

University of Alberta

Seeking Shelter among Settlers:
Housing, Governance, and the Urban/Aboriginal Dichotomy

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation looks at urban housing fields (its policies, services, actors, and structures) in two Canadian cities: Edmonton and Winnipeg. Using a Bourdieusian method of field analysis, I ask how local networks of actors engaged in the struggle over housing resources govern and are governed in the city, with an emphasis on the positions, roles, and experiences of Aboriginal people. Employing an analytic matrix that seeks to cast light on differences amongst Aboriginal people, I ask how and why the shaping of the housing field differentially affects Aboriginal women and men, how some Aboriginal people can meet their needs through gathering valuable resources, and what roles Aboriginal political groups play in the housing fields. Finally, I explore whether strategies for inclusive, Aboriginal collective action are being attempted in urban housing fields, in response to, or in light of, the political-economic order that hinders Aboriginal control over housing.

Combining questions about political economy, gender, and Aboriginal politics in Canada, I use a multileveled analysis to show how hegemonic ideas shape housing fields and the people within. At the same time, urban residents of all backgrounds are also responsible for shaping the field around them. Powerful, historically based field structures reward certain kinds of behaviour, but also seek to constitute actors as certain kinds of people. Aboriginal women and men find themselves with behaviours, beliefs, or dispositions that often leave them at odds with cultural, political, and economic forces in the city. I argue that a complex dichotomy that puts Aboriginal people at odds with the ideal urban citizen (the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy) is challenged, or disrupted, by the ways in which people contest the common-sense assumptions of the contemporary housing field. However, a great amount of resources – social, cultural, economic, and symbolic – are required in order to change colonial, patriarchal, and neoliberal structures and shift power from the privileged actors that have benefitted from them for so long.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACW - Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg

AFN - Assembly of First Nations

AHMA - Aboriginal Housing Management Association

AMC - Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

APC - Aboriginal Partnership Component

ARO - Aboriginal Relations Office

AV - Aboriginal Visioning for the North End

CBC - Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

CMA - Census Metropolitan Area

CMHC - Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, originally Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation

CNFC - Canadian Native Friendship Centre

CRGBA - Culturally Relevant Gender-Based Analysis

CRHC - Capital Region Housing Corporation

DOFNHAI - Dakota Ojibway First Nations Housing Authority

DOTC - Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council

DOTCHAI - Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Housing Authority Inc.

EAUAC - Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee

ECOHH - Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness

ED - Executive Director

EJPCOH - Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing

EHTF - Edmonton Housing Trust Fund

EICHS - Edmonton Inner-City Housing Society

EUAAl - Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative

EUTC - E.A.G.L.E. Urban Transition Centre

FC - Friendship Centre

GBA - Gender-Based Analysis

HPS - Homelessness Partnering Strategy

HRIR - Housing Rehabilitation Investment Reserve

HRSDC - Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

IAAW - Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women
INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
JIT - Joint Implementation Team
LICO - Low Income Cut-Off
MAP - Municipal Aboriginal Pathways
MCHC - Métis Capital Housing Corporation
MFSH - Manitoba Family Services and Housing
MH - Manitoba Housing
MHA - Manitoba Housing Authority
MHRC - Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation
MKO - Manitoba Keewantinowi Okimakanak
MLA - Member of the Legislative Assembly
MMF - Manitoba Métis Federation
MNA - Métis Nation of Alberta
MORN - Mother of Red Nations
MP - Member of Parliament
MREA - Manitoba Real Estate Association
MUHC - Métis Urban Housing Corporation
MUNHA - Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association
NACHA - Northern Alberta Cooperative Housing Association
NAHA - National Aboriginal Housing Association
NECRC - North End Community Renewal Corporation
NDP - New Democratic Party
NHA - *National Housing Act*
NHI - National Homelessness Initiative
NPM - New Public Management
NWAC - Native Women's Association of Canada
OFI - Office of the Federal Interlocutor
RGI - Rent Geared to Income
RNHP - Rural Native Housing Program
RRAP - Homeowner Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

RTB - Residential Tenancies Branch
SCO - Southern Chiefs Organization, Inc.
SCPI - Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative
SIS - Social Investment State
TLC - Tenant-Landlord Cooperation program
TSAG - Technical Services Advisory Group
UAHP - Urban Aboriginal Housing Project
UAPS - Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study
UAS - Urban Aboriginal Strategy
UK - United Kingdom
UN - United Nations
WEAC - Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre
WHHI - Winnipeg Homelessness and Housing Initiative
WID - Women in Development
WPA - Winnipeg Partnership Agreement

CHAPTER ONE:

1.0 THE CONTEMPORARY “INDIAN PROBLEM” IN THE CANADIAN CITY

This white woman used to give me a hard time, say: “go back to the reserve, you don’t belong here.” When I come home from work she would be right there picking on me. (Edmonton women’s focus group participant)

Right now, my main concern about housing is to get your own house you have to good credit. How can Natives have good credit when we were never taught how to save money, how to budget, or even to realize credit actually means something in this world? (Edmonton women’s focus group participant)

Canadians have historically viewed Aboriginal people and living spaces in binary terms; settlers/citizens were associated with urban areas, Aboriginal¹ people were cast in opposition as inherently rural or ‘un-urban’ outsiders. However, the increased migration to cities by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, the higher population growth rates that they have experienced, and a growing participation in urban economies and political and social processes call this dichotomy (which still persists in people’s minds) into question, creating a more complex set of circumstances and lived experiences. These factors have also created a new dilemma, similar to Canada’s perennial “Indian [sic] problem:” what to do about the disproportional poverty, discrimination, and violence Aboriginal women and men face as they struggle to survive within cities — cities which remain structured around colonial² and, more lately, neoliberal³ ideas of

¹ The word “Aboriginal” is used to refer to the First Nations (status or non-status), Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada (Peters 2007, 208), with acknowledgement that the word itself is seen by many as a foreign, government-given term that was not traditionally used by Aboriginal people themselves. This word is used in place of the increasingly more common “Indigenous” as the former was used by most of research participants (and it is the constitutionally-used “legal” term, a symbolic action that shapes the field), though it is noted here that many, including some who participated in focus groups, take exception to this term.

² Colonialism, defined in more detail in Chapter Two, is here defined as the promotion and “production of ideologies that justify the theft and violent practices” that are “rooted in racial assumptions” and which create and reproduce institutions and identities based on the colonizer’s world views (Cannon and Sunseri 2011, 275; Andersen 2000, 98).

how to govern.

There have been efforts to address these problems. Indeed — previously erased and, historically, “invisible” in the city — some Aboriginal people are now treated by many contemporary governments as possible targets for strategic “social investments” (Dobrowolsky 2006). The urban/Aboriginal dichotomy is also challenged by a growing category of people — what some are calling the “new Aboriginal middle class” (Cannon and Sunseri 2011, 98) — that attain a certain level of economic and/or political “success” in the city. However, even when conforming to the norms of the city and participating in mainstream political, social, and cultural systems, many urban Aboriginal people are still seen or treated as outsiders that do not belong to that space. This dislocation happens at the same time that they are subjected to different forms of domination — overt discrimination and more subtle systemic barriers — that are inspired and supported by neoliberal and colonial ideas.

Under current political-economic conditions, many Aboriginal people face a variety of related economic, political, and social hardships (Government of Canada 1996 v.4, c.7; K. Graham and Peters 2002; Rexe 2007; Peters 2007). There is also a fear among some that as the number of urban Aboriginal people continues to grow, a failure to address their housing problems will place high costs on cities and the state (Mendelson 2004; Lamontagne 2004). The housing field⁴ presents an interesting context for study, as it is a social policy area that has been passed between governments for decades; in the neoliberal era, it was virtually abandoned by the federal government that had long funded it. Simultaneously, governments have also avoided the question of urban Aboriginal responsibility. At a nexus of these two policy fields lies urban Aboriginal housing which provides a useful example of the urban “jurisdictional maze” that

³ The version of neoliberalism used here denotes the “mode of governance” based on the repudiation of the welfare state (W. Brown 2005, 37); it provides an “operating framework” that promotes free-market economic theory (Peck and Tickell 2002, 380). Primary examples in the housing field include the downloading of the federal responsibility for social housing and a turn toward the value of individual self-reliance in this area. This is further elaborated in the theoretical chapter.

⁴ A housing field is a network of individuals and groups competing against each other in a struggle for goods tied to housing (Bourdieu 2005).

Aboriginal people must navigate despite lacking many of the tools necessary to engage in this struggle (K. Graham and Peters 2002, 9).

The housing field provides an arena in which this tension can be studied, and in which colonial and neoliberal forms of oppression play out. Having adequate, suitable, and affordable housing, something which a significant number of urban Aboriginal people lack, and securing some sort of community control over the affordable housing sector have been identified as essential steps in addressing many urban Aboriginal people's cultural, political, and economic goals tied to self-determination (Wicahitowin Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship 2009; Government of Canada 1996 v.4, c.7; Morris 2002; Sgro 2002; Walker 2006a; Maracle 1995; Janovicek 2009). At the same time, numerous authors have suggested that the best hope for alleviating Aboriginal people's economic problems (and for easing their economic burden on the state) rests in integrating them into existing economic, legal, and political systems (Helin 2006; Cairns 2000; Boldt 1993).

Yet this is a challenging prospect, particularly when such systems are rooted in ideas that are cast as universal but really indicative of the beliefs of the dominant, privileged members of society (Brodie 1997, 226; Tully 1995, 66, 131). For example, in the housing field, individual homeownership (and filling it with a different-sex parent, nuclear family), has been framed for generations as a symbol of an individual's success as a citizen (Bourdieu 2005). Participation in this "whitestream" or settler-centred housing field and internalizing dominant ideas of success are problematic when definitions of the 'good life' continue to privilege dominant (colonial and patriarchal⁵) interests. Further, many Aboriginal people in Canadian cities do not possess the necessary resources (the spoils of Canada's colonial development) to share in this dream, nor do all Aboriginal people wish to be co-opted into these expressions of the neoliberal, racialized, and gendered social order (Green 2001).

It is clear that Aboriginal resistance to participation in mainstream housing

⁵ Patriarchy is "the system of male dominance that subordinates women and privileges men at women's expense" (Polakoff 2011, 11).

services (and other structures and processes of the housing field) will continue if participation or integration is based solely on dominant (i.e. Euro-Canadian, “whitestream,” or colonial) terms, criteria, or concepts (Silver 2007; Rust 2007; Silver et al. 2006; Walker 2006b; Silver et al. 2004; Altamirano-Jiménez 2004). Strategies for Aboriginal control over Aboriginal affairs have been proposed and attempted. However, these must take place in the face of oppressive and entrenched neoliberal and colonial forces — forces that shape the housing field and people’s behaviour within it. As a result, attempts to contest the move toward neoliberal governance in the housing field, through which social housing is abandoned in favour of treating housing as an individual responsibility, have been limited at best.

The above complexities raise a number of questions that are posed in this dissertation. First and foremost, my study asks how the governance of the urban housing field (its policies, services, actors, and structures) takes place in two particular Canadian cities: Edmonton and Winnipeg. Employing an analytic matrix that seeks to cast light on the diversity among Aboriginal people, I ask how and why the shaping of the housing field differentially affects Aboriginal women and men, how some Aboriginal people can meet their needs through capital accumulation, and what roles different Aboriginal political groups play in the housing field. Finally, I explore whether and how strategies for inclusive, Aboriginal collective action are being attempted in urban housing fields, in response to, or in light of, the political-economic order that hinders Aboriginal control over housing. Are strategies for urban Aboriginal control possible (if they are not happening already) under neoliberalism or are the systemic barriers too great?

In order to answer these questions, I make use of the field theory method of analysis, developed by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 2005; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Wacquant 1989). This theoretical approach is supplemented by feminist approaches to field theory (Lovell 2000; McLeod 2005), tools from Indigenous methodologists (Kovach 2009; S. Wilson 2008), and studies from the field of geography (Peters 2006; Walker 2004). The primary data

used herein come from over sixty interviews with policy-makers and service providers, and from focus groups with Aboriginal community members.

I argue in this dissertation that fields, the structures within them, and the “common-sense” ideas that are imposed by their dominant actors, determine, to an extent, what people believe and do. These ideas also influence how we see other people in the field; Aboriginal women and men are assumed to be “certain kinds” of people and associated with certain places (and housing) in the city (Peters 2006, 315). In this housing field, for a disproportionately high number of Aboriginal people, notably single mothers, this means relying on affordable housing programs and living in inadequate housing. These diminished circumstances further reinforce the perception that Aboriginal people are ‘failed citizens’ or inherently un-urban who cannot live without government support. Non-Aboriginal people and some Aboriginal people who benefit from the distribution of forms of capital also participate in processes of recreating the field and the people in it (as they themselves are also shaped by the field).

I argue that broad similarities between the fields, especially in the colonial, patriarchal, and — most of all — neoliberal ideas that shape the field, even under very different provincial and municipal governments, show how powerful the federal field of power is as a source of conformity; even as the federal government abandoned housing policy, it still manages to condition subsidiary housing fields by its absence and through the ideas about ‘good citizens’ — self-reliant, depoliticized individuals that do not make claims against the state — are internalized in both cities. This, as will be seen, limits what can be done for self-determination.

Yet, although such hegemonic ideas permeate the housing fields, strategies to contest oppression happen in each city. In both cases, community-based attempts to find ways to work against the state (by groups of Aboriginal people with key sets of capital) do take place — though their success is limited by the amount of economic capital (usually tied to government) and government support (symbolic capital) that they have. In each city, this support comes from different levels of government. In Winnipeg, this is more visible at the provincial level of

government given the municipal government's failure to address Aboriginal issues, and the current provincial government's long-standing commitment to affordable housing and Aboriginal peoples. In Edmonton, collective action was less focussed on the provincial level in response to a provincial government that long neglected Aboriginal affairs and housing (though this may be changing over time as the provincial government gets more involved in housing), and looked more toward the municipal level where Aboriginal people have made inroads with a supportive mayor. Multilevel analysis, which includes looking at the local field of power, shows us how important each level of government is in creating the field and influencing policies and people within it.

In addition to revealing these differences, I show how attention to the histories of each housing field and the role of "Aboriginal politics" demonstrates how Aboriginal people in each city have different expectations about whom to house and how: in Winnipeg, housing services are "pan-Aboriginal" but in Edmonton, dominant Métis political and housing-related organizations hinder pan-Aboriginal goals. This has significant effects on the housing field and how power is distributed between actors there. I argue further that differences between the fields demonstrate how key moments in each city (in which certain people or groups have had access to relevant sets of capital) can create field divergence that persists over time. Fields are open to change and strategic, albeit limited, community-based intervention is possible.

However, although Aboriginal women and men, especially those with valuable resources, participate in activities that can form the basis of self-governance strategies with goals for self-determination, I find that many Aboriginal people in the city are still struggling just to survive (in the housing field and in the city) and to have their basic needs met. Even the recent social-investment-style strategies designed to "help" Aboriginal people and invest in those who are "deserving" reinforce colonial and neoliberal goals, rather than fostering autonomy from them.

Finally, I find that people in the housing field, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, tend to perceive of self-government as something that "political"

people do. Hence, few Aboriginal people claim that they are pursuing political goals in the housing field, leaving interventions in the policy process up to Aboriginal political organizations that many identified as unhelpful. As self-determination initiatives have also been subject to economic and symbolic control by the same governments that have harmed Aboriginal people, few Aboriginal residents demonstrated interest in pursuing them. This is, I argue, because of the symbolic co-option of the concept of self-government by state governments and male-dominated political organizations, and the depoliticization that has taken place in the Canadian city. This also reiterates why it is important not to confuse concepts of self-government, self-determination, and self-governance.

In this light, some urban Aboriginal people pursue collective activities focussed on healing or community renewal that complement self-determination goals. Looking at some differences within Aboriginal communities, we find that women, whom many participants described as responsible for housing, tend to participate more in local, community-based housing strategies (Ramirez 2007). It will be seen how “self-government” strategies by (male-dominated) Aboriginal political organizations, on the other hand, are more likely to favour mainstream housing goals such as individualistic homeownership. This socially constructed division between ideas about women’s and men’s work (described both by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal research participants) is reflected in each housing field’s structure and distribution of resources as well.

Such a study calls for a specific scope that I justify here. In order to provide a context for understanding governance and Aboriginal people in the city, I focus on the housing field because a recent longitudinal study found that 70% of over a thousand Aboriginal people who had recently moved to Winnipeg considered housing to be the most important issue that they face (Distasio 2004). Housing has been called one of the “pillars” of social citizenship (Walker 2006a, 2349; Chisholm 2003, 6) and has been identified as being “key” to improving urban Aboriginal people’s lives (Government of Canada 1996 v.3, c.4; Morris 2002). Inadequate housing can contribute to poor educational attainment, reduce

employment, affect people's health, and increase mobility, which negatively affects children's mental health and scholastic achievement (Stokes 2004). In short, housing crises are happening in both Winnipeg (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008) and Edmonton (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011), and Aboriginal people are disproportionately negatively impacted. This is a timely issue and a valuable avenue for detailed study.

Further, this dissertation focuses on urban experiences. Although the rationale for many Aboriginal people to move to the city includes housing crises on reserves, the complex and legally/constitutionally (as well as politically, economically, and socially) separate issue of housing on-reserve is not directly addressed in this study. This is not to say that housing issues in and outside the city are separate, or are otherwise unconnected (Simpson 2003). Indeed, some participants spoke about how their housing situation on reserve influenced their housing situation in the city, and there is ample evidence that many First Nations people often move between the two areas (Todd 2000). However, it is important to note that there are many Aboriginal people in the city who have no current relationship with places outside the urban area. To focus too much on the experiences of some First Nations people (with Indian status) would mischaracterize the realities of diverse urban Aboriginal communities.

As suggested above, this study of urban housing fields uses two case study cities: Edmonton and Winnipeg. These two cities represent the largest urban Aboriginal population (Winnipeg) and the soon-to-be largest urban Aboriginal population (Edmonton) in Canada (Environics Institute 2011a; Environics Institute 2011b). The 2006 census showed that Winnipeg's Aboriginal population has grown by more than 22% since 2001, while the non-Aboriginal population has increased by less than 3%; the 63,745 Aboriginal people that lived in Winnipeg in 2006 made up 10% of the city's population (Statistics Canada 2007). Winnipeg was also chosen because Manitoba is regarded as a policy laboratory in the area of urban Aboriginal issues with important demonstration effects for other provinces (Mendelson 2004). It has the most well-developed urban Aboriginal institutions, and a history of innovative approaches to housing and community development

(Walker 2006a, 2351). For example, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population began forming community associations and service organizations in the 1950s, before any other city in Canada. As a result, the Aboriginal population of Winnipeg has long been regarded by many as being ahead of the curve on political mobilization and in the development of Aboriginal-specific social service organizations (Peters 2005, 46–47).

Edmonton's Aboriginal population in 2006 was smaller: 52,100 Edmontonians, or 5%, identified as Aboriginal. Although Edmonton's first Aboriginal organization was started in 1962, and only a few more were created before the 1990s (Peters 2005, 47), there has been much Aboriginal political, social, and cultural activity in this city in the past five years. Most significantly, there is much less literature on 'Aboriginal Edmonton,' which is only recently becoming a location for in-depth study (Andersen 2009; D. Johnson 2011). Both cities were also chosen because of my familiarity with living in each city, which made fieldwork and trust-building easier. The cities also make an interesting comparison because one province has long had a Progressive-Conservative government while the other has had an NDP government for over a decade.

This dissertation, like most studies that deal with contemporary Aboriginal people's issues, is important because it increases the sources of information that report on Aboriginal people's experiences and thus counteracts a general lack of understanding of Aboriginal people's lives. Despite a heavy focus on the need for Aboriginal people to be better educated, non-Aboriginal people in Canada are largely ignorant about Aboriginal people (Spielmann 2009).

As stated, this study incorporates numerous analytic tools to shed a new light on a longstanding set of issues. Primarily, I make use of field analysis methods (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) to explore the housing field in Canada. Although this is not the first study to use field analysis in the context of the Canadian city, or to understand Aboriginal peoples' experiences (Manitowabi 2011), this study employs a plurality of Bourdieusian concepts, such as field, habitus, capital, doxa, and symbolic violence, instead of just one or two.

Further, as will be explained, although Bourdieu himself studied the French housing field (2005), my study looks at very different fields, characterized by multilevel governance in a non-unitary state where multiple, divergent housing fields exist.

My study also contributes to the existing literature by bringing new detail to the two case studies, especially in Edmonton, the context of which has been less thoroughly studied than in Winnipeg. Further, this approach incorporates some attention to field actors' differences, addressing questions about diverse Aboriginal group membership (such as First Nations and Metis) and gender⁶ difference — something that Bourdieu did not do in his study of the housing field (Bourdieu 2005) — in a specific context (urban housing and governance). It is easy to overlook internal cleavages and treat Aboriginal people as a homogenous group. Although, as will be shown, there are studies on gender/women and housing (Davis 2001; Benzason 2006; Hayden 2005) or Aboriginal people and housing (Goering 2007; Lipman 2011; Devine 2004), there are fewer studies that look at Aboriginal people and housing while considering the diverse experiences of women and men (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005).⁷ In this dissertation, I therefore employ an emphasis on gender difference in order to show how women and men operate in the context of the field, rather than treating all urban Aboriginal people as a monolithic block.

As will be explained in detail in the next chapter, this dissertation addresses some of the paradoxes and gaps left by previous works. More specifically, the study of urban Aboriginal politics in Canada is relatively new, dating back only to the 1980s. Previous literature has generally not included Aboriginal people's own voices in the research, relying instead on official statistics, policy documents and the perspectives of a few privileged actors within the community. My dissertation attempts to bring Aboriginal people into the study

⁶ Gender is a complex concept that can be mobilized in different ways. It defined and contextualized for the specific the purposes of this study in Chapter Two.

⁷ Most of these studies are also focussed on a single case, rather than comparing more than one case study in order to arrive at conclusions that are developed by exploring the differences and commonalities between them (for another comparison of case studies, see Altamirano-Jiménez 2006).

through the inclusive research methods (inspired by Indigenous methodologists) that I employed. Thus, this work brings the field actors, and their contradicting and diverse, experiences, and beliefs, into the study of the governance of the field. Although an overwhelming number of studies on urban Aboriginal self-government have been theoretical and model-based, this dissertation seeks to situate the existing theory in real case studies, detailing real experiences in order to demonstrate how the housing field, and the people in it, are both governed and governing.

As a political science dissertation, this work focuses on questions tied to the field of power or ‘politics.’ There is, therefore, an emphasis on questions relating to governance and the connected issues of decision-making, funding or resource distribution, and inclusion. Rooted in the Canadian political context, my analysis necessarily considers the eternal Canadian questions of jurisdiction, or federalism. This dissertation examines which government(s) is/are ‘responsible’ for urban Aboriginal peoples and housing (two separate and overlapping agendas), and what (Aboriginal) people in the housing fields expect to see. It also looks in detail at how and why governments have succeeded in passing these responsibilities off to other governments, and then to the private individual and the free market. These jurisdictional disputes raise the timely debate regarding how urban housing fields (located at a nexus of government policies and with diverse communities that have governance systems of their own) can, and should, operate to ensure urban Aboriginal people have control over their lives. Recognizing the multileveled or “nested” (Howlett 2003) nature of the urban context, this dissertation contributes to Canadian political science literature by seeking to shed new light on Aboriginal women’s and men’s complex and contested locations in the Canadian city today.

As such, this is a pressing set of political issues that must be addressed. To treat urban Aboriginal people as the newest manifestation of Canada’s “Indian problem” misses the mark; a large part of the “problem” is with the colonial, neoliberal, and patriarchal ideas, structures, and people themselves, who

reproduce the same systems of power that continue to privilege the “right” urban citizens — those who uphold the false urban/Aboriginal dichotomy.

I will develop these issues, concepts, and arguments in the following manner: Chapter Two discusses the theoretical concepts and definitions used in this dissertation; it builds my analytic framework. Chapter Three offers a discussion of the history of housing policy in Canada and provides a context for the Aboriginal/urban dichotomy that persists. Chapter Four lays out the methodologies and research methods that were used, including the culturally appropriate protocols implemented for interviews and focus groups. I also use that chapter to briefly describe the reflexive methodology that I used.

Chapter Five provides the first case study. It looks at Winnipeg’s housing field and the impacts of neoliberalism on Aboriginal women and men living there, as well as how self-governance is shaped by the field. Chapter Six provides a similar analysis of Edmonton, although the “end of subsidies” issue discussed for Winnipeg (which, as will be discussed, was not an issue that came up in Edmonton), is not dealt with in the same depth.

Chapter Seven provides a comparison of the two cities and expands upon the arguments described above. By looking at similarities and differences, the final chapter arrives at conclusions drawn from the case studies. Similarities between the fields, especially in the colonial and racist experiences of Aboriginal people, in the neoliberal structuring of the housing fields, and in the roles that people play, tell us how vital the field of power is in creating conformity, much of it based on historical divisions of power, across the housing fields. At the same time, divergence in field structure and in people’s behaviour in the two fields tells us that there are locally-based deviations, rooted in moments when key people had the right capital at the right time to effect some sort of changes in the field. It is speculated that these events show that common-sense ideas that are imposed by neoliberal, colonial, and patriarchal sources can be contested and that there are spaces for urban Aboriginal people to pursue some level of self-governance within the city.

The final chapter also includes some ideas for future research and a brief discussion of some of the limitations of this dissertation. Despite logistical and theoretical restrictions, this dissertation provides an important analysis of what is happening in urban housing fields. Despite a plethora of possible lenses of analysis to draw from, my work combines questions about domination and resistance, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations, differential experiences, and political economy in a valuable policy field in two dynamic contexts. Detailed developments of these concepts are carried out in the next chapter, in order to demonstrate how I arrived at this matrix of analysis.

CHAPTER TWO:

2.0 COMBINING THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

What are we as Native people supposed to grab at to maintain that stability in our lives? I became a drunk, I became an addict, I became a drug dealer in order to just to be, you know, live as a European. And it never seemed to pan out any which way I went. I poisoned a lot of people, I harmed a lot of people, just to create that materialistic, phony lifestyle I lived at the time. (Edmonton men's focus group participant)

In the previous chapter, I asked: how and why the shaping of the housing field affects Aboriginal women and men; what kind(s) of strategies for Aboriginal collective action in urban housing fields are being attempted (in response to or in light of the political-economic order) in order to achieve better collective control by urban Aboriginal communities; are strategies for better outcomes (such as urban Aboriginal self-governance) impossible under neoliberalism, or do they already happen? In order to answer these questions, this chapter will discuss and explain the theoretical concepts needed for framing and analyzing the data.

The different bodies of literature used to provide theory for this study are presented in a certain order so that they build toward a matrix of analysis that incorporates all the necessary theoretical tools and contextualized concepts. This chapter also provides an assessment of some related or similar studies that have been done in different contexts. Beginning with the primary theoretical approach, the first section covers the basic concepts of field theory, its major preoccupations, critiques of field theory, and discusses some of the related questions it has tried to answer, concluding by justifying my use of field theory to conduct my analysis. I then explore concepts pertaining to colonialism and the racialized state; self-governance, self-government, and self-determination; gender analysis; and political-economy/neoliberalism.

I argue that these bodies of literature can complement each other and bring a new approach to looking at urban Aboriginal governance and housing. The tools provided by field theory provide the analytic lens to look at these issues without overlooking the people who experience them. Understanding colonialism is essential for understanding the role that Canada's "polite racism" (Goldberg 2002;

M. Smith 2003) plays in diminishing the relevance of racism. An analysis of self-determination, self-governance, and self-government shows how the terms are sometimes used interchangeably and that when people describe being self-governing, they may still be subjected to oppressive state forces. Introducing gender as a category of analysis (J. Scott 1986), while remaining vigilant to not essentialize its effects (Hawkesworth 2006) provides an analytic tool to further study social relations, how the field constructs women and men, and how they construct the field.⁸ Finally, a critique of the workings of neoliberalism on urban housing fields contributes to understanding how and why people shape and continue to shape a housing field that privileges dominant interests and inhibits Aboriginal self-determination.

Combining these approaches allows me to look at urban Aboriginal housing in new and different ways. A study of housing expands the range of contexts in which we can understand the dynamics of Aboriginal people's lives and their encounters with state agents. The combination of approaches and contexts I use provides a coherent approach to understanding important questions about the real impacts of neoliberalism on a vitally important social field.

2.1 FIELD THEORY: THE TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

The following section summarizes Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, focussing on the components and concepts that are most useful for answering this dissertation's research questions. After explaining how field theory works, I discuss the ways in which the approach has been used in previous studies similar to this work on housing, gender, and colonialism, while addressing some of the helpful or problematic points they raise. The point made here is that field theory provides vital tools for studying relationships which are essential for answering

⁸ Treating "urban Aboriginal people" or "Aboriginal women" as monolithic blocks carries risks of hiding how the field operates and does not contribute as much to the analysis. It is vital not to "essentialize" women or all Aboriginal people into undifferentiated groups that hide how some people within these imaginary groups can still oppress others (Jhappan 1996).

questions about how urban Aboriginal governance has been shaped by colonial, gendered experiences and further compounded by neoliberalism.⁹

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), a French sociologist, developed a system of analysis that has been constantly refined, redefined, and adapted, by himself and by others. It has been used in Bourdieu's primary discipline (sociology) and in other areas of study. Field theory can thus be used differently in different contexts. Bourdieu's primary concepts are field, habitus, and capital. I will outline each concept individually and then demonstrate how they can be used in concert. I will also outline other important concepts from field theory such as symbolic violence, rules, and doxa.

Field

Bourdieu offers a succinct definition of a field, and there is some meaning lost in translation, (Thomson 2008), though his 2005 work on the housing field stated that people (or "agents") can create a field, or "space . . . which exists only through the agents that are found within it and . . . [the agents] deform the space in their vicinity, conferring a certain structure on it" (Bourdieu 2005, 193). Bourdieu's foremost student and co-author explains that it is more easily understood:

as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation . . . in the structure of the distribution of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (Wacquant 1989, 39).

What defines a field, and separates it from others (i.e. what constitutes, for example, the housing field as such) is "the stakes which are at stake" (Jenkins

⁹ I use the term 'field theory' to refer to the broad theory and set of analytic tools developed by Bourdieu. I use 'field analysis' to refer to the *application* of field theory. This is done by analyzing a field. The *method* of doing field analysis relies on the concepts identified in this chapter and it will be elaborated in the methods and methodology chapter.

1992, 84).¹⁰ For example, Bourdieu saw housing prices in France as the housing field's stakes (Bourdieu 2005, 200). Seen as a "social space where interactions happen" (Thomson 2008, 67; Bourdieu 2005, 148) a field:

contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies (Bourdieu 1998a, 40–41).

Thus, a field can also be understood, metaphorically, as a "football field . . . a boundaried site where a game is played" (Thomson 2008, 68). The "game" in question is a "struggle" (Bourdieu 1998b, 58) to control resources and reproduce the power relations that privilege those with valued resources. In the case of this study, the game is played by hierarchized (gendered and racialized) people — alternatively referred to in the literature and in this dissertation as 'agents' or 'actors'¹¹ — as individuals or in groups. The actors are interested in, or compelled

¹⁰ People in the field have to believe in the field's stakes or else they won't be involved in the struggle, in the field itself (Kalpagam 2006, 93). This shared belief that the field matters is called the field's *illusio*. For example, in the housing field, there is a belief that housing programs will one day get everyone housed, that homelessness is something that can be eradicated, or nearly eradicated, by the right policies. Fundamentally, there is a shared belief that everyone should somehow be housed and that housing is desirable. Without this at stake the field would lose its purpose and power. Kalpagam showed how, in the case of India, for example, ideas of development, empowerment, grassroots democracy, etc. are what place people in the *illusio* (2006, 98). This created hopes and expectations that are impossible to meet but are a fundamental part of developing the Indian state.

¹¹ These actors include the people doing research, such as myself, so Bourdieu was thorough in stressing the importance of reflexivity and placing oneself in the study and recognizing their position in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Wacquant 1989; C. Deer 2008a). This has been used in some relevant studies in Canada already; looking at urban Aboriginal community development in Winnipeg, Silver *et al.* used a Bourdieusian method to shift attention from information-gathering to understanding the field and the experiences of its agents as they participate in the field struggle (Silver *et al.* 2006, 7). This approach not only shed light on the researchers' own position in the field (Silver *et al.* 2006, 8) but how different forms of capital create different forms of violence in the field (Silver *et al.* 2006, 13). The importance of reflexivity is described in more detail in the methods and methodologies section in Chapter Four.

by, the stakes of the housing field and struggle to preserve what they have, while ‘getting ahead’ — that is, improving the circumstances of their lives, by accumulating valuable capital, having control over their lives, pursuing collective self-determination, or even by asserting their dominance over others. For example, getting ahead in the housing field can mean attempting to control housing policy and programs, working for an organization that provides housing to others, trying to find a (better) home or even a combination of these. People’s differing capacities and actions in the game are determined by the resources they have (see *Capital*) and by their dispositions (see *Habitus*).

A field is only semi-autonomous because all fields are related to the field of power. The ‘field of power’ is best understood as the dominant field in society that everyone occupies and that structures (and is structured by, though in a hierarchal, top-down fashion) the other fields that it dominates (Thomson 2008, 70). Here, the field of power is the space in which people struggle for power over the state, or statist capital, and by extension, the political fields (Kalpagam 2006, 82–83). Put simply, the field of power, in Canadian society, is synonymous with what many call ‘politics’ (Jenkins 1992, 86). Because of the homology, or overlap, between fields, the field of power is the primary source of the hierarchical power relations that structure, and are found in, other fields (Jenkins 1992, 80). Further, all fields have relations with other fields. For example, the housing field has close ties, sharing many actors, with the bureaucratic field. Fields are hierarchized in their relative power; some fields can even be considered subfields of others. In this light, one can, as Bourdieu did, see the state as a subfield of the field of power (Bourdieu 2005, 271).

As much as the field struggle takes the form of competing for resources, we can also describe what is called resistance: working against the field structure, its actors, or the oppressive ideas that shape it in order to change how power is divided (improving the position of the individual or the group) and to challenge the very nature of the field itself. Bourdieu’s saw resistance when people recognized the oppressive power dynamics of the field (especially the neoliberal state), calling for strategies of change (Bourdieu 1998b). In a very specific sense,

“citizens, feeling themselves ejected from the state . . . reject the state, treating it as an alien power to be used so far as they can to serve their own interests” (Bourdieu 1998b, 4–5). He writes that those who have cultural capital (primarily education,¹² described below) can “break the monopoly of technocratic orthodoxy over the means of diffusion” that reproduce the field and its patterns of domination (Bourdieu 1998b, 27). This must be done collectively in conjunction with key (resource rich) actors who are in positions to influence the field. Resistance therefore means questioning what is taken for granted and working together on collective goals.

That said, Bourdieu’s theories do not tell us what form resistance should take in any given circumstance (Hoy 2004, 132). Bourdieu even calls the supposed emancipatory nature of field resistance into question, stating that “resistance can be alienating and submission can be liberating. Such is the paradox of the dominated” (Bourdieu 1987; Wacquant 1992, 24). In other words, if the dominated have to make use of the same properties that make them dominated (as will be discussed with the idea of devalued Aboriginal cultural capital), they may, he says, push themselves into positions of deeper oppression. As a result, “the dominated can resist by trying to efface the signs of difference that have led to their domination. But this strategy has the same effect as assimilation, and could well look like submission” (Hoy 2004, 135). In a strict reading of Bourdieu, the dominated can be complicit in their own domination (Bourdieu 1977; McLeod 2005; Krais 1993). This complex nature of resistance is raised again in the section below on how feminists have adapted field theory for understanding domination.

In a more explicit context, it is stated that resistance is a “force in opposition” to capitalism, colonialism, or other forces of oppression and exploitation (Polakoff 2011, 3). It seen exercised in a multitude of strategies such as “building alliances,” “collectively organizing against the forces of oppression,” “becoming aware” that the marginalized do not live “outside the structures that

¹² As long as inequality is unquestioned, dominant power relations remain invisible. The answer, the first step in resistance, is a “reflexive sociology” as a “form of critical resistance” (Hoy 2004, 137; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Wacquant 1989).

oppress them,” and changing structures of oppression, rather than assimilating into them (Polakoff 2011, 3–4). For example, studies on how women resist neoliberalism show because “women are ultimately responsible for the care and well being of their families, resistance is a survival strategy . . . Women resist by refusing to give in and refusing to surrender” (Polakoff 2011, 14). This can be, and is, done through trade union alliances, organizing neighbourhoods and the homeless, creating alternative trade associations, educating themselves, fighting privatization, creating support networks, and “collectively organizing against the inhumanity, violence and non-sustainability of patriarchal capitalist exploitation and cultural hegemony” (Polakoff 2011, 15).

Looking for resistance means seeking examples of attempts to problematize the (colonial or neoliberal, for example) oppression of the field and seeking to change it (Hoy 2004, 7). I met with research participants to ask about what strategies they see for the substantive redistribution of power over the housing field that would allow Aboriginal people, *as Aboriginal people*, to make decisions over their housing needs and to collectively take control over the structures of the housing field that affect them. As will be seen, this fits into the search for examples of self-determination in the city as well. Such forms of “social resistance” manifest themselves “in opposition to the ways that institutions shape individuals, but it may also reflect opposition to social policies that shape populations” (Hoy 2004, 7). In the context of field theory, this means that “resistance is both an activity and an attitude. It is the activity of refusal. It is also an attitude that refuses to give in to resignation” (Hoy 2004, 9; Bourdieu 1998b). The way in which the field struggle relates to and shapes people’s behaviour (and vice versa) is captured by habitus in the next section.

Although one of Bourdieu’s most thorough applications of field theory was on France’s housing field, in a study summarized in more detail below, he never explicitly defined what the housing field was (2005).¹³ This has not stopped

¹³ In fact, he only actually used the phrase “housing field” once and “field of housing” three times in that work (Bourdieu 2005, 95, 93, 243fn29, 244fn6).

authors from using the term and characterizing his study as that of the housing field (or subfield) (Thomson 2008, 77).

Since my study deals with two specific cities, the housing fields studied herein are delimited by their own urban contexts, though some actors within them operate in broader (provincial or national) housing or related fields. Actors' interests in the stakes at play also help define the field. For reasons that will become apparent, in Canada, housing is primarily dealt with at the local, municipal level with only periodic, strategic interventions by higher levels of government or interurban organizations. This political context, combined with a broader definition of the field's stakes, allows one to maintain a functional concept of a local housing field defined by its actors. Thus, the housing field, for the purposes of this study, is defined as the local, visible (objective) networks of people who have a direct investment (conscious or not) in, and who participate in, the distribution of housing.

This research focuses on more affordable-housing or public/supportive housing programs than in Bourdieu's work, and so the emphasis is shifted from primary concerns on housing prices to the actual availability and (public/government/corporate/tenant) control of housing — something reflected in the positions of research participants. People invested in this conception of the field include: those who are employed (or volunteer) in housing provision (development or allocation), policy planning, and regulation; those otherwise involved in housing related programs and organizations; and/or those who are seeking to access housing. All of these people, on one level, are playing the field's game and engage in its struggle (Mahar 2010, 54). For further details on who was considered "in" the housing field for the purposes of fieldwork consultation, please see Chapter Four where the participant selection process is elaborated.

Habitus

Bourdieu's theory of habitus helps to bridge two extremes: the subjectivism of seeing society only as an aggregate of individuals and the reductionary objectivism of seeing behaviour simply determined by structures;

thoroughly developed in Bourdieu's earlier work, he described habituses as "systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*" (1977, 72 emphasis in original).

Habitus, a "habitual or typical condition, state or appearance, particularly of the body" (Jenkins 1992, 74) is central to field theory. A person's 'position' in a field — a combination of their resources, past, and power or capacity to dominate — will determine, in part, their habitus within the network in question. Thus, their habitus is understood as their dispositions — behaviours and beliefs — that shape what they think and do. Habitus is seen in people's anticipation of how the field operates; this anticipation arises from the regularities we experience in each field (Kalpagam 2006, 93). The concept of habitus is thus used to introduce the social formed subject into the study of objective field structures, overcoming the objective/subjective debate.

Habitus can thus be understood as a field-specific "feel for the game" that lets people know what is at stake, and gives an awareness of the field's power relations (C. Cronin 1996, 70). The "marginalized," (i.e., people on the margins of power) are those who have either a bad fit with the field (habitus/field mismatch) or who lack the field-specific capital that is necessary to participate. For these people — outsiders to the field — field events can be "illegible" (Kalpagam 2006, 84). Their habitus (seen in their responses to their negative experiences) will continue to differ from those who are 'at home' in the field and who are rewarded by having their expectations met (Bourdieu 1977).

In a cyclical nature, an actor's habitus — seen through their struggle for the power to shape the field — will also structure the field itself. Bourdieu called this a "relationship of mutual attraction" (Bourdieu 1999a, 512) and this relationship replicates patterns of domination. Because habitus is both embodied in individuals and exists collectively as a result of shared group histories, it is central to the reproduction of social practices such as colonialism (Bourdieu 2005, 2). This collective nature of habitus connects groups to shared pasts while also creating shared goals for the future. And as we find with fields, there are also homologies between the habituses of different fields. This is explained by the relative power of dominant fields (such as the field of power) and because of

actors' participation in more than one field (Jenkins 1992, 86). As will be seen, actors in the housing field import habitus from their powerful bureaucratic field (beliefs about how services should be offered and who is deserving) as well as from very different spaces such as First Nations reserves. For example, research participants described how behaviours, experiences and beliefs acquired from living on a reserve (non-individualistic cohabitation, not owning or renting a home, the importance of living with extended family) often prove to be at-odds with the rules and expectations of urban living. This problem is elaborated in the case studies.

Capital

Understanding what forms field resources — or capital — take is important to understanding how the field operates and how people act within it. Generally, descriptions of Bourdieu's field approach, even in Bourdieu's own works, focus on four main forms of capital: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic (Bourdieu 2006; Jenkins 1992, 84). In practice, however, Bourdieu did not confine himself to these four forms. For example, his work on the housing field focuses on the roles of technological and bureaucratic capital as well (Bourdieu 2005).

In addition to as the amount of capital(s) one has, the extent to which these forms of capital are valued in the field, and by others, is just as significant. The struggle for dominance requires specific forms of capital in each field, so capital that is valued in some contexts will not necessarily be as valuable in another (Moore 2004, 105). Thus, quantity is not everything. As will be seen, one can have types of capital that ultimately prove unhelpful in the urban housing field, or they may, if they become valued, start to change it.

Economic capital is easiest to understand and recognize; it is that "which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights" (Bourdieu 2006, 106). Cultural capital takes different forms. It can be found in an embodied form. This includes one's skills, learned knowledge, and closer to habitus, one's 'class' — in the sense of sophistication,

demeanour, cultivation, and knowledge about how to behave (Bourdieu 2006, 107). Acquiring embodied cultural capital requires economic capital and because much of this capital is learned at a young age, those with parents who have more cultural capital, and the economic capital to help cultivate it, are most likely to accumulate it themselves. The misrecognition of its arbitrary nature makes embodied cultural capital “predisposed to function as symbolic capital” as people recognize cultural capital as “legitimate competence” that can be used to claim authority (Bourdieu 2006, 108). Field analysis is therefore useful to “dispel the mystification of underlying symbolic domination by revealing the arbitrariness of the social divisions it serves to legitimate” (C. Cronin 1996, 76).

Cultural capital can also take an institutionalized form. This is most easily seen in university degrees (which are not transmissible) or in titles of nobility (Bourdieu 2006, 113). Although the latter are hardly useful examples in the context of this study, one could argue that there is cultural capital in an institutionally recognized title (executive director, Minister, President, etc.) as it confers a “conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value” on an agent (Bourdieu 2006, 110). Payoff depends on scarcity, so the more people that get a certain form of this kind of capital (and the easier it is to get), the less useful it will be in the field’s struggle for domination (Bourdieu 2006, 110).

It is important to differentiate cultural capital from ‘culture.’ Because one’s culture influences (and is informed by) one’s behaviour, the connection between culture and habitus is more evident. In this study, cultural capital is used to understand people’s knowledge and skills. This includes forms of traditional knowledge that informs their culture and which is manifested in culturally informed behaviour. In an urban field, we see how some traditional Indigenous knowledge leads to habituses that are at odds with the field (because these forms of capital are devalued there).

Social capital is defined as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu 2006, 110). Social capital derives its profitability from providing the owner with

the support of other field agents' own capital. An actor needs competence (cultural capital) and a certain disposition (*habitus*, which will influence the competence) to maintain social capital and keep it profitable (Bourdieu 2006, 111). These social relationships can either be practical and exist only in the material exchanges that maintain them (friendship) or they can be institutionalized through membership in a named group (ranging from a family to a state) that has its own rules (Bourdieu 2006, 110). The value of an agent's social capital will depend on the size of her/his social network and the amount of capital that the members of the network possess.

Social capital also explains how groups (or institutions, which are made of groups of people) function. Social groups are the result of conscious and unconscious efforts by their members to profit from the social capital they confer (Bourdieu 2006, 111). The group is then reproduced through the recognition of the group and the mutual recognition of group members. This also "reaffirms the limits of the group" — who is in and who is out (Bourdieu 2006, 111). When new members enter the group, its boundaries or identity can be challenged and it may have to redefine itself (Bourdieu 2006, 111). Power is derived from social capital when groups institutionalize representatives and concentrate their social capital in these people, allowing the representative to combine the group's collective resources power with their own. Paradoxically, this "embezzlement" of capital allows representatives to exert power over the group (Bourdieu 2006, 112). Representatives, those that could be called 'elites' (Bourdieu called them *nobiles*) are visible and can claim the backing of a group; they can speak on behalf of the collective and exercise authority in its name (Bourdieu 2006, 112) such as "Ottawa," "the federal government," "Alberta," "Winnipeg," "First Nations," "the Métis," etc.

Central to the concepts of cultural and social capital is their conversion with economic capital within and across fields (Mahar 2010, 100; Bourdieu 2006; Moore 2004). In an economically-focussed world, subject to the "brutal fact of universal reducibility to economics", this conversion is hidden, making cultural and social capital "disguised" economic capital (Bourdieu 2006, 113). If we were

to care only about economic capital, non-economic efforts (learning a language or spending time with a friend) will seem like wasted time and energy. But recognizing that investing in cultural and social capital has economic returns shows us that these activities have a purpose in the field's struggle. For example, research participants demonstrated how building social capital (getting to know one's neighbours, the community, other single parents, etc.) allowed them to survive with inadequate housing and, in some cases, share knowledge that helped them find better homes. In other examples, acquiring the 'right' cultural capital (formal skills-based education *and* the critical education to challenge colonial or gendered domination) enabled people to find employment that gave them a sense that they were making a difference.

Thus, the advantage of this conceptualization of resources is that it takes us beyond a focus on economic capital alone. Capital connects us to history because it is often inherited and, takes time to accumulate; it does not arise out of nowhere but traces its origin back to prior struggles (Bourdieu 2006, 105). Even acquiring and converting capital later in life often relies on having prior, inherited forms of capital. A market of "transubstantiated economic capital," where ostensibly non-economic resources are exchanged between actors, is vital in determining how much power people have within a field (Moore 2004) and it hides the arbitrary distribution of resources in society.

When people focus solely on 'funding solutions' for Aboriginal housing, they miss (intentionally or not) the important roles of other forms of capital. Simply providing Aboriginal people or organizations with more money will not help if they have no other sources of (useful) social or cultural capital. Some of this economic capital could be converted to other forms of capital, but Aboriginal people do not control enough of the tools, structures, social networks, or institutions that influence the means of conversion and transmission. Historical and existing systems of conversion will continue to privilege those who have large amounts of valued social and cultural capital. Dominated people, including many urban Aboriginal people, are encouraged to imitate the dominant. This

means trying to ‘fit into’ the city and buy a home (and all of the economic obligations that come with it).

Further, this participation/reproduction is only possible if the marginalized are able to see how the conversion of capital works, thus requiring co-option into the market. In order to gain an advantage and participate in the market of capitals, marginalized agents must also devalue their less valuable social and cultural capital and try to exchange it for different forms. This can mean turning their backs on Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal culture, and their traditional social networks in order to conform to the mainstream. Many, especially the privileged, may deny the importance of cultural and social capital (notably in a political-economic paradigm that privileges the free market and individual entrepreneurship) when it comes to the housing field, but these forms of capital are essential to all field struggles. The common and simplistic emphasis on merely “getting a job” (as the solution to homelessness)¹⁴ or purchasing a better home, downplays the inherited backgrounds and gendered division of power that continue to help more white people, and particularly able-bodied, straight men, get ahead and meet their housing needs while others struggle. This also explains why fields are able to reproduce themselves and their distributions of capital. The misreading of how the field works is the result of symbolic violence.

Symbolic capital and symbolic violence

One form of capital deserves special attention. Symbolic capital confers the capacity to determine, among other things, what is legitimate within a field

¹⁴ Throughout this dissertation, “homeless” or “homelessness” refer to both the “absolute homeless” — those who are living ‘on the street,’ in shelters, or couch surfing — and the “sheltered homeless” — people who are living in emergency shelters or condemned buildings because they have no permanent place to stay (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011, 17). Elsewhere, three levels of homelessness are described: primary homelessness (“literal rooflessness”), secondary homelessness (couch-surfing and shelters), and tertiary homelessness (boarding houses with shared facilities “and no security of tenure”) (Farrugia 2010, 2). Depending on their situation, people are sometimes referred to as the ‘near-homeless’ (Wilder Research 2006), ‘at-risk of homelessness,’ (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011, 3), ‘hard-to-house’ (when they are chronically in one of the above categories), or ‘under-housed.’ These broader categories include people, for example, who are housed but at great risk of losing their home at a moment’s notice.

(Mottier 2002, 349) and to impose this view upon others, making them believe it. It is the power, manifested through other sources of capital (notably cultural or economic), to exercise symbolic violence. Its form also varies by field. Symbolic violence occurs when people with sufficient symbolic capital are able to dominate others by ensuring that things such as the arbitrary distribution of capital in the field are unacknowledged and unquestioned. This act of influencing others' perceptions and beliefs, causing them to internalize their own subordination, can be more oppressive than real physical violence (Bourdieu 2001). Symbolic violence helps ensure that the relations in the field continue to privilege the interests of the dominating actors. This is key to understanding, as an example, how most fields privilege 'mainstream' (i.e. colonial and/or male) interests. It is claimed that the main victims of symbolic violence are women (Bourdieu 2001, ix) and in the housing fields studied in this dissertation, it is seen how expectations for gender roles oppress women and/or shape their behaviour. For example, women participants overwhelmingly self-identified, and were identified by others, as carers and responsible for providing homes for others, even when they lacked the resources to do so adequately. For many, this meant that affordability considerations forced them to live in neighbourhoods they identified as unsafe.

Symbolic violence is "the form that economic, cultural and social capital take when these elements are perceived as legitimate" (Mottier 2002, 349). While economic capital is transparent about its self-interest and instrumental value, symbolic forms of capital deny or suppress their value, claiming to be disinterested. The misrecognition of the economic value of symbolic capital leads to symbolic violence: when people can dominate those who have less symbolic capital by claiming that they have no self-interest in the matter (Moore 2004, 104–105).

Symbolic capital and violence help mask the self-interest of politicians and leaders by making them appear disinterested (Mahar 2010, 106). The dominated or marginalized (i.e. those who lack the symbolic capital necessary to shape opinion) can misrecognize these leaders as 'honourable' or fail to see how

they are only acting for their own personal gain in the field struggle. Symbolic power is then exercised to manipulate the hopes, expectations, and anticipation that constitute habituses (Kalpagam 2006, 93). It is “never wielded” by those in power the way physical force is applied. Rather, it gets its real power through the complicity of those who submit to it (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999, 46). Thus, according to Bourdieu, the dominated have to agree to, believe in, and participate in their own domination. Elsewhere, studies of the *Resource Management Act* in New Zealand have shown how the government uses symbolic violence: “Strategic actors” such as powerful government institutions and corporations dominate residents who learn to “be docile, resistance for most is futile” (Gunder and Mouat 2002, 140).

Another Bourdieusian study, which considered politics in India, showed how symbolic violence was used to create “citizens as modern rights-bearing subjects who, as members of a national fraternity, would then begin to aspire for the same goals” (Kalpagam 2006, 98–99). In India, this was exercised by creating the categories of ‘scheduled tribes’ which separated Indigenous Indians from their historical identities and erased them from “institutional memories,” in order to create a homogenizing, yet unequal, “unitary history” controlled by the government (Kalpagam 2006, 99). In an American context, scholars have shown how symbolic violence is used against teachers in training in order to persuade them to adopt a habitus in which they see and accept themselves as ‘unenlightened’ in inter-cultural relations, rendering them unable to participate in discussions on Native American treaty rights. The authors argue that symbolic violence is used to get new teachers to see themselves as racists and be afraid to engage in talking about race or question the fishing laws (New and Petronicolos 2001).

Farrugia’s study of homelessness in Australia used field analysis to show how “homelessness carries a symbolic burden” that is “associated with irresponsibility and moral failing” (2010, 14). Symbolic violence is enacted upon young homeless people who internalize their domination because they lack the symbolic capital to fight against their disempowerment. Although homelessness is

an experience in the housing field, not an identity, the symbolic burden is misrecognized as a characteristic, not a lack of capital (Farrugia 2010, 15).

Sundin used a field analysis method to examine housing in Sweden (2004). He asked how “common sense legitimates symbolic violence,” a process which led to the demolishing of old homes and the displacement of people under the guise of “modernisation” (2010, 14). As spaces become endowed with hierarchizations (“the wrong side of the tracks” or the “Aboriginal area of town”), people seek to move, but migration requires both the “right” habitus and forms of capital (Sundin 2004, 11–12). For example, many Aboriginal people living in the urban core not only cannot afford to move away but do not want to leave their friends and family even if they find the area dangerous. Thus, “habitat shapes habitus” and vice versa — people seek housing that fits their habitus but they must also fit the requirements of that space; “belonging” to (or ‘matching’) a space of privilege such as a suburb confers benefits, while stigmatized areas symbolically degrade their inhabitants (who then degrade it by their presence) (Sundin 2004, 13). Neighbourhoods are, thus, not only defined by their economic characteristics but the symbolic and other forms of capital that are reflexively conferred to them and their occupants.

Finally, a Canadian study by Manitowabi looked at the impact of neoliberalism on urban Aboriginal casino development (Manitowabi 2011). This study used the concept of symbolic capital to show how people claim that casinos are a good solution for urban poverty because they enable Aboriginal people to participate in the economy. By reducing social welfare costs, the government can get people to believe that corporatization, privatization, and individual productivity are “logical social behaviour” (Manitowabi 2011, 117). Despite using the banner of “individual freedom” to encourage people to participate in the mainstream economy, it is the economic order’s “structural violence” of unemployment, insecure employment, and fear of losing one’s job that really conditions people. Aboriginal control of the casino is an illusion, since job tenure is short, the government sets the rules that govern casinos, and non-Aboriginal

people manage many ‘Aboriginal casinos’. A lack of symbolic capital prevents people from adapting to the economy (Manitowabi 2011, 119).

The complicity of the dominated is problematized further below, but its manifestations can be seen when, as is outlined in the case studies, some Aboriginal people participate in government or market strategies that actually further dependence and inequality. The issue of Aboriginal homeownership programs, common to both Edmonton and Winnipeg, are examples of strategies in the housing field that, consciously or not, seek to tie urban people to a specific (primarily economic but also social) way of being, one which hides colonial and patriarchal biases such as the nuclear family and integration into private property-based economic conformity (Bourdieu 2005).

The pursuit of private homeownership shows how symbolic violence can also be used to get people to conform to certain “class”¹⁵ distinctions. Prior work on Aboriginal people in cities talks about a “new” or “emerging Aboriginal middle class” (K. Graham and Peters 2002; Silver et al. 2006; Wotherspoon 2003), though this status has not been elaborated. The roles of Aboriginal people with (economic, social, cultural) capital *and* habitus who use these resources in order to ‘fit in’ with the city should be addressed. An essentialist focus on “Aboriginal poverty” alone (K. Graham and Peters 2002; Bashevkin 2000) would obscure those who benefit from the uneven distribution of capital and who have succeeded in exploiting others.

For example, in New Zealand, a “new capitalist class” (Clydesdale 2007, 61) that benefits from self-government arrangements has been described as an example of “neo-tribal capitalism” (Rata 1999). This “ruling elite” emerged decades ago and benefitting from mainstream education, its members have taken leadership positions in Maori communities (Rata 2003, 55). Similar to the Canadian housing fields studied here, many of this small group who profited from being in the middle class work in areas such as governments departments of

¹⁵ Crossley notes that Bourdieu used class to refer to “social classes” of people who occupied similar positions in a given field (based on a matrix of their various forms of capital) and had similar habituses (Crossley 2008, 87–88).

health and social welfare “that were sensitive to the increasing bicultural awareness” (Rata 1999, 248). Further:

Those with tribal cultural capital to add to their access to the traditional means of production, that is, with the habitus derived from an internalized neotribalist ideological construction, will be the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie of neotribal capitalism in the same way that the middle class in the Pakeha version of capitalism are characterized by a cultural capital that is inherently linked to the acquisition of material rewards (Rata 1999, 276).

It is argued that these people have been incorporated into the shared capitalist mode of production characterized by neoliberalism, colonialism, and the harmful gendered implications that continue to harm other Indigenous people. This also creates an economic regime in which “Aboriginal–state relations in Canada are based upon a hegemonic strategy that replaces the *Indian Act*’s coercive paternalistic relations with forms of neoliberal Aboriginal self-governance” (Altamirano-Jiménez 2007, 142). This is made possible when dominant ideas in the field, such as the importance of homeownership, are left unquestioned.

Rules and doxa

In addition to being objectively composed of a network of actors, a field is delimited by its nomos: what are sometimes referred to as rules. Each field follows its own logic; its rules are not necessarily explicit or codified (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 97). Rather, the rules or nomos are implicit, historically shaped, and reflect the privileged interests of those who dominate the field (Chopra 2003, 427). People in the field can increase their capital by conforming to its rules and playing the field’s game, further legitimizing the rules (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 99). A field’s rules also determine what is and is not possible in the field and what forms of capital can be used. These shared principles, or ‘common vision,’ imposed by the state (Kalpagam 2006, 88) provide the basis of conformity, logic, morality, and fundamental laws, for a field (Kalpagam 2006, 93).

Doxa, on the other hand, are the shared cultural beliefs that dictate what is seen as ‘common-sense’ within the field. They are the values and ideas that are

taken as read by actors and not questioned. Doxa provide the field's limit of what is thinkable and set boundaries on habitus (Chopra 2003, 426). Doxa are what "goes without saying" in a particular time and place (Bourdieu 1977, 167) and form "a set of fundamental beliefs which does not even need to be asserted in the form of an explicit, self-conscious dogma" (Bourdieu 2000, 15).

The unquestioned truths and common-sense assumptions upon which neoliberal orders rest (referred to as 'neoliberal doxa') are developed in the concluding section of this chapter and in the case studies. Neoliberal doxa are centred on two main ideas that can be expanded out into several political goals: the good of reducing the welfare state and the value placed on self-reliance. These inform the political and social strategies pursued by those who subscribe to them and create ancillary social ideas that are found throughout the housing field. For example, such doxa would inform broad, socially constructed ideas on what is 'good' housing (i.e. owning a house rather than renting an apartment) or what is 'bad' social behaviour (i.e. asking the government for 'hand-outs' instead of relying on one's own ability within the free market).

Actors exercising symbolic violence reinforce these doxa. When the arbitrary nature of doxa is misrecognized as natural, it becomes seen as a self-evident truth (C. Deer 2008b, 119–120). Doxa can therefore shape people's behaviour and beliefs. For example, the state sets up, via housing regulations, schemes of thought and limits to what is possible (Grenfell 2004, 136). Doxa in the housing field create, support, and justify the rules. In the case of Bourdieu's study, he found that neoliberalism in France in the 1970s allowed the state to employ the rhetoric of 'liberating' people from state control in order to privatize building construction and regulate the state out of the housing market (Grenfell 2004, 136; Bourdieu 2005; Bourdieu 1998b). Rules reinforced doxa and symbolic violence.

Doxic effects have been demonstrated in neoliberal globalization's successful establishment as "unquestionable orthodoxy" in India (Chopra 2003, 419) and in the UK where doxa were used to condition and discipline behaviour (Flint and Rowlands 2003). There, the concepts of doxa and habitus were used to

show how the neoliberal focus on “social exclusion rather than poverty” led the UK to see anti-social behaviour (those lacking cultural capital) as the cause of bad housing conditions, and not economic poverty itself (Flint and Rowlands 2003, 219–220). Tenants who failed to conform to dominant (neoliberal) habituses of “responsibility” and “civility” were cast as ‘anti-social,’ under an ideology of self-responsibility that blamed people for their failure to conform to social standards (Flint and Rowlands 2003, 220). Affluent people are seen as “successful citizens and consumers” because they live “an individualized and privatised existence,” while the less affluent are “urged to adopt collective neighbourhood-based responses to their social exclusion” (Flint and Rowlands 2003, 223). Governments want to encourage participation in the market but also control consumption (the spending of capital), so state agents and regulations commodify housing (as Bourdieu found in France) and control symbolic capital to get people to pursue lifestyles that privilege home consumption, branding homeownership as ‘success’ and ‘belonging’ which further confer cultural and symbolic capital (Flint and Rowlands 2003, 224) on those who have matching habitus and enough capital.

Despite its sociological origins and basis, field theory is useful for political science, and it is used in this study for a number of reasons. It highlights the influence of power in society and the roles of government, both the individual actors within governments and the government institutions themselves. It also opens space for non-institutional views of governance, and hence the study of individuals and groups in society.

Further, a critique of neoliberalism (as the ultimate example of symbolic violence) was central to Bourdieu’s purpose for continuing to develop field theory in his later career (Bourdieu 1998b; Bourdieu 2003). His approach, when modified to fit new contexts and questions, is useful for demonstrating the distribution of different kinds of resources in society, especially how the contemporary neoliberal doxa, with a focus on market forces and the importance of economic capital, mask the importance and relevance of social and cultural

capital. Finally, as will be demonstrated, field theory has the potential for incorporating the politics of gender and colonialism.

Some of Bourdieu's previous works have used field analysis in contexts relevant to my own research questions. The most relevant of these is undoubtedly Bourdieu's own study of the housing field, published in English three years after his death. He demonstrated that the symbolic "mythology" attached to the house or home has an ongoing effect on family structure and socialization because societal bonds are reinforced by cohabitation (Bourdieu 2005, 20). In France, he says, people are taught from childhood to love their homes and this is part of the social reproduction of the "chief means by which the domestic unit ensures that a certain transmissible heritage is accumulated and preserved" (Bourdieu 2005, 21). Tastes for homes, which vary by people's habitus, are socially constructed. Variance is caused by the forms and amounts of economic capital and cultural capital, among other factors such as marital status (Bourdieu 2005, 25). Wealth alone will not cause someone to buy an expensive home; decisions are conditioned by expectations and desires about what kind of home people want. For example, research for this dissertation showed how research participants' preference in housing was influenced by gendered experiences; women who participated in focus groups and interviews were much more likely to cite safety as their primary concern about housing.

The rise of neoliberalism brought people who would not, traditionally, have bought homes into the established order of homeowners, under the doxic guise of the rights of individuals to partake in the common order/nation (Bourdieu 2005, 90). The value of being single-family homeowners is thus reinforced, even using the contradictory language of collectivism (belonging). Bourdieu's focus on the construction industry showed how a mutually supporting, and reproducing, housing field was created in which the government constructed housing policy that supported the building industry which has become dependent on public authorities to sustain it (Bourdieu 2005, 91–92).

As in Canada, it is now state actors (those who have bureaucratic capital) who are able to produce the housing market via the state; they make "housing

policy” (Bourdieu 2005, 15). This is achieved through a two fold social construction as the state creates demand for (certain kinds) of housing via habitus creation, and it allots resources (controls capital) to make this housing happen (Bourdieu 2005, 16). State regulations are backed up by symbolic violence since they are seen as “legitimate representations . . . invested with the symbolic and practical efficacy of official regulations” (Bourdieu 2005, 92). This power of legitimization will prove essential in Canadian contexts as it not only delimits dispositions in the housing field but it used to recognize who is a credible field actor — vital for Aboriginal groups — with legitimate claims. Bureaucratic capital — a combination of social and cultural/technical capital — is vital for controlling state bodies (structures and the people who are connected to them) and the people subject to them. It therefore plays an important part in Edmonton and Winnipeg’s housing fields and is further discussed in the case studies.

The most important struggle in the housing field is the “competition for power over state power” (Bourdieu 2005, 204, emphasis removed) such as the power of regulations and other “state interventions” in the field. Social capital is central to achieving power, even by the dominated such as small housing firms. The state is not neutral; it is a regulator but also an arbiter that “contributes quite decisively to the construction of both demand and supply” (Bourdieu 2005, 204). Challenges to the field’s structure are possible when new sources of capital supply emerge (Bourdieu uses the example of the discovery of oil), when demographic changes shift demand, and when lifestyles change (Bourdieu uses the example of women’s entry into the paid labour force; one of the few mentions of gender in his study) (Bourdieu 2005, 205). However, these factors, external to the established field, must exert their effects within the field according to its own relations of force.

There are some issues with Bourdieu’s study that make blind application to a different context (urban Aboriginal people and housing in Canada) problematic and require attention. First, his work on the French housing field did not take race into consideration, when articulating people’s dispositions and experiences, nor in their accumulated capital. Although Bourdieu did touch on the

subtle and covert doxa in the French housing field that portrayed housing as an appeal for the middle-class to participate in a traditional (read white) familial (read patriarchal), nuclear, monogamous, heterosexual lifestyle, it did not look at how different people in France's housing field would have different habituses because of their racialized or gendered backgrounds, nor how the mainstream doxa would affect them. He collected data on the characteristics that mattered to him: age, employment, and family structure.

Second, the fact that he looked at a national housing field that encompassed all of France presents problems in Canada; each urban housing field here is subjected to a different provincial (and hence municipal) government. Canada is one of the only industrialized countries in the world without a national housing policy (Layton 2008; Wellesley Institute 2010, 18). Finally, Bourdieu focussed on the field's regulations and rules (Bourdieu 2005, 39) since he looked more explicitly at three interconnected groups: home buyers, the construction agency, and government actors. My study is concerned more with governance and social relations, rather than the technical aspects of housing law, building regulations, and construction corporations, and thus examines different sets of actors. And while Bourdieu focussed on homebuilders, and hence *market influenced* housing, my study looks at not-for-profit and affordable housing organizations, and related government actors, although the role of the market is still relevant.

Other studies have also used field theory to look at issues connected to my research, notably colonialism and gender, and on more local, rather than national, scales. Some of these studies are cited above throughout explanation of the concepts provided by field analysis. One worth looking at in a bit more detail is Mahar (2010) who applied field analysis to a particular village in Mexico. Focussing on the transition of traditional collective economies in communal communities to individualistic capitalist economies, she showed how rural and Indigenous peoples who have more recently become urbanized face a transition toward valuing economic capital over the forms of symbolic capital that they (used to) value (Mahar 2010, 3). This shift marks a realignment of habitus with

the field of power that values economic capital over other forms. Families are thus required adopt entrepreneurial behaviour and a different skill set. The misrecognition of one's position in the field makes it more difficult — or indeed impossible if this misrecognized distribution of power is accepted as natural — for those without capital to carry out any major changes that challenge the structure of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 172). As New and Petronicolos point out, citing Bourdieu and Wacquant, “resistance can be alienating when one has no means to express it [other] than the display of those very properties that mark this person as dominated” (New and Petronicolos 2001, 8; Wacquant 1992, 23).

Even Indigenous people in Mexico who lacked both social and economic capital (and were shaped by so-called “‘Indian’ dispositions” that were seen as foreign to urban spaces) eventually adopted similar habituses. Their earlier strategies for success, and coping, were not understood or accepted by the mainstream and so they were treated as invisible. Newer successes, putting them on par with non-Indigenous residents, albeit poorer ones, has increased their visibility and confidence (Mahar 2010, 70).

A common issue with many of the Bourdieusian case studies, cited above, is their partial application of the tools offered by field theory. Mahar, for example, relies extensively on the concept of capital, which is useful, but does not articulate the field structure and habituses that are necessary to make use of it (2010). Flint and Rowlands used habitus in isolation and treated it as “social norms and values” (2003, 221), and New and Petronicolos (2001) only connected habitus to symbolic violence. A full understanding of habitus requires understanding the field that it creates and through which it is constituted. Likewise, Farrugia misses field structures and, rather than deploy the Bourdieusian concept of capital, uses Foucaultian ideas of symbolism (2010). Silver et al. relied primarily on Bourdieu's contribution to reflexivity but do not situate it within the other concepts of field analysis (2006). Finally, Manitowabi's use of symbolic capital is imprecise. Used in place of cultural capital, it is meant to include education,

experience, and prestige. His reference to social relations makes for a much more convincing, though apparently unintentional, reference to the power of symbolic capital (Manitowabi 2011, 117).

My study actualizes a field analysis by applying the basic trinity of field, habitus, and capital, with the necessary ancillary components in order to demonstrate the usefulness of this approach for answering the research questions and providing a robust explanation of the case studies. Although the cases are not unique (field analysis has been applied to Canadian cases, including urban Aboriginal people), it is still fairly uncommon to use field analysis, combined with a gendered analysis (for the reasons described in the section on gender) in Canada while conducting a case study. By incorporating all of the tools offered by field analysis, I demonstrate how useful it is for explaining where people are located in power struggles and what real resources urban Aboriginal people in Canada have at their disposal.

As can be seen, field theory is useful because of the adaptable tools it provides for looking at individuals, groups, and the state and the power relations that constitute them. Existing literature has already used these concepts and provided a rudimentary picture of the housing field methods for applying field theory to other cases. What remains to be done is to discuss the particular elements that my analysis adds to the study of housing fields: a focus on the pressing issues of urban Aboriginal experiences with colonization, the relevance of gender differences, and a political-economic contextualization that highlights the varied roles of neoliberalism in Canadian cities.

2.2 COLONIALISM, THE RACIALIZED STATE, AND SPACE

Colonialism and racism were not explicitly addressed in Bourdieu's writings on the housing field (Kalpagam 2006, 95).¹⁶ However without

¹⁶ One of Bourdieu's few detailed discussions of contemporary questions about race — his early writings were on colonialism in Algeria — is found in a paper that states, problematically, that contemporary concepts of race flow from American ideas in which 'race' is defined solely on the basis of descent (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999, 45). The application of American ideas about race (if his reading is even accurate) is not helpful in

understanding these concepts we cannot understand the urban Aboriginal field and the complex tensions at play between actors; the systemic and ongoing oppression of Aboriginal people in Canadian cities is not just a matter of class or socio-economic difference, but rests on colonial and racist assumptions about who urban Canadians are, the contested spaces that they occupy, and the roles that they should play. This section will provide definitions for these concepts and explain how they illuminate the structure of housing fields, and what impacts this has on urban Aboriginal people.

Colonialism is defined as “a process of radical dispossession” that erases a people’s history (Eagleton, Jameson, and Said 1990, 10). It is internalized in people’s mentalities (Alfred 1999) and “embedded in the everydayness of indigenous life” (Turner 2006, 105). It is “a process of conquest whereby one nation establishes a colony on another nation’s territory with intent of taking power, land, and resources” and colonialism “is not only about material accumulation but requires the production of ideologies that justify the theft and violent practices at its root” (Cannon and Sunseri 2011, 275). Colonialism “is fundamentally rooted in racial assumptions about those who were colonized and those who did the colonizing,” creating institutions and processes based on the latter’s world views (Andersen 2000, 98).

Colonialism based on the European or “Western” tradition, results in “Eurocentric” narratives based on factors such as capitalism, Christianity, and racism (Adams 2000, 44). The colonialism expressed in settler countries, of which Canada is an example, espouses liberal political and economic theories and values which include individuality, individual autonomy, self-interest, the state as rational, the rule of law, trade, science, and the regulation of the public sphere (Tuhiwai Smith 2006, 92). It is based on a history of and accomplished through, the dispossession and exploitation of Indigenous knowledge and lands (Lawrence 2002). Colonialism also carries with it ideas of the “American Dream,” the pre-colonial “savage,” and Enlightenment principles (Ladner 2003, 44) tied to the idea

a Canadian context that looks at Aboriginal people since they have been colonized and racialized in very different manners, as will be discussed.

that Europeans must “civilize” Aboriginal peoples and improve their lives (through entry into Western lifestyles/habitus) in the name of “progress.”

Key to the ideology of scientific discovery, colonialism seeks to “name” and “know” Indigenous peoples (Tuhiwai Smith 2006, 93). One legacy of this in Canada is the grouping of peoples into ‘Aboriginal’ groups (even the word Aboriginal itself), and then cast them as the Other, separate from the mainstream or ‘whitestream’ (Andersen 2000, 98). As Western culture becomes globalized, it has been able to cast itself as “the centre of legitimate knowledge” and the source of civilized or “universal” knowledge: “available to all and not really ‘owned’ by anyone — that is, until non-Western scholars make claims to it” (Tuhiwai Smith 2006, 96). Western or Eurocentric knowledge must continually reposition itself in order to cast itself against “outsiders.” For colonial forces in Canada to maintain the supremacy of their world view, bureaucrats had to “think about, write about, and make public policies based on the idea that there were essential differences between those doing the colonizing, ‘us,’ and those subjected to colonization, ‘them’” (Andersen 2000, 98–99). The concepts tied to Western colonialism are also gendered (Tuhiwai Smith 2006) and tied to the (white) male experience or male superiority. More of the gendered nature of colonialism will be develop in the following sections on Aboriginal governance and the gendered nature of the housing fields.

Colonization is also responsible for organizing spaces¹⁷ (Razack 2002). Spaces, also called *relative* space (to set it apart from *absolute* or physical space which is not discussed here) are socially produced ideas about locations (Norton 1995, 36). Spaces are recognizable and “represent landscapes with nebulous and constantly shifting boundaries drawn by institutional and individual actors who, over time, create patterns” (Nickerson and Dochuk 2011, 14). Not a mere physical manifestation of area, spaces are constructed out of social, political, and economic

¹⁷ A *place* is a “set of ideas born from the spatial transformations” described above (Nickerson and Dochuk 2011, 14). It is a location (or space) to which distinctive values have been associated (Norton 1995, 37). Through placemaking, spaces are converted into places (Paulsen 2010, 600). These places then exist in the “collective imagination” and, for example, can be seen in the idea of “home” (Nickerson and Dochuk 2011, 15; Robinson 2011, 7).

relations (Uguris 2004, 16; Nickerson and Dochuk 2011, 14; Raju 2011, 6). Specifically through historical, colonial practices, Indigenous spaces became redefined, as “it was never enough to just acquire legal title to Indigenous land. Instead it needed to be reimagined and shaped by the colonial eye” (Banivanua Mar and Edmonds 2010, 5).

In the city, there is overlap between physical spaces (neighbourhoods) and the abstract spaces (such as inclusion in social processes). Garber describes ways in which post-modernists have criticized how dualizing space into the physical and abstract has depoliticizing effects and reinforces patriarchal dualisms and hierarchies (Garber 2009, 213). As a result, some critical theorists try to “disrupt the perception of congruity between space and in particular, local places” in cities (Garber 2000, 260). In response, Garber’s contribution here is a broad survey of the literature on the varied and conflicting meanings of space in order to develop four useful ways of conceiving the public sphere. As such, she finds that “people act *from* space,” “people act *on* space,” “people act *in* space,” and “people *make* space,” (Garber 2000, 267–268). In other words, space and identity create each other (i.e. “Aboriginal housing”), people shape physical spaces (i.e. people and governments build homes and maintain or degrade them), space limits action (seen in community development activities), and, in its most abstract usage, space is linked to politics as people create (metaphorical) spaces in policy processes, governments, etc. These varied uses of the ideas of space, the physical *and* the metaphorical, are employed throughout my dissertation.

In most instances, I use “place” only for the most physical manifestations of space, though, as Garber notes, the physical meaning of space is still vitally important and should not be downplayed (Garber 2000; Garber 2009, 213). The metaphorical use of space remains popular and, as will be seen, it is possible to create Aboriginal spaces in colonial cities (Ramirez 2007), despite the fact that urban spaces are often used to represent settler/European civilization and culture, and are cast in opposition to reserves or rural areas which are associated with Indigenous non-civilization (Razack 2002; Banivanua Mar and Edmonds 2010).

Creating reserve spaces was intended, in part, to keep First Nations people away from settlers (to keep the white race safe and pure) until they were deemed worthy of assimilation or died out. This “genocidal” idea of “manifest destiny” is “inherent in the concept of ‘Canada’” and histories of the land itself are rewritten in order to erase Indigenous peoples from their prior occupations of the land (Lawrence 2002).¹⁸ Critical geographers have questioned this false and disingenuous division of space, stating that when the study of Canadian cities:

frames their development only in terms of physical geography, transportation and spatial relations and urban institutions, it ignores colonial settlers who displaced Aboriginal peoples and communities from urban areas. Adding Aboriginal people to urban geography provides a more accurate lens through which to view the conditions for urban growth in this country (Peters 2004, 255–256).

Likewise, in political science we must connect the role that space plays in power relations with the actors who occupy — and who thus defined and are defined by — urban spaces, including the nebulous idea of ‘the city.’

Some concepts on how Indigenous people find ways to “belong” to spaces in the city (that they create) challenge the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy. For example, a “Native hub” is a geographical concept that represents a place or space where, in this case, Aboriginal cultural, social, and political activities can happen in an urban setting (Ramirez 2007). Spaces where urban Aboriginal people gather are represented as a the centre of a wheel while its spokes represent the social networks that radiate outward and connect people to other communities, including reserves (Ramirez 2007, 2). Social activities are then carried out “through participation in cultural circuits and maintenance of social networks” (Ramirez 2007, 3). Hubs therefore have the potential to “increase the political power of Native peoples” because they open space for community members to engage in the struggle for self-determination (Ramirez 2007, 3, 81). Ramirez’s study of

¹⁸ There have been recent efforts to better educate Canadians about the histories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people (Government of Canada 1996; E. Jones and Perry 2011), although these efforts will have to counter centuries of misinformation that draws benefits from misunderstanding or misrecognizing the historical basis of this ignorance and the benefits that Canadians enjoy from this ignorance. Many, if not most, Canadians today do not understand even the most basic rights of First Nations peoples or how they are rooted in colonial, state-dominated history (Spielmann 2009; Vowel 2012).

