lone parent households, at 80%, is higher than for two-parent households (65%) and non-family households (75%).¹⁵ The relative persistence of non-Aboriginal people in their residences, of course, links back to their much higher rates of home ownership.

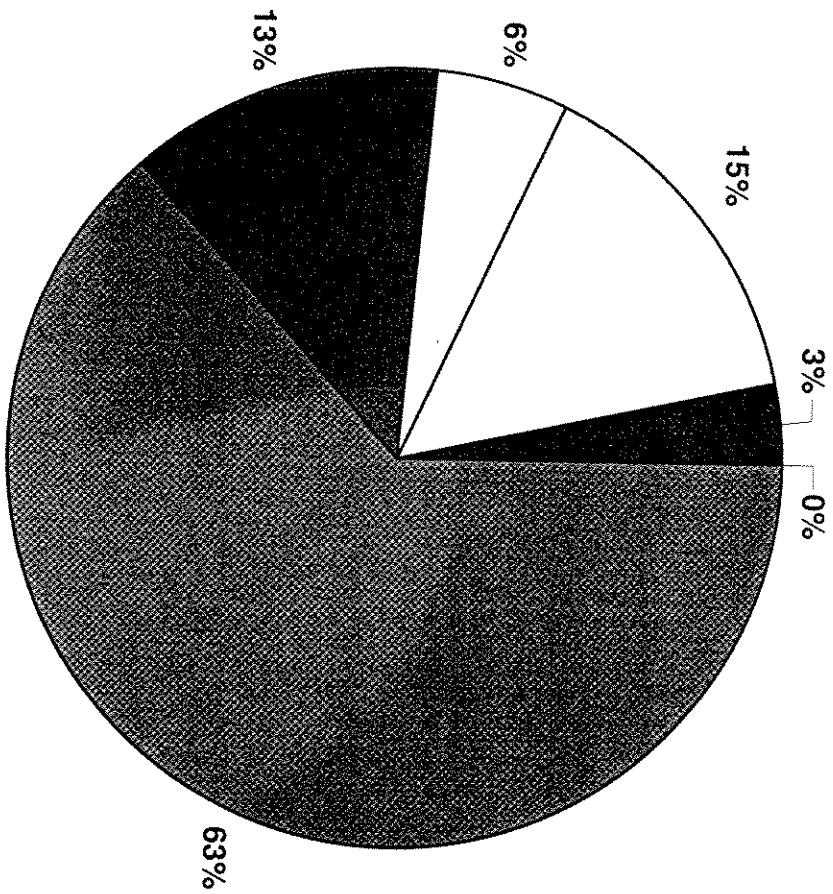
Due to the concentration of rental units in the inner city of Winnipeg, moving rates are generally much higher in these neighbourhoods, particularly among Aboriginal residents. Not captured by Census information is the number of families who may move several times over a five-year period. A 1995 study by Manitoba Health observed that:

*Migrancy [frequent movers] is a particular problem for inner city children ...Migrancy combined with poverty, single-parent families and other social difficulties further exacerbates the difficulty of school aged children. In a 1992 review of inner city schools the lowest [annual] migrancy rate was 40.6%. The highest rate was 84.7% ...Seventy-five percent of migrants were from unemployed single parent families ...In a nine-month period in 1992/93, there were 3,058 single parent family moves out of a possible 3,553.*¹⁶

For example, William Whyte School (K-9) had the highest mobility rate in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 in 1997-98: with a total average enrolment of 243 students, there were 218 transfers.¹⁷ If each transferred student moved only once, this would mean that of 20 students in a classroom in June, only two would have been there in September. However, some students are transferred more than once each year. The effect of this level of disruption on the children's education is immediately obvious.