Native hubs looked at an American context; comparable social, cultural, and political networks were detected in other studies in different contexts (Mahar 2010; Feldman and Stall 2004). It will be seen here how some programs and organizations such as Aboriginal Visioning and Friendship Centres provide, to an extent, similar opportunities.

In the context of field analysis, the idea of hubs demonstrates how useful social capital (which is accorded by belonging to these networks) is for the field struggle. Since a field is a network, hubs can be seen as small subfields. This can connect, as will be seen, with an “Aboriginal field of power” where self-governance or self-determination strategies take place. This subfield includes ‘official’ Aboriginal political bodies as well as the grassroots actors whom Ramirez described participating in hubs. Because local Aboriginal networks open spaces for cultural, social, and political activity, they enable a capital exchange by which people can share in resources and develop habitus based on belonging, not isolation. Inclusive, or bottom-up resistance strategies and “carving out home spaces within the urban environment” allow field actors to resist oppression (which Ramirez calls activism) and make demands for social change (Ramirez 2007, 80–81).

Bourdieu himself addressed the question of space as both a social and physical location. “Locations” are hierarchized and “power over space,” whether physical locations or the people within them (social space) “comes from possessing various kinds of capital” (Bourdieu 1999b, 124) so where one lives is an expression of one’s cultural capital (Reed-Danahay 2005, 134). The importance placed on owning a home makes having secure tenancy an important form of cultural capital and the importance placed on living in the ‘right’ neighbourhood makes being accepted by one’s neighbours (especially established residents with cultural and symbolic capital) an important form of social capital; it allows the resident to say that they ‘belong’ to their ‘place’ (Mahar 2010, 144).

Locations confer capital on their occupants or take it away if they are low in the hierarchy. It is in these spaces that symbolic violence is carried out, through mental and physical structures. People “without home or hearth” or disconnected

from their space (such as the homeless or some Aboriginal people) are “virtually without a social existence” because of their relative position in the field (Bourdieu 1999b, 124). Lack of capital “chains one to a place” (Bourdieu 1999b, 127). People will struggle for power over spaces, with dominant actors able to move “up” to better locations. Individuals make “spatial choices” in order to avoid feeling “out of place” (for example, white people avoiding “Aboriginal areas”) while collective struggles can be seen in housing policies and land development (Reed-Danahay 2005, 135; Bourdieu 2005).

Notwithstanding the above, Bourdieu’s overall use of geographical concepts is described as “patchy” — however, critical geographers have used his theories in their work on space or place (Bridge 2011, 77). Because space and place are tied to culture, they can be tied to questions of capital accumulation (Bridge 2011, 78). More importantly, habitus is very much tied to location — place “is constitutive of social life because they relate the body to space through habitus” (Bridge 2011, 78; Cresswell 1996). Urban groups have distinct habituses that relate to distinct neighbourhoods (Butler and Robson 2003; Bridge 2011, 78). It has even been argued that the built environment reproduces habitus and therefore resistance to colonialism (Hillier and Rooksby 2002; Bridge 2011).

The conception of hierarchized locations, discussed above, also fits with multiscalar or multileveled approaches to understanding government-Aboriginal relations; the reserve scale (as a space) is linked to the federal level of government while the urban scale is tied to the provincial and (subordinate) municipal, creating problems for First Nations people, especially women, who move between two locations and hence two legal/constitutional worlds. In each, services are provided differently (Peters 2006).

Because of the historic — yet ongoing — dispossession of Indigenous lands, the colonial experiences people face today are rooted in those of the past. The specific details of Canada’s colonial history with Aboriginal peoples is covered by numerous authors (Dickason 2002; Ray 2005; Tuhiwai Smith 2006; Ladner 2003). The next chapter will interweave the most salient parts of this history with that of the urban housing field. The experiences of colonialism in an

urban setting are also unique. Bourdieu noted how studies on colonialism and habitus showed how people find themselves in a “foreign economic cosmos” when their cultural equipment and habitus (particularly their economic dispositions) are out of place and imposed upon, especially if they are from a “precapitalist world” (Bourdieu 2005, 2). Colonial relations foster habituses, for both the dominant and dominated, that reproduce systems of domination in ways that are not always recognized or acknowledged.

Some have claimed that the effects of the colonial order, reinforced by mainstream institutions, “create a false consciousness among the colonized. Eurocentrism does not allow for alternatives and thereby deceives Native people into believing that their history can be acquired only through the colonizer’s institutions” (Adams 2000, 51). Thus, people involved in producing and legitimizing culture can be the “most closely aligned with the colonizers in terms of their class interests, values, and their ways of thinking” (Tuhiwai Smith 2006, 102). Many members of the “oppressed elite want to be like the colonizer” and this desire can lead them to “become more passionate Eurocentrics than the average white supremacist who takes his or her privileged position for granted” (Adams 2000, 51). It is the systemic nature of symbolic violence and doxa that provoke some Aboriginal people to internalize colonialism and some non-Aboriginal people to fail to acknowledge its role. This unconscious mainstreaming of one worldview is what makes the racialized state possible and profitable for those in power.

Goldberg’s theory of the racial state fits in well with field theory. To him, a state that is “racially conceived, ordered, administered, and regulated,” such as Canada, “could be said to be everywhere. And simultaneously nowhere. It (invisibly) defines almost every relation, shapes all but every interaction, contours virtually all intercourse” (Goldberg 2002, 98). A racial state provides the liberal doxa that ‘everyone is equal’ while using symbolic violence to enforce its goals.

A racial state is also gendered; it reproduces the racial order “in gendered terms” because bodies themselves are governed (Goldberg 2002, 99). For example, historically, white men governed colonial states while white women did

not; colonized non-whites provided labour (such as Indigenous people in the fur trade) while colonized women did even more menial work (and provided reproductive labour for settlers) (Goldberg 2002, 99). The colonial state is therefore founded on this racial and gendered division of labour. In Canada, colonialism is used to define Indigenous women and men — not just in applying the word “Aboriginal” and other categorizations to people — as, for over a century, the state saw that Indian status was taken away from women and their children along gendered lines through the sexist provisions in the *Indian Act* (Grammond 2009; Lawrence 2004).

As will be seen, housing fields are influenced by racial orders of government and the societies that produce them. Housing fields themselves are racialized, then, in the ways in which identities, the housing conditions, and positions in the field are racially structured in order to maintain the privileged positions of those who benefit from colonialism in Canada (Goldberg 2002, 104).

Studies on racism in housing have shown why it is important to consider this line of analysis. Broadly speaking, attention to race and racism in the housing field shows how some groups can succeed and improve their housing situation while others do not (Harrison 2001, 163). Critical studies also show why some socially constructed groups succeed more than others. Using a lens that critiques the identity-blind norm in housing services shows that simply having urban Aboriginal people participate more in existing mainstream (white-run) housing services (i.e. the assimilationist approach) has not always improved their positions (Walker 2006a).

In short, states are racial¹⁹

because of the structural position they occupy in producing and reproducing, constituting and effecting racially shaped spaces and places, groups and events, life worlds and possibilities, accesses and restrictions, inclusions and exclusions, conceptions and modes of representation (Goldberg 2002, 104).

¹⁹ States are *racist* “to the extent such definition, determination, and structuration operate to exclude or privilege in or on racial terms, and in so far as they circulate in and reproduce a world whose meanings and effects are racist” (Goldberg 2002, 104). In other words, the racial structuring of the field of power privileges one group along racialized lines and for racial reasons.

Again, spaces (being socially constructed) are racialized, colonized, and hierarchized as the people who live there and the people who do not give them meaning. Colonial state processes reproduce the ways in which identities that are tied to certain spaces are assigned to people, and vice versa, as the racialization of different spaces extends to the people (individuals and groups) who occupy them. As will be seen, Aboriginal people, associated with the inner city and the poverty that is found there, create and are created by these ideas of location. Overall, as Canadian accept the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy, we learn that cities “are colonial environments that perpetuate binaries identifying insider/outsider and citizen/other . . . leading most Canadians to internalize the belief that urban Aboriginal peoples are displaced cultural curiosities” (Belanger 2011, 140).

In such a case, “resistance” is seen as the fight for “space appropriation” — a struggle for spatial resources and location-specific tools (Feldman and Stall 2004, 10). Claiming space can mean (re)taking material space in the city and/or virtual space in governance processes, both of which have been demonstrated through activities by Indigenous women or women of colour in the inner city (Feldman and Stall 2004; Silver et al. 2004; Mahar 2010).

Working together (within the bureaucratic and social fields where Aboriginal issues also are fought over), in order to (re)define people and the spaces they occupy on the basis of perceived race or group membership can also be understood within field theory. This study focuses on the real experience of overt (usually conscious) acts of racism (or discrimination) *and* systemic racism by reproducing colonialism. Symbolic violence masks the latter and the field enables the former. Both are enacted through field struggles that are themselves racialized by the (racialized) distribution of capital, racialized habitus, racialized spaces, and, as a result, racialized field structures and doxa. They are also manifested, as will be demonstrated in how the urban housing field is governed.

2.3 WHO CONTROLS THE CITY?

The concepts of self-determination, self-government, and self-governance can be and have been conflated in many contexts. Confusing these terms leads us to misrecognize what is happening in cities (and what the Aboriginal people there actually want to see happen) and it empowers dominant forces when unbalanced power relations go unrecognized. This section provides and develops concepts against which to test the data that came from the field studies. It is imperative to both define these different terms and to differentiate between them. A research participant may refer to “self-determination” in an interview when what they are describing actually fits with concepts of self-government; these are not the same thing. The goal here is to articulate concepts that capture descriptions of reality, or ideas for the future, without changing the meanings of people’s statements.

For simplicity in reading this section, I will define how I use these terms here now, and then use the remainder of the section to explain how I arrived at these definitions and why I believe that focussing on self-governance, with self-determination goals, is the most useful way of looking at (Aboriginal) governance in the city today. I define self-government as the “institutional expression of [self-]governance,” defined below, used by a collective for allocating power (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 76). Discussion on the forms that this can take is noted below as the terms defined here are developed.

The right to self-government (the right to create and control decision-making bodies) flows from the right to self-determination which I define as the right of a group to freely pursue its political, economic, cultural, and social goals (United Nations 2007). Because self-government is such a limiting concept (Green 2005; Ladner 2001), which has been co-opted by state agents, and self-determination is so broad, I believe that looking for self-governance in the urban context is more consistent with what is taking place and what Aboriginal people are doing. I define self-governance as a process, or system of processes, through which members of a collective (approaching or meeting their self-determination goals) inclusively make decisions (Maaka and Fleras 2008). As will be seen, process of self-governance can include making use of self-government structures,

but goes beyond these institutions to include civil society and informal decision-making processes.

Because these different terms are used variously and sometimes interchangeably by the people who participated in this research and who condition these concepts through the field of power, it would be misleading to say that this study deals with one concept, such as self-determination because it is most desirable, but to then use it so broadly or vaguely that anything, even self-government, can be used as evidence of its existence in the urban housing field. I deal now with some of the problems in the literature regarding the definition of self-government, self-determination, and self-governance. I argue that the relations between these concepts must be understood in order to have useful terms for field analysis.

A number of problems occur when trying to define urban Aboriginal ‘self-government’ using the existing literature. I start with this term because it is the phrase most commonly used, although it is also problematized and declining in popularity (Green 2005, 336–337). The term is recognized by the federal government as an inherent right (Government of Canada 2010a; Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995) and is often used in casual discussions and by the media (CBC 2011a).

Although the federal government does not *define* self-government, ostensibly because it recognizes that it is going to vary by context, it describes it as an inherent right:

based on the view that the Aboriginal peoples of Canada have the right to govern themselves in relation to matters that are internal to their communities, integral to their unique cultures, identities, traditions, languages and institutions, and with respect to their special relationship to their land²⁰ and their resources (Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995, 3).

²⁰ It is worth noting that the federal government’s policy framework states that *urban* Aboriginal self-government negotiations will only include discussions over the provision of land if it is “deemed necessary and complementary to the management of a federal program or service” (Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995, 19); this emphasizes that urban lands are not Aboriginal lands.

However, the government's policy framework that guides the negotiation of self-government agreements also states that "Aboriginal governments and institutions exercising the inherent right of self-government will operate within the framework of the Canadian Constitution" (Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995, 3) which calls into question whose 'inherent' rights are being recognized and to what extent. Thus, the federal government is very much involved in self-government, in whatever form it takes (Dacks 2004, 672). The "federally sanctioned" idea of self-government (Belanger 2011, 138) is doxic; "statist overtones" set the rules for *how* self-government agreements are negotiated and unquestioned rules limit *how* people (are allowed to) think or pursue it (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 79). As will be seen, many people in the urban field denied that self-government played a role in their lives because they saw it as a concept from a field of power that 'other people' deal with.

A further dilemma with crafting a widely understood meaning of self-government is that it is possible to write, even very persuasively, about it without explicitly defining the term (Turner 2006; Tully 1995). Another problem is that since the 'default' idea of self-government is that of people (usually First Nations) living on what is often referred to as a "traditional land-base"²¹ (Coates and Morrison 2008; Morse 2008; Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995), *urban* Aboriginal self-government is seen as something special or additional that merits its own separate study because the heterogeneous Aboriginal population in question and more visible incursions by three levels of state government (Weinstein 1986; Wherrett and Brown 1995; Peters 1995; Peters 2005). Again, an uncertainty over space and the idea that urban areas are alien to Aboriginal people invites us to talk about self-government in ways that address how much power the urban mainstream is willing to 'grant' urban Aboriginal people. As Edmonton and Winnipeg are no longer seen as Indigenous lands — since the histories of Aboriginal people in these areas have been erased — there is tension here. It is difficult to apply conceptions of 'traditional land-based' self-

²¹ Again, this obscures the fact that both Edmonton and Winnipeg were/are on Indigenous lands. This history of the strategic redefinition of these areas is described in more detail in the next chapter.

government to urban contexts because cities have more heterogeneous Aboriginal populations with different histories, legal rights, socio-economic statuses, and cultural identities (Peters 2007, 208).

A similar issue, the question of pan-Aboriginal (or cross-nation) self-government across First Nations is faced in the Yukon. The debate between convergence (into a pan-First Nation of self-government) and disaggregation means comparing the benefits of cost-sharing with pan-Aboriginality's effects on self-determination (Dacks 2004, 683; Boldt 1993). In urban areas, pan-Aboriginality may prove the only or best option unless local First Nations can find ways to provide programs and services inside the city. It will also require negotiations regarding how Aboriginal people who are not recognized members of First Nations will play a part.

Further, a history of colonialism has not just symbolically erased Indigenous people from the urban landscape but disrupted the long-existing, shared systems of governance that can be found in more isolated communities where self-government agreements have been made. In this vein, we recognize that self-government in cities is going to be different because of the diffused population and diversity among the Aboriginal people based on Aboriginal group-based diversity (Peters 2005; Cairns 2000). A concept of "urban Aboriginal self-government" therefore poses important and unique questions regarding structure, membership, and jurisdiction. Definition of this term has drawn special attention, especially since the 1990s.

However, such consideration sometimes amounts to a general description of a particular number of theoretical 'models' of self-government that can be adopted for an urban setting (Wherrett and Brown 1995; Fleras and Elliott 1999; Peters 2005; Peters 1992; Mountjoy 1999; K. Graham 1999; Government of Canada 1996). The question that arises is how can dynamic (subjective) patterns of relationships be simply 'fit' into a set number of existing (objective) models developed by people, often outside local Aboriginal communities? Some models are useful for understanding what can be legislated in an area (Government of Canada 1996; Government of Canada 2010b), and highlight the power of field

rules, but they can also obscure what is taking place outside the homogenizing and institutional focus of these models. As such, proposed structures such as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) models are useful for considering how power could be divided, but do not address urban Aboriginal people's lived experiences, nor their internal diversity (such as Aboriginal group membership, gender, class, culture, etc.).

Any examples of self-government found in case studies will vary depending on how it is defined. For example, one reads of different "modes" of urban self-government: urban reserves, shared stewardship, and the participation in public governments (Dust 1995, 3). While these modes demonstrate how self-government can vary, they do not explain what self-government is. In fact, self-government can be almost anything, leaving its interpretation open and susceptible to misunderstanding.

As a result, one of the problems found with defining self-government by focussing on models is that such proposals can become centred around concerns about the structural nature of (self-) government institutions, and not necessarily with the people and processes that operate inside and outside of them (Maaka and Fleras 2008; Government of Canada 1996). In field theory, the roles that the less visible (marginalized or otherwise unrecognized in an institutional focus) urban Aboriginal people play are just as important to understand. This is especially a problem for gender-based inquiry because an institutional focus risks overlooking women consigned outside traditionally male dominated fields of power and the public sphere.

Elsewhere, self-government is popularly described as "the negotiation of a defined level of jurisdiction or control to be exercised either exclusively, or on a shared basis, with either Aboriginal and/or Non-Aboriginal governments, within a broad or narrow range of 'government' or jurisdictional sectors" (Cowie 1987, 13).²² Such a specific concept of self-government highlights the need for legal/constitutional jurisdiction, specific policy powers, administration, and

²² Wherret and Brown also use this definition (1995, 85), but omit the problematic "negotiated" element.

financing arrangements. But this very institutional definition, focussed on state government and its rules, leaves little room for non-institutional, society-based governance. Entrenching self-government in constitutional terms, making it rigid and inflexible, carries the risk of developing regimes that are unresponsive to change (Dacks 2004, 688). It also accords an overwhelming symbolic power to the state.

Because of these issues, some studies turn to self-determination as a preferable site of analysis (Walker 2004). Relational conceptions show that while broader self-determination can be understood as “sovereignty within a territory,” self-government is instead the “ability for people to make significant choices about their own political, cultural, economic, and social affairs” (Cassidy 1991; Peters 2005, 40). The difference between these terms helps set up a dichotomy that tends to reinforce self-determination as an alternative to self-government, even though they are not mutually exclusive.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that by virtue of the right to self-determination, Indigenous people have the right to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (United Nations 2007 Art. 3). This is to be done through Indigenous people’s own political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions or through the institutions of the state at Indigenous people’s discretion (United Nations 2007 Art. 5). Article 46(3) sets the Declaration in accordance with the principles of, among other things, democracy, human rights, and good governance. The precise meaning of how these international and non-case-specific ideas of self-government and self-determination can be applied to Indigenous people in Canada — especially in urban areas — is yet to be determined (Belanger 2011), however it is useful for clarifying that self-determination can be best understood as a broader concept that *includes* self-government.²³ The Declaration mentions the word self-government once. It states

²³ Thus, while self-government is not the equivalent of self-determination, it is not inherently negative; self-government is seen as a normative concern about capacity (not dependency), empowerment (not marginality), providers (not clients), and rights (not needs) (Peters 2005, 40). It is therefore something more empowering than self-

that Indigenous people “have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions” (United Nations 2007 Art. 4). It states that it flows from the right to self-determination.

In light of concerns about obscuring actors by focussing on institutions, Indigenous leaders sometimes state that Indigenous governance is best understood as *traditional* government; it is a governing process that is not written or codified (Wuttunnee 2004, 30). This view is in strong opposition to institutionalized or colonial views of (state) government and explains why some Aboriginal people do not like using the term self-government. It is alleged that mainstream concepts of self-government have been “appropriated by the federal government and the Aboriginal political elite” and manipulated by academics (Belanger and Newhouse 2008, 15). Over time, doxic ideas about self-government have changed from a focus on local municipal style government, bound by the *Indian Act*, to ideas about inherent rights and national governments *within the Canadian constitution*. Aboriginal claims of self-government must proceed through neo-colonial mechanisms and attitudes in order to meet a standard imposed by the Canadian state (Ladner 2001). Although the Harper government eventually backed the UN Declaration (after stating that they would not support it²⁴), its acknowledgement that it is an “aspirational” and “non-legally binding document that does not reflect customary international law nor change Canadian laws . . . [But that] Canada can interpret the principles expressed in the Declaration in a manner that is consistent with our Constitution and legal framework” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010a).

administration — which is only specific, delegated or ‘downloaded’ authority, dependent on colonial structures, with no accompanying resources, claims to autonomy, or reference to inherent rights (Coates and Morrison 2008; Ladner 2003; Maaka and Fleras 2008; Weinstein 1986).

²⁴ The government stated that there were concerns over “provisions dealing with lands, territories and resources; free, prior and informed consent when used as a veto; self-government without recognition of the importance of negotiations; intellectual property; military issues; and the need to achieve an appropriate balance between the rights and obligations of Indigenous peoples, States and third parties. These concerns are well known and remain” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010a).

There are therefore other reasons for backlash against the predominant concept of self-government because it “draws on contingent rather than sovereign rights” (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 79). Some scholars argue that self-government requires (as an end) Aboriginal people to co-operate with the colonial state in order to limit independence, not violate Canada’s territorial integrity, harmonize with state governments, and assimilate Aboriginal people into Canadian society (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 82).

Self-determination, on the other hand, is linked to autonomy goals such as post-colonialism and power sharing by equals. As a paradigm, self-determination “rejects the legitimacy of existing political relations and mainstream institutions as a framework for attainment of aboriginal [sic] goals” (Fleras and Elliott 1999, 190). The negotiated, inherently unequal and colonial nature of self-government-as-goal renders it a mistake to pursue outside of broader quests for self-determination (Alfred 1999; Ladner 2001). Many authors and Aboriginal people therefore turn to self-determination as the preferred concept for exploration and attainment (Alfred 2005), even in the urban housing field (Walker 2006a). They describe how, while Aboriginal self-determination entails the “right to take control of their destinies at political, economic, social, and cultural levels,” self-government is but the “political expression of this demand for control” (Fleras and Elliott 1999, 441).

The shape that Aboriginal self-government takes will vary by context and be complemented by other activities. But since self-government, by virtue of being attached to a recognized political body or institution, is more visible, people tend to seek it out or find it first. Further, it is in this political language that Aboriginal people have been negotiating with governments; state-led processes have shaped what is permissible/thinkable for decades — another example of symbolic violence. This doxic idea of self-government (what is possible, what is feasible, what is best) shapes how self-government, and indeed self-determination, is pursued by limiting it to the forms of negotiated inferiority that governments permit (Ladner 2001; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010a).

Other activities that are part of self-determination can be found in the wider field struggle. Looking for urban Aboriginal self-determination in the housing field means going beyond examining institutions and looking at the roles of non-state/civil society actors (J. Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003, 6) in order to see how urban Aboriginal people order their lives *and* have their lives ordered. This political, cultural, social, and even economic expression of *governance* is vital to understand.

Very simply put, governance is defined as any form of collective action used to make decisions and it is primarily concerned about the roles people take in making decisions: “who should be involved in deciding, and in what capacity” (J. Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003, 1,2 emphasis removed). Governance is most often tied to normative questions about how decisions are carried out, the normative idea of ‘good governance’ (J. Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2012).

Most governments will claim that they exercise ‘good governance’ ideals, but that these will vary in context (Poluha and Rosendahl 2002, 2) and so the definition of what is ‘good’ about examples of governance is open to symbolic manipulation by states and powerful actors. Popular ideas like ‘efficiency’ are especially vulnerable to being co-opted by neoliberal agendas. It is therefore essential to remember that there is no single checklist of good governance criteria; the normative evaluation of whether governance processes suit the local community must be community-specific. For example, as Aboriginal women have demanded on many occasions, what has often been identified as essential is that political strategies (whether using the language of self-determination or self-government) reflect the diversity of the community’s views and be inclusive of both women and men, disrupting the colonial doxa that governance is men’s business (Lawrence and Anderson 2005; A. Smith 2005; Fiske 1996; Stasiulis and Jhappan 1995).

Culturally appropriate good governance principles set normative goals for (urban) governance processes. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples identified nine elements of good governance for self-governance systems based

on traditional ideas of how to govern (Government of Canada 1996). These include participation, rule of law,²⁵ transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness, accountability, and restoring traditional institutions (Missens 2008, 9–10).

The extent to which governance strategies that are carried out through the field struggle meet these goals – goals which, for the most part, are focussed on *including* members of the Aboriginal community²⁶ who are affected by and exercising their inherent rights – creates the ‘self’ in self-governance. For example, including women in Aboriginal self-governance initiatives is necessary in order to cast the process as a collective process concerned with the ‘self’ of the Aboriginal group (Napoleon 2009, 235). Without decision-making processes geared toward the needs of the community, “self”-governance processes can be directed by outsiders (to suit the needs of dominant field actors) or by internal (Aboriginal) ‘elites’ who are the only ones to profit from the process.

Thus, explicitly in an urban Aboriginal context, self-governance can be seen as the “individual and collective control over the structures and processes of everyday Aboriginal life” (Newhouse 2000, 403). Broader than self-government, this goal of self-determination occurs when “the major structures and process of Aboriginal life . . . [are] largely under Aboriginal control and will influence identity, education, and government” (Newhouse 2000, 407). Although this definition is tied to the education field, it works in the housing field as well; understanding housing as one of the social, cultural, economic goals of self-determination (as described in the UN Declaration) makes it a goal for control by Aboriginal people, easily incorporating the concept of self-governance into the struggle of the housing field. Thus, this definition captures the fact that self-governance is not just political (and tied to economics) but cultural and social,

²⁵ Defined as the natural law of the Creator, *not* the liberal idea of government law.

²⁶ It is suggested that the concept of “community government performance” may be a more appropriate substitute for the language of ‘good governance’ because it “encompasses the extent to which a community government achieves the outcomes desired by its constituents” (Limerick 2011, 90).

because it involves institutions (structures) *and* non-institutional (processes) forces.

This concept of self-governance also ties in to the right of self-determination.²⁷ The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples says that:

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions (United Nations 2007 Art. 18).

Again, this definition may be overly focused on institutions, but it is argued that Aboriginal people are entitled to, and need, governance arrangements that are consistent with the right to self-determination because structures of ‘settler governance’ (state policies, rigid laws, foreign government agendas) are incompatible with Indigenous lives and ways of governing (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 75). At the same time, by stating that Indigenous people *have the right to participate in decision-making*, it calls for, but does not describe, the kinds of *inclusive* governance and self-determination arrangements alluded to above.

Self-determination can also call for the making and (re)claiming of space, free from the centralizing roles of the state, free market capitalism, and individualizing liberalism. The concept of self-governance opens up space for pre/post-colonial methods of collective self-determination; it has been argued that (self) governance is to Aboriginal self-determination concepts what (self) government is to settler state self-determination concepts (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 76).

Looking for self-governance in case studies is also much more compatible with what is observed in the urban housing field. Asking questions about whether, how, and why the field exhibits signs of people doing “self-determining

²⁷ Although the Declaration did not state that the right to self-determination was inherent, it did recognize that Indigenous peoples do have “inherent rights” derived from “their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources” (United Nations 2007, annex).

governance” — self-governance with goals of self-determination in mind (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 77), allows one to see the extent to which urban Aboriginal people are exercising decision-making control within the field while using their own concepts of governance in ways that are not colonial extensions of the settler state.

Finally, normative self-governance outcomes such as community inclusion and accountability to the community “flow from the principles of self-determination” (Frideres 2008, 130). Thus, looking for the “self” in self-governance can mean looking for the (re)introduction or affirmation of traditional methods of governance, or traditional cultural practices and concepts, into governance strategies that help secure Aboriginal control (Coates and Morrison 2008, 117). In other words, this means engaging in the field struggle by using Aboriginal (cultural and social) capital.

This, in a sense, requires differentiating between being *governed* and *governing*. Tully describes how one is “subject to a relationship of governance (that is to say, governed) *and* simultaneously and primarily, is an active agent in the field of a governance relationship” (Tully 2008, 3). This relationship of governance is not only the institutional governments of the state, but “the broad sense of any relationship of knowledge, power and subjection that governs the conduct of those subject to it” (Tully 2008, 3). Within this relationship, individuals and groups can be subjected to colonial “relationships of inequality, dependency, and exploitation,” however people can also engage in resistance strategies, what Tully calls “practices of civic freedom” in which they can act:

together on the field of governance relationships and against the oppressive and unjust dimensions of them. These range from ways of ‘acting otherwise’ within the space of governance relationships to contesting, negotiating, confronting and seeking to transform them . . . [in order] to bring oppressive and unjust governance relationships under the ongoing shared authority of the citizenry subject to them (Tully 2008, 3–4).

In this sense, studying governance allows us to understand how Aboriginal people, subjected to dominant governance relationships (including internal domination), can resist oppression.

Looking at governance allows one to see “how governments and other social organizations interact, how they relate to citizens, and how decisions are taken” (J. Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003, 1). Examining the power relations (what it is and why/how it is reproduced) between and among actors and institutions/groups is central. Since field theory is about studying relations, it is especially useful here. In a Bourdieusian context, the state itself is a field or subfield, with its own agents — a “state nobility” (Kalpagam 2006) — who have capital, habitus, etc. As the state is a result of a historical process of concentrating capital (such as physical force, economic capital, informational capital, and symbolic capital), the same can be said of less institutionalized and even non-institutionalized governing (decision-making) groups in society. Aboriginal orders of government and Aboriginal governance processes are both rooted in specific histories through which groups of people (with shared histories and interests in the field’s stakes) have accumulated and concentrated capital.

Governance processes that decide how resources are distributed are simultaneously the main struggles of the field and the (high) stakes. Studying self-governance therefore involves looking at how decisions are made by analyzing how the field is structured and how capital is distributed. This division results in inclusions and exclusions. These processes of goal-based governing, “interventions that seek to act upon constituted objects towards desired ends,” are standardized and framed in policy discourse, in order to be understandable and (somewhat) predictable, creating methods of accountability (Kalpagam 2006, 84–85). By studying habitus, we can see how people (consciously or not) decide to participate in the field struggle and why some choose (or choose not to) participate in the symbol-laden governance processes of the housing field.

In field theory, we see how processes of governance (especially self-government regimes) are also responsible for replicating themselves by defining, through doxa, what ‘true’ governance is. This reproduces power structures (that privilege the dominant) as well as knowledge about how governance ‘should’ work. The state and state structures (including Aboriginal organizations) are therefore simultaneously created objectively (in their institutions and

mechanisms) but also subjectively — in how they shape our perceptions and thoughts through symbolic violence (Kalpagam 2006, 89; Bourdieu 1998b, 40). Field theory can thus shed light on how colonial institutions reinforce colonial ideas about how power and resources should be divided in the housing field. Through governance processes, institutions (such as the state and its agents) make us forget that they are biased and their legitimacy is arbitrary.

In addition to understanding field structures, we must consider the field actors' own habitus, something more often overlooked in the literature as it is harder to do. By seeking to understand the force that gendered, colonial, and neoliberal field structures and doxa exert in shaping our roles, experiences, beliefs, and actions in the field, we can see how people reproduce the field, even when it means reproducing a field that perpetuates their domination. Most significantly, introducing a gendered lens into the study of the housing field, as will be seen in the next section, provides a useful means for critiquing the place of habitus in field theory; when 'rescued' by feminist scholars, field theory provides tools to show us how Aboriginal women and men can act against gendered and colonial systems of governance and try to challenge the field's structure and its dominant behaviour-conditioning ideas.

2.4 DIVISIONS AMONG ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND MEN

Having already established the foundations and basic concepts of field analysis and the context of study (urban Aboriginal governance) this section lays the groundwork for understanding the different roles and experiences of women and men in the housing field — an axis of analysis which is essential for understanding how the field operates, why it is reproduced, and where space for resistance to colonialism and neoliberalism may lie. Here, we revisit field analysis and governance, asking what it means to apply a gendered analysis to the urban Aboriginal (housing) field.

This section is based on three primary goals. First, it looks at the large body of literature on women and housing on which this study draws in order to develop a gendered frame of analysis. This will also explain why questions of

gender are important to ask; they tell us vital things about the structure of the field and agents' dispositions within it. Second, despite the size of the first body of literature, I look at how, historically, much of the literature on (urban) Aboriginal people and housing has ignored the relevance of gendered forces. Finally I look at how field analysis has been problematized, and adapted, by feminist researchers. This final part will demonstrate how it is used in this study for addressing questions about gender.

Gender is “an ‘inherited’ and embodied way of being that is shaped in interaction with social fields, constituting a repertoire of orientations and dispositions” (McLeod 2005, 19). More simply put, gender is understood here as the cultural constructions that are imposed on a sexed body (J. Scott 1986, 1056). It is seen in socially constructed expectations for the ‘proper’ behaviour of both women and men, which will vary in time and place, and in the relations between them (Beall and Levy 1995, 28).

In this dissertation, I make use of gender analysis to show how women and men operate in particular social contexts. This dissertation describes how I saw gendered differences mobilized in the field, noting that patriarchal forces of domination create differences in power, experiences, and roles in the housing field (explained using the tools of field theory). Gender analysis, as will be seen, can be used in diverse ways, from a shallow (or liberal) analysis to a much deeper consideration of how gender identities are created and contested. The ways I have used this complex concept is limited by the purpose of my study, the scope of my questions asked, and, as will be seen, participants' willingness to engage in questions about gender. My approach is inspired by different sources that employ gender to study, among other topics, housing policy in Canada.

First, in a basic sense, the government of Canada uses gender-based analysis (GBA). It defines GBA as:

a lens of analysis that examines existing differences between women's and men's socio-economic realities as well as the differential impacts of proposed and existing policies, programs, legislative options, and agreements on women and men (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999, 5)

GBA means assessing differential impacts of the field on women and men's lives and to interweave that analysis, not simply tack it on (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999), and it is a process for "questioning whether, how, and why" women's and men's experiences may be different or similar (Jackson, Pederson, and Boscoe 2006, 2). It is claimed that gender-based analysis leads to "informed policy-making and good governance" (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999, 4) as it is concerned with evaluating and critiquing inclusivity in government.

The federal government has supported gender-based analysis since the 1990s (Clow et al. 2009, 5) as have a number of provincial governments (Jackson, Pederson, and Boscoe 2006, 2). Several federal government departments, including Indian Affairs, have also adopted GBA protocols (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999). INAC is required to use gender-based analysis for looking at its policies, programs, regulations, and legislation, as well as during consultations and negotiations for self-government agreements and land claims. The Assembly of First Nations has also committed to begin using GBA (Assembly of First Nations 2007a; Dell and Poole 2009). Despite all of these commitments, GBA is still "frequently absent from policy and policy making" in federal and provincial governments and departments (Jackson, Pederson, and Boscoe 2006, 2) including in housing fields (McCracken 2004).

GBA lines of inquiry allow researchers to question assumptions and understand causal relations in society (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999). It is best understood as a tool, a way of thinking, and a process for understanding differences *and* similarities between the experiences of women and men, in society and in "power and decision-making" (Haworth-Brockman and Isfeld 2008, 1,8; Clow et al. 2009, 1; Healey 1995, 50), rather than as a rigid set of inadaptible questions. GBA is hence about *relational* analysis, rather than looking at women, or men, in isolation (Native Women's Association of Canada 2009a, 1).

This makes gender-based analysis compatible with the purposes of field analysis. It also fits with research questions on governance as the "purpose of

gender-based analysis . . . is to provide good advice to decision-makers” (McNutt 2010, 5). And it is the relational aspects of GBA, looking at women and men (Healey 1995, 50) that prevents us from considering the experiences of men in the housing field as universal. This approach demonstrates not just differential experiences but how they are created by the uneven distribution of capital, differences in habitus, how doxa shape priorities, and most importantly here, the way in which the field has been structured in order to have one sex dominate another.

The literature on gender and housing shows that there are systemic gendered differences between (and among) women’s and men’s experiences in the housing field. For example, a gendered analysis has shown how men and women have different reasons for moving; women are more likely to move in order to escape violence than men (Davis 2001, 190). Aboriginal men are more likely to move for work (Norris and Clatworthy 2003). Socially constructed (doxic common sense) ideas about women being carers cast them as responsible for housing, maintaining the home, and providing a home for their families (Chant 1996, 1, 42–43; Healey 1995, 51, 53), while the ‘official’ politics of the (urban) Aboriginal field, the realm of ‘self-government,’ is often treated as men’s work (A. Smith 2005).

One could use this to argue that only men are involved in governance relationships. However, by expanding this focus and looking outside official politics, at so-called grassroots spaces, we see how Indigenous women, through their work in culturally-based social networks, “are central to sustaining urban Indian community life” (Ramirez 2007, 3–4). Field theory gets us to look beyond just institutions and at the social relationships that constitute diverse people’s lived experiences. Using field theory to look at gender difference shows us why some women and men can have differences in their habituses and the distributions of their capital (Bourdieu 2001). Field doxa, field rules, and regulations and symbolic violence cast women and men in gendered roles that structure how they can and do engage in the housing field’s struggle.

In light of claims that most understandings of gender and GBA are based on Eurocentric experiences, some Aboriginal groups have recently been working on culturally appropriate GBA models and systems in order to ask gender-related questions relevant to their history, culture, politics, and lives (Assembly of First Nations 2007a; Native Women's Association of Canada 2009a; Native Women's Association of Canada 2009b; Native Women's Association of Canada 2007). These are further elaborated in Chapter Four.

Thus, women or men are not monolithic groups and individuals' capacities to resist oppressive field structuring will vary based on their habitus and capital as well. For example, it is argued that mothers, who are less likely to be employed or own a house than men, are more impacted by market forces; as a result, they are disproportionately reliant on someone else's income to afford housing (Davis 2001, 189). Because of the sexual division of labour that causes men not to seek custody of children, women are more likely to be single-parents; this is both a privilege and a responsibility, but it does not come with an automatic right to housing (Gutierrez 2000, 40). Having to find housing while supporting a family is a dual burden experienced by many women in the city.

Within the field, women and men experience symbolic violence differently. Many women are seen as 'risks' by landlords because of a perceived likelihood (again, "common sense") of not being able to pay rent (Davis 2001). As a more visible manifestation of such ideas, they are also more likely to suffer discrimination or harassment by landlords or those who work in their buildings (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 1995).

Ideas about "the home" are rooted in unquestioned ideas about ideal family structure (Bourdieu 2005). As in France, mainstream (settler) ideas about 'the home' or how to house people are imposed in Canada along with their gendered implications. For example, in Alberta, the "'common sense' understanding of femininity," in which women are presumed as weak and needing protection, led the (archetypically-neoliberal) Klein government to fund women's shelters at the same time that it dramatically reduced social spending (including housing) under the "wholesale rejection of the legitimacy of claimsmaking by

groups not associated with the business sector” (Harder 2003, 129, 120). This enactment of symbolic violence, in which the same government that cut supports for women’s groups and ignored women’s advocacy organizations, invoked ‘compassion’ in order to appear to be saving women and providing the homes they ‘deserve.’ At the same time, it ensured that shelters would remain reliant on the state for funding, hindering any radical changes to systemic power imbalances. Patriarchal forces therefore play a significant role in shaping gendered identities in the field so as to reproduce patriarchal power structures.

Because Canadian ideas about what makes a home are rooted in the ideal of the self-reliant, patriarchal nuclear family, family types that deviate from this norm, a departure determined by a deviation in gender roles, will experience the housing field in different ways (Beall and Levy 1995, 29). Thus, women and men are systemically treated differently (predominantly by male, non-Aboriginal landlords) in seeking housing because of traditional ideas (doxa) about how families should be structured and about who is most ‘deserving’ of housing (Davis 2001).

Formal ways of addressing gendered inequality resulting from and contributing to the distribution of power in the housing field have also varied. For example, the “Women in Development” (WID) approach helped create women’s organizations to address issues in housing. This, however, marginalized women in ‘their’ organizations which tended to be weaker, underfunded, and powerless (Beall and Levy 1995, 29). In WID, women were seen as ‘problems’ to be overcome by inserting them into mainstream systems (Chant 1996, 48) similar to the universalist approach noted above in relation to colonialism. It is argued that gender integrated approaches for looking at gendered inequality help more by ensuring that women have the tools to integrate a gendered perspective into planning processes. Second, this kind of approach encourages mainstream organizations to be more accountable and inclusive, while ensuring that there is an equal access to the resources necessary to effect change (Beall and Levy 1995, 29). It also calls for efforts not to essentialize women into one group with a common gendered experience (Chant 1996, 48; Mansbridge 1999). This leaves

room for other identities that further problematize the relationships between and among women and men.

As stated, none of the gendered experiences described above should imply that women are a homogenous group or that women cannot dominate each other (A. Smith 2005; Lorde 2004). Aboriginal women's poverty is magnified as they are "doubly marginalized by the interlocking effects of sexism and racism" (Native Women's Association of Canada 2009a, 1).²⁸ A "gendered vertical mosaic" in Canada ensures that not only are some racial groups hierarchized above others (Abu-Laban 2002), but that the gendered structuring of society gives Aboriginal women a double disadvantage; they are oppressed as women, as Aboriginal people, *and* oppressed *as Aboriginal women* in forms of discrimination and violence unique to their identity at a "nexus" or "matrix of identities" (Green 2001, 729; Bakker 1996, 8). This "intersection"²⁹ (Crenshaw 1989; Hawkesworth 2006) of gendered and racialized oppression calls for understanding the diversity of experiences in the housing field.

Thus, Aboriginal experiences and expectations in housing contradict some of the mainstream housing experiences described above. For example, although the claim was made that women, generally, are more likely to rely on a male wage earner to afford housing, many women who participated in fieldwork for this dissertation described situations in which Aboriginal men (who are more likely than non-Aboriginal men to be un(der)employed) relied on Aboriginal women (as recipients of government assistance) for housing supports. These paradoxes of how the dominant field of power creates field actors is visible when considering a multiplicity of questions of analysis.

²⁸ This study will also show that there are women included in the "Aboriginal middle class" and among the poorest inhabitants; Aboriginal women are not a single group either.

²⁹ The idea of "assemblages," as an alternative, highlights how the disciplinary nature of the field creates identities in order to control agents (Puar 2007, 212–215). By privileging naming, identity-creation helps ensure the reproduction of the field when, for example, the state controls the naming of Aboriginal peoples. Puar suggests going beyond intersectionality to be attuned to "movements, intensities, emotions, energies, affectivities, and textures as they inhabit events, spatiality, and corporealities" (Puar 2007, 215). Her work on American exceptionalism in the post 9/11 context may prove useful if applied in future works in a Canadian context involving Indigenous peoples.

At the same time, women in both cities talked of being obliged to move to the city because their band council denied them housing. The loss of Indian status and exclusion from (government created) First Nations groups, has historically been done via gendered and racialized discrimination (Lawrence 2004, 55; Day and Green 2010; Native Women's Association of Canada 2009c). The fact that the 1985 *Act to Amend the Indian Act* (still commonly referred to its designation as "C-31" and seen in statements such as "I got my C-31" or "I'm a C-31") continued gendered discrimination rather than resolve it, and that some Aboriginal political organizations (including the Assembly of First Nations) refused to challenge ongoing status issues, explains why so many Aboriginal women failed to express confidence in their own political leadership (Grammond 2009, 110).

In addition to ascribed, subordinate gender roles and the burden of being carers, Aboriginal women face systemic racism in the form of little to no understanding about their culture (devaluing Aboriginal cultural capital) and values (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005, 41). This creates further problems with landlords and government actors around family structure and caring for families. With cultural values that emphasize the importance of taking in extended family members, having lots of space and the ability to allow people to stay overnight is vital (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005) though this is often at odds with the regulations and expectations of the housing field. Similar to the idea of field mismatch, it is argued that a "problem of translation" happens for Indigenous women (who are gendered at the same time that they are racialized as 'the other' — through patriarchal colonialism) as they have foreign, socially constructed roles and identities foisted upon them when they enter mainstream (urban) society (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 45–46).

As will be seen, Aboriginal women *as Aboriginal women*, face unique issues in housing (as do Aboriginal men as Aboriginal men), though there have been few explicit studies of their unique experiences (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005, 43). As already stated, there are ample relevant studies on gender and housing (Davis 2001; Benzason 2006; Hayden 2005; Beall and Levy 1995; Reitsma-Street 2005; Novac 1996; Kern 2010) and on racism or Indigeneity and housing (Harrison

2001; Walker 2006a; Goering 2007; Lipman 2011; Devine 2004; Lanigan 2004; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2005), but few of these studies look at race and gender (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005). There have been studies on intersectionality and housing outside Canada (Uguris 2004), and when the parameters of urban policy study are taken beyond housing, there are other works that use an intersectional approach in Canada (Straus and Valentino 2009; Janovicek 2009; Jaccoud and Brassard 2003; Peters 2006).

The literature on Aboriginal people and housing in Canada goes back to the 1970s and although much of it is focussed on First Nations housing on reserves, there is a significant body of literature on off-reserve housing as well (Institute of Urban Studies 1970; Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, Winnipeg 1971; Clatworthy 1980b, 1980a; Peters 1984).³⁰ However, rarely does the early literature consider gender as a relevant axis of analysis, or approach gender and race issues together. For example, Clatworthy's ground-breaking study of urban Aboriginal housing in Winnipeg separated statistics into sex-groups but did not explain *why* differences existed (1980b), a trend that is repeated in later work (Cohen and Corrado 2004). Works on housing and Aboriginality are most likely to incorporate a gendered lens when gender is the primary axis of study, and race is a secondary factor (Haworth-Brockman and Donner 2009) or the converse (Peters 1984), although there are exceptions (Guillemin 1975).

Other times, gender is treated as an added-on issue (Harrison 2001). Historical studies that are explicitly focussed on Aboriginal people in housing (where race is not a secondary axis of analysis) rarely consider gender, if at all (Henry 1989; Clatworthy and Stevens 1987; National Indian Brotherhood 1975). Arguably, this reflects the desire of predominantly male (Aboriginal) political leadership to keep the issue of housing grounded as a 'race' (Aboriginal group membership) or treaty issue and to offer a united, single voice on Aboriginal housing (National Indian Brotherhood 1975; Gribbons 1976; Devine 2004; Lanigan 2004). Governments, unwilling to consider systemic forces of gender

³⁰ Much of this is Winnipeg-centred because of the location of the Institute of Urban Studies.

domination or reluctant to wade into a contentious area of identity politics, reinforce this when they fail to consider the relevance of gender as a cause of inequality and essentialize Aboriginal people into one genderless (or single-class) group.

Despite government desires to be gender-blind, state actors do enter into this debate when such action is used to expand state control over Aboriginal people's lives. For example, extending matrimonial property laws to First Nations people living on reserve, by using the language of helping women (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2003; CBC 2008), has helped increase the government's, and CMHC's, involvement in encouraging private property/housing ownership on reserve (Fiss 2006).³¹ These changes were made in spite of assertions by the Assembly of First Nations that First Nations have their own traditional laws regarding marriage and property (Assembly of First Nations 2007b).

As housing has a gendered dimension, so does governance. Because so much public and academic emphasis is on 'high' (Abele and Prince 2002, 228) or 'official' (Abu-Laban 2002, 277) politics of the field of power, defined by and occupied by men (Pateman 1992), we often fail to address the role that gender or women play in public life. Work on Aboriginal governance can reproduce this gendered dichotomy and it has been shown that existing (institutional focussed) ways of studying governance can erase or conceal women (Native Women's Association of Canada 2009a, 2; Fiske 1996; Altamirano-Jiménez 2007; McIvor 2004). Yet, newer work is starting to show that in Aboriginal politics, women play significant roles in Aboriginal governance (Saunders 2012; Saunders 2010; Voyageur 2008). Understanding what these roles are, how they are created, and why they persist is vital to understanding the housing field if it is to be a key target for Aboriginal self-governance.

Shedding light on the differential nature of people's habitus in the housing field (rather than essentializing groups) demonstrates how people react to

³¹ Of course, the state also ventured into this area with the original *Indian Act* when it imposed male-led systems of government on band councils and established the sexist provisions for losing Indian status.

domination differently, as well. For example, a similar study in Mexico argued that, in different ways, Indigenous women do resist oppressive state and market forces. There, a group of diverse women acted collectively to challenge patriarchal laws, and by gaining representation on key decision-making bodies, they secured a public housing project (Gutierrez 2000, 44). Acting collectively and engaging in governance (in the broadest, non-institutional sense identified in the previous section) is key to resisting dominance by field institutions, and even gendered sources of capital and habitus may be sources of such power. Looking at the history of field actors can show how bringing new forms of capital and habitus into the field can disrupt its structuring effects and challenge its common sense assumptions.

Questions about gender are therefore central to field analysis, even if Bourdieu did not adequately or convincingly explain how or use it throughout his analysis of the housing field. Because habitus is so important to social reproduction (the reproduction of not just the population but subjective feelings of cultural loyalty) and social reproduction is inherently tied to the gendered division of labour in society, the differential impact of the field on women and men, and the reciprocal effects of women and men on shaping the field, must be examined (Bourdieu 2001). Since power (in the guise of dominance) is so relevant to field analysis, it must be acknowledged that the gendered division of capital and shaping of habitus play important parts in determining one's position within the field.

The intertwined colonial forces of sexism and racism can be exposed and (though Bourdieu is less clear about this) contested. Although one option open to Aboriginal people is to try to accumulate enough social, economic, and political capital to have control over their own housing affairs, this can often require opting into all the rules of the field and playing its racist, sexist, and colonial game — and risk assimilating. Aboriginal women could pursue self-government only to find that the male-dominated political organizations that promote Aboriginal control over Aboriginal affairs are themselves dominated by Aboriginal men (who are dominated by non-Aboriginal field structures and actors). Feminists have

pointed out that colonized women are often told to wait until ‘after the revolution’ to have sexism in their communities addressed only to find that it never is; patriarchal power relations adopted before or during colonization processes end up being retained by those (men) in power if they are not questioned during decolonization (McClintock 1995; Peterson 1996). One could end up replacing one set of dominant field actors with another.

Altering habitus or fostering habitus/field mismatch — thereby ending the reproduction of dominance — is therefore essential for resistance (Hoy 2004). But seeking emancipation from field dominance is something for which Bourdieu leaves little room, possibly because it is so difficult to take place (C. Cronin 1996, 79; Lawler 2004). As a result, a number of authors claim that his theory does not explain how to break habitus and subvert domination; the field, and hence habitus, are too pessimistic or deterministic³² (McLeod 2005). Can Aboriginal women or men resist domination? How can change happen if the field is being reproduced by field-matching (sexist, neoliberal, colonial) habituses? Some feminist authors take exception to some of Bourdieu’s bleaker descriptions of power and offer ways of ‘saving’ field theory.

Bourdieu conceded that in times of crisis, the rules can be changed (Bourdieu 1992; C. Cronin 1996, 76) and despite a pessimistic attitude recognized that resistance is possible, albeit difficult (Wacquant 1992, 24; Bourdieu 1987). Bourdieusian critics have also offered commentary on how, for example, women can resist masculine domination. One strategy that fits within field theory is for women to identify the “dehistoricization that sustains masculine domination” (Chodos and Curtis 2002, 406) and demonstrate the exploitative roots of the division of capital.

A second strategy is to look for social practices that attack the male/female binary of domination as such (Chodos and Curtis 2002, 407). Identifying gaps in the field between social structures and individual practices (i.e. finding habitus

³² Bourdieu’s work helps us see that “pessimism is not the same as determinism; that resistance takes many forms; and that, in any case, for many groups of people, change is very difficult to effect, no matter how much they resist. This is what it means to be dominated” (Lawler 2004, 124–125).

that is not the result of the field — ‘outsider’ or imported habitus) can destabilize the reproduction of dominant structures (Chodos and Curtis 2002, 411). As will be seen, contrary to what traditional Bourdieusians may expect, there is evidence of non-Aboriginal people learning to value Aboriginal (imported) forms of capital and cases where Aboriginal habitus at odds with the urban housing field, have called the field structure into question. Others also find that a focus on capital is most useful for using field analysis to ask questions about gender. For example, one must look at amounts of capital, its composition, its use over time, and how/when it is used, asking whether women accumulate capital themselves or act as repositories for others’ capital (Lovell 2000, 22). In the case studies that are analyzed in this dissertation, we find instances of Aboriginal women and men actualizing their own capital, rather than choosing to be co-opted into existing field structures. For example, Aboriginal women in Winnipeg meet to educate each other about how to navigate the housing bureaucracy (using their social capital to find a home). In both cities, there are also cases where Aboriginal people use their cultural capital in designing housing and support programs that meet their communities’ needs, rather than replicating programs that are based on dominant, colonial standards.

A gendered approach to field analysis can also mean seeing power not only as a male/female binary, but rather recognizing that there are multi-layered relations among actors in the field (Mottier 2002, 355). For example, while there are many Aboriginal women who live in poverty in the city, there are also many Aboriginal women who work in social services (especially affordable housing), providing or denying services to these same women (Fiske and Browne 2006). Likewise, Aboriginal men are disproportionately over-represented among the homeless population and in the top ranks of the Aboriginal political field.

Thus, failing to recognize societal differentiation within the field (as some claim Bourdieu does) overemphasizes the field/habitus alignment (McLeod 2005; McNay 1999). People move within and between fields and their imported habitus can be at odds with the field. Contextualized field analysis highlights generational change, the effects of exposure from other fields and how actors can actually be

reflexive about their dispositions (McLeod 2005). We can also examine the field's rules for hidden flexibility, seeing how a diversity of habitus within a field can lead to change, and how new conditions, such as a crisis, can also change habitus (McLeod 2005, 17; C. Cronin 1996, 76).

Finally, there is the issue of the internalization of symbolic violence leading to complicity in one's own domination. As stated, a Bourdieusian understanding of symbolic violence means that the dominated are complicit in their own domination by internalizing oppressive habituses and 'playing the game' in a way that privileges the dominant. This brings up the question of whether Aboriginal women and men can be said to lack awareness of their situation, misunderstand their position in the field, or pursue activities that are harmful, believing that they are helpful. Bourdieu stated that "every established order tends to produce . . . the naturalization of its own arbitrariness" (1977, 164), and so claimed that people in a field are said to internalize doxa and fail to question them.

This problematic statement could be used to argue that Aboriginal women and men, or any other oppressed group, are recreating or consenting to their own marginalization. This is something that Bourdieusian feminists have taken issue with (McLeod 2005; Kraus 1993) and I will be arguing that doxa is only incorporated to a point — people do give in to common sense ideas but are also conscious of the injustice they experience. Bourdieu's work calls into question what conscious activity in the field is, but there is a difference between embracing the field and resignation to the inevitable (J. Scott 1990, 76).

For example, he claimed that self-oppressing internalization meant attributing to oneself what is attributed, refusing what is refused, adjusting expectations to chances, and defining oneself as one is defined by the field (Bourdieu 1984, cited by J. Scott 1990, 76). This ambiguous idea about whether internalization is conscious can be saved by a "thin" view of naturalization in which a person's acceptance of what they feel as inevitable is not the same as seeing it as legitimate; they can still recognize injustice when they see it (J. Scott 1990, 79). But even this explanation fails to account for the imagination of the

dominated to tell what is or is not inevitable or the fact that Aboriginal people are not completely colonized:

No matter how relentlessly domineering governors try to implant [colonization] . . . they invariably fail to ‘construct’ the other all the way down. . . . This is the constrained space in which Indigenous peoples and others have exercised the arts of resistance and survived centuries of imperialism (Tully 2008, 278).

Some people (such as the Aboriginal middle-class) may comply with field doxa, such as the colonial ideas that support the racialized state, because they believe that if they do, they will some day occupy a position of power within it and dominate others.

However, it is claimed that even this level of co-option into domination (seen when actors participate in an oppressive field) is hard to maintain on a large scale (J. Scott 1990, 82), nor can all urban Aboriginal people be assimilated — some will always be marginalized in order to be cast in opposition to those ‘good’ Aboriginal people who have ‘succeeded.’ As the urban Aboriginal population increases, so too will the demands for inclusion by Aboriginal people who do not occupy positions of power — opening space for contesting the field. Thus, people are more aware of their position in the field than implied by the strictest Bourdieusian approaches. People are knowledgeable about the social world, and critics claim that “the role in social life of deliberate, knowing, decision-making, informed by whatever rationality is the order of the day, is vastly under-estimated by Bourdieu” (Jenkins 1992, 97). This hidden consciousness in field analysis means that people do have ways to change the field and power relations in it; this is even the case with using field analysis to demonstrate women’s (tempered) resistance.

For example, Mahar’s study in Mexico shows that because there is an expectation (a habitus based on certain gendered doxa) that women are responsible for the family, they get access to certain forms of capital: their husband’s pay, their children’s labour, and household goods, in addition to their own economic projects (2010, 37). She argues that her research demonstrates how women use symbolic capital in the “role as a good mother and reliable community

person” and transform this into other forms of capital — through the process of the capital exchange Bourdieu described — such as social networks and economic capital in the form of jobs and other financial resources (Mahar 2010, 36).

Although this example of capital exchange may undermine Bourdieu’s bleak picture of how masculine domination shapes fields in order to preserve male interests (Bourdieu 2001; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 171–172), Mahar noted that women’s capital was only consciously recognized as being valuable in “maintaining social relationships among households, it was unrecognized as contributing to women’s positions within and beyond the household” (Mahar 2010, 36–37). Thus, although women found ways to secure valuable capital in the field, the internalized doxic idea that the household was women’s work and that women’s capital was not as valuable outside this sphere helped ensure that the women in question misrecognized their position and prevented more radical changes in the field. This study will show that some Aboriginal women and men use the capital that they accumulate through gendered experiences in order to meet their needs in the patriarchal/colonial bureaucratic sphere. This, however, leads to only limited change because it must take place within oppressive fields.

Thus, while it is true that not all men will be in positions of power in all fields, and not all women will be dominated by all men (something that Bourdieu may have oversimplified), looking at women and men’s access to different forms of capital shows how the housing field follows gendered and colonial power systems. These privilege some over others and (re)create certain habituses in order to preserve the field’s power relations and relations to the field of power. For example, the idea that the home is the feminine sphere, and hence activities related to the home constitute women’s (unpaid and/or devalued) work (Waring 1988; Hochschild 2000; Pateman 1992) positions the field and the people who work within it as subordinate to other fields occupied by powerful (more likely male) people with valuable capital. Further, those who have connections to powerful economic fields — again, people who are more likely to be male and/or non-Aboriginal — will fare better in the housing field.

Despite this appearance of strict gender domination, it will be seen how in the housing field (in which many women occupy positions of power) certain women with access to certain kinds of capital are able to pursue their goals effectively, interrupting or challenging the broader systems of domination. How they manage this is essential to understanding field resistance and to complicating the gender binary within the field — some women can access sites of power; some men are in dominated positions. Fieldwork showed how some Aboriginal men also defy gendered doxa by ‘doing housing’ and being responsible for raising children. It will be seen that some Aboriginal women appear better positioned to question and resist historical systems of domination, because of their habitus and capital that they have accumulated through means that can only be understood when interrogating the gendered distribution of power and resources in the field. Thus, while field theory has faced some issues in the context of gender, it still provides important tools for looking at how the field is structured and contested.

2.5 THE NEOLIBERAL STRUCTURING OF THE FIELD AND ITS ACTORS

This final section brings together and unites the concepts discussed above, placing the research question in a context which considers the political economic forces that shape the housing field, influence the actors in it, and condition how governance of the field takes place. Foremost, this section will define the predominant, contemporary political economic set of forces and then tie this to the topics described above.

Neoliberalism can be defined as a “mode of governance” based on the repudiation of the welfare state (W. Brown 2005, 37). Characterized by an unrestrained free market, competition, free trade, deregulation, social policy that favours business, indifference toward poverty, depoliticizing difference-blindness, among other things, it is more than just an approach to politics and the economy (with certain effects) but a “*political rationality* that both organizes these policies and reaches beyond the market” (W. Brown 2005, 38, emphasis in original); it “carries a social analysis that, when deployed as a form of governmentality, reaches from the soul of the citizen-subject to education policy to practices of

empire” (W. Brown 2005, 39). Through neoliberalism, market values extend beyond questions of economics “*to all institutions and social action*” (W. Brown 2005, 40, emphasis in original).

Neoliberalism, as a “new religion” conditions spaces (and the people in them) as “nonbelievers are typically dismissed as apostate defenders of outmoded institutions and suspiciously collectivist social rights” (Peck and Tickell 2002, 381). This field mismatch happens to those who do not share in the individualizing common-sense ideas upon which neoliberal spaces rely. Peck and Ticknell’s assert that we must look at the local level in order to avoid “overgeneralized accounts of a monolithic and omnipresent neoliberalism, which tend to be insufficiently sensitive to its local variability and complex internal constitution” while still acknowledging neoliberalism is an “extralocal” project (Peck and Tickell 2002, 381–382). Understanding neoliberalism as a *process* shows us that it is not one group of timeless characteristics but the change that is taking place (Peck and Tickell 2002, 383); it also ties the concept in to understand the field struggle and how governance takes place.

In Canada, neoliberalism, is founded upon creating and reproducing a “neo-classical (liberal) economic orientation” (McBride and Shields 1997, 12–13). We can see a shift in politics, and in thinking about politics, that has been based on the “pillars” of privatization, decentralization, and individualization (Brodie 2002a, 99). This “ideological direction” for changing society is premised primarily upon factors such as the internationalization of trade and government policy (Doern, Pal, and Tomlin 1996), a redefinition of citizens as “customers” (Pierre 1995; Clarke 2011; Larner 1997), and changes in the sites of democracy (Clarkson and Lewis 1999; McBride and Shields 1997). These are elaborated and contextualized for housing below.

As stated earlier, Bourdieu identified neoliberalism as one of the key tools of oppression in contemporary society and developed field analysis to address this point (Nelson and Patten 2005; Clarkson and Lewis 1999). He saw neoliberalism as the “pauperization of the state, the commodification of public goods and the generalization of social insecurity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999, 43). This

systemic deregulation of the state has been done with the *complicity* of citizens who have been conditioned to accept the evisceration of the welfare state as the ‘inevitable outcome’ of national evolution — a doxic triumph. Through such symbolic violence writ large, citizens ceded control of social welfare to free market forces, dominated by large corporations. This paradigm also finds its way into the private sphere, shaping the foundation of society — the family (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999).

The neoliberalization of the housing field enables privileged agents to continue to dominate others and — most significantly — enact symbolic violence. For example, in Bourdieu’s massive tome on neoliberalism, he found that the modern dream house is really a nightmare (Bourdieu 1999b; Grenfell 2004, 137). Writing before the 2008 market crash, he saw how many people buy homes they cannot afford and live beyond their means. This is another triumph for the neoliberalization of the state because it was government policies that allowed for the building and rapid purchase of new houses. However, the housing field’s rules were set to make it easier for private housing companies to make money, not to meet human needs. This way of life is designed to feed the free market (Grenfell 2004, 137).

Added to this, Bourdieu noted that a “cult of domestic life” is reinforced by the patriarchal and neoliberal housing field as it centres families around the single unit home and, by extension, individuals around the nuclear family (Cited by Grenfell 2004, 137; Bourdieu 1999b). For many Aboriginal people, whose culture is not historically shaped around single unit dwellings, and who have different family structures, this leads to (as will be seen in the case studies) field mismatch when they participate in the urban housing field. For Aboriginal mothers, opposition to the urban housing field creates new dilemmas since their roles as care-givers must be (re)cast in order to suit a patriarchal and neoliberal culture that focuses on nuclear families and self-help/waged employment.

Further, as Chapter Three will show, the way in which people were incorporated into the welfare state affects their current housing situations. T.H. Marshall noted that citizens rights evolved over time as citizens were accorded

civil rights, then political rights, and then social citizenship rights (Marshall 1963, 71). However, it should be noted that Marshall's theory relies on gendered conceptions of rights and discourses which can exclude women (Lister 1997) because it is based on the historical experiences of European men. For example, women gained political rights *before* civil citizenship and women's civil rights did not lead to full social citizenship (Valentine and Vickers 1996, 166). This reinforces the difference between formal and substantive citizenship.

Extending the ancient, male-centred forms of citizenship (liberal notions of negative freedoms from the state) to women and all Aboriginal people can only provide simple, *formal* equality and fall short of *substantive* equality (Lister 1997). Identity-less norms of citizenship, based on "falsely universalizing one particular group's practice of it," reject claims based on difference (K. Jones 1990, 784; Trimble 1998). Likewise, foisting formal (or liberal) citizenship on Aboriginal people merely conveys them equal (legal) rights as Canadian citizens. Asking questions about substantive equality looks deeper to address the systemic barriers created by patriarchal or colonial legacies and is more concerned with outcomes (Dietz 1987; K. Jones 1990). The inherently liberal blindness to difference is exacerbated under neoliberalism (Harder 2003).

Obscuring this inequality in the neoliberal era implies that everyone had/has equal capacity to enjoy social benefits — the failure of some individuals to enjoy a higher quality of living are seen as 'special needs' (Harrison 2001, 109). As housing strategies are shaped by entrenched ideas such as the need for social integration, managing difference requires seeing these 'others' as 'failures' or failed citizens (Harrison 2001, 110). Aboriginal people who fail in the urban housing field reaffirm the doxa that they are bad citizens and inherently un-urban.

Studying the role of neoliberalism therefore helps tie together many other relevant threads of inquiry. Relevant studies in different contexts have highlighted differential impacts of neoliberalism, showing it is a varied phenomenon (Dodson 2006). For example, a thorough study of housing and difference (disability, gender, and race) in the UK showed that despite a diversity of needs, the free market has become, and remains, the priority in UK housing policy (Harrison

2001, 108). This has meant a focus on individualism, reliance on market housing, and a rejection of the welfare state as a means for meeting housing needs. Renters are consistently cast as social inferiors, as are the poor who fail to have any of their housing goals framed as social or citizenship rights. In addition to eroding citizenship rights, an emphasis on the market also inhibits housing regulations.

Despite common themes in fields and structures typical of neoliberalism, it is important to remember that neoliberalism is not a monolithic, internally uncontested, unified, or homogenous force (Peck and Tickell 2002). In this light, it is more useful to understand neoliberalism in a context of “market governance,”³³ enhanced with feminist or other critical theory to contest it (Larner 2000, 6; Larner 1997). When we recognize that neoliberalism is a *process* that shapes institutions, practices and identities in different, even contradictory ways (Larner 2000, 12; Hackworth 2007, 11), we can recognize its relative and relational power. This makes it easy to insert into a field analysis that looks at the differing and relative ways in which neoliberalism affects the people, groups, and institutions in the housing field. The structure of the political economy and the institutions that support it “emerge out of political struggle, rather than being simply imposed in a top-down manner” (Larner 2000, 18). Most importantly, if we demonstrate that neoliberalism is not monolithic, it can be contested and part of the field struggle can be the fight against the manifestations of neoliberalism itself. If neoliberalism is essentialized, then it is harder to understand how to contest it. It is best decentred by describing how contestation (or resistance) goes hand-in-hand with neoliberalism; it is not merely a secondary, reactive effect (Leitner et al. 2007, 8).

It is important to note that in Canada, because of the multilevel government system, one must also not blindly adopt a monolithic notion of “the state.” For example, in studying the impact of neoliberalism on political-economic culture, a ‘levels of analysis’ theory shows how there can be a difference between

³³ Defined here, and taken from “neo-Foucaultian” concept of governmentality, as recognizing that less government (thanks to neoliberalism) does not mean less governance whereby individuals and institutions are encouraged to conform with neoliberalism (Larner 2000, 12).

approaches to public policy at the national, sectoral, and agency levels (Howlett 2003). Thus, different factors found at different levels will create various, even conflicting, habitus such as administration styles that exist in a “nested” relationship to the other scales (Howlett 2003, 485). This has led to the relational, multi-layered provision of state services. There is a similar argument to be made about how levels shape relationships and identities of urban Aboriginal people since scales are socially constructed, relational, contradictory, contested, and have material outcomes (Peters 2006, 315–316). This is easily tied to field analysis because the “scales through which social services are provided for First Nations women constituted them as certain kinds of citizens” (Peters 2006, 315). As will be seen, the passing of responsibility for Aboriginal people between governments has led to identity creation as Aboriginal people learn which governments will recognize which people or rights. A convoluted mix of governments has suited each government well as it decentres Aboriginal rights claims, making the downloading of the related social fields (especially off-reserve housing) much easier.

A “nested” (Howlett 2003) approach to studying neoliberal governance³⁴ also demonstrates how citizenship can be viewed differently at different levels of analysis. Similarly, multi-scalar research demonstrates how different scales, ranging from the national to the local, differently shape urban Aboriginal identities as each level of government plays a different role in shaping rights (Peters 2006; Ley 2007). These approaches demonstrate that there are differences in the habitus of government agents, and so not all governments will follow the same doxa to the same extent or in the same way. Further, different policies and bureaucratic cultures open (and close) space for public participation at different levels and scales.

Thus, multi-scalar study tells us that even if the federal state starts treating its citizens as customers, people can still feel more politically empowered at the

³⁴ A neo-institutionalist model also demonstrates how variances in “logic and practice” (or doxa and field structure) lead to different administrative styles (or habitus) that are “long-lasting, quasi-permanent arrangements establishing a trajectory of activity that is very difficult to change” (Howlett 2003, 471, 477).

local level (R. Johnson and Mahon 2004) where more spaces for disagreement have made neoliberalism less pervasive. Local, community-based public services may be better able to respect citizens' social and political rights and cultural and economic needs, provided that the (economic) capital exists (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003). Such analysis is useful as many, especially Aboriginal people and women, tend to participate more at the local level due to its accessibility and its capacity to allow for different conceptions of citizen participation (K. Jones 1990; Lister 1997; Silver et al. 2006; Walker 2006b; Todd 2000, 53). Political scientists often have a bias in looking at "official politics" (such as the state) instead of "unofficial politics" (such as community organizations) which are closer to the private sphere (Abu-Laban 2002, 277). Contemporary concepts of political participation and citizenship must be re-thought in order to empower Aboriginal women and men by demonstrating how neoliberalism is neither monolithic nor incontestable. Looking only at state retrenchment (Bashevkin 2000) misses important points such as the actors left picking up the pieces of political capital in order to attempt to self-govern, and the inherent jurisdictional conflicts that arise (Todd 2000). This is especially the case with urban Aboriginal people who find themselves living in the "jurisdictional maze" (K. Graham and Peters 2002, 9; Government of Canada 1996 v.3, c.4) of the city where multilevel governances takes place, shedding light on neoliberalism's varied impacts across scales.

As such, neoliberalism (working in conjunction with colonialism and patriarchy) has diverse effects on urban housing fields. This dissertation looks at a number of impacts that are demonstrated in both case studies. Key examples of the effects of the changing political-economic order on the housing field have direct impacts on policy, people, and processes therein. These inter-related features include downloading, 'getting out' of housing, privatization, partnerships, seeing government as a business, depoliticization, relying on the voluntary sector, self-reliance, the citizen-customer model, and difference-blindness. I expand on these, briefly, here.

The primary aspect of neoliberalism that complicates the housing field is the effort by governments to promote the free market and let it operate

unrestrained by public intervention. Governments thus divest their responsibility for providing social services — the ‘hollowing out’ of the state. Most often, these social responsibilities, such as the provision of housing supports, are downloaded to other levels of government and then to individuals or groups outside the government. This was especially the case with housing (Hulchanski 2004). Neoliberalism is typified by the idea that the free market should be unrestricted and so regulation of housing and the accompanying spending is passed on to another part of the field.

As a result of this attempt to download housing, the idea of completely making housing (and other social programs) no longer a government responsibility at all followed. This idea, was coined by former Ontario Premier Mike Harris (neoliberalism-personified) when he said that governments should “get out of the business of housing” and leave the market to sort it out (quoted in Layton 2008, 237). Services that cannot be downloaded to other governments are farmed out to private for-profit corporations and privatized as government symbolically divests all responsibility for housing — it is no longer to be seen as a social good or right. By disconnecting the housing field from democratic processes (described further with “depoliticization,” below), the public has less say in how services or programs should be managed or delivered.

Another way to offload some services and responsibility is to engage in “partnerships” (Tupper 2001) with the private sector, voluntary organizations, or even other governments. The Aboriginal homeownership programs described in Chapters Five and Six both rely on partnerships between Aboriginal political organizations and private sector actors in the business/property field. The problematic nature of these partnerships is reflected in the differential level of power between governments and private sector organizations (on the one hand) and non-profit, Aboriginal, and voluntary organizations (on the other) as the former, through colonial and liberal aims, seeks to dominate the latter (Ladner 2001; Tully 2008, 274). Dominant actors, as will be seen, can place “strings” on the (diminished) funding they provide and condition dominated partners. Further, partnering between governments is problematized for divesting symbolic

responsibility (by not claiming to be fully responsible) while providing less funding.

State governments also attempt to apply business concepts such as “performativity” or efficiency to public governance (Brodie 1997, 234). As the government adopts management techniques from the private sector in order to shape how social programming is delivered, social rights, which were once supported by governments, can then give way to new forms of “market citizenship” (Bakker and Gill 2003, 29). Canadians, thus become redefined as ‘customers’ of the state, rather than entitled to a certain level of substantive equality (Brodie 1997; Burt 1999; Jenson and Phillips 1996; Pierre 1995; Valentine and Vickers 1996).

Further, Aboriginal people’s rights, when expressed outside the government’s narrowing processes and definitions, complicate matters as they violate the citizen-customers model. Neoliberalism is therefore at odds with (and even seeks to discipline) these different ideas of citizenship that violate the formal equality of the individual customer-citizen (K. Jones 1990; Trimble 1998; Dietz 1987; Brodie 1997; Walker 2006b; Pierre 1995; Green and Peach 2007, 270; Lister 1997; Denis 1995; Green 2000). Such processes (the disciplining of rights-claiming as well as the control over how claims can be made) are what make Aboriginal rights so hard to invoke. As will be seen, the doxic and *normative* ideas that support neoliberalization and shape ideas about what is best (Bourdieu 2005, 200) pervade the field, changing how we view the state and our responsibilities to each other.³⁵

Aspects of the welfare state that cannot be fully privatized, which include some social services and public consultation or governance processes in the housing field, are passed on to the voluntary sector. It is volunteers, not paid professionals, that look after many aspects of the housing field such as affordable

³⁵ Bourdieu also reflected on the prevalence of new public management, or ‘management theory,’ in the housing field. He called it a literature produced by business schools for business schools that fulfils the same function as the work of sixteenth and seventeenth century European jurists who, in the guise of describing the state, contributed to building it (Bourdieu 2005, 200).

housing boards, support services for women, and housing fundraising projects. As will be seen, much of this slack is picked up by women in the housing fields in question. Volunteer burn out results and is a major issue in the voluntary sector (Government of Alberta 2008; Community Services Council 2003; Evans and Shields 1998). Many voluntary or non-governmental organizations also struggle with inclusion/exclusion issues, which means that governance is again called into question. When capacity is an issue, democracy can be eroded when it is moved from the government and public, accountable processes to scales that lack the funds to handle it (B. Miller 2007).

The idea that citizens are customers and not rights-bearing leads to a doxa of individualistic self-reliance. “Good citizens” are those who recognize and accept the limits of the state’s ability/desire to provide for Canadians. Instead of maintaining social solidarity as a public good, substantive citizenship itself is called into question as people must provide for themselves and secure their *own* futures without relying on the state. Ideas of self-help or individualistic self-reliance discourage or punish people who make claims against the state or turn to it for support (Brodie 1996a; Brodie 1997; Green 1996; Jenson and Phillips 1996; Denis 1995; Andersen 1999).

There are gendered impacts here as some people, such as single mothers, are explicitly targeted (Brodie 1997). Under neoliberalism, the state can refuse to take seriously those people who do not contribute, and the end result is further symbolic stigmatization, not only as single mothers (“vindictive leech moms”), but as a burden on society (Dacks, Green, and Trimble 1995, 280). Neoliberal symbolic violence ensures that people are seen as responsible for their position, especially their poverty. Claims against the state for support must then be made as individuals, not groups. In the housing field, everyone is responsible for how/where they live.

This political economic consensus includes beliefs in a neutral, equitable meritocracy in which the most competent will succeed. Hence, socio-economic indicators that measure the poor conditions of Aboriginal dwellings are assumed to be consequences of Aboriginal people’s own inadequacy, best remedied by

applying measures of ‘progress’ and ‘development’ (Green 2006, 512) which are based on non-Aboriginal/colonial ideas of progress or development. When employment is equated with public participation and the “basis of self-respect,” and autonomy (Mendelson 2004, 1; Richards 2007), it obscures the fact that jobs alone are inadequate to address long-term, systemic, gendered, and racialized group poverty (Rexe 2007; Green and Peach 2007).

In order to endorse a liberal (formal) equality that sees all people free to participate in the market, neoliberal doxa teach us to be blind to difference. Rights claims based on group status must be denied, as must the claims that any particular groups are systematically oppressed by society or the state. An intersectional approach to the study of neoliberalism shows that when government policies stress the “primacy of private property and market economic forces,” there is a significant impact on Aboriginal women (Walter 2007, 156) because neoliberalism is not indifferent to gender and race; it, along with colonialism, treats Aboriginal women worse.

Patriarchal neoliberalism exacerbates Aboriginal women’s disadvantages and widens political, social, and economic gaps because it privileges Western culture and whiteness. For example, Aboriginal collective ownership is antithetical to Western ideas of individualism, especially those heightened under neoliberalism (Walter 2007, 160). In Canada, the *Indian Act* transferred collective, sometimes matriarchal, Aboriginal ‘ownership’ of housing to Aboriginal men via certificates of possession, disrupting traditional Aboriginal governance and ways of life (Voyageur 2000, 95).

In another example, Aboriginal people, and especially Aboriginal women, are singled out as welfare-dependent “problems” and associated with the welfare state, which the neoliberal paradigm rejects as amoral because it discourages work (Walter 2007, 161). Behavioural conditions on social support benefits are racialized because they individualize poverty and separate economic problems from their social and historical contexts (Walter 2007, 162). Cuts to social programs hit Aboriginal women hardest because they doubly do not conform to the white male norm (Kline 2005) upon which the neoliberal state is based. It only

legitimizes the direct link between the individual, undifferentiated, ‘neutral’ (really, white male) Canadian and the state (or the individual consumer and the market) (Bakker 1996; Trimble 1998).

Interviews with “whitestream” service providers, and their inability to understand why Aboriginal people want Aboriginal-controlled (“separate”) housing services or institutions, demonstrates the refusal by many non-Aboriginal people to respect Aboriginal rights and citizenship needs, since they cast as merely “special interests” (Walker 2006b; Kymlicka 1998). The new “more efficient” state is less able (or willing) to respond to citizens. For example, when it comes to input from women’s groups, neoliberal governments, which seek to limit the public sphere, are finding it “increasingly easy to ignore the mixed messages” coming from so many different groups (Burt 1999, 410). Another issue here are the government-created (colonial) divisions between groups of ‘Aboriginal’ people. Such questions of identity, diversity, and colonization pose a dilemma, especially in spaces where neoliberalism and colonization intersect. Canada can be called a “raceless state” where state sanctioned multiculturalism is used to symbolically de-racialize the state (Goldberg 2002, 201). Here, “liberalism’s polite racism” (Goldberg 2002, 58) leads to a difference-blind racelessness, “the *logical* implication of racial historicism.”³⁶ It is the perfect blending of modernist rationality and the maintenance of de facto, if deraced, racial domination juridically ordered and exercised” (Goldberg 2002, 203). As Canada grew, urbanized, and created a centralized state, it had to nationalize a coherent identity while erasing the relevance of Indigenous identities that undermined this. Thus, the state can claim to now be raceless while it is actually hiding its racial and racist origins.

“Neoliberal raceless racism” tries to make “racially marked substantive inequalities,” such as Aboriginal homelessness, “beyond the reach of reform or redress, if not altogether invisible” (Goldberg 2009, 237). When neoliberalism is espoused by racist states that purport to be raceless, the inequality of people of

³⁶ Historicism is the Enlightenment idea that elevates Europeans over ‘primitive’ others as the triumph of progress (Goldberg 2002, 43).

colour (especially women of colour, since the gendered state also purports to be genderless) is exacerbated. When difference-blind formal equality is championed over the “costly” social security provisions of the past, urban Aboriginal women who make claims against the state *as Aboriginal women* are relegated as ‘special interests’ who do not belong.

Difference-blindness rests upon the liberal trend of depoliticization. Depoliticization sets new common sense ideas about which political and economic activities are legitimate as it removes the political nature from decision-making (Burnham 2000, 10). Here, dominant field actors “insist that key issues are ‘above,’ ‘below,’ or ‘beyond’ politics in an effort . . . to suggest that there is only one way, or the best way, of proceeding” (Clarke 2011, 240). In the housing field, this is seen in separating housing services from public governance structures and processes. Ironically, “depoliticization is highly political” as it constructs “new public perceptions concerning the ‘neutrality’ (thereby boosting the credibility) of the state” (Burnham 2000, 22). Most research participants denied that they were involved in politics.

Many, as will be seen, also could not recognize the relevance of gender relations to power. This difference-blindness is found in “a context where neoliberal political rationalities frame politics as if gender no longer matters” (Gotell 2010, 220). Sexual domination, such as sexual violence, has become “decontextualized” from the “social power relations that define it” (Gotell 2010, 221). Depoliticization therefore exacerbates domination because it “involves construing inequality, subordination, marginalization and social conflict, all which require political analysis and political solutions, as personal and individual, on the one hand, or as natural, religious or cultural on the other” (W. Brown 2006, 15).

As a result, de-political difference-blindness prevents us from seeing inequality as anything but a personal problem, or else it is seen as natural. In this way, the neoliberal emphasis on the citizen-consumer calls for a “double movement of depoliticization” where the relationship between citizens and public services become redefined as “individualized (contained in the interaction of

consumer and provider)” and “particularized (located in the specific service or need at stake)” (Clarke 2011, 240–241).

As can be seen, it is useful to study neoliberalism in an urban context as it is the “forefront of neoliberalism” (Leitner et al. 2007, 2). Too many studies of neoliberalism have been “placeless” and ignored the fact that neoliberalism is rooted in geographic locations (Hackworth 2007, xii; Chronopoulos 2011; Leitner et al. 2007, 2; Kern 2010, 7). If “cities are key geographic sites for the implementation of neoliberal policies and practices” and they are a scale where neoliberal experiments take place (Kern 2010, 7), then the inner city and the people who live there provide the most useful area and community to study. In a sense, the city is the site as well as the stakes of the field struggle (Kern 2010, 8)

The ‘inner city,’ created as a doxic idea, has become a location for real estate investment, neoliberal experimentation, and changes in governance (Hackworth 2007, 13; Baeten 2007, 50). The people who live in the inner city, more likely to be Aboriginal or people of colour, have thus become constructed as the “undeserving poor” — citizens are more likely to agree that it is all right to take away their social supports (Lipman 2011, 12; Baeten 2007, 49; Chronopoulos 2011, 84). The “neoliberal urban revolution” has most often been “presented as a necessity rather than a choice”; it is taken as common sense that cities need to prioritize financial investments (Baeten 2007, 47) because the hollowed out federal state (and province) has made cities responsible for competitiveness and local democracy (Leitner et al. 2007, 2).

As a result, municipal governments have been encouraged to deregulate or race to the bottom in order to elicit real estate investments. In the “revanchist city,” a neoliberal “culture of intolerance” (Chronopoulos 2011, 84) where people are blamed for their poverty and “zero-tolerance” policing targets the poor and people of colour (groups which are assumed to be synonymous) not only are housing supports denied, but they are vindictively removed altogether (N. Smith 2007, 31; Goldberg 2009).

Specifically in the housing field, neoliberal housing policy decreases the number of public housing units, devolves federal responsibility to local

authorities, privatizes management, helps demolish or gentrify inner cities, relocates people, encourages public-private partnerships, markets neighbourhoods to capital investment (Lipman 2011, 43–44), creates tax incentives, redevelops property, and encourages private business (Kern 2010, 7). A difference-blind discourse in urban housing also has effects. For example, the growing emphasis on ‘mixed income’ housing proposals denies that racial discrimination and oppression are relevant in housing and reduces disparities to being income issues (Lipman 2011, 80).

A study of the impact of neoliberalism in Calgary showed how two processes — a move toward market/business-focussed social action and the downloading of social responsibility to the local, submunicipal scale *without the funding to support it* — led to “limited-capacity market-based governance” (B. Miller 2007, 224). While this may have led to more citizen participation in local bodies, without the funding to back up governance and programming, it led to frustrations and disengagement because of a *mismatch in scales*: the everyday local life and provincial/federal field of power (B. Miller 2007, 224). Resistance to neoliberalism was typified there as short-term, one-off campaigns (not social movements), based on a “logic of the consumer” (not as citizen rights) that fostered low-level participation, such as petition signing. Citizens rarely met, did not create collective identities, and dissipated when the target issue was resolved (B. Miller 2007, 237–238).

Such studies demonstrate how the city is an ideal arena for studying neoliberalism. By looking at specific populations, groups of real people instead of abstract national populations, and the multiple levels of government that provide services there, we can see how political economic change has differential effects. We can also see what these effects are on people’s lives. The city provides a concrete policy space where specific policies can be analyzed. Finally, looking at neoliberalism links colonialism and patriarchy since it rests on both; looking at these three factors together shows the complex nature of dominance in the urban housing field.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This theoretical chapter has allowed us to situate the research questions within the existing literature. Concepts that are central to carrying out my analysis have been defined so that the questions can be answered. This includes the relevant components of Bourdieusian field analysis and the concepts raised in the vast literature on Aboriginal governance. Tying these together are concepts derived from feminist literature and studies on political economy that bring depth to studies that have often neglected attention on the diverse experiences of actors in housing and governance. Although this research finds itself located in a diverse variety of bodies of work, the various streams can be united in one framework.

To summarize, the literature analyzed above demonstrates how a field analysis can incorporate attention to the gendered roles and experiences of Aboriginal people within the housing field. Defining the housing field as a network of individuals and organizations that pursue the stakes of the field, allows us to see what people are struggling for. The other tools offered by field theory provide a means, as will be demonstrated, for analyzing the field in ways that are amenable to understanding self-governance, especially when it is understood in the broader sense of collective decision-making. The ‘self’ comes from its inclusive nature, which can be problematized, and its freedom from domination, whose limits are made visible in a field analysis. Understanding that people’s beliefs and behaviours are just as important as understanding the institutions and other field structures at play shows us how valuable it is to consider the gendered and colonial nature of the field. This helps shed light on why people do what they do and why their strategies may not always be beneficial or successful. Political-economy studies show us how economic capital is important but power relies on non-economic capital as well; although prevailing doxa try to make it seem like economic capital is all that matters.

The matrix developed above enables us to answer the research questions and connect all these various strains to demonstrate how the governance of housing services and programs affects Aboriginal men and women. It demonstrates how effects, and the resulting behaviours, are differentially based on

factors such as gender roles and the uneven distribution of resources between women and men, resources that include the non-economic. Understanding what this looks like under neoliberalism will shed light on how neoliberalism has different effects on different people, demonstrating that it is not monolithic. This opens space for contestation and we can seek to find out not only what urban Aboriginal self-governance actually looks like, but what options people have that do not replicate symbolic violence. The next chapter contextualizes some of this by providing a history of urban Aboriginal housing fields, demonstrating how this matrix is put together and put to use.

CHAPTER THREE:

3.0 A HISTORY OF FEDERAL POLICY-MAKING, HOUSING, AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE CITY

“It is impossible to move forward without understanding where we have been” (Ladner 2003, 44).

I’ve never lived on my nation’s reserve. Grew up very low income. My parents never owned a home. We rented, lived in trailer parks, you name it. I’m 28 and just over two years ago got my first house. Up until this point in my life that’s my biggest accomplishment, is having a mortgage. (Edmonton women’s focus group participant).

This chapter interweaves two histories in order to provide a historical background to Edmonton and Winnipeg’s housing fields and the people who live there. To understand any field, one must understand what has happened in it in the past in order to explain how and why its structures and supporting habituses were created. A Bourdieusian understanding of history is more than just placing dates in order, but examining the connections between events and the relative roles that diverse people and populations played in shaping, and being shaped by, what goes on.

This chapter thus provides a contextualization for the theoretical basis developed in the preceding chapter. The history of housing in Canada and the roles that Aboriginal people have played in urban (housing) fields are often considered to be separate, *by design*, but those two histories have had an impact on each other as the housing field has dominated the urban Aboriginal policy field. In this chapter, I show how the false dichotomy and doxa that Aboriginal people are inherently ‘un-urban’ (and hence irrelevant to the urban housing field), has created field structures and habituses that persist. All of the housing policies, programs, and governance strategies for improving the lives of urban Aboriginal people that are examined in the two case studies flow from these colonial and gendered histories.

The history of federal housing policies — influenced by (and imposing) colonialism and, later, neoliberalism — intertwined with the history of Aboriginal people’s interventions in the urban housing field demonstrates how we arrived at

the contemporary “urban Indian problem.” When applicable, specific reference is made to Edmonton and Winnipeg, but the most salient parts of each city’s most recent history in housing policy, vital for understanding the housing fields unique to each city, are addressed in more detail at the start of each case study.

3.1 EARLY HISTORY: COLONIALISM AND THE URBAN/ABORIGINAL DIVIDE

The fact that Edmonton and Winnipeg are located where they are is because they have been, for centuries, historic meeting places for First Nations people. Winnipeg is also credited with later being the capital of the Métis nation. Both locations became settler cities because of their prior occupants; companies established trading forts there which drew in more Aboriginal traders and then non-Aboriginal settlers, eventually displacing the original occupants (Goyette 2004; Dickason 2002, 242; J. Miller 2011).

The histories of Edmonton and Winnipeg show that First Nations people were marginal in these cities at the start of the 20th century. The *Indian Act* was only twenty-four years old in 1900 and the majority of First Nations people at the time were living on reserves. Indeed, the number of First Nations people in Winnipeg was either too low or politically insignificant to be counted, as it is reported that there were “few” First Nations people in Winnipeg from 1901 to 1951 (Loxley 2000). Traditional histories of Edmonton convey the same message: First Nations people are portrayed as having disappeared from the immediate area in 1885 (Cashman 1956; Edmonds 1943; MacGregor 1975) following the failure of the Indigenous resistance against colonial settlement and the federal government’s breaking of treaties. While this popular myth of the disappearance into the wilderness is not true, the possibly illegal efforts by local and federal agents to dissolve the Papaschase reserve (which occupied lands in what is now southern Edmonton) in 1888 certainly hastened the European occupation of the area. It forced the dispersal of the nearest First Nations community, helped “internalize imposed identities,” and cemented the “oppressive poverty and regulations” that local Aboriginal people who stayed in and near Edmonton would

face for the next 70 years (J. Miller 2011, 57).

While Métis³⁷ people have lived in what is now Winnipeg (formerly the settlement of Red River which had a Métis majority) for over a century, they were not considered to be Indigenous or rights-bearing; until the late 20th century, they were considered nothing other than ‘Canadian’ by the state (Loxley 2000) following the entry of the Red River settlement (and Manitoba’s) entry into confederation in 1870. Despite this formal equality, Métis people were not necessarily treated as equal by the flood of white³⁸ settlers who arrived in the area shortly afterwards. As a result of discrimination or fear of reprisal for participating in Métis struggles for rights,³⁹ many Métis people refused to identify as such, choosing to learn English or else blending into the local francophone communities; assimilation became a survival strategy (Weinstein 2007, 22).

First Nations people with Indian status, on the other hand, were formally/legally and symbolically decreed to be outside of the (white) Canadian/settler citizenship regime and outside mainstream (urban) society until they were considered “acceptable” enough to become full citizens through enfranchisement. This racist and colonial (insider/outsider) approach to assimilative status was both a “reward and punishment” for First Nations people

³⁷ Métis is used in this dissertation to refer to those who self-identify as Métis and are recognized as part of the historic Métis nation in the Canadian West. In Manitoba and Alberta, the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Métis Nation of Alberta (respectively) recognize people as Métis if they are descended from the (rights-bearing and constitutionally-recognized) descendants of the Red River (the “Historic Métis Nation Homeland”) “half-breeds” and if they are accepted by others in the Métis Nation (Metis Nation of Alberta 2012). The Government of Canada recognizes that the *Powley* decision stated that: “the term ‘Métis’ refers to distinctive peoples of mixed ancestry who developed their own customs, practices, traditions and recognizable group identities separate from their Indian, Inuit and European ancestors. Hence, the term ‘Métis’ does not refer to all individuals of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry” (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010b). This limiting definition excludes other people who may self-identify as Métis, metis, half-breed, or other Indigenous people of mixed background (NunatuKavut 2012). There is a significant debate on who is Métis and who is not (Weinstein 2007; Jones Morrison 1995; Sawchuk 1978; Sawchuk 2001), with governments and Métis political organizations both attempting to control who is included and who is excluded.

³⁸ Not just white, but anti-French, anti-Catholic, anti-Métis Orangists.

³⁹ It is a curious fact of history that Winnipeg (and Manitoba) entered Canadian confederation as they did because of an urban Aboriginal self-government movement.

(Voyageur 2000, 88). White settlers, especially in the West, came to know that they were entitled to the lands they occupied and justified in dislocating Aboriginal people. Further, gendered colonialism targeted First Nations women and their movement (Razack 2002); by confining First Nations people to reserves or keeping them out of cities, it helped maintain the purity of the settlers' race by prohibiting intermixing.

Despite this formal barrier, intended to preserve the purity⁴⁰ of the white (specifically Anglo-Saxon) culture, it is important to note that First Nations and Métis people did have frequent contact with urban Canadians. For example, more recent scholarship, based on oral testimony, show that First Nations people did not really disappear from cities from the late 1800s to the 1950s as is commonly assumed. It demonstrates that First Nations people, facing an increasing level of intimidation, discrimination, and illegal land usurpation continued to live near Western Canadian cities, and despite a lower level of urban participation, they still had important roles in the city's economic life as well as coming to the city for other reasons (Coutu 2004; Goyette 2004; Hesketh and Swyripa 1995). Likewise, Metis people did not disappear but rather downplayed their Indigenous identities in the face of persecution, blending into the city more than First Nations people (Weinstein 2007).

This hidden interaction violated the idea that white people are civilized (hence urban), and Aboriginal people, not being white, are thus inherently savage (hence non-urban) was overlooked for its doxic-breaking illogic. Its impact was carried over into First Nations people's eventual migration to cities, and into Canadian citizenship regimes, at the time when the welfare state was being built up in order to help reproduce the Canadian (settler) family. The history of the urban housing field is therefore optimal for understanding how many were left out

⁴⁰ The presence of Métis people in the Canadian West calls into question of the alleged 'purity' of the race that the settlers had been attempting to preserve. By attempting to extinguish any Métis rights (through legislation and through violence), Métis people were pushed underground for nearly a century as they were categorized as 'Canadian,' (albeit "rural," not urban) (Weinstein 2007; Sawchuk 1978). This "developmentalist" (Goldberg 2002) form of assimilation was useful for further denigrating First Nations people and upholding a white ideal.

of the welfare state and yet are still (doubly) affected by the rise of neoliberalism.

3.2 THE NON-EXISTENT URBAN INDIAN AND THE EARLY WELFARE STATE

In Canada's early colonial years, with the government's emphasis on territorial expansion in the West, there was no discussion or expectation for the federal or provincial governments to provide for housing. Indeed, housing did not figure in the 1867 constitution because Canada was primarily a rural country where people built their own homes (Layton 2008, 231). Starting with the depression of the 1930s, the federal government began a few housing projects and passed the *Dominion Housing Act* of 1935, with a short-term project centred on *creating jobs* through home-building (Chisholm 2003, 5; Falkenhagen 2001, 4). Two years later, as the Keynesian welfare state took hold and the government got more involved in helping (increasingly urban) citizens try to meet a higher standard of living (albeit one based on a whitestream standard), the government's first program for granting loans for home repair began (Falkenhagen 2001, 4).

In 1938 the *National Housing Act* (NHA) was passed to "provide housing for lower-income groups" (Falkenhagen 2001, 5). This finally and fully committed the federal government to providing housing to its citizens (and not just to creating jobs) as it created the expectation that the state was now responsible for helping redistribute the shared wealth (Falkenhagen 2001, 4–5; Chisholm 2003, 5). Thus, "housing, nutrition, and education" became the goals of Canadian social security and the state sought to protect (albeit unevenly) Canadian's citizenship rights (Chisholm 2003, 6). Social citizenship rights, ranging "from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being" (Marshall 1963, 72) became a bedrock of urban life in Canada, and the new Canadian state emerging from the Depression and then the Second World War.

Focussed on society as a whole, the early Canadian welfare state framed "welfare as a right of the community, rather than as a charity for a stigmatized minority" (D. Cronin 2007, 183). Yet, most First Nations people's participation in

the welfare state was very different. Living on reserves, most First Nations people were physically, legally, and symbolically outside of mainstream government programs; the *Indian Act* made sure of it. Instead, for many First Nations people and their communities, their dependence on the state began much earlier, at colonization (D. Cronin 2007).

Colonial states (first the French and English, later the Canadian state) used settlement to occupy Indigenous lands, separating the Aboriginal peoples from their natural and cultural resources, and hence from their historic economies and food sources (Dickason 2002). First Nations people⁴¹ were provided with welfare “relief,” intended to just keep them alive until they could be assimilated, rather than being provided with economic development to nurture growing and independent communities. This hindered the continued development of many First Nations communities and kept them outside the mainstream economy, dependent on foreign social security. First Nations people were therefore seen as “wards and cheap labour,” not citizens (D. Cronin 2007, 186–187). The state therefore consolidated its power over, and sought to regulate Aboriginal social reproduction for economic purposes in the transition to capitalism; Canada’s developing economy needed certain “kinds of people” (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 80) to make this happen. The resulting attempt to replicate European family structures in Aboriginal societies disrupted kinship and tribal relations, weakening their power to self-govern.

Violence against women, the imposition of patriarchy, and other forms of gendered oppression⁴² were therefore vital in breaking down Aboriginal societies so that they could be assimilated in to the mainstream Welfare State-based

⁴¹ Métis groups in the west faced opposition to their bison hunt by some First Nations. However, for “many Métis, agricultural or wage-earning options were already accepted into their lifestyle” (Dickason 2002, 271).

⁴² The primary example of this was the sexist provision in the *Indian Act*, which made First Nations women lose their Indian status (and their homes on reserves) if they married a non-status man. Identity creation through “government categories of Indianness represent a war of jurisdiction over who has the right to define an Aboriginal identity” (Lawrence 2004, 209). Although this “‘science’ of classification” has existed since the 1800s and was originally designed to exterminate Aboriginal peoples, it continues to be used today (Grammond 2009, 81).

society. Indeed, it is through acts of gendered violence that First Nations people were continually displaced (A. Smith 2005), separating them from their resource bases and leaving them dependent on the state for support.

Although this had been happening for centuries, the patriarchal nature of the early welfare state and its focus on universalizing the white (male) experience (getting a job, providing a suburban home to a stay-at-home wife so that she can raise his children) meant that Aboriginal people leaving the reserve or rural experience had to enter into a different (foreign) and patriarchal urban setting where the standard of living was based on settler/capitalist ideas of progress, development, and the ‘good life.’ Aboriginal people’s different gender roles, when pre-colonial gendered divisions of labour were equally valued, made their assimilation even more difficult if Aboriginal women were not willing to conform to fields structured by the white patriarchal order.

By the 1950s, the urban and housing fields “had become dominated by the discourse of functionalist modernity” (Healey 1995, 52). After the Second World War, efforts to universalize the welfare state experience, “founded on the image of the nuclear family living in suburban family housing” were increased (Healey 1995, 52). Men were expected to work in the inner city or industrial areas while (white) women stayed in the suburbs, caring for children, shopping, and maintaining the home. As such, early urban housing projects that were focussed on *individualistic homeownership* meant little for those Aboriginal people who were predominantly living on reserves and in rural areas and/or did not have a habitus shaped by living individualistically or owning single family homes (or, most significantly, *owning* homes at all). First Nations people still lacked full Canadian social, political, and civil citizenship and despite participating in the Second World War effort, Aboriginal men, and especially women, were still, through symbolic violence, relegated as outsiders, or outside society, even after the war (Voyageur 2000, 81; Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 49). Single First Nations women, less likely to be moving to the city for work, were thus doubly disadvantaged for being non-urban, non-wage earning, and not living in what Canadians recognized as ‘traditional’ family units. The Canadian welfare state

therefore never provided the same supports to First Nations women (Altamirano-Jiménez 2009).

At the same time, non-British immigrant groups from Europe (in the Canadian West, this notably meant Eastern Europeans) started moving up in the social hierarchy after the Second World War as they assimilated into the mainstream economy. With the resulting process of city growth through suburbanisation, Aboriginal people and ‘new’ immigrant groups (such as people from Africa) started to move into the voids left by the new middle class (Silver 2006, 2). This was the start of the inner cities we know today. It is not a coincidence that in both Winnipeg and Edmonton, the neighbourhoods with the highest proportion of Aboriginal people are former Ukrainian neighbourhoods.

Many of these inner city neighbourhoods were left to deteriorate and housing was purchased by ‘slum’ landlords. In response to the worsening state of the urban housing stock, amendments were made to the NHA in 1944, making it a “declaration of faith in the nation’s future, in which housing policies would play a large part in post war readjustment” (Falkenhagen 2001, 5). This led, two years later, to the creation of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC),⁴³ a crown corporation designed to administer the act and carry out the federal government’s housing policies and programs (Falkenhagen 2001, 7). Because of the depression and recent war, the CMHC was immediately backlogged and saw little resource support from the provincial orders of government; its early focus was on providing loans and some home building (Falkenhagen 2001, 8).

By the late 1940s, the federal government moved beyond providing mortgages and the CMHC began community development initiatives in 1946 (Chisholm 2003, 6). Unfortunately, in many instances, this early goal of “urban renewal” meant bulldozing whole areas, forcing the poorest residents, including Aboriginal people, to move out of the neighbourhood. In the process, ‘community development’ actually broke up communities (Chisholm 2003; Silver 2006, 2).

⁴³ The CMHC would later have its name changed to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Despite this, as Aboriginal people continued to move to cities like Winnipeg and Edmonton, the racism and discrimination that they faced caused them to congregate in the poorest areas. They faced inadequate living conditions and symbolic violence for living there, but lacked the resources to move away from the inner cities (Silver 2006). By the mid 1950s, there was a growing realization of the poor housing conditions of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg but the city was unable to do anything to help, simply because “little was known about them” (Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg 1954, 1 cited by; Loxley 2000, 84) and urban Aboriginal people were still living outside the mainstream welfare state.

As urban migration really increased in the 1950s and 1960s, urban Aboriginal people began to be seen as a “problem” by the federal government and by society so both were forced to finally take notice, given that interactions were now harder to avoid. Cities wanted Aboriginal people out in an attempt to “keep down welfare rolls” (Peters 2000, 249) and because “Indians” were viewed as inherently incapable of urbanizing (assimilating) because of their culture. The urban/rural, white/Aboriginal parallel dichotomy persisted despite significant migration patterns that shattered the idea that Aboriginal people did not live in cities.

3.3 URBAN MIGRATION AND THE HEIGHT OF THE WELFARE STATE’S INVOLVEMENT IN HOUSING

In 1958, a “remarkably enlightened” (though ultimately ignored) report for the City of Winnipeg recommended building up Aboriginal peoples’ own capacity to solve their problems, train them for work, and accomplish this by reforming the education system, social assistance, and housing developments (Loxley 2000, 85). Essentially, this meant reconsidering the goals of the welfare state and although it intended training Aboriginal people to assimilate, it did recognize that Aboriginal people were being left out of existing economic and social benefits of the city. The next year, Winnipeg became the first city to establish an Aboriginal Friendship Centre and Edmonton did so only three years later. Yet, movement in

actual policy areas was slow, partly because there were no major off-reserve Aboriginal political or service organizations until the late 1960s. It is worth noting that the first such groups were motivated by the housing situation (Loxley 2000, 86).

By the 1960s, the general public dissatisfaction with housing policies was visible. In 1968, the federal government sought to bring communities themselves into the housing field's policy processes through better, more inclusive plans for community development. Here, a more collective (in this case, neighbourhood-based) approach was taken (Chisholm 2003, 7). The 1960s also marked First Nations peoples' formal political entrenchment as Canadian citizens. But suddenly being formally "included" in a predominantly non-Aboriginal policy field did not mean that their housing or other off-reserve needs would be addressed.

In this way, throughout and beyond the 1960s, Aboriginal people were brought into mainstream organizations, perpetuating colonization through a new era of "bureaucratic welfare colonialism," characterized by short-term funding, no accountability, and purposeful assimilation (Yu 1994 cited by; D. Cronin 2007, 187). As the situation stagnated, a federal report critiqued the "ghettos" of poor people that were forming in cities. When this warning was unheeded, the Minister responsible (the Transport Minister) quit the Cabinet which led then Prime Minister Trudeau to name the first Minister responsible for the CMHC (the Minister of State for Urban Affairs), a post that would be maintained for most of the 1970s. Following these radical steps, the next years would prove among the best for the federal government's commitment to housing.

Prior to 1964, the federal/provincial split for spending on public housing programs was 75/25. After this date, with the federal government clearly leading housing policy and programs and establishing national rules and regulations, the split was changed to 90/10 (Yu 1994 cited by; D. Cronin 2007, 187). This led to a large take-up in federally-led public housing projects which would soon become very unpopular (Falvo 2007; Silver 2006). Different ideas about what "good" social housing was led to the birth of the 'co-operative era' in which public

housing was built by the federal government and owned by tenants or non-profit corporations, not the government (Falvo 2007, 9).

The year 1964 also saw a change in the CHMC's attempts to maintain and improve homes, rather than simply tear them down and break up communities. But despite the shift toward more federal funding, "urban renewal" had become recognized as a provincial responsibility (since cities are seen as 'creatures of the province' and as provincial jurisdiction) and these projects were shared 50/50 between the federal and provincial governments, using local planning ideas (Falkenhagen 2001, 8). This "jurisdictional maze" (K. Graham and Peters 2002, 9) of urban responsibility, which plagues Canadian cities to this day, allowed local communities to have a say in provincial policy-making, but there was still a reliance on federal economic capital. This space for local participation in the housing field's policy process opened the door for public backlash against slum removals and the federal government was forced to commit itself to more community involvement, and less government interference.

Growing political and social capital within cities and the creation of powerful urban organizations and structures allowed for national housing groups to form in response to rapid urbanization and the rising costs of housing (Falkenhagen 2001, 10). The first national housing group formed in 1968 and the following year's *White Paper on Indian Policy* became a catalyst for the parallel politicization of First Nations people in Canada (Voyageur 2000, 81). Prior to 1960, their political struggles were primarily local and unable to use the state (or participate in the mainstream field of power) as a tool for change (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 226). After the White Paper and the creation of more diverse, political Aboriginal organizations, including urban Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg (Aboriginal Edmontonians, as will be discussed, were politically organized later), the resulting bureaucratization (through participation or co-option into mainstream fields), of these groups led to a focus on civil and political rights, rather than social welfare. This has led to some resentment of the predominantly male leadership of Aboriginal political organizations (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 237) which has tended to pursue limited goals

of self-government over broader social rights (Fiske 1996). It is further argued that state actors (who choose which Aboriginal groups to legitimize) and Aboriginal leaders are now mutually interdependent; participation in the urban field has led to a requirement for constant contact regarding funding and policies which reflects the class issues of the emerging Aboriginal middle-class, a development that will be elaborated in later chapters (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000).

As a response to the deterioration and racialization of certain urban areas, the CMHC received a \$200 million budget for low-cost housing in 1970. The “Kinew experiment” in Winnipeg led to the country’s first Aboriginal owned and managed urban housing project (Institute of Urban Studies 1970; Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, Winnipeg 1971). Before that, there were only 196 units in all of Canada built for off-reserve Aboriginal people under the NHA (Falkenhagen 2001, 13, 20). Yet, many of the other Aboriginal housing projects in the early 1970s were unsuccessful and, either as a result or as a cause of their failure, short-lived (Falkenhagen 2001, 21). With the Trudeau minority government propped up by the NDP, the NHA was revamped in 1973 with increased funding, its authority re-centralized under federal control, and new housing programs were started (Falkenhagen 2001, 21; Layton 2008, 257). The Neighbourhood Improvement Program (1973-1978) conducted more urban renewal work with municipalities and resident involvement in decision-making. The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP), “finally a community-based alternative to the large-scale, government-owned public housing projects,” was also created to repair and convert housing with a greater focus on adequacy regulations (Falkenhagen 2001, 26, 23). Funding was also secured for more housing co-operatives, centred on the idea of the collective governance of housing, and Winnipeg started one of the country’s first Aboriginal housing co-ops in 1985.

The 1970s also marked an increase in women’s participation in the work force (which had started in the 1960s) and, more importantly, a turning away from the “paternalistic” planning of the early welfare state that been designed to shape social relations to meet the needs of economic interests (Healey 1995, 52).

Increased spending *combined with* more diverse local input marked the 1970s and early 1980s as the height of the provision of new housing projects in the late welfare state, although it should be noted that even in this “heyday” of public support, social assistance was still quite meagre and seen as a last resort. Paid work (by men) was still seen as the best social policy and all Canadians were expected “to meet the majority of their social needs through the market” (Harder and Taylor 2007, 298).

In 1974, the Rural and Native Housing Project⁴⁴ was created in order to build or rehabilitate fifty thousand housing units for off-reserve Aboriginal people in five years. It was implemented in cooperation with the Native Council of Canada (the forerunner of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, representing off-reserve/non-status Indians and, at the time, Métis people as well) and other Aboriginal service organizations (Falkenhagen 2001, 28–29). Yet, by 1976, there were signs of problems with this program; actual involvement by Aboriginal people was low, results were not materializing (Falkenhagen 2001, 30), the CMHC bureaucracy was slow to deliver, and Aboriginal groups were worried that the “Native” element was being pushed out of the RNHP (Gribbons 1976). For example, from 1972 to 1975, the “Neeginan proposal,” an Aboriginal-run housing area with social services, for Winnipeg was discussed but did not materialize (Loxley 2000, 93). No government would fund it and the project was shelved until 2007 (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2007).

With so few Aboriginal housing projects coming to fruition, it is evident that even during the welfare state’s best days, Aboriginal people still had differential access to social services, depending on their (sometimes very remote) location, but also because of their lack of capital and habituses ill-suited for the urban/bureaucratic environment. Access to programs also varied by status, class, and gender (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 95).

There is no need here, however, to lapse into “nostalgic welfarism” (Brodie 1996b) because the welfare state never embraced substantive equality.

⁴⁴ Note that “rural” and “native” housing are (doxically) put together in one program, despite the fact that Aboriginal urbanization was increasing steadily.

For example, the social programs of the welfare era were denied to on-reserve populations which were often either apathetic or disorganized for the purposes of implementing these services (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 157). Housing on reserve, delivered directly by CMHC with no provincial interference or support, was (and remains) fraught with issues over status and band membership (Patriquin 2010). Again, on reserve housing distribution is inherently tied to the sexist provisions of the *Indian Act* that sees First Nations women lose their status, and their homes, much more easily than First Nations men (Palmater 2011). Any support programs or remedies offered by provinces did not (and still do not) apply to people on-reserve who were faced with losing the few federal benefits, conferred by treaty or Indian Status, that they had if they did leave their homes for the city. Worse, many vital supports that were provided to Canadians, such as health care, were not always provided on-reserve because of federal/provincial jurisdictional wrangling (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000, 161). The chronic, unequal access to the profits of Canada's development, paid for by Aboriginal people's labour, lands, and resources, is and was premised on racialized conceptions of citizenship that cast Aboriginal people as outsiders and "freeloaders." They remained substantively and formally unequal.

In urban areas, the 1970s saw local community involvement in housing projects on a smaller scale (Chisholm 2003, 7). By this point, however, the provinces felt that the federal government was overstepping its jurisdiction and interfering in their municipal domains (Chisholm 2003, 8). In response, provinces created their own housing agencies. In 1985, with the federal Liberals out of power, new federal/provincial agreements on funding were reached with the Mulroney government; the Progressive-Conservatives had already stopped co-operative and non-profit home building upon their election the previous year (Falvo 2007, 9). The recession of the late 1970s/early 1980s also led to restraints in spending on housing, as the Progressive-Conservatives cut approximately \$1.8 billion out of housing over their tenure (Layton 2008, 233). In 1986, the federal government announced that it would only focus housing supports on those who were explicitly in core housing need, and not fund mixed-income neighbourhoods

or middle-income homes (Chisholm 2003, 9).

This use of targeting ‘deserving’ people increased in the next year. The RRAP had been redefined solely as a social housing program that was not intended for people who were expected to work. As a result, the focus on improving neighbourhoods (community development) was replaced by a focus on individual units (and individualized/*owned* property) in no particular space. The RRAP funding for non-profit housing was ended in 1985 and as decentralization continued, the provinces were once again expected to share in 25% of funding costs (Falkenhagen 2001, 33). This process of downloading was also demonstrated in the (defeated) 1992 Charlottetown Accord that would have formally devolved jurisdiction over housing policy and programs to the provinces (Chisholm 2003, 10).

As for Aboriginal people in the city, Peters argues that the historic “‘problem’ of Aboriginal urbanization” was “redefined” in the 1980s, relocating the root cause of poverty from one’s race (or “culture”) to blaming poverty on a lack of education and/or employment (Peters 2000, 252). But that said, the ‘incompatibility argument’ of Aboriginal people and the city continues to serve (Flint and Rowlands 2003), although few governments and their agents invoke the racial/cultural angle (partly because it would raise allegations of discrimination, but more so because avoiding racial blame supports a neoliberal focus on paid-employment as the solution for urban woes). Further, obfuscating racial inequality and its colonial origins supports the claims of Canada as a raceless state (Goldberg 2002).

Thus, the history of systemic inequality and colonialism has meant that the economic problems for so many urban Aboriginal people remain, but the *rationale* has been reframed; by the 1980s, the most overt racism was being replaced by subtle systemic racism, intertwined with sexism, that erased the relevance of racial or gendered differences. The Canadian myth that racism is “personal” and not systemic (M. Smith 2003, 124) helps keep issues of racism or colonialism ‘off-topic’ and reduces inequality to merely an economic problem. As will be seen, this shift away from (overtly) blaming culture is especially necessary

for neoliberal governance's blindness to difference.

Despite a change in attitudes, by the late 1980s, there was growing recognition by governments that universal public services were failing urban Aboriginal people (the recognition of related gendered inequalities would have to wait another decade). This era also marked the "rebirth" of Métis nationalism in Canada, which was perhaps most apparent in Winnipeg, where many Métis people were concentrated. Talks between the local Métis political organizations and the federal government had led to some agreements and politicization was driven by (as much as also drove) a feeling by many urban Aboriginal people that they were being ignored in favour of First Nations groups. The Manitoba Métis Federation (incorporated in 1967) had also been increasingly involved in the housing field. It started and aborted some home-building programs and corporations throughout the 1970s, but was finally given the authority to manage the Rural and Native Housing Program for the province of Manitoba in the 1980s (Jones Morrison 1995; Sawchuk 1978; Fulham 1981). Political action by Métis people, who were now more willing to identify as Métis, had seen their inclusion in the Charter and, a decade later, concessions in the Charlottetown Accord (Weinstein 2007).

Faced with continuing urban poverty, growing urban Aboriginal political groups started to claim that mainstream urban service programs were too assimilationist, had uncertain funding, unclear mandates, and no cultural relevance for their people (Peters 2000, 253); aspects of the housing field were still plagued by an underlying Aboriginal/urban dichotomy. Even today, many policy-makers continue to see no space for Aboriginal capital in the city and so Aboriginal people and their needs are subsumed under general 'urban poverty' issues (Peters 2000). Historical exceptions, however, show that during the 1980s, there were some efforts to confront this. For example, from 1978 to 1993, the CMHC's Urban Aboriginal Housing Project (UAHP) helped fund 92 Aboriginal housing corporations, creating or rehabilitating 10,301 units (Chisholm 2003, 41). The CMHC subsidized the difference between the organizations' revenues from rents and their operating costs.

The 1980s therefore marked the height of federal government investments in urban Aboriginal housing; many of the Aboriginal housing organizations whose representatives were interviewed in this study, including the immensely successful Métis Urban Housing Corporation in Edmonton, were started in the 1980s.

3.4 THE RISE OF NEOLIBERALISM IN THE URBAN HOUSING FIELDS

The UAHP was one of the many housing programs extinguished by the Chrétien government in its landmark 1993 budget. In fact, one of the first social welfare areas to be severely cut by the new federal government was housing. Finance Minister Paul Martin's budget withdrew the federal government from all new social housing projects except for those on reserve, and funding for these initiatives were reduced (Chisholm 2003, 10; Falvo 2007, 11; Falkenhagen 2001, 55). Up until that time, the federal government had built 600,000 social housing units which amounted to 6% of Canada's housing stock (Falvo 2007, 11). In 1993, the government cancelled funding for co-operative and non-profit housing and capped the funding for the existing affordable housing stock (Layton 2008, 233). Despite pre-election promises to invest in housing, the Liberals actually continued, and in many cases increased, the cuts that the Progressive-Conservatives had made.

With the end of the UAHP, Aboriginal people outside of the remaining social or Aboriginal housing corporations had to "make their way in the market" (Chisholm 2003, 41). This meant/means dealing with record-high rents and a shortage of housing units, like other Canadians, but compounded by racial (and racial/gendered in the case of Aboriginal women) discrimination and symbolic violence that still forces many Aboriginal people to move to neighbourhoods that are characterized by structural decline, aggressive policing, boarded windows, drugs, and violence (Chisholm 2003, 41).

The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated that the withdrawal of the government's economic capital from the housing field, the 'hollowing out' of the state as it downloaded and 'got out' of housing, left a

significant void for urban Aboriginal people (cited in Chisholm 2003, 42). It stated that creating housing units requires a massive amount of capital, something which many Aboriginal people lack. More capital is required just to partner with governments or private agencies. Prior to the cuts, from 1978 to 1993, the more powerful Aboriginal groups were able to leverage their capital and use the UAHP to form connections with the community and three levels of government (Chisholm 2003). Without anything to offer, partnerships, one of the buzzwords of the neoliberal era, become unobtainable.

Pre-1993, Aboriginal housing groups were also able to use their cultural capital to infuse the housing projects with “Aboriginal spiritual values” which strengthened their communities and culture (Chisholm 2003, 42). It is further argued that the successful leverage of social capital, used to create networks of capital-rich Aboriginal people and government actors, results in better consultation, trust, community connections, and service delivery (Hanselmann 2002).

But in 1993, housing programs that supported these goals were cut, as was the RRAP. That program was restored a year later at only \$100 million, with the provinces sharing in 25% of project costs, though this has actually varied by province⁴⁵ (Falkenhagen 2001, 56). The eternal ‘hot potato’ of housing responsibility has had further effects on the housing field. For example, the National Aboriginal Housing Association (NAHA), created in 1993 to lobby for more funding and Aboriginal control over off-reserve housing, wanted to deal directly and solely with the federal government for housing. However, the CMHC wanted the provinces to be included in housing projects in order to secure the extra funding (Falkenhagen 2001, 57). Over time, some solutions were reached in which tripartite negotiations now occur between the federal government, provincial government, and local Aboriginal communities, allowing each level of

⁴⁵In Alberta, the federal government funded 100% of RRAP projects from 1986 to 2001. In Manitoba, the federal government funded 100% from 1986 to 1988 and there were no RRAP projects in the province from 1989 to 1997. The federal government funded 100% from 1997 to 1999, and from 1999 to 2001, the costs were shared: 75% federal, 25% provincial (Falkenhagen 2001, 176–177).

government to (systemically) claim they are not solely responsible for housing.

The 1990s can be seen to represent a triumph (albeit not total) of neoliberal political economic ideas in Canada. This was characterized in housing by major fiscal restraint and leaving people to the market to secure housing needs that had once been considered a right of social citizenship. This “common sense revolution” (Hackworth and Moriah 2006, 511) affected housing in different ways. First, responsibility (but not autonomy) for housing was downloaded to provincial and then municipal levels, or down to the housing projects themselves, while regulations were downloaded to the provinces.

Second, resources for municipal housing projects were cut by both the federal and provincial governments. Third, and possibly for the better according to some, the resulting housing crisis resulted in “entrepreneurship” by some housing developments, such as community groups, in the voluntary sector. However, the ability to be entrepreneurial has been significantly uneven among groups and communities (Hackworth and Moriah 2006, 518). This reduction of housing provision from a social citizenship right provided by a government (albeit with unequal results for Aboriginal people), to a business was accomplished by the use of symbolic violence to persuade people that housing needs are best deserved by those who are self-reliant and through participation in the (unfettered) market. The government was able to get out of the (costly) housing business and, since it is a devalued social field that means less (than, for comparison, health care or education) to middle class people whose housing needs are met, it has weathered the resulting uproar. This is not to say that affordable housing does not matter to those who do not use it, but the high level of NIMBYISM that was identified in fieldwork (especially in Edmonton) showed how homeowners, generally, do not want homeless people or the poor/underhoused living in their neighbourhoods — almost every affordable housing provider spoke about the neighbourhood resistance that they face when purchasing or building new units. Edmonton is even now mulling over a moratorium on affordable housing in certain neighbourhoods (CBC 2012a). This desire to separate spaces and the

people associated with them enables governments to scale back on housing programs.

The near complete downloading of housing was accomplished by the “erosion” of the CMHC through “commercialization” in 1996 when part of the mortgage insurance portfolio of the crown corporation was passed on to an insurer in the private sector, weakening the policy and regulatory power of the government to intervene in the housing field (Layton 2008, 233). Also in 1996, the Canada Health and Social Transfer was put in place to pass economic capital from the federal government to the provinces. While most social services had been cost-shared 50/50 by the provincial and federal governments, the provinces were now to bear the burden for citizens’ social welfare (Harder and Taylor 2007, 298). The same year, the federal government transferred approximately 75% of social housing units to the provinces (Chisholm 2003, 11). Although this transfer occurred in most provinces, including Manitoba, Alberta has refused to take up the CMHC’s existing affordable housing portfolio and accept the download. Thus, the crisis was not just accomplished by the federal government; all provinces made their own cuts to housing as well. Between 1993 and 1999, Manitoba cut spending on housing by 7.3% while Alberta cut it by 67.6% (Layton 2008, 235). Alberta’s “grand housing experiment,” (Layton 2008, 238) carried out in one of Canada’s primary neoliberal “testing grounds” (Dacks, Green, and Trimble 1995; B. Miller 2007, 223) gutted housing programs.

3.5 AN EMERGING SOCIAL INVESTMENT ERA?

The late 1990s saw vacancies in many major cities fall to less than 1% (Chisholm 2003, 11), a shortage that has persisted (1.1% in Winnipeg and 4.4% in Edmonton in 2009) (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2012 citing the CMHC). Partially in response, but also in order to re-establish some (limited) federal presence in housing and social welfare, the federal government created the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI — pronounced “skippy”) in 1999, part of its National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) for “strategic investments that address homelessness” (Falvo 2007, 1). Note that this

was aimed at the poorest of the poor: the homeless, not the under-housed or those living in otherwise inadequate homes and only those who ‘deserved’ government support in order to participate in the economy. SCPI committed \$850 million to help end homelessness. SCPI and the NHI were also extended more than once. For example, \$1 billion was committed in 2001 (for five years) and, perhaps most famously, these programs were extended by the Martin minority government’s 2005 budget as a \$1.6 billion concession for NDP support in passing it (Andersen 2000, 98–99).

This social investment style funding has proved to be more flexible (or less accountable) than past projects with the federal government reluctant to tell provinces how it should be spent (Falvo 2007, 12) or, in the words of then NDP leader Jack Layton, the funding was “set for a quick and easy roll-out . . . into the hands of experienced community-based housing developers, who had projects that were ready to go” (Layton 2008, 258). The cash injection for housing included stipulations that part of it be spent on urban Aboriginal housing.⁴⁶ The Manitoba government matched some of this funding (Manitoba Housing and Community Development 2012). Interviews with representatives from the Alberta housing ministry showed that the Alberta government did not match any of the funding they received. How this funding, to date, has been spent is described in the case studies, as are the very different processes used to decide how this one-time support for urban Aboriginal housing should be used. It has been alleged that a slow allocation of funding to the provinces was a political tactic and that the Martin government “wanted to use the dollars as a kind of political hostage in the federal election” and the Harper Conservatives that came into power were also slow to transfer it (Layton 2008, 258). It took until 2006 for the government to finally allocate \$1.4 billion for housing into the provincial trust funds (Layton 2008, 259).

⁴⁶ The government ended up allocating \$800 million for the Affordable Housing Trust, \$300 million for the Northern Housing Trust, and \$300 for the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust. The last was divided among provinces based on their off-reserve Aboriginal populations and allocated between 2006 and 2009. Manitoba received \$32.5 million and Alberta received \$48.4 million from this trust (Department of Finance Canada 2006).

SCPI and the NHI were ended in 2007 and replaced by the Conservative government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) (Falvo 2007; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008). The HPS provided \$269.6 million for two years in order "to establish the structures and supports needed to move homeless and at-risk individuals towards self-sufficiency and full participation in Canadian society" (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008). Both Edmonton and Winnipeg were partners in HPS projects. Otherwise, the Harper government, during its minority years, was relatively silent on housing (Falvo 2007, 29, 20).

This possible experimentation with social investment state (SIS) (Giddens 1999) funding in the urban housing field marks a departure from neoliberalism (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003; Dobrowolsky 2006) even though it is couched in much of the same self-reliance rhetoric. While the old welfare state protected people from the market and neoliberalism saw the supremacy of the unfettered market, the social investment state facilitates integration into the market (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003; Giddens 1999) — which is presumed in the HPS's goal of "full participation in Canadian society."⁴⁷ While the welfare state was seen as spending passively and oriented to the present with no focus on returns, the social investment state is concerned with *future* results (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003, 83). Thus, there is an idea that we are helping create a better future by investing in Aboriginal people, especially those who 'should' be working and Aboriginal children who will be future workers. Winnipeg's 2008 Aboriginal Youth Strategy, its sole policy for Aboriginal people at the time, embodies this future oriented approach.

There is no consensus whether Canada, or any housing field, has truly entered a social investment paradigm, though signs have existed since the late

⁴⁷ This change is reflected in a similar adjustment, in 2006, to Status of Women Canada's mission to "facilitate women's participation in Canadian society by addressing their economic, social and cultural situation through Canadian organizations" and "achieve the full participation of women in the economic, social and cultural life of Canada" (Status of Women Canada 2006; Mallick 2006). This further example of a "climate of entrenched neoliberalism" makes the advancement of gender equality more difficult (Gotell 2010, 219–220).

1990s (Dobrowolsky 2006, 182). Further, there is no consensus on whether it offers hope or is an improvement for Aboriginal people. Although SIS-style spending is primarily concerned with social cohesion,⁴⁸ it can mask homogenizing goals (Dobrowolsky 2006) and, like the welfare state, it remains concerned with and shaped by “white experience” (Altamirano-Jiménez 2009, 1). The recent austerity budget passed by the Harper majority government, written in a period of economic ‘downturn’ that did not yet exist when this study began, may also signal a turning away from or cessation of the SIS. As will be seen, interview participants were asked about what the most recent economic situation has meant to them, their organization, the housing field, and Aboriginal women and men. Interviews conducted at a time of renewed retrenchment may prove that the SIS has not fully materialized and the neoliberal struggle is still a primary determinant in the housing fields.

Social investment projects for Aboriginal people, if they exist, can be seen in targeted funding for Aboriginal organizations and transfers to the provinces in order to fund Aboriginal social assistance, usually with a focus on Aboriginal children (Dobrowolsky 2006, 193). To date, these programs have not accounted for large sums of money. However, like all of the programs described above, none of which implemented gender-based analysis to see how women are differently affected, they still focus on simple identity targeting, not an intersectional approach, in order to discover whether Aboriginal women and men are facing different housing issues and why (Dobrowolsky 2006, 194; McCracken 2004). Without strong Aboriginal women’s groups to influence spending, future projects will more than likely remain limited in number, availability, dollar amount, length, and scope.

Some mention should be made of the social investment potential of the Kelowna Accord, agreed to by the Martin government and all provincial

⁴⁸ Brodie calls the federal government’s definition of social cohesion a “proxy for national identity” — an “elusive” concept that seeks to bind Canadians to shared values and a cultural identity “without specifying what they are, where they come from, or how they are eroded; [and] . . . without interrogating how these are mediated by philosophies of governance” (Brodie 2002b; see also White 2003).

governments, following consultation with Aboriginal groups. It would have invested over \$5 billion in projects for Aboriginal peoples (Patterson 2006) and over a fifth of this money was to be spent on housing infrastructure (on and off reserves). After this study began, the Harper government rejected the Accord. The subsequent 2008 Speech From the Throne (entitled *Protecting Canada's Future*) was silent on housing except for a promise to remove “barriers to participation in the economy and society” by extending the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (Governor General of Canada 2008). Likewise, it was silent on Aboriginal peoples except where it stated that the federal government will, meeting Giddens’ view of integrating people into the market, “take steps to ensure that Aboriginal Canadians fully share in economic opportunities, putting particular emphasis on improving education for First Nations” through partnerships (Governor General of Canada 2008). The problematic nature of partnerships, as stated in the previous chapter, lies in questions about on whose terms these partnerships will be created and whom they will serve (Ladner 2001; Tully 1995; Boldt 1993). Although it has been argued that participation in the market, and doing everything that goes along with it such as becoming home/property owners, will improve Aboriginal people’s socio-economic positions (Helin 2006; Flanagan 2010), what must still be asked is whether this participation will or can be done as Aboriginal/First Nation/Métis people or whether further conformity is required. In this light, little has changed since 1993 or earlier, when urban Aboriginal people were seen as outsiders who needed help assimilating to a particular idea of urban civilization.

3.6 CONCLUSION

As can be seen, the history of policy development in Canada’s housing field is intertwined with that of Aboriginal people’s experiences with colonialism. The limited interaction between the two (i.e. the limited amount of equitable participation Aboriginal people have had in the urban housing field’s governance processes) has shaped the field, ensuring its colonial reproduction, as well as having shaped the people, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who operate within it.

Historically, First Nations people were seen as non-citizens (and non-urban), later they were reluctant citizens and urban migrants/outsideers, then customers (like all Canadians), and are now potential recipients for profitable investment strategies. Métis experiences, shaped by being rural outsiders or else hidden urban populations, also followed a racialized path, albeit a different one, to the status of customers or the business partners of government. Today, both populations must compete or cooperate for the limited project-funding for urban housing or else operate in the mainstream, market-based arena. These conceptions for Aboriginal identity rarely leave room for non-colonial participation in the governance of housing. Aboriginal women, exposed to both the gendered expectations of the transitioning housing field *and* left outside of it, experience conflicting ideas about how they should operate in the city. The often overlooked stories of Aboriginal women's and men's locations in these contested histories (Goyette 2004) must be further explored in order to understand how their struggles interact within the urban housing field, as well as the paths of resistance that they have followed.

In the two case studies, the recent history of each housing field will be explained in detail in order to demonstrate the multileveled nature of the field and how field structures (and their actors) have inherited their relative positions. While this chapter has focussed on a national housing field, the devolution of housing to the provincial and municipal levels has created field divergence that can be seen in the case studies. The differing nature of each city's Aboriginal populations has also led to a difference in field structure and habitus. These differences lend support to the claims that neoliberalism is not monolithic and that if differences exist, spaces for contestation can exist as well.

In conclusion, understanding the housing field's history is important. If we are to challenge the claims that field theory is deterministic, we must acknowledge how a critical reading of the history of the housing field shows that history does not necessarily always repeat itself; the field is malleable to new ideas and actors' actions can contest its structure. This chapter has demonstrated the impact that transitions from the welfare state to neoliberal ideas, and perhaps

beyond, have had on the urban housing field and on the Aboriginal people that fight in the field's struggle for control over housing. Its precise colonial and gendered effects on how people live, using data from discussions with people there, will be explored in the rest of the dissertation.

CHAPTER FOUR:

4.0 METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

I didn't get hired because I didn't submit to the terminology of "Aboriginal." That was my point having to come here and say, well even, how many people did you deter coming to this meeting when you know there's a lot of people out there who do not even know how to read or write or comprehend the word "Aboriginal." If you're going to say "First Nations people" and you want people to come together that is the word to use. I am not Aboriginal. I am not. I am really highly offended by the terminology. (Edmonton men's focus group participant).

Answering research questions about power and domination, and carrying out research with real (and often marginalized) participants, calls for a particular methodology. In fact, it is argued that the methodology itself is just as important as the question (C. Deer 2008a, 200). The relationship between methods and methodology is also important to understand; these are different concepts. Research methods are "techniques that a researcher uses" while a methodology is a "theory that guides method" or the theoretical assumptions that lead to a particular choice of methods (Kovach 2005, 29; Kovach 2009, 122). This chapter lays out the ways in which data was collected and explains and justifies why these strategies were chosen.

I will start by explaining Bourdieu's method for field analysis: the ways in which one applies field theory to a case study. This is also connected to case study methodology. I then briefly talk about how data was sorted, demonstrating how the concepts developed in Chapter Two were applied to the methodology/methods and data collection. Next, I situate myself within my research, applying a reflexive approach and explaining why using culturally appropriate protocols, derived from previous research with Aboriginal peoples, is essential. This chapter then discusses the Culturally Appropriate Gender Based Analysis approach, also developed by Aboriginal people, that was used. For the remainder of the chapter, I cover, in depth, the methods I used to collect data. After speaking about ethics commitments, I elaborate on the interview and focus group processes that were used, and provide feedback on how they operated. Throughout, I argue that the

methodology and methods that I used were the most appropriate given the context of my research with dominant and dominated populations.

4.1 DOING FIELD THEORY

Having established the concepts and tools that are central to field theory in the theoretical chapter, what remains is to explain how one applies field theory to a field. It must be stated, however, that Bourdieu, and those who supported his approach, stressed that field theory method, or field analysis, must be contextual and that there was no single scientific formula within it that could be neutrally applied to every case study; it is not “to be a theory applied as a paint-by-numbers formula to any given situation . . . [it must] be developed on a case-by-case basis” (Thomson 2008, 75). Field theory is not a grand theory, but a “set of *thinking tools* visible through the results they yield . . . *a temporary construct which takes shape for and by empirical work*” (Wacquant 1989, 50). As such, there are some fundamental differences between the field analysis used here and Bourdieu’s own study of France’s housing field (Bourdieu 2005).

According to Bourdieu, a field analysis involves three steps or, more appropriately: “moments,” since they are connected (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104). First, the researcher must look at the field in relation to the field of power, asking how the field relates to other fields: By which fields is it dominated? Which fields does it dominate? One must also ask whether it is in an overall dominant or dominated position. In the second moment, the researcher describes the field, mapping out the relations between agents and groups of agents who are participating in the field’s struggle. In this step, the data is used to explain the structure of the field, the distribution of kinds of capital, and the location of actors in order to understand how governance takes place. Using the concepts developed in the theoretical chapter, field data is investigated and analyzed for instances where people spoke about the relationships between different agents in the field, the rules of the field (consciously or not), what forms of capital are used, and how they are distributed.

Third and finally, there is the analysis of the subjective: the description of the habitus of the agents and, relating to the second step, the trajectories they foster, what is thus taken for granted in the field, and an explanation of how these dispositions have been acquired in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104–105). By examining more subjective lived experiences of field participants together with the more objective aspects of the field, the researcher can explain the fit or mismatch people experience. Here, we go beyond description and ask questions that get to the subjective nature of people's dispositions: why they do the things they do. The purpose here is to examine what people are trying to achieve in their strategies within the housing field, asking what influences their actions and what they can do given their internal and external limitations. In sum, a field analysis will show why different people find themselves in different positions in the field and it sheds light on the forces that create differential effects on Aboriginal women and men and why people are not necessarily aware that they dominate others and/or are dominated.

Since there is such an overlap between the first two steps in Bourdieu's field analysis method, they are dealt with in conjunction in order to demonstrate how they are complementary. If explaining moment two (field) and moment three (habitus) must be done simultaneously to fully understand the field, then it seems that combining the first two is not unhelpful. Capital, the other primary element in field theory is included in both. As such, the case studies do not separate elements of field analysis but deal with them as a whole, building toward a picture of how the field is structured and how the people within it operate.

Field analysis is used because it sheds light on people, institutions, and processes, not just some of these. It is inclusive which calls for inclusive methods. Field analysis sees people as active, not just passive, even if it can be criticized for being pessimistic. It therefore has room for critical politics and recognizing contestation within the field.

Field analysis has been contrasted with a Foucaultian approach to understanding power and domination by a number of authors. As such, a Bourdieusian approach is useful because it connects domination to social agents

(with identities) and state institutions (C. Cronin 1996), provides for a critique of neoliberalism in which individual agents, the state, and the struggle between them “matter” (Kalpagam 2006, 80, 88), has a role for struggling agents (Kalpagam 2006, 89; Thapan and Lardinois 2006, 32), provides a social context, and because the concept of habitus is dynamic enough to mediate “determinism and voluntarism” (McNay 1999, 95). For these reasons, I used field analysis in order to answer my research questions. This allowed me to discover how the governance of the urban housing field takes place and what Aboriginal people, as individuals and groups, actually do within the fields.

Case studies, thoroughly tied to qualitative data analysis, allow us to map out patterns of thought and action, in varying contexts, while leaving room to situate ourselves in relation to the variables of the case (Northey and Tepperman 2007, 76; Zucker 2009, 181). A case study approach was used to describe experiences, describe their meanings, and then focus analysis to see if themes emerge between the two cities that can be used to form generalizations (Zucker 2009, 175–178).

In any case study, one has to set limitations on variables that are investigated because you cannot “explain everything there is to know” (G. Scott and Garrison 1998, 280), even though setting limitations does risk simplifying the case and can distort effects (G. Scott and Garrison 1998, 282). Research can be enriched by selecting more than one case study and then comparing it with another. This allows us to study themes or forces that are common between them (Shively 2005, 102–103). Case studies, based on detailed fieldwork and historical background study, are therefore ideal for comparison (Geddes 2003, 133). In the end, a case study is about the people who are active in it so it encourages academics to study in a way that “emphasizes communication and relationships between human beings” (Zucker 2009, 181). This makes case study ideal, if not essential, for field analysis and qualitative analysis.

The two case studies presented in this dissertation are laid out as parallel as possible in order to allow for easy comparison. Where they deviate substantially is in the analysis of economic capital in each city; during fieldwork,

the newest housing crisis — the expiration of the government subsidies to affordable housing programs that had been established in the 1970s and 1980s — was an issue that came up in numerous interviews in Winnipeg and presented one of the most pressing concerns for many in that housing field. Although Edmonton's affordable housing programs are also facing similar expirations (albeit at a later date), this crisis was not identified by many research participants, for reasons elaborated in the case studies and in the final chapter. As a result, there is no similar investigation of the 'end of subsidies' question in the Edmonton case study. In the case of Winnipeg, the end of subsidies are explored in some depth which means that the two case studies deviate in structure at this point.

4.2 APPLYING QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

I use a synchronic comparative method in which I examine two case studies in the same contemporary time period (Mahler and MacInnis 2002, 6). Again, the cities of Edmonton and Winnipeg were chosen because their basic demographic similarities make for a logical and easy comparison (similar total size, both with high proportions of Aboriginal inhabitants, both are 'Western' cities with a similar colonial history, both occupy similar geographies) while there are important and interesting differences that allow for comparison (different long-term provincial governments, differences in resources, differences in the recent histories of local Aboriginal populations).

Looking at and comparing Edmonton and Winnipeg allows us to see what influential differential variables, such as local (provincial, municipal, community, and individual) forces, have on urban Aboriginal populations. I use the "most similar systems" approach where I compare two cases that have many similarities (a common federal government, cities with populations over 500,000, located in Western Canada, substantial Aboriginal populations) but focus on key differences in order to draw conclusions. The impacts of these differences on social and political phenomena can then be analysed (Mahler and MacInnis 2002, 9).

In order to collect data for this analysis, primarily qualitative data

collection was carried out. When doing work on subjective concepts that explain one's experiences, such as Aboriginal "quality of life," we can contrast the quantitative focus on socioeconomic problems (which is not as good for prescribing precise policy directions) with more qualitative approaches (Salée 2006). For example, stressing the value of community, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) has stated that cultural relevancy must be incorporated into frameworks for measuring Aboriginal people's quality of life (Rust 2007, 14, 31). Combining qualitative approaches to understanding the data, such as a 'collective capacity-building' approach (for emphasizing the role that social capital plays), with an 'individual decolonization/healing' approach that stresses the importance of "psychological reconstruction and personal transformation" (for addressing the internalized repercussions of colonialism) allows me to measure quality of life using qualitative, rather than quantitative, standards and to see the relationship between objective structures and subjective habitus (Salée 2006, 9). This also matches the opportunities provided by field analysis's tool set.

Subjective views about experience can only be discovered by talking with the population in question and trying to understand their world view (Findlay and Wuttunnee 2007, 20). Using qualitative measures allows researchers to look at Aboriginal women's and men's own stories and their capacities to address barriers. Quantitative statistics can tend to "reinforce [Aboriginal] women's disadvantage and associate them with deficiency and dependence," but qualitative methods permit an analysis of women's barriers, opportunities, and achievements (Findlay and Wuttunnee 2007, 12).

The qualitative analysis used here employs a directed content analysis approach in which an existing theory is applied to a new case study (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1281). As stated:

The goal of a directed approach to content analysis is to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory. Existing theory or research can help focus the research question. It can provide predictions about the variables of interest or about the relationships among variables, thus helping to determine the initial coding

scheme or relationships between codes (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1281).

Case-specific data were collected primarily through interviews and focus groups with open-ended questions, based on targeted questions that relate to predetermined categories of analysis including field analysis, gender-based analysis, and political-economic concepts. Data coding was then applied to these themes, as is consistent with content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005).

For this form of analysis, a strategy of coding first with predetermined codes, and then a search for uncoded data afterwards is suggested in order to decide whether it should be classed as a new category of analysis or else as a subcategory of one of the primary codes (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1282). The frequency with which codes are found can also be used as a soft form of quantitative analysis in order to lend support to the qualitative element. With directed content analysis, once the data is analyzed, it will either support or else challenge field theory, refining and enriching it. Thus, “the main strength of a directed approach to content analysis is that existing theory can be supported and extended” (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1283). To help in the process, NVivo qualitative data analysis software was used.⁴⁹

Directed content analysis can carry the risk of some bias as researchers attempt to fit data into an existing theory (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1283). One could claim that interview and focus group participants could be led to give certain answers in order to fit with what the researcher is looking for. However this risk is mitigated by open-ended, long answer questions and conversational (as opposed to rigid Q&As) interviews where participants can say what they want (Walker 2004). As an example, a very limited form of field theory analysis was used for looking at Aboriginal community development in Winnipeg, in which the researchers shifted from information-gathering (trying to ask “the right questions”) to a methodology of understanding relations and an emphasis on process (Silver et al. 2006, 7). This put the experiences of members of the

⁴⁹ This dissertation was written using Word 2008. Zotero was used for the citations and bibliography, using the University of Chicago’s 16th edition of its manual of style (University of Chicago Press 2010).

Aboriginal communities, collected via open-ended interviews, at the centre of the work instead of at the margins, treating them as agents. By placing emphasis on their stories, it left less room for the imposition of outside/researcher bias.

4.3 REFLEXIVE METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

Just as there are different Aboriginal groups in Canada, there are different, culturally appropriate approaches to working *with* (not *on*) Aboriginal people, some of which are commonly referred to as ‘Indigenous methodologies’ (Kovach 2005; Kovach 2009). As many interview participants stated, urban Aboriginal people can be competent in “two worlds” — the whitestream field of power and their own Indigenous social/political orders. The methodologies discussed below helped in shaping research protocols that were necessary to build trust, respect, and social connections, while treating participants respectfully as people with varied ways of knowing, rather than fragile objects.

Aboriginal people have sometimes been silenced and marginalized by previous research approaches, but more critical approaches (based on feminist or Indigenous methodologies) offer an emancipatory potential (Kovach 2005, 21) to fight against colonialism or patriarchy. Indigenous methodologies incorporate Indigenous perspectives and aligned methods (Kovach 2005, 22). Feminist research has been an important part of such studies, and Indigenous research methodologies represent a growing stream of study, albeit one that is often critical of historical feminist research (L. Brown and Strega 2005, 9; Green 2007; A. Smith 2005). Although Indigenous methodologies seem closest to the emancipatory methodologies used by feminists, they cannot easily fit into this category since much academic feminism is based on a set of Western institutions, ideas, and ways of thinking stemming from the Enlightenment and the European idea that knowledge leads to progress (Kovach 2005, 29).

More central to my work here, Indigenous methodologies are also tied to “anti-oppressive research” (Potts and Brown 2005). Anti-oppressive research is concerned about social justice and resistance in its process and as its outcome. This means that researchers should ask questions about social change, maintain a

personal commitment to action, and work self-critically to see the oppression embedded in oneself and one's work (Potts and Brown 2005, 260).

As a non-Indigenous person raised and educated outside Indigenous world views, I do not have the experiences or ways of knowing to employ Indigenous methodologies. Field analysis, by design, is a European, Western methodology, rooted in ways of knowing that are foreign to the cosmologies of Indigenous people in Canada. It can be used to try to understand urban Aboriginal experiences, but it cannot be called an Indigenous methodology. The theories and analytical lenses used were developed by non-Aboriginal people and are being applied and interpreted for a non-Aboriginal driven program at a predominantly non-Aboriginal institution. What I can do, however, is draw from methodological work with Indigenous people and incorporate culturally appropriate protocols to make it, and this study, more accessible and inclusive.

The methodology used in this dissertation, then, should be defined as 'culturally informed' rather than Indigenous, as I do not begin my research with an Indigenous epistemology. Nor was my research community-based, whereby Aboriginal people developed the research questions and had final say over the results. However, the methods used here are based on respect, and on inclusive Aboriginal protocols. Further, for the more "emancipatory" methodology goals, I hope that the data generated by this work will be useful for Aboriginal people and communities to use, rather than repeat the colonial cycle of having outsiders decide what is best for Aboriginal people (Battiste 2008, 503).

Anti-oppressive researchers need to recognize that all knowledge or research is socially constructed and political (Kovach 2005, 22). Acknowledging that knowledge is located in power relations can lead to social justice goals (Potts and Brown 2005, 261). As such, the process itself for anti-oppressive research is about looking at power and relationships. This means rejecting a positivistic position where the researcher is considered the only person with knowledge, and participants (called 'subjects' by some) are objects to be acted upon (Potts and Brown 2005, 262–263). I believe these tenets are very compatible with a field theory analysis, not just because of their emphasis on relationships and reflexivity,

but also because of Bourdieu's goals of using field theory to expose the oppressive nature of fields.

The importance of the role of the researcher and reflecting on this is key to an appropriate methodology. In addition to the three moments of field analysis described above, using field theory as it was intended means situating oneself in the field and thinking reflexively (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). This means reflecting on how one is situated in the field and reflecting on one's relation to research participants. For example, in a study on Aboriginal community development in Winnipeg, Silver *et al.* followed Bourdieu (1977) in being reflexive by being "aware and critical of our position and interests" (Silver et al. 2006, 8). This was also done well in Mahar's field analysis in Mexico (2010); Bourdieu himself did not do so in his own work on the housing field in France (2005).

Reflexivity, by locating oneself in one's work, is the "most fundamental principle" to critical or Indigenous methodologies and must be done from the outset in order to make the researcher accountable for her/his own position, since neutrality does not exist (Absolon and Willett 2005, 97). I used self-reflexive practices in my research in order to understand my "own location within the hierarchy of the field" and confront my place of privilege as a white, middle-class male (Silver et al. 2006, 7; Green and Peach 2007, 269). A failure to situate oneself in relation to populations that are impacted by research can lead one to miss, ignore, or devalue the points of view of different actors with levels of power that are different. Not reflecting on the power relations between the researcher and researched within the field can limit the scope and quality of the analysis. If the only thing we can write about with authority is about ourselves (Absolon and Willett 2005, 97), then research that accepts multiple epistemologies must be reflexive.⁵⁰

I can situate myself in the housing field by sharing my housing experiences: I have been a renter most of my adult life, first in Winnipeg, then

⁵⁰ That is why I also make an effort to use research participants' own words when possible so that I do not alter how they talk about themselves.

Ottawa, then Edmonton. I have no experience owning a home. At the same time, I have no experience of housing vulnerability;⁵¹ I have never had to settle for renting a sub-standard unit nor have I ever been evicted. When I rented my last few apartments, the landlords did not look at my rental history or contact references. Many of the experiences described by research participants were completely outside my realm of experiences as I have benefitted by being both white and male. As a student, I have less economic capital than most of the people I interviewed, but more than some of the focus group participants I met with and the homeless people I worked with at services organizations. My experience working in government also allowed me to accumulate some cultural and social capital that has helped me in life and in my dissertation work. I shared as much of my own background with research participants as I could, as well.

This research, by virtue of the fact that it is done by a non-Aboriginal person in a colonial language,⁵² cannot define Aboriginal realities or convey Aboriginal experiences outside of European or Western constructs (Battiste 2008, 504). Efforts were made to develop research questions that benefit Aboriginal people (Battiste 2008, 503), but it cannot be guaranteed that all people will benefit equally from this study.

I also drew from some of Kovach's themes for research: experience is a legitimate way of knowing; telling stories is legitimate ways of sharing knowledge; the relationship between the researcher and participants is part of the research; and there should be reciprocity to the community and an acknowledgement of collective knowing (Kovach 2005, 28). From these themes, one of the goals of research is an emphasis on the relational. This means being

⁵¹ Although I participated in couch surfing for the months I was in Winnipeg (which afforded me some empathy for the feelings of transiency, incertitude, and imposition that many feel), I at least had the knowledge that I had an apartment in Edmonton to which I could eventually return.

⁵² Even if I could write my dissertation or community reports in an Indigenous language, I would not know which one to use: Cree is the most common First Nation language in Edmonton, but not the only one; Ojibway is more common in Winnipeg but linguistic diversity in that city is even higher. In both cities, there are Métis people as well who could speak English (as most First Nation people do), French, and/or Mitchif.

inclusive, taking only what you need, thinking about the environment,⁵³ thanking people, giving back, looking at relationships, working with the community, communicating research, and being humble (Kovach 2005, 30). Although rooted in Indigenous epistemologies, these ideas proved useful in my own work which required building trust in Aboriginal communities. Tied to this is an appreciation of the collective, rather than a focus on the individual; this approach takes questions of Aboriginal politics and cultures into account (Kovach 2005, 30). Like goals rooted in the relational, looking at the collective and how it operates also fits well with field theory. Many of these goals are dealt with in the ethical considerations elaborated below as well.

Although this dissertation is not an example of community-based research, efforts were made to gather feedback throughout the process. Follow-up focus groups, described below, as well as providing transcripts of interviews for approval provided some input into the process. Another way to give something back to the individuals and communities who helped with this research, and to integrate myself more into the field, was volunteering at Aboriginal and housing-related organizations including Boyle Street Community Services, Homeless Connect, Homeward Trust, the Edmonton Homeless Count, and Wicihitowin. This “immersion” or “prolonged engagement in the field [helps] to build trust and rapport, ensure purposeful sampling, and undertake persistent observation” (Walker 2004, 278). I also was asked to join the Canadian Native Friendship Centre and the Aboriginal Student’s Council at the University of Alberta. Participating in public and social activities in Aboriginal communities helped me connect to different groups of people. Volunteering and connecting in Winnipeg was more difficult, though I did attend Aboriginal cultural events while in the city, and spent as much time as possible in the North End, meeting people at different community centres. Finally, participating in conferences, notably those centred on housing or involving significant Aboriginal control was another way to

⁵³ I am aware of the carbon footprint my work has left. I made four trips to Winnipeg, two by plane and two by car. The driving likely contributed around one metric ton of carbon dioxide (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2011). My personal carbon footprint from the four flights would be about the same amount (Carbon Footprint 2011).

give back by sharing research results and seeking feedback (Walker 2004, 283).⁵⁴ When appropriate tobacco was provided when making requests (Kovach 2009, 127) and at some organizations, I came with donations for their community food banks.

4.4 STUDYING UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

These goals informed my methodological approach and my research methods. But rather than create a monolithic picture of “the Aboriginal community,” this study strives to address internal cleavages, especially gender differences. In order to avoid simply ‘adding’ gendered analysis to existing research methodologies, this dissertation employs an intersectional methodology, again developed by Aboriginal people themselves.

Culturally-Relevant Gender-Based Analysis (CRGBA) was developed by NWAC and deemed “validated” after it had been accepted and used by Aboriginal communities and government agencies in policy work (Native Women’s Association of Canada 2009b, 14). The tool was developed because Aboriginal women’s issues (notably violence) were not being included on the agenda for the Kelowna Accord negotiations (Native Women’s Association of Canada 2007, 3).

CRGBA is focussed on gender-based-analysis models used by the government of Canada since the 1990s, whose purpose was to help government agencies create equal opportunities for women and men (Government of Canada 2005; Napoleon 2009; Native Women’s Association of Canada 2007). CRGBA brings issues of race and colonialism into the equation as these forms of oppression intersect, as has been argued in the theoretical chapter and will be demonstrated in the case studies. The process of developing the CRGBA included

⁵⁴ Research findings were shared with research participants and community members by uploading documents onto a website. The website was advertized by email through community-based Aboriginal organizations. Instructions on the site solicited feedback, corrections, additional information, disagreements, or any other interventions that would be included in the final draft or future work. Some organizations also printed out some of the documents to give out to members of the public, community members, and policy professionals. All materials contained my contact information. Allowing Aboriginal people to include their thoughts (agreement or dissent) in the final work is one way of ensuring their voice is maintained throughout the process.

women of diverse social, economic, and political backgrounds, and included elders (Native Women's Association of Canada 2007, 8)

Seen as a "living process" for changing needs, CRGBA offers normative goals for the evaluation of the impact of policies and processes in order to ensure that programs and services are balanced (Native Women's Association of Canada 2007, 6). Because of its flexible nature, it can also be used to look at the nature of the housing field, and it serves as a tool for answering research questions about how Aboriginal women and men are affected in housing, shedding light on how the field differently shapes their dispositions and how people contest gendered and colonial oppression.

The CRGBA tool was used here to inform and develop a line of questioning for interviews and focus groups. It is not simply a matter of asking questions that locate women in the field (a 'just-add-women' approach) or comparing women's and men's work, but going beyond quantitative questions and empirical descriptions in order to combine CRGBA with field theory and ask *why* gendered differences exist. This approach is used to explain the gendering effects of field structures and the resulting relationships between women and men's habituses.

Many useful questions for consideration arise from the CRGBA tool that have been integrated into the research. The tool itself, like most Aboriginal practices based on the four-part medicine wheel, focuses on four themes or desired outcomes: equity in participation, balanced communication, equality in results, and adoption and application (Native Women's Association of Canada 2009b, 15). These normative goals, as seen in the earlier concept work, are linked, balanced, and circular, not linear (Native Women's Association of Canada 2007, 7). They form a basis for examining the gendered nature of the field, but also culturally appropriate ideas of what good governance can mean for urban Aboriginal communities.

For example, 'equity in participation' questions whether Aboriginal women are full and equal partners in governance. Looking at obstacles (such as disparities in capital) and how they are addressed, this considers whether and how

Aboriginal women's roles are valued and given voice. 'Balanced communication' means looking at the research itself and asking how the data has been shared, who has interpreted it, and how (and to whom) it is communicated. In fieldwork, this helps ensure that community participation is balanced, and demands that researchers reflect on their own roles as well. The best data will reflect different experiences and priorities.