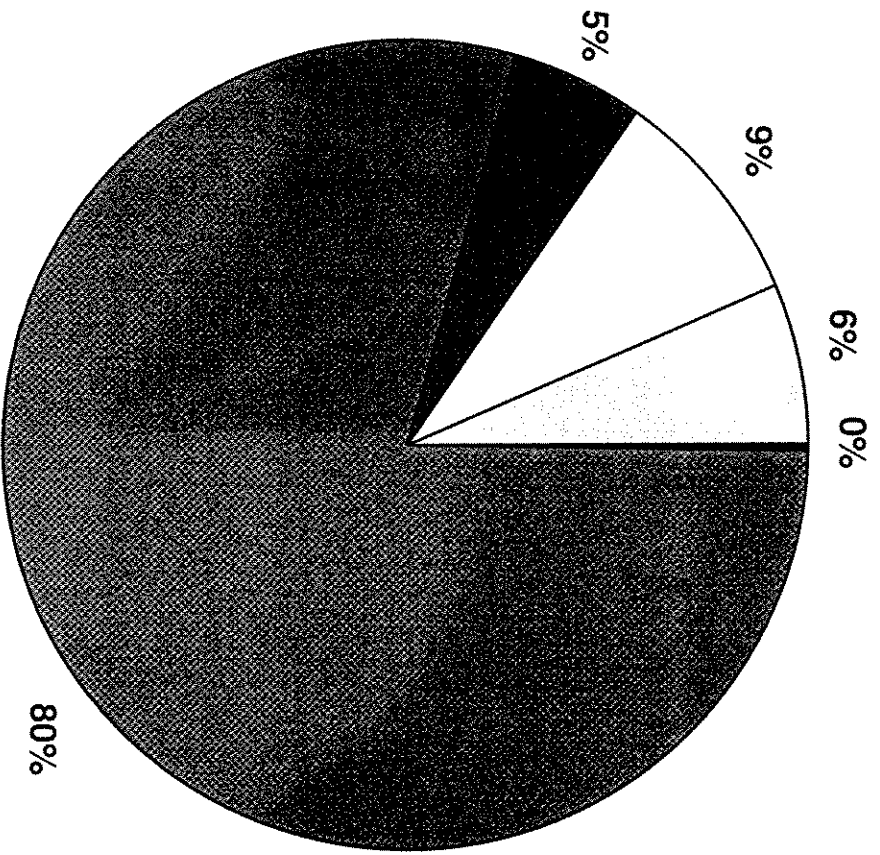
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- ¹ Housing figures are based upon unpublished 1996 Census data, and refer to the population in private (non-institutional) housing: 127,500 out of 128,910 Aboriginal people in Manitoba.
- ² Backgrounder to May 1996 press release, INAC (www.inac.gc.ca/news/may96/1-9630.html) pp. 1-2.
- ³ Backgrounder to May 1996 press release, INAC (www.inac.gc.ca/news/may96/1-9630.html) pp. 1-2.
- ⁴ 1994/95 data: "Results of DIAND Program Review and 1996 Budget" News Release Fact Sheet, March 6, 1996. Quote taken from Health Canada, "Trends in First Nations Mortality 1979-1993," Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1996, pg. 15.
- ⁵ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, pp.iii.
- ⁶ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, pp.13.
- ⁷ This finding for Manitoba is not consistent with Clatworthy et al (1996) and several previous national studies, which suggest labour market participation is higher among Aboriginal migrants than non-migrants.
- ⁸ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, p.19.
- ⁸ Brian Postl, Manitoba Health, "The Health of Manitoba's Children," 1995, pp. 107-108.
- ⁸ Heather Hunter, "In the Face of Poverty: What a Community School Can Do," in Solutions that Work Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg
- ⁹ Doug Norris, Statistics Canada, presentation to Round Table on Urban Aboriginal Challenges in Winnipeg, November 9th and 10th, 1998. Published by Human Resources Development Canada in "Report on First Nations, Metis, Inuit and Non-status Peoples in Winnipeg's Urban Community."
- ¹⁰ Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, "Manitoba Aboriginal Persons: A Statistical Profile 1996," 1998, p. 15. Small variances between the figures in this chart and figures given above are due to the fact that the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics defined the Aboriginal groups slightly differently.
- ¹¹ Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, "Manitoba Aboriginal Persons: A Statistical Profile 1996," 1998, p.11. In this study, "North American Indians" includes both Status and Non-Status.
- ¹² Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, pp.v-vi.
- ¹³ Kaufman, Thomas & Associates, in association with Mendelson & Associates, "Report on Metis and Off-Reserve Aboriginal Issues," 2000, p.13.
- ¹⁴ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, p.22.
- ¹⁵ Stewart Clatworthy, Four Directions Consulting Group, "Migration and Mobility of Canada's Aboriginal Population," September 1996, pp.20-22.
- ¹⁶ Brian Postl, Manitoba Health, "The Health of Manitoba's Children," 1995, pp. 107-108.
- ¹⁷ Heather Hunter, "In the Face of Poverty: What a Community School Can Do," in Solutions that Work Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba, 2000, p. 111.

1991 Residence of 1996 Off Reserve Status Indians Outside Winnipeg



- Non-Migrant
- From Reserve
- From Winnipeg
- From Other MB Location
- From Other Province
- From Other Country

1991 Residence of 1996 Status Residents of Winnipeg



- Non-Migrant
- From Reserve
- From Other MB Location
- From Other Province
- From Other Country

% Aboriginal Dwelling Changes in One Year, Census Metropolitan Areas, 1996