Questions about 'equality in results' include asking whether Aboriginal women's needs are being served and whether their perspectives are reflected in outcomes. This means asking whether prejudices or assumptions have been challenged so that power imbalances are acknowledged and addressed. Finally, 'adoption and application' seeks to know whether people and organizations are actually thinking about gender and facing patriarchal impacts. Stressing the equal role of women in decision-making, this last section aims to ensure cultural competency by tracking change within organizations and respecting the roles of women, while recognizing the inherent, treaty-based, and constitutional rights of Aboriginal people (Native Women's Association of Canada 2009b, 14–15).

These methods and methodologies, rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing, but also coming from backlash against centuries of colonial study, were used to complement the field analysis methodology and methods in order to carry out an inclusive study that treated research participants as knowing agents with diverse experiences in governance. Doing so enabled the research questions to be properly and ethically answered in the specific context of the urban Aboriginal field. What remains is to explain how these methods and protocols were implemented in field research.

4.5 ETHICS AND PROTOCOLS IN CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE INTERVIEWS

Interviews (and focus groups) have been described as a very personal experience that is strategic, experimental, and fundamentally a cultural activity in itself (Mahar 2010, 33). The interview methods used here are based on one of the

most similar and recent studies, Walker's dissertation on Aboriginal people in the low-income housing sector in Winnipeg (2004).⁵⁵

It has been noted that there are no "interviews" in Aboriginal culture; there are discussions and talks (Kovach 2009, 152). Others describe "research conversations" with Aboriginal women about where they live, their concerns, and what they would like to see in housing (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005, 43). However, given that only half of the interview participants were Aboriginal and most who were Aboriginal were working in non-Aboriginal (state government) spaces, traditional interview styles, guided by ethical certifications, were suitable for the purpose of the study and worked well.

It has been suggested that conversational and fluid interviews with open-ended questions work best (Kovach 2009, 123). Following Walker (2004) as example, these techniques were employed and I carried out voluntary, one-on-one,⁵⁶ face-to-face interviews with individuals representing different organization and groups, or in a few cases speaking for themselves. Interviews were conducted in the participant's office when possible, or in another venue at their choice. Interview questions were semi-directed, or conversational, leaving room for long answers. Most interviews lasted approximately one hour.

Before conducting my interviews, I applied for ethics approval from the Arts, Science, Law Research Ethics Board. A main concern with the ethics application was to demonstrate that I was aware that I am working with different populations, including some whose historical relationship with university research

⁵⁵ Walker's study, while not a field study, showed a good approach to understanding both the field and its dispositions; his questions sought to understand what people did in the housing field, discovering how people and groups are connected, but also shed light on their motivations and beliefs. This is consistent with Bourdieu's approach to describing France's housing field, where he did a vast number of one-on-one interviews with key people in the housing field (2005).

⁵⁶ All interviews were intended to be one-on-one, although in some cases, participants chose to bring someone with them, either a supervisor who wanted to observe their participation, or a subordinate who was being trained or asked to provide supplementary information. Some of these interviews generated more guarded answers when colleagues or supervisors were present, especially in a government setting. At the same time, in some not-for-profit organizations, multi-participant interviews led to a less formal, 'discussion group' atmosphere.

has been problematic and whom academics have consciously and unconsciously hurt in the past (Kovach 2005, 32; Absolon and Willett 2005, 106).

Letters of invitation to participate in research⁵⁷ emphasized participants' ability to decline to take part, that there would be no duress nor penalty to decline or withdraw, and the right to withdraw their consent at a later date. Upon ethics approval, a list of possible interview participants was compiled. An initial list of organizations that were identified as key to the two housing fields was based on previous, similar studies on urban Aboriginal housing (Walker 2004; Silver et al. 2004; Peters 2005; Hanselmann 2003; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2005). The list changed as some organizations no longer existed, and it grew as I used a snowball technique, asking participants if they could think of any other key people or organizations to contact. Once the same suggestions began to be repeated, it reinforced my belief that I was speaking to relevant people and that I had covered the high profile players of the housing field. This strategy for confirmation has been used in other studies with Aboriginal people in Winnipeg (Silver et al. 2006, 8).

Every effort was made to speak to a variety of people from organizations that reflect different parts of the housing field, different scales or levels of government and society, and different kinds and levels of capital. While Bourdieu's housing field study focussed on three groups (builders, bureaucrats, and homeowners), interviews for this study, reflecting the nature of the urban Aboriginal context and a focus on governance, (as opposed to construction), focussed on government workers (all three levels), public and affordable housing providers (Aboriginal and mainstream), and those who work at not-for-profit organizations (Aboriginal related, housing related, or both).⁵⁸ Every effort was made to balance the two case studies by making sure that people in comparable

⁵⁷ In compliance with community standards and expectations, these documents adapted over time, especially the inaccessible academic and legalistic tone that did not resonate with many people. I also took time, especially in early interviews, to ask participants for feedback on the interview process itself and their comments to adapt interviews to better fit languages and customs.

⁵⁸ Homeowners (as well as renters and the under-housed/homeless) were covered by focus groups.

positions in each city were interviewed, when comparable equivalents existed (Mahler and MacInnis 2002).

Having worked in the provincial government in Winnipeg helped me secure interviews⁵⁹ with people in the housing field. In Edmonton, having less social capital made getting interviews harder, although I still possessed the cultural capital of being a PhD candidate (which carries some weight with some people). In both cities, once some interviews were completed, getting the next one became easier as many participants were willing to make introductions or references to others.

The interview period spanned six months in 2009. Interviews in Edmonton began in spring. I also met with national Aboriginal organizations in Ottawa early in the interview process. The bulk of the Winnipeg interviews were conducted in the summer. Upon returning to Alberta, the majority of Edmonton interviews were carried out in the fall. I also returned to Winnipeg for a week in order to meet any participants who were previously missed. By going back and forth (Edmonton, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Edmonton) I ensured a good cross-comparison of similar participants and was able to ask questions that focussed on comparing the cities.

The same general question list was used for all interviews, though supplementary questions were added in preparation and irrelevant ones were dropped. The question ordering and wording was flexible. Interview participants

⁵⁹ Everyone I spoke to at Manitoba's official opposition, the Progressive Conservative Party, referred me to one policy analyst who refused to allow me to speak with either the Aboriginal Affairs critic or the Housing critic. Even requests to get a written summary of the party's position on either of these areas were refused.

The other organization where meeting proved impossible was the national office of the CMHC. When I requested an interview, I was told that I would have to submit a question list ahead of time. I readily agreed, as I had done so in other cases and wanted to be as transparent as possible. I was told that my questions were too numerous and to reduce the list. I explained that I wanted to ask the same core questions to all participants for comparison, but I agreed to reduce it. I was subsequently asked to further reduce it to only three questions. Eventually, I was told that an interview would not work because the time it would take to run the questions past both a policy analyst and a public relations staffer and then get the questions answered in writing was too long. I was fortunate to have forthright and helpful interviews with CMHC regional representatives in Edmonton and Winnipeg.

were provided two copies of the consent form detailing their rights as research participants, which I explained orally at the interview (Mahler and MacInnis 2002).

Although all interviews were anonymous (names are not used), there were times when statements need to be attributed in order to provide context. All direct citations are attributed in ways so that participants cannot be personally identified, but organizations and/or titles (and sometimes some personal background when it does not lead to identification) are used. Statements are thus only attributed when it is useful for demonstrating how the field operates.

Every interview was tape recorded.⁶⁰ Participants were informed of this ahead of time and at the start of each interview. I again asked if they were comfortable with being recorded and my taking notes (Novac 1996). Recordings were used to make transcripts and then destroyed.⁶¹ Due to the volume of transcriptions needed, assistant transcriptionists were hired who signed confidentiality/non-disclosure agreements and those interviews deemed the most sensitive were transcribed by myself. I read through all contracted-out transcripts while listening to the recording to verify them.

Transcripts were one way of maintaining people's own voices (and provide some participant control over what was analyzed) and the transcribing process itself was a way to relive the conversations and reflect (Kovach 2009, 128). Transcripts were later provided to participants by email, when possible, and feedback (comments, changes, etc.) was solicited⁶² (Kovach 2009, 100). Accurate representation maintains the work's integrity and is another way to give back to the community (Kovach 2009, 100).

⁶⁰ Another important part of reflexivity is not to project one's own vision onto the participants (C. Deer 2008a, 201). This is most difficult, especially when trying to take participant responses and fit them into the framework of field analysis. One way that I attempted to mitigate this distortion is to use participants' exact words when possible, rather than paraphrasing. This was achieved by transcribing every interview verbatim and not summarizing while transcribing.

⁶¹ Some interviews were not transcribed and not used for this research.

⁶² The digital recordings of three interviews were lost when my first digital recorder was destroyed. I sent these participants the written notes I had made myself during the interviews. One person consented to be re-interviewed.

Twenty-two interviews in Edmonton, twenty-nine in Winnipeg, and six in Ottawa were completed and transcribed.⁶³ I also conducted some follow-up interviews with participants who indicated that they wanted to meet again. These secondary interviews were not all recorded or transcribed as they were more about fact checking, clarification on the previous interview, and receiving feedback on other participants' responses.

4.6 "FOCUS GROUPS" FOR SHARING STORIES

Interviews with government representatives or from other field organizations that have a large part in shaping the urban Aboriginal housing field are clearly important. But one cannot fully describe how the field operates without talking to the people who live out the policies made by government decision-makers or who use the services provided by housing- or Aboriginal-related not-for-profits groups. I am also mindful of the dangers of allowing representatives to speak for a diverse group of people they claim to represent (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada 2005). In order to hear from people who live out politics 'on the ground,'⁶⁴ and do not necessarily participate in 'high level' politics (Abele and Prince 2002, 230), and in order to hear from those often left voiceless in the literature, focus groups with people who self-identify as Aboriginal and live in the city were a central part of fieldwork and data collection. This process also draws attention to overlooked controversies while confirming, contradicting, or disproving what interview participants said.

Previous case studies on the housing field or urban Aboriginal governance often looked only at those in positions of authority (Bourdieu 2005; Walker 2004; Hanselmann 2003). Using focus groups with people of varying levels of marginalization created a unique data set with a new depth that is missing in

⁶³ This does not include approximately ten interviews that were not transcribed, follow-up interviews, or other less formal conversations that were not recorded.

⁶⁴ Focus group participants who were part of powerful organizations were welcome to participate, however all focus group participants were encouraged to speak on behalf of themselves and their personal experiences, not to serve as spokespeople for organizations in the housing field.

studies that only use interviews with government employees and heads of organizations. Focus groups with community members also allowed me to connect my work with people in the community; the participant recruitment process enabled me to speak to more people about the research and word-of-mouth (through Aboriginal organizations and with individuals) allowed more people to find out what was happening. This led to better interviews as well.

Rather than engaging so-called ‘non-elite’ people in one-on-one interviews — though this has been used in similar studies (Mahar 2010) — I chose a focus group process similar to that offered by research on Indigenous methodologies and methods (Kovach 2009). For example, sitting in a circle is a traditional, Aboriginal way of sharing information and doing so in order to share research information is a newly accepted academic activity (Kovach 2009, 124). It has also been noted that there are really no ‘focus groups’ in Aboriginal culture or traditions; there are sharing circles which have different epistemological underpinnings (Kovach 2009, 152, 124) and which this study could not reproduce.

In planning the Winnipeg groups, the idea of calling the process a ‘sharing circle’ and advertizing it as such, something that local community members would recognize as a traditional and familiar process for dialogue, was proposed by some community members. After being taught about some important differences between the two concepts (for example, some people believed there should be no discussion ‘leader’ in a sharing circle who can cut people off and that note-taking would be inappropriate in a sharing circle), I decided after further consultation with community members that it would be misleading to call the groups a sharing circle and chose to call them ‘focus groups,’ even though even this term has a corporate, market-research sound to it (Archer and Berdahl 2011, 238). I was careful to let potential participants know that I was conducting ‘modified’ or culturally-sensitive focus groups and not traditional sharing circles, attempting to bring in as many culturally appropriate elements as possible.

A new concept of “research circle-talking circles” (elsewhere described as “research-sharing circles”) provides space for traditional speaking narratives but are still research focussed (Kovach 2009, 99, 124). These research circles are

holistic, and like the focus groups carried out for this study, not structured by questions so that participants' speaking time is not fragmented by interjections (like in an interview). The less structure there is, the better the process can ensure voice and representation of experiences. 'Talking circle' methods are useful for getting valuable data (Jaccoud and Brassard 2003, 134) and hearing about people's experiences and backgrounds that led to their current housing situation is especially helpful for understanding the "'informal' and 'inside world' of Aboriginal people" (Silver et al. 2006, 8), and the bigger picture behind them as well.

Even without discussion leaders, circle participants can self-regulate to stick to the topic at hand and the process is more like "participants sharing their stories in relation to the [research] question" (Kovach 2009, 124–5). The groups met many of the protocol criteria designed by Indigenous methodologists, but I continue to call them 'focus groups' since that is the language that was used when formulating them (Kovach 2005; Kovach 2009; Absolon and Willett 2005; Battiste 2008; Potts and Brown 2005; Silver et al. 2006; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; S. Wilson 2008).

Other studies with Aboriginal people and women have found similar success with such focus groups (Breton and Akian 1978, 4; Silver 2007; McCracken 2004). Group sharing also helps create a process where participants listen to others and then provide either similar (emphasizing common experiences) or differing (emphasizing a diversity of experiences) insights. Collective discussions can help provide more useful data than a series of one-on-one interviews as it is interactive, allowing for people to build upon what they hear, agree with, or contradict others. Concerns that people would not participate based on others being present (or my presence) did not materialize.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Unlike a similar study (Silver et al. 2006, 9) where the authors asked two Aboriginal people to do their data collection for them, I believe it was necessary for me to attend the focus groups in order to learn first-hand about participants' experiences in the housing field and to give a face to my research, even if it is that of an outsider. This created more need for me to earn trust in the community.

Based on comments received when presenting my proposed research methodology and methods at the Canadian Political Science Association in 2009, I debated which order was best: to do focus groups first and use that information when approaching interview participants, or else to conduct interviews first in order to get a clearer picture of the field before conducting focus groups. I decided the latter would work best; as a non-Aboriginal person who is relatively new to Edmonton and who had been away from Winnipeg for years, I was not immediately or overly familiar with either city's Aboriginal or homeless communities. It was therefore beneficial to conduct interviews first, in order to get to know people at service organizations in both cities and to build up social capital among these interview participants so that it would be easier to reach out to potential focus group participants.

Kovach asserts that research-sharing circles require food, cultural acknowledgement by an elder or "cultural person," and should ideally be led by an elder or cultural person so that the sharing is directed by Aboriginal people (Kovach 2009, 124). When possible, a smudge or other appropriate protocol should be conducted (Kovach 2009, 139).

At all groups, I provided food (light food in the afternoon and heavier food at the evening sessions during supper time). I paid for a child-minder and attempted to make it clear, as I had been taught by the community, that participants were welcome to bring children. To help with transportation, I also provided bus tickets. All participants received a cash honourarium of \$20. I had planned to offer gift cards for a local food store, but the community members I spoke with ahead of time told me that cash is more versatile and would be better appreciated. I chose to honour this advice and respect participants' choice of what they would spend their money on rather than decide for them.

In each city, I received the assistance of an Aboriginal facilitator who also acted as a cultural expert, and I spoke to elders (more below) about cultural protocols beforehand as well. There was a smudge when it was possible and I was fortunate that an elder in Edmonton agreed to give an opening prayer and speak at one of my groups in addition to participating.

In Winnipeg, I was fortunate to connect, through interviews, with a community group that helped Aboriginal people work together to deal with housing and other social issues. Community organizers from the centre met with me to discuss the housing issues that they see in the community, and I was offered the use of the centre for conducting focus groups. This was ideal because it is located in an area with a very large Aboriginal population, but is also recognized as Aboriginal space and a safe space for women, something which is vital to making the group comfortable (McCracken 2004). I worked with the centre's community facilitator, an Aboriginal social work student, in setting up the group. This person also agreed to act as a facilitator for the group so that I could take notes and pay attention to what was said rather than trying to direct the talk.

For the Edmonton groups, I first spoke with Aboriginal elders for guidance; I provided them with tobacco offerings (Kovach 2009, 127). I am grateful to them both for their help. Lacking an Aboriginal community space similar to the one that was shared in Winnipeg, the focus groups were held at the downtown branch of the Edmonton Public Library. It has an Aboriginal advisory board and a reputation for attempting to engage the Aboriginal community, especially in the inner city. I asked a trusted Aboriginal friend and academic colleague who is familiar with Edmonton's Aboriginal community and cultural protocols to be the facilitator.

In both cities, there were two focus groups, one for women and one for men.⁶⁶ The reason for doing so was to see whether gendered conclusions could be drawn by comparing the groups (Fernandez 2003). It has also been suggested that if a focus group is homogenous and based on common bonds, the members are more likely to share their innermost thoughts (Luntz 1994). After consultation with community members and cultural advisors, it was decided to hold the women's groups during the early afternoon (as they were more likely to be parents/caregivers to children who would be in school) and the men's groups in the evenings after 5:00 PM, as they were more likely to be working during the

⁶⁶ All participants were over 18 in order to avoid any legal issues regarding consent to participate.

day. I am not convinced that the division by sex was as useful as I had anticipated. Results show some differences between group responses, but it is possible that these results could have been achieved in mixed groups (although the dynamic may have been quite different). Also, I received calls from women who indicated that they would have liked to participate but had to work during the scheduled time.

Inviting participants was a difficult task in both cities, though this also helped me learn about the field and its members. Not everyone has email access, a phone, and/or a fixed address. Finding people who are so easily and regularly overlooked, either because they lack capital or are so busy trying to maintain what they have, was difficult. Many people may have wanted to participate in the focus groups, but giving up two hours of their time, even for an honourarium, was not a viable option. The challenges of recruitment reveals a lot about the housing field, which I will address below.

I composed a letter of invitation to participate that was sent to prior interview participants who had indicated that they would be willing to help reach out to potential participants from among their tenants or service users. This email was intended to be forwarded to others or to help spread the details by word of mouth. An abbreviated version of this letter was also sent out on different email list serves. For those who were less likely to have email access, and to ensure a diversity of housing backgrounds, I contacted all of the homeless shelters (by phone in Winnipeg and in person in Edmonton) and spoke to those who work directly with the homeless and low-income community. Posters in strategic locations were used to advertise the focus groups and a number participants indicated that they came because they had seen the posters.

The groups lasted about two hours⁶⁷. Participants were given a consent form there as well. The Winnipeg groups were not tape recorded as the facilitator and I felt that this would make people hesitant to speak and it would be inappropriate in the space. Whether to record or not is a dilemma; it can cause

⁶⁷ A sharing circle will last as long as it has to last, even if it takes five hours (Kovach 2009, 124).

discomfort for the participant but it also helps keep stories alive and ensures accurate voice (Kovach 2009, 127). Not recording meant that the notes from the Winnipeg focus groups failed to capture people's own words and I can only paraphrase their stories rather than quote them directly. Since this was the rationale behind recording all interviews and doing verbatim transcripts, I asked the Edmonton groups if they would consent to being recorded. No one in the women's group indicated that they had a problem with that. The men's group discussed it for a bit and decided it was acceptable, though I stressed that I did not want anyone to feel that they had to agree and would stop if requested.

No one has heard these tapes; sections of the recording were written down in order to draw out anonymous quotes and then it was destroyed. I do not know if I would attempt to record a focus group again. Tape recorders can be seen as a powerful symbolic tool of academia or of the more powerful who have done harm in the past and diminished trust through problematic research.

At the end of each group, I handed out a debriefing questionnaire⁶⁸ intended to gauge the demographic diversity of participants' backgrounds, and explained that it would not be connected to what participants said in the group. Although focus groups are not designed to be representative (Archer and Berdahl 2011, 238), I still wanted to know whether the group demonstrated a cross-section of the Aboriginal community. The questionnaire included an optional section where participants could record their contact information in the event that a follow-up group was held or if they wanted to hear more about the research results. In both Winnipeg groups, everyone was provided with an envelope that was stamped and addressed to me and invited to contact me with further information if they ever wanted to share anything or if they had wanted to say something but not in the focus group setting. I never received any responses and this practice was not repeated in Edmonton.

Since the focus groups were free flow discussions, and I did not want to have questions directed at individuals, I provided the facilitators with a list of

⁶⁸ Based on responses in Winnipeg, and insights from people in Edmonton ahead of time, some of the wording on the questionnaire was altered to make it easier to understand.

topic areas or broad questions (an “aide memoire”) that coincided with my interview questions (Silver et al. 2006, 9). Having them act as the facilitators also helped since they, as Aboriginal people, were more likely to be trusted by participants, would lend some legitimacy to the proceedings, and could be counted on for any cultural considerations.

It was suggested by some people in Winnipeg that I orally present the results of my work,⁶⁹ in a more traditional sharing circle at a later date. This afforded me the opportunity to accept any feedback in a less structured and less stressful manner. A less formal follow-up session was held when I returned to Winnipeg to present a related paper at the Prairie Political Science Association conference (Crookshanks 2010). On the focus group debriefing questionnaires, numerous participants had indicated that they were interested in participating in a follow-up. I managed to contact some of them through a mix of email, phone calls, posted letters, and word of mouth. No new participants were solicited for this session. What is worth noting is the number of people I was unable to reach despite their stated interest in participating again. This taught me, first hand, about the high mobility of urban Aboriginal people, something I discuss later.

At the group, I spoke briefly about what I had learned through the focus groups and interviews in both cities. For feedback purposes, I asked whether participants felt that my summary was missing any important points that the work should cover and what they thought about the work so far (positive or negative). Consistent with similar follow-up groups in other studies, no significant changes were recommended by participants (Silver et al. 2006, 9) though there was ample feedback on some further areas for exploration.

The process of having interviews and focus groups was a learning experience in itself. There were setbacks and some unexpected surprises, though these experiences also shed light on the field and how the research experience is part of it. In the following chapters, the data gathered from participants will, figuratively and literally, speak for itself. Concerns earlier in the research development process that the culturally appropriate focus group approach would

⁶⁹ This had been proposed during the ethics process as well.

provide data that is incompatible with interviews was proven unfounded. People who have housing ideas and issues do not need to speak in the language of high politics in order to talk about governance or for us to learn how they do or do not work together to deal with housing problems. Further, I argue that the focus group methods gained much more personal, insightful, and meaningful data because of the open-ended questions that led to shared discussion.⁷⁰

4.7 CONCLUSION

The methodologies and methods used in this dissertation were chosen specifically to best answer my research questions about colonialism, patriarchy, and neoliberalism in the housing field. I believe case studies are most useful for answering the questions in detail and a comparative approach is best for contrasting the cases in ways that generate useful and informative analysis. Field analysis and gender-based analysis require asking certain questions and call for inclusive and participation-based approaches. Although the procedures I used are not Indigenous methodologies, they are informed by the protocols and methods drawn from previous, similar research. Thus, my study follows principles of culturally-sensitive research. Obstacles and barriers to inclusive research always exist, including those based on the researcher's own limited capital and experiences. These can lead to bias or omissions. Some of these limitations are discussed in the concluding chapter. Every effort was made to address and be mindful of these restrictions and create a project that was mindful of the subject matter's implications for participants and the relations between them and myself as researcher.

⁷⁰ While being a cultural and social outsider made participant recruitment difficult, another barrier was economic. The financial price of doing ethical, inclusive work with marginalized populations is high. I am very grateful for the financial support that I received and that made this level of study possible. I am also especially grateful for the supportive community members in both cities whose insight helped me mitigate costs, reach more people, and keep my fieldwork as inclusive and culturally-appropriate as possible.

CHAPTER FIVE:

5.0 A HOUSING AND AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE: ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN WINNIPEG

Right now, I'm in [Affordable] Housing which is ridiculous; my rent is going up like crazy. Every time I get a raise for my pension cheque it goes up. It went up again in July. \$719. [...] I guess it's a lot cheaper than other people that are paying rent that's so high; it's so expensive (Edmonton women's focus group participant).

And up above us all, leaning into sky, our Golden Business Boy will watch the North End die, and sing "I love this town," then let his arcing wrecking ball proclaim, "I hate Winnipeg" (The Weakerthans 2003).

Winnipeg's housing field has been shaped, not just by oppressive forms of neoliberalism, but also by the struggle against these forces. Aboriginal people's struggle to collectively pursue their social, political, and cultural affairs — to seek out self-determination — in the face of state, societal, and market forces represents part of the fight over the ways in which the field is structured, how capital is distributed and used, and how what people believe and do are (re)created through symbolic violence. These effects tell us how Aboriginal women and men are differently affected because of their racialized and gendered identities. And this structuring, inspired by changes in neoliberal political-economic ideas (in conjunction with historically-based colonial and sexist ideologies), sets limits on what is possible for self-governance or other attempts to have an inclusive voice in housing related decision-making and policy-setting processes.

By focussing on how and why the Winnipeg housing field operates, I argue that neoliberal, racist, and gendered doxa affect urban Aboriginal people and the housing field as they are actively limited by the political and economic values of neoliberal governance that are imposed upon them. It is argued that the neoliberalization of the field limits self-governance initiatives from having any substantive movement toward self-determination goals or in countering colonialism and the ways that power is distributed. Although the Manitoba government is attempting to deal with some housing issues, a scarcity of funds for

housing has ensured that the dominated housing field remains in a crisis in which Aboriginal (low-income) tenants, the most marginalized field actors (essential for reaching the critical mass necessary for change), are most at risk. I argue prospects for developing local Aboriginal self-governance within this field, despite some notable attempts by Aboriginal women to find solutions, are hindered by the colonial distribution of capital perpetuated by neoliberal common-sense ideas.

The chapter will proceed by providing some of the most relevant statistics about Winnipeg's Aboriginal population. I then turn to an analysis of field structure, including the agents who occupy it and were interviewed. The rest of this chapter will look more explicitly at the struggle of the housing field. I examine the impact of neoliberalism on Winnipeg's housing field and the tools that women and men within it. This chapter features an expanded section on economic capital, which includes a thorough analysis of the primary political-economic crisis of Winnipeg's Aboriginal housing field: the end of government housing subsidies. I also look at other forms of capital including the importance of 'foreign' capital that may disrupt the dynamics in the urban Aboriginal field. I examine why the field has been and continues to be reproduced along capitalist and colonial lines by interrogating actors' habitus in the housing field. I also explore how some Aboriginal women and men experience the field differently, highlighting their roles in reproducing and contesting the field and how these tie into possibilities for self-governance. I conclude by considering prospects for collective control in Winnipeg's housing field, and the limitations such strategies face because of dominant forces within it and from the field of power.

5.1 WINNIPEG'S ABORIGINAL POPULATION: A BACKGROUND

According to the 2006 Census, there were 625,700 people living in Winnipeg that year (686,040 in the census metropolitan area or CMA).⁷¹ Of these,

⁷¹ Two Aboriginal themed studies that use the 2006 census data focus on Winnipeg's census metropolitan area (CMA), rather than the area within city limits (Enviroics Institute 2011b; Statistics Canada 2006). Looking at a larger area drops the Aboriginal population of Winnipeg from 10.19% to 9.97% (Statistics Canada 2007). This chapter

63,745 (or 68,385 in the CMA) people identified as Aboriginal (Statistics Canada 2007). Winnipeg thus has the largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada; Aboriginal people accounted for approximately 10% of Winnipeggers (Environics Institute 2011b, 10). This includes Canada's largest Métis community (Environics Institute 2011b, 10). Métis people accounted for 60% of Winnipeg's Aboriginal population, totalling 40,980 people. There were 25,900 First Nations people (38%) in Winnipeg and 350 Inuit people (1%). Eighty-seven per cent of these First Nations people identified as being Treaty or Registered Indian (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 6).

Winnipeg's Aboriginal population had grown by 22% between 2001 and 2006 (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 6). Although this growth could be partly explained by the increase in Métis self-identification (which grew by 30%) it is worth noting that the First Nations population itself grew by 13%.

Statistics reveal some significant differences between Winnipeg's Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations that are useful for understanding why Aboriginal people occupy the spaces in the housing field that they do. Like elsewhere, the Aboriginal population is younger. The median age of the Aboriginal population was twenty-six years, but it was forty years for non-Aboriginal people (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 7). Further, almost half of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg were under the age of twenty-five, compared to just 30% of non-Aboriginal people (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 5).

Family structure also differed greatly. Over 80% of non-Aboriginal children in Winnipeg were living with two parents in 2006, however only 44% of Aboriginal children were doing the same. Almost the same percentage (43.2%) was living with a single mother. Also, 7.2% of Aboriginal children were being raised by a family member other than a parent, while only 0.8% of non-Aboriginal children were in that situation (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a,

uses CMA-based data from these useful studies but also some city-bounded data when possible, as municipal services will be limited to neighbourhoods within these limits.

17). In 2006, men accounted for around 47% of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg (the proportion was only slightly higher when counting the metropolitan area).

The socio-economic situation of Aboriginal people was, overall, not as favourable as it was for non-Aboriginal people. Unemployment ranged from 14.5% for First Nations people, 6.6% for Métis people, and 3.4% for non-Aboriginal people. Although men's and women's unemployment rates were similar among the non-Aboriginal population, First Nations men were more likely to be unemployed than First Nations women, while Métis men were more likely to be *employed* than Métis women (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 11). Métis people also had *full time, full year* employment at almost the same rate (just over 40%) as non-Aboriginal people, while only 26% of First Nations people had full time, full year jobs. Employed Aboriginal Winnipeggers with *full time, full year* jobs had a median salary of \$33,400 in 2005. Although this was an increase of over three thousand dollars since 2000, it only totalled 85% of the median non-Aboriginal full time, full year income in the city (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 12). Since most Aboriginal people were not working full time, full year jobs, the median salary of all Aboriginal people over fifteen years old, *with income*, was \$18,620 (\$27,108 for non-Aboriginal people) (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 20). Less than 25% of Aboriginal men made forty thousand dollars a year while 40% of non-Aboriginal men made that much or more. Approximately 22% of non-Aboriginal women made over that amount, as did 13.4% of Aboriginal women.⁷²

Related to this lack of sustainable income, the numbers of Aboriginal people living below the low income cut-off (LICO) in Winnipeg varied; 61.3% of First Nations, 32.2% of Métis (for an average total of 43.4% for Aboriginal people) and 16.2% of non-Aboriginal people in Winnipeg were living below the LICO (before tax) (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 13). Differences between the sexes in each group were minimal, though women in each group were more likely to be living below the LICO.

⁷² This is especially significant when tied to the high number of Aboriginal single mothers reported earlier.

Studies on Aboriginal people's spatial distribution also demonstrate trends tied to income and housing. Peters argues that urban Aboriginal people in Winnipeg are spreading out over time (Peters 2005, 64, 61). Yet, her geography-based research still shows that in 2001, Winnipeg had one census area where Aboriginal people accounted for over 50% of the local population, one area over 40% Aboriginal, and eight over 33% (Peters 2005, 61–62) out of approximately 155 census tracts. This issue, the assumed “choice” people make about where they live, is also framed by neoliberal doxa discussed below.

Census tracts with the highest Aboriginal populations are all found in the inner-city neighbourhoods, notably those referred to by Winnipeggers as the North End (essentially the north end of the downtown core) and West Broadway. These areas face an aging housing stock that requires more maintenance (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008, 51). As an extension of the history of the area, detailed in the history chapter, the North End is also synonymous in many Winnipeggers' minds with crime and violence, the drug trade, and gangs (Silver 2010). Outside of these areas, there were no census tracts that had a population that was more than 10-10.9% Aboriginal, and most census tracts, especially those further from the city centre, registered an Aboriginal population of less than 10%.

Participants in the follow-up focus group noted that Winnipeg, as it has been designed by the city and province, is divided into place-based (*geographic*) groups. A focus on physical geography over space is both depoliticizing and privileges men's interests (Garber 2009). Women said that these state boundaries make it hard for them to branch out and create city-wide Aboriginal-based networks. Some women and men in focus groups also noted that Aboriginal space in Winnipeg, the North End, is the only place they can afford to live and that it is plagued by crime. These economic and social barriers confine the poorest Aboriginal people in Winnipeg to a particular location. As will be seen, as Aboriginal people become associated with the poorest neighbourhoods, the neighbourhood becomes associated with them, stigmatizing both and reinforcing ideas about where Aboriginal belong (Razack 2002).

The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study found that over three quarters (77%) of First Nations respondents are “First generation Winnipeg residents”: those who were born and raised outside the city.⁷³ Only 43% of Métis were first generation Winnipeggers. Thirty-three per cent of Métis were second generation (born in Winnipeg but their parents are from out of town) and 20% were third generation (their parents and/or grandparents were born in Winnipeg). Only 7% of First Nations were second generation, and 14% were third generation (Environics Institute 2011b, 18). The most popular reasons for Aboriginal people to move to Winnipeg were finding work (44%), to live near family (40%), and to go to school (35%). Only 8% said that they moved to Winnipeg for the housing (Environics Institute 2011b, 19).

Even if it was not a reason for moving to Winnipeg, many who move to the city must resort to using public or affordable housing programs if they are unable to buy a home.⁷⁴ The use of non-Aboriginal⁷⁵ social housing programs is higher among First Nations in Winnipeg than Métis. Overall, 24% of Aboriginal people had used non-Aboriginal social housing programs in Winnipeg; 11% of respondents had used it in the last year (Environics Institute 2011b, 43). Almost three quarters of UAPS respondents (73%) identified housing as “very important” when asked which *Aboriginal* (owned/operated) services should exist in addition to non-Aboriginal ones. This was true only slightly more for First Nations than it was for Métis people (Environics Institute 2011b, 61). Aboriginal-specific housing programming for Winnipeg was thus the fourth most popular response,

⁷³ The UAPS did not ask this question to non-Aboriginal people.

⁷⁴ Common reasons for not being able to buy a home included: lack of money, no credit history (never having owned a home on reserve), a bad credit history, no understanding of how mortgages or home buying works, or no desire to own a home. Compounding these factors is Winnipeg’s shortage of (adequate) housing.

⁷⁵ Note that *non-Aboriginal* housing programs are being counted here. It is unclear why the UAPS looked only at non-Aboriginal housing programs other than to show that Aboriginal people use many services that are not owned by or targeted to their communities. A study specifically on Winnipeg should also consider Aboriginal owned/run housing since there are several such programs, described later in this chapter. It is also possible that Aboriginal people claimed to be using non-Aboriginal housing, unaware that it was actually Aboriginal controlled and operated. The UAPS data would have been more helpful if it had cited the names of the housing programs respondents used.

very close after addictions programs (85%), child and family services (75%), and employment centres (74%) (Environics Institute 2011b, 50).

Aboriginal people's housing conditions in Winnipeg were also issues; 5.3% of Aboriginal people reported crowded dwellings in 2006 (2.5% for non-Aboriginal people), and 15.7% reported homes needing repairs (7.8% for non-Aboriginal people). These numbers had improved only slightly (less than 1%) since 2001 (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 20).

Lack of access to adequate housing and family structure can lead to high mobility. The 2006 census captures Aboriginal people's high mobility in Winnipeg, showing that 62.1% of non-Aboriginal people had lived at the same address for the past 5 years (2001-2006); only 43.4% of Aboriginal people said the same thing. Aboriginal men were 3% more likely to be living at the same address than Aboriginal women (the sex difference for non-Aboriginal people was 1%). Of those who had moved, Aboriginal people were 3 times more likely to have moved within Winnipeg than between the city and another place (42.3% to 14.3%) (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 20). Family reasons, followed by work reasons, were the most reported reasons for Aboriginal people to move (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 14).

5.2 THE FIELD STRUCTURE AND THE ACTORS THAT CREATE IT

By studying groups of actors and their relations to the field (the first step of field analysis as described by Bourdieu), we can see how the field, by virtue of the rules, regulations, and predictable patterns of interactions, manages to reproduce itself (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In Winnipeg, actors' relative capacities to dominate others are evidenced by their proximity to those that play a part in actively shaping the housing field. Many Aboriginal people seek work with the government or service organizations and so these actors (in managerial or political positions of the bureaucratic field) gain more exposure to powerful actors who draw from the field of power. Can they use these forms of capital to create processes for Aboriginal control of the housing field or do they end up being further conditioned by the dominant actors and doxa to which they are directly

exposed? I argue here that although all Aboriginal people, regardless of their position in the field, are exposed to the colonial and oppressive forces of the field, some Aboriginal individuals have found and created spaces to develop organizations and processes that attempt to put power into the community's hands. The question that remains is how economically and symbolically free these field structures are to pursue collective goals of greater political, social, cultural, and economic determination. The inter-connected nature of the field, showing that urban Aboriginal people do not operate in a vacuum but are tied to one another (and the colonial, neoliberal, etc. field of power), is elaborated here.

One of the primary hopes for urban Aboriginal self-governance of the housing field in Winnipeg comes from the potential of the Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association (MUNHA), first established in 1994. In an ideal field where power and resources were accessible to Aboriginal people, housing needs could be met or addressed politically by this organization that acts as the advocacy arm of different Aboriginal housing-related organizations across the province.⁷⁶ This includes several affordable housing organizations in Winnipeg (each discussed in more detail below). MUNHA's mandate is to lobby the federal and provincial governments for more urban Aboriginal housing units, assist governments in the "appropriate allocation of those spaces in a self-government context," facilitate the delivery of urban Aboriginal housing programs and address systemic problems, exchange information between organizations, and provide a forum for dealing with urban Aboriginal housing needs (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008, 135). This purpose is to alleviate the strain on housing organizations that are already over-burdened with their day-to-day operations. MUNHA has no real services of its own, though it does provide some training to

⁷⁶ It is important to note that one of the barriers to MUNHA's success is that it is a province-wide organization and does not deal with Winnipeg alone. Some MUNHA members spoke about how others outside Winnipeg were frustrated by having to come to the city for meetings. Half of MUNHA's members are located in Winnipeg, which is the site of the provincial government and over half of the province's population. As a result, power imbalances emerge. There are trade-offs here: being able to make province-wide claims while having to stretch other forms of capital in order to maintain that symbolic capital. MUNHA's specific activities outside Winnipeg will not be addressed in this study.

housing managers. Plans in 2009 to consolidate the application processes for several Aboriginal housing providers have since come to fruition, with a joint application form now usable for eleven Aboriginal housing companies, four of them with units in Winnipeg.

There was, in the past, speculative talk of MUNHA taking on a greater role as an Aboriginal housing agency (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008). This would be similar to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) in British Columbia.⁷⁷ However, this has failed to happen for reasons largely tied to capacity, legitimacy, and the limiting structure of the field. One of the few housing providers who had the knowledge to address the issue — Kinew Housing — was very involved in the housing field and probably the best judge, and assessor, as to whether it would go ahead or not. A representative of this organization simply said:

I'm not really ready to go to, like an Aboriginal housing authority that would, who would then funnel the funding to us. I don't think that's always the best way to go. I'm a little reluctant to set up another level of bureaucracy as well.

Another Aboriginal housing provider who oversaw the dissolution of MUNHA agreed that mixing politics and services was a mistake:

That's the thing they [MUNHA] were trying to do, is do some sort of housing authority, replacing MUNHA with that or whatever the case may be. And again, it comes down to the mandate of what that body's going to do, what's it supposed to do? Is it supposed to chase programs for reports or is it supposed to assist the programs in combating common issues that they're facing?

Again, separating public governance and service provision, and separating citizens from resources that would improve their lives, can be viewed as a feature of depoliticization (Clarke 2011, 240). This will be seen in other examples throughout this chapter; in Winnipeg, the field of social services — where many

⁷⁷ The AHMA is a “quasi-government entity that manages subsidized housing for Aboriginal housing providers” and a “self-management housing organization that serves urban and rural Aboriginal people in BC.” Its goal is “to have all Aboriginal housing in BC owned, operated, and managed by the Aboriginal community ... [It is] working with BC Housing to have all off reserve Aboriginal housing in BC devolved to AHMA.” (Aboriginal Housing Management Association in British Columbia 2011).

Aboriginal people work and struggle for help on a daily basis — has become separated from structures that enable public participation in decision-making. Such depoliticization is heightened by the fear, espoused in the first quote above, about a loss of control to an unresponsive “bureaucracy” — the neoliberal distrust of an over-bloated state and civil service.

The arguments that many Aboriginal housing providers in Winnipeg made were that MUNHA lacked the capacity to take on any extra work. With no connection to the community (again, it represents *organizations*), it also lacks the community-backing that is necessary in order to develop itself into a body that would foster community-based governance. During fieldwork for this study, MUNHA was going through what many, including MUNHA itself, described as a process of renewal. Around 2008, MUNHA’s board of directors was more or less dissolved and new management was brought in to restart the organization. No one, including current and former members, would say what exactly happened, but some did say that they had begun to question MUNHA’s usefulness. Like other non-profit organizations, MUNHA has had to fight to regain its relevancy in a dynamic and competitive urban (Aboriginal) housing field that has faced two decades of economic strain. As will be discussed, when not-for-profit organizations (and their overworked staff and volunteers) burn out from a lack of capital, not only is their relevance questioned by dominant field actors (MUNHA is easily overlooked — one government director of housing could not remember MUNHA’s name) but also the legitimacy of an organization is at stake.

Longevity — resulting in symbolic capital accumulated over time — means something in the housing field and confers status on an organization’s members. Longevity of Aboriginal organizations also sets Winnipeg apart from Edmonton (Peters 2005). This is further elaborated in Chapter Seven. Some of Winnipeg’s housing organizations have been around since the height of the Rural Native Housing Program (RNHP) and have survived the housing crisis that started in 1993.

Winnipeg’s primary reaction to the housing and homelessness crises that began in the 1990s was to create the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness

Initiative (WHHI) in 2000. This is described as a “single window delivery point” for housing programs and services in Winnipeg (Walker 2006a, 2352). It is, however, a misnomer; while it is true that all three levels of government (federal, provincial, and municipal) have their housing programs delivered in the same building (though the governments have their real sites of power — ministerial offices — located elsewhere), there is little integration of the three orders. The idea of “partnerships” — strategies to cut costs while sharing symbolic burdens — has been downplayed in the WHHI. Thus, the WHHI’s main purpose is to house a site where individuals or organizations can contact a single office in order to learn which of the three levels of government offers the most appropriate program or funding stream for whatever project they have in mind. In effect, this helps reduce redundancies or duplication of services (reducing costs on government) and, ideally, should prevent people from accessing multiple sources of funding to do the same thing, while enabling them to access, more efficiently, the most appropriate services.

The three levels of government therefore coordinate fairly minimally on housing policy, and each delivers its own programs based on its own priorities. It is worth noting that these priorities (because of jurisdiction and expectations about what each government should be doing in the housing field), do vary between levels. For example, as explained by a municipal WHHI representative:

So the feds deal with the absolute homelessness, emergency shelters, up to transitional housing. The province typically deals with transitional housing through the moderate income, so mostly permanent housing. But they do work with the transitional housing field as well. And the city is almost exclusively within the permanent housing, typically low-income, into some of the areas of market housing. In some areas, we can talk about tax grants and incentives and things like that. [...] ⁷⁸ We, for example, do little or nothing with social housing anymore because it’s really a provincial responsibility. And the city has sold the vast majority of stock that had social housing. [...] So the city does not directly involve itself anymore in social housing issues. We certainly don’t give any

⁷⁸ For direct quotes from interview and focus group participants, square brackets with an ellipsis [...] indicate some words have been removed. An ellipsis by itself is used for when speakers trailed off or did not complete a sentence.

rent supplement or anything like that. That's purely a provincial responsibility. Provincial/federal, I suppose, depending on who you ask [*laughs*].⁷⁹

This variance in agenda hints at the possibility that neoliberal ideas about 'getting out of housing,' as will be seen, are not completely monolithic (Peck and Tickell 2002); different governments are still bound by some level of public expectation (a symbolic responsibility held over from the welfare state) that at least some forms of housing need must be addressed, even through difficult economic times, if not more so.

For example, in Manitoba, the NDP has been in power since 1999 and for political/ideological reasons (and to differentiate themselves from the Progressive-Conservatives in what is essentially a two-party system) have made numerous commitments to affordable housing (Wowchuk 2010) — which it is willing to call "social housing," a term associated with the welfare state. The 2010 budget also committed \$281 million (over 15% of the total budget's infrastructure investments) to housing (Government of Manitoba 2010, 3). Even if only making rhetorical commitments to support housing, the provincial government must act on them at least once in a while in order to shore up its base of support and to be seen to be doing something about a housing crisis it has inherited but not yet resolved. As one government employee, who worked in non-profit housing before joining the government, stated:

I think housing is a priority for this government, and I don't want to make this into a political statement, but I've been in the field with housing for twenty five years, so I've seen a lot of changes and I've seen a lot of refocusing of priorities. And I think this government's focus on housing broadly, housing for people with low-income, on its mental health strategy, its poverty reduction strategy, its commitment to revitalizing the inner-city have all been very positive things that we hadn't seen in the decade before that.

Thus, the current provincial government cannot abandon the housing field without losing some of its support and the symbolic capital it needs to differentiate itself from the opposition Progressive-Conservatives.

⁷⁹ Note the similarity to the 'old' housing continuum approach, which is no longer accepted under a Housing First approach.

Like Blair's "new labour" in the UK, "Today's NDP" in Manitoba have espoused "moderate forms of social democracy" (Duhamel and Ferguson 2010, 402). One of their first acts upon taking office was to implement the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and begin addressing the difference-blindness of the previous government. Although criticized by some for being too pro-business, the Doer government nonetheless "yielded to the demands of Aboriginal activists" to fund community-based Aboriginal economic development projects (Gonick 2007). In Manitoba, Aboriginal support can also translate into a number of seats in the legislature; Aboriginal voters are concentrated in northern parts of the province and some areas of Winnipeg, seats that the NDP consistently wins. This has assured that Aboriginal housing has at least some place on the agenda (an Urban Aboriginal plan was proposed by the current Premier during the last election) and maintains some level of expectation that the government will not completely exit housing policy.

Further, Manitoba was one of the provinces that accepted the download of social housing from the CMHC in the 1990s. The relative ability of the province to pick up the slack reveals how important the eternal Canadian question of jurisdiction is for housing, even with the parallel question of (off-reserve) Aboriginal jurisdiction aside. Issues surrounding *Aboriginal* housing, based on differential needs, Aboriginal rights, and the field's systemic discrimination, complicate an already complex urban housing field, and it unites two intersecting jurisdictional hot potatoes. The way in which Aboriginal people address their housing needs is an important question if people indicate that they would rather work collectively in order to achieve some level of shared self-determination than assimilate into mainstream housing organizations.

What is key here are the non-state field structures and actors that take part in and shape the struggle over housing. In Winnipeg, the field of power (where lucrative political decisions get made) touches on the housing field, not just through interventions by the three levels of government, but by strategic plays by self-government-seeking Aboriginal political organizations. These have the capital to make demands on government orders, while attempting to deal with

recognition and legitimization issues and the needs of their (sometimes less than clear) memberships. In Winnipeg, Aboriginal political organizations (all of which address housing policy and programs in some way), whether bounded by a municipal mandate or simply headquartered within the city, play a significant, if not always influential, role in Winnipeg's housing field.

Winnipeg's location as a historic meeting place of different Aboriginal and colonial peoples is reflected in its location in Treaty One territory, closely surrounded by lands in Treaties Two, Three, and Five, and the U.S. border. The city has a close proximity to different First Nations reserves and numerous Métis communities. It contains a vibrant francophone community that reminds us of the province's constitutional guarantees to French language rights and Catholic schools that were negotiated by a Métis-led government that brought the Winnipeg area into confederation with Canada. All of this speaks to the diversity of Aboriginal political voices, identities, membership-based groups, and cultural traditions that must be mediated in this multicultural and multinational city.

First, Winnipeg is recognized as the "birthplace of the Métis Nation and home to the largest Métis community in Canada" (Environics Institute 2011b, 10). As such, the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) has its headquarters there. Space prevents a thorough history of the MMF and its somewhat infamous story of nepotism, financial mismanagement, and allegations of corruption (Jones Morrison 1995). The MMF started and aborted different housing projects in Winnipeg out of a long-standing desire to provide better homes for Métis people in the city. Unreliable government funding and MHRC's stringent regulations led to failure and many people blamed the MMF (Jones Morrison 1995; Sawchuk 1978). This turned around when the MMF was given the job of managing the Rural and Native Housing Program for all of rural Manitoba in the 1980s. In the 1990s, Yvon Dumont, President of the Métis National Council (and formerly of the MMF) supported Brian Mulroney's Charlottetown Accord. The MMF's combined federal/provincial funding went from \$873,000 to \$4 million by 1992 (Jones Morrison 1995, 68).

Today, the MMF manages ten homes that they own (all outside Winnipeg) and fourteen thousand that they manage for the province.⁸⁰ All of these are rural; they are not even targeted at Métis tenants. Despite long-standing desires to play a formal and vital part in Winnipeg's housing field, the MMF is effectively shut out. They do have a political voice but no chips to play within the housing game, so to speak. One small exception is that in 2008, the MMF⁸¹ signed a deal with Habitat for Humanity to build homes for Métis families in Winnipeg. As of 2009, this had created five houses; the Winnipeg region office of the MMF screens candidates. Despite being out of the urban housing field, the MMF does have a significant "institutional capacity" to engage in politics that is "backed up with financial resources" it has acquired by establishing corporations since the 1980s (including construction); this "pool of capital" allows them to engage in other field struggles and in ways that other Aboriginal organizations cannot (Loxley 1996, 18–19).

Winnipeg also houses the secondary headquarters of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC). The AMC represents the amalgamated voices of over 60 First Nations across southern Manitoba. Since the AMC's focus has long been on on-reserve issues, and the poor situation of housing there, it also has limited involvement in Winnipeg's housing field. It has also been "caught between federal and provincial off-loading and fiscal cut-backs" (Loxley 1996, 20) and so it pays for its position trapped between jurisdictions. While it is not a significant player in urban service delivery, it is increasingly involved in off-reserve political processes. For example, the AMC sat in on the province's joint selection committee on how to spend part of the trust fund for off-reserve Aboriginal housing (Een Dah Aung, discussed below) and does some advocacy work for one of the housing organizations associated with the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council

⁸⁰ Jones Morrison claims that by 1992, the MMF's housing branch was making over \$1.7 million a year which was transferred to the head office (1995, 75) as a form of core funding and their primary source of income. When the funding stream for this housing program came under threat by CMHC cuts it was the Métis National Council (MNC) that negotiated with the CMHC to save it (Jones Morrison 1995, 118).

⁸¹ The deal was also signed by the Winnipeg Métis Association, part of the MMF, and this organization works with Habitat for Humanity to raise part of the necessary funding that the provincial government does not cover.

(which has a direct relationship with the federal government, thus bringing in the AMC through the political field), elaborated below.

Although the AMC housing representative said that “right now we deal with just strictly on-reserve things,”⁸² the organization has begun to recognize the value of working with the provincial government and private sector in order to provide for First Nations people who are living off reserve (this requires working with tribal councils as service delivery arms as well). The AMC signed an agreement with the Manitoba Real Estate Association (MREA), based on a challenge from former AFN Chief Phil Fontaine, to get First Nations people to work with private industry. The AMC and MREA created Manitoba Tipi Mitawa,⁸³ in partnership with the federal government and the province. The program helps First Nations people buy their own homes (under \$18,000) by covering part of the down payment and providing mortgage subsidies (Manitoba Tipi Mitawa 2011). The AMC is exploring other avenues and partnerships to encourage homeownership off reserve. Like the MMF, it can speak to housing but not compel action in the housing field because it lacks the material property.

Some Dakota and Ojibway First Nations in the southwest of Manitoba formed a tribal council focussed more on service delivery than political advocacy. The Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council (DOTC)⁸⁴ is one of seven tribal councils in Manitoba, has nine member nations, and was created in 1972 as the first tribal

⁸² The Winnipeg AMC office’s main focus at the time was health issues, notably First Nations people coming in to the city for medical services

⁸³ This is Ojibway for “my home.”

⁸⁴ Multiple levels of Aboriginal organizations mirror the multi-scalar nature of Canadian federalism. It is debated whether Americans, and later Canadians, learned about concepts of federalism from Indigenous peoples in North America (Grinde and Johansen 1991; Payne 1996; Grinde and Johansen 1996). Today, Indigenous groups must target their interventions at certain governments; the distribution of powers in the 1867 Constitution (ss. 91 and 92) (in conjunction with the definition of Aboriginal Peoples in the 1982 amendment) determine, ideally, which level of government delivers which services to which people and where. This requires strategic alliances on the part of Indigenous groups. For example, Long Plain First Nation, where DOTCHAI is headquartered in an urban reserve, is a member of the Assembly of First Nations, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Southern Chiefs’ Organization Inc. (representing over 30 southern First Nations of the AMC), and the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council. First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations are encouraged/required to join different lobbying organizations based on what service or rights claims they are making against which government.

council in Canada (Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council 2011). As will be discussed, the DOTC controls⁸⁵ two Aboriginal housing organizations, one with units across the south-western part of the province, and one with units exclusively in Winnipeg. The DOTC's headquarters are not in Winnipeg and they are more focussed on on-reserve issues as well. Being responsible for only service delivery separates the DOTC from politics and from decision-making. While it runs the risk of being reduced to mere self-administration (delivering someone else's programs), it gives the appearance of a partnership between First Nations and the federal government. This also serves the purposes of neoliberal interests by devolving responsibility down to another level. And when that organization is explicitly forbidden from engaging in politics, it suits state interests further.

As an almost exact opposite, there is one organization in Winnipeg that addresses off-reserve *urban* issues for Aboriginal people that claims to be the only one of its kind in Canada: an urban pan-Aboriginal political body. The Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg (ACW) attempts to speak for Aboriginal people in Winnipeg, in a *pan-Aboriginal* or *group membership non-specific* (First Nation, Status and non-Status Indian, Métis, Inuit, and anyone who otherwise identifies as Aboriginal) manner. This organization continually seeks to assert a political equivalence to the AMC and the MMF, with mixed results. Having gone through some years with little to no funding, the ACW is also coming out of a renewal cycle and rebuilding. It is not involved in service delivery other than housing a "business incubator" that fosters entrepreneurship in the Aboriginal community. Its role in the housing field is currently limited to working with, and advocating for MUNHA, and speaking out on housing issues when it has a platform and an ear of the governments. Its President (the sole paid position next to the receptionist) has to simultaneously claim a membership that is not necessarily recognized, while differentiate the ACW from political organizations that have garnered stronger legitimacy. For example, the ACW President said:

We pay attention [to what] the MMF, the AMC, SCO, MKO are doing [...]. They're on a self-government path so we get to

⁸⁵ Each of the DOTC member nations gets a seat on each housing organization's boards of directors.

monitor and ensure important issues like informed consent that nothing's going to be forced on urban Aboriginal people by these groups. Because we have three distinct sets of rights. We're full Canadians, we have Aboriginal, and we have treaty rights.⁸⁶

Thus, the established political groups are pursuing government-recognized (institutional) self-government, a politicized field struggle with which most actors in the housing field, as will be discussed, did not identify. Aboriginal political organizations can make claims in the name of self-government because they have a membership that is *recognized by the state* (either by the *Indian Act*, self-government agreements, or court rulings), which gives them a capacity to engage in a higher level of politics than the nebulous ACW. They do this because they can and their leadership knows that some level of power can be achieved by pursuing this specific strategy. This creates some issues for the ACW:

Another challenge, serious challenge about any issue including housing is the community doesn't speak with one voice. There's a very scattered approach to anything. So MMF will voice their concerns about housing and AMC will do the same thing and then ourselves. So there's no cohesive voice to governments about anything. And then those groups, they're on a First Nation, Métis, and Inuit specific agenda. So only for First Nations, only for Métis, only for Innu. So you know it's a very complex and convoluted playground. And the ability of any one organization or one group to achieve their goals is affected by all those serious limitations.

Of course, as pointed out earlier and by participants in the field, governments have interests in there being diverse Aboriginal voices; (Boldt 1993, 86; Sawchuk 2006)

it makes ignoring them easier if they cannot agree and speak as one and it creates competition for scarce reasons.

At the same time, there are Aboriginal people who support the existence of each of these groups for the benefits that they confer on their membership, and

⁸⁶ The ACW President guessed that the majority of the organization's members are (Indian status) First Nations people. Considering the majority of Aboriginal Winnipeggers are Métis, this begs the question of why Métis people are not joining at the same rate. One guess is that the MMF serves a more significant function in Winnipeg (albeit not in housing which is just one area of concern) than First Nations political organizations, which are focussed on on-reserve issues (though there is a growing realization that looking at off-reserve issues does not weaken their symbolic capital).

because claims-making processes against the state (through courts or land claims, through self-government negotiations, or through special negotiations with government ministers) have been channelled through these organizations since the 1970s; they cannot be dissolved now, even if the government wanted to get rid of them.

Some people who participated in focus groups, sincerely identified with their group as it gave them rights, a community, and an identity (when asked by the questionnaire how they defined as Aboriginal, one person put “MMF”). Simultaneously, many Aboriginal participants remained convinced that there is a divide and conquer approach (Boldt 1993; Sawchuk 2006) to the government’s recognition of the MMF, AMC, and other membership-based organizations, especially those whose identity has been shaped by imposed colonial practices (“Indians”) and by negotiations with the government (“Métis”). However, it can be argued that governments again have little choice but to recognize the symbolic capital of entrenched groups, especially when governments can use the complicity by these groups in decision-making processes and take it as tacit consent from the community.

This is most true in the case of the federal government as other levels of government, with less certain or formal relationships with Aboriginal organizations, can recognize that this system of spreading out power creates more tension than the advantages of unifying voices (Boldt 1993). One city government employee stated:

And it doesn’t help that there’s no, and maybe it’s impossible, there’s no single voice that comes from the Aboriginal community. There’s the political groups — AMC and MMF — then there’s a very strong core of service providers that are not aligned with anything they’re just out there trying to do do-gooder stuff. And then there’s other organizations like the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg which wants to be seen to speak for Aboriginal citizens but of course the AMC will say ‘well those First Nations people are our people, they’re our people’ and the MMF ‘will say they’re our people not your people.’ So there’s all those kinds of dynamics as well that doesn’t create a kind of momentum and consensus around what self-government can mean for the Aboriginal

community because there's just too many communities within the Aboriginal community.

This tension plays out between the organizations described above. As stated, the ACW is often on the side-lines while the MMF and AMC, with much more symbolic capital and more at stake (not just the stakes of the housing field but the other goods tied to the recognition of their organization), must struggle against the bureaucratic field and against each other. According to an MMF representative:

It's [relations in the housing field] kind of, it's workable. But [pause] I know there's some sour feelings from the First Nations side, that say the Métis have no rights. But you look at the historical content, our rights go beyond theirs, by way of our government before them. [... Housing providers] can go to Aboriginal because it's 'urban Aboriginal,' but they can't say 'Inuit only.' But DOTC does. They shouldn't be able to do that either, all their stuff's straight First Nations.

These concerns about group recognition were not just brought up by research participants at political organizations, but by community members too who are used as pawns in these political struggles. For those who are outside the political groups, either because they are not members or because they are members but not active or interested in the political struggle, this issue drew frustration in the focus groups. And, for reasons that are developed more below, it was the women's group that was more critical, though there were some men who spoke about it as well.

In order to fill a political gap and help Aboriginal women access the field of power, by speaking for them, another *pan-Aboriginal* organization exists in Winnipeg, the Mother of Red Nations (MORN).⁸⁷ Describing themselves as a "service that looks after women," MORN is a decade-old political organization that seeks to be a voice for Aboriginal women in Manitoba, "fighting for those women who don't feel like they're being heard." MORN has a training program,

⁸⁷ In late 2011, following some arrests and corruption allegations (Kusch 2010), MORN ceased to exist. Research participants in Winnipeg and Ottawa stated that MORN's board of directors has also dissolved. Since it was so active during field research in 2009, this section on MORN is still written in the present tense. Citations in this paragraph are from interviews with people at MORN. The void left by MORN complete dissolution is discussed later.

works on the Sisters in Spirit program,⁸⁸ and conducts political advocacy with three levels of government, though mostly the province. They also have a resource centre with a number of tool kits including a substantial housing tool kit to help Aboriginal women find and apply for housing.

Like the ACW, a MORN representative noted how MORN can be easily left out of important events and government announcements if they do not constantly assert why they should be involved in the field. For examples, during fieldwork, at a public announcement on housing, MORN was not invited (which drew some disgruntled comments in an interview) and instead of inviting the MMF, the provincial government, for reasons that could not be answered in interviews, invited their rival organization, the *Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba*. Unequal relations of governance (Tully 2008) allow governments to decide whom to recognize and when, creating competition between groups and weakening their abilities to resist domination by engaging the government as self-determining groups (Sawchuk 2006; Ladner 2003).

Based on their levels of capital, the above Aboriginal political organizations occupy different spaces in the housing field; some are more influential than others and can better get what they or their members want. In different ways, they all attempt to influence policies of the three levels of government through field-sanctioned activities that conform to the unstated and unquestioned rules of the field. Housing field actors engage in the struggle and lobby government, form coalitions, share information, apply for grants, and provide services. As will be seen, many enter into strategic partnerships with governments in order to secure project-based funding. And in various efforts to include (some) Aboriginal voices in decision-making process — to enable limited, that is *controlled*, forms of state-sanctioned Aboriginal governance — the three levels of government have established different strategies for the urban housing field: the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement, the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, and the Een Dah Aung program.

⁸⁸ Sisters in Spirit is a program started by NWAC “to raise public awareness of the alarmingly high rates of violence against Aboriginal women in Canada” (Sisters in Spirit 2012).

In 2004, the three levels of government each contributed \$25 million over five years, to support downtown development, neighbourhood renewal, Aboriginal participation, and economic development. This Winnipeg Partnership Agreement (WPA) project provided funding to 245 projects by January 2010 (City of Winnipeg 2010). Decision-making on how to spend the money was done by four sub-committees or “components,” one of which was the Aboriginal Participation Component (APC). As of 2009, five Aboriginal community members, two youth, two business representatives, two representatives from philanthropic societies, one representative each from MORN, ACW, AMC, MMF, and one representative from each level of government (plus a non-voting Aboriginal elder) were included in the APC. Under the WPA, the APC was set up in order to ensure that Aboriginal people’s voices were heard in the redevelopment of distressed neighbourhoods and communities and that some funding was targeted at Aboriginal people, organizations, and related services.

Coincidentally, when the federal government began the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) pilot phase, the APC — having just been established to deal with similar issues in a similar manner — was chosen to take on the role of Winnipeg’s UAS steering committee. This created some overlap between the WPA and the UAS.⁸⁹ Over the years, the WPA did fund housing-related initiatives (such as an Aboriginal Youth Housing renovation project), however most projects touched more tangentially on other social fields that had connections to housing (Western Economic Diversification Canada 2005). Further, one WPA participant indicated that because of the division of responsibilities of governments (whether constitutional jurisdiction or simply presumed responsibility that they were willing/obliged to deal with), each level brought their own ideas to the table, funded these plans themselves, but then called each initiative a “joint project.” He described it as an “independent granting process” made to look collaborative.

Winnipeg’s UAS process, meanwhile, did not identify housing as one of its priorities although it has supported housing initiatives in Winnipeg such as

⁸⁹ When this study’s fieldwork was being conducted in 2009, government participants knew that the WPA (and with it, the APC) was set to expire, but no one had any idea what would replace the APC in order to steer the UAS.

contributing towards infill housing at Kinew, supporting MUNHA to build capacity, and a transitional youth housing project. However, as the pilot phase has ended, the UAS now requires ministerial approval for major capital ventures (such as housing) and the program's flexibility has been reduced, according to one WPA member.⁹⁰

At the provincial level, the Een Dah Aung (Our Home) Rental and Cooperative Housing Program was allocated over \$45 million "to address off-reserve Aboriginal housing" (Manitoba Housing and Community Development 2012). This included the \$32.5 million from the federal government's 2005 "Martin/Layton budget" and a top-up in provincial funds. A request for proposals on how to spend the money went out and a "Joint Selection Committee was formed to make recommendations to the Minister of Family Services and Housing regarding a portion" of the funding (Manitoba Housing and Community Development 2012). This committee included representatives from AMC, MMF, MORN, MUNHA, and other Aboriginal groups. There was also a non-voting member from Northern and Aboriginal Affairs. The group co-developed a ratings system and the Housing Minister selected all of the committee's six recommendations (three in Winnipeg) without revision (although it was not required to follow the recommendations; it was a non-binding consultation process, but the housing director stressed that all recommendations were approved by the government).

The joint selection committee's portion of the fund — the amount for which they could make recommendations — was to be around \$16 million, but when additional funds were later allocated to their chosen projects (now totalling over \$23.8 million), the projects for which the committee made recommendations accounted for just over 52% of the Een Dah Aung program's funding. Of the eighteen total projects that were committed funding, eleven of them (totalling almost \$22 million) are in Winnipeg. This includes, among other things, some of

⁹⁰ Manitoba's only other UAS city is Thompson. Interestingly, UAS funding was used in Thompson to create housing units for urban Aboriginal people, in the UAS pilot phase, before such programs were deemed unfeasible. It is possible that Thompson is the only UAS city to successfully use UAS dollars to create housing units.

the projects discussed in this chapter, such as the Manitoba Tipi Mitawa homeownership program, Kinew Housing, and the Habitat for Humanity/MMF project.

As for the roles of governments themselves, in addition to having the greatest say in setting up the broad organizations that bridge actors and structure the field, each government has an individual role in the housing field, influenced by their own goals. The government departments and ministries that comprise the “partners” housed by the WHHI essentially account for the key state players here. The federal government’s participation in the housing field is made possible indirectly via the CMHC’s Winnipeg office, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC, overseeing the Homelessness Partnering Strategy), and Service Canada.

It is important to note that Manitoba was one of the provinces where the federal government and the CMHC successfully downloaded responsibility for affordable housing to the province. Although they do still transfer residual housing-related funding to the provinces (from agreements set up in the 1980s), the policy direction, management, and decision-making on how affordable housing dollars are used is up to the provincial Ministry of Family Services and Housing⁹¹ (MFSH). This is a good example of the “steer but not row” neoliberal motto where the province must now do the management (and suffer the backlash if something goes wrong) while the federal government has a hand on the money. The Manitoba branch of the CMHC still works to promote the development of “market affordable” housing, and provides some tools for non-profit groups, such as seed funding, to get their organizations off the ground before they “hand them over to the province.” CMHC still delivers the RRAP program in conjunction with the province, and there is an Aboriginal target as part of that.

Manitoba also has what was previously known as the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation (MHRC), a provincial entity comparable to the CMHC, that

⁹¹ Renamed the ministry of Manitoba Housing and Community Development.

it funds, manages, and owns⁹² affordable housing. A restructuring and rebranding of the MHRC and MHA, (and a change in how they relate to each other and the provincial government), during fieldwork led to some complications, and still does, as not everyone was on the same page as to who was responsible for what, and what each part of the MHRC was now called. Both the former MHRC and MHA are now housed under the entity called Manitoba Housing (MH) though this study uses MHRC (which still exists as a legal entity) when citing information given by interview participants (and the literature at the time), as people still use the term today — change is slow.

Finally, the City's involvement in the WHHI is done through their Planning, Property and Development branch. The City of Winnipeg also has a trust dedicated to urban housing; each year since 2000, the city used the Housing Rehabilitation Investment Reserve (HRIR) to provide funding for housing initiatives, via WHHI, that they identify as priorities. The reserve provides \$1 million per year, of which \$200,000 goes to Aboriginal housing initiatives. This was established during the tenure of the previous mayor (a former human rights activist), identified by many as centre-progressive (he resigned to run as a Liberal MP and is now in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario Cabinet). Today, in contrast to an NDP provincial government, Winnipeg has a mayor who is generally regarded as conservative and pro-business.

As for Winnipeg's Aboriginal field, government players are even more limited. The Manitoba Ministry of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs also plays a (growing) part in Winnipeg's housing field. In the past, the ministry has not had a large urban Aboriginal role though it delivered services to Aboriginal people in the north. Now, it is starting to (informally) implement some new program spending as Greg Selinger, who took over as Premier during fieldwork, and won re-election after this chapter was written, made a provincial Urban Aboriginal Strategy one of his leadership promises.

⁹² The CMHC does not own housing; in Manitoba, public housing is owned by the Manitoba Housing Authority, or MHA.

The municipal government's own response to urban Aboriginal people has been quite limited. Once at the forefront of developing Aboriginal-specific programming, the City of Winnipeg has done little in this area since the current mayor was elected. Today, only the Municipal Aboriginal Pathways (MAP) program, staffed by a single employee, has dedicated funding for Aboriginal initiatives. This employee serves as the city's corporate point person on Aboriginal issues and acts as the manager of Aboriginal Initiatives. He has no staff or defined mission; his current goal is to build trust between Aboriginal communities and the city, while advocating that the various municipal departments carry out Aboriginal-specific programming of their own. To date, such programming has been largely (if not entirely) carried out through the City's Aboriginal Youth strategy.

Outside this field of politics, there are numerous housing and Aboriginal organizations that are working with the programs and services established through the political struggle. Although they are also part of the field of politics because of their political nature, actors in this area spend more time carrying out policy than creating it, working with the community rather than making the rules that affect it. Winnipeg, as one of the first cities to experiment with Aboriginal-specific programs has a wide variety of organizations relevant to this field study.

Canada's flagship urban Aboriginal housing provider is Kinew Housing, established in Winnipeg in 1970. It is the oldest and largest Aboriginal-run Aboriginal housing organization in Canada (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008, 136), and provides housing for low-income Aboriginal families. The province subsidizes rents (based on agreements originally signed with CMHC that were later downloaded) and tenants pay rents geared to income (RGI). Kinew's 417⁹³ units are concentrated in the North End and West End of Winnipeg. In its early years, Kinew bought older core-area homes that it renovated. Later, they purchased newer homes, with the help of the province, outside the city centre. Units are allocated using a pan-Aboriginal approach ("We

⁹³ Unit totals throughout this chapter are provided as they were given during fieldwork in 2009; most affordable housing programs are not in a financial position to afford the purchase or renovation of new units.

don't discriminate amongst Aboriginal populations. Métis, Status, non-status, First Nations, Inuit"); these are no quotas by Aboriginal population. The manager said that "there were some attempts to do that [allocate units by Aboriginal group] in the past and it was really not well accepted by anyone really."⁹⁴

As will be argued, the failure to establish group allocations at Kinew set a precedent in Winnipeg that has been replicated by other housing organizations. Further, as seen by the inability of the group-based Aboriginal organizations (political organizations) to get involved in the urban housing field, this idea that housing services should be provided to Aboriginal people without reference to group membership (with the exception of DOTCHAI which is owned by a First Nations tribal council) continues to shape expectations. These facts are further developed as one of the key differences between Winnipeg and Edmonton that have an influence in shaping the housing field and the governance strategies within it.

Kanata Housing is another Aboriginal housing provider with a pan-Aboriginal approach ("We don't decipher; it could be Métis, Status, even if the children are, can be proved to be of Aboriginal descent, we're open to that too"). Smaller than Kinew, most of its units are outside the core of the city, though it does own some housing in the North End and West Broadway as well. It owns 89 single family homes, subsidized by MHRC. MHRC also provides the guidelines for how they are to operate. Kanata's manager stated that the organization is non-profit and heavily subsidized, allowing for RGI.

As already mentioned, the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council has two separate housing corporations. The DOTC Housing Authority Incorporated (DOTCHAI) was started in 1981 to house First Nations people off-reserve in south-western Manitoba. Today, it is the largest urban, Aboriginal-owned

⁹⁴ The manager at Kinew guessed that 75% of his tenants were First Nations and 25% were Métis (although it fluctuates, he guessed it has not gone beyond 60/40). The fact that this is an overrepresentation of First Nations people (who number less than Métis people in Winnipeg) is likely explained by the fact that Kinew is affordable housing and Métis people, on average, earn more money than First Nations people, on average, and because Métis people are more likely to be from families that are established in Winnipeg, rather than recently having arrived there.

residential property manager and owns housing units in different cities and towns, including Winnipeg. Though it prioritizes housing for members of DOTC First Nations (“We always try to keep that [non-DOTC] under 30%”), DOTCHAI houses Aboriginal people from all groups (and even non-Aboriginal people as a last resort⁹⁵). Also as mentioned, the AMC does some advocacy for DOTCHAI with the federal government because it was not downloaded and is First Nations focussed⁹⁶: “We didn’t want to go back to the province, because the budgeting is much different, and since we were part of a tribal council, we wanted to keep that federal funding.”

The Dakota Ojibway First Nations Housing Authority Incorporated (DOFNHAI)⁹⁷ was created in 2006 to take over the units of the dissolved Aiyawin Housing Corporation. The provincial Auditor General laid out the mismanagement of Aiyawin in a 2006 report (Auditor General of Manitoba 2006), which caused a scandal for the provincial government, the funder of Aiyawin, and increased the public scepticism and scrutiny of other Aboriginal (housing) organizations. DOFNHAI took over Aiyawin’s portfolio of 219 units (all within the City of Winnipeg) as DOTCHAI deemed the units too undesirable (most units are in the core area and some are/were in poor conditions) to mix with its existing stock. In addition to a mostly core-area housing stock, DOFNHAI housing owns one apartment complex outside the city centre which is popular. Unlike DOTCHAI, DOFNHAI (like all other Aboriginal providers) is pan-Aboriginal in approach.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Housing non-Aboriginal people has only happened in Portage La Prairie when no Aboriginal tenants could be found; there are always many Aboriginal people looking for housing in Winnipeg.

⁹⁶ DOTCHAI is one of two urban Aboriginal housing providers that CMHC was unable to download to the province. This will be elaborated later.

⁹⁷ It is a paradox, and misleading, that DOTCHAI has a First Nations priority, while Dakota Ojibway *First Nations* Housing Inc. is fully pan-Aboriginal.

⁹⁸ With its funding coming from MHRC, DOFNHAI would have a hard time arguing that they should have a First Nations focus like DOTCHAI does. The manager said that a review after about a year of DOFNHAI took over Aiyawin showed that only 4-10% of successful applicants in the past six months had been from DOTC nations. Said the manager: “We get funded for all Aboriginal people, not just one group. Not the Dakota people, not the Ojibway people, it’s all everyone.”

Finally, the Payuk Inter-Tribal Housing Co-operative (Payuk) opened in 1989. It is one of around ten specifically Aboriginal housing co-operatives in Canada (Cole 2008, 170). Its goal is to provide housing for Aboriginal women⁹⁹ and their families. It is the only Aboriginal housing co-operative in Winnipeg and has 42 units; members must pay \$500 in shares in order to live there. Rent is 25% of tenants' gross income (Payuk Inter-Tribal Co-operative Ltd.). Because of some problems with management and budgets in the past, Manitoba Housing had become involved and then found a non-profit housing management company, SAM Management, to come run Payuk.

Kinew, DOTCHAI, Kanata, DOFNHAI, and Payuk (as well as the three organizations described in the footnote below)¹⁰⁰ are all members of MUNHA. The AMC, CMHC, Manitoba Housing, and MMF are also listed as MUNHA organizations (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2011). As will be discussed some different organizations spoke about how their involvement with either MUNHA is limited or in name only; they had no active relationship with them.

These housing programs account for a significant number of Aboriginal housing units in Winnipeg, and symbolize some Aboriginal control over part of the housing field by conferring (material) economic capital to Aboriginal-owned and operated organizations. This is capital that the state and many mainstream actors respect.

How units are distributed (across organizations but also among Aboriginal Winnipeggers) is significant. The following table shows the approximate total

⁹⁹ This women-specific nature of Payuk's mission comes from the interview with its manager; it is not found in the literature on Payuk.

¹⁰⁰ Two other Aboriginal housing providers in Winnipeg were not dealt with in as much detail this study: Kekinan Senior Centre and the Native Women's Transition Centre (NWTC). The important issues raised by seniors and women's shelters, as in the Edmonton case study, merits further, independent work. Some mention of the NWTC will be made in this chapter, though the NWTC politely declined to be interviewed, referring the researcher to organizations that they felt were more able to speak about the housing field; it was the NWTC that pointed this study toward their partner, Aboriginal Visioning, and the resources that this organization provides for Aboriginal women. Another MUNHA member in Winnipeg, Dial-A-Life Housing, provides housing for Aboriginal people moving to Winnipeg for dialysis. It is now managed by Kanata (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008, 137).

housing units for each Aboriginal housing organizations, as they were when fieldwork was conducted:

Kinew	400
Kanata	89
DOFNHA	218
Payuk	42
DOTCHAI	110
TOTAL UNITS	859

Table 1: Housing Units per Aboriginal Housing Provider in Winnipeg

As already stated (and will be addressed more later), these units are mostly allocated on a pan-Aboriginal basis, though some are not. Taking all Aboriginal housing organizations' housing units into consideration, the units in Winnipeg are allocated based on Aboriginal group identity as follows:

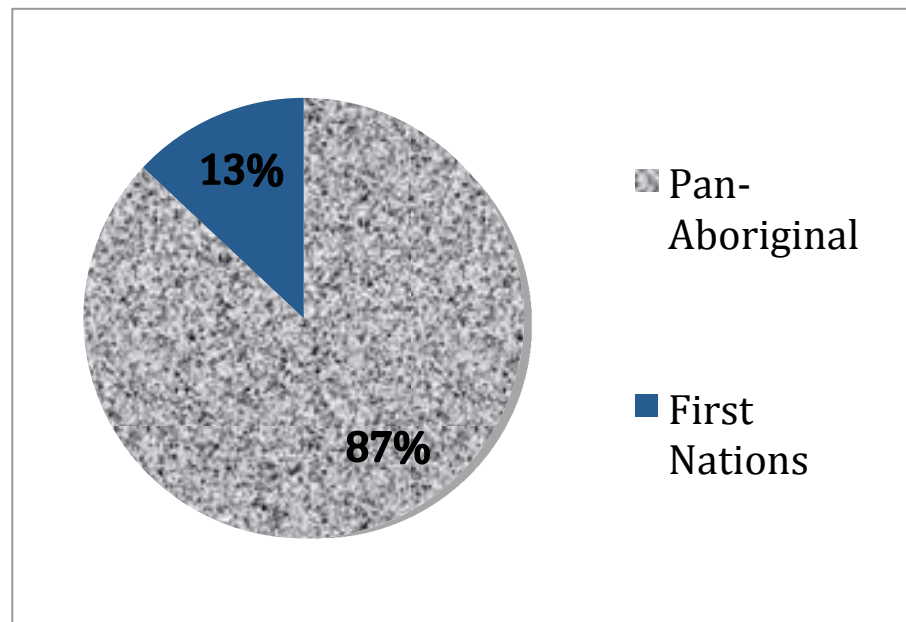


Figure 1: The Allocation of Aboriginal Housing Units in Winnipeg

Note that this 13% allocated to First Nations people is based solely on DOTCHAI's preference to house members of DOTC nations, though they house non-members (other First Nations, Métis people, even non-Aboriginal people in Portage) when necessary. As will be seen in the next chapter, this distribution is

very different in Edmonton and forms the basis for arguments about the roles that history, gender, and politics play in urban housing fields.

Despite the significance of these Aboriginal owned and/or operated housing organizations, the largest social housing program, by far, that houses people in Winnipeg is government-owned. Manitoba Housing (recently called the Manitoba Housing Authority) owns approximately 10,300 units of public housing in Winnipeg. They operate approximately 7,600 units in the city. Around 37% of Manitoba Housing's units in Winnipeg are located in the North End and central part of Winnipeg (Manitoba Housing and Community Development 2011). Because so many units are in the North End and occupied by Aboriginal people (although Manitoba Housing "does not request information about ancestry or race from applicants or tenants"), Manitoba Housing tends to be very much associated with the Aboriginal community. On the advice of the Friendship Centre, this study focussed on discussions with workers at one of the larger housing projects in the North End where the majority of tenants are Aboriginal (single-mothers) and the MHA actually employs a tenant-relations worker who is Aboriginal.

Outside of housing-specific organizations, Winnipeg's housing field comprises several other important bodies whose representatives were interviewed in this study. For example, as Winnipeg's North End contains a high percentage of Aboriginal people, to a point where the space and population often become synonymous in the public mind, the North End Community Renewal Corporation (NECRC) provided useful insight on what is going on in that area as far as attempting to address the chronic problems associated with poverty, a primary one being housing. The NECRC houses the Tenant-Landlord Cooperation (TLC) program which encourages "landlords to be responsible landlords and tenants to be responsible tenants," advocating on behalf of both, and dealing with issues such as discrimination in housing.

Across the street, Aboriginal Visioning for the North End (Aboriginal Visioning or AV), a community renewal project (not an organization) started around 2004. It is a community-driven project governed by a steering committee of community organizations. Its purpose is to bring an Aboriginal voice to the

revitalization going on in the North End, as well as to develop leadership in the Aboriginal community. Like the Native hubs described in Chapter Two it also offers a space where Aboriginal people can meet and, through holistic and traditional processes, work together to support each other and the community while maintaining connections to other (non-urban) communities (Ramirez 2007). They partner with other groups, notably the Native Women's Transition Centre. Most significantly here, AV created an Aboriginal space with a housing circle where community members meet, discuss housing issues they were having, and then work together so that *they* were solving their problems, while developing the capacity to help others in the community.

Not far away from these organizations, the Friendship Centre helps orient Aboriginal people in the city and direct residents to the services they need. They employ a family support worker who helps people find housing among other things. She estimated that she spends only a small proportion of her time on housing, because Winnipeg's low vacancy rate discourages people from attempting to move. From January to July 2009, 30 people (of which 29 were women) sought help finding housing.

Downtown, the E.A.G.L.E.¹⁰¹ Urban Transition Centre (EUTC), owned by the AMC, has been running since 2005 to address the transitional issues of "First Nations/Aboriginal"¹⁰² people coming to Winnipeg. It is similar to the Friendship Centre in some ways, but more focussed on First Nations people, transition issues, and does not provide the same community meeting space and programming for long-term urban residents as the Friendship Centre.

Finally, one of the largest Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg is Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata (often referred to as Ma Mawi).¹⁰³ This broad organization works to help Aboriginal families by providing various support services centred on child welfare but expanding to assist whole families. Key to its mission is the

¹⁰¹ This stands for: Encouragement, Advocacy, Goal Seeking, Language, Empowerment

¹⁰² Although the AMC's website uses the language that the EUTC helps "First Nations citizens," all of the EUTC's literature uses the (unexplained) term "First Nation/Aboriginal."

¹⁰³ This is Ojibway which translates roughly as "we all work together to help one another."

way in which the centre does its work. Programs and services are designed to be collaborative so that clients are not being told what to do; they work with staff and other clients to find the most appropriate way to help themselves and their communities. Ma Mawi's services touch on housing in various ways, most directly through their group homes for youth, but also indirectly, as many of their clients are experiencing housing need in addition to (and often tied to) the other issues for which they are seeking help with. Ma Mawi is also the "sponsor" that took the lead on getting the proposals together and administering the funding and ultimate legal responsibility.

As for the housing field's position relative to other fields, Winnipeg's housing field is in a dominated position. Without the prestige of being a pressing election issue, few parties campaign on housing, other than to briefly mention it. The majority of Winnipeggers will not face housing crises, especially the powerful agents who set the agenda. All of this makes getting attention from governments, media, the general public, and wealthy corporations more difficult. Without political or symbolic clout, securing funding for housing is even harder, putting the housing field, as a whole, in a position dominated by other social service and bureaucratic fields. Many people in the housing field, especially in the affordable housing sector, lack the capacity to influence the field of power.

According to one affordable housing provider:

I think we're too quiet. I think the squeaky wheel gets the grease. And I think that maybe as people who are interested in housing, maybe we need to start lobbying as a group. [... Governments] tend to make promises to the people who are likely to vote for them. And I think that in a lot of cases, governments see affordable housing as not being necessary as that's not where the votes are going to come from.

Thus, the added burden of being associated with *affordable* or *public* (read: welfare state) housing is a liability, punished by the symbolic violence and doxa of the predominantly neoliberal field of power. One government employee was even less optimistic about the importance of his own department within the public consciousness:

But start looking at the price of military helicopters and so on and so forth. Not that there shouldn't be other priorities, but in my opinion housing has to be a greater priority. Unfortunately it's not on the federal scene; it's generally not one of the major campaign issues. It's always part of the party's platforms, but it's not a major issue. It's not up there with health and some of the other major issues: health and infrastructure and crime and even defence and security. It's not up there with those 'hot' issues. [...] Let's face it, low income people don't have the same political voice as, you know, the majority of Canadians are able to house themselves reasonably well. [...] The majority of people in Manitoba are adequately housed, and I suppose the majority of people in Canada are adequately housed. So it's not a universal issue. Health care is a universal issue, right? Anybody can get sick or need health care. Doesn't matter whether you're rich or poor, male or female, short or tall, left or right. Whereas, the need for social housing obviously tends to be disproportionately, obviously, among people with special needs – mainly either people of, either low-income households, or people with special needs, whether it's people with mental health issues, addiction, physical disabilities, etc. And some of those constituents have a loud voice. Obviously seniors have a reasonably significant voice on the political scene and so we generally see a fair amount of money going into senior's housing.

Urban Aboriginal people also fit into the category of those who lack the voice to draw attention, and funding, for their housing needs. Both the Aboriginal and housing fields are in a subordinate position in Winnipeg's field of power. As can be seen in the above quote, this subordination is also partly because so many of the people struggling in the housing field are Aboriginal, further devaluing the housing field in the racialized state.

Housing is not a stake for the mainstream citizen as much as it is for some specific populations: the poor, Aboriginal people, the disabled, or single mothers. Neoliberal individual self-responsibility ideals make housing a private/personal matter and people are responsible for housing themselves. Many aspects of the housing field (notably affordable housing, housing supports, the homeless, inner city housing) and Aboriginal people are dominated because of their association with each other.

The visible structure of Winnipeg's housing field tells us about how organizations and individuals work together or against each other in the field struggle, but the power distribution described above only raises more questions about how far Aboriginal women and men can go in attempting to self-govern in a field that is set up to ensure that the needs of the private market, and those who are powerful within it, are met. Do community, service, or political organizations create spaces for, and include people, contesting field domination? This must be further explored in order to understand the field and how limiting it is or whether Aboriginal people can contest the doxa within it.

As can be seen, the housing field is complex, with different approaches to housing spread across three levels of government and civil society. The diverse views (between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, within the Aboriginal community, and between women and men) about how housing needs should be met lead to struggles for capital. As stated, housing field actors and the structures they support (and are supported by) have their ideal, outwardly-stated goals about what to do, but these are not always met; dominant actors (with a larger share of valuable capital) can prevent others from meeting their mission. And the subjective domination (enacting symbolic violence and taking on oppressive habitus) conditions behaviour that privileges both dominant field actors and structures. As will be seen, the influence of neoliberalism affects both structures and habitus, and it shapes how the field struggle itself is played out.

5.3 THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE HOUSING FIELD

The impacts of neoliberalism can be seen in Winnipeg's housing field in varied ways. Most critically, it is seen in the way the governments have successfully dodged responsibility for housing (Layton 2008) and the varied impacts this has on people's lives by fostering depoliticization and separating people from governance structures (Clarke 2011, 240–241).

Housing was downloaded from the federal government to the provincial government. This included all Aboriginal affordable housing programs across Manitoba (with the exception of DOTCHAI and a housing program in

Thompson). When so many federal housing programs stopped (see Chapter Three), it created an impact that has been felt by Aboriginal people in the city.

The ACW President stated:

So in urban housing, you know one of the most significant impacts in the last ten years was the ending of the Urban Aboriginal Housing Program by the feds, the withdrawal of the federal government from social housing, and devolving to the provinces. From our perspective it was almost a totally negative decision; it's never been the same since. And so I think it was one of the primary reasons we haven't been able to keep up with the demand for social housing units.

CMHC stated that DOTCHAI and Keewatin were spared the download because they were:

considered to be First Nation related groups. In other words their boards, etc. were appointed by First Nations; they were essentially owned and operated by First Nation communities. Those groups stayed with CMHC as part of the transfer, and are still administered out of this office by two people on our Aboriginal housing side, who also do all the First Nation housing side piece of it.

Despite this otherwise massive download, CMHC still sees that it has a role in housing, though the Manitoba representative is clear on how limited that should be; CMHC has a social housing agreement with the province to administer social housing, and it still funds the province each year under those agreements. But it is the province's responsibility to do the political work; "they administer it and make the decisions, budget; they basically do the whole administration, but they're still getting funding from CMHC." The CMHC also has some funding for Aboriginal housing capacity building, directed at First Nations, and they are "transferring affordable housing money to the province to do new projects, some of which will be Aboriginal, but there's not currently designated money for Aboriginal housing under those agreements with the province; it's up to the them to kind of decide how much they will put toward Aboriginal housing." Again, we see an implementation of the depoliticizing, neoliberal "steer but do not row" ideal, in this case, in the guise of respecting Aboriginal self-determination.

However, the government still holds the reigns; it has the money and sets housing

regulations. DOTCHAI's relationship with the government is more akin to self-administration (Coates and Morrison 2008; Ladner 2003).

Despite this, DOTCHAI states that their continued, direct relationship with CMHC has been positive:

We have a good relationship with our local CMHC, in Winnipeg, I mean that's where our portfolio officer is located. And to Ottawa, we're just another number [*laughs*] on the registry of urban Native groups. [...] [Not being downloaded] was a favourable — we fought to have it, we lobbied, we didn't want to go back to the province, because the budgeting is much different, and since we were part of a tribal council, we wanted to keep that federal funding. I think we had a strong political voice that we lobbied to stay, because we were with CMHC originally and then the province to go over, and then we were going to be transferred back, we didn't want this devolution to happen [again].¹⁰⁴

Already, then, we see some evidence of resistance to neoliberalism: the DOTC was able to avoid the downloading of housing by invoking their federal/Indian constitutional responsibility, arguing that they, like First Nations administering on-reserve housing, should maintain their relationship with the CMHC. The DOTC succeeded in arguing, as has been advocated by the AMC, that Aboriginal housing to be treaty-based (at least for First Nations) and under the control of those who are being housed — carrying out some form of self-determination. Resistance here is seen in challenging the neoliberal download but also in invoking Aboriginal rights claims to do so — the DOTC not only resisted the download of housing but the download and violation of the federal-Indian/treaty relationship.

However, as seen from Winnipeg's thoroughly pan-Aboriginal housing field, this group-based focus does not serve Métis or non-status people who are so

¹⁰⁴ DOTCHAI was very briefly under provincial jurisdiction, when they had an agreement with MHRC for some provincially funded housing units; for a few years, DOTCHAI had two operating budgets, one with the federal government and one with the province. Units, they said, were taken on with provincial agreements because CMHC was “just passing on the responsibility for urban Native groups, how they always have [...]; federal/ provincial responsibility: pretty much that's what it came down to.” Under the province, “the funding was a lot lower and a lot more paper work, but also at that time, we were acquiring units too.” DOTCHAI was able to (re)secure CMHC as a sole partner because “being part of a tribal council, we're stronger in ways than a group in Winnipeg.”

numerous in the city. The DOTC's resistance relied on having access to particular symbolic capital. They, like some Aboriginal (really, First Nations) groups were able to invoke the constitutional and treaty-based federal/Indian relationship in order to maintain a direct relationship with the federal government on housing and avoid the download. This avenue is not as easily available for Metis, non-Status, or pan-Aboriginal groups. Being reserve-based, the DOTC also respected the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy that is challenged by urban-based Aboriginal groups that are more easily cast aside as provincial responsibilities.

As to whether the province could further download to the city (Hackworth and Moriah 2006), provincial housing representatives stated that the city and non-profit sectors do have roles to play in housing; it is not solely up to the province:

I think that the city has to look at how it's doing its development, where they're developing, how easy is it for a non-profit group to come into an area and create housing for its citizens. [...] I think that there should be a strong provincial-municipal relationship in that regard. And I think that, again, I don't do the delivery here, I'm just going from my previous experience as the development manager for an urban Native group, I think that I felt that it was too easy for municipalities, from time to time, to not allow non-profit housing to go in when it does nothing but good for a community.

Thus, housing has become an issue that few governments want to deal with. This makes the struggle more difficult for Aboriginal organizations that do want control over housing but cannot find a government willing to ante up and provide the economic and symbolic capital afforded by accepting responsibility — few governments want to say, “we will house you” (Hackworth and Moriah 2006). For example, the MMF cannot develop a relationship with the CMHC (as was possible in the 1980s) because:

They're not in the [housing] business; it all goes through the provinces now. It wasn't our preference — wasn't our way suggested — for obvious reasons. I don't think the province had a lot of choice in that either. I think the government was going to ram it down their throats hell or come high water. And I don't know that we're going to have too much choice either; they're going to ram it down our throats hell or come high water because they know that they can't afford them, so now they gotta give

‘em to us and they’re blaming the victim again. It’ll be the Métis Federation’s fault that these things are not working. Not the government no more, the blood trail leads to us.

This leads to the second aspect of the neoliberal influences in the housing field; it is not enough to pass off housing to another level of government; governments are attempting to ‘get out of housing’ all together (Layton 2008). In other words, they are attempting a doxic shift to train citizens to see that housing is not a government responsibility; it is not a public or social good that should be provided by tax-payers or the fading welfare state. For example, the CMHC’s direct role in the WHHI is actually quite limited as the federal funding comes from HRSDC and, according to a representative, they are “not involved directly in the commitments.” The UAS in Winnipeg also avoids dealing with housing partly because the WHHI exists and because the UAS (especially after the 2007 refocusing by the Harper government) has been framed as not for housing:

Probably because we have the WHHI which does have an Aboriginal component, or did have an Aboriginal component after the old SCPI program and certainly has, I don’t know if it’s a component so much anymore but there’s certainly a stream, if you will, for Aboriginal housing in the new program. We were trying not to duplicate existing federal programs, we were trying to fill gaps in the programming.

Now that SCPI is gone, there is less Aboriginal policy presence in the WHHI. Yet, this will not increase the role of housing for the UAS: “No. We, again, housing is not our, necessarily us. The funding, for one thing, is small enough.” Second, as explained in the Edmonton chapter, ministerial permission is now required for building purchases.

While capital building is great for meeting urban Aboriginal self-governance goals in the housing field, if groups do not have the financial support to succeed (see the section below on the ‘end of subsidies’), then, as we will see, urban Aboriginal housing groups will be set up to fail and prove that only (mainstream) market housing works.

The Manitoba government wants social housing organizations to be more independent of government funding, that is, to become more self-reliant:

A lot of what we've been working with the groups in Manitoba to raise the issue and begin increasing the capacity of the groups, giving them the tools to govern and administrate their portfolio with the understanding that these agreements are ending. And we're not sure that there's gonna be dollars coming around the corner from the federal government, or even the provincial government. So we have to work with what we have – so how do we make that work? [...] So these communities have to look at really what they can afford. They have to come up with a balance of economic type rent, lower end of market rent, to help support the number of rent geared-to-income units that they want to maintain.

The third neoliberal doxa found in the housing field fits with these ideas of governments getting out of social services: the ideal of (individualistic) self-reliance. The EUATC representative spoke about the importance of empowering clients and ending dependence on government, while helping support First Nations business development. While these goals are recognized by many Aboriginal people as important (Helin 2006), business development can be a difficult, double-edged sword that risks further assimilation into capitalist economic systems that do nothing to guarantee self-determination that benefits the community. For example, the ACW's business incubator could be helpful and generate wealth for Aboriginal people, but which Aboriginal people? Will creating more Aboriginal businesses help low-income people in the Aboriginal community or just those who are fortunate enough to have the right capital going in, to start a business? There is therefore a hidden risk in the alluring 'common-sense' of self-reliance, *especially* when individualistic self-reliance (the neoliberal ideal) is mistaken for community-based (collective) self-reliance, the basis of Aboriginal self-determination goals, one of which is self-governance.

For example, the representative from MMF housing stated that with the proposed funding of the Kelowna Accord, the future of Aboriginal housing looked promising, especially considering that even conservative Premiers had signed on. However, the federal government killed this, he says, because "they figure everybody should take care of themselves!" Thus, self-reliance applies as much to individuals as groups.

The emphasis on individual conformity is justified (and limited) by neoliberalism's emphasis on personal choice or "individual freedom" to participate in the market (Bourdieu 1998b, 98; Trimble 2003, 144). For housing, this translates into (as demonstrated in other studies on the use of symbolic violence to discipline those who "choose" to live in the poorest parts of the city) ascribing to people the stigma of living in the "wrong" area and blaming them for doing so because they failed to create for themselves the economic capital to move into the "right" home or neighbourhood. Many people in the focus groups spoke about wishing they could move out of their neighbourhood if they could. But others spoke about liking their area because they knew and identified with their Aboriginal neighbours. As spaces become tied to race, as is definitely the case of Winnipeg's North End, those with capital can try to improve the negative aspects of their neighbourhood, but this relies on *collective* work (the "community development" done by a number of the organizations interviewed), not individualized self-reliance. The efforts by North End residents, if they can continue projects such as Aboriginal Visioning, to de-stigmatize their space may succeed *if* governments are willing to provide the necessary economic capital to supplement their work — social investment strategies for "cleaning up" the North End can generate support (albeit limited, as will be seen) if they are framed as making the city safer for the mainstream.

Tied to these expectations that good citizens should be self-reliant, is the idea of difference-blindness. The doxa that citizens should not make demands on the state, and settle their own (social, economic, cultural) needs themselves, carries with it a classical liberal expectation that 'all citizens should be treated equally.' This is an approach to the marketization of society that mandates that the state must not recognize difference among citizens; as self-reliant consumers, we are all presumed equal, and people who make difference-based claims against the state (such as Treaty-right claims, recognizing that female tenants with children need extra supports, or redress for the impacts of racist colonialism) are seen as 'special interests.' Neoliberalism eschews special interest politics for difference-blindness couched in the guise of universal 'equal' treatment by the state (Brodie

1996a; Brodie 1997; Green 1996; Jenson and Phillips 1996; Denis 1995; Andersen 1999).

In Manitoba, the NDP government has not completely adopted a difference-blind approach to Aboriginal issues, even in housing. For example, a housing representative stated that funding for urban Native groups is presented to Treasury Board separately:

So we do that. And we do only use urban Native dollars for the urban Native programs. So if we have surpluses there, surely we'd want to be able to get out to the groups, if we can identify that when we're coming around to the third quarter that we're going to have some surpluses in there, then we – through our communication with our officers in the urban Native groups – say here's the list of items that have to be done that we can afford 'this and this'. So we have the ability to roll out any surpluses that we have in our budgets back out to the urban Native groups.

As stated, the current provincial government has attempted to maintain a commitment to Aboriginal people and not bury them in a false universalization. Even having two Aboriginal people in the provincial Cabinet helps use (co-opt) their cultural and symbolic capital to send a message to the Aboriginal community. This use of Aboriginal capital is also reflected in the government's attempts to be at least somewhat responsive to Aboriginal citizens through the Een Dah Aung program's joint selection process. This was a powerful recognition by the province of Aboriginal organizations; those who were at the table were legitimized.

Tellingly, the provincial government chose a pan-Aboriginal approach here. The province knows that they cannot recognize one Aboriginal group to the exclusion of others without wading into the debate on provincial/federal responsibility of First Nations. The issue of Aboriginal difference is therefore difficult for the provincial government that has no constitutional jurisdiction for any Aboriginal people other than to treat them like 'average' citizens. The provincial representative from Aboriginal and Northern Affairs noted:

So I guess First Nations are thought of when they leave their reserve communities: provincial. If anyone wants programs and services then it becomes the responsibility of the province. And

even though we know in the last, say just ten years alone, there's been a really steady, constant migration to the urban centres of Winnipeg, the province has not really until recently, (when it was announced in the new premier's campaign, we need a provincial urban Aboriginal strategy), the province has just been responding by 'well we'll provide programs and services to everyone just like we do with everyone else, including Aboriginal people migrating from the First Nations to the urban setting'; let alone, all the First Nations people that have already been living here now for a good number of years and their generations as well.

As can be expected, there is some resistance to 'special treatment' from governments, but possibly more so if it is tied to housing. The same representative stated that:

I think there's been a little bit of resistance to targeting funds specifically to Aboriginal housing. But I wouldn't say it's been significant, no. I wouldn't say it's been significant. The truth of the matter is, in my own personal opinion, I don't think social housing is that high on the agenda of the average Manitoban. It is if you're a low-income household or an Aboriginal organization, or an organization that's advocating for services and the needs of the homeless. But the average Manitoban? I don't think social housing is high on the agenda, I don't.

Recognizing those who cannot afford housing (another 'undeserving' special interest) can also be seen as a violation of universal citizenship. Targeting housing programs for Aboriginal people poses some issues for organizations that have always been difference-blind. At Habitat for Humanity a representative said: "I'll be honest here, it's a bit of a tightrope. Umm, we need to, in our literature, we claim that we don't discriminate based on race, class, gender, age, and so..." The new Habitat partnership with the MMF, espousing the neoliberal partnership ideal, also touches on being a social investment in a particular population, which is something new for the organization. At the same time, Habitat has always aimed its program at people on low-incomes so it is not a completely new idea:

Any time we have qualifications, you are in a way discriminating, you're saying "this person fits into our program, this person doesn't fit into our program." Now, where we haven't wanted to tread those, to say that we build exclusively or give preference to this people-group over this people-group. The principles of Habitat is that it's open to any low-income families.

However, our justification in doing this, in part, is that we aren't taking away from any of our other families. In fact, we're doing more now to solve the problem of affordable housing. We're actually opening up spaces for other applicants because of this program. We were accepting Métis applicants all along, it just means that now those Métis applicants, we have funding for already, and we can now put in more people through our regular stream of applications into housing. In short, it, at first, was a bit of a: "are we treading into the area of discrimination based on race?" And I don't believe we are, I believe we're actually creating more opportunities for, for all races to get into affordable housing by doing programs like this.

So Habitat can justify their Métis housing program on the grounds that by helping Métis families, they help people in the "regular" categories. Social investment ideas open up some space for recognizing difference *if* it can be demonstrated or claimed that doing so benefits the population at large.

Likewise, the recognition of gender-based difference was identified as vital for developing effective and just government policy by organizations such as MORN, and the provincial government that recognized them, so that women's voices are included in the policy and decision-making processes. At the same time, there was a paradoxical recognition by many *in the housing field* that since women are so over-represented in housing and Aboriginal organizations that efforts for the specific recognition of women were unnecessary, even a detriment to men who were, allegedly, left out. At a family-centred organization such as Ma Mawi this is entirely possible. At housing organizations, that, for the most part, recognized that the majority of their tenants were women but failed to consider that there are any systemic reasons why this may be so, there was a greater tendency to gloss over gender and treat it, officially, in a difference-blind manner. I will return to this erasing of the relevance of gendered forces in the concluding chapter as it was common in both cities.

If governments will not recognize different needs, and withdrawing from housing means requiring groups to be self-reliant, then Aboriginal people will have to rely on their own communities. While this is can be a valuable step toward self-governance, it also requires enormous amounts of capital which may

not be there. Indeed, this is what a neoliberal state most encourages: downloading, as it were, to the voluntary sector so that social activities are not publicly funded. Volunteers must step in and help provide housing services or work on housing policy for little, usually no, remuneration. In Winnipeg's housing field, this reliance on volunteers has had an impact on a variety of organizations. On the top of many people's minds was the recent collapse of MUNHA. The CMHC representative guessed:

I think they still exist however, they were having some trouble a little while ago; it's always been the ones in Winnipeg who seem to have a greater connection to them because of course they're the ones who can regularly attend a meeting and if something educational gets put on they can easily attend, where the group in Swan River, the group in Dauphin can't really drive down for the day. [...] I think volunteer boards, I've been on a number of volunteer boards; you're on them for ten years and you're hoping for some new blood to replace you. You get volunteer burn-out. Any organization I think their boards, the more boards you have I think the harder it is to have volunteers, get volunteers.

Relying on volunteers is difficult because people will burn out, especially if they have fewer resources to look after their children while they sit at meetings or if they have to work long hours in addition to giving up their time for free. Running co-operative housing requires a lot more tenant input and participation than regular housing. The manager at Payuk stated that:

We're always looking to recruit new people. It's really hard getting people to volunteer for boards nowadays. Number one, they're afraid of liability issues, and number two people are just busy nowadays. [...] They're not as involved] as much as I'd like. A co-op runs most effectively with committees and volunteerism. We've really struggled with Payuk. Payuk at one time was not running well. Manitoba Housing has been involved with them I think on 3 occasions now. So the past couple years now we've really just focused on board governance and things like getting your arrears under control and making sure to house people who would be of benefit to the building. So that's been our focus over the past couple years. And I'm happy to say that the board's really coming along, and it's baby steps. But, as for committees... you know I think with any building nowadays they're having trouble getting volunteers. [...] People are getting burned out. You know

they sit on boards for year after year after year, and committees it's hard to get people involved in that.

This is disappointing considering the number of people in the focus groups who indicated that they thought that co-operative housing was a viable alternative to relying on market housing. Many people may believe that their lives will be better if they have financial control over housing but be unaware of the non-economic capital necessary to maintain co-operative housing — the time and energy. Many housing organizations suffer from a lack of people who can provide this. Kanata, too, is having trouble filling its board of directors:

There are seven spots available. We have 3 filled right now. We have a meeting on the 15th and whether those positions are filled or not. It's a difficult thing where, people are, in my experience, volunteering is sort of a thing of the past. People, it's time consuming. They don't get compensated for it in any way. And it's difficult for people to volunteer their time; everybody's busy. It's difficult to get those, especially good people that want to volunteer their time and put their effort forward to see the benefits of what the corporation is trying to do which is to provide housing in, quality housing in a decent area of the city that's affordable to these families that could not afford that in the private market. [...] It's volunteering, a lot of them are, I think a lot of people are scared because they're not willing to admit that it's over their head and they don't understand. It's not a simple thing. It's quite complex as to how things run and how things operate and there's all these government policies and procedures and our own corporation policies and procedures and the whole dynamic of meeting with a board and looking over these numbers and what it entails and stuff, it's, to the new person, it's overwhelming. But it is something it's just the nature of today's society. Everybody's extremely busy, who wants to go out on the 20th of January at 7:30 at night to go to a board meeting? Not many.

This is unlikely to change, as relying on volunteers fits in with the idea that housing should be community-run, not administered by government. Said a representative from the provincial government:

We have to take a step back in the community, we look at the urban Native [housing] groups as being community groups, volunteers that have come together and suggest that they can provide housing to their community members better than the government can.

Given existing problems with relying on unpaid work in the housing field, it does not bode well that governments think that they can offload running not-for-profit housing — once a responsibility of the state — to people lacking the capital to pick up the slack. Again, while this may seem ideal for self-determination — taking control from a non-Aboriginal, non-responsive bureaucracy to the community — community-based burnout is a real consequence if not enough people in the community are trained managers and willing to do this for free.

Another alternative to relying on governments and volunteers is for social housing to give in to neoliberal ideology completely and operate as private housing in the free market. This, the sixth neoliberal element discussed here, essentially means hiring people to run the housing field. It also means no longer running as a public service but running as a for-profit business. Such a prospect has been raised already as Aboriginal housing providers are facing the end of their CMHC subsidies, and are now under pressure to sell off unprofitable units and/or charge market rent on the rest (and only rent to those who can afford to pay, *Aboriginal or not*). This is also seen in the increased demand for Aboriginal people to participate in the housing market and become homeowners. The AMC representative observed:

It's because nobody's ever really done that so we're kind of blazing the trail for First Nations to be homeowners and we also wanted to target people living in those social housing that have, income, steady income, so we put them through a financial management course. [...] And those ten families, they all went to this, finance management course. And not only that, we had CMHC provide a, home maintenance course, so, you know, because, those guys aren't, never been homeowners. [...] So we're kind of blazing the trail for First Nations to be homeowners and we also wanted to target people living in those social housing that have, income, steady income, so we put them through a financial management course. [...] And just try to move a little bit away from the social aspect and start bringing, generating wealth for First Nations community, members who live off reserves, give them that opportunity and chance to stabilize the family life. [...] We like to get like trust fund people involved and more in the private industry to be involved with the process. There are some foundations that may, you know, could assist so overall we want to

be able to teach our First Nations members that owning a home is something you need to know.... well, it generates wealth¹⁰⁵

Thus, as a continuation of Aboriginal assimilation into mainstream urban life (as detailed in Chapter Three), Aboriginal people are encouraged by Aboriginal political leadership to become homeowners. Both Aboriginal (Helin 2006) and non-Aboriginal (Flanagan 2010) people have claimed that homeownership and private property schemes may help Aboriginal people participate in the mainstream economy and garner benefits of self-reliance. Again, what is key here is the extent to which some strategies may be modelled on assimilative goals or whether they truly provide opportunities for Aboriginal people to participate in an economy (that has been developed through their historic exploitation) *as rights-bearing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples* (Ladner 2001; Tully 1995; Boldt 1993). Since these programs are all very new, only time will tell whether this is helpful (or workable) or whether it puts people in greater economic risk, tying them to the housing field with mortgages (especially at a time when financial uncertainty has led many to lose their homes), while isolating them from their culture, history, and community. Homeownership, it is argued, is not a universally-held ideal, but one tied primarily to the liberal, Anglo-Saxon experience (Lennartz 2011; Stephens and Fitzpatrick 2007; Kemeny 1995).¹⁰⁶

Pressure to conform does not come just from non-Aboriginal people, but those who feel they have gotten ahead by adjusting their lives to match the field and they encourage others to share in this habitus that values the same capital and ideas (Helin 2006). The symbolic violence — the internalization of mainstream neoliberal ideas — creates rifts in communities between those who see the value

¹⁰⁵ This idea that homeownership will generate wealth, rather than lead to debt, is worthy of further study in a follow up in a few years and to see how those who purchased homes through the program benefitted. Likewise, there proved to be a gendered trend among participants, with men more in favour of homeownership than women. Future research with a larger sample size would be valuable to explore this issue deeper.

¹⁰⁶ Scholars explain that Kemeny (1995) shows how countries in a liberal welfare regime, such as Canada, have “dualist rental systems . . . characterized by two polarized rental tenures and a strong preference of housing policies for the owner occupied sector. . . . [These present an] almost fully deregulated private housing sector. . . . In reality, dualist rental systems can primarily be found in Anglo-Saxon countries (Lennartz 2011, 347; Stephens and Fitzpatrick 2007, 206; Kemeny 1995).

in adjusting to meet the field and those whose behaviours and beliefs, in this case largely influenced by non-urban experiences such as never owning a home or not believing that homeownership is viable, cause them to resist. What these forces do is try to wear down resistance and reinforce the idea that homeownership is for everyone who wants to live in the city. This view is supported by the MMF:

So the whole effort on the MMF's part is to get away from the government and then transfer the ownership and responsibility back to the homeowner. Not to the Métis government — there may be a flow-through, there's always been a case where the government is gonna have to own and manage this, because there are some people that will never be able to be homeowners, there's always gonna be a need for that. But that's not to say that they all have to be, you know the way that families can create wealth in other societies is primarily through their house. Today, you build a house back home, it's a liability.

For Aboriginal people who have never owned a home, notably for First Nations people from reserves who have never had the option, homeownership can be portrayed as the ideal of appropriate urban living.

Many respondents noted that not all (Aboriginal) people need or want to own homes. This is especially the case in the current economic climate where homes, as even the MMF representative noted, can be a trap that ensnares owners with massive debt. As an Aboriginal woman who worked with the homeless and under-housed noted:

I don't know if they [all Aboriginal people] want to own homes. I think we view property ownership differently. Like I think that we have a different view of monetary things. The capitalist system is not ours, right. So the idea that we have to hoard everything and keep it all to ourselves is very foreign. Like we were a give-away community and we are very, some people talk about transiency, but there is such a negative connotation to that, but we're very mobile people. [...] Like, I couldn't care less about the stuff that I own. It's people that I care about. The people around me are the most important thing, so all of my energy, all of my resources tends to go to people, not necessarily the things that I buy. So there is this notion that I don't care about my house because I'm not putting my money into my house because I'm giving all my money away to my relatives, or I'm feeding all of my relatives all of the time.

In addition to the social, cultural, and economic benefits of community-based living such as in co-operatives or other shared buildings, one Aboriginal housing provider noted there are advantages to the fact that the organization bought apartments, not single family homes:

Single family houses are probably the hardest to deal with. You're dealing with a wide variety of landlords and homeowners and in that area, I think it was mostly landlords and you never know who the landlord is; whether they're the really good guy down the street or some guy you've never heard of in Toronto. Who maybe doesn't even know he owns a house in Langside [in West Broadway].

The social capital built up by living in apartments that are owned and managed by community members helps ensure some level of community control and helps maintain social capital brought in from outside the city. Few focus group participants spoke about a desire to own a home; renting was recognized as beneficial, since it allowed them to move back to their communities when or if necessary.

However, it was also noted by almost all participants that it was the rules imposed on rental properties (notably the objective tenant capacity rules, but also the sometimes subtle harassment and discrimination from landlords) that made them a disadvantage. It is the forces of the dominant bureaucratic field that make apartment living difficult or unsustainable because they are not accountable or responsive to Aboriginal people or other tenants. Thus, the neoliberal doxa of homeownership as urban ideal creates conflict for Aboriginal people who do not subscribe to that and are at odds with the expectations of the housing field, and the contemporary (neoliberal) urban field itself.

It is worth noting that it was Aboriginal political organizations that promote homeownership, and in both organizations, male leadership drove the programs. As stated, Aboriginal men, as in most communities and Canadian society at large, make more money than Aboriginal women. It is too early to say whether these programs will create more male homeowners than female. Future research with a larger sample size will shed light on how the issue of ownership

itself is gendered, considering the uneven distribution of income.¹⁰⁷ This could have serious impacts on the family as well as some women spoke about the importance of being able to move, in order to get out of an undesirable area, escape violence, or return to another community to be near family (even within the city).

Homeownership, of course, is consistent with liberal ideology; it enforces the primacy of economic capital (represented by the home and mortgage), promotes self-reliance, individualism, and the nuclear family. It is also consistent with the field's ideas about how neighbourhoods should look, and is of benefit to, and promoted by, the construction field (Bourdieu 2005) and banks (or CMHC) that will profit from mortgage loans. With the idea of urban success and positions of power tied to homeownership, becoming homeowners themselves can help bring Aboriginal people into the existing field, reinforcing doxa that ownership is the correct path for good citizenship and convincing people that there are good Aboriginal people out there who also want to live a 'normal' life.

This is not to say, as some believe, that by buying homes Aboriginal people are selling out; having the economic capital of owning a home can be a powerful economic and symbolic resource and it lends valued/valuable cultural capital as well. However, it should be emphasized that some people, including but not limited to Aboriginal people, do not see homeownership as a goal (CMHC 2005). Aboriginal housing providers and some Aboriginal people in the field recognized the value conferred by collective (community) ownership of Aboriginal-managed/owned housing stock (Cole 2008) — it is not just a source of economic capital but *a place to house an Aboriginal family*. Further, these people can be housed in culturally appropriate housing and have building managers who are more likely to be from the same community and take their needs into consideration. It can also generate wealth and provides spaces for community (cultural) development and (social) support, something private and individual homeownership does not do as well. This is not encouraged under neoliberal ideas about individual, for-profit ownership schemes.

¹⁰⁷ Similarities here, with Edmonton, may mean this is a trend worth exploring further.

What is necessary to fully benefit from the potential of Aboriginal community housing is to establish wider (community-based) urban Aboriginal self-governance over this resource so that it is used to the community's (and not the government's, market's, or individual owner/manager's) full advantage. How this could happen was not immediately clear after field research. There are too many people still struggling to make ends meet who do not want to participate in political processes. As stated, most denied that they were involved in self-government, seeing it as someone else's (political actors' and political organizations') business. However, whether they were aware of it or not, they may be involved in self-determination; people who are working to ensure Aboriginal people's control over social, cultural, and economic aspects of the field, including housing, are doing something to help the *community* be more independent of the state or market. This is done more through organizations as they provide the capital, rules, and structure to engage in the field struggle.

But organizations that accord resources for the struggle can also be a source of devalued capital; being a field actor affiliated with an *Aboriginal organization* in the city carries with it the stigma of being part of a 'special interest' or other negative, common-sense doxa associated with Aboriginal politics: that Aboriginal people are corrupt or incompetent when it comes to money and housing (partly because they get these resources from the government without deserving them) (Canadian Taxpayers Federation 2010).

As mentioned earlier, the fallout from the Aiyawin scandal also had an impact on Aboriginal housing; it reinforced the idea that Aboriginal people are bad with money and that the best thing the government can do (for non-Aboriginal tax-payers, although urban Aboriginal people pay taxes) is demand more 'accountability.' When asked whether the Aiyawin incident had an impact on other Aboriginal housing, the representative at DOFNHAI (the organization that took on Aiyawin's portfolio) said:

Oh yes it did, yes it did, oh yes it did. There was, we, MHRC, you know, put together a number of sessions, a number of working sessions where we looked at policies and procedures of each of the organizations, we looked at financial management, personnel,

tenanting selections, tendering, you know, all those aspects that caused problems with Aiyawin. And I mean, some of the groups already had things in place, some hadn't. And for us here, we had to kind of start fresh; our personnel policies were out-dated so we had to get legal counsel to come in and analyze what the personnel policies, what the current job descriptions, as well as a financial policy. We needed to look at the financial practices, tendering, reporting requirements, things like that that, and I guess board of governors as well, that's another thing. And our organization, Dakota Ojibway First Nations Housing Authority, has been reviewed twice already and actually once because of the allegations we were moving in Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council members which was not the case; we accept all applications, we move in everybody from everywhere, they don't even have to be from a band as long as they claim that they're Aboriginal.

As can be seen, one of the harmful impacts of neoliberalism is the creation of Aboriginal housing as '*Aboriginal* housing.' It is assumed by government actors (and following the outrage surrounding Attawapiskat, by many more) that there must be something inherently suspicious going on in "Aboriginal housing." First Nations people have often made the case that, contrary to the assumptions that they have free reign over too much government funding, they must actually submit to constant scrutiny and audit (Auditor General of Canada 2011; Assembly of First Nations 2011).

The impact is worsened in the housing field because it is so poor in (economic) capital and easily dominated, leaving it vulnerable to intervention by powerful governments, but also because its doxa is permeable and easily influenced by ideas from the field of power. This compounding stigma of having housing associated with the poor/non-taxpayers (i.e. Aboriginal people, single mothers and Aboriginal single mothers), and tied to ideas of the former welfare state, makes the housing field and the dominated people within it easy targets for disciplining. Thus, in Winnipeg's housing field, we find examples of downloading to others, getting out of housing (complete downloading), valuing individualistic self-reliance, difference-blindness, relying on the voluntary sector (and the burnout that causes), and calls for privatization and free market competition.

The entrenchment of neoliberalism in Winnipeg's housing field, even if it is uneven across levels of government, and not total, has an impact on Winnipeggers, their positions in the field, and the field itself. The strategies used in this field struggle — which include a fight to question the imposition of neoliberal and colonial ideas — are, as will now be seen, directly related to the Aboriginal women and men's capacities to effect change (individually and collectively) and the ways in which dominant actors help determine how these resources are distributed.

5.4 TOOLS FOR THE STRUGGLE

The struggle in Winnipeg's housing field can be primarily described as a struggle over economic capital. A focus on economic capital, however, provides only a partial view (Bourdieu 2006), but for most people who were interviewed and who participated in focus groups, economic capital (how to get it, get enough of it, get it again) was clearly a primary motivator and goal in the struggle for control over their lives and the field. For example, a woman at MORN who helped Aboriginal women find housing said:

I'm getting, just even recently, like I'll talk about the past couple of months, I can't even talk about the last year: "I owe Manitoba Housing money, I can't go back to them because I can't afford to pay them." When you're on assistance and you're already there, you don't have the money to survive. Can you imagine trying to pay a bill? Even with issues with utilities. Our winters are very harsh. And heating bills can range anywhere from 200 to 300 dollars a month. Where are these women going to get money to pay that? So they jump around from home to home, trying to survive. So then they're at risk again of losing their children. And they're going into new schools and it's a big change. So I think something needs to be done to address these lacking of funds for sure. I don't think once has there ever been an increase of assistance since I don't remember when. So how can you have a market increasing and then your income not? So I think that's a big major concern or gap.

Even most non-economic issues have an economic basis (due to the conversion of capital). So, the issue of poorly maintained homes (as stated, many city-centre homes owned by Aboriginal organizations are quite old), has economic impacts

on tenants. Focus group participants talked about high heating bills and one woman spoke about how she could afford her rent but not her bills, which gave her bad credit that prevents her from moving to a better home. Others agreed that income assistance levels barely provide enough money for adequate housing; people have to live in inadequate homes or else, as some women said, turn to drugs or the sex trade in order to make ends meet. For example, MUNHA identified a lack of affordable housing (that is, the high number of Aboriginal people living in homes that they cannot afford) as the most common issue facing their clients. Overcrowding was second.

Housing providers also identified funding as a common barrier. With both Payuk and MORN, for example, funding was readily cited as their greatest obstacle. Even governments recognize the housing field needs more money (from other governments). At the WHHI, one employee said:

[Our] successes in many ways are that we are again providing funding where there's been a gap. It's not a lot of money. \$200,000, for me personally, if somebody gave me 200 grand, I'd be thrilled. For housing development, it's pennies. Really you need millions, not 200 grand.

The housing field requires large amounts of funding to create and operate housing; it is not a small investment. However, housing has not attracted significant amounts of capital from the federal government for decades. This weakens the position of the housing field in relation to others that are funded. A provincial government employee stated:

I mean let's face it, 42 million dollars is not going to address all of the needs of Aboriginal households and all of the specific needs of Aboriginal women, so it's in some ways, it's a drop in the bucket. But it's a lot better than nothing and it's a start. I think it's fair to say that housing in general, social housing in particular, that social and affordable housing is still significantly under-funded by the federal government. [...] They make announcements about a billion here a couple of billion there, which sounds like a lot of money to the average Canadian, but when you start divvying it up and when you say a couple of billion dollars and Manitoba's share is 62 million over three years, and you look at the housing needs in Manitoba [...] and you start looking at the cost of producing housing – it doesn't create a whole lot of new housing. It's better than nothing but it's far short of

what the needs are. In my opinion we need to get back to at least the levels of funding that the federal government was providing in the mid to late 80s, before they started to slowly pull out and pull back and then finally ended any new funding for social housing after 1992. We need to get back to at least those mid-80s levels in order to make a significant impact.

Poorly situated in the field of power, Winnipeg's housing field is in a dominated position, reliant on funding from other fields, and rarely ever to get the amount of funding that is needed to make long-term changes or challenge the field structure itself. Part of this may be because each level of government recognizes housing as 'someone else's issue.'

The primary economic issue that ties in government responsibility (an idea of the post welfare state era), and that came up remarkably often in Winnipeg, was the situation of the 'end of subsidies' or 'end of operating agreements' that the housing field has now entered (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008). As explained in Chapter Four, affordable housing agreements signed with CMHC in the 1980s (and subsequently passed off to most provinces) are coming to an end as mortgages mature and the agreements expire. When units mature, the mortgage subsidies end, which ends the rental subsidy passed on to the tenant. This was identified as an impending crisis by MUNHA in 2008 before it more or less collapsed (Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association 2008). Indeed, the end of subsidies was a topic that many research participants at housing organizations raised without prompting and it dominated discussions in Winnipeg. This major economic, political, and social issue for Aboriginal people in Winnipeg's housing field must be dealt with here in some detail, and will focus on questions of field structure (jurisdiction) and (economic) capital. In this way, as already stated, this case study diverges from that of Edmonton to deal with this pressing issue.

The End of Subsidies — An Economic Crisis for Aboriginal Housing

The impact of the end of subsidies on social housing in Winnipeg (possibly more so in this city because agreements were signed so long ago,

especially for Aboriginal housing, and because there are so many Aboriginal housing providers), cannot be overstated.¹⁰⁸ Kinew housing's manager said that although Kinew is designed to charge rent based on income, he will have no choice but to start renting out homes that come off subsidy at market rent. He stated that he will try to charge:

lower end market rent and there will be no subsidy. Those houses will have to pay for themselves. The mortgages have been satisfied and subsidy is finished with that. I want to try to keep the rents low because that's what we're here to do but if I can't then I have to raise the rents; they have to sustain themselves.

In the face of this crisis, there is also creativity where there is capacity to engage it. Kinew is raising rents, but introducing a discount to lower the rent; as long as rents are paid on time and there are no noise complaints or damage, the discount will remain. Of course, this may only end up hurting those who have inconsistent wages and cannot always pay full rent on time. Kinew, with its size and long-term success is most likely to survive the end of subsidies. Said one provincial employee, Kinew "has a really good shot" at surviving.

However, the impact that this is going to have on individual tenants is uncertain. Certainly some people will be unable to afford the rent increase if they rely on government assistance for their rent (unless government assistance goes up). The impact that this will have on the field as a whole, as hundreds of Aboriginal people and thousands more people in Winnipeg in other affordable housing projects, simultaneously find themselves unable to pay their rent and there are no available subsidized units to rent.

Some housing providers made it clear that they, as non-profit corporations, do not have the capital to continue to subsidize units themselves and maintain rents geared to income. Otherwise, they may be unable to continue. One provider

¹⁰⁸ As of summer 2009, Kinew had over 100 units off subsidy. By 2017, all of their housing subsidies will have ended. Payuk's agreement is set to expire around 2018. Its subsidy has always been 100% (other cooperatives in Winnipeg have only received 25-30% subsidy), so the impact will be greater. Twenty-five of Kanata's mortgages came up in 2011 and the next set should expire around 2020. DOTCHAI expects that by 2012, they'll have 212 to 222 houses (half their portfolio across the province) off subsidy. In 2009, DOFNHAI had 77 units that were still subsidized by CMHC and 152 with MHRC. That fall, their units started to mature and come off subsidy.

who expects the units he manages will all have to go up in rent observed:

I know that there are some groups that will probably sell their homes and use the capital to reinvest in what they already have. But if they sell the home outside of the organizations it's a lost home to a family, to our Aboriginal families, so that's not what I want to do. It would be easier — why fight? Sell the house, take the money and make an easier living with what you have. But I still have to think that I have anywhere from 800 to 1000 applications coming in, sitting on file and if I'm selling houses I'm actually going in reverse.

He reasons that for Aboriginal housing corporations to lose the units that they have (one of the only few strong sources of economic and symbolic capital Aboriginal people have in the city), then they will lose more than just buildings; people will lose their homes and the community will lose a valuable source of power. It is the Aboriginal community, that many see as sharing in these symbolic and economic capital of these programs, that will lose out.

Although some may consider it naïve, keeping housing units may later be valuable bargaining chips if subsidies are renewed, said one optimistic provider:

I don't believe that the subsidy will go away, that the need for subsidies will ever go away. I think that CMHC may one day come back to the table and say "ok, we have something" and I'm hoping that I still have the capital investment and that I don't have to go out and try and buy or build new homes. I'll still have my investment so that I can use that. CMHC doesn't require so much money, they just require the subsidy amount not the whole capital part of the program. Maybe it's dreaming but that's how I hope that it works out. Until then there's a problem.

The manager from Payuk was equally pragmatic in hoping Manitoba Housing will be forced to act:

So the theory is once the mortgage is paid off, your replacement reserves are supposed to be healthy enough that that will take care of your big maintenance items. But it's going to be a lot of planning for the future. I don't know, in the co-op world we like to think we definitely have to plan for the end of the agreements. But we wonder if Manitoba Housing will really, fully pull out. Because co-ops provide an awful lot of affordable housing. And if co-ops can't afford to subsidize members out of their own pockets, Manitoba Housing is going to have to subsidize those people in other buildings — and they don't exist. There's been barely any

affordable housing built over the past few years. [...] One of the things we're looking at is, 'what are you going to do with this housing'? And right now it's stuck in federal government land and nobody wants to give an answer.

There is then a belief by some that funding for housing will never completely dry up because *someone* has to be responsible for it and provide some level of support. Interview participants had no consensus on who this would be, depending on their beliefs on which level of government is fundamentally responsible for Aboriginal people and/or housing. This uncertainty and lack of unified direction at one level of government can help ensure government domination because recipients are not only uncoordinated but now conditioned to be satisfied (for fear of biting the hand that feeds) with whatever funding they do get, no matter how limited or short-term. Social investment funding therefore becomes the best of all evils for those who are desperate. Yet, one Aboriginal housing provider was much less optimistic than the others:

Now the collective or the wisdom of MHRC is saying that 'because you don't have that mortgage payment you don't need the subsidy' and our position is like 'how do we offer a student with, say a couple kids that gets band assistance, from say a band up north in Manitoba, that generally they give them 1200 dollars a month?' If we based that rent on that it comes to \$200, \$220. How is that unit going to survive by charging that low market rent?' It can't, because the taxes in itself are probably \$170 bucks a month. Let alone repairs, maintenance, and everything else. So what's going to have to happen is, we're going to have to change [...]. We don't want to sell them, then we'd just deplete our stock. We're going to have to charge, not a sort of market rent, but a medium market rent to sort of make those units viable. To keep them up to snuff. So it's going to be, to me, they're going to displace a lot of people, even the ones on social assistance, which probably, say 85% of our tenants are on social assistance which is a government-set rate. [...] Even that amount is not enough to sustain that particular unit so they're going to have to find another place to live so. And then where do they go? They go down to the core. [...] So they move to some dilapidated housing down in the core because it's the only place they can afford. The kids associate with troubled kids. [...] I don't understand the long term thinking of the province on this one. And again, if that is necessarily what happens and these kids get in trouble and they go to jail; there's costs associated with everything if you don't do something about

it. It probably costs more to have them in jail or, policing, etc., etc. There's a cost for not doing anything.

The end of subsidies is not just about economics; there are dire social consequences to getting out of housing which will impact self-governance and other fields. But some feel it has been reduced to merely a financial issue, where housing providers that once helped the community will have to act as well-run (for profit) businesses, or else fail in the free market. One housing provider said that she has already started charging market rent on units that are no longer subsidized to be RGI. The rent is over \$600 (plus utilities), which is much higher than it was as an affordable housing unit. This has an effect:

It's changing our profile of our tenants. I mean social assistance, I mean those rates have not changed for years, for two people, like it's \$397.00, and that's all, everything included. But now, with these ones we have to charge like, plus utilities. And so their shelter allowance is like \$351, or 341. [...] We try to accommodate our long term tenants: 'well okay this house is going to expire so let's try and move you over here.' But I mean we're running out of houses.

Another provider has also stated that the units that come off subsidy will have to compete with other market units in the neighbourhood:

These are going to be for profit now, because they're not going to be within the umbrella of MHRC funded agencies. So what do we do? Do we just say we're going to get \$410 a month, hoping at year end we break even and everything works out, or do we increase the rent to comparable rates that are being rented out in the surrounding area? Do we sort of look at the clients or the tenants' ability to pay and sort of go on case-by-case basis and say 'this unit is going to be this much because you have got this sort of income' and 'your rental here is going to be a little bit higher [...] because you are maybe employed?' Those are some of the things that we have to decide very shortly. Because what we also want to do, and some of the tenants have also stated this, is that they may not want to live in these units once they mature. So we might have to move tenants from these units, out to some of our subsidized units and it's going to be a challenge because it's going to be a middle of a school year. [...] It's going to be very interesting to say the least, because we have to change our mind-set; not our mind-set, but it's going to be a little bit different.

Because of the end of subsidies, most housing providers feared that it will change the face of affordable and Aboriginal housing in Winnipeg:

Our original mandate was to provide low income housing to Aboriginal families. Now, the operating agreements are expiring. Now they're saying 'now you have got to market the houses too, now you're all of a sudden somewhat profit oriented. You have to look out for the longevity of the corporation so you can't give this person or this family this house for 200 dollars, it's got to be somebody that has the ability to pay 600.' So you're flip-flopping your mandate. Now basically you're profit-oriented because you're going to have to retain some of that capital because you want to stay alive. And selling, once you're out of money, selling one of the houses every time, is — where are you going to go? You're going to be finished. [...] You may get away from even renting to the Aboriginal population.

One organization that said that they will have to charge market rent acknowledged that this will mean renting to middle-income people and no longer offer affordable housing for low-income Aboriginal people. This, they admit, will also probably mean renting to more non-Aboriginal people who are willing to live in those neighbourhoods, something that will surely anger the Aboriginal community, as evidenced by responses in the focus groups where some people expressed frustration at seeing immigrants, with what they perceive as government help, find homes more easily than people in the Aboriginal community.

The Aboriginal housing field in Winnipeg is therefore nearing a turning point. Being co-opted into the market, becoming for-profit in order to meet ends, to be self-reliant and adopting difference-blindness in order to rent to non-Aboriginal people could very well take away the community's only shared material assets over which they had some control. The CMHC representative stated that federal and provincial governments are working on solutions for the end of the subsidies:

But I think from a group's perspective that's too slow, too late and if they... there is a view point by many that the only thing that spurs the government to action is lobbying or crisis and obviously the more removed the federal government is from the process, the more difficult it is to push them when they say "well, we're

working, the provinces have responsibility and we're working with them." So I think some might feel that they haven't made headway with the province. I mean this province, Manitoba, I can't speak for every province, is committed to housing and has always been and it's trying to make an effort to do a lot of work. They've had, certainly some history where they haven't put enough money, enough resources into it and certainly in the last number of years really acknowledged that and made a turn around. They have shown a strong commitment to housing. I don't know how strong that view is in this province but certainly in, I think that in some view that when anybody is further removed from the process the less they are tied to it.

Thus, no one wants to do anything because that would be accepting responsibility for social housing. The city can do little here but blame others. One city representative at the WHHI was less willing to expect the province to solve the issue, but also felt helpless:

As these houses come off subsidy, the housing providers, Aboriginal housing providers are having to raise rents. They have no choice. They can't continue to rent these houses even if there's no cost associated with owning it. If it's totally paid for, they can't just maintain a house for the rent they receive on it, if it's at the minimum social assistance rate or whatever. So that rate needs to go up certainly. We've been saying that for years. But that's a limitation, I wish we could do more.

The least optimistic Aboriginal housing provider, cited above, was also not confident about what governments can or will do to come up with a solution:

I don't know if we're in negotiations. I don't think there's, what can we negotiate? We can negotiate for some money to bring them back up, but generally the clientele or family, not to say that they're all hard on the units, but they're harder than most, and they require more maintenance, more money to fix the property up. [...] I think it's their [the federal government's] responsibility; they bailed out. [...] We] used to be subsidized by the federal government, and they passed it on to the provincial government. The provincial government is financially tighter.

With housing downloaded in Manitoba, the responsibility may be up to the province. The provincial government is well aware of the issue. Their strategy is to foster the self-reliance of the housing groups so that they can survive without subsidies:

The biggest issue to the non-profit groups is going to be that their sole source of revenue is going to be the rent that they collect. And the urban Native portfolio tends to be heavily subsidized in a lot of the, I don't want to say all, but a lot of the tenants are paying the rent geared-to-income. A lot of what we've been [doing is] working with the groups in Manitoba to raise the issue and begin increasing the capacity of the groups, giving them the tools to govern and administrate their portfolio with the understanding that these agreements are ending. And we're not sure that there's going to be dollars coming around the corner from the federal government, or even the provincial government. So we have to work with what we have. [...] They have to come up with a balance of economic type rent, lower-end of market rent, to help support the number of rent geared-to-income units that they want to maintain. [...] It also depends on how well they've administered the agreement throughout the mortgage, and really how much surplus or reserves they've banked. That's really important. We keep reminding the groups every year when we look at their audited financial statements, 'you've really got to start banking some of these monies.' And the challenge is for some of the older groups, especially in the inner city area; if they did not build, if they renovated older houses, well you're looking at a 100-year-old house, and that in itself has a lot of challenges. [...] So we're working with the groups trying to identify strategies that they can adopt if they see themselves in that strategy. And hopefully be successful when the agreement expires.

Although he believed Kinew had a good chance of succeeding here, other housing organizations, especially those that were fully-funded and failed to plan ahead, may not be so lucky. Failure to become self-reliant and survive in the market, even under an NDP government, may be what ends Aboriginal housing in Winnipeg.

There is not much that the Aboriginal political leadership can do about it either, though they may want to get involved to increase their role in the housing field. As the ACW summarized:

So when that [mortgage subsidy] ends, then the problem is that house then has to be, there's no longer any subsidies and full rent has to be paid, so the house is really no longer social housing. You've gotta pay market rent and there's no social housing left. And the housing organizations do not have the money or resources to continue the subsidy. So it's not social housing technically, right. So that's a big enough issue; there's enough units being

affected for it to be a serious issue for these organizations. So that's on the table right now. We're kind of monitoring that one.

The MMF, outside the urban housing field can do little but watch as their requests to be given authority over urban housing are ignored. A representative stated that his organization had predicted the problems that are about to happen, but the MMF has a solution:

All those subsidies now that they have, these things they're amortizing and falling off. And now we had warned the province: 'don't take this on.' In '93, we strongly, as loud as we could, asked them not to do this. But now the chickens have come home to roost. Now they don't know what the hell to do with these things because now they don't have a subsidy. The provincial taxpayer is asked increasingly for subsidy. So this change of heart in transferring some of those houses to us might be self-serving a bit, because now that weight is on us. So what we've told them is now we'll take the houses.

As will be seen, a similar scenario in Edmonton ended very differently as the Métis Nation of Alberta did take on urban housing. Perhaps a housing field crisis in Winnipeg is what will lead to similar change. Or it may, as Bourdieu suggested, lead to more radical change, a major shift as the field restructures itself to match a different habitus *if* those actors can leverage the popular support to make this change and demonstrate to others how they too would benefit from a radical field change. A social investment scheme — where affordable housing is reframed as a universal good in which housing security for some (the marginalized) means a pay off for the mainstream (increased safety, not having to see poor people, conformity to white lifestyles) — could materialize if the situation gets worse.

The end of the subsidies means many things for Aboriginal people in the housing field. First it represents the formal, albeit belated, end of the classic late 1980s welfare state era, when the federal government recognized some symbolic obligation to have a national housing policy, to make social housing a priority, and to support it with public funding. Urban Aboriginal housing programs further recognized Aboriginal people's important role in the urban housing field. With the end of the subsidies, the housing field shifts to a neoliberal era of a greater

need for self-reliance where Aboriginal housing programs may eventually be handled as corporations in the free market, concerned about running as a business and making profit at the expense of the community they were designed to help. Some providers fear they will have to prioritize renting to non-Aboriginal people. Many focus group participants who expressed how hard it is to get into Aboriginal housing programs will likely remain left trying to meet their housing needs in substandard and unaccountable market housing outside processes of public control. Here, again, the idea that every citizen is entitled to housing is being replaced by the idea that everyone is supposed to be self-reliant.

Second, the housing field may quickly move into a social investment type system where housing corporations will have to compete with each other in order to prove that they are deserving of limited, short-term subsidies from the government, in order to allow them to charge RGI on some units and maintain their (aging) stock. If corporations are forced to sell off units in order to stay out of debt (either the units in good condition that can be sold for more money — reducing the corporation's rental income — or else the poor quality units that do not generate much rent and which are too costly to repair), Aboriginal people will lose what little control they have over the housing field, as community-controlled¹⁰⁹ units are bought up by individuals or non-Aboriginal corporations that do not have a mandate to help Aboriginal people or the disproportionate number of women seeking housing.

Third, the downloading of affordable housing in Manitoba will have been made symbolically complete once the Aboriginal housing providers that had turned to the federal government (recognized as responsible for housing *and* Aboriginal people) must turn reluctantly to the provincial government for new subsidies. While a compassionate provincial government is a better ally than a hostile federal government, the question remains whether the provincial government can afford to maintain housing supports (provincial representatives indicated that they do need the federal government to be involved on some level,

¹⁰⁹ The argument will be made that Aboriginal units represent potential for common control and may serve in self-governance initiatives.

as it was in the 1980s and again with the 2005 budget). It also begs the question about how sacred the federal government's constitutional and treaty-based commitment to Aboriginal people, especially First Nations, is if it can be so readily passed on to another level of government that lacks the legal and symbolic attachment to Aboriginal people.

For these reasons, the 'end of subsidies' issue presents itself as a new front for the contestation of neoliberalism within the housing field. The extent of which future successful resistance in this area can look like is uncertain; the parallel goals are to secure more economic capital to maintain programs at their current (substandard in comparison to earlier) levels while maintaining (or increasing) Aboriginal control. To even secure this funding, field actors will need to turn to other forms of capital. For these reasons, it must be stressed that the values of social, cultural, and symbolic capital must not be overlooked in the analysis of the urban housing field (Bourdieu 2006). Reduction of the end-of-subsidies issue to an economic question hides the real costs of getting out of housing; by reframing housing as a personal responsibility, dominant actors who espouse neoliberal ideas are ensuring that Aboriginal people, even those who cannot afford it, will have to turn to market housing — where many of these same actors will be making money.

Turning to social capital, it was noted by many (who were in marginalized positions) that the most important tool for finding housing in the city was knowing the right person. With Winnipeg's infamously long waiting lists to get into housing, something which every organization other than Payuk¹¹⁰ expressed as a pressing issue, many people were frustrated by this draining aspect of the field struggle. More than just knowing the right person, finding a home requires having the capital to survive the waiting list experience: having contact information that will not become obsolete¹¹¹ and support from others to remain in

¹¹⁰ Payuk was full at the time, but the manager stated that she believed that the requirement that tenants pay a \$500 share (or two shares of \$250) prevented a waiting list.

¹¹¹ As stated in the methodological chapter, many focus group participants could not be reached less than a year after the first meeting because their addresses or phone numbers

the city, rather than having to leave or live on the streets where finding a home becomes harder.

More pertinently, to the more powerful decision-makers in the housing field, those that operate the organizations that provide housing and make policy, social capital provides access to people with the necessary (primarily economic) capital needed for the field struggle. In sum, although less visibly desired than economic capital, the complex nature of the housing field, economic dependence, and domination makes social capital all the more necessary for getting ahead. This is also true for Aboriginal self-governance goals. For example, both MUNHA and the ACW saw the value in working together; recognizing the other elevates each organization's position in the housing field. This is especially true since each is rebuilding and in a legitimacy/recognition crisis. The MUNHA representative noted:

Yeah we network and we sort of stay informed on what's going on and how we can complement each other, whether it is housing or not. More often than not, though it is housing. For example, I met with the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg recently. [...] Although they are not housing specific, it's an organization that I think is important to MUNHA. And that's what I've kind of found out in the 6 months that I've been here. That it's really important, instead of everyone kind of working alone (which can often happen because everyone gets so busy, to work alone and trying and move towards whatever your goal is), I think it's good to kind of take a step back and see who the other key players are in this very small community and network with them and collaborate and try and work together to move the housing agenda forward. Yeah, so networking with these Aboriginal organizations is key. [...] And everyone kind of knows each other even, if they are not really working in housing so it's good to sort of collaborate that way, in that sense.

Working together across groups, tying in organizations that are not explicitly housing-focussed was described as a key goal by many organizations. It also parallels many of the resistance strategies people have described in other contexts (Polakoff 2011). Within the housing field, connections with non-housing

had changed. That said, some members were contacted by word of mouth because they were active in community organizations — a valuable source of social capital.

organizations can be useful especially when housing is so dominated and money is scarce. This requires social capital, as well as the credibility to get organizations in other fields to *want* to work with you. The Friendship Centre identified it as one of their successes:

We're all working together to, you know, support the needs of the community and families who are in need of certain things going from housing to homelessness to hunger, poverty, violence, and so we're all working together.

Similar to Native hubs (Ramirez 2007), the Friendship Centre creates Aboriginal space in the city for people in the community to work together, conferring their various resources to the group while maintaining their culture and own social networks. The representative at the FC stated that, unlike governments or “political” Aboriginal organizations, the front-line workers there directly interact with community members and help develop grass-roots ideas about what the community wants and needs:

The ones actually working with the community members, they're the ones who would know a lot more of what's needed in the community and what's needed with the families, what kind of, what would work, what wouldn't work, getting feedback information from the community, as [opposed] to those, you know, like, sitting back at their desks 24/7; they wouldn't know what the community needs or wants. All they would know is from what they see on TV or kind of what they, hearsay from what they hear from people or family members.

The Friendship Centre also identified Ma Mawi as another organization whose work benefits from community contact instead of detachment and creating Aboriginal spaces outside state/colonial systems in Winnipeg. A Ma Mawi representative said:

So we have close to 200 full time employees, a huge amount of casuals, a huge amount of respite, a huge amount of foster families, a huge amount of volunteers, and so we hire from the community as much as possible. So, you know our cleaning staffs are all from the community. Many people who run our programs are people who used our programs, who were in that program. [...] So a lot of our facilitators are from the community, so if they want to build those skills, they can get even employed with us full time to deliver different programs. So when you listen to a lot of people

go around this agency, how they find out about Ma Mawi or how did they come to Ma Mawi, a lot of people will say “I was in a program,” or “I came for help one day,” or “I got volunteering and the next thing I know I was working here.”

This longevity of many organizations in Winnipeg’s housing field, made possible by the social connections of key people that help tie the field together, keeps organizations in contact and working together. Participants noted that this has been a source of strength for their organizations and the people that work there. For example, the manager of Kinew Housing¹¹² stated that he maintains good relationships with tenants:

Just by having good people. We have people that have been working here for a number of years; they know the people. It’s a small community. Winnipeg is actually very small so it’s pretty easy to keep that with good staff.

The manager said he can easily pick up the phone and knows who to call at other housing organizations; people take his calls because he has been around so long and built up so much respect in the housing field (social and cultural capital). People referred to him in interviews in Edmonton. Established organizations confer their capital on the people who run them. These people, if they have the cultural capital to maximize the socially acquired resources and the habitus to behave “properly” (match the behaviour of dominant field actors in the bureaucracy and get along instead of antagonize) can further their capital accumulation, becoming the managerial (or Aboriginal middle class) discussed below under cultural capital.

At the same time that a small community provides tight connections, it can also be problematic. One housing provider stated that this was his concern about creating Aboriginal co-operative housing:

The thing I don’t like about co-op housing, and it’s only one thing because, like I said I don’t know enough about it, is that the landlord tenant act, when I talked about mediation, doesn’t apply in co-op housing, to everything. It has to be done through the co-op board and the co-op board, [...] through their bylaws, could be

¹¹² Described by a CMHC representative as “a very knowledgeable individual and has been there for longer than I have been in housing.”

nobody but tenants on that board. So if it's Uncle Joe, if you have relatives on the board, are they going to vote to have you evicted for non-payment of rent? Or for maybe having a party that got out of hand? How do they control that stuff? If it's outside, if it's a mix of people on the board, then it maybe gives a little different view towards it. I don't know; maybe it's not a problem but I see it as it could be a problem.

Even the representative of Payuk, an advocate of co-operative housing, admitted that there are occasional problems:

So a lot of the complaints that I get do come from board members, which makes it difficult because they're the same people who have to sit on a board and make a decision on this person. [...] I mean yeah, it is a challenge, especially in co-ops that are a little bit smaller. [...] And the Aboriginal community is very tight knit so everybody seems to know a relative of somebody. They're all kind of intertwined a little bit. So there's always going to be a little bit of personal issues, I think.

Competition for housing units, when there are so few, is part of the field struggle, as is the competition for the few paid positions (sites of power) in the housing field. This competition is exacerbated in small communities and if capital is limited. As the MMF representative noted, the close-knittedness (social capital) of the Métis community can also be abused to get people out of desirable housing on rules-based grounds:

And they have people reporting them [for violating rules]. Welfare workers are going in. [...] It's a Gestapo state now you know, where people are telling on each other; it's messed up now. [pause] Are we as a society, are we prepared to do things because it's economically feasible? Man and wife, 15-20 years, twenty years ago, bought a three bedroom house, all their kids are gone – is it right for us now to throw those people out of that house because they're over-housed? Their house that's too big for what their family needs are? Is that what we've come to?

According to many women in the focus groups, having Aboriginal people struggle against each other (within and between Aboriginal groups) helps the government maintain their dominant position consistent with a divide and conquer approach. This is consistent with what others have described in the history of Aboriginal politics in Canada (Boldt 1993; Sawchuk 2006). Social capital is therefore vital to

the field struggle; it can be a tool or weapon because people part of a group can use their connections to powerful, recognized groups in order wield symbolic violence — being an insider and creating outsiders.

Not everyone wishes to use group membership in this manner. More optimistically, women at MORN identified social capital in the community as essential for Aboriginal women to live in the city:

People go back and forth [between the city and other communities]; they're transient. I think it has to do, there are a few things: they are homesick, they miss their family. Their supports are their families, so they're going to go back to what they know. And it's scary when you come from a really close knit, rural, and your community, and you come into an urban centre, like to Winnipeg. There could be barriers like language, just access to resources. Like it's overwhelming. I couldn't imagine coming from a small community of 50 to 100 people and coming to live here.

Indeed, there is a gendered dimension to how social capital is used in the housing field (Ramirez 2007). Fieldwork showed two spheres to the housing field: those who rely on friends, family, and front line service workers to get ahead (the most dominated) and those whose accumulated capital and habitus (the 'Aboriginal middle-class') have moved them into a sphere where social connections with dominant, capital-rich actors in capital-rich organizations and governments, are sought in order to preserve their positions, organizations, and ultimately the field. Although women work through both spheres (it takes post-secondary education to get ahead in the bureaucracy and Aboriginal women are completing managerial/service education much more than Aboriginal men), focus groups and interviews with social support organizations demonstrated that Aboriginal men in the housing field, are much more likely to be isolated from their family or community support structures, and do not use the first source of social capital nearly as much. To a great extent, it is women who are expected and seen to "do" grassroots community building because they are most often socialized to do this kind of social work and to be carers for children, the primary beneficiaries of these support networks (Ramirez 2007; Bourdieu 2001; Waring 1988).

But dominant, field-shaping ideas still influence which forms of cultural capital are sought with this social capital. Those with the ability to participate well in the field of power, who have strong influences over decision-making processes, have the benefit of fitting into neoliberalized spaces of the field and getting along with others who share their interests (Bourdieu 2005). Those who are at odds with the field, coming from ‘foreign’ communities shaped by non-liberal/Eurocentric ideas (Kalpagam 2006, 84), will continue to be in a dominated position as the field is structured against their interests and abilities to participate.

As for cultural capital, its most visible and recognized form in the housing field is one’s education (even when including non-formalized life experience as a form of education). Of course, more formalized forms are going to be better for getting employment, a comfortable income, and secure adequate housing (another example of capital conversion). The data collected through focus group questionnaires showed the variety of respondents’ educational background: eleven women and seven men (over 54% of participants) had at least some post-secondary education.

Winnipeg, with its Aboriginal social, political, and service organizations so much more firmly established (with social, cultural, economic, and symbolic capital of their own) than in other cities in Canada, has developed an Aboriginal middle class — a network of people who have valuable cultural capital (namely mainstream education in the social services and business) that helps them attain and maintain positions of relative power. The successes of Winnipeg’s Aboriginal field are largely due to a “core” group of well-placed (middle-class) Aboriginal people (Peters 2005, 236; Loxley 1994). For example, speaking about the educational level of the Aboriginal leadership in Winnipeg, the ACW President guessed that 80% are University educated, saying: “That’s fairly high.”

Being well-placed means having the right kind of capital to get ahead in the field; mismatched capital (education and life experiences that did not promote and reflect dominant ideas about the field) do not lead to as much success. Consider, again, the way in which the MMF was able to establish itself because pro-urban migration, pro-business Métis leaders in the past agreed to accept

government support (in exchange for supporting the government) (Jones Morrison 1995).

What does the consolidation of knowledge by dominant actors mean for the Aboriginal community? Many participants stated how important it was to have an education and how they got where they are because of it. However, there was a significant divide between women and men as to which forms of (institutionalized) cultural capital they acquire. Aboriginal women, (as evidenced in statistics but also reflected in the gender divide among interview participants' education and employment) were more likely to be educated in social areas (especially social work or other University degree) and working in the service sector (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010a, 9–10). Male participants were more likely to have business, political, or trades backgrounds.

For example, research participants at MUNHA, the Friendship Centre, Ma Mawi, Manitoba Housing, Aboriginal Visioning, Payuk, DOTCHAI, the UAS (OFI), and MORN were all women. Participants at ACW, Kinew, EAUTC, CMHC, WHHI (City of Edmonton), Kanata, MFSH (Manitoba Housing ministry), MAP, AMC, MMF, DOFNHAI, and Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs were men. This second list includes all of the political organizations (except MUNHA and MORN), the three levels of government, and organizations that are 'owned' by political organizations or governments, (with the exception of Manitoba Housing Authority project, UAS, and DOTCHAI). This evidence that there are female and male roles in the housing field will be elaborated in the next section on habitus.

Second, there is an issue of whose cultural capital should be valued in the housing field and the difference between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal forms. This again raises the question of how Aboriginal cultural capital can fit in an inherently (urban) non-Aboriginal neoliberal field that eschews difference-based claims. One government housing employee stated:

I've had to ask that question; at one point people kept talking about 'Aboriginal housing' and I said 'how is Aboriginal housing different from non-Aboriginal housing. If I look at one on the street, what's going to tell me? Is it going to have something

special. It's gonna say it's Aboriginal? No, it's just a house. That's the occupant.' That's really the difference of it. So the only difference, culturally that we look at is to see if there is something that's structural, would accommodate one culture, and that typically is size. But yeah, we have had a look at that.

Thus, there is an expected tendency, by at least some non-Aboriginal people, to refuse to reconcile the fact that cultural capital can vary with what has historically been, and currently is, valued in the housing field. Liberal emphasis on difference-blindness helps them refuse to recognize that culture is always relevant because what they perceive as dominant is arbitrary. That said, one non-Aboriginal employee of the provincial government, who had much exposure with Aboriginal co-workers, Aboriginal community consultation, a past history of working with low-income housing, and ideological attraction to the current provincial government that is (rhetorically, at least) more tolerant of diversity than their conservative predecessors, was of a different mind:

I think it [culture] is extremely relevant [to housing], not only in the physical built environment, but I think that there are significant cultural elements that, in some elements of Aboriginal culture, [...] could resonate in housing that haven't been explored. How we can marry current design practices with elements of Aboriginal culture is, I think we've only scratched the surface of that and there's a great deal of potential to do that. I think we try, sometimes you run into cost issues, you run into a sense sometimes of given limited funds, sometimes we get into a 'unit count' universe where it's all about how many units you produce; it's more about quantity. We certainly have moved significantly in terms of the housing we build or fund now is far more sustainable and energy efficient, higher quality and there is more awareness of the need for housing to fit into the broader community, rather than building housing that you can see from a mile away is public housing. One of the things I'm very happy to see in Manitoba, finally, is the recognition that we need to facilitate more mixed income developments in social housing and affordable housing.

Thus, we cannot generalize about how influential difference-blindness is, whether all levels of government (or all people in the field) do not value Aboriginal cultural capital, or whether all Aboriginal people do. For example, an Aboriginal

person working in the housing field downplayed the role of culture (and then arrived at different ways that it was relevant to the housing field). As he sees it:

I don't know [if it's relevant]. I'm not a real cultural person. I think that, that just the fact that we're dealing with each other rather than with somebody from outside our, our group, you know. The maintenance guy shows up and they might have went to school together or maybe they know somebody or they're from the same community or know somebody from the same community, I think that goes a long ways. It's not just somebody who's showing up to work on my house, you know; it's Roger who's shown up. And I think that's where the cultural part benefits us. We're doing for our own, not having somebody else do it for us. I think that's the big thing.

Another Aboriginal housing provider was more adamant that culture was very relevant, stating the role that extended family play; Aboriginal people often have family members come visit, and some move in without telling their landlords. Further, he says, many Aboriginal people come into Winnipeg for medical visits. He said that Aboriginal people are a "giving people" and likely to let family stay with them.

Because of incidents such as run-ins with landlords and governments over the rules of the housing field, many Aboriginal people recognize that their culture is at odds with the field and its doxic values about what is, for instance, 'proper' behaviour for tenants, etc. For example, a woman who worked at Ma Mawi, where Aboriginal cultural values are used in services and policies stated:

Our culture has babies young and there are some definite pros to having babies young, you know. But society sets it up like it's a bad thing to have a baby, so we have all these barriers that if you do have a baby young, then all these barriers are going to kick in. Like if we set up society that way, then yeah, it's going to be that way. But I know like my mother, my grandmother started having kids when she was 15, right. She's got 16 kids and I'll tell you, that size of that family is the proudest thing we have right now. It's the best thing in our lives that we are that big, that we are that close. It's a very good thing to have a family that big.

Some ideas about kinship are incompatible with urban/individualistic living. The manager at Payuk stated how Aboriginal culture can also be at odds with the field's rules:

[Visitors are] another challenge, because under Manitoba Housing guidelines, because they're fully subsidized people, are required to disclose their full household income which includes people who are staying with them if they're staying long-term. The Aboriginal culture, though is to provide for your families and in some cases we have elderly people, or people who just aren't well, and families come to stay with them for extended periods of time. Well... And that is kind of, we kind of accept it, but we also have to be responsible property managers and in some cases, other people in the building get frustrated because there's people in and out that are not members of the co-op. So that one's a hard one to pin down though.

There are some cases where non-Aboriginal people or institutions are beginning to value Aboriginal culture. At MUNHA, the director said that relations have gotten better over the years, through "all the promotional activities and awareness and education around diversity" and because "the younger generation is more accepting about diverse culture." And at a higher level, the housing field has become more accepting because "non-Aboriginal housing groups or leaders. or whatever, and the Aboriginal groups work together very well now." Thus, relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal can improve when Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations (are forced to) work together and are exposed to different forms of cultural capital. Field change is possible if people in dominant positions find reasons to value other forms of capital, forms that some Aboriginal people may already possess.

Here we see a key form of resistance in Winnipeg's housing field where actors are trying to (slowly) change the field itself (Bourdieu 1998b, 4–5). Focus group participants were also asked how they sought their housing needs or took on oppression. Few people stated that they were engaged in successful strategies but they had many ideas on what they should do: protest, create collective housing, develop leadership, engage the grassroots, heal the mind, body and spirit, and develop skills to challenge the bureaucracy and its processes. Citing that the situation is as bad as it is because people do not understand how bad it is ("it's

hard to fight about it if you don't know anything about it"¹¹³), a common goal was to educate people and create awareness about housing and Aboriginal rights. Many women stressed working together across Aboriginal groups in order to challenge governments and be heard; they said that change will not happen until they "get out of the box" people put them in. Such strategies would certainly challenge the way the field operates and creates the identities that serve to reproduce it.

As for the idea that Aboriginal people are resisting by making cultural capital valued — the idea of disrupting the field by introducing foreign capital or habitus (Chodos and Curtis 2002, 411) — while also developing education strategies in order to accumulate the necessary (mainstream) cultural capital to recognized domination and challenge the field, it is not clear if this trade off is balanced. Are non-Aboriginal people learning to value Aboriginal cultural capital (incorporating Aboriginal cultural practices into meetings, hiring Aboriginal tenant relations workers, tailoring educational programs to the Aboriginal community, and using the symbolic act of having policy or programs approved by particular Aboriginal organizations) at a rate equal to that at which Aboriginal people are still expected (as they were forced in the past) to adopt field-dominant (non-Aboriginal or urban) cultural capital in order to participate in the housing field? The inherently unequal or unbalanced exchange of ideas in a colonial space (Tully 1995) would imply that there is a greater incorporation of colonial ideas by Aboriginal people than Aboriginal cultural capital or habituses being valued by non-Aboriginal people. For example, although most respondents employed in housing spoke about how many of the overt acts of racism (and devaluing Aboriginal cultural capital) have subsided (focus group participants strongly disagreed), this overt racism has been replaced by a more subtle field-sanctioned racism that disciplines Aboriginal people who do not conform to urban/colonial

¹¹³ Put simply: "For domination to be resisted effectively it must first be revealed" (Hoy 2004, 138). Here, Aboriginal people noted that they could not decolonize, self-determine, or even work effectively against colonial forces until everyone in their communities understood who, and what, they should be fighting.

spaces (making their lives harder) and rewards those who adopt field-matching capital.

In the end, the valuing of Aboriginal cultural capital (in the examples given above) and using social capital that is connected to colonial structures may actually serve to encourage Aboriginal people to conform more with the expectations of the dominant field forces. Such co-option hides the symbolic violence that is used to convince both the marginalized and the more powerful Aboriginal people (middle-class) to misrecognize the extent of their incorporation into the field, the real limitations of their own power, and whether the collective is benefitting over the individual. This is the problematic nature of resistance that Bourdieu described (Bourdieu 1987; Wacquant 1992, 24). If resistance (which requires at least *some* participation in the field) can mean incorporation, then a risky contradiction is presented; what is framed as “self-determination” may actually only be “self-administration” — another form of assimilation. Powerful forces and misrecognition of contestation make it difficult to tell where resistance starts (C. Cronin 1996, 79; Lawler 2004).

The concept of habitus allows us to look at these complex power relations and understand what people’s individual roles are within them (Bourdieu 1977). Turning to people’s dispositions, we can ask what motivates people and, most crucially, see what people are doing with their tools in the field. Most importantly, we can ask whether the urban/Aboriginal mismatch between field and habitus still creates marginalization or perhaps provides the impetus to resist domination and change the field structure? Understanding that the housing field is not all-determining and that divergent behaviour is possible, the point made by Bourdieu’s feminist critics, will shed light on what effects the mismatch actually have in urban Aboriginal people’s lives (McLeod 2005; McNay 1999).

5.5 WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO: BELIEFS, BEHAVIOURS, AND ROLES

As much as there are people in the housing field who are struggling to accumulate valuable capital or who find themselves like a “fish out of water” in the city, there are Aboriginal people whose dispositions mark them as outsiders

(Kalpagam 2006, 84). Despite giving in, however, some people contest this domination and seek to take control of their lives and, when fully mobilized, see to collectively reshape the field, “carving out home spaces within the urban environment” (Ramirez 2007, 80–81)

For example, in attempts to introduce Aboriginal world-views to the governance of the social services sector, Ma Mawi uses its extensive social capital to find people that have similar approaches to community work. This allows their service-users to avoid relying on governments or other dominant organizations and actors in the field who do not share their perspectives. As a representative said about one of their partners:

That’s a faith-based organization, but they run like lots of youth programs. We’ve worked with them like for ever and ever and ever, like the sisters run it, and again, long standing relationship with them. But what binds us all together is our philosophy. We have the same kind of philosophy; we work in the same ways, so it’s our philosophy, our values. We all sort of work within the community economic development framework where we hire locally, where we hire like folks from the neighbourhood, who are using our services. We are very much about capacity building. So again, Aboriginal people don’t have a corner on the market of capacity building approaches, right, so we are always looking for other organizations that share the same philosophy and values and we readily partner with those organizations. [...] We’ll work with anybody who has got that same philosophy and values.

However, working with different-minded organizations is sometimes required in order to gain advantage in the field. This can be managed, according to the representative, by having the knowledge of how field domination works and being mindful of what they are doing so that domination can be mitigated:

Well, I think that number one, and that might even be some of the government systems kind of stuff, I think just really recognizing, and being very aware, of what services they do provide. And so if their service is like that, just knowing that that’s what it is and don’t expect it to be anything different, and so we can refer people to that service knowing that that’s what it is.

Different levels of government can also privilege different habituses; behaviour is not so monolithic and relies on individuals. For example, the WHHI has to

mediate the views of a Conservative federal government, NDP provincial government, and a city government that has gone from having a left-wing to right-wing mayor. Further, even within levels of government, Ministers, each with their own personal views, can change as well. As one WHHI participant noted:

Politically, people go into these things with visions right? And the minister that started the WHHI, the mayor that started the WHHI (you know I think federally less close probably, so it's not as much of a thing), but the minister, federal minister has changed, all those people have changed more than once. I guess the mayor only changed once. And so from that perspective, people come in with different ideas of what they would want to see or what they wanted to see, and you'd only have to go back to the original minister, Tim Sale, and ask him "is this what you envisioned? Would you continue to do it?" I can't answer that question but different people come in and look at something and have a different vision of it.

Thus, the housing field will be shaped to fit the habitus of dominant actors. What is most problematic for Aboriginal people is that the urban housing field, like most fields based on white people's experiences and the false (urban/rural, non-Aboriginal/Aboriginal) dichotomy, is based on systemic racism that privileges non-Aboriginal (whitestream) beliefs and experiences. Under difference-blind neoliberal systems, this structuring of the field creates a political order that erases Aboriginal needs and experiences from the dominant discussion. In order to fit in existing doxa, Aboriginal people can adopt habitus that are actually self-harming. As a worker at the NECRC, who sees racism on a daily basis, explained, the disproportionately poor, Aboriginal people in his neighbourhood have learned (the hard way) that self-reliance and not seeking (state) support is best:

It's the same old story of structured racism, lack of self-respect, lack of self-esteem, and 'you're not going to get any help from them' [the government ...] 'I'm not going to call them, it's a waste of my time' you know. And that's just, if you go to employment insurance or you go into the legal system and you're Aboriginal you'll feel... (they say if you go into the justice system with an Aboriginal person well you know the story about that). Okay, that portrays itself back out into the community and reflects back on every other large government agency as [*laughs*] 'why bother, what are you talking about going to the RTB? Sit down, have a coffee, you're wasting your time – we'll deal with this ourselves'. Or 'don't bother dealing with it, you're going to get evicted'.

That's just the way the community thinks because it's been years and years and years and years of that.

The field conditions behaviour to discourage people from seeking help, but also from asking questions. As explained by the MMF representative, it is the bureaucratic field that seeks to limit Aboriginal control of housing but also gets Métis people to stop each other from seeking change:

There's no incentive for them to do that. If you were to start doing that in housing you'd be seen as a rabble-rouser, shaking and moving; they'd isolate you out. There's not very many Aboriginals working on those housing units, because as soon as they walk in the room they: 'shh, shh.' But you know, don't eliminate discrimination; you make it worse or push it underground.

Habitus also tells people who they are which further influences how they act. In the urban Aboriginal field, the issue of identity is critical because it will tell actors which Aboriginal group(s) and communities, organizations, or governments they should turn to for their needs. As the ACW President explained about himself:

And then you have real urban Indians like myself who, it [the city] is all we know. I never lived on a reserve until I moved to B.C. for two years. [...] I never lived on my own reserve. So I'm a real urban Indian and I went to school with kids like yourself and learned the same things you learned. And I grew up with it. So I know. But when I visited my reserve I could see clearly the differences. [...] That's who I am. [pause] So the advantage that I have is that I can walk in both worlds and compete in both worlds.

Group-based Aboriginal identities not only legitimizes these groups but confers benefits (capital) to those participants in the 'right' group. The field struggle therefore also incorporates an inter-group conflict, notably between First Nations and Métis, with the ACW in the middle or on the outside, depending on whether anyone is listening. Field actors have to choose whether to recognize these groups (and the groups, through their politically-motivated membership lists choose whom to recognize) as a means of gaining influence or advantage. As stated, in Winnipeg, although these groups are consulted by the three levels of government when it suits them, the housing field has been historically structured along pan-Aboriginal lines because the main political organizations have no housing

services and because of the field's particular history, shaped by the Kinew Experiment. This is further developed in Chapter Seven when comparing the pan-Aboriginal approach in Winnipeg to the group membership politics of Edmonton.

Habitus (in the form of our preferences) can be influenced by symbolic violence and reinforce dominant ideas about what 'good' housing — it reinforces the unquestioned desire to want to live in certain areas and certain kinds of homes (Bourdieu 2005). This connects habitus to locations (Bridge 2011, 78; Cresswell 1996), tying habitus to economic class and race. Particular spaces, such as the North End, are symbolically, socially, and physically connected to Aboriginal people — some Aboriginal people (the most marginalized) are more likely to live there, non-Aboriginal people are very unlikely to want to visit these spaces let alone live there. One Aboriginal housing provider believed that no one, not even Aboriginal people, wants to live in the inner-city:

And we have people waiting on the list [for three years ...]. And why wait so long? Because they don't want to move into the house we offered them because of the location. The majority of our houses are located in the North End, central, so neighbourhoods there are very.... well they're having social problems in those areas so a lot of the people that are applying, are coming from First Nations communities or outside of town, they don't want — the first impression is, living in the North End, with sirens blaring, safety of their children. Especially their teenage children as well, you know, 12, 11 years old, a lot of them are getting initiated into gangs you know, just by going to the playground or going to the corner store or walking to and from school. [...] We own one apartment building in St. Vital. It's a 32 unit apartment building. And it's fully occupied. Everybody likes to stay there; it's a nice area of town.

The doxa of the housing field also include hierarchized ideas of what is 'good' housing (Bourdieu 2005). Related to this are common sense ideas about 'good' citizens and tenants and 'good' neighbourhoods or spaces (Bourdieu 1999b, 124). Possessors of symbolic capital reinforce ideas that good housing is not Aboriginal housing and good tenants are not Aboriginal.¹¹⁴ False equivalencies (reinforced by

¹¹⁴ This is made worse in the affordable housing field where low-income tenants (assumed to be Aboriginal, and vice versa) are presumed to be destructive, not pay rent,

the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy) become established whereby run-down homes are associated with Aboriginal people and vice versa. There is therefore a dichotomy between Aboriginal homes and nice (urban) homes. For example, someone at WHHI spoke about how funding for home beautification helps convey a good message about the home (and who lives there):

And the neighbourhood cleans up; it's no longer a trashy house and we no longer have the stigma of 'oh crap it's Aboriginal housing'. It's *nice* housing. And it has a good appearance and somebody can be proud of living there, right. That's an important thing. When you're talking about your housing and affecting your health, part of it is just simple, of where you're at and who you are. Whether you like it or not, it gives you some status; if you live in a dump, you don't feel too good about things and if you live in a nicer place... So it helps in that respect.

This concept of what is nice home (not an Aboriginal home) becomes applied to the people who live there as well. Ideas tied to locations not only reflect the kind of housing that exists there, but create the people that constitute these spaces (Razack 2002). Tied to this, common sense ideas of 'tenants' also become racialized whereby Aboriginal people are assumed to be bad tenants and while the good tenant is non-Aboriginal — as expressed in the difficulties focus group participants described in trying to rent a home. This doxa is imposed, via symbolic violence, to get Aboriginal people in positions of power, including housing providers, to fear 'at risk' First Nations tenants who have, by design, no rental history even when they, themselves, were once in that position. One Aboriginal housing provider stated his distrust of people coming off reserves and the on-reserve sources of information:

So I wish that sometimes community agencies would share information a little bit better. If somebody is going to be an 'at risk' tenant, [...] Often people come from reserve housing [...] and reserve housing won't give references of any kind. They won't even really acknowledge that the person lives there. [...] But people not having prior rental history is a real barrier because you don't know what kind of shape they left the unit in. And you don't know what kind of shape they're gonna leave your units in.

and noisy. This becomes associated with the Aboriginal community in general, low-income or not.

Just as Aboriginal people are seen as suspect tenants, Aboriginal women described how they faced intersecting forms of discrimination because of their gender. This is distinct from the forms of oppression faced by Aboriginal men (Green 2007; A. Smith 2005). For example, Aboriginal single mothers are seen as a risk — and hence bad tenants — because they are assumed to have large, destructive families. Others stated that their landlords assumed that they were prostitutes or invited dangerous men over to party. One case worker described how landlords see their tenants in the North End:

I would say you're given a 'three strike rule' which is particular to this community: [...] you're female with several children, you're on employment income assistance, and you're Aboriginal. That's the three strike rule. Three strikes you're out! [*Laughs*] You know. So that's the only place that I ever see sexism is if there's a large family attached to it. [...] They'd have a larger, a much larger hill to climb in getting adequate housing simply because they're Aboriginal.

This discriminatory treatment and symbolic violence by those who control who lives where, conditions people's habitus and what they understand, or want to understand (Bourdieu 2005). This acceptance of the way things are prevents contestation even when injustice is recognized (J. Scott 1990). One person who works with tenants in the North End, says tenants often get illegal rent increases, but:

They almost accept it. [...] The structured racism and the things that go with that, it takes a person's self-confidence and voice away. This happens with a rent increase: 'well, I've gotta pay another \$100 a month, oh well,' or 'oh, if you give me an eviction notice I have to move, I don't have a choice, I have to move,' that's just what they're used to, it's what's happened to them all their lives.

Similarly, when asked why Aboriginal people are not being more active in protesting the end of subsidies and the long waiting lists for housing, one housing provider stated:

We're talking about low-income people. We're talking about people that never had regular opportunities. They had some goals and dreams earlier on in their life, but sometimes those goals and

dreams wind up being dreams and never being fulfilled. So what happens is your mentality just gets sucked into it and you just accept it when somebody says you're moving out: 'Fine. I'll go over here.' Sometimes you don't argue with authority or you don't argue with people. Sometimes that's the mentality that people have, you know. Not that they're like children, it's just that their motivation and inspiration is really cut in half or whatever. There are so many issues that Aboriginal people face that mainstream media don't really get played inside the cabinet meetings, don't get played here and they may be... The taxpayer, and rightfully so, some of them don't believe people should be living like this and they should be making their own living or whatever else, the thing is these people have generations and generations of poverty and how do you break that out and to back to the treaties?

Habitus that is shaped by symbolic violence ensures that dominated people do not act out and resist domination; what is learned in the field are the behaviours and beliefs that best preserve it by encouraging people to anticipate similar outcomes over time, good or bad. However, experiences from other fields, especially the dominant political field, can be useful when brought into the housing field. As one Aboriginal housing manager related:

I was a politician in my community, I was a councillor, like a leader. I had worked in housing in one point in time prior to that a number of years, as a tenant liaison officer. [...] I graduated from Brandon University with a Bachelor of Arts, major in Native Studies, minor in Sociology. I also, through DOTC, [...] gained my management certificate. I also worked at Indian Affairs and other government agencies as well.

Interestingly, like most government employees in the housing field, all Aboriginal housing managers were male except for one woman whose husband was a chief, conferring some social capital. The manager at Payuk had a different story about how she also ended up managing Aboriginal housing:

I worked as a legal assistant for 15 years out in the public sector. And you know, it was all about the dollars and the big bucks, and I really got burned out and when this opportunity came along with SAM, I loved what SAM stood for – which was to provide safe, affordable housing — and it was non-profit. So it's, it really appealed to the social side of me. And I think a lot of women have that social side, especially in affordable housing where I think there's a lot of women.

As can be seen, gendered differences play a central, though overlooked, role in reproducing the housing field and creating people's beliefs and behaviours, while also shaping power relations in the field (Bourdieu 2001). At the same time, looking at gender confirms how field theory can be opened to find space for understanding gender difference in less deterministic and more emancipatory ways (C. Cronin 1996; Chodos and Curtis 2002; McLeod 2005; McNay 1999; Lovell 2000; Mottier 2002). As has been argued, Aboriginal women have access to some valuable sources of capital (social connections and education) that proves essential (Ramirez 2007) in creating space for Aboriginal people to work together toward self-determination in the field. In the next section, we will look more at how seeing differences among urban Aboriginal people sheds more light on the diverse, even conflicting, roles that they play in the field.

5.6 FIELD CLEAVAGES: DIFFERENCE IN EXPERIENCE AND CAPITAL

In order to bring needed attention to the diverse experiences that people have in the field (related to both domination and resistance), this section uses gender difference to further elaborate on how the operation of the field — its structures, the capital that is used there, and the roles people play — is shaped along lines that create divisions, not unity, among its actors.

It was not surprising to find so many women involved in Winnipeg's housing field, especially the affordable housing and public service side, either employed in housing or seeking/living in public housing. Participants were asked why there was this overrepresentation. First, when asked why so many of their tenants were female,¹¹⁵ housing providers had different responses, although many were uncertain, as they claimed that they had never actually thought about it before. Their answers included:

¹¹⁵ All managers knew that the majority of their tenants were female (the majority of whom were single mothers), but did not keep statistics (they had no reason to do so), so exact figures are not available.

Why? [long pause] I don't know why. I don't know. Other than maybe a cultural thing where the males don't, are sort of nomadic and, that's the only thing I can see.

Well, a good majority of our tenants are social assistance clients.

It tends to be more the old style, where the division of labour, where the women are responsible for the child-rearing and the house and the domestic, and males are sort of out working kind of thing, yeah.

I think that housing is really important to women. It's not just their families, it's their children's families, their grandchildren that are in these homes. And they have a responsibility to their families.

You would have to ask others about that, but it seems to me that a lot of single males are living in hotels, because, I mean, I don't think the money is great under social assistance, so 'if they are deemed able-bodied, right, then they should be working,' is kind of the view of the system. So, not taking into account any other conditions or barriers or challenges that individual males might have.

There is therefore a cultural as well as economic explanation, though rarely interrogated by research participants beyond a simple assumption about what is normal (Bourdieu 2001), for why housing is women's work. It should be noted, too, that not everyone answered this question in terms of women's work; a small number of participants did not equate gender with women and spoke about men as well, a vital part of a gender analysis (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1999, 5). Although still reinforcing gender roles, some people, such as the person cited above, stated that housing was only women's work because men were nomadic. This also reinforces the idea that women are, in contrast, sedentary and "at home" in the private sphere or working on housing issues (Pateman 1992; Waring 1988).

Asked why so many Aboriginal people employed in housing or serving on tenants' associations were women, the MUNHA representative said:

I would guess that it's because women are the care givers for the family so housing is very important to them, so that they can be good care givers for the family. So I think that is probably why it's such an interest to them, I think.

The idea that women are carers, as will be seen in Chapter Seven, was stated by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents, by people in both cities, by women and men, and by interview and focus group participants — for those who were able or willing to reflect on this question. This highlights the claim that hierarchical gender differences cut across groups (Hayden 2005, 48) but also that the difference-blind avoidance of talking about gender (Harder 2003) or questioning the falsely-arbitrary division of resources in a patriarchal society cuts across fields. Gendered doxa come from an established — and reproduced by a more powerful — patriarchal field of power (Bourdieu 2001).

Compared to Edmonton, something that will be raised later, there were fewer people who felt gender was irrelevant in the housing field, or who were unable or unwilling to consider how it could be relevant. One housing manager stated that she did not see evidence of sexism in the field, but said that that was mostly because so many housing-related organizations were employing women. Another housing manager said that she had actually never noticed that all five people who work with her are women. This response was not common in Winnipeg where people readily acknowledged that women were not just overrepresented in the proportion of tenants living in Aboriginal affordable housing, but in the population that work in housing and housing-related organizations, as well as those advocating for better housing conditions in the city.

Gendered field rules also shape experiences at the same time that they are contested (C. Cronin 1996). For example, the people at the Friendship Centre and Ma Mawi spoke about how hard it is for families in housing crisis to stay together since there are no shelters that will allow opposite-sex couples to reside together. At Aboriginal Visioning, the program manager concurred that housing programs (not counting shelters) are geared toward nuclear (different-sex parent)¹¹⁶ families. This has gendered impacts as well as cultural impacts for Aboriginal

¹¹⁶ This person was also the only person to mention the (housing) hardships faced by two-spirited and transidentified people in Winnipeg.

people, many of whom do not live in such family structures. One Aboriginal woman who work with families at Ma Mawi said that:

Well I think because primarily the kids are with the women. So for us, because our genesis has been around child welfare, you know it's always been about supporting the children and the families, and a lot of the time that is single moms, or a lot of the time women are the primary caregivers of their children, their grandchildren, their nieces and nephews. We are starting to see more men doing that, but I think in the past, whether it be for societal reasons or, I don't know what all the reasons are, but the single mom situation has been more predominant, and so our services have been focused toward that. [...] With limited income assistance, you can't really live as a [two parent] family, right, like because the male would be deemed able-bodied to work, and if he's working and has an income, then does he need income assistance? You know. Like they won't often put up a family on assistance. It's way harder, there's way more rules around that, so it's a little bit harder to do that. But a single mom, with kids, that's a given, right, for housing.

Thus, the field's formal rules for who gets assistance (needy moms — not men who should be working) impacts family structure. Some people have to decide with whom they will live (or not live) based on what services they can get. This is a continuation of one of the first acts of colonialism which was to dictate the reshaping of Indigenous family structure, a policy that continued throughout history with the *Indian Act*, residential schools, and is now imposed by state regulations today (A. Smith 2005; Green 2007). These ongoing acts of colonialism, even in the contemporary housing field, reflect its intertwining colonial and patriarchal nature. They are then reinforced by the social investment state's focus on saving women and children (in this case, from Aboriginal men) (Dobrowolsky 2006, 193).

The fact that housing policies affect all people, albeit differently, mean that Aboriginal men also have gendered experiences in the housing field. Even though patriarchal power structures mean they more often benefit, they still have their options limited by what is thinkable in the field (Bourdieu 2001). Of course, the fact that gender cuts across groups also means that men in more marginalized groups — homeless Aboriginal men — can still experience domination from non-

Aboriginal men or from Aboriginal women in positions of authority in the housing field. For example, the manager at Aboriginal Visioning also said that many men have significant housing issues (as stated, they are overrepresented in the absolute homeless population), but that their problems are less visible because, since they are less likely to have children, they have the opportunity (which is not a solution to housing problems) to couch surf. That is not an option for women who are more likely to have responsibility for or custody of children and need more housing stability. Men are also less likely to get help, she says, partly because they do not have children; they cannot qualify for the same government supports.

The social investment state (Dobrowolsky 2006), that decides who is worthy of help and who is undeserving, seeks to integrate people into society (notably the workforce), and the (housing) market, (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003; Giddens 1999), but unemployable Aboriginal men cannot be integrated — especially if the social investment state is informed by white experience (Altamirano-Jiménez 2009, 1). The AV worker said that she saw how Aboriginal men in the North End were only seen as useful for the state for filling prisons.¹¹⁷ The limited amount of funding provided for social investments are therefore given to people who have children, who are, as shown in the statistics at the start of the chapter, much more likely to be women.

It is this gendered division of work (habitus in the form of people's behaviour) that influences housing experiences; it shapes what people's roles, needs, expectations, and options are. Women's roles as child-raisers tie them to housing issues and the stakes of the field struggle; they can lose their home if they lose their kids, or lose their kids if they lose their home. As one case worker explained:

The biggest trend that I see is child welfare. And that indirectly, or could be directly, affects housing. You lose your children, you're at risk of losing your house because if you're on income assistance, they're going to cut or reduce your income. And you

¹¹⁷ The grossly disproportionate sentencing of Aboriginal women in Canada's judicial system highlights the roles Aboriginal women also play in keeping women's prisons populated (Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies 2012).

won't be able to afford to keep the housing. [... Conversely,] There's a woman who is needing housing and she'll get her children back if she can get housing. That's another thing that the child welfare system said, that "you know what, if you find adequate housing, you can have your children back."

The case worker noted how long waiting lists further hurt women and their families who are trying to get into adequate housing in order to be reunited. She has worked with one housing provider in the past to try to persuade them to let women seeking reunification with their children, skip ahead in the list.

The women in the focus groups more often spoke about the impact that housing has, not just on them, but on their children. First, they noted how hard it is to work in order to afford rent when they are also saddled with raising children. Second, some who were in the North End or other distressed neighbourhoods feared that their children were being exposed to drugs and the sex trade because that was the only place they could afford to live. Third, many noted how few options there are for housing for families; people without children (more likely to be men), they said, have more options for location, affordability, and quality. But the task of being responsible for raising children goes beyond the home. In some instances, it has been translated, in the housing field, into avenues for Aboriginal women to take a lead on housing issues. While this may be part of the unpaid burden of those deemed responsible for providing housing for the family (Waring 1988), participating in the housing field, or broader urban field, has been shown to carry with it some benefits in the form of social capital, cultural capital, and even taking on leadership roles (Mahar 2010; Silver et al. 2004; Ramirez 2007).

Some people in the field argued that this behaviour, for Aboriginal women to be the ones in charge of housing, is consistent with traditional Aboriginal culture — it would be an act of acquiescing to colonialism to change. One non-Aboriginal man (who emphasized that he was married to an Aboriginal woman) who worked in the North End said:

It's always baffled me a little bit why there's so little in the way of male participation versus female. I think mainly that in this community the females tend to run the families, it seems to be that way as far as supporting the family goes, and supporting the family

socially – not necessarily financially, but socially. [...] As far as I know that's original, pre-contact, that was the way it was.

A manager at an Aboriginal housing project further explained:

I think in the Aboriginal culture too, it's very common for women to take leadership roles too, because they're, you know, they're the mothers, so spiritually, you know, they take more leadership than men do, I think. [...]. Women are involved in housing] because we're nurturers. [Laughs]. I don't know, I think that from what I know of why I'm in housing, and I work for a non-profit company, we're not about dollars.

This person was speaking about the *urban* housing field, but the manager at DOTCHAI, tied to on-reserve, male-dominated politics, said that gender roles are influenced by the roles within the field of power:

Well I guess in the communities it's always been male dominated for, in Aboriginal, First-Nations politics — I mean it's kind of changing now, that you see female Chiefs, leaders.

But others stated that it is natural for urban Aboriginal women, with so much more social capital than urban Aboriginal men, to take on leadership roles in the city. It has been argued that social (grassroots) organizing, even in colonial spaces that are hostile to outsiders, is more likely to be done by women than men because they are more likely to live in social housing, go through government service-seeking processes, develop social capital by raising children, be responsible for passing, and participate in community groups or Native hubs (Mahar 2010; Silver et al. 2004; Ramirez 2007). A woman at MORN said:

You know what, women are more resourceful I think. They're not scared to go out there. They're involved, whether it's with their neighbours, like "oh guess what I heard" kind of conversations, or "I know where you can get housed." They're more connected and I think men are not as sociable maybe? [...] I mean, men usually stick to men and how many men are knowledgeable in community resources, like when you look at it? And I see groups like Ma Mawi, their organization has men's groups and so I think that's really a wonderful step in connecting them to their clients. So that's going to slowly change. It's very small, the change is small now but it's going to get bigger. [...] I think we see a big need as women, to support each other. And that's just kind of what we do. We rally together.

It stands to reason, then, that change in the housing field, and urban Aboriginal self-governance, is going to rely heavily on women. In spite of any capital Aboriginal women may have that would be useful in self-governance, the person at MMF also spoke about such change, but was less optimistic. He stated that government rules and regulations, dictated by the bureaucracy, shape gender roles and experiences in housing, confining the field and what is possible:

But certainly women have been impacted in more ways. Sure, because they are the primary providers. [...] There isn't any doubt in my mind that particularly women and children are asked to carry a bigger burden. Because they do have, you're squeezed out economically out of the community because you have no babysitters, you have no day care centres. You have no disposable income for entertainment, you even win money in a goddamn bingo and they'll cut you off welfare until that amount is gone.

More than one person shared stories about Aboriginal couples who got divorced so that the woman (taking the children) could qualify for assistance or get a space in public housing. In a similar vein, another housing provider spoke about how Aboriginal women's burdens in the housing field are tied to rules to discipline those who use the welfare state, and how First Nations women, historically outside the welfare state, are disproportionately hurt:

Well, money's tied to the mother through the children. So it's the mother that has the money. It's not the 'money,' it's basically the support, income assistance, that's what it is, social assistance. But unfortunately family breakdown is breaking down, from day one, Treaty One. Reserves, welfare, residential school, everything else has broken the family apart. Not all families are broken, but there is a substantial amount that are broken. What that does is it makes the woman the main bread/money winner and the man is not there. And policies with employment and income assistance is the women cannot have a spouse living with them and qualify for that employment income assistance. They cannot even give [her assistance] if they're aware that the man gives child support, and whatever is given is deducted off of that. So it's a no-win situation for the mother. And actually some women are forced to go and try to take their fathers to court for child support before they're even considered to receive benefits.

Some state actors consider differential impacts on women when decision-making

in the housing field. For example, the UAS, as part of OFI, has a process for using gender based-analysis on its applications and MORN (through the WPA) was represented in their decision-making process. When the provincial government set up Een Dah Aung, they knew to include MORN:

And you know they're not as broad, but the advice we got when we put together the core group, and we asked 'who are we missing?' [...] And Mothers of Red Nation was invited because there was a feeling that Aboriginal women weren't specifically represented. Aboriginal women sometimes feel some of the broader political organizations don't represent the interests of Aboriginal women. So they were invited.

With MORN's collapse, it is uncertain what the future will be for formal or institutionalized involvement of women in the housing field. Without an organization that has gained the recognition or state-sanctioned legitimacy similar to MORN's, women's voice(s) in government processes that seek 'legitimatised' organizations to provide 'the (unified) voice' of particular groups could be diminished. MORN's former executive director even said that Aboriginal women's influence in the field of power, and by extension, the housing field, was improving because:

First of all, the whole issue of services to Aboriginal women are really key. I don't think that any government, level of government is going to turn their backs on issues of Aboriginal women, for one. I think that if you have an interest and have all of your information that you want to partner with all levels of government along with other organizations, that partnering part, establishing partnerships is key and sometimes we don't have a choice in the matter. [...] And I see that happening with homelessness and housing. That's the reason I was even more surprised when we weren't involved [in a recent housing announcement], but that's OK I'll get over it [*laughs*].

The consolidation of Aboriginal people's power, a coming together of the community (or at least key, powerful individuals) that has an effect on the power distribution in the field is a first step in moving toward self-governance — as long as this includes both women and men, indeed all areas of the Aboriginal communities in Winnipeg. But what limitations do the rules of the field, its powerful, capital-rich dominant actors, the field of power, and neoliberal habitus

impose on the possibilities for self-governance or self-determination? What kind of collective action is possible given what the Aboriginal people there *can* and *want* to do as part of the struggle of the housing field?

5.7 WHO CONTROLS WINNIPEG'S HOUSING FIELD?

Asking who controls the urban housing field allows us to see who is governed and who is governing — and which actors are involved. Do actions by Aboriginal people approach self-determination goals or are their collective actions — resistance to the neoliberal or colonial forces that shape the city — too limited to be recognized? This also begs the question of whether Aboriginal self-determination or self-governance takes place in the urban housing field.

Interestingly, the MUNHA representative did not view the organization as having a role in self-determination, despite its obvious potential, according to some, to act as an Aboriginal housing authority that unites governance and service delivery with urban Aboriginal people. This disassociation with community control is partly explained by MUNHA's unclear membership and questions regarding whom it represents; Aboriginal housing providers or the Aboriginal people who are housed by these organizations (and/or the Aboriginal community).

Similarly, a worker at Aboriginal Visioning said that she was more interested in decolonization (another basis of self-determination) than politics or self-government, even though AV provided some of the best examples of implementing strategies for the community-based control of housing. For example, AV started hosting meetings with Aboriginal people in order to discuss housing issues in the community (which turned into meetings of all women, whether that was intentional or not). After realizing people were having similar problems with the government processes, AV was able to host a meeting in which Residential Tenancies Branch (RTB) employees came to the community centre in order for Aboriginal people to explain their needs and for the RTB to educate community members about how the housing bureaucracy worked. This allowed those Aboriginal women present to teach others in the community and build up their social and cultural capital. It also gave them the chance to explain to the

RTB what was not working. This also provides an example of a process of resistance, one of the few detailed ones that came up during fieldwork. Here, people succeeded by challenging the way that the field operated (Bourdieu 1998b, 27).

Further, the activities of AV have attracted the attention of politicians empathetic to their community (Simard 2008) — legitimizing the program and attracting more resources through connections with powerful people who share at least some of their ideas about resistance. After learning that community members were having trouble with its processes, the RTB has since created a new position for a neutral advocate to help community members fill out housing applications and navigate the housing field — further educating people about the way the field operates. In a more recent development, an old hotel in the North End, used for substandard housing, was slated to be rehabilitated — gentrified — changing the nature of the space in which many marginalized Aboriginal people live. Aboriginal Visioning participated in public conversations in order to give voice to the local Aboriginal community. Their affiliated organizations, Ma Mawi and the NECRC, were among an alliance of stakeholders that were able to create a rehabilitation project in response. This action ensured that all of those people living in the hotel would be adequately housed in the area, rather than left on the streets or housed in places away from the community that they know and on which they rely (CBC 2012b). This did not change everyone's housing situation, but again, (limited) contestation of the field happens when state processes are questioned (ideas of 'good housing' and how people should be housed were challenged) and power is put into the community's hands (Polakoff 2011, 3–4). The field was not drastically changed, but power was redistributed and we can see how the local Aboriginal community engaged in a strategic act of inclusive governance; people in the North End took control of the process, not leaving it up to the state (Bourdieu 1998b, 4–5). Once again, people acted in "opposition to social policies that shape populations" (Hoy 2004, 7).

Despite describing such examples of entries into limited examples of self-determination seeking governance (in the form of community problem solving),

the representative from AV did not believe that the group was getting into the ‘politics’ of housing yet, though this could come later, she said. In the same way that people at AV were “not into” politics, the UAS representative said that her program does not relate to self-determination or self-government: “We don’t usually talk about it in those terms. I’m not really sure, I’ve never really approached it that way so...” As interviews (even with those who participated in the field of power) showed “political” ideas such as self-government (or other related terms) were not on many people’s agenda. As another example, the ACW president equated self-governance with government-recognized, membership-based political Aboriginal organizations. Since the ACW is always cast in opposition to these groups, it cannot be “on the self-government track,” he said.

This disconnect from political goals (Burnham 2000; Clarke 2011) can also be explained by the doxa or symbolic violence in the field that conditions people to view self-governance (or self-determination for that matter) as something political, associated with high level politics (Abele and Prince 2002), and hence the sole responsibility of those political organizations that claim to be pursuing self-government. Many spoke as though ‘politics’ was a dirty word and associated with it with corruption and dishonesty. In focus groups, numerous First Nations women said that they had had enough of politics on the reserve and some also men indicated that their political struggle to regain their Indian status had left them disenchanted with both the state and Aboriginal politics.

As a result, the Aboriginal housing field, and housing as a stake, has been separated from Aboriginal political networks that govern political processes — the Aboriginal field of power. Again, housing (especially Aboriginal and — often overlooked — public/affordable housing) is so thoroughly devalued as a social field that it has largely been depoliticized as governments and powerful actors have withdrawn, making housing a personal, not public or social, good. Many in the urban Aboriginal community have accepted this neoliberal trend as well, as evidenced in the statements above. However, turning a focus from institutionalized models of self-government to community-based ideas of self-determination seeking governance (Maaka and Fleras 2008), we can find some

examples of resistance to domination that still casts itself as non-political. For example, the Ma Mawi representative, when asked whether what they do contribute to self-governance, stated:

Well, not in a political sense, we are non-profits, so we're not political organizations. I do think that the way in which we work, again that whole philosophy of we all work together to help one another, we subscribe to the principles that families *are* able to take care of themselves, and families can, if you will, govern themselves, and so we don't feel that systems and services need to tell families how to live. We think that families know what's right, they know what they need and that they should be the ultimate decision makers in their lives, and so we try very hard to put that decision making back into families where it is absent. [...] And so we use different tools and techniques for that, we use the pathing process, we use family-group counselling processes, we use a lot of our traditional type process, you know the sharing circles and ceremonies and that kind of stuff. So not self-governing in a political sense but that families can be self-governing. We believe that they have the capacity. We believe that they have the knowledge and the ability to do that with supports.

Thus, there is a recognition, that urban Aboriginal people are working toward some form of self-governance, even if it is not recognized as part of the basis of self-determination or a form of collective self-governance. I argue, then, that limited, collective action (that contest the field) does take place — although, as seen in the above quote, symbolic violence stigmatizes political action (Clarke 2011, 240) — in the realm of non-institutionalized self-government strategies. These forms of collective action lack the symbolic capital of governments or other “important” bodies in the field of power but open spaces for people to challenge domination, putting power in Aboriginal people’s hands, outside dominant power structures, in the community, and in the home.

Housing providers were more certain that their organizations were working toward similar self-governance goals in Winnipeg. The manager at Kinew stated that the organization was part of a broader quest for Aboriginal self-determination. The manager at Payuk agreed, stating:

I guess it’s just a control thing, it’s an empowerment thing, right? Especially in co-ops because ultimately the membership is who controls the decision-making. They can vote boards in and out.

They can hire and fire management, auditors, all that kind of stuff. So really it's the membership collectively that has the power to run Payuk. I mean I don't have any power whatsoever; I take my direction from the board. [...] And I think it teaches really good leadership skills that can hopefully be used in the future.

Similarly, the manager at Kanata agreed that Kanata was part of self-governance because:

It's just the board... the board of directors and management and making decisions that are based, or best for the future of the corporation and that type of thing. That's no different than any other government.

These ideas about self-governance being based on community control over Aboriginal services, in this case housing programs, is significant. Collective control over shared properties (subverting ideas about private ownership) that have the potential to generate shared wealth to be distributed according to the needs of members engaged in the governance of these homes (Cole 2008) are valuable resources for a landless collective in a colonial space. The capacity for the community to have a say in how Aboriginal housing is run is a significant part of *self*-governance within the housing field, even if it is only a part of it. Said the manager at DOTCHAI who also believed her organization was part of self-determination seeking governance:

We continue to run our program even though we're on our own, with no government funding on some of these units. I mean, if we look at it, real-estate is an investment that will only keep growing. If the house falls down you will have that piece of land that is valuable, and I think that with the right vision we could really go far, and the right leadership behind us.

Of course, this question of autonomy — freedom from interference (either the government or systemic outsider forces such as the free market) — is an important part of differentiating self-determination from self-administration (domination) dressed up to look like something that it is not (Coates and Morrison 2008). A government employee, reflecting on Aboriginal housing providers, stated:

Are the groups free to govern themselves? Absolutely. And we support the community, we support the community in the direction they want to go within the agreements that they signed. There are accountabilities that they have to meet. And they have to meet those, those are imposed on them because they signed the agreements 15, 20, however many years ago. But do we support the groups to pursue their own future, is however they see it? Absolutely. I think that we are here to provide, to act as a support to the groups.

The end of housing subsidies is going to have a great impact on self-determination. As Aboriginal housing organizations, and the Aboriginal people who work or live there, find their economic capital drop off, their capacities to function independently and pursue their goals will weaken. Outside influence thus has a significant impact on governance when market and government forces, with their capacities to set rules and inflict symbolic violence, exercise their dominance on the field. One government employee even disagreed that any kind of urban Aboriginal control was happening:

I do think we're fairly close a couple of urban reserves which would create a kind of self-government, but they're just really commercial so at the end of the day... [...] I think that we could be promoters of that where there's a political willingness to see it happen but I can't imagine how that could happen, in our current political climate. I just don't see any sort of sense of what would be viewed as some kind of parallel form of government having any kind political or even community support at this point.

Thus, even those with the power to dominate can recognize that without the political will of their political over-seers, self-governance is going to be limited by the preferences of politicians and those who profit from the uneven distribution of power. One provincial housing employee was more optimistic, saying that that Een Dah Aung was "a very small step" toward Aboriginal self-governance in Winnipeg, but concurred with the sceptical doxa that Aboriginal self-governance can only go so far, stating:

obviously first of all it takes significant political will. Again, it's not my position to really be critical of federal policy, but I don't see the current government taking many major steps towards promoting significant Aboriginal self-government. I don't know what'll happen in the future; I think it's inevitable that that

movement is going to grow. I think that the current government of Manitoba is amenable to it to some extent, but there's a lot of issues. [...] It'll be very slow progression, but I think ultimately Aboriginal, the Aboriginal community will become more engaged in growing responsibility for directing how housing resources that are targeted to Aboriginal households are spent, and the policy development around it as well.

As though in response, an Aboriginal political organization representative believed that the mainstream political will for self-government exists, but it is the bureaucracy — the subfield of symbolic capital-rich civil servants who have the technical resources to shape the field with symbolic violence and the rules they enforce (Bourdieu 2005) — that preserves the dominance in the housing field. An MMF representative said:

It needs to go a lot further, but it seems to be moving incrementally in the right direction. The wheels of change turn slowly. You have to have, I think the hardest part to obtain is the bureaucratic will. The political will is there. [...] It would appear that the governments, that the bureaucrats to an extent are starting to come around. Because everything that they've done, it's pretty clear, is failing, from both a social and economic perspective, both. So it would appear to me that if you can't change your ways, then let other people try to do things a little bit differently.

This is most interesting because, based on what community members in focus groups and many interviews indicated, many Aboriginal people in Winnipeg do not feel that self-governance will emerge from Aboriginal political organizations. This includes the AMC which is mostly focussed on-reserve (though transitioning to include an urban focus), the MMF (which struggles for urban recognition), and the ACW (which struggles for any recognition). This downplaying and distrust of Aboriginal political organizations came up more, as expected, from Aboriginal women (who have historically been marginalized from these groups), but was also heard from many men as well, especially those who had lost (or never had) their Indian status and/or had no membership in any political organization. This point will be taken up again in Chapter Seven in comparison to Edmonton.

For now, urban Aboriginal self-administration, recognized by and negotiated with the state, happens through some devolution of responsibility to

political organizations, but even this is slow in happening and limited in autonomy and scope — it is an antithesis to self-determination (Coates and Morrison 2008; Maaka and Fleras 2008; Ladner 2003). Self-governance, community-based decision making on how housing problems should be addressed at the community level, is also limited, but is beginning to appear through tenant organizations, participation in Aboriginal-owned and operated housing organizations, and in community advocacy bodies as described above. These forms of engagement have proven more inclusive because they rely heavily on both women's and men's work and their source of capital.

While *self-government* in Winnipeg (especially in the housing field) is not immediately visible, self-determination seeking governance *outside* state-sanctioned bodies and government agreements on the future of housing policy, is slowly growing as Aboriginal organizations are picking up parts of various related social fields and attempting to provide community members with input into how services are delivered. The question of whether a broader spectrum of Aboriginal women and men are included in decision-making processes was not a pressing issue for research participants, except in cases such as the Een Dah Aung program which was concerned that state processes heard from MORN. With MORN now gone, the inclusive nature and future for higher-level self-governance is in question.

But such measures for formal, tacit inclusion of women or men (or any other particular part of the Aboriginal community) do not necessarily ensure that movement toward Aboriginal control of the housing field responds to the needs of all community members. The liberal influence of downplaying the relevance of difference ensures that such considerations will remain secondary unless Aboriginal people can find ways to contest exclusionary ideas that reproduce power relations in the field. Resistance to patriarchy, neoliberalism, and colonialism will have to come in the form of getting dominant actors (government decision-makers *and* Aboriginal people in positions of power) to work with the community by valuing different forms of capital and Aboriginal people *as equals* — thus basing relations on mutual recognition, continuity, and consent (Tully

1995, 199) — and not simply valuing Aboriginal capital in the long-standing spirit of colonialism that appropriates Indigenous resources. This is no simple task; it will require a change in the field of power that relocates sites of power into Aboriginal spaces and into the Aboriginal community. It also calls for the continued contestation of encroaching neoliberal ideals that undermine collective and Aboriginal-specific action by stigmatizing “politics.” But resistance, as can be seen, can still happen without reference to the language of self-government; urban Aboriginal women and men engage in self-determination seeking governance strategies (Maaka and Fleras 2008; Polakoff 2011, 14–15). By finding and creating spaces to work together in the city, this challenges the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy (Ramirez 2007, 80–81).

5.8 CONCLUSION

Some slow steps toward Aboriginal self-governance have been made in Winnipeg’s housing field. That said, there is no consensus on how far it has gone and who is benefitting. Most significantly, there are a number of barriers to the contestation of power systems that are put up by neoliberal elements found in the field. The impacts of downloading, getting out of housing, self-reliance, depoliticization, difference-blindness, relying on the voluntary (and the inevitable burnout), and marketization are all found in Winnipeg’s housing field. Significantly for the city’s Aboriginal housing subfield, the political-economic issue of the end of housing subsidies is culminating in a new housing crisis that not only demonstrates the urgency behind achieving Aboriginal self-determination goals for housing, but also some of the capital-based obstacles that are placed in its path.

This uneven distribution of power within the housing field also shows how other fields and actors who have the capital to limit Aboriginal collective action dominate Aboriginal people. This includes the symbolic capital to shape ideas about good housing, good citizens, and the spaces they occupy — all of which penalize Aboriginal women and men who do not/cannot conform to the urban ideal. Dominant actors in the Manitoba government (who claim to be sympathetic

toward social housing and Aboriginal people) and in the municipal government (which has demonstrated a relative indifference to Aboriginal people) make Winnipeg an important city for understanding the roles that state actors play. Further comparison with Edmonton and Alberta will highlight this in more detail.

There are examples of limited resistance in the field. Not surprisingly, much of it is led by Aboriginal women who have some of the useful resources to effect it, but who are also so disenchanted by Aboriginal political organizations (that are on the “self-government track”) that they prefer to act on a community-based or grassroots basis. Space claiming is also limited by taking place; while some people are proud to call the North End home, others wish they did not have to live there. Time will tell whether projects to reclaim such spaces, and accord to them the symbols to remove their stigma, will work. Programs such as AV and organizations such as Ma Mawi will be at the forefront of this, provided that they can operate at some length from the colonial, neoliberal, and patriarchal ideas that shape the field. Securing economic capital that does not lead to co-option will remain a relentless pursuit. Again, in Winnipeg this will undoubtedly continue in a pan-Aboriginal manner.

Winnipeg’s approach to Aboriginal housing, using a strategy that incorporates all Aboriginal groups, is also partly reflected by the different roles that women and Aboriginal political organizations have had in the field over the years. This will be contrasted in Chapter Seven with Edmonton’s housing field in order to demonstrate the impact that Aboriginal peoples’ beliefs and activities can have in shaping the housing field (and being shaped by it). The evidence that some Aboriginal women use their unique social and cultural capital (including foreign capital and bureaucratic capital that are increasingly becoming useful) in order to set foundations for self-determination tells us that change is possible even though it is difficult. Looking at the same elements in Edmonton, and the similarities that exist between the two cities in this regard, can tell us which dominant (colonial, neoliberal, etc.) forces being introduced from beyond the city and how relevant the provincial and local levels are in shaping people’s habitus in housing fields.

CHAPTER SIX:

6.0 RAPID CHANGE: EDMONTON AND ABORIGINAL HOUSING

Right now I'm living in low income housing. I finally got into some type of housing. I've been with this for three years so I feel kind of in my situation, I'm good but I know that my mother has had problems trying to get into Métis housing. [...] She's been on the waiting list for six to seven years and everybody else has gotten housing before her. And at the time she had my siblings living with her and the house she lives in today is a shack (Edmonton women's focus group participant).

People in Edmonton like to point out that Edmonton will soon surpass Winnipeg as having the largest Aboriginal population in any Canadian city. This is a point of pride for many and a call to action for service organizations and governments, especially those working in the housing field. By understanding how Edmonton's housing field operates, and the barriers, limitations, and modes of resistance to the different forms of domination that exist, we can see what behaviours and beliefs are reproduced and why, in this rapidly transforming city.

I argue here that the ways in which Edmonton's housing field is structured by neoliberalism and colonialism, and the ways in which people operate within it, can tell us a lot about urban governance and the roles that women and men play in (re)creating experiences in the housing field. In contrast to contemporary Winnipeg, I argue how an engaged municipal government and a 'core group' — a new Aboriginal middle-class — may be the catalyzing agents for new and rapid change in the urban Aboriginal field, with implications for housing. At the same time, local Aboriginal politics in the housing field play an important role in controlling people's expectations. A shift in provincial symbolic violence and doxa may be another helpful sign, though Alberta remains rooted in the excesses of neoliberal and patriarchal disciplining today. This, in conjunction with the colonial distribution of resources, still limit what is possible for people to do in Edmonton's housing field. While many new ideas are cited as examples of progress (and certainly some changes at the local level makes Winnipeg look dated), many of these developments mask the colonial, gendered, and neoliberal attitudes that are not changing.

This chapter proceeds in the following manner, similar to that in Chapter Five. First, statistical information sheds light on the Aboriginal population's demographics and housing situation. The chapter then provides a brief history of recent developments in Edmonton's housing field, whose effects still structure how it operates today. Flowing from this, the relations that create the field are described, demonstrating how the field works by (re)creating systems that structure and divide power. Having established who and what is involved in the field's struggle, I then examine how these participants engage in the struggle. The varied impacts of domination are analyzed in order to provide a context for the forces that shape and are shaped by the field struggle. Next, the resources that are used to engage in the housing field are analyzed, demonstrating their varied nature and uneven distribution. This leads us to look at the actual roles, behaviours, and beliefs that people adopt. These are determined by, as much as they determine, the housing field and create *certain kinds* of Aboriginal women and men. The concluding section details how these dispositions, tools, and structures are combined in order to work toward self-determination in Edmonton.

6.1 EDMONTON'S ABORIGINAL POPULATION: A BACKGROUND

In 2006, there were 684,090 people living in Edmonton. Accounting for 5.6% of the city's 2006 population, the number of self-identifying Aboriginal people in the city grew by 25% since 2001 (Andersen 2009, 9). According to the last census (2006), there are 38,170 Aboriginal people (20,465 female and 17,700 male) in Edmonton (Statistics Canada 2006). Métis people account for 55% of the Aboriginal population (20,695 people) and First Nations people account for 40% (15,989 people).¹¹⁸ There is a small Inuit population of 595 people.¹¹⁹ Edmonton's

¹¹⁸ These statistics do not include the approximate 3% of the self-identifying Aboriginal population in Edmonton that declared multiple sources of Aboriginal identity (Andersen 2009, 6).

¹¹⁹ Andersen's (2009) study of the Aboriginal population described in the 2006 census focussed on the statistics of the City of Edmonton *within city limits*. Statistics Canada's own Edmonton-focussed study of the 2006 census and Aboriginal population used Edmonton's census metropolitan area (CMA) which includes three First Nations reserves, inflating the number of Aboriginal people (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division

urban Aboriginal population is second only to Winnipeg's (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010b, 6).

Within Edmonton, Aboriginal people live in almost every area of the city (Andersen 2009, 10). As in Winnipeg, there is no evidence of 'ghettoization' (in the homogenous and inescapable sense understood in the United States) of urban Aboriginal people (Peters 2005, 70). However, while there is no *single* area of Edmonton with a high concentration of Aboriginal people, over 62% of Aboriginal Edmontonians live in less than a quarter of the city's thirty-one 'traffic districts.' This collection of districts include what the city calls its 'inner city' (Andersen 2009, 10) and, like in Winnipeg, research participants (like most Edmontonians probably do) associated the inner city with poverty and, tied to this, Aboriginal populations. That said, there is no neighbourhood like Winnipeg's North End that is so thoroughly synonymous with Aboriginal people.¹²⁰ Census figures also show that there is a difference between First Nation and Métis population concentrations; while an almost equal number of First Nations and Métis people live in the inner city, of the Aboriginal people outside this area, Métis people appear more spread out than First Nations (Andersen 2009, 11).

From 2001 to 2006, 70% of Aboriginal Edmontonians moved; 26% moved to the city and 44% moved within it. In contrast, only 49% of non-Aboriginal Edmontonians moved in the same time period (Andersen 2009, 11). Family structure is also different between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Edmonton. Sixty-one per cent of Aboriginal people in the city were single while 37% of non-Aboriginal people were single and 17.5% of Aboriginal Edmontonians were living in a common-law relationship (compared to 8.2% of non-Aboriginal Edmontonians). Ten per cent of Aboriginal families were headed by a single parent (of which 85% were women) while 18% of non-Aboriginal

2010b, 6). Although it is true that many of the people on these reserves will interact frequently with the city, this study of the urban housing field requires a focus on the census area bound by the city's own municipal government.

¹²⁰ Spatial representations of where Aboriginal services exist (and where interviews were conducted) show more concentration in Winnipeg than in Edmonton where services, being newer, are more spread out — the Friendship Centre in Edmonton even moved out of the inner city to an industrial area because inner city rents are so much higher in Edmonton.

families had a lone parent (Andersen 2009, 13). And though 17% of non-Aboriginal Edmontonians had children under 15 in the home, 27% of Aboriginal people had children. Again, there is also a noticeable difference between First Nations people with children (32%) and Métis (25%) (Andersen 2009, 13). Aboriginal women are more than five times as likely as men to be single parents (Andersen 2009, 14).

These significant differences in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal family structures play important parts, as will be seen, in shaping activities in the housing field and framing people's expectations about how others behave. They are also one of the aspects of political and economic non-conformity that leads to the state and societal forces targeting deviations from the (false) universal nuclear family (Beall and Levy 1995, 29; Bourdieu 2005). Housing extended family members is something that was identified by many Aboriginal people as an obligation, part of their culture that they did not (want to) question. However, this deviation from the common standard of single-family dwellings is at odds with the rules of the field and non-Aboriginal people's expectations (both what is preferred and predicted) for behaviour. Many non-Aboriginal people working in the housing field stated that they *expected* their Aboriginal tenants to violate regulations and over-house or have people stay without paying rent. Others believed that women on social assistance would have men (who 'ought' to be paying rent somewhere) stay with them for free. Several people, in interviews and focus groups, gave examples of how married/partnered couples chose, or were forced, to live apart so that they would not be at risk of losing their home or housing assistance. This dilemma creates great pressures on Aboriginal women, especially those who risk losing their children for violating rules.

Tied to this non-conformity with the urban 'mainstream' or non-Aboriginal population, there are gaps in the socio-economic status of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people since they do not all have the same opportunities or make the same choices as people who have lived in the city for generations. Overall, Aboriginal people were slightly less likely to have finished high school, much less likely to have completed university, but slightly more likely to have a

trades diploma (Andersen 2009, 25). Over 10% of Aboriginal people in Edmonton are unemployed while only 4.6% of non-Aboriginal Edmontonians are unemployed (Andersen 2009, 16). Again, Aboriginal people are not monolithic. The unemployment rate for First Nations (at 14.2%) is almost twice that of Métis Edmontonians. Aboriginal men tended to have jobs in the trades while Aboriginal women tended to work in sales or service organizations (Andersen 2009, 17). The median income for Aboriginal people in Edmonton was approximately \$19,000, ranging from \$14,945 for those in the inner city to \$51,410 in the suburbs (Andersen 2009, 19). This average is about two thirds of the median income of non-Aboriginal people in Edmonton. The difference between Aboriginal women and men's incomes is similar to that between non-Aboriginal women and men (on average men make more). Overall, First Nations people made much less money than Métis people.

As such, almost 40% of Aboriginal people in Edmonton live below the poverty line, a figure more than twice as high as the poverty rate for non-Aboriginal people in the city (Andersen 2009, 20). In the inner city areas, the low income rates are over 50%. First Nations greatly outnumber Métis people for living in low income situations; in some neighbourhoods, the percentage of First Nation people living below the low income cut off rate (for example, 68.1% in Londonderry) is more than twice that for Métis people (31.2% in the same neighbourhood). Although the percentage of Aboriginal Edmontonians living in these poorer downtown areas is decreasing (65.6% in 2001; 62.5% in 2006), the real numbers of Aboriginal people living in inner city areas has increased (Andersen 2009, 22).

This diversity among First Nations experiences is partly due to the diversity of surrounding reserve communities (Alberta is also the only province that has legally-recognized Métis settlements; although a number of the settlements are quite far from Edmonton, most are closer to this city than they are to any other large urban centre). This proximity draws people in to the largest city in the area and, as stated, studies show Aboriginal people have a much higher mobility rate than non-Aboriginal people and Aboriginal women have a higher

mobility rate than Aboriginal men (Skelton 2002). They also have different reasons for moving; men more likely to move for work, women are more likely to move to be with family or escape violence (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2002; Norris and Clatworthy 2003, 68).

Alberta's recent boom years also help account for the significant number of (new) Aboriginal people in Edmonton who have no historical, cultural, or familial connection to city or even to the province, and its regional Aboriginal organizations. This combination of Aboriginal diversity (in identity, socio-economic status, and awareness/access) and relative newness will explain some of the dilemmas, including those surrounding self-governance, faced by the urban Aboriginal population and will be addressed more exclusively throughout this chapter.

In light of the above figures on the socio-economic status of Aboriginal people in Edmonton, it should come as no surprise that their housing situations are also varied. For housed Aboriginal people in Edmonton, a 2011 study found that 66% of respondents were renting their accommodation, 14% were homeowners, 14% were living with others, 4% were in a shelter, and 2% were in a rooming house (Andersen 2009, 23).¹²¹ The homeless situation is also problematic. In 2010, there were 2,269 homeless adults counted in Edmonton. Three quarters of these were men. Of the total, 38% of homeless Edmontonians were Aboriginal people, a slight increase in proportion since the counts began in 1999 (Sorensen 2010, iii). Most significantly, Aboriginal people counted for 47% of the absolute homeless people enumerated, but only 22% of the sheltered homeless (Sorensen 2010, 16). Statistics also show that while the non-Aboriginal homeless population has begun to decline in 2008, the number of Aboriginal homeless people only began to decline in 2010 when the total number dropped (Sorensen 2010, 17).

As already stated in the reasons behind choosing housing as a field for analyzing governance, housing is an important issue in many, and arguably all,

¹²¹ Focus group data provided similar figures with 85% of participants renting, 8% owned a home, and 8% were in a shelter. Just over 30% were on some sort of government help, not counting old age pension.

urban Aboriginal people's lives, and the situation, if left unaddressed as it has been since the early 1990s, will not improve. Because it is seen as a key program area for creating a healthy and liveable city and because it was so greatly cut during the dismantling of the welfare state, (compounded by Edmonton's housing shortages during boom years), housing is now something that many Edmontonians, including those in government and the Aboriginal community are attempting to address. This renewed interest in an important social field is demonstrated in the following section on how agents in Edmonton have recently structured the housing field in order to engage in the struggle over decision-making in housing policies and services.

6.2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF EDMONTON'S HOUSING FIELD

In this section, we look at what is at stake in Edmonton's housing field and at the groups of people or organizations whose relations and struggle for the stakes form the more objective structure of the field. This structure and action mediate Aboriginal people's entry into decision-making processes of the field. Although this does not include all actors — government actors create the rules and regulations that set limits on the field and provide the economic capital that allows them to dominate — the two organizations here are government-backed and represent the groups of actors who most visibly represent how the field operates (or *should* operate). These organizations and the people within them are subjected to and influenced by different doxa, including that of the neoliberal and patriarchal order (Bourdieu 1998b; Bourdieu 2001; Kalpagam 2006; McLeod 2005). A large part of the field struggle takes place through these organizations which have different levels of influence over how the field is structured and how Aboriginal people's housing needs are addressed.

The data and analysis in this section also provides details about which organizations provided research participants for this study. Brief details about who these actors are, and how they are tied to the field, are necessary for understanding who is in the field (and in this research) and how relationships are

structured by the parameters determining responsibility, jurisdiction, and membership. All of these influence how people operate in the field.

Due to the dire housing situation experienced in Edmonton (and Alberta), a number of plans have been initiated to deal with the problems of homelessness, underhousing, and the lack of affordable and adequate housing. Edmonton provides a good example of innovation and experimentation in housing, something that many participants liked to state, for acting proactively and, as some claim, inclusively. As will be seen, initiatives for Aboriginal input into existing power systems (created by new organizations and modifying existing ones) creates a veneer of Aboriginal control (which, for many, was enough to laud the way the field operates) which has yet to demonstrate any large scale changes to the systemic power imbalances which have always existed.

Key in this area are two primary organizations (one housing-based, one Aboriginal-based, though each addresses the other) that serve a consolidating, or uniting, role as ‘hubs’ for bringing together various interpersonal networks that comprise the housing field and connect it to both the Aboriginal field and broader social service field. Although their power is uneven (one is important to government actors while one is important to the Aboriginal communities), they are both important for understanding how the field itself shapes the housing field struggle. A brief history, picking up from Chapter Three, demonstrates how and *why* these field organizations exist in the way that they do.

The Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing (EJPCOH) was established in the early 1990s as a community-based, non-profit organization that linked the three levels of government and housing-related stakeholders in the community and private sectors. The committee coordinated community initiatives on (affordable) housing policy and strategies. It authored a Community Plan (2000-2003) on homelessness and a Community Plan (2005-2009)¹²² on housing and support services; these documents reflected the goals and needs of

¹²² Today, both the City of Edmonton and Province of Alberta have Ten Year Plans to end homelessness that are used by organizations, notably Homeward Trust, to inform them and shape their policies and goals.

Edmonton's housing field and set its direction for governments and other field actors.

The Edmonton Housing Trust Fund (EHTF) was established to create economic partnerships¹²³ between the three levels of government and the Edmonton community and to “serve as the funding vehicle for affordable housing and support services in Edmonton” (Umisk 2007). This was to be done by leveraging funding from the public, non-profit, and private sectors in order to meet the Community Plans. In essence, the EJPCOH led and coordinated the efforts to meet low-income housing needs in Edmonton by setting priorities; the EHTF raised and provided the funding (from governments and private sector), decided what would be funded, and monitored and evaluated the projects (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2009, 5).

In 2005, the EHTF and EJPCOH undertook a governance review to consider whether their functions should be merged. They authorized and created a Joint Implementation Team (JIT) to oversee the creation, and set out the course, of a new single organization that would continue to meet the goals of the Community Plan on housing and support services (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2009, 3). Following input from 32 stakeholders, they agreed to create a new organization, Homeward Trust Edmonton (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2008, 5).

Assuming the responsibilities and obligations of both the EJPCOH and EHTF, Homeward Trust Edmonton began operating in May 2008. The organization is charged with a number of roles: determining Edmonton's housing needs and priorities; leveraging funding from the three levels of government, non-profit and private sectors; carrying out the goals of the Community Plan; monitoring and evaluating all previously established, and any future, housing projects; educating the public about housing issues; consulting with stakeholders

¹²³ It is noted here the neoliberal origins of the EJPCOH and EHTF; they both came about as a response to the federal government's abandonment of housing policy and the provincial government's refusal to get involved. They represent the responses by the more powerful actors in the housing field (heads of the non-profit or arm's length government bodies) that had to pick up the pieces of the housing field in order to ensure that the government remained somewhat involved, even if it meant having to decide how less money would be used to do more.

and the community on housing issues and goals; and engaging “the Aboriginal community to ensure strong representation and a more effective management model” (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2008, 6). It is no small matter that working with the Aboriginal community is one of the primary roles of Homeward Trust. What is remarkable is how the historical field structure of Edmonton’s housing field led to a strong Aboriginal mandate in the present housing field (including Homeward Trust).

First, Aboriginal political organizations (such as the Métis Nation of Alberta and Treaty 6 organization) had been represented on the boards of the EHTF and EJPCOH, ensuring a voice for Aboriginal people was heard in these organizations and, potentially, reflected in the organizations’ decisions. This organizational representation was not maintained with Homeward Trust. Instead, four out of nine of the trust’s board of directors members must be Aboriginal. They are appointed through an Aboriginal nomination committee. Second, there is an Aboriginal Advisory Council that advises Homeward Trust (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011, 7).

Second, key people working with the EHTF, the EJPCOH, and most importantly, the Joint Implementation Team that combined them were either of Aboriginal background or recognized the importance of including Aboriginal input in the housing field. A number of research participants spoke about the high profile Aboriginal community members who were involved in the organizations and the transition process that led to Homeward Trust. The presence of relatively powerful Aboriginal people — so-called ‘Indigenous elites’ (Maaka and Fleras 2008, 73) — in the decision-making and field structuring ensured that there was a recognition that Aboriginal people, as was stated in Community Plans that were provided, faced a disproportionate number of housing problems.

Third, because of the interconnected nature of the networks of capital-rich people in the housing field policy process, the former EHTF had been given the task of helping deliver the federal government’s Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) funding. This became one of the obligations that was picked up by Homeward Trust. As Homeward Trust developed, the responsibility for deciding

on UAS spending priorities was passed on again to another organization that was created partly through Homeward Trust.

The second primary organization in Edmonton's housing field, as it relates to Aboriginal people, is the Wicihitowin Secretariat. It was created as part of the growing recognition by the municipal government, based on what Aboriginal people on EAUAC (below) were saying, that something needed to be done to engage the Aboriginal community so that it could play a proactive role in addressing the differential needs facing its members. It came about because in 2003, the City of Edmonton, in partnership with the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (EAUAC) — a municipal-based voluntary advisory board of mostly Aboriginal people with community-building expertise and high profile connections in the community — began discussions about how to improve the lives of Aboriginal Edmontonians. This informal consultation process with community leaders led to the establishment of the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Accord Initiative in 2004 (EUAAI).

With the additional support of the other two levels of government and the EHTF (which still existed at that point), the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Dialogue process was used in late 2005 to engage the wider Aboriginal community in a discussion about what its perspectives, concerns, and priorities were. This resulted in the passage, by City Council, of the Declaration “Strengthening Relationships Between the City of Edmonton and Urban Aboriginal People” (“the Declaration”) and the *Your City, Your Voice* Report of 2006. (Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Dialogue Process 2006, 8–9). Further, as part of its plan to implement the EUAAI, the City of Edmonton created the Aboriginal Relations Office in January 2007. This office is advised by EAUAC, the city's Diversity and Inclusion Framework, the Declaration, and the EUAAI, thoroughly tying it into a number of the Aboriginal field's guiding policies.

Another key recommendation that came from the Dialogue Process was that there should be a continuing, community-driven method for decision-making, or a self-governance process, for Aboriginal people in Edmonton, based on their own traditions and processes. Facilitated by EAUAC and the City of Edmonton, and

with support from EHTF (later Homeward Trust), the UAS, and the former Alberta Ministry of International, Intergovernmental, and Aboriginal Relations,¹²⁴ the mechanism was established over a two-year community development initiative (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2008, 13)). It is formally called the Wicihitowin¹²⁵ Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship, or Wicihitowin, for short. It opened its doors inside the Homeward Trust offices in 2007 and has since parted, physically and structurally/politically, first operating out of the United Way's building and then moving to its own space in 2011.

Wicihitowin is described as a “community driven model of urban governance that's inclusive of all Aboriginal peoples and the [Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal] agencies that serve them in Edmonton. Thus, it is based on Indigenous traditions of governance and community decision making” (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2008, 13). The organization is administered by the Wicihitowin Secretariat whose task is to provide logistical support for the decision-making processes, but not to run it like a board of directors. Nine Action Circles, organized around key priority areas (one of which is housing), develop strategies for addressing their designated issue. The chairs of the Action Circles report the goals and decisions of the circles to the main Wicihitowin Circle which sets overarching priorities at its large public meetings.

Anyone can participate in the Action Circles. In 2010, I was asked to participate in the Aboriginal Housing and Shelter Action Circle (often called the Housing Circle) and to share the knowledge gathered by this study. There are also four Community Circles, centred on getting four segments of the Aboriginal population to participate and share their voices: Elders, Women, Men, and Youth. Similarly, local Aboriginal Governments (Treaty 6, Métis Nation of Alberta, Treaty 7, Treaty 8, Métis Settlements General Council, Inuit, and Non-Status)¹²⁶ have permanent seats at the Wicihitowin circle. Finally, EAUAC and the three

¹²⁴ This Ministry of Aboriginal Relations was separated out (before fieldwork started) by Premier Stelmach and then Premier Redford put it into the Ministry of International and Intergovernmental Affairs.

¹²⁵ Wicihitowin is a Cree word meaning “help each other.”

¹²⁶ If these sound vague it is because they do not all actually participate in Wicihitowin at the moment and the community has yet to figure out how, or if, they will be involved.

levels of government have a similar role (Wicihitowin Circle of Shared Responsibility and Stewardship 2009, 9). Wicihitowin has not been operating long and only got started as fieldwork was being completed, hence, as will be mentioned, focus group and interview participants had a lack of familiarity with the process and there are limited results to report. The rest of this chapter may serve as one of the first academic assessments of its potential for success.

The interconnected nature of the primary organizations¹²⁷ demonstrates the interconnected nature of the network that forms the housing field in Edmonton. Spaces where it overlaps with the Aboriginal political field are important to recognize, as the primary organizing body of the Aboriginal field arose largely from the housing field and through interventions by many of its actors. Housing is therefore a key field for studying self-governance in Edmonton. Further Homeward Trust and Wicihitowin set the rules for Aboriginal people's involvement in the official politics of the housing field (in self-government). This creates parameters on what is possible for urban Aboriginal governance in the city. But these organizations can also be dominated, disciplined, or ignored, to varying degrees, because they are also both subjected to the field of power's values that downplay the relevance of housing policy and that emphasize the importance of neoliberal ideas such as self-reliance and difference-blindness — common sense ideas that make Homeward Trust and Wicihitowin irrelevant to the 'average' Edmontonian. Thus, these organizations, and their participants, do not operate in a vacuum and other field actors are very important to understand as well.

In addition to these organizations, there are other influential actors in Edmonton's housing field, notably those in government, with a wealth of economic and symbolic capital. This includes the decision-makers and policy-makers who create housing policy as well as government employees who carry out programs and provide services, reshaping them and controlling access.

¹²⁷ The repetition of the same names of people on the boards of these organizations speaks to a strong role of structuring the field by key individuals.

Research participants included representatives and employees from the three levels of government. At the federal level, research focussed on the role of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI), as the deliverer of Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) funds in Edmonton (although Wicihitowin has some authority over deciding how the funding is distributed the federal government sets the amounts and has the final say). For reasons that will be made clear, the UAS does not spend on housing in Edmonton.

One of the primary deliverers of federal funding for housing programs that focus on homelessness is Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). And the CMHC, operating at arm's length from the federal government, has a regional office in Edmonton. Because affordable housing was not downloaded in Alberta, CMHC maintains a higher presence in the province's housing field, than it does in Manitoba, providing programs and services such as subsidies to affordable housing (and being responsible for on-reserve housing), though it is primarily a mortgage company today.

At the provincial level, research focussed on (and participants came from) two ministries created in 2008, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (now part of the Ministry of Human Services).¹²⁸ The former had no real services or projects of its own; it was charged with helping ensure that those departments that do provide services and funding are doing so in ways that are accessible to Aboriginal people. Someone from the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations was also charged with participating in intergovernmental and community-based organizations that worked in the Aboriginal field (Wicihitowin being the main example). The second ministry was quite active; as one person noted, much more active once Premier Klein left office (the government's most recent, 'post-Klein' housing initiatives are discussed in the next section). Most relevant here is that the Ministry of Housing and Urban

¹²⁸ After fieldwork, these ministries changed names more than once. Aboriginal Relations was rolled into International and Intergovernmental relations and then separated again. The mergers show how both ministries surrendered some of their symbolic significance as they were incorporated into bigger ministries where they risk(ed) being overlooked by more universally valued areas of policy.

Affairs decided, through an internal process, how to spend the federal funds given to the province for off-reserve Aboriginal housing.¹²⁹

For the City of Edmonton municipal government, participants included people from Sustainable Development (which is responsible for carrying out the city's numerous and extensive plans on homelessness and housing),¹³⁰ the Aboriginal Relations Office (described above), and the City's 'lead' councillor on housing issues who provided her insight into why Edmonton, and city council, does the things it does for housing. All of these governments and departments play vital roles in providing the economic capital that sustains the housing field, especially the non-profit or affordable housing subfield where all of the Aboriginal housing projects are located.

Edmonton's Aboriginal-run housing providers have mandates to house Aboriginal people. These include the Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC), Amisk Housing, and Umisk Housing.¹³¹ The MUHC — which is owned by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) — also owns the Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC). The MCHC is slowly taking ownership and control of the housing units on which MUHC has finished paying the mortgages.¹³² The approximate breakdown of the total units owned by these three corporations in 2010 was as follows:

¹²⁹ In addition research participants from these governments' ministries, the (now former) provincial opposition critic for housing participated agreed to be interviewed.

¹³⁰ Like in Winnipeg, the small number of housing units owned or managed by the city did not figure in this analysis although it is worth noting that the city of Edmonton purchased more units as this project wrapped up.

¹³¹ While doing fieldwork, Amisk and Umisk Housing both went into separate receiverships. This limited what people could say (it was not even possible to meet with anyone from Umisk) and what can be reported. Amisk was started with funding from the CMHC, which acted as its guarantor. Its restructuring is being done for CMHC by a non-Aboriginal, court-appointed receiver. Umisk was started with help from the EHTF. As a result, its guarantor is now Homeward Trust, which is restructuring Umisk with input from the Aboriginal community.

¹³² For the purposes of my statistical information, I will lump MUHC and MCHC together since MCHC was just getting started during fieldwork and they are very much connected, politically and economically, through the MNA.

Amisk	69
MUHC/MCHC	880
Umisk	100
TOTAL UNITS	1049

Table 2: Housing Units per Aboriginal Housing Provider in Edmonton

The MUHC houses its residents in a 3 to 1 ratio for Métis people. Amisk and Umisk, despite being started by First Nations, house tenants without reference to Aboriginal group membership (they are pan-Aboriginal). Thus, Edmonton's 1049 housing units are roughly allocated as follows:

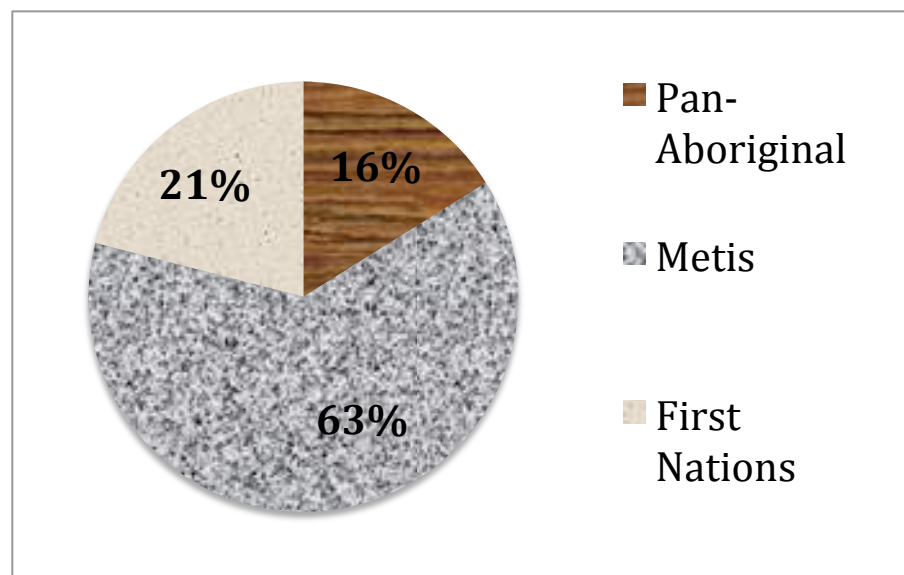


Figure 2: The Allocation of Aboriginal Housing Units in Edmonton

This distribution caused some frustration among focus group participants and will be used as a point of analysis later when comparing the roles of Aboriginal political organizations in Edmonton and Winnipeg.

There are other organizations involved in housing Aboriginal people, though less directly. For example, the First Nations (Alberta) Technical Services Advisory Group (TSAG) provides “technical services and training for Alberta First Nations in the Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 areas. TSAG specializes in housing, public works and community facilities, and environmental management”

(TSAG 2012). In Edmonton, it has recently started a series of programs, in partnership with other mainstream (non-Aboriginal) housing organizations, in order to encourage more First Nations' people to buy homes in the city. Beyond *Aboriginal-focussed* housing providers in Edmonton, there are mainstream (or 'difference-blind') affordable housing providers such as the Capital Region Housing Corporation (CHRC). The CHRC is a publicly-owned housing corporation held at arm's length of the provincial government. It owns and manages over five thousand affordable housing in Edmonton *and area*, stepping into other regional housing fields. It is also responsible for delivering much of the province's social assistance programs through their head office downtown.

The Edmonton Inner-City Housing Services (EICHS) owns and manages a sizable portfolio of approximately 250 affordable housing units in the inner-city. Both EICHS and the CRHC are difference-blind when it comes to most attributes of potential tenants (obviously, class and family structure are used to prioritize housing the poor and single mothers). CRHC (more closely tied to the government) was adamant about this, stating that race was not used to provide or deny housing. Curiously, the CRHC employee stated that she believed that the organization housed few Aboriginal people, while the EICHS worker stated that they housed many Aboriginal tenants, and by including tenants on the volunteer board of directors, currently have at least one Aboriginal person on the board.

Finally, the housing field contains organizations that do not provide housing, but rather housing-related and/or Aboriginal-related services, Boyle Street Community Services is a large homeless support centre with large number of Aboriginal service users. The centre's housing support service helps people find a home through mainstream housing channels and provides assessments for identifying people who would fit into the Housing First programs guided by Homeward Trust. The Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society is an Aboriginal-run organization based on principles of healing. They own and run a home for people escaping addictions.¹³³

¹³³ Bent Arrow recently started a new housing-related transition centre in the city in March 2012.

Aboriginal political organizations play very different roles in the housing field. For example, the role of the Métis Nation of Alberta has already stated; they own MUHC but also intervene politically since they have a direct relationship with CMHC (and the federal government) and the province (one person noted that former Premier Klein's wife was active in the MNA but no one would discuss whether this had actual political implications). There is not a significant First Nations *political* presence in Edmonton. TSAG is designed to provide services, not be political, and there is no local tribal council affiliated with Treaty 6 in the way that Treaty 7 (which surrounds Calgary) has a tribal council. The Treaty Six organization has a seat at Wicahitowin but was largely absent from discussions during fieldwork. The fall of Amisk and Umisk may be related to this gap as well, but details that would prove a connection were not forthcoming.

Similarly, there are advocacy organizations whose primary activities in the housing field are not to provide services, but to engage in the struggle over political and decision-making processes. The Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH) is a coalition of organizations that includes many of those named above (and they were one of the groups to note that the MNA/MUHC has withdrawn their participation, hurting their credibility). It helped start the EJPCOH and continues to lobby for low-income housing initiatives. EAUAC, one of its collaborators, provides input to the mayor, city council, and municipal government departments on Aboriginal issues. The Northern Alberta Cooperative Housing Association (NACHA) provides advice and resources on alternative forms of affordable housing. At the time of interviewing, it also shared its president with ECOHH.

The Canadian Native Friendship Centre (CNFC) serves as a resource hub for Aboriginal people in the city, especially new arrivals. During fieldwork, it was relocated to an industrial neighbourhood far from the inner-city areas where many Aboriginal people live. It went through a succession of executive directors and staff and has recently moved back to the revitalizing "118 Ave" neighbourhood. Not far from where the Friendship Centre used to be is the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW). Headed by Muriel Stanley

Venne,¹³⁴ the Vice President of the MNA, it serves a lobby and advocacy function, not necessarily on housing, but specifically on the needs of Aboriginal women.

Edmonton, and Alberta, actually demonstrate a significant involvement by Aboriginal women in important housing field structures. Of the eight Aboriginal-specific organizations that participated in research, four were led by women. When one includes all the organizations that explicitly address housing as a central component of their mission, four (Homeward Trust, Boyle Street Community Services, Bent Arrow, and the MUHC) were led by women. Here we see, just like in Winnipeg, that women are leading many of the groups that constitute the housing field — and unlike Winnipeg, they are even leading more political organizations as well. It is also significant that the organizations listed above all have strong connections to the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal leadership; they draw heavily from Aboriginal women who have the tools, discussed below under capital, that are necessary to work there, and the dispositions to do so. This group does not include Wicahitowin, which is also led by a woman. As participants noted, many people who work in housing, a ‘soft’ or ‘social’ field, are women.

Interestingly, the government employees who participated were more likely to be men.¹³⁵ As one woman at an Aboriginal housing organization noted:

The majority of the, or I would say all of our admin staff are women. Our Executive Director of course is a woman. The President of the Métis Nation of Alberta is a woman. So I don't think that we really have any issues there. I don't think that we're limited to that scenario in the company it's just that's the way it just happens. [...] Yeah, I just think that with the Aboriginal community when we're dealing with housing and family issues we have always from our cultural background, it's the women that have always taken care of the home so I think it's just natural for us to be in this setting for the admin part. Especially when we're dealing

¹³⁴ Muriel Stanley Venne, has won many awards for her activism on behalf of Aboriginal people and is regarded (by many who participated in research) as an important community activist and role model.

¹³⁵ The Métis Nation of Alberta, with a female President, is an exception among most Aboriginal political organizations.

with our clients, with the tenants. Of course the maintenance is all men so they do the labour part of it. That's all I can say on that.

Moving beyond simply counting women or noting that they exist, one should ask why (Aboriginal) women are so over-represented in the housing field. The shaping of the field, including the bodies within it, rests on colonial and patriarchal assumptions about what kinds of work people should do (A. Smith 2005; Altamirano-Jiménez 2007). These assumptions are used to maintain and reproduce the field over the generations. For example, one woman at an Aboriginal social service agency said so many women work there:

Because it's a social service agency, and I think that there are more females in the social service industry, period. And that's what I think [...] And also women are natural helpers. [...] Well, we don't put out a sign saying 'men wanted' but we don't discriminate. It just happens that way. It just happens that way. We actually have to go out there and put ads that say 'male position.'

The field of social service provision, long associated with “women's work” — and dominated by the male-centred policy-creation field — is primarily constituted by women (Hayden 2005). This means that it, like the housing field, is hampered by a lack of capital in the form of prestige (Bourdieu 2006; Manitowabi 2011).

As will be seen, this gendered division of labour is not by accident, nor is it necessarily benign, but a history of patriarchy ensures that it is unquestioned by many (Bourdieu 2001). In most cases, when the question was asked, people (women and men) insisted they had never thought about why women were overrepresented in the housing field and the Aboriginal services field. Many people were apprehensive about answering and only provided short answers. One Aboriginal woman at IAAW said that many people still refuse to consider why women participate in the structuring of the field and thus the gendered implications of housing:

I think they just look at the housing without gender because they know there's a problem and maybe they don't know how to deal with it. Maybe there's not enough programs not enough adequate funding or housing. And that's just something that... I want to know the statistics too on how many men apply for low income housing. If it's not gender based, then what is it based on?

This reproducing (gender-based and racialized) behaviour is created by the field structure, described above. And as neoliberalism shapes so many aspects of the housing field, variously and in different ways, it reinforces actors' roles, field structures, and divisions of power that make the struggle for contesting neoliberalism that much harder for everyone, especially Aboriginal women and men.

All of the above organizations (and the people within them) participate in and constitute the housing field. But the housing field does not operate free from the field of power and thus politics plays an important role. Other social fields also influence the housing field, serving as sources of capital, habitus, and domination. It is the field of power that keeps these fields in a hierarchy with the housing and urban Aboriginal fields clearly hierarchized below, and dominated by, other fields. For example, priorities set by Wicihitowin and the UAS show a clear preference for education, health, and economic development. As such, resources imported from other fields, such as education from the education field or experiences from the bureaucratic field help people get ahead. In this sense, the housing field must also compete with these other social fields for similar sources of economic capital, and for skilled actors with the tools to help operate it. Further, Edmonton's housing field is but one housing field in Alberta; since the province has more than one large city, Edmonton's Aboriginal housing field must compete with Calgary (and others) for resources.¹³⁶

6.3 GIVING WAY TO NEOLIBERALISM IN THE HOUSING FIELD

Field analysis shows how, in Edmonton today, neoliberalism and related patriarchal and colonial doxa have significant effects that structure the urban housing field and the people within it. Like other political-economic paradigms whose common-sense assumptions have been questioned, the contestation of

¹³⁶ For the off-reserve Aboriginal housing funding, Edmonton received \$1,758,260 (of which \$400,000 went to the MCHC), Calgary received \$8,382,333. Off-reserve Aboriginal housing programs in Lethbridge and Red Deer received more money than Edmonton.

neoliberalism constitutes part of the field struggle itself. Examples of neoliberal restructuring and the reproduction of common-sense ideas about governance within the housing field abound in different forms as political-economic domination presents itself variously throughout social and economic fields (Peck and Tickell 2002). Here, I explore the ways in which the field demonstrates common-sense ideas that influence the field such as the abandonment of social housing, the value of individualistic self-reliance, and depoliticization.

As stated, the federal government has not been successful in downloading the CMHC's affordable housing portfolio in Alberta; the Klein government resisted it. A provincial employee stated:

It's one of the things we have looked at and analyze and we can't make a business case that suggests we should support it. We, and I think we are one of two jurisdictions that have not entered into an agreement for the devolution, and a lot of it is, I would suggest based on the limited knowledge I have that over the long term, the portfolio to which that devolution agreement applies is aging, ongoing, the costs of maintenance are rising.¹³⁷

Unsurprisingly, a business decision, based on costs kept Alberta out of housing. Although, as one city employee noted, the CMHC's affordable housing portfolio has not been downloaded to the province, "feds are devolving their funding *decisions* to the province. So long as the cash . . . the decisions are really made provincially." (emphasis added). Further downloading is not as much of a threat of 'getting into housing' because, as a provincial employee said, "a lot of their [CMHC] portfolio is delivered by municipalities, a lot of it is delivered by not for profits, a lot of it is co-op." So the federal government can download *around* Alberta.

The province further stayed out of 'specialized' housing such as Aboriginal housing by refusing to match any of the funding in the 2006 off-reserve Aboriginal housing trust. Alberta, according to a provincial employee, did not match the funding because it:

Had just gotten out of the social housing game, and then along

¹³⁷ He added: "They [the federal government] approach us on it almost on a continuous basis."

came this affordable housing, which really is social housing, and didn't want to get back into that game. So I think that had a little bit to do with that issue of whether or not they were going to match.

But not only will Alberta not accept the downloading of the CMHC's affordable housing portfolio, a provincial housing employee pointed out how the province had actually managed to *upload* co-operative housing to the federal level:

We used to deliver the co-op program on their behalf. We severed that at some point in time a number of years ago and it went back under CMHC's administration so they're now administering the co-op program.

During the Klein era, Alberta proved to be exemplary (next to Mike Harris' Ontario) as a jurisdiction committed to not taking on the symbolic responsibility of housing its citizens¹³⁸ (Layton 2008). As discussed below, some of this changed following Klein's stepping down after fourteen years as premier. However, not everyone saw the long-term provincial avoidance of downloading as a negative thing. One research participant, a politician from the MNA, described how preventing the download was a victory:

They [the province] thought about it but they said no. I think, thanks to, at that time who said, Ralph Klein said: 'I'm not in the business of housing,' so that helped us out a lot. [...] Definitely [the MNA agreed with him.]; we were the ones that went to him and said 'no we don't want to be transferred over to the province.' He said 'I agree with you guys, we're not in the housing business.' So we just, the federal government was trying to get out of their own responsibility and trying to shift their responsibility to the province. That's the long and the short of that one.

¹³⁸ As stated above, one provincial representative from the housing ministry said that there has not been a good "business case" as to why the provincial government should accept the download of social housing from the CMHC. The case has been made (Harder 2003) that Alberta has been at the forefront of protecting its social policies and programming from federal incursion, going to court over the question of federal/provincial jurisdiction if necessary (Choles 2009). Surprisingly, the jurisdictional debate, long a preoccupation of Canadian politics, was not invoked as a reason for avoiding the download of housing — it was (at least with those interviewed) a question of economics. Even with the highly contested question of responsibility for Aboriginal people (especially First Nations people living off reserve), provincial representatives admitted that spending in this area does not violate the constitution, hence the growing development of an Aboriginal Relations ministry (albeit one with no programming of its own) after the Klein era.

This also allows the MNA to maintain a symbolic relationship with the federal government. This gives them some legitimacy as an Aboriginal group.

What is also telling about the statement above is that the participant, like other people who were interviewed, spoke as though the era had not yet ended. Klein's fourteen years in office left a significant impression on the province, especially the housing field which was, as many respondents in the affordable housing sector noted, hard hit. Upon taking office in 2006, the new premier, Ed Stelmach, set about re-investing in the housing field. He established a Housing Task Force to look into affordable housing, created a Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, and provided \$285 million to address immediate housing pressures (Stelmach 2007, 16).¹³⁹

Despite such change, the idea that the field had moved past a neoliberal era and was now in a state of social (re)investment, had not taken hold in Edmonton (in 2009), as evidenced by statements by people who did not make reference to any changes that had happened since Klein left. Note also the city employee, cited above, who spoke about the "era of Ralph Klein" as though it was still ongoing and even getting worse over "the past couple of years." The only participant to mention Stelmach by name¹⁴⁰ and describe the changes to housing taking place under his premiership was the then opposition critic for housing. He said:

[Our efforts] triggered Ed Stelmach, who had just become leader of the Conservatives, to call an All-Party Affordable Housing Task Force. [. . .] It was able to come back with a whole string of recommendations, and I was very impressed, you know, through the process and into the end of the process to see that what they did was take our plan, and put flesh on the bones. [. . .] The government only adopted about a third of the recommendations, [. . .] but you know, in any event it got something moving, which wasn't happening anywhere else before. [. . .] It took one person with the political will to put it onto the provincial agenda and keep it on there. And if I made a contribution, you know, a direct contribution to this, then that was the most significant part of it. [. .

¹³⁹ Just before leaving office in 2011, Stelmach's government committed \$74 million to affordable housing across the province (CBC 2011b).

¹⁴⁰ The city councillor who looked after the housing portfolio also noted that things are getting better under the new Premier.

.] There was no way that the Conservative government in Alberta was willing to consider rent controls, rent caps, or a moratorium on condominium conversions, or anything like that — that would have regulated, albeit temporary I would hope, or brought some degree of control to the unfettered free market — because, ideologically, they were committed to the notion that the free market can solve all problems. They're not anymore, by the way, because there is nothing like a good old fashioned recession to sort of kick the free marketers in the teeth [...], but the ideology has changed, I believe to a certain extent. Certainly the ideology was firm two years ago, when there seemed to be no end to the money pipeline and everything was good.

The slow change (and the slow pace for non-politicians to notice it) can be explained in a number of ways. First, change in any field is slow; civil servants (and it was certainly government employees who downplayed change) can slow field change as they have the bureaucratic capital to do so, and it suits them that field structures should match what they are used to — people like the field to be predictable (Kalpagam 2006, 84–85). Second, as noted by the media, Stelmach did not have as much charisma or presence as his predecessor (Walton and Harding 2006; CBC 2006). He lacked the symbolic capital to convince the public things were changing, at least in 2009 when fieldwork was being done. The current premier, Allison Redford, appears committed to maintaining some of the investments Stelmach started in housing. Longitudinal study would be useful here to see how long it takes for people's perceptions of the housing field and its relationship with the government to change.

Because the affordable housing portfolio remains with CMHC in Alberta, and because the city is more involved in the housing field (in a rapidly growing city with numerous inner-city housing developments), when housing programming does take place, especially when Aboriginal people are involved, it is done in a multilevel manner. Team projects (or “partnerships”) enable levels of government to spend on housing without accepting the responsibility that comes with it. Including community partners helps further devolve responsibility to non-government actors. The 2006 trust fund money (given by the federal government, distributed by the province to Aboriginal organizations) is a good example of this.

Who is responsible if something goes wrong or projects fail to house Aboriginal people? The organizations that took the money. The same goes for Homeward Trust's multilevel funding system.

Field actors have learned to accept this compromise of multilevel sharing, even if they remember when Ottawa had a national housing policy rooted in social citizenship. According to one housing advocate:

I think all three levels of government need to be responsible. It think that the federal government should be the one in the vanguard I think that it's a national issue and I think we've lost so many things with the national body downloading responsibility to the province then the province turns around and downloads responsibility to the municipality. Even things like building standards where you don't have that national body that needs to be there to ensure proper construction methods. It think the same ... it's affordable housing is a national issues and I think first and foremost that's where the dollars should come from and I think that the province needs to be involved and we have specific housing needs in Alberta that perhaps are best analyzed and met by the province and then we have specific needs here in Edmonton where it makes sense for the city to be determining what the priorities are. But when we had the federal government turning out 25 to 35 units of affordable housing per year we had a housing network that was the envy of much of the world and when they stopped producing that, when they stopped putting those dollars into it we've been playing catch up ever since and we've gotten so far behind that its gonna take a long time to catch up when they do finally start to put money back into it.

Today, an uneasy stalemate on housing is maintained where no one level of government wants to be seen as responsible for housing, while they try to (inflicting symbolic violence) get citizens to believe someone else is responsible. And in the same way that governments claim that another level of government is responsible, people *as individuals* are encouraged to believe, as many already do, that someone else is responsible for homelessness or the underhoused — those people themselves. This individualization ties downloading to the idea of individualistic self-reliance, something that many in the Aboriginal community claimed was at odds with what they had been taught and how they wanted to live.

It is also an idea that creates challenges for those who are socially and economically unable to be self-reliant.

Challenging these assumptions and making demands on the state, as people do when they try to convince governments to take on responsibilities that were successfully ignored for decades, means challenging common sense. Doing so in the housing field suggests a mismatch between habitus and field structure that risks isolating actors or else setting them up for some kind of discipline for failing to follow the easiest or most ‘correct’ patterns of behaviour. Thus, fighting against symbolic violence is the hardest part of the field’s struggle. How urban Aboriginal people resist the impositions of the field of power, and how they attempt to shape the housing field, and self-governance in it, in a manner that is more consistent with their views, needs, and valued resources, is important to understanding how the field is not necessarily all-determining.

Liberal emphasis on difference-blindness is also easily recognized in Edmonton; it is essential for enforcing depoliticization in the field and making people misrecognize the patriarchal divisions of power. As stated above, most research participants could not explain how or why women were overrepresented in managing the housing field (if they had the capital to work in it) or overrepresented as the family member providing a home for others. Most said that they had never thought about it. Patriarchal political-economic doxa in the housing field condition beliefs that that people should be treated as formally equal — recognizing women’s or men’s different needs, such as the disproportionate number of women who require housing assistance because they are single mothers or the number of women at risk of violence who require safer housing — means making claims for ‘special interests’ and putting ‘non-universal’ financial demands on governments (Brodie 1997).

Intertwined with this unawareness or hostility to the relevance of gender differences is an indifference to the forms of systemic discrimination that non-white people face because of an ignorance about Aboriginal people’s particular needs and rights, including the right to self-determine or self-govern. Difference-blindness plays out in Edmonton’s housing field when Aboriginal people are seen

to be, or expected to be, ‘just the same’ as everyone else; they should not to make demands on the state as Aboriginal people. Government supports this idea of the raceless state (Goldberg 2002); original requests for an interview with CRHC, were rejected on the grounds that “we do not ask for or keep data on ethnic background, so we would not be of any benefit to you.” An interview did take place and when asked whether the CHRC employed any policies to consider Aboriginal people’s overrepresentation in affordable housing or any other differential needs they faced, the employee stated, “No, they’re just treated just like everyone else.” A person from the local CMHC branch had much the same response:

I do everything, I represent the company on everything but I specialize on the affordable housing stuff which is all off-reserve stuff and not targeted to any individual population. Although projects may be targeted to immigrants or Aboriginal people or whatever. For me it doesn’t matter they’re all equal. [...] Once you leave the reserve really you’re just another member of the municipality.

The question of responsibility for Aboriginal people finds a friend in neoliberal doxa; *off-reserve* we are all the same.¹⁴¹ This belief benefits the federal government because it helps divest responsibility for guaranteed treaty rights. The province, meanwhile, can hide behind the fact that it is not their responsibility, nor could they afford to honour such agreements.

Separating Aboriginal people from their rights — preventing them from making rights claims — is proof of further depoliticization, as the race-blind government housing organizations get people to enter their processes as service-seeking individuals. The jurisdictional debate is exacerbated by neoliberalism here; this difference-blindness is not motivated by racism or sexism alone but is driven and justified (making it seem less offensive common sense) by a need to save costs. Low-income housing and Aboriginal programs are very costly; governments want to get away from social programming that, because it is not universally used (in the way health care is), it is seen as “hand-outs” to those particular people perceived as welfare burdens.

¹⁴¹ This perpetuates the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy as well.

Housing is not the only jurisdiction that is passed between governments; the responsibility for addressing Aboriginal people's poverty and its basis in government neglect and the violation of rights, is downloaded as well, to the free market where there are no Aboriginal rights or responsibilities. Provincial governments have long stated that off-reserve Indians and Métis should be treated just the same as Canadian citizens, emphasizing their lack of economic or symbolic responsibility, but also a uniformity of identity. Representatives from the provincial housing ministry were asked whether the province would ever fund housing programs specifically for off-reserve Aboriginal people. They said:

I guess our position is that they're eligible under all our programs. So they never have been discouraged from applying under our affordable initiatives, or it was a bit of a unique opportunity, I guess that the federal government ear-marked specifically some funding in support of the off reserve initiatives. But in Alberta even those who are on reserve who come off reserve and end up with a housing need are eligible for any of our programs, both capital or operating.

Hiding the fact that the state's emphasis on a common experience privileges the whitemainstream creates the acceptance for government housing programs to treat citizens as undifferentiated customers of state programs, with no racialized or gendered privileges (except the unstated white male privilege). The correct way to succeed is to get a job, or the (business) education necessary in order to get one. When asked how he would like to see urban Aboriginal housing projects funded, the CMHC employee stated:

Ideally, I'd rather see the urban Aboriginal name dropped completely off. Because urban Aboriginals are, share unfortunately the same problems that a lot of society does. When we did our research in 2005 we found out that the Aboriginal population here in Edmonton tended to have lower paying jobs, tended to have lower education levels, which really was the cause of them being in housing need. It wasn't because they were Aboriginal, it was because they didn't have the education, because they were having the low paying jobs. [...] So for me, my preference would be to have the urban Aboriginal thing dropped and if an Aboriginal group was to come in and look for funding they would be considered the same as any other group that was coming in the door. The credentials, the qualifications, the level of scrutiny that

an Aboriginal project has should be comparable to what everybody else has as well. Because it again goes to the capacity end of things. You know, you can try to target certain populations but you need to make sure if you're providing funding that you're not providing funding foolishly to a group that doesn't have the capacity or ability to fulfil what they're set out to do.

Thus, Aboriginal people can, sometimes, be the recipients of 'targeted' funding. This violation of neoliberal principles happens, but for reasons that not everyone understands or wants to understand (because it violates common sense). When asked about how he reconciles the federal government's spending on off-reserve Aboriginal housing in 2006, the CMHC employee stated:

Why was it done, there's a lot of policy reasons for it. [...] That's well beyond me. [...] So there are very valid reasons to try to target dollars towards an Aboriginal sort of concept. But specifically the political reasons why, I don't even get involved in it. Because your job is to get *x*, *y* and *z* done. I care about getting *x*, *y* and *z* done. Why it's *x*, *y* and *z*, don't ask.

If SIS targeting is misunderstood, it can lead to resentment by others. This was visible, according to a EAUAC member, in the establishment of EAUAC itself:

The structure [of urban governance] itself is not empowering so they [the city] gave a part of their authority over to us. [...] And it's different because there is not a Chinese committee. And that bugs people: "Why is [EAUAC] a special thing?" Because we are still in a state of the 'Native problem.' Right, so the Chinese are not a problem.

SIS's violation of difference-blindness creates a perception of giving in to special interests. At the provincial level, this occurs as well. A worker from the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations was asked whether non-Aboriginal people understand the need for the ministry. He replied: "[*sigh*] On some level I'm sure they do. But... whether they think it's justified is another question."

The UAS, with its set of targets, priorities, and results-based goals, is a prime example of limited targeting — it may seem a shift from the neoliberal state, but its goals and limitations are consistent with minimal recognition of difference while trying to maximize downloading and self-reliance (and guided by

NPM principles). As described by an OFI worker about how the UAS changed when the Conservatives took office five years ago:

The new government was in power at that time and they wanted much more of an emphasis on results and our ability to demonstrate results. [...] So the renewed UAS really focussed us on three main areas of activity, and while they're still fairly broad, they can still do some reasonably creative and innovative things. There's definitely more of a focus than there was in the early days. [...] We have three main priority areas that we are to make sure our projects will fall under and within each priority area there is a set of indicators and examples of targets that could be used for each of those performance indicators. So part of our project development process is then to ensure that the proposal that we are looking at considering funding lines up very clearly with all of those; with the priorities, with the target, with the indicators and with the targets.

The federal government determines these indicators and targets but projects that get funded must somehow also meet the local Aboriginal community's priorities. The UAS employee called this "the challenge and the tricky part of the UAS, and where some of that creativity and innovation has to come in sometimes is marrying community priorities with the national priorities." Although Edmonton's urban Aboriginal community identified housing as their top priority, the local OFI worker admitted that it does not match with the three federal priorities of life skills, job training, and women and children.¹⁴²

The first two goals are clearly tied to the goal or good of self-reliance for individuals. If Aboriginal groups wanted to use UAS funding to foster group-based self-reliance (a requirement for self-determination) but limitations in funding ensures that this cannot happen. Most urban Aboriginal and affordable housing programs subsist on project (not core) funding. A woman from one Aboriginal organization noted:

And it all started out with different projects that [the ED] thought were needed. And so she started off with different projects and she was able to hire some people to assist in the project and once that project was over then she had to do up another one. It seemed once you got one project going something else would turn up that

¹⁴² These are the priorities for the "refocused" UAS that were made by the Conservative government.

needed to be done so that's how she started. We still are project funded. We still operate on funds that the government gives us to do specified projects.

This kind of limited funding is not much more helpful than the non-existent funding under the worst years of the Chrétien government and yet it is framed as a tool to reduce reliance on state supports. For example the person charged with rebuilding Amisk Housing stated:

My goal for Amisk is: you bring in low-income struggling First Nations, provide them with whatever adequate housing is that helps them get back on track, back on their feet and working towards kind of a better self-sustainable future and a stronger family. And that's kind of the goal of Amisk, is to provide low-income housing so that people aren't financially stressed with their rent and can focus hopefully, on rebuilding whatever they need to rebuild in their lives.

The problem here is that while many Aboriginal people, as evidenced by some of their organizations such as Wicihitowin, are focussed on collective self-reliance and developing community capacity, these ideas are based on individualistic self-reliance. The UAS and many other housing programs and policies in Edmonton (including Housing First), focus on an idea of individual responsibility that has its uses but cannot develop what many Aboriginal people seek for self-governance initiatives. An OFI worker was asked why there was a UAS goal of self-reliance and she replied:

Um... It's kind of an individualistic term which is interesting because Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal culture aren't necessarily about individual; they're more about collectivity. But the idea of being that an Aboriginal person will have the skills and knowledge and education needed to be able to make their way in the world in a productive manner; and that again takes you back to those three priority areas, life skills, job training skills, development, education, employment, and those types of things.

Individualistic self-reliance is also tied to the doxic value of individualistic homeownership. There is a pervasive idea that owning a home is the 'correct' goal for people and those who deviate from this need help to be good citizens. Not only is this inconsistent with diverse (including many Aboriginal) ideas about

family structure and how to raise children, but it is something that many people coming off reserves have never experienced and that many others cannot afford. Yet, this neoliberal idea is supported by those who have the power to symbolically influence the field, and those who have field-matching habitus to believe it. According to some of the people I interviewed, homeownership encourages individualistic living which is isolating. The idea of individualistic living, as opposed to collective living, is also found in non-ownership models. One government employee, who asked not to be identified for fear of criticizing the Housing First model stated:

The most recent model is the Housing First model, where you take someone off the street and put them in affordable housing right away. [...] That is a solution to the one type of need, but there are some people, for instance, in WEAC [Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre], who that's their lifestyle; that's the way they want to live. They don't want a house by themselves, they want that community sense, and that's what serves their purpose.

That said, many Aboriginal people fully embrace this idea of homeownership as an ideal. The TSAG project is designed to foster First Nations homeownership. One First Nation man stated in this lengthy but telling statement that he supported the homeownership program because:

there's lots of programs out there that assist in, I guess, social housing, affordable living, all sorts of social programs out there for our First Nations. But there's nothing really to award them to the next level. [...] So with that we have these individuals that pay their rent month-to-month, doing everything it takes to pay their bills, everything like that, but in the end they have nothing to show for it. If we taught these people, well I guess they're self-sufficient now, so we want to reward that. So just like any other family, I guess there's steps involved in every family's life to get them to a sustainable level. And of course you go through your parents, you branch off on your own, you rent, and then you buy. And that's a huge step in any family's life, but it's, how would I say that, I guess it's a mark of independence, having that home to carry on to generation to generation. It's equity that not only assists the individual, but assists their generations. And our people don't have that; they don't know how to have that. [...] But if we could teach that and reward these individuals that are self-sufficient and took all the steps to get their family independent and start building wealth and equity within these individuals, to reward that. [...]

When it comes to homeownership, it's like a stage in life: you grow up, you finish high school, you go to university, you get married, then you buy a home. It's just steps in life. In a First Nations' individual it's almost a survival mode, you do enough to get by, to provide for your family. So you grow up, you go to high school, you go to university, and then you get a job and there's no house in that equation. It's either you live on-reserve or you find a job off-reserve but now you're renting. So they don't think of homeownership as a stage in life. I think we're getting to that point though.

A male representative from the MNA also supported homeownership. Despite owning the successful MUHC, one MNA politician recognizes that social housing can also encourage dependence:

A lot of them [Métis families] are on social assistance because they're hard to house. So a lot of them are on social assistance or whatever and social assistance pays their rent. We house them. [...] And at one time, the housing was to get these people back into society and make room for other Métis people but it didn't happen that way. People moved in and got comfortable staying there and the rent. Sometimes, I've found through the years is that we enable some of our people also through this program, [...] with the rent being so low and them being on social assistance. They can stay there, they don't have to worry about their water, but if they move out, they have all these extra burdens they have to worry about. We also got involved in a homeownership program which was excellent because we had, through the province, we got grants to help our people to purchase their own homes. You could make that mortgage payment but you could never ever make enough to get that down payment on the house. [...] So right now we helped about 10 Métis families buy their own home; they're working, they have good credit. So now they're going to own their own houses some day.

As in Winnipeg, it appeared to be men who supported homeownership more than women. When asked, participants would not speculate on why this is so but there are inferences that can be made that merit further study. Aboriginal men's income is demonstrably higher than Aboriginal women's. Second, Aboriginal men are less likely to be single parents and tied to social assistance that makes homeownership unattainable (Andersen 2009). Third, more exposure to other

homeowners through work can lead people to want to live like the others they know as well as face higher pressure to conform (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 2005).

Yet, despite this particularistic idea of what makes the best home, the governments of market-liberal countries, which includes Canada, uphold homeownership as a universal ideal (Lennartz 2011; Stephens and Fitzpatrick 2007; Kemeny 1995). For example the CMHC, as a mortgage corporation, largely supports the idea of universal homeownership:

I mean, what we try to do, our overall mission, whether on-reserve or off-reserve is to provide safe and vibrant communities across Canada, however we can do it. On reserve, typically we provide a lot of funding to get the actual housing units built, through our section 95 programs. We try to even instil homeownership on reserve. We have our homeownership trust fund that we're trying to get people moving more that way. Now, off reserve, we try to share information success stories that have happened across Canada with groups that are here in the city. One that comes to mind right now is TSAG and TSAG is part of the First Nations housing and development corporation who are trying to do housing projects off reserve and do them affordably, where they be homeowner or targeted to lower-income groups so what we try to do typically, because we don't have the dollars off-reserve to just go, ok well CMHC is going to give you 2 million dollars to build a project. So we try to give them ideas and approaches that have worked outside the community and implement them here so that they can go to the province that has got the dollars to be able to try and get funding for themselves.

These three appeals to ownership and self-reliance tie in to the neoliberal project described earlier.¹⁴³ (Beall and Levy 1995; Kemeny 1995; Brodie 1997). Acts of symbolic violence inspired by neoliberal doxa disrupt the attempts at collective resistance that are part of contemporary self-governance initiatives (Green 1996). As will be seen, strategies of resistance do take place in the housing field, but they

¹⁴³ The federal government very recently reduced home mortgages from thirty to twenty-five years (CBC 2012c). While this may make homeownership harder, it actually makes losing a home easier — CMHC is still encouraging homeownership. Even if fewer people qualify for mortgages under the new rules, people will still be encouraged to be among the lucky few who get a mortgage, increasing penalties (symbolic and financial) on those who rent from the free market.

are partial and tentative as they must struggle against a matrix of neoliberal, racist, and sexist forces.

Neoliberalism, as a governance ideal (Larner 2000, 6; Larner 1997), shapes the housing field and the people in it. Tied to colonialism, it limits what is thinkable for many people and it is used as a justification for making the field the way it is: depoliticized and individualizing with Aboriginal people dependent on project-based funding. Manifested in the different efforts to reduce governments' roles in providing housing, neoliberalism directly affects the lives of people in the housing field as those who support it recreate the field. But in recognizing that neoliberalism is a process, we can look for ways to contest it ways (Larner 2000, 12; Hackworth 2007, 11) — recognizing that neoliberalism is part of a field struggle, not an end result, highlights that resistance is possible with the right tools and minds set in opposition. The next sections on how the struggle takes place demonstrate the resources that are used to fight against neoliberalism and to shape a housing field in ways that give some control to Aboriginal women and men.

6.4 TOOLS OF THE STRUGGLE

Any analysis neoliberalism will demonstrate how important economic capital is in the housing field (Bourdieu 2005). Arguably, it is the most visible form of capital (Bourdieu 2006) and the struggles within the field are most often centred on a desire for more government funding for housing programs, services and initiatives as a structural result of downloading and the habitus of self-reliance. But field analysis tells us that economic capital is only one of the resources necessary to get ahead in the housing field. Other forms of capital are also important, as will be seen, but we are conditioned to focus on the economic.

When asked what the main barrier was to achieving their goals in the housing field, the majority of actors in Edmonton indicated that money, whether securing it, securing enough of it, securing it without burdensome conditions, or securing it for a longer period of time, was their biggest obstacle. According to the MUHC:

Because of the high cost of materials, because of the high cost of contractors, it is slowing us down and with a limited budget it's very difficult to renovate these houses on a timely basis. [...] Especially with the times the way they are, to obtain affordable housing out there is very, very difficult. And, I don't know, that's another issues I guess. The economy today certainly affects us, with the material cost, the labour cost, and getting our units ready for occupancy.

Numerous interview participants, and the vast majority of focus group participants, spoke about how hard it is to find an affordable place to live in Edmonton. Even government workers noted their departments' reliance on outside economic capital. A provincial government worker for housing stated:

Well, you know I guess, in terms of needs, you know it's really broadly known that there's needs for affordable housing throughout many communities in Alberta. There are a lot of market impact things that present us with challenges. The rising costs of the labour market, the rising costs of construction materials, and the impacts that that has on those who we fund to develop the new housing: those would be the, those are some of the major challenges. The current economic impact and the tightening of lending practices is a challenge for those proponents, as well in terms of being able to ascertain and access the necessary resources to make sure that they can compete.

The multileveled nature of the urban housing field makes subsidiary levels of government reliant on the funding needed to support and maintain programming.

Self-reliance, then, is a chimera. A City of Edmonton employee stated:

Some of the barriers? Well we're very reliant on funding, I think, from the other orders of government. [...] The other thing is, from a dollar perspective, we have tremendous need for affordable housing in Edmonton, and there's not enough dollars to help address provision of actual units. So that's a problem with the capital dollars.

Paradoxically, Aboriginal organizations are caught in a catch-22; some want to be self-determining (free from undue government influence) but a disconnect from a resource base (in an urban/colonial space) can create limitations on self-determination (Coates and Morrison 2008). Location may only foster further dependence if Aboriginal people cannot develop their own economic base — even

if that means resources from outside the city as is the case with both the MNA and MMF — with which to support themselves. At least one Aboriginal housing program saw the importance of not relying on government funding, at least for the time being:

As of now we haven't, in my program, I haven't received dollars from them [the federal government]. We're trying to be a more independent corporation. Again, to provide those success stories without any assistance in a sense. And again so that maybe in the future we will be that go-to organization where if the province or the feds come up with extra dollars and want to throw it at a housing program, 'hey this organization's really successful in what they're doing, what about them?'

With this exception, all Aboriginal organizations relied on some form of outside capital, as did all non-Aboriginal non-profits in the housing field.

The structure of the field creates these lines of dependence. With the creation of Homeward Trust as a primary distributor of funds, there is an even more visible, symbolic centralization around the role of economic capital in the field. One government employee, (who asked not to be described since s/he was taking a risk by criticizing Homeward Trust) stated:

And now they combine them [EHTF and EJPCOH] all under one and it's Homeward Trust. So every funding decision is driving policy, or driving decisions. [...] They come together under this one Homeward Trust title and the dollars rule.

Thus, funding is not separated from the field of power and the subjective personal motivations that influence funding decision. This is not to say that Homeward Trust is especially biased (all people and groups are biased), but that by virtue of being part of a larger field dominated by the government agents that fund it, Homeward Trust is relatively more powerful in shaping the housing field through its ability to grant economic capital and the legitimacy that comes with it.

It is not just organizations that are shaped by the distribution of economic wealth. The distribution of capital creates individual identities as well. One person who worked in low-income housing stated:

It's a bit of a historical phenomenon. [...] Quite often, for Aboriginal people, they come to the city, where the first sort of

branches of support that are right in the inner city, and where's the cheapest housing, you know if you have modest means. If you've come from poverty in the reserves, you're coming to the city in poverty; your choices are very limited.

As pointed out by Aboriginal participants, having access to certain forms of *non-material* economic capital (such as a good credit history) is something that many of those who are moving to the city from a reserve — and who have never owned a house — simply do not have. They face significant obstacles in getting a mortgage or even demonstrating a good rental history (since they have none) to a potential landlord. These forms of capital, which have long been valued by urban populations, indeed equated with good urban citizens, deny belonging to those who lack them because of their mismatch with the urban housing field.

The fight for economic capital is also highly competitive and takes skills. Sought-after funding for housing programs comes from a variety of sources, but the primary funders in Edmonton are the three levels of government and, to a lesser extent,¹⁴⁴ Homeward Trust.¹⁴⁵ For organizations that want to access this funding, it is difficult and time consuming. Getting money requires money. Many research participants spoke about the processes they must go through writing grant application and funding proposals. Further, many grants, especially through the UAS, are often small, too small for creating housing units. Thus, the limited number of recipients creates competition among field actors and can enforce government agendas on how the money actually gets used. An OFI staff person stated:

In my case, in Edmonton, I have 750,000 dollars available per year to spend on this community and there are sixty to seventy Aboriginal service agencies in Edmonton and they would all like all of that money all for themselves. And you can imagine, how many buildings am I getting with 750,000 dollars per year; well maybe a few bricks in one really massive place right? So that was part of the rationale; there simply wasn't enough funds available to support capital projects in any meaningful way and at the end of

¹⁴⁴ For example, in 2010, Homeward Trust received over \$23 million in funding from the three levels of government (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011).

¹⁴⁵ Despite housing being identified by Edmonton's Aboriginal community as their number one priority, the UAS has not funded any housing programs for the city.

the day what we were trying to do is make a difference in respect of improved life circumstances, better integration into the economy through life skills, job training, skills development, those kinds of things.

Organizations that secure larger sources of government funding (via Homeward Trust or directly from government) are also subject to the conditions attached to it. A number of people in the housing field spoke about the strings on the funding they receive. These range from following government criteria and guidelines, administrative requirements, and meeting certain outcomes or deliverables. Many of these conditions are consistent with treating government as a business, another approach that fits with a neoliberal view of the state. Housing programs must demonstrate what one person called “good business sense” (remain profitable) or else risk not receiving any more funding. It also leads to more conditions. As one city employee stated:

Individual agencies [have barriers] too as well, except that they’re kind of strapped if they get government funding, to stand up and say something that’s against the government. I saw a paper last week that showed that when Ralph Klein, the era of Ralph Klein, this big picture of Ralph Klein in the paper, and a whole page about how a lot of agencies and groups that get hand-outs or whatever from the government have one hand tied behind their back in terms of being able to advocate or approach for change because, it’s like you don’t bite the hand that feeds you. And so how that’s a problem for a lot of different agencies in Edmonton, I’ve seen that get worse over the last couple of years. There’s been some demonstrations at the legislature and some agencies have been told that ‘if you show up there we’re not funding you.’

SIS-style funds are therefore ideally suited for controlling behaviour and expectations.¹⁴⁶ The limited nature of funding; by making it short term, recipients must undergo constant scrutiny since they are re-applying so often. For example,

¹⁴⁶ The end of subsidies crisis did not come up much in Edmonton’s housing field and there is not enough data to devote a section to it in this chapter. Amisk and Umisk are dealing with other matters. The MUHC will have its housing subsidies expire but, as stated, it is transferring units over to the MCHC, which it can then sell, in order to stay profitable. The long-term repercussions of this strategy were only briefly mentioned by participants who knew what was going on. Edmonton lacks an Aboriginal organization like MUNHA to coordinate a response on the end of subsidies and the units in question are concentrated in one organization that has a strategy.

one worker at a homeless shelter said he wished his organization could secure three year funding so that they could hire more qualified staff and develop longer term goals. SIS project-based funding creates an appearance of doing something, but it is too limited to drastically alter the field and existing power balances. Said a man at NACHA:

I think we would just like, [pause] longer-term sustainable funding. And a lot of that starts at the federal level with the housing policy and core money coming to the provinces for housing. I mean, there used to be that back in the '90s. We're getting a little bit closer to that but it's not quite the same. We're sort of still reacting and so they're coming up with programs and 2-year commitments and half a million here, and 5 million over 2 years for that, and you know, that sort of thing. So there's money there but it's, it's kind of like just coming at us one off and we have to, as an organization, we have to be prepared to be able to secure that funding.

Even the provincial government has similar problems, saying that "the federal commitments have not been consistent; they're not long term so it makes it difficult to implement programming, if you will, or programs with any degree of longevity." Project-based funding is therefore ideal for keeping people engaged in the struggle while ensuring that no one really gets ahead.

Social capital represents one way of getting past a reliance on economic capital or at least displacing it as the primary driver of governance. After decades of talk about the power of community development as a tool for improving housing and homelessness issues, and for building up stronger urban Aboriginal communities, it should be no surprise that many identified social capital as essential. Said one person who worked with the homeless, "Well I think we need to come together as a community, that's number one." Many housing field projects now focus on developing these kinds of resources. For example, the Bent Arrow Healing Society runs a building of housing units where Aboriginal people are not just housed but develop social capital:

And the clients or families who live there are actually connected with different resources and supports in the community. So this helps to get them away from Orenda house so they don't become closeted. We were finding that's one of the things that was

happening was that they didn't want to leave their home because everything was right there: 'I did programming there, I had childcare there, I live there.' So to get them to go to a day treatment program or go to parenting off site, we weren't finding we were having much success with it. [...] I would say in particular that with Orenda House there is a firm belief there that it is a community. That all the families who live there are there to support each other.

The organization recognizes the importance of building relationships because they themselves have succeeded by developing their own relations among key actors in the housing field:

We have relationships with children's services, we have relationships with corporations, we have relationships with all different communities, supports and resources. We have to build those relationships because we're offering support to people who come here. And we don't think that we're all things to all people so we have to create positive, healthy relationships so that when we have a client, or a family, who's coming here in need of a service that we can't provide or may not be comfortable taking part in our service, we can provide a referral to a different agency.

Social relations are key to understanding the nature of the field, its power relations, and domination. Social capital therefore becomes a measure of understanding who has access to whom and, by extension, which resources (belonging to the latter) they can access. A housing department worker with the City of Edmonton talked about how housing organizations involved in the housing field access others' knowledge, including things that the city, or others, may lack but need to use:

Well it depends what our own agenda is. I mean there's some tremendous resources in those agencies and they have a lot of hands-on experience dealing with people. So when you're looking at proposals to build and construct units or to offer a service, they have a good handle on what those specific clients need in terms of space, in terms of how they can share, in terms of sharing space, in terms of kinds of services they might want, how accessible they might need to be to certain members in the community, what locations might work, what might not. So we provide our expertise that way.

Social capital is therefore not just about who you know but what other people

have to give you. The question is what level of social capital Aboriginal women and men have.

Although Aboriginal people's relative urban newness may reduce their cumulative social capital and resource networks, and though individual capital holders may have less economic or valued cultural capital, there is reason to believe that urban Aboriginal people's social capital is improving in Edmonton. A woman at the Friendship Centre, arguably one of the most important spaces for urban Aboriginal social capital building, stated that, "I see with the Aboriginal people, I think we're starting to stick together, work together like a . . . helping each other. And that's very positive and I'm grateful for that." Further, she states that most Aboriginal people that work in public service or housing agencies know at least one person in every other agency. This is not, in her opinion, only because the Aboriginal population in Edmonton is small but because people are coming from tight-knit communities — although she did note that it's also not uncommon for two people in the urban Aboriginal community to find out they have common relatives. Community size and kinship may help Aboriginal people in the city. One Aboriginal woman, who was adopted out of her culture during the 60s scoop, told a similar story about how she found and reconnected with her culture:

Like word-of-mouth... Like people know each other. So if you say you're a [last name], they ask you where you're from and next thing you know, 'I'm your cousin.' You know, there's connections made. So people know each other and that's how I found my mother. It wasn't through any registry, post-adoption registry, that didn't help me. It wasn't the government that helped me; it was the Moccasin Telegraph that helped me [*laughs*]. The Aboriginal word of mouth.

These valuable social connections are credited with helping build the Aboriginal community in the city. By and large, research participants identified Aboriginal women in Edmonton as primary holders of social capital; they know their families and who is related, they know government actors through work or getting supports, and they get involved in community organizations or housing service delivery. Combined with cultural capital, this makes for a powerful set of resources to accumulate economic capital and improve one's position in the field.

Nonetheless, this fight for capital still takes place in a field that values non-Aboriginal forms of capital and has structures and rules that privilege the whitestream. One Aboriginal person critiqued the mainstream housing field and programs in Edmonton for their lack of interest in social capital:

So they have a very specific ideological way of being: ‘give this person a house’... But the biggest problem that they’re falling into is loneliness. That’s the biggest number one problem. They don’t ever say that but it is. [...] People get how a house works, but you’re sitting in this little house, you’re not allowed to drink anymore, you’re not allowed to socialize anymore. [...] So then what is the social component of that space? And for Aboriginal people that’s big, so you almost have to build open kitchens, or build things where there is much more fluidity of care. There always have to be places where people volunteer so it has to be a whole holistic way of doing things versus building a bunch of indestructible buildings, putting doors on it and hoping they don’t destroy it. [...] So they’re revamping Toronto because they’re realizing people need community and the poor have to meet the rich and the rich have to meet the poor.

Thus, although urban Aboriginal people in Edmonton do show evidence of possessing and developing social capital (and benefitting from connections to others), the question remains as to whether this is social capital that is actually valuable in the mainstream housing field. Knowing a lot of people is not necessarily going to help, unless those people have valuable economic or cultural capital of their own (as the person cited above said — “the rich need to meet the poor”).

Cultural capital is probably the most complex form of capital. When asked what role cultural resources play in housing in Edmonton, most who chose to answer (many, especially non-Aboriginal people, could not answer) spoke about Aboriginal views of family. As one non-Aboriginal man who works with a mainstream housing organization stated:

I think it [culture] plays a big role [in housing]. I think we have to be sensitive and understanding of people’s cultures, their diversity, their backgrounds, I mean how we go about dealing with a large Aboriginal family is quite a bit different, I think, than just dealing with a Caucasian family. I think the dynamics are different, the relationships, the roles and responsibilities. What’s normal for that

cultural group may be not be what we would normally, be normal to us. I think that a specific case in point, as a rule, is that the grandmothers play in terms of adding stability to those families and how that becomes sort of the fulcrum of stability and how it's normal for extended family, aunts, uncles and children to come and stay for periods of time, and that's just something that should be accepted, but it's something that can drive the neighbours crazy.

These expressions of what people see as “Aboriginal culture” require further reflection.

Again, we see how closely cultural capital — understood not just as formal (education-based) knowledge but also culturally acquired (relative and contextualized) knowledge about how to live in the world — approaches habitus and informs people on how to behave in the field. In this case, Aboriginal people's cultural knowledge influences how successful they will be in the field struggle. Field actors' *sets of skills* and dispositions blur a line between capital and habitus, showing how important cultural capital is for enabling *how* people can get ahead. In the next section on habitus, we focus more on how field actors' *behaviours* are impacted by their match or mismatch with the field.

Some Aboriginal people possess cultural capital based on Aboriginal knowledge (forms of capital that are devalued by the mainstream field) and some Aboriginal people, to varying degrees, also possess mainstream cultural capital (institutionalized education) that is valued. For example, some Aboriginal people who have been in the city for some time have been able to access many of the same forms of cultural capital as non-Aboriginal people (such as mainstream post-secondary education), but also carry with them forms of Aboriginal cultural capital that is gained outside (urban) mainstream field structures and institutions. Different Aboriginal cultures are seen in the objective manifestation of these skills. In this light, one Métis woman, when asked what cultural resources Aboriginal people have, replied: “The Aboriginal community, we're known to house 8 or 10 people. That's part of our culture, is to be together. And I think that's one of the primary needs.” This cultural responsibility to share housing with extended family was not seen by Aboriginal people as a burden but it becomes a problem for the field because it is at odds with many rules and regulations. The

local CMHC understood how this becomes problematic in Edmonton's housing field:

I think culture plays a huge role. [...] three generations of people living in the same home and it's not necessarily because they have to. It's because they want to. It's because sort of the cultural part of it. At the same time that makes it challenging from a policy standpoint when you're talking about suitability of housing. Because you write black and white rules saying: 'well for any child you have over the age of 18 they have to have a bedroom, for every child of opposite sex they've got to have a bedroom, yadda yadda yadda.' Well, that might not work for some families, that might work fine for other families, because these families that I think of that have multi-generational people in their houses they're happy as anything else because they have all their family there. So it's tough when you try and put black and white definitions on something that's as fluid as housing.

Expressions of some forms of Aboriginal cultural capital are therefore not just at odds with the housing field, but with the field of power that influences the bureaucracy and governance within the field. A EAUAC member stated that:

Wicihitowin has a housing advocacy group and that's the most difficult because of that model of bureaucracy, because they have even, with Housing First, because Native people are so built on community. So to build a house right and live here is not going to be good enough, and you don't want fifty of my relatives living in this little house and that's what will happen because I need those fifty people around. So that's the biggest cultural differences. [...] That paradigm of 'one family or you living in a house by yourself and being insular and having your own spirituality and your own psychology' and 'I think therefore I am; I don't need to be enriched by anyone else,' that whole philosophical understanding is very foreign to Aboriginal people. [...] I live with my mother and my sister and she calls me dad, because I'm her primary caregiver. I've been her primary caregiver since... whatever right? So my sense of community is different and my sense of family is different, right.

Non-Aboriginal people's real knowledge (their cultural capital) about how Aboriginal people organize their lives and express their culture is quite low; Aboriginal people, especially the focus groups, spoke about how they are continually misunderstood or how their cultural capital is devalued or misrecognized because non-Aboriginal people simply do not understand (or do

not want to understand because they know that they do not have to). One Aboriginal woman who works at a housing provider said:

I mean, there's different needs for different people and the cultural needs need to be taken very seriously in providing adequate and suitable housing for any race that's involved. The Aboriginal community has always been targeted for, I guess, misuse of their housing, current housing. Why? Because people don't take the time, I think, to understand our cultural needs and they expect that race to operate to survive on other people's cultural beliefs. It needs to be a little more targeted for that specific culture. [...] I believe is that they [the federal government] have taken the time to come and see what Aboriginal people are all about. And they are more adaptive to that and they are more aware of the cultural needs because of it. But a lot of it again is cultural awareness.

The relative importance of this embodied cultural capital highlights how, while everyone has cultural capital of some kind, some forms are more valuable than others in Edmonton's housing field. Being able to write well in English is a valuable skill, speaking Cree is not.

However, other Aboriginal people, such as one First Nations man working in housing (who has a background in business — a very different form of embodied cultural capital) had slightly different perspectives on what kinds of cultural capital are relevant to housing and what resources were lost through colonization:

[*Pause*]. Yes and no. I think history, the way the whole colonization rolled out, affects us to where we are in housing at the moment. Reason I say that is that with the whole dependence on the government, providing us certain needs, in some areas enabled our independence [sic]. So at the same time, well, prior to the whole colonization and all that, we were a prideful people in everything that we done. So we used to build houses for our neighbour, no questions asked. And now it's come to the point, well, I remember as a kid we could leave our doors open and go visit your neighbour, walk in, and the parent, they wouldn't care, they'd 'how's it going, eh?' [*laughs*] You'd play with their kids, and now we have to lock our doors. It's just really lost, that within our history I guess.

He therefore believes that it was through a process of colonization that Aboriginal people began to value new forms of cultural capital — those from the dominant

field — that would disrupt their history.

This history culminates in the contemporary urban housing field. Some participants stated that their cultural capital is devalued or made useless in Edmonton by policies that privilege small (nuclear), independent, two-parent, two-wage-earner, families or by a struggle shaped by a different set of knowledge and modes of expression. Some Aboriginal people in Edmonton find that their forms of cultural capital do not help them get ahead. On a broader, collective level not having enough people with valued cultural capital can hinder effective urban self-governance initiatives.

That said, there is some evidence that some forms of Aboriginal cultural capital are in the process of becoming valued by non-Aboriginal people. That is to say, some field actors (including those who dominate and structure the field in ways that suit their interests) are finding that some forms of Aboriginal cultural capital can be useful in helping *them* get ahead in the field. Such a change has been made possible by the growth of Aboriginal participation, visibility, and success (in mainstream terms — economic) in the housing field. For example, a number of housing organizations provide housing services, programs, or policies with an attention to different cultural backgrounds and experiences. Social investment type strategies, investing in Aboriginal people so that they can ‘succeed’ (without necessarily challenging the underlying basis of power distribution), allows neoliberalism to be reframed in ways that seem more supportive to Aboriginal people.

A shift in how services are delivered may signal growing movement toward Aboriginal control of the house field; some housing programs have gone as far as to state that programming for Aboriginal people must be delivered by Aboriginal people if it is to work. The Bent Arrow website states that the values that they use when designing their projects recognize that to “simply hire an Aboriginal person” to run a pre-existing government program “does not work” (Bent Arrow 2011) as has been the case with mere self-administration. A research participant from the organization confirmed:

Some of the traditional values that have shaped our programs

would be in respect to how we look at, how do I put this, we look at the old ways of the community. We look at the old ways and the belief it takes a whole community to raise a child. And there was grandparents and aunts and uncles and these were positive support systems who were there to help support this family. So we look at it that way and we look at the respect that they have for each other and the respect they have for their cultural practices and the cultural traditions and the pride they had in being an Aboriginal person. And so when we look at how this is incorporated into our programs [...] we pull from the teachings of the medicine wheel, we pull from elders, spiritual guides, spiritual advisors. We look at incorporating culture in all aspects of our programming.

Some Aboriginal organizations participate in the field in ways that are *informed by Aboriginal culture and perspectives*, in contrast to traditional, mainstream sources of cultural capital. Having seen whitestream projects fail to help Aboriginal people in the past, this idea recognizes that there is some potential to valuing Aboriginal cultural capital. Some governments or departments that fund the organizations are starting to realize that “Aboriginal problems” can be better solved when Aboriginal people are involved, and when programs meet Aboriginal cultural needs. This is probably, though no strict causal line can be determined, caused by government-approved bodies such as the provincial Ministry for Aboriginal Relations or the municipal Aboriginal Relations Office that may be charged with inserting Aboriginal people and views into (existing) government systems. It also represents a new way to download social services to Aboriginal people. And if they fail, neoliberal government actors and their supporters can claim that Aboriginal people are bad with money and need to be watched; they should not receive tax-payer’s money; Aboriginal housing programs simply do not work; and any failures of housing programs to alleviate need are not the government’s fault.

Still, it must be emphasized that this valuing of Aboriginal cultural capital can only go so far as it preserves the dominant structuring of the field. As much as non-Aboriginal people may understand how some Aboriginal cultural capital is useful, Aboriginal people are still expected and required to adopt dominant cultural capital if they want to operate effectively in the field. One non-Aboriginal

government employee said:

I think that the Aboriginal population or other cultural people with different cultural backgrounds, need to be educated on what the expectations are as tenants, because there are certain expectations. For example, when you move in and sign a lease, the expectation – or it may even be in the lease – is that you can't have more than 5 people living in the house. And a lot of time, people I've talked with at [Native] Counselling Services, and they say that one of the biggest issues is multiple generational moving in and taking over and then the next thing they know they get eviction notices because there's ten or fifteen of them living in a two-bedroom apartment unit. And they go 'we didn't know that'; they don't read the fine print, don't understand it. All of this stuff is not written so they can understand or go over it with them or anything. Or else they do understand and just ignore it and say 'well this is just our cultural thing so we'll go ahead and just do it'. There's two sides to all of it, right?

In the end, non-Aboriginal cultural capital will continue to drive urban housing policy and relations between agents. Asked whether people who devalue urban Aboriginal people can change, a woman at the Friendship Centre said:

Um, I think so – eventually. Maybe twenty, thirty years ago was worse. But I think it's getting better. A lot of non-Aboriginals are starting to welcome the Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal people.

A mixing of cultural capitals in the urban setting, also makes for some tension that may be less noticeable in other fields with more homogenous contexts. One non-Aboriginal man who works in low-income housing said that when Aboriginal people are present in policy discussions, there is “a little bit of tension there all the time and people are very conscientious about offending one another.” This causes some non-Aboriginal people to be afraid to speak, for fear they may cause offense. A growing urban Aboriginal population and more visible activity in the housing field, especially that facilitated by Homeward Trust, means that different forms of cultural capital will continue to clash.

One Aboriginal woman who grew up outside the city argued that city-born Aboriginal people have very different experiences and access to sources of cultural capital in different forms. As younger, city-born or raised Aboriginal people are “striving more for their education” than older generations or those

from outside Edmonton, largely, she says, because they have Aboriginal teachers, counsellors, social workers, and peers which makes their education experience more positive or at least less ‘foreign’ to themselves. As these people are beginning to occupy positions of power in urban policy fields, there may be a shift as those who ‘live in two worlds’ can interject some Aboriginal cultural capital into mainstream fields. For example, EAUAC is now attempting to reconcile existing urban governing structures in Edmonton with Aboriginal culture by striving for a governance model based on consensus. Talks with the Mayor about attempting to reconcile this with the municipal government are proceeding (slowly).

At the same time, ‘foreign’ capital, that is, capital coming from outside the city that accompanies the habitus that creates mismatch may still be useful. If Aboriginal forms of cultural capital are becoming valued (requesting Aboriginal people to sit on a housing committee, hiring a housing worker that that speaks Cree, etc.) then some Aboriginal people may get ahead. Incorporating new forms of capital into the field, forms not previously valued, may slowly change the field and open spaces for more people to participate well. Social capital from outside the city, reserve-based social connections, are also going to be valuable in the city, even if the field does not immediately value these forms of capital; they provide another resource for Aboriginal people. It can also change power dynamics when hubs are used to bring together people using shared forms of capital, while retaining their previous community connections.

This empowering intersection of cultural and social capital, most often possessed by Aboriginal women, brings me to one last form of capital that must be discussed; its evidence became apparent as research participants were asked what it took to succeed in housing. Having the skills to navigate the bureaucracy (a capacity referred to elsewhere as bureaucratic capital) is vital for all people in the housing field. This, I believe, can be seen in an intersection of cultural capital (the knowledge of how the complex bureaucracy works and the tenacity — embodied cultural capital — to work in a system seemingly designed to frustrate) combined with the social capital of knowing the right people in the right places

(or at least knowing someone who knows someone who can get you what you want). A man who worked with the homeless observed:

The system, *systems*, are very hard on people's dignity. You line up and wait. That, that's what we do to people. I mean, not only in trying to access services; even you line up to get a place, a mat to sleep on at night. You line up to eat. You know, you sit and wait for appointments, longer than most of us who are middle-class would tolerate. And those are contributing factors; some people give up. [...] Well you need skills to be able to manipulate just what I said, to not lose your temper after you've waited for two hours, to not scream and shout when you have had an appointment and you get there and find out nobody told you your appointment's been cancelled and you waited for an hour, to be able to talk to people in a way that you can express your needs and have them hear without thinking that you're a con artist or whatever. Those kinds of things, they're skills that not all people have: just expressing what you need. Going into an environment and you see someone you've never seen before in your life and having to expose your soul to them, talk about your failures, which a lot of people see it as failures, what a dehumanizing process.

Two research participants (who were interviewed simultaneously) were willing to speculate that there is also a gendered element to this form of capital; they believed that Aboriginal women, because they were more used to applying to the government for help (such as child support or housing supplements) had more bureaucratic skills than men. One of the women stated:

The majority of the applications would be from women. Because women are resourceful people. If you have to make dollars stretch you find ways of making your money last as long as you can. I don't know; I'm not a man. As resourceful as a man is, [I don't know] if they could do the same thing [*laughs*].

This would also make sense if Aboriginal women, as is demonstrated in the demographic statistics, have a disproportionately higher rate of post secondary education in areas related to the service sector, and tend to work more in the public service. Not only does this give them the appropriate (cultural capital) skills to know how the bureaucracy works but they participate in more useful social networks that are more useful for finding, securing, and providing housing.

Bureaucratic capital is useful for people on the margins of the housing field (trying to find a home) and central decision-makers. The latter, as explained by a UAS staffer, will know which Aboriginal housing related grant applications to fill out and who will provide the most effective assistance. Bureaucratic capital is very important in the urban housing field and likely a reason why other studies also differentiate it from other forms. That said, some Aboriginal people spoke less about the importance of having bureaucratic capital, and more about doing something fundamental to change the bureaucratic field itself:

I know housing is really important but that one is so difficult for people to get into to talk about because there's so many, so much bureaucracy around it and there's no say there. There's no place for the mob. [...] Housing First [is a good idea] and homelessness, and they can throw ten million dollars at, or forty million dollars, but the problem I think, that if they don't incorporate the mob, then we are going to have like the first Europeans that came here; they had all the resources in the world and they all died.

In the end, valuing a certain form of capital can run the risk of valuing the field that produces it. This is especially the case with bureaucratic capital. Thus, the distribution of capital in Edmonton's housing field is not arbitrary or random; it is rooted in the historic structuring of the field which is perpetuated as the field reproduces similar distributions of capital. These continue to privilege the same agents and the field structures that support them. Someone who makes use of forms of capital that are rooted in colonial or patriarchal power systems runs the risk of being co-opted into a field where colonialism and patriarchy are reproduced with that person's help.

As stated, this may be useful for attempts to change the distribution of power in the field (the marginalized can try to accumulate a greater quantity of capital without questioning the doxa and power distribution it supports). However, the strategy of using other ('foreign') forms of capital in order to challenge the structure of the field, and the power relations within it, has been recommended for allowing the marginalized to use their own tools (Mahar 2010; Ramirez 2007; Silver et al. 2004; Feldman and Stall 2004). Of course, since many Aboriginal communities have been cut off from their own sources of economic

capital (the most objectively valuable form of capital in the housing field, if not all political fields) for centuries, finding their own sources of economic capital has been most difficult (Calliou 2000; Helin 2006; Boldt 1993), and, as stated, it is a reliance on financial support from the state that creates dependence. That is why I argue here that Aboriginal forms of social and cultural capital must supplement state support in order to decrease its assimilative and co-optive potential, until new forms of Aboriginal economic capital are created.

Although some Aboriginal people hold some key positions in the housing field, the majority of the field actors in positions that directly or indirectly control Aboriginal organizations are non-Aboriginal people. As a result, broader change is going to be based on a willingness on the part of those whose institutions have historically held power to start to value Aboriginal forms of capital. Self-interest dictates that this change will only happen if there is a recognition that this will still privilege (their) existing power structures and position in the field. As it is, there is already enough public backlash against “special interest” politics and “race-based” housing programs. This final aspect of the struggle over the housing field is the struggle over determining what behaviours, roles and beliefs will dominate it and be created by field structures.

6.5 EXPERIENCING THE FIELD STRUGGLE: BEHAVIOURS, AND BELIEFS

The field is not just shaped by the relative position of actors and the distribution of capital. Through personal experiences throughout their lives, actors in Edmonton’s housing field are conditioned about how to use their resources and what kinds of capital to value and accumulate (Bourdieu 2006). Dispositions learned over time, their habitus, teach them and others what to expect within the field — people learn what is thinkable (Bourdieu 1977). To sustain its structure that privileges the dominant actors, the housing field needs, and rewards, certain people with certain kinds of dispositions. Those who have a mismatch, the contradictory ‘urban Aboriginal’ will be taught to conform or else feel like “fish out of water”(Maton 2008, 57).

As stated in Chapter Four, to get a full picture of the field one must recognize those in power and those who are marginalized — high politics and people who are working ‘on the ground’ (Abele and Prince 2002, 230). I did this in order to understand what people, including those easily overlooked, do in the field and why (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104–105). Focus group participants in Edmonton spoke about their lives and experiences with housing — demonstrating their struggles in the housing field. Focus groups were useful for learning about the actual positions that people occupy in the field. Aboriginal people who live in Edmonton and struggle in the housing field described their housing situation and how they got there.¹⁴⁷ This emphasises not only the role of (colonial) history in shaping the field and Aboriginal politics today (Ladner 2003, 44), but the impact that less visible Aboriginal people, as individuals and as members in groups, have in engaging in its struggle.

First, it was apparent that reasons for moving highlighted the forms of oppression that people face. As stated, many women left reserves because they lost their status/band membership or because of band politics. One woman said:

I’ve lived here since, let’s say 20 years old, and I only went back home for four years to live on reserve and they wouldn’t give me a house because I was considered a start up trouble-maker or I didn’t kiss ass too much.

As in Winnipeg, women stated that sexist politics on reserve forced them to leave, sending them to urban areas where they felt that they were not welcome. One man said:

Life on the reserve was not great. I saw a lot of things that most kids should not see and it was just horrible. [...] My mother moved us away from there and moved to a predominantly white town where there were very little Aboriginal families and growing up there was tough too. [...] My mother and father had separated at that time because, and we had to move off the reserve because my mom was not from that reserve and my mom and dad were not married so when they separated she was asked to leave.

¹⁴⁷ As stated in Chapter Four, Edmonton’s focus groups were recorded so direct quotes were possible, making this section more detailed than the section on habitus in Winnipeg.

Histories of living with violence, addictions, and being incarcerated compound the problems of living in a housing field that does not support affordable housing or other housing-related crisis supports. Numerous people who were coping, or trying to cope, with their personal problems, the result of a colonial and racialized field, spoke about the barriers they faced in trying to find a home. One woman said:

At that time, with ending that relationship, it was really bad. I asked Métis Housing, [...] and my mother put me on the list. I did the intake. I've been on this list since 1993 and I've called every three months and they keep telling me I'm first on the page.

Reliance on an underfunded social housing system is problematic enough, but not having a history of owning or renting leaves people with financial difficulties (no credit history) as well as a mismatch in the habitus to seek and find the 'right' home. One man described the transition:

I been here since I was 18, 22 years ago. In terms of housing, when I first came, being young, for myself there was lot of obstacles. There was really no supports in terms of myself and my family. [...] Coming out of boarding school, the whole system, the transition and into city life. It was hard, it was a big change for myself.

Another woman stated that said that she had a history of always moving for reasons she could not control:

We were constantly moving from one place to another because it was always an issue with money or all these things. I feel now that I've got into low income housing, because of my situation. Now I have children and I'm trying to better my life and myself.

Many people indicated that they had to constantly settle for inadequate housing, putting them in further trouble. One woman said:

I was living in this other home where mould was a major issue. In the basement, when it rained. [...] I was seven months pregnant with my youngest. My daughter's father at the time was leaving. [...] I had my baby there; she was constantly sick. We were sick all the time. They quickened the process with getting into low-income because we were on the brink of having to move out.

Such a history of living in the ‘wrong housing’ — and relying on the state for it — combined with a cultural mismatch with the field creates further problems.

One woman said she could not find a home because:

Over the years I’ve gotten myself in legal troubles. I’ve got legal troubles! I don’t know but in the last year they asked for a security clearance. So now I don’t know what to do with that. I’m scared to go for a security clearance. That’s what’s kind of drawing me back to calling for housing.

One man said that the transition to Edmonton from out of town proved difficult because even other Aboriginal people (those born in the city and who had valuable cultural capital) were not welcoming; he did not belong in the city and could not find the kind of housing to which he was used:

When I went to university here in Edmonton, moved to Edmonton, it was the first time on my own. I stayed at student residence. And it was tough to try to find other Aboriginal people that were going to university at that time in the early 80s. They had an Aboriginal student club that I went to go check out a couple times but I didn’t feel welcome there. I just didn’t feel comfortable there so I never went back. [...] I haven’t really settled since I’ve been back. I’m trying to look for another kind of communal living situation. But I haven’t found it yet.

Not only does coming from a different field create habitus/field mismatch when Aboriginal people are not used to city life, but the political question of government responsibility exacerbates issues tied to government-created identities. This complicates an already very frustrating “jurisdictional maze” (K. Graham and Peters 2002, 9) and highlights the colonial role of government in creating habitus by putting Aboriginal people in rights-bearing (and activity-limiting) groups (T. Deer 2008; Grammond 2009). For example, one man described how his health as a status Indian (a federal responsibility) leads to politically-inspired anxiety:

I have a great apartment. Unfortunately, as my health is deteriorating, I haven’t been able to take care of my home. Because of this difference between on-reserve/off-reserve. [...] Because I am status I can’t get home care and be able to take care of my home. So I feel very overwhelmed at times, just trying to manage.

Likewise, many focus group participants spoke about how much urban field rules and systemic barriers create problems, and how much of their time is spent fighting a very basic struggle simply to get housing and other social services. Like the volunteer burnout described earlier (Evans and Shields 1998), citizen burnout, from frustration and lack of resources, showed to be common in a field where so much is at stake yet processes for securing it are so illegible. One man who had been homeless in the past stated that:

I seen a lot of people downtown here go through a lot of shit just to get a place. It's like red tape and all that. I mean it's pathetic to go through that. They have to go, say if they ask, they have to follow a protocol and they have to be accepted and something like that. Like my home town, I don't ask for stuff from my home town. Help from them is not for me. When I ask for help from them they'll make me wait at least six to a year to try to get what I need and meanwhile I'm struggling out here. So I go elsewhere, screw my fricking home town, they can go to hell. This Edmonton's been pretty good to me so far, but financially it's a little insecure here and there. To see all those people struggling and all that there's gotta be something a person can do to give them a hand, open a door for them.

To deal with this struggle, some people sought out support systems in order to overcome the barriers and discrimination faced in the housing field. One man who had been to prison said:

This last time, five years ago, I ended up doing three years and I came to Edmonton to come to a half way house and I've been here since. When I was in the penitentiary, I was the chairman and I started talking about when I get out into the world I'm going to keep doing that. So that's what really changed me was going to the pen for the first time. [...] As far as rent and all that, sure I struggle. I had to come from a place where everything was paid for, right [the penitentiary], into responsibility, where I didn't know where the hell to start. When I was in the half-way house [...] my ex-wife used to live in the city and she used to go to this place called Boyle Street. So as soon as I got into Edmonton, I thought maybe I should check that place out. [...] On my way out, they helped me get my own place and stuff like that. And working. And I became a responsible person because I ended up doing some time.

Such resistance shows the vital link between personal education or awareness of domination as resistance and working together or tapping into collective efforts to challenge the individualizing nature of the political-economic order

(Bourdieu 1998b) that has been demonstrated elsewhere as well (Polakoff 2011; Mahar 2010).

Others measured success in the field by achieving home ownership, although only one person in focus groups — who had experience working within the housing field itself — wanted or managed to get a mortgage and buy a home:

Up until this point in my life that's my biggest accomplishment, is having a mortgage which sounds retarded! My work has always been in the not-for-profit sector, especially working with Aboriginal communities and I've been involved in the housing sector since I moved to Edmonton, so I have kind of that background. [...] I was lucky when I did get my house that I did because two years ago they had no down payment mortgages and forty year mortgages. [...] They don't have those anymore. [...] I didn't have any savings but my credit was OK and they were handing out mortgages to whoever wanted them at the time. I realize how fortunate I am.

Some people stated that they did not feel the need to own a home. One elder said:

I struggle to survive today. I'm just happy that I have a home. I don't mind renting. But I'm also getting older. If I'm lucky enough, I'll reach pension in three years but that's not even going to be enough to pay for the rent that I do now.

Some agreed, perhaps because they are led to believe that renting is all that they can do, that there are advantages to renting. But some also noted that there are certain advantages to owning a home; renters are subjected to the symbolic violence of not being successful urban citizens and Aboriginal people said that they were subjected to additional discrimination because they are assumed to be living on tax-payer subsidized housing and living off the system. They also learn to expect to be rejected for housing because they do not belong. One man said:

But I was applying for places and I walk in the door and they all were really nice about it, when you fill out the application. But you won't get picked. They won't rent to you, you're Native. 'You're a Native guy, there's going to be drunk parties all the time, all you're going to do is have parties.' That's how it is. [...] For Native people it's really bad because you don't get these opportunities we can like non-Natives can. They don't give us a chance.

Women also described the harassment that they experience from their neighbours if they are identified as Aboriginal, living in affordable housing and seen as not belonging in the city:

There was a white woman living next door to where I was. [...] This white woman used to give me a hard time, say: “go back to the reserve, you don’t belong here.” When I come home from work she would be right there picking on me. She used to make up a bunch of lies about me. [...] She’s trying to get all the neighbours to sign to get me out of that housing, that house. [...] So I just up and left and moved out because I couldn’t put up with it anymore.

Another woman said:

[My neighbours] wrote a letter and made me look really bad with Métis Housing, saying I steal and damage property, I don’t watch my kids, I have parties. I have music real loud. They went to town to me! And I just can’t stand my neighbours. [...] And you can’t complain to them; they *own* their house. Who can you complain to about them?

The first woman was surprised to hear that her situation was not unique and that similar things were happening to other women as well. Noting that she was not well connected to support services, she had always seen her situation as an isolated one with individual, not collective solutions. Individualistic habitus to give in to domination and symbolic violence are reinforced by the anti-collective nature of the (neo)liberal field that accords status to homeownership and failure to collective-focused living (Flint and Rowlands 2003, 223).

As stated, many people identified education as a primary way of learning about how such oppression operates and then how to fight it; to learn that people are not alone in their suffering and that there are group solutions (Hoy 2004, 137). And again, like Winnipeg, many women were enrolled in postsecondary programs. For some, this even represented a break in their habitus in order to better their lives. One young woman said:

I grew up in social services, actually for the most part. Never really had much problems with housing that I know of. I don’t know yet. I’m 23 and I did drugs for about six years. I quit just over two years ago. [...] I’d have some places where I stayed for months on end or whatever and I’d go to a safe house here and there and just crash there until I felt like I was gonna go and I left, and just did that for about six years. But now

I've got my life together and I'm going somewhere. I live at a friend's right now because I'm going to school.

This personal struggle happens in the face of the racism and systemic discrimination that almost all focus group participants identified. Oppression is magnified by people's positions as 'outsiders' or failed citizens who do not conform to field expectations but contested it by working together. One man said:

I see a lot of homeless people here. I've got people staying at my place right now. I've got a really small apartment. I can't refuse people if they come and say 'can I spend the night?' I can't say my place is packed right now. The landlord is cool; he doesn't know! He lives upstairs and I live in the basement. I actually got a really nice place. And I think about when I was on the streets and I was homeless.

Another man was more optimistic; he said that not everyone in the housing field is racist but it takes the right people — attained through social capital — to find a place to live:

There really is some good people out there. You have to know somebody to get a place. If they don't really know you or figure out in their own mind what you're like, like if you're a long hair...

Thus, even this somewhat optimistic statement ended by recognizing that while there are helpful allies in the field who seek change, and can provide resources, he also recognized that Aboriginal expressions of habitus, having long hair, do not fit with many in the city who have preferences of their own about to whom to rent.

This short summary provides some examples of things that were said in focus groups. It demonstrates some key points about the diversity in Aboriginal people's experiences, reinforcing that they are not a monolithic group, while highlighting the domination they all experience, to differing degrees, in the housing field. Their dispositions will determine how they engage in its struggle. In sum, people's behaviours and beliefs are influenced by past experiences as well as by the oppressive nature of the field that shapes their ways of acting and thinking. At the same time, like those who disagree with the deterministic nature of field and habitus, we can see many examples of people who recognize their domination for what it is — not arbitrary — and are finding ways to retain mismatching habitus and use it to empower themselves, rather than give in (J.

Scott 1990; McLeod 2005; McNay 1999; Chodos and Curtis 2002; C. Cronin 1996). As can be seen, Aboriginal people are cognizant of the injustice they face and, as will be seen more below, are working to contest it.

Non-Aboriginal people and some more privileged Aboriginal people (the Aboriginal middle-class) who participated in interviews described different ideas about how they experience and participate in the housing field. Such differences in habitus, when associated with factors such as race, lead to conflict — either in overt discriminatory mistreatment or through the covert (colonial) imposition of other systems of knowledge. One First Nations woman with a social service background was asked if culture was relevant to the housing field and replied:

I think so, I think so. [...] I would say because a lot, I don't want to say all, but a lot of landlords are very, I don't want to say prejudiced either, there might be a better word for it. But, of course they're going to judge them if they have big families, and they're on welfare, and I guess an Aboriginal person like myself, my mom was actually on assistance part-time – like I think it's subsidized and she was also working at a low-income job. [...] Couch-surfing? Yeah, that's another thing with Aboriginals. They'll have, they finally got their house set up, they have their own little one-bedroom apartment – I'm just using one of our clients – and he's allowing different people from the reserve to come into his house to spend the night, spend the week, spend two weeks without saying anything. That's very common. [...] It could be problematic for them because they might end up being evicted because of that. But at the same time it's a part of the Aboriginal values where they don't really want to ask them to leave or.... It's just our values.

Cultural capital, when it creates certain kinds of behaviour and beliefs *produces* Aboriginal people in Edmonton as certain kinds of people (Peters 2006). This is an image projected onto Aboriginal people by others, but can also be one that some internalize as well.

These dispositions that are created through the field struggle take different forms in Edmonton's housing field. People's life experiences are vital in creating perspectives that condition their interest that shape the housing field. As a non-Aboriginal city employee noted:

Since we work with agencies and groups of course, it [progress] is dependent on who they deal with. So quite often it's their

perspective on things. So for example when the, when we were working on the first Community Plan, people who were in the room were all agencies who were providing a service. So when there were questions about what the needs of the people are, it was very biased in favour of what the agencies provide as a service. So if one of the groups deals with groups that are mentally challenged, then they'll think that there's a lot of mental health issues. They'll think that's the majority because that's who they deal with. So it's a little, I think it's where you're coming from, and your experience that puts a bit of distortion to the way you deal with... It can provide you insight in one way, but on the other hand it can prevent from seeing a bigger picture.

An Aboriginal person who works with Homeward Trust stated how important someone's background was to how they participate in the field:

Well I think that individuals' identity is a huge factor when it comes to any major issue in our society. And having an opportunity to reconnect or define for oneself who and what their belief system is and who and what they believe in terms of how they are in the world. I think a lot of the contributing factors to some of these social challenges is, really kind of goes back to the core of each of us as individuals whether or not we have strong enough family units, systems of supporting and validating our own identity. I think that's crucial and part of that is certainly culture and has a major role to play.

Thus, people's backgrounds shape how they will operate in the field; we do not come to it equally or as blank slates. People's experiences condition their participation in the field. In fact, these sets of dispositions determine *why* many people work in the housing field. According to one First Nations man:

I think in terms of my identity and the kinds of things in my career that I'd like to have an impact on, I feel like I'm a part of an organization that is going to end homelessness, or have a huge impact. And part of my responsibility in that is to help, I think, influence and ensure that programs and services that we support in the community are sensitive to recognizing the importance of culture and, you know, people are open to that in different stages, their lives and their journeys.

One non-Aboriginal research participant from CHRC had a different reason. She said:

We do have a social conscience in this organization, we always have. [...] And so we're here for a reason and it's because we believe in what we're doing, we believe we're making a difference and it's worked very well in having this group of people who really believe that we owe it to the people and to our tenants to do the very best job that we can.

Engaging in the struggle is therefore done for a reason. Reasons vary between people depending on their history and will shape how they participate and how the field is (re)created. Yet, many stressed that their opinions were their own and not those of the organizations they worked at, as though their opinions did not shape their organization or surroundings. For example, one Aboriginal man in the government made an explicit distinction:

Well, I have a personal perspective and a professional sort of stance on that [whether the provincial government should have a role in the Wicihitowin process]. And for the most part, it should be the Aboriginal community that determines that relationship within, and government should not be involved in that. That's my personal perspective. My professional perspective is that we certainly provide them with funding to assist them in building these relations, and they have to show results and be accountable for that money. Sometimes they're at odds, most times they're not. [...] Does that [being Métis] give me a different perspective? I think, for me, I guess the answer would be 'yes'. Because in the end there's a conflict between my personal and professional perspectives, whereas I think the [non-Aboriginal] federal and municipal representatives, it's more of a professional perspective.

What is most telling is that this person was not the only Aboriginal person who separated his personal beliefs from the government he worked for. But this kind of response was not as common in non-Aboriginal interview participants. We can infer that some Aboriginal people (even those who, like the above person, identified as "middle class"), feel at odds with the field. For the focus group participants who had recently arrived from out of town or who faced chronic homelessness or unemployment, this feeling of being out of place — *habitus* and field mismatch — was heightened.

The question then is whether increased legibility in the field can be achieved by reconciling two identities and resisting colonialism or whether the so-

called Aboriginal middle class are required to internalize the field and all its problematic doxa. Matching the (middle-class) field is often framed as getting (mainstream) education, getting a 'white-collar' job, and becoming a homeowner, etc. For some people, then, getting ahead means embracing the field, adapting to meet it. However, some Aboriginal people who said that they were doing well also said that they could live "in two worlds;" they were not assimilating but adapting 'just enough' that they continued to value their culture. Such responses may allow for urban Aboriginal people, if they can get into positions of power, to change the field in ways that suit them.

What is key to understanding this aspect of the struggle is that all of these motivations, dispositions, and behaviours shape the field as it shapes them. As stated earlier, one non-Aboriginal who works with the homeless pointed out how the "system" reproduces itself by conditioning people's behaviour to accept their homelessness by wearing them down: "Some people give up. And that contributes to people being homeless." A vicious circle exists yet some people, the "emerging Aboriginal middle class" manage to position themselves in order to get ahead. This is driven, as the neoliberal field of power encourages, by an individual desire to be economically self-reliant, which few people want to say. Instead, people say that they are motivated, as described above, by a desire to improve the community. This may be true but engaging in the housing field struggle also means agreeing to the rules of the struggle itself and all of its anti-collective implications. For some people, this means internalizing the systemic racism in the field without acknowledging that it exists. For example, the person charged with restructuring Amisk during its receivership noted:

Well, I mean, in this case it's low-income. I mean Amisk is all low-income First Nations, so I mean they just, most of them can't afford market rent and often, that market rent is being offered by non-Aboriginal people. But I wouldn't say there's animosity toward them, they just know [they] can't afford that.

One non-Aboriginal housing provider said he had problems with his Aboriginal tenants. It demonstrated how people mobilize concepts of Aboriginal people (in this case, single mothers) as a particular category of people:

We research them as much as we can but they'll lie through their teeth to get a home and then, and then they lose it 2 months later. We had someone last 14 days with 7 kids; promised she'd be good and partied for 2 weeks straight.

Aboriginal people who work in the housing field describe how non-Aboriginal people have preconceived ideas about what an Aboriginal tenant or even an Aboriginal home is. One Métis woman stated:

Well when you're talking about specifically Aboriginal housing, I mean, people automatically have a negative outlook to it; a negative response. You automatically think of poor maintenance of the houses, the landscaping is poor, they're always evicted, there's always some kind of addiction happening, there's no education involved, it's always been that way.

Despite people clearly having ideas about "Aboriginal people," there was, generally, a strong discomfort to talk about the role of racism in the field among the majority of interview participants. However, many Aboriginal participants acknowledged that racism exists, either using personal accounts (something which few non-Aboriginal participants did) or referring generally to the Aboriginal community. Many non-Aboriginal people were unable or unwilling to answer any questions about race, racism, or culture because symbolic violence tells us that racism is a thing of the past.

Acknowledging racism also means accepting that the universal citizen is a myth and some people are at a disadvantage because of their perceived (Goldberg 2002). With formal anti-discrimination policies in place, it was hard for many non-Aboriginal people to think of anything beyond small-scale isolated cases of objective racism (such as denial of rental housing by a racist landlord) which they assume would be rectified through the proper channels. Liberal rights talk assures us we are all the same so there can be no systemic discrimination (Brodie 1997; Turner 2006). As stated in Chapter Two, because we live in a "raceless state," the real impacts of race are not easily dealt with and, instead, condition non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people's expectations in the field. A woman at the NAFC who regularly deals with such experiences said:

I think it [ignorance about the impact of racism] is because there is a lot of prejudice out there regarding housing. They don't, a lot of renters don't want to rent to Aboriginals. And I've actually witnessed it here myself when I've actually contacted landlords and their first question is 'are you Native?' [...] Yes! Because I'm calling, well obviously from Canadian Native Friendship Centre on their phone, well 'are you Native?' And it's like, 'oh, excuse me? Yes.' And then how are we supposed to prove that? [...] Well you say, 'excuse me' but what else are you supposed to do? You can't really prove anything.

Thus, these experiences shape our expectations and what we simply accept as normal. With less capital to deal with this adversity, many people, as has been pointed out, get frustrated and settle for living in conditions and being treated in ways that others would regard as intolerable. The focus group participants, especially the women, spoke about the various kinds of abuse they experienced from landlords and other people in the housing field but do not report to the 'authorities' such as the tenancy board or the police. Not knowing how to deal with these acts of symbolic or actual violence and/or not having the tools (time, money, and knowledge) to resort to the field's designated conflict resolution measures, most people expressed how frustrated and disempowered they felt. This appears to be especially the case for Aboriginal people not raised in the city who end up moving there.

Habitus from different fields (non-urban spaces dominated by Aboriginal cultures) creates friction — habitus mismatch (Kalpagam 2006, 84) — when they enter (physically and symbolically) urban fields. As one non-Aboriginal city employee stated:

And I really do think that relations between Aboriginal tenants and landlords needs to be improved, and a better understanding of one another and where they're coming from – acknowledging cultural differences, understanding them, and realizing that a number of issues that come up may be about discrimination, but may be more about misunderstandings. And I think a lot needs to be done in terms of communication to address some of those misunderstandings in communication [...]. Because when you're dealing with a tenant and a landlord, the landlord has the power, and the tenant has none, so they don't want to say much against the landlord. They don't want to lose their place or else they want to

get into their place, so they're not going to say too much against the landlord. But I think a lot of landlords have to be called to the carpet for acting, for discriminating against folks.

People who are born in the field, who still experience the symbolic violence of the city but also accumulate some urban capital provide proof that, through forms of integration or assimilation, mismatch is declining. One Aboriginal woman said that changes in the city (more Aboriginal people moving in, being more visible, having more role models) are even changing the power balance for the better:

In my generation, and the generations before me, I believe that we were sort of ashamed to be Native because of all the racism that we had dealt with going to school, growing up, that sort of thing. [...] And we didn't have Aboriginal schools when I was going, and now there's lots of Aboriginal schools here. So I think the thing with that is we can never forget where we came from; we've got to love ourselves and don't hate the person inside of you.

She believes that people can get ahead without internalizing the racism of the city — that is, resisting the domination because of their mismatching habitus (McLeod 2005; McNay 1999). But habitus mismatch may actually increase again if Aboriginal cultural capital is indeed gaining acceptance and rising in value, rather than being eradicated via assimilationist strategies. People may begin to bridge two worlds, as one man who worked in government said: “I identify as a Métis. I don't identify rural or... I think growing up it's more rural, and now I live in an urban area. So hopefully I have both.” This arguably requires some co-opting as well (Wacquant 1992, 24; Bourdieu 1987). Disciplining errant behaviour that threatens the balance of power has long been a successful strategy in changing people to fit into the city and the housing field (Flint and Rowlands 2003). Aboriginal organizations, led by Aboriginal people in positions of power can mediate tension. As someone from EAUAC pointed out:

The difficult word is assimilation. That is the most difficult word for Native people. Because they don't want to be assimilated. And as white people they think that ‘why not, because you guys are all doing so great.’

Other organizations in the housing field, such as those that are now encouraging homeownership are less clear on how to resist co-option:

The main soul of our program is to educate and teach about homeownership off-reserve. So we partnered with the Home Program, which is an organization that creates education and awareness specifically for homeownership. However they're geared towards... they're a colour-blind organization right? They take on anybody in society. But we found a lot of our First Nations aren't taking advantage of these types of scenarios. So personally I think it comes from discomfort-wise, lack of confidence and you know, whatever it may be. So they look around the room and they're scared to ask questions, even asking about taxes they might feel uneasy to ask questions like that. On reserve we don't deal with taxes, so it's new to us. So to ask a question like that, they won't ask it or they won't even attempt.

Empowerment, when it is framed this way, treads a thin line between blindly embracing the whitestream and recognizing that agreeing to play the game means having to play by someone else's rules but still trying to contest what is contestable. This has important implications for understanding the nature of domination in the field — further seen in differences between women's and men's roles, wants, and resources. It also leads us to see that there are differences *among* Aboriginal people in the housing field; what some people identify as empowerment may mean assimilation to others.

6.6 COMMON-SENSE AND SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

Bending habitus to match the field is accomplished by the use of symbolic violence by dominant actors and by agents' internalization of the common sense of doxic ideas. Here, it will be made more apparent how these forces reproduce the actors that are necessary for the housing field to function and continue its patterns of domination (Bourdieu 1998b, 27). This requires particular Aboriginal people as field actors, keeping them depoliticized, individualized, or in jail. It means assuming, among other things, that (as focus group participants described) Aboriginal women are prostitutes and Aboriginal men are dangerous. In a SIS state where funding is designed to help integrate *certain* people, these failed (unproductive) citizens will not be seen as deserving (Dobrowolsky 2006; Altamirano-Jiménez 2009; Flint and Rowlands 2003). Overall, those that cannot be rented to or who cannot pay their rent are 'bad citizens' who do not belong in

the city and should be kept out if they will not be invisible — reinforcing the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy. If this flies in the face of difference-blindness it is because it is individual (*Aboriginal*) *people's fault* that they are bad citizens; it is not the fault of the raceless state that has one set of rules for everyone (Goldberg 2002; Goldberg 2009). Aboriginal people could have acted like everyone else but failed to be self-reliant. This is the harmful contribution of the doxa that reproduces harmful and self-harming ideas in the housing field.

As stated, Aboriginal women face a matrix of forms of oppression, gendered and raced, and some women in the focus groups spoke about how they are treated badly by landlords. For example, one woman shared a story about how her landlord offered to waive her rent if she had sex with him. Another woman spoke about how she offered to let a homeless sex worker use her shower and was evicted. More than one woman spoke about how Aboriginal women are assumed to be prostitutes, little surprise in a country that sees poor Aboriginal women as disposable (Razack 2002).

Racism and sexism do not just lead people to expect certain things from the field, but also help (re)create and reinforce urban Aboriginal people's female and male identities. One Aboriginal man said:

There is nothing better than a strong Native man. There is nothing weaker than the weak Native man. So that's that a paradigm. But Crees, it's hard to tell the difference between a really strong Cree woman and a really weak Cree woman, right. So a landlord, they asked my mother, my mother looks, she's darker than me, the landlord asked my mother what's her nationality. They would never ask that to a white woman, right. If my mother had looked more like me, had been more Irish, inner like, if she didn't look like a Native woman, never in a million years would she have been asked that question. But they feel it's OK to ask those questions. And the question that he really wanted to ask: what kind of Native woman are you; are you a clean one or a dirty one? That's really what his question was, right. So because he knows Native women bring children, and bring boyfriends, or bring providers, or... There's a much more complex family paradigm with a Native woman than with a Native man. [...] Natives in general have a difficult time with housing especially if they are right off the reserve. Some of these people right off the reserve they could be

your best tenants, but if you screw them around enough times, they get discouraged or whatever.

An intersection between gendered and racial oppression shows that there are unquestioned ‘truths’ about Aboriginal people in the housing field. Expectations for certain behaviour can create that behaviour; a particular kind of tenant is recreated through the field by internalizing its patterns of domination (Flint and Rowlands 2003; Kalpagam 2006; New and Petronicolos 2001). Witnessing examples of Aboriginal people being ‘bad’ tenants or ‘bad (urban) citizens’ helps entrench these doxa among the dominant and, if internalized by tenants, become reproducing habitus. The non-Aboriginal consultant who was managing and restructuring Amisk housing said:

They don’t respect the homes, and you evict them, and they cause ten grand damage. And you never recover that obviously, and it’s just a complete uphill battle. So that’s the biggest one because you can’t find, it’s hard to find, low income First Nations that will respect a place.

These self-fulfilling ‘truths’ of the housing field will thus dictate what is within the realm of what people will consider to be possible when it comes to governance. Again, since all affordable housing projects (including MUHC and Amisk) said that women (especially single mothers) were their most common renters, the idea of the ‘bad Aboriginal tenant’ is extended to gendered ideas. As already stated, many research participants stated how landlords and building managers fear the Aboriginal tenants who bring their large families with them and this is more likely to be women who are cast (positively) as care givers or (negatively) assumed to have large numbers of fatherless children. Their stigmatization is then further compounded because they cannot work and so they are cast as welfare users.

But while it is clear that white people have a disproportionately large amount of the symbolic capital necessary to reinforce these stereotypes, fieldwork also demonstrated that some Aboriginal people in Edmonton possess some forms of symbolic capital of their own. Although the field at large does not necessarily value it, Aboriginal forms of cultural capital can be used to accord symbolic

power to capital-possessing individuals. Within an Aboriginal field, some Aboriginal people can even use symbolic violence to dominate others. For example, the MUHC (and the MNA¹⁴⁸) possess enough symbolic capital (which it has accumulated through its significant economic, cultural, and social resources) in the housing field, to convince enough people that their Aboriginal-group specific approach to urban housing should prevail over a pan-Aboriginal approach. Their 3-1 ratio went largely unquestioned in interviews with those in positions of power but drew criticism by non-Métis women in focus groups.

Predictably, First Nations political leadership now advocates for First Nations-specific housing programs rather than create the pan-Aboriginal housing models that many urban residents would prefer. Thus, field structures are created by habitus. The leadership of these political organizations possess the symbolic capital to mobilize their members and gain enough legitimacy from powerful non-Aboriginal actors (governments), and as a result to recreate a housing field that privileges some Aboriginal people over others, based on their (symbolic) group association.

As expected, Aboriginal women are marginalized here. For example, they are more likely to have lost their status or be denied membership in a particular Aboriginal political group; this was a common story among focus group participants and the most privileged interview participants as well. Some women also spoke about their bad history with the leadership of their reserve which was one of the reasons some of them came to the city in the first place. No one spoke about getting more involved in First Nations politics once they got to the city, though some did participate in IAAW, which is pan-Aboriginal. It is also apparent, however, that many Aboriginal people, especially the most marginalized, do not get involved in Aboriginal politics because of a lack of interest or lack of resources. “Doing self-governance” may not be an issue if people are too indifferent or capital-poor to bother.

In the wider Aboriginal (housing) field, those few individuals with enough

¹⁴⁸ The MNA’s President is a woman, but she also has to operate in male-dominated (Aboriginal and government) fields of power.

symbolic capital can also be used as signifiers of their perceived group.¹⁴⁹ The “token” Aboriginal person, useful in an organization or on a board to lend it legitimacy (either in the eyes of the Aboriginal community or with others that have accorded symbolic value to having an Aboriginal perspective in governance), is often in demand. Said one woman: “We always get people contacting us to come sit in on their meetings. You know non-Aboriginal people like to have an Aboriginal voice in their meetings.” This is a valuable example of Aboriginal symbolic capacity to make a policy decision appeal to the Aboriginal community or convince non-Aboriginal people that it has the backing of the community.

But this method of enacting symbolic violence — appropriating Aboriginal people’s cultural capital — uses them, especially elders or organizational representatives, as tools to justify what are otherwise colonial practices and meaningless (non-binding) consultations. The act of getting a ‘token Indian’ to sit at the table speaks to the lower value of Aboriginal symbolic capital. While it is useful to demonstrate that Aboriginal people have been ‘heard,’ it can also be used by Aboriginal ‘elites’ to reinforce their positions as cultural or community authorities who speak for others.

In Edmonton, it appears that there is little difference between Aboriginal women and men to act in this capacity. Once the factor of government-recognized groups is removed, because Aboriginal women are so involved in the provision of social services, many have risen up to a level historically occupied by male politicians. The ‘unofficial’ political sphere is one area where there appears to be some gender parity.

This position of Aboriginal women in the housing field presents an interesting contradiction. On the one hand, they are in a sense what seems to be a promising position; they are overrepresented in the Aboriginal service sector and housing organizations, often acting as Executive Directors or in other positions of authority. They are also much less likely to be counted among the absolute

¹⁴⁹ As stated in the theoretical chapter, the act of creating these groups and identities can also be seen as acts of symbolic violence.

homeless. On the other hand, the many Aboriginal women, especially the most marginalized, often experience violence and an intersecting racism/sexism that pits them against the mainstream and some of the Aboriginal leadership. But as was discovered during focus groups, although they face more poverty, being on government assistance (for children or housing) can connect them to others in what can be, according to many of the men, an isolating place to live.

Such strategic investments in “women and children” (who cannot help their situation) are proposed in order to help Aboriginal people help themselves (Dobrowolsky 2006) but can also perpetuate colonialism when the system punishes women for not using government ‘help’ in order to conform and ‘live right.’ Despite these issues, there was very little effort demonstrated by the main funders of the housing field to take gender into account in their decisions. A provincial worker in the housing ministry observed:

Do we ask for gender specific proposals? No. We ask for proposals. If they come in gender specific, they’re weighed, everything is weighed under the same criteria and the cream rises to the top. And over the number of years we’ve been doing it, I would say that we have, there have been, we’ve funded projects for women escaping family abuse, we funded projects for single moms. That includes the Aboriginal population because we don’t differentiate between the Aboriginal population and anyone in Alberta.

One of the reasons why there is so little gender-based analysis in the housing field may be because so many women work in it, and housing is seen as a “women’s issue” — even though “cities are still planned by men for men” (Wekerle 1979, 2) — so housing projects are assumed to be sensitive to women’s experiences. But this also perpetuates the difference-blind outlook. What may be more accurate is to state that housing-related work (i.e. the *provision* of housing which usually means *social* housing) is women’s work while the larger urban field of power, including the bureaucracies that control land use, remain dominated by men.

The construction industry, associated with the trades and physical labour, is “men’s work,” as is *owning* for-profit housing units (the apartments that are rented out to single mothers) and single-family homes. Both of these (owning

homes and making money from it) are also examples of good urban (neoliberal) behaviour (Bourdieu 2005). Men's historical relationship with ownership/property, a foundation of the capitalist/neoliberal system, is maintained by associating women only with those aspects of the housing field that are not profitable and, not by coincidence, failing through government or public/collective neglect.

In the face of such domination — long-standing and intertwined colonialism and patriarchal forms of oppression — what opportunities or possibilities are there for contestation or field change? Can exercising collective control (in an inclusive manner that ensures that one group of exploitative governors is not simply replaced by another) of Edmonton's housing field make it less oppressive for Aboriginal women and men? This final question of analysis will demonstrate how some of the Aboriginal resistance strategies — exemplified by self-government processes such as Wicihitowin — exist in Edmonton's political-economic space.

6.7 A LOCATION FOR CONTESTATION?

The previous discussion provides a picture of the field in which behaviours, beliefs, and identities are created, and recreate, the field itself. As stated in Chapter Two, the deterministic nature of field theory has been contested by feminists for failing to demonstrate how the contestation of the field's structuring nature, including neoliberal doxa, is possible (C. Cronin 1996; Mottier 2002). Thus, it may be possible to change Edmonton's housing field *if* it may not be as rigid as some believe (B. Miller 2007; Leitner et al. 2007). Collective self-governance may take place, as instances of gradual field change have already been noted:

I see with the Aboriginal people, I think we're starting to stick together, work together like, helping each other. And that's very positive and I'm grateful for that. [...] I see we're really coming together, we're starting to really practice our cultures together more than we had in the past. Whereas before we'd hide our culture, you know, not going to Sun Dances, 'oh, I don't want to be Aboriginal anymore; I'm ashamed to be Aboriginal'. Now a lot

of people are coming forward and saying ‘you know, I am Métis and I’m proud of it.’

Finding strength in practicing their cultures, as stated in Chapter Two, can lead to domination, not oppression. The argument is made by Bourdieu that celebrating the capital or habitus that led to marginalization in the first place may sustain hardships of not belonging (Bourdieu 1987; Wacquant 1992, 24). But many Aboriginal people already know that some people feel that they do not belong. That is why they are creating their own spaces like the Friendship Centre, cited above. Celebrating Aboriginal culture remains a form resistance because it hinders assimilation (Polakoff 2011; Hoy 2004).

Research participants were asked how the organization they worked with contributed to resistance or self-governance. As stated, most denied a connection to the politics of self-governance but many people in positions of power believe that their organization provides prospects for positive change for Aboriginal people. One person at Homeward Trust stated that “capacity building and partnering with the Aboriginal community is probably a reflection of how the urban Aboriginal population can get to that place [of self-determination].” A city representative also stated that “a very strong council,” in conjunction with new ideas for affordable housing advocacy, can create powerful alliances to help Aboriginal people in Edmonton. At the same time, and problematizing the nature of such partnerships based on the inequality of partners (Ladner 2001; Tully 2008, 274), she noted that Aboriginal or non-for-profit partners can be held to task by the governments that fund them, as they were during the Klein years.

Although oppressive forces dominate the field, there remain avenues for Aboriginal people to resist opposing forces in more subtle ways. One approach to integrating, without modifying, Aboriginal cultural capital into spaces of power may challenge the field and resist the imposition of colonial governance. As already stated, EAUAC is following through on their plan to introduce consensus-based decision making to their organization which, it is hoped, will go on to influence how the city interacts with Aboriginal people. Further, as already

described, Aboriginal people in Edmonton are accumulating some forms of capital that are valued. One Aboriginal man involved in housing said:

And on a personal note, I felt like through that [Wicihitowin] report and then having the opportunity to witness the organizational structure, I felt like I had a whole lot of community development experience as a result of the Wicihitowin stuff, but the opportunity with Homeward Trust in terms of myself is to now see through, in one sector, how that combination of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners of the governance structure and through this nomination process and through other components that we have like the Aboriginal advisory council and our organization, that's embedded. Those are key elements [...] I think the kind of support that an organization like Homeward Trust is shared in terms of capacity building, and partnering with the Aboriginal community, is probably a reflection of how the urban Aboriginal population can get to that place.

Most participants noted that education, whether educating non-Aboriginal people about Aboriginal people (changing how Aboriginal cultural capital is valued) or educating Aboriginal people about the field *and about themselves* is central to changing their habitus challenging doxa and improving their position in the field — as stated in Chapter Two, understanding the way that the field works is the first step in resisting it (Bourdieu 1998b; Hoy 2004). One First Nations man said that his business program was at a college run by First Nations people:

So we learnt about colonization, residential schools, our language, all sorts of stuff that allowed us to understand where we come from as a First Nations individual. [...] And even I didn't understand it; I didn't know I was affected by it [colonialism]. I didn't know my family was affected by it. Sometimes you just take things for granted [...], but you don't realize how day-to-day life, growing up as a kid, the way my parents acted, why they acted that way. [...] Again, the way I think is, it's education. The quote I always go by is 'be the change you want to see' so that, and the reason why that quote kind of sticks out to me, that goes with all our past: we need to break the cycles, but we need to learn about them so we have the power to change the cycles. Because again if you don't know about it how can you change it? So it's just, we need to learn and educate ourselves not just to live as an individual within society, but to understand where we came from. [...] There's some champions with, that relay the message and now it's starting to snowball.

This emphasizes the point, made above, that change can start with the individual (Alfred 1999), but as Aboriginal people stated, change also has to be collective; resistance takes many people to succeed (Polakoff 2011; Mahar 2010; Feldman and Stall 2004; Ramirez 2007). And tools for making change do not come only from the housing field; participation in other struggles also provides skills for learning about oppression. Some women described how “getting their C-31” provided them with political tools and behaviours that have helped them contest patriarchal forces. These skills are also passed on to the next generation. For example, one woman said:

So my mother became involved in the Indian Rights for Indian Women, right from early beginnings. And between her and the women in Alberta they got the law [the sexist provisions of the *Indian Act*] changed. And I remember I used to work for Metis Nation at the time and the men there used to say: “these women are nuts; they’ll never get this law changed.” Well one of them was the first one to go sign up for Bill C-31 as soon as the law changed. It was so funny to see these men: “It’ll never change.” It was so amazing how negative they were and how they believed in men’s superiority. Really that’s what it was. [...] But I can say in the intervening years it has settled down. A lot of people have come to accept yes, it’s right. We have rights too. [...] So it has changed and I think that give it another twenty, thirty years, things will change [more.]

Focus group participants, among whom there were homeless or near-homeless people, were less optimistic about whether change is happening but, like in Winnipeg, had no shortage of ideas about how resistance could or should happen. When asked how they can resist domination or change their situation, common answers were: healing and building self-esteem, seeking help through support programs, and giving back to the community. Again, education about colonialism and raising awareness about housing programs and Aboriginal rights were the most popular goals. Men were more willing to suggest working with “the system” while some women described how leaving abusive relationships were a first step in improving their housing and beginning to heal.

There are also many people (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) in relative positions of power in the housing field who want to see it change and who contest

neoliberal and colonial ideas. The large number of actors involved in the low-income housing sector, with their connections to ‘dissident’ causes, ideas, and parties means they do not stand idly by as the field continues to privilege some interests over others. One city employee said:

They [low-income housing advocates such as ECHHO] definitely have a part to play. [...] People that do play an advocacy role and they advocate for people to basically to be a voice for the people who don’t have one. To advocate for the appropriate supports and housing needs for those people. So they write letters to the paper, they make presentations to council, they make policy statements, they review issues, they try to strategize how best to expose certain things and present certain situations and problems. They reacted to the 10-year plan on homelessness, they put forward a lot of different position papers and things like that.

Thus, there is a basis for field-wide resistance: a will to change and some Aboriginal people who have the resources and habitus to contest domination. However, whether government-recognized organizations such as Wicihitowin or the rise of an Aboriginal middle-class are changing the field in ways that help all Aboriginal people, rather than merely shift power from one dominant group to another, is uncertain. Only if Aboriginal people of all backgrounds are involved, with some level of shared power, in inclusive processes of field change can we be certain that those who advocate on their behalf (or on behalf of the under-housed and homeless), will have an impact that actually improves all urban Aboriginal people’s positions in the field. And it must be Aboriginal people who are involved; as some indicated, it can be tempting, and easy, to continue to leave the governance of the field up to those who have long dominated the field. One government employee said that having bureaucrats look after funding the UAS was better:

It’s a better use of the funds because they are limited, and I think that the end of the day, federal government program staff, that’s their area of expertise. It’s what they do; it’s what we do. You can find that expertise out there as well. But at the end of the day most people have figured out that it’s just a big headache; they would just be as happy to see somebody else take that on. It does create some issues and challenges in relationships amongst the organizations in the community.

An inclusive way to restructure power relations and contest domination will have to make room for Aboriginal people to control Aboriginal affairs (Ramirez 2007; Deere and Leon 2000). As a representative from an Aboriginal organization said:

And, in order to have any success, [...] we need to believe that there's something going on that may not be going on with white society that is culturally specific, that is best addressed in terms of Aboriginals helping Aboriginals.

Thus, strategy for collective self-governance will need to rely on Aboriginal people with Aboriginal capital.

This emphasis on inclusion has also led to arguments that Aboriginal women are essential to changing the field and that any change, self-governance or otherwise, that does not take their views and needs into account will not be real, community-based self-governance and will not work. As stated, Aboriginal women, possess more of the educational and bureaucratic capital that is necessary for taking on the government and they occupy many important positions in the housing field. The UAS person stated:

My theory is women, at least in North American society, I'm not sure about elsewhere, tend to be change agents or are more willing to be agents of change or built to be, I don't know. But I've actually seen literature on that and it is maybe one of things, the reasons that a glass ceiling was in place for many, many years because women were gonna come in and make us all do things differently. But that could very well be what attracts women to this kind of work.

Self-governance, if it is to be community-based, has important implications for women although only the Aboriginal women at IAAW talked about this. They said that First Nations women have been treated badly by some of their leadership for too long; a growing awareness of human rights legislation, and the recognition that these rules can be applied to Aboriginal relations, including on reserve, are what it will take for there to be self-governance. Concurring with Indigenous feminists, these women said that Aboriginal people cannot be self-governing until women are included and respected (Napoleon 2009; A. Smith 2005; Green 2007; Altamirano-Jiménez 2006; Fiske 1996; McIvor 2004).

At IAAW, they were more emphatic, sharing their stories of how they and other Aboriginal women were changing the urban Aboriginal field. Not only does their creative use of capital help (as they said, “women are resourceful people”), but wanting to change who has power and providing assistance is vital:

[*One woman:*] I started in 1995 with Muriel [Stanley Venne] and a bunch of women getting together, and Muriel wanted to start an organization that would speak up for Aboriginal women in cities and in the towns. And she started up all by herself. And also to provide information and also to go to government with our problems. And advocacy was the first main thing that she started off with when IAAW started. [...]

[*Another woman:*] Well I talked to Rachelle about that because there’s a bunch of other lawyers and everybody calling about a non-profit organization. And apparently you have to be committed to volunteer work. And you have to show that you are committed to helping your community and that’s what Muriel and them did: a lot of volunteer work.

Both of these women from IAAW and many other urban Aboriginal women (including some from the focus groups) had been involved in the political, and very personal, process of getting Indian status after losing it through racist and sexist government policies. Although initially a negative experience, it gave them political experience they did not expect and the process of change (that pitted Aboriginal women against their male leadership, and against each other) could not have been accomplished on an individual level. It is the individuality of the political-economic paradigm that makes resistance so hard and the punishment of deviants so easy.

Since field change must be collective (Bourdieu 1998b), then collective self-governance must be accomplished through new or existing social networks within the housing field. Field transitions in valuing Aboriginal capital or finding room for Aboriginal habitus require claiming or (re)appropriating space in the city (Bourdieu 1999b, 124). So far, Edmonton does not appear to have a single neighbourhood with the same Aboriginal concentration as the North End in Winnipeg (Peters 2005; Andersen 2009) or with the same *positive* cultural connection where the neighbourhood is not just associated with Aboriginal people

in a negative way. The Friendship Centre's recent move to 118 Ave ("the Avenue" neighbourhood), an area with a significant Aboriginal population and affordable housing (perhaps not a coincidence), indicates some change. Recent cultural initiatives and community-based economic development strategies there may lead to this space becoming a positive Aboriginal space with better housing under community (Aboriginal) control.

Despite subtle changes, many interview participants were not clear or certain on how their organization relates or contributes to Aboriginal control of the housing field. For the most part, participants could not connect their role or mission to ideas of self-governance. Some explicitly stated that there was no connection, but some believed that they played a part, though how they related to the concept depended on how they defined it. Although there was a general idea that urban Aboriginal self-determination was possible (and perhaps a deferral to someone else being responsible for it), few could see it happening now. The provincial government worker in Aboriginal Relations held back on optimism but summed up what seemed to be the general thread of thought:

Maybe down the line? I mean right now it's really about addressing issues, taking care of those needs and trying to assist those individual Aboriginal community people with addressing their needs. So in the immediate, it's really about getting that person housing, getting that person employed. Could it, in the end, could it result in an urban governance, self-government model? It could... But I don't think that's the focus right now.¹⁵⁰

Change is slow and the movement toward urban Aboriginal self-governance in Edmonton is hesitant. The individualization of poverty — and individual-based goals of addressing it — also hinders collective efforts to self-determination. Organizations like Homeward Trust (driven by governments at arms length, or nearer/further, depending on whom one asks) are opening spaces for Aboriginal voices in *existing* political processes. This may mean that resistance to dominant forces will be weakened because collective action takes place in colonial spaces,

¹⁵⁰ Once again, the depoliticization of the field, another liberal strategy that separates people from resources, is achieved through disconnecting service provision and governance.

using colonial tools, similar to the argument against using band councils to further First Nations goals for self-determination (Alfred 2005; Tully 1995).

Wicihitowin, with its newness and lack of uptake by the community has proven slow to challenge the colonial basis of the field. This pace can be discouraging and lead people, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, to believe change is impossible, especially under government dominance and colonialism at large (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 172). One housing field worker stated:

We talk a good game and make ten-year plans but we really don't act collectively to challenge the issues. [...] One: the issue of housing. Two: the issue of Aboriginal people in the community, and them being able to take their rightful place in the community, is an issue that we have and we've done a lot of talk but we haven't walked the talk very well as a greater community. The City of Edmonton has their Urban Aboriginal initiative but do you know about that?

The combined lack of government action and public ignorance, apathy, and sometimes hostility help stifle change that suits those who profit from the status quo.

But if Aboriginal people can participate in these bodies as Aboriginal people, then Homeward Trust and Wicihitowin, with their government recognition and ability to claim ownership over parts of the self-governance process in the housing field (and beyond) are the best and most likely venues for carrying out limited change within the system and offering avenues for resistance, in the future of the oppressive state forces that shape the field. But this possibility also comes with caveats. One person who has worked with Homeward Trust summed up its strengths (and weaknesses), highlighting what it can and cannot do:

We're not a government. [...] We're a community based organization. And I think that's a great advantage in terms of government's role in our organization. I mean ultimately we have contractual relationships that obligate us certainly to them for certain things. And we have a strong history of ensuring that's the utmost importance to us. [...] I think the kind of support that an organization like Homeward Trust is shared in terms of capacity building and partnering with the Aboriginal community is probably a reflection of how the urban Aboriginal population can

get to that place.

One First Nations person involved in the housing field stated that he felt that Wicihitowin would take over from Homeward Trust and be responsible for guiding urban Aboriginal self-governance in Edmonton's housing field:

One of the challenges throughout this whole [Wicihitowin] process has been getting everybody to work as a collective unit and understanding what the long-term impact of that is. Being a UAS steering committee is one important stage of that process. [...] My hope was that out of all this initiative that we were engaged in, that we would ultimately start to deal with inter-governmentalism in an urban context. And I think that's an urban Aboriginal strategy opportunity. And whether or not the government partner, the federal government in that case, and the community that is managing that UAS agreement wants to and chooses to evolve things to try and impact intergovernmentalism or if they feel maybe several years need to be stable under a UAS steering committee format that can sort of start to collectively get the community to work together and see the benefits of the process and potentially decide whether or not they evolve to the next stage of that.

Despite this optimism, Wicihitowin is starting to assume some of this responsibility with difficulty. Only one person in the focus groups had heard of it (a serious issue about inclusion) and had concerns:

The problem, the initial intent of Wicihitowin is not what it's become. The original intent was that community members, Joe Smith on the street, could say "this is what I think needs to happen." And if there were other people believed that, then the government would fund it, is what was supposed to happen. But what's actually happening is all these priorities are coming from the community from agencies, from individuals at the table but then the government's saying: "It has to fit within our box of what we fund, as opposed to you're saying: 'It's a priority so we're going to fund it.'"

When one woman pointed out that that was just another way that the government controls Aboriginal people and gives them the run around while shirking the burden of doing any work, the first person laughed: "It doesn't really change the process because they had those boxes before of 'We only fund this.'"

Another community members spoke about how an important decision

about what to do about a new arts space for Aboriginal people was made by the government without any consultation with Wicihitowin. According to one Aboriginal woman involved in the housing field and Wicihitowin, “sometimes I feel like we’re an afterthought.” The process is also facing some identity issues. One Aboriginal city employee said:

There has been some groans I guess in the community on who represents Wicihitowin. And therefore who’s representing the people, right? So because this is a new model, and Wicihitowin is an urban Aboriginal self-governance model, right? So how do you make urban Aboriginal self-govern when they’ve never even had a voice, let alone governed? So that’s what I mean by that, it’s a process. It’s going to take time for transformational leadership to occur, where natural leaders that the community brings to the forefront to say ‘this is who we want to represent us, that person’. So I don’t think we’re there yet. I’ve seen Wicihitowin, and I’ve heard things in the community and I just think ‘oh boy’. The concept itself is good, but when you get people that, I guess, with different personalities and all that kind of stuff, and because Wicihitowin is just being born, and finding its own legs and all that kind of stuff. It may take a while before we can honestly say that Wicihitowin represents the people.

Wicihitowin is facing legitimacy issues in the community and with the government. Partly, this is to be expected because it threatens to disrupt dominant political economic systems (upsetting the government and people who support colonial relations) or else conform to them (disappointing community members dissatisfied with the status quo). In addition to not knowing who is representing whom, and who is included, Wicihitowin (and EAUAC) has also faced “internal problems.”¹⁵¹ This includes, according to a EAUAC member, Aboriginal group disagreements:

So here’s Wicihitowin and how we like to govern ourselves, and here’s the city and how they like to govern themselves. So then EAUAC is supposed to be the translator in between. So that’s the problem. And then, so who do we represent? So then we have 12 members on EAUAC each representing different components of the community with no way of building a consensus. So all it does is create fractions and friction, because again, small community

¹⁵¹ Wicihitowin went through three or four Executive Directors while this was written.

you get just enough on each side so nothing gets done; it gets stalemated.

Further internal problems for Wicihitowin include a refusal by the MNA to participate (their influence had been greater while the EHTF was in charge of the UAS). For governing the housing field, this is a real blow as the MUHC (which refuses to participate in the Housing Circle) holds so much virtual and real capital in the field. Of course, setting Aboriginal organizations up to fail reinforces claims that Aboriginal people cannot govern. This can be used to justify, for example, third party management of Aboriginal affairs and intervention by the state — a continuation of a long history of colonial governance (Prince 2010; Vowel 2012).

Because Aboriginal organizations are expected to conform to the (colonial) field of power, urban Aboriginal governance in Edmonton becomes about reconciling two kinds of governance: Aboriginal¹⁵² and colonial, in a space that heavily favours the latter. The city, like most governments that deal with Aboriginal people, seeks a unified voice via Wicihitowin and EAUAC. This creates problems for both. Again, issues of inclusion come up because, with all of these decision-makers trying to use governance models that are either based on non-Aboriginal governance (EAUAC) or Aboriginal-based models (Wicihitowin), it is possible to lose touch with the people who are being represented. One MLA stated:

I think the best decisions are the decisions that are made closest to [where] the people that are going to be affected by them live. And, so, the extent to which we can take that down to the community level, I don't even want to say down, take that to the community level, because it's not, not a down thing, and then get folks who actually live in that community and work in that community involved and engaged in solving what they see as a common problem, that gets by in a commitment of a lasting nature, that you just can't get when you try and impose a solution from on high. I'm back to the up-down thing again, but you know, you get, from a distance, let's put it that way. [...] So, it's better if you can transfer

¹⁵² Arguably, different Aboriginal groups have different ways of governing as well, though in the urban setting they are so heavily colonized that they attempt to reconcile with each other.

as much of the responsibility for identifying the problems and solving the problems down to the community level as possible, but of course that only works if you are also transferring the resources to do it with, right, and that resources are not just money; they're money, they're power and authority, they're support services of various kinds, whether direct or indirect, hands-on or intellectual and emotional, you know, resources in terms of being able to allow a community to plug into a central clearing house of information. [...] But, I think really, what, what is foundational to the whole thing is the community best understands the texture and the shadings of the particular homelessness, or affordable housing problem, or both, that it faces. And, because they can best identify the problems, they are also probably best at talking about what they think would solve the problem and getting creative and innovative around that.

In the end, although urban Aboriginal self-governance projects strive to be community-based, this goal is elusive. When a community is diverse and indefinable, there will be a struggle to determine who speaks for whom. And when so many people affected lack the capacity to participate, as is evidenced with Wicihitowin's poor turnouts at community meetings, we find the situation trapped in a chicken-and-egg dilemma. Wicihitowin's efforts to engage Aboriginal people and powerful governments have so far, hardly been successful in these respects. Though it has the possibility of being a site of resistance, it has yet to develop a realistic housing strategy in opposition to the dominant forces that punish Aboriginal people in the city. Like many Aboriginal people, generally, it is reacting, and coping, rather than leading and actively resisting domination. As one Aboriginal insider in the housing field said (in 2011), the success of Wicihitowin in the next year will determine whether it is a model for other cities or a write-off for Edmonton. It will also, when compared to the situation in Winnipeg, demonstrate how little resistance is possible in housing fields that are subservient to powerful outside interests.

6.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated how Edmonton's housing field, with particular attention to Aboriginal people's involvement and perspectives, is

shaped. We can see how powerful actors and forces that possess more valuable capital dominate urban Aboriginal people. Further, dominant actors use symbolic violence to condition behaviour and (re)construct the field to their advantage. If urban Aboriginal people want to gain power within the field, they will have to contest the forces that shape self-harming habituses while also striving for collective self-determination that includes Aboriginal community-based control over housing decisions and decision-making processes.

This chapter has demonstrated, and has argued, that self-governance initiatives in Edmonton's housing field are being channelled through institutionalized organizations, such as Homeward Trust and Wicihitowin. These offer new and innovative spaces for Aboriginal voices in the policy process. They also create limitations on self-determination by incorporating Aboriginal people into existing colonial, political systems that reproduce neoliberal ideas. As these organizations have yet to engage the wider community and address the inclusion concerns that are prerequisites for self-determination evidence on whether they will change the field is not yet available.

The limited success of Wicihitowin so far does not speak well for any proof of broad or even nascent Aboriginal self-governance in the housing field. While it and (more compellingly) its predecessor, the Dialogue Process, opened a process for contestation by urban Aboriginal people, there is still no reason for governments to listen to it, nor are they really obliged to do so. With no compelling capital source to make governments recognize decisions made by "the Aboriginal community" through Wicihitowin (other than by making rhetorical use of the symbolic legitimacy it claims), it is in reality more of an advisory board that can try to claim to speak for the community. In the end, organizations like MUHC, with the backing of MNA's economic capital, among its many resources, have more influence over the housing field and the people within it, Aboriginal and even some non-Aboriginal. If these organizations do not want to participate in what is recognized as 'political' self-governance, then vital field structures and actors, needed for self-determination to work, are missing.

The success of the MUHC disrupts the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy (and assumptions about Aboriginal people being unable to run a business) at the same time that it and its tenants are subjected to colonial ideas about who belongs in the urban space. Edmonton's housing field is also unique because of an absence of a First Nations political structure and a near monopolization of Aboriginal capital by a Métis organization. Contrasts with Winnipeg in the next chapter will highlight what these differences mean and how these findings are significant. The adoption of neoliberal modes of governance, due, in part, to a provincial government that was uninterested in investing in housing (an era from which it will take some time to recover), has clearly taken place in Alberta. In Edmonton, with a municipal government that seeks to engage Aboriginal people, there are hints that the community could develop strategies to resist domination (although such strategies have yet to materialize) through local field structures, if the province maintains its recent commitments to housing and accords it some symbolic and economic resources. The following comparison and conclusion chapter will show that despite signs of, albeit limited, supports from municipal and provincial governments, Aboriginal people in Edmonton are in different (though ultimately very similar) positions as those in Winnipeg: subjected to a powerful neoliberal and colonial field of power that imposes some structural and mental boundaries for what is possible in the local housing field.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

7.0 COMPARATIVE CONCLUSIONS

For myself, I'm a survivor. First of all of residential school. So I know very much about the Christian system and the government system and how a lot of people have residential school stories and direct and indirect impacts of how it's affected on our people. To be a survivor in this world, right now I live comfortably, but I faced many numerous obstacles at the time I've been in the city. (Edmonton men's focus group participant)

By identifying and analyzing differences and similarities between the two cities' housing fields — including understanding *why* there are differences and similarities — this chapter demonstrates colonial, gendered, and neoliberal similarities in the two urban environments. Here, I also expose the differences that tell us how oppressive forces are not completely monolithic and that there are spaces for contestation (Larner 2000; Peck and Tickell 2002; B. Miller 2007; Leitner et al. 2007). Along the same lines as the case studies, this chapter breaks the analysis into sections that apply field analysis concepts.

First, the fields themselves are compared, focussing on the ways in which they are structured by oppressive forces. In this context, I argue that the similarities in the two field structures demonstrate the significant role that the federal government (and the hegemonic doxa that support it/it supports) and the field of power play in conditioning the fields. In the same section on the importance of studying field structure, I argue that the downloading of housing has actually created and perpetuated differences between the fields, showing how neoliberalism is not monolithic. The shift of housing responsibility to local scales has produced field divergence that creates different structures for urban Aboriginal people to navigate. The multileveled nature of urban housing fields, and the jurisdictional mazes that Aboriginal people experience during the parallel passing-off of Aboriginal responsibility, create demonstrable field differences.

Second, I look at how the fields impact on actors themselves. I argue that there are common habituses created by dominant doxa that come from powerful fields. But once again, I also argue that differences between the fields, because of

their structures and because of historical differences that predate the advent of the neoliberal era, show how each field has its own habitus as well. The reproduction of habitus, supported by key individuals and distributions of capital at certain times, can have localized effects. I use the case of pan-Aboriginality in Winnipeg, and the role that gender plays here, to argue that the ‘Aboriginal field of power,’ that is, local Aboriginal politics matters when looking at how fields and people within them are created and reproduced.

Third and finally, the local communities’ capacities for collective action are contrasted. I argue that communities in both cities face common barriers and setbacks to self-governance and self-determination (despite very different strategies for such in each city). This demonstrates how thoroughly ideas about ‘politics’ (usually framed as ‘self-government’) have been co-opted by the federal field of power. There are some differences between the fields in this area because of the different structures and habituses, as described in the first two sections, but state control, through economic domination (inspired by neoliberalism and the SIS) and symbolic violence ensures limitations in each case. As shown in the case studies, actual resistance to domination (and avenues to pursue it) proves limited — in practice and by design. This chapter concludes my dissertation by highlighting some of the logistical and contextual limitations of this study. Areas for future research are also suggested as a means of addressing these limitations and building upon what has been learned so far.

7.1 THE STRUCTURING EFFECT: A ROLE FOR HEGEMONIC FORCES

There are important similarities in the two housing fields because there are overarching ideas, actors, structures, and resources influenced by or supporting neoliberalism (Dodson 2006). These combined forces occupy and draw from positions in the field of power, allowing the actors to dominate (as they have always dominated) both of the housing fields, often in attempts to consolidate them in order to be more amenable to entrenching the federal government’s pro-market approaches. For violating the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy, Aboriginal housing in each city finds itself in a nexus (“the jurisdictional maze”) as

governments pass responsibility for Aboriginal people and housing, separately and linked, between them for economic and symbolic reasons.

One such overarching, doxic reason is the current ‘economic climate’ — that is, the consensus (found in both cities) that we are in a period of recession and that we should accept the failure of the welfare state and adopt neoliberal strategies to ‘fixing’ the economy (cuts to state spending, self-reliance, etc.). Here we see similarities in the housing fields. In both cities, people described the ‘economic downturn’s’ impact on the housing field. The most dire predictions came from non-profit organizations already burdened with self-reliance and volunteer burn out. Aboriginal people’s reactions were mixed but similar between each case; while Aboriginal-focussed organizations knew that they, as ‘special interests,’ could not rely on sustainable (adequate, long-term, and condition free) funding, many also recognized that Aboriginal people, less likely to be homeowners, or have investments, were less likely to see a drop in their standard of living. Experiences for women and men were also similar in both cities with women more worried about loss of government support and men facing more unemployment because of a decrease in construction work at the time fieldwork was conducted. Despite very different governments at provincial and municipal levels, both fields, as described in Chapters Five and Six, are experiencing a political-economic climate characterized by the government getting out of housing, even from the most ostensibly non-neoliberal governments that can only do so much to pick up the slack.

Similarities in neoliberal values (and, in the example above, effects of the patriarchal division of power) that influence the field show how the provincial and municipal governments are at some disadvantage to resist federal policies or operate in opposition to ideas from the field of power. Housing, as a political field, is so thoroughly dominated in both cities and lacks the economic capital needed for development — the provinces (especially Manitoba) and cities cannot be self-reliant. It also ensures that contestation is merely reactive; no government can come up with a complete housing plan without having some support from the

federal government which refuses to enact long-term planning in order to prevent the housing crisis from worsening.

The doxa that housing provision is someone else's problem (another level of government or an individual tenant's own responsibility) is not universally held by all actors; many, from community members, to government employees, to politicians stated that ensuring that everyone in the city is housed should be a collective or social responsibility. But the way in which the fields have been restructured has nonetheless created situations in which housing is a personal responsibility in both cities. As I will argue, it is the differential *local responses* to these expressions of individualizing liberalism — the reactions to the 1993 cuts, the handling of the end of subsidies, the dismantling of the CMHC — that tell us how the cities differ. In Edmonton, Aboriginal people have found some recourse at the municipal level and in quasi-political Homeward Trust/Wicihitowin where policy makers, advocates, funders, and Aboriginal representatives came together. In Winnipeg, they have found more successes at the provincial level and in numerous, smaller community-based, 'apolitical' organizations.

As one provincial politician said, both cities have the similar housing challenges and, despite different priorities and strategies for dealing with the crisis, federal funding (or the lack thereof) and federal rules and regulations attempt to ensure conformity.¹⁵³ It is a hollowing out from above, not a race for the bottom that has created the national housing crisis that is reproduced on the local level. The triumph of hegemonic neoliberalism in this area is reflected in the public's (reluctant or eager) turning to the provincial and municipal governments, which shifts *de facto* responsibility away from the federal level, even in Alberta.

¹⁵³ Indeed, differences in provincial rules create divergence. One other significant rules-based difference between the two housing fields is that Winnipeg is a "charter city." Said a City of Edmonton employee, this "means that they can do a lot more than what the provincial legislation allows or limits them to. [...] our Municipal Government Act has lots of limitations in terms of what we can and cannot go forward and deal with. For example, in [Winnipeg ...] they can request a certain amount of affordable housing must be provided by the housing industry. [...] And so we can't do this to the same extent or the same way, and so we need to urge a lot more cooperation and encouragement and provide incentives and all kinds of other things like that to help make some of those things happen." Thus, rules still play an important role in the shaping of the field. Edmonton became a charter city in 2012 (CBC 2012d).

The success of this national pull out was found in the near unanimous consensus by interview participants in all parts of the housing field (including government employees) that the province must bear most or all of the responsibility for funding and regulating the housing field.

Parallel to this, some governments have tried to withdraw or avoid Aboriginal-specific programming in the housing field. Urban Aboriginal housing remains caught between two state processes of avoiding responsibility, reinforcing the dichotomy once again. The responsibility for Aboriginal people (and Aboriginal housing), once tied to the federal level as well, has shifted to hopeful expressions by community members that all three levels will cooperate and share funding. Urban First Nations groups are even willing to modify much of the “s.91(24)” rhetoric in order to enter into multilevel agreements with the province and private sector. This was similar in both cities, even though Wicihitowin provides a model of tripartite funding in Edmonton and such a model is absent in Winnipeg. In all cases, though, the federal government still plays a role, such as in the UAS or in tripartite agreements, so that it maintains some policy influence while committing less funding thanks, in part, to partnerships with other funders.

Thus, despite abandoning the social fields, the federal government still plays an important role within them. The act of retreating from and refusing to return to housing is a powerful act of symbolic violence that affects Edmontonians and Winnipeggers. It passes responsibility for the provision of social housing to governments that cannot or do not want to be responsible for it; they do not want another level of government making incursions into their social policy, while they also do not want fiscal burdens placed upon them. Further, it ensures that services will be cut or eliminated, and it reinforces the message that housing is a private and personal matter best left up to the individual family. The urban housing field therefore proves to be an arena suitable for confirming the primary characteristic of neoliberalism described by Bourdieu (1998b, 98), the act of dressing up the hollowing out of the state as a concession to the individual freedom to enjoy the free market, unhindered by government interference. Many,

especially those in the provincial and municipal governments, stressed that this responsibility should be *shared* among all three levels of government; no one said that the province had *no role* in housing.

These new expectations on how politics will play out matter because they create predictable and recognizable interactions in the field that reproduce power relations (Kalpagam 2006, 84–85). But even though there are hegemonic forces at play, there are important differences between the two housing fields. This tells us, I argue, that local structures matter in shaping the field, how it operates, and conditioning the people within them.

7.2 STRUCTURE AND DIFFERENCE: WHY THE LOCAL MATTERS

As seen in the case studies, the impact of the downloading of responsibility for housing has had an impact on both housing fields. But downloading also has led to differences in field structure as the two local fields have diverged; they are now subjected to different sources of provincial policy in the absence of a strong national housing policy or consensus. Some people in Edmonton even cited the initiatives of the Manitoba provincial government in housing as examples of good practices. As shown in the case studies, the NDP in Manitoba, for reasons already explained, has accepted responsibility for affordable housing much sooner than in Alberta. As for Aboriginal housing, not only did it commit funds to top-up the off-reserve Aboriginal housing program (something which Alberta did not do), it carried out the joint selection process in order to get Aboriginal people's input into the policy process.

Further downloading to municipal levels also creates more divergence and the biggest difference in the two housing fields occurs at this scale. One City of Edmonton employee, who had been most critical of the Alberta provincial government, stated that Winnipeg was at an advantage because they started their housing programs “ages ago” and have a different approach today:

When it comes to affordable housing and low-income housing, in my own view, Manitoba, and Winnipeg, probably lead the pack in terms of moving forward and really addressing a lot of needs. [...] Well, they have a different

provincial government [*laughs*]; more cooperative and their administration has really been involved in a lot of studies and a lot of work.

The most obvious difference between the two provinces is that the federal government successfully downloaded the CMHC's responsibilities for social housing programs in Manitoba, but not in Alberta. But even with intervening provincial responsibility, the municipal level still matters; although Manitoba has shown more interest in off-reserve Aboriginal housing,¹⁵⁴ it has not been able to rely on downloading to an interested city government. This contrasts with Alberta where the city of Edmonton has picked up some slack in both housing and Aboriginal affairs. The neoliberal risk of 'double downloading' — as demonstrated best in Ontario (Hackworth and Moriah 2006) — creates a certain jurisdictional stalemate in both cities and confusion of expectations. In both cities, there was a lack of consensus over who is responsible for (Aboriginal) housing, though most frustration in Edmonton was directed at the province while Winnipeggers were critical of both the province and the city/Mayor.

Perhaps an even bigger difference here is that regardless of what is actually being done, the mayor of Edmonton has gained recognition for having supported the Aboriginal community¹⁵⁵ and to an extent, housing/inner-city development initiatives (Simons 2012; Kartsens-Smith 2012; Mah 2012). For example, he and a former city councillor were largely given credit in field interviews for the city's Aboriginal Accord. With this symbolic recognition for being pro-Aboriginal and pro-housing (something which the provincial government, in the eyes of those who participated in research, had not yet gained), combined with some influence over how the city's economic capital will be spent, the mayor can use his symbolic capital to demonstrate/convince that he is invested

¹⁵⁴ As stated, Manitoba's Ministry of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has programs and funds for service delivery (and is developing an urban Aboriginal strategy) while Alberta's Aboriginal Affairs did not. Premier Redford transferred Alberta's Aboriginal Affairs into the Ministry of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations, and then separated it out again.

¹⁵⁵ Witness, for example, the Mayor's role as Edmonton's champion against the far-right Wild Rose Party in the 2012 election and his speaking out against the racist comments of one of their candidates (Kent 2012).

in the housing field, as seen by the number of research participants in government and housing organizations who stated how much the city was doing. Backing up its financial commitments to housing strategies and Aboriginal relations with supportive rhetoric helps reinforce, in people's minds, that the city is engaged.

In contrast, in Winnipeg, according to one city employee, the mayor:

came in and he felt that instead of a city initiative, MAP was a [former Mayor] Glen [Murray] thing and he didn't want to touch it. [...] He tried to find councillors who would serve as the secretary of Aboriginal Affairs for the city. He went through three councillors. None of whom did much and finally decided that the mayor was going to, the mayor named himself to this position. So Sam Katz is actually the secretary of urban Aboriginal affairs for the city. [...] The symbolism or message he was trying to convey was he wasn't prepared to just leave this critical issue to others. He was going to make it his personal responsibility to improve the quality of life for Winnipeg's Aboriginal citizens.

With housing and Aboriginal affairs being engaged by the municipal level in Edmonton, but only downloaded so far as to the province in Manitoba, we can see how influential key local individuals are in shaping the field.

Homeward Trust, with its strong Aboriginal component (which was also the result of certain Aboriginal people and municipal actors with concentrations of power), permits some Aboriginal involvement (albeit by capital-rich individuals) to participate in decision-making and policy-direction within the housing field. In Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Housing and Homeless Initiative still lacks similar Aboriginal participation. Thus, the colonial irrelevance of Aboriginal people to the policy process is reinforced. Although the WHHI was innovative at its inception (and adequate for the housing crisis at that time), its failure to engage the urban Aboriginal communities or integrate the three levels of government that should be working together on housing look dated as Homeward Trust develops, but it will nonetheless continue until it ceases to meet the needs of the city's dominant (government-based) housing actors.

This difference in housing fields is not to say that Winnipeg has no interest in affordable or Aboriginal housing, but that the city's commitment to housing stems from an earlier era, a different mayor, and a recognition that the

downloading of housing and the end of subsidies hit that city harder and earlier. Edmonton, still experiencing an economic boom, population growth, and housing development was not yet in the same position and, as stated, the end of subsidies has not registered in the urban Aboriginal community the same way in Edmonton.

As for Winnipeg's lagging behind in Aboriginal affairs (the only municipal priority is the Aboriginal youth strategy¹⁵⁶), it is because, as was pointed out, the municipal "political climate" and "political council" has been cautious in Aboriginal spending for ideological and economic reasons (which is itself ideological). Winnipeg, having once been at the forefront, is starting to fall behind Edmonton in this area according to a city employee:

We felt with MAP that we were out ahead of them [Edmonton]. Not that it's a competition. But we felt that we were the first to launch into this in a big way. And in the transition from [former Mayor] Glen [Murray] to [current Mayor] Sam [Katz], we lost a ton of momentum. [...] The next step with Glen was to get the budget behind MAP so we could expand what we were trying to do, learn from our mistakes. And in the transition from Glen to Sam it just completely collapsed. Completely, like a house of cards, poof, gone. So the result of that is that Edmonton, on the other hand, is on a different track, got a whole bunch of community support for what they were trying to do and made it happen. I guess that would be what I regret about that, is that the Aboriginal communities, [...] we didn't have them totally on side enough that they could be outraged when we kind of... [...] I didn't build enough alliances and allies out there in order to try to sustain the momentum.

From this, and the examples in Chapter Six, one can draw out some resources that have allowed Edmonton to 'pull ahead' in developing institutionalized urban Aboriginal governance structures: a supportive mayor and council combined with a mobilized and connected community. This latter factor was led by key people in the community who had the capital to lead and to connect with supportive non-Aboriginal people in sites of power (Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Dialogue Process 2006). A timely moment of (re)politicization allowed Aboriginal Edmontonians to come together.

¹⁵⁶ The strategy is the epitome of a SIS 'investment in children,' with the added neoconservative spin of treating Aboriginal youth as potential criminals.

Urban Aboriginal networks or hubs also exist in Winnipeg, especially among the well-connected women who help each other through Aboriginal Visioning or other organizations, but these people are not as well connected to the political agents that support the Aboriginal community. There are not enough access points or public spaces for Aboriginal participation in either the city council/mayor's office or in the housing field's primary structure, the WHHI. As stated, MUNHA represents organizations, not people and it is struggling at that. Edmonton was not unlike this in the past, but the ability of the urban Aboriginal community, led by Aboriginal leaders to connect with mayor and council created the dialogue process that led to the ARO, Homeward Trust's Aboriginal advisory component, and Wicihitowin. This has moved Edmonton's Aboriginal field into new and innovative areas.

Thus, the transfer of housing policy (back) to the local levels may mean different things in each city. The two housing fields rely on different structures in which capital is distributed in dissimilar ways. The downloading of housing (and avoidance of urban Aboriginal responsibility) has caused divergence as differences in the two local housing fields become more pronounced over time when there are no national housing strategies to keep cities and provinces in line.

The relative differences between the fields (their history and structure) allow for some contestation at different levels or scales, depending on the city: Edmonton, at the municipal level, and Winnipeg at the provincial level. The implication to this understanding is that, as a reality of Canadian politics and Aboriginal/state relations, we must look at urban Aboriginal politics or housing (as Bourdieu did not in the French context) in a multileveled manner; the jurisdictional maze that Aboriginal housing strategies must navigate necessitates understanding the roles of all three levels of government *and the uneven power relations among them*. Studying just one level of government, such as treating urban Aboriginal housing as a "municipal problem" does not explain the origins of the problem or how it can be addressed.

The idea of "urban Aboriginal people" creates complex political questions because of *urban Aboriginal* people's contradictory or impossible positions,

occupying more than one scale of government jurisdiction and cutting across (disrupting) fields. Locating their political questions and answers requires taking apart the false Aboriginal/urban dichotomy while simultaneously acknowledging the long-standing colonial divisions of power and resources that are responsible for creating these contested spaces. This must happen even though the depoliticizing effects of liberal difference-blindness, by evacuating political contestation from the state, rules that such questions are out of order.

7.3 THE UNWELCOMING CITY

Like the impact of national approaches to housing policy, historically based ‘common-sense’ that comes from beyond the city’s own field of power shapes actors in shared ways in each city. The cities themselves and how people within them create and react to social issues are based on a common colonial history of Canada’s racialized and gendered state. Aboriginal women and men’s stories showed how the same racist and sexist ideas that were found in Winnipeg were also found in Edmonton. For example, all focus groups contained stories from people who were told by their non-Aboriginal neighbours to “go back to the reserve” and both women’s groups relayed accounts of sexual harassment from landlords.

Commonalities between focus groups confirm that actors from across the urban housing fields — government employees, landlords and potential landlords, housing organization employees, neighbours — insinuate and believe that Aboriginal people are certain kinds of people which reinforces the Aboriginal/urban dichotomy. Often, this characterization sees Aboriginal people as bad tenants, prostitutes, addicted to drugs or alcohol, having lots of fatherless children, or planning to let large, destructive families stay with them — all examples of inadequate urban citizens who take from the city more than they contribute. As can be seen, most of these labels fit those more likely to be renting: Aboriginal women and single mothers. By living on social assistance, or *assumed* to be living on social assistance, they are ‘worse’ than the (non-homeless) Aboriginal men who are more likely to be working. These women also disrupt the

parameters of the field and its jurisdictional barriers: neoliberal urban citizens are supposed to be working at waged employment; living off government funding and in ‘free’ (tax-payer funded) housing is what people do on reserves (Canadian Taxpayers Federation 2010; Canadian Taxpayers Federation 2011). Even their tendencies to try to act collectively and go against the expectations of individual self-reliance violate ideas about private property.

The value of difference-blindness adopted by actors and enacted through governments and institutions require us not to recognize this systemic racism and sexism for what they are; most non-Aboriginal people believed that overt racism existed in isolated events but could not recognize their own racism or that of their employers (see, especially, some of the quotes in Chapter Six). The situation was the same for gendered assumptions and the creation of ideas about Aboriginal women. The fact that there are similar experiences across fields tells us, as one would expect, that these experiences stem from a non-localized field of power — in this case, patriarchal colonialism.

It must be emphasized that Aboriginal people’s experiences in housing or the city were not homogenous. While some people experienced chronic poverty, other Aboriginal people, especially those in government, described how they bettered their lives, economically, and were less hampered by systemic barriers. However, no Aboriginal people *denied* that racism existed and was an issue for the community. Most could recount personal or second-hand accounts of experiencing racism in the city and/or provide examples of every day, systemic sources of racist oppression. These forces are shared by everyone in the field but there is no universal Aboriginal experience.

Further, all interview and focus group participants were asked what role gender played in housing as stated earlier. Many, Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people, were unsure how to respond.¹⁵⁷ The most common answer was

¹⁵⁷ Only one person in all of my fieldwork used the questions about gender roles to talk about sexual minorities; one person at AV talked about the housing difficulties two-spirited people have. I believe that this either reflects the discomfort people have talking about gender beyond heterosexual male/female categories or a lack of awareness about queerness in Aboriginal communities (Napoleon 2002).

that ‘women are carers’¹⁵⁸ and responsible for housing (again, this was a common response among women and men, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people). Women were more likely to answer questions about gender but the men who answered provided responses similar to the above. When I asked about “gender in housing” most participants spoke about — and reduced it to — *women* even though it is a larger concept. Few people spoke about roles that men have in housing, perhaps because it not recognized as men’s work. If any area of the housing field was recognized as men’s work — male-dominated — it was recognized by research participants (especially in Winnipeg¹⁵⁹) in the ‘official’ or state-related field of politics; housing organizations connected to service provision were, very crucially, not recognized as political. This reinforces the depoliticization of the housing fields, but also disconnects women, more likely to be working at or benefiting from services organizations, from the state-sanctioned (and funded) political sphere. The fact that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people had similar responses shows how much gender ideas cut across society.

Because of hegemonic patriarchal ideas, it is little surprise that the ideas that create roles for women as carers were held across the fields. What is intriguing is that, although non-Aboriginal people were uncomfortable talking about race (or “culture”), participants were, overwhelmingly, more ready and able to point out examples of racism in the field than sexism. This reflects how thoroughly we have been conditioned not to recognize, indeed to misrecognize, examples of patriarchy and how questions of gender have been evacuated from politics (while questions about race are slightly more acceptable to address or at least recognize). Most research participants who recognized housing as women’s work did not describe how relying on women’s unpaid work helps reproduce distributions of (patriarchal) power. Among many respondents, it was often cited as ‘tradition.’ Although, historically, Indigenous cultures had different roles for women and men, Aboriginal feminists argue that this was not oppressive because

¹⁵⁸ This is not a universal truth, however. There are male caregivers; the only person to bring children to a focus group was a man who had custody of his children.

¹⁵⁹ This may be because the president of the MNA is a woman, or more likely, because of Winnipeg’s long-standing pan-Aboriginal approaches, described below.

women's work and men's work was equally valued (Ladner 2000) rather than hierarchized the way it is under patriarchal colonialism. But this division of housing work is problematic today when women's work and housing (which were synonymous among many respondents) are not valued, symbolically or economically (Waring 1988). Hence, both of the housing fields continue to be dominated by a field of power rooted in hierarchical patriarchal ideas.

Before beginning my research, I had expected or anticipated finding examples of women contesting this domination by working together to create anti-oppressive structures in the housing field that opened spaces for inclusive self-governance. This would have confirmed what others have found where women created housing or related neighbourhood-based supports that valued their work and which challenged the division of power (Mahar 2010; Silver et al. 2004; Feldman and Stall 2004). The closest (housing-specific) example that was discovered during fieldwork was Aboriginal Visioning (people mentioned some successful organizations that operate outside of the housing field in areas such as education and child/family welfare — the IAAW in Edmonton is a prime example, Ma Mawi in Winnipeg is another). Such organizations show how Aboriginal women used their social and cultural capital¹⁶⁰ to come together and create support structures in order to resist the individualizing forces of the field. This was done through “apolitical” service or community organizations — more political organizations such as the ACW or Wicihitowin have yet to realize similar results.

Although fieldwork failed to turn up more examples or get participants to reflect more on what collective control means, it does not mean that such self-

¹⁶⁰ At least two women spoke about how the process of regaining their Indian status — the so-called process of “getting one's C-31” — had influenced their political views. I speculate that navigating the bureaucratic maze necessary to regain Indian status — like the bureaucratic maze participants described for getting housing/child supports or into affordable housing — is a process that, although demoralizing or insulting to many, provides the Aboriginal women who succeed with bureaucratic capital that has enabled them to navigate other field struggles. It provides first-hand information about government responsibility — explaining how so many were knowledgeable about government services — and knowledge about where to go in order to get services. This is information that many indicated that they shared with others; indeed, both of the women's focus groups were used to share information with others who were present.

governance, much harder to see than self-government institutions, is not happening in less studied areas of the city. It just means that we need to be mindful that not all movements toward self-determination take place through state-sanctioned bodies such as Wicihitowin.

7.4 THE LOCAL ABORIGINAL FIELD OF POWER

Despite examples of hegemonic patriarchy, it is in gendered habituses (perhaps because women contest the housing field better or because they are identified with it, and it with them) that we start to see examples, again, of how the two housing fields show (historically-based) divergence. Once again, this divergence is visible when looking at field actors' behaviours and beliefs that shape, and are shaped by, the field.

The local housing field still plays a part in influencing behaviours and beliefs. The differences in field structure can and do lead to differences in habitus that reinforce divergence. Again, forces from outside the field, including policies from the federal level, are not totally monolithic, especially when competing ideas were firmly entrenched prior to neoliberalism's adoption. Most significantly, there are differences in dispositions within the two Aboriginal housing fields when it comes to policy areas such as whom to house and how. The question of why these differences exist is the result of the distribution of capital at key moments. These milestones in the development of the urban Aboriginal (housing) field created long-term divergence in structure and mutually supportive behaviour. The implication here is that the Aboriginal field of power, no matter how insignificant or thoroughly dominated it may seem, matters when understanding urban Aboriginal politics and it must be sought out, rather than looking only at mainstream actors. The distinction that demonstrates this is as follows.

It has been asserted that Winnipeg's Aboriginal organizations, both political and service-oriented, not only began earlier, but were started by a "core of active First Nations and Métis people" (Peters 2005, 236; Peters 2005, 46–47; Peters 2006, 320). This affirms that Winnipeg, as a combined result of its history and location, developed an urban Aboriginal population sizable enough, at the

height of the welfare state, and containing a core that was rich enough with valued (whitestream) capital to access program funding. This included: cultural capital in the form of education and knowledge in how to operate in the urban field of power; social capital in the form of access to government decision-makers, other privileged members of the “active core,” and networks of other urban Aboriginal people that could be mobilized politically; and economic capital in the form of government support for the creation of new projects. Combined, this strategy made Winnipeg’s Aboriginal population one of the first to actually use the welfare state as Aboriginal people. This brought about the first Friendship Centre in Canada and the country’s first urban Aboriginal political and social service organizations, *many of which still exist today*. Most importantly, this included the first urban Aboriginal housing program (Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, Winnipeg 1971; Institute of Urban Studies 1970).

An examination of Peters’ (Peters 2005, 46–47) lists of urban Aboriginal organizations in Edmonton and Winnipeg shows that not only did/does Winnipeg have more, but they have *lasted*. Fieldwork for this study included interviews with organizations that have been operating since the 1970s and 1980s. Longevity of the field actors (in this case, organizations) can promote stability, result in the accumulation of capital and can open political spaces for those who want to challenge the field’s division of power. This includes the capital described above plus (most importantly) the symbolic capital to say they have lasted and are recognized by the government as a “success” — this status imposes symbolic violence on other organizations. In contrast, there has been more turnover in Edmonton. This also speaks to the stability and longevity of Winnipeg’s urban Aboriginal organizations, and to the instability of Edmonton’s ‘newer’ urban Aboriginal population.

As argued, timing was certainly of the essence in creating Winnipeg’s urban Aboriginal field, as it entrenched the habituses that sustain it today. Kinew housing started in 1970. At that time, the relative number¹⁶¹ of non-status Indians

¹⁶¹ Even ten years after Kinew was going, the Aboriginal population of Winnipeg’s *inner city* was estimated to contain “about 3,100 Status Indians and 5,200 Status/Non-Status

in Winnipeg would have been high, especially when one considers that the sexist provisions of the *Indian Act* that made women lose their status for ‘marrying out’ (and, as was stated, having to leave their homes on reserves) were still in effect. These same women made the most use of the early affordable housing programs (Institute of Urban Studies 1970), as they continue to do, today. The MMF and First Nations groups did not participate in the founding of Kinew; it was created by the pan-Aboriginal Friendship Centre (Institute of Urban Studies 1970, 27). Serving the needs of so many women and non-status people, it had to remain pan-Aboriginal.

With the MMF and AMC unable to break into the urban housing market, there is a greater demand that Aboriginal housing remain pan-Aboriginal to service all Aboriginal groups, regardless of group membership. As quoted in Chapter Five, the director of Kinew said that there was a discussion in the past about privileging certain Aboriginal groups but¹⁶² such proposals were roundly defeated.

The success of Kinew set the regulatory standard and expectations for urban Aboriginal housing in Winnipeg. Other projects in Winnipeg have followed its pan-Aboriginal lead (with the exception of DOTCHAI which, as already explained, is run by a First Nations-based tribal council outside the city). Related to this, Aboriginal social services in Winnipeg also follow a pan-Aboriginal approach (e.g., the Friendship Centre, Ma Mawi, Aboriginal Visioning). Thus, an urban pan-Aboriginal common sense has been established for Winnipeg’s housing field and a large driver behind it has been Aboriginal women. As already stated, they and their children have lost the most from the ‘status debate’ and the division of Indigenous groups into government-created cleavages. Research participants showed that they participated and trusted less in group-specific Aboriginal political groups. As they are un(der)represented in many, if not all, of the political

Indians” which included Métis people. Clatworthy extrapolated this to estimate that Winnipeg, as a whole had 5,500 to 6,500 Status Indians (less than 40%) and 8,500 to 9,500 Non-Status Indians and Métis people¹⁶¹ (Clatworthy 1980a, 14).

¹⁶² The Kinew reports from the early 1970s do not mention this so it must have occurred later, or else did not register as an important issue to the non-Aboriginal people writing the reports (Institute of Urban Studies 1970).

organizations (Aboriginal or otherwise) that seek to preserve, promote, and profit from group division, Aboriginal women in Winnipeg have sought to protect their needs, and those of their children, through pan-Aboriginal programs, projects, and services. Women in the follow-up meeting even stated that they saw themselves working against the male leadership of Aboriginal political organizations and at times replicating them.

The dilemma over pan-Aboriginality is ongoing at a higher level.¹⁶³ The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and Sgro Report on the “Urban Aboriginal Strategy” (2002) both struggled with the question of working across group difference in the city. The RCAP endorsed pan-Aboriginality for its cost-effectiveness while recognizing that many (such as the Métis Nation of Canada and Manitoba Métis Federation), on the one hand, were opposed to it on cultural grounds and that, on the other hand, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) overwhelmingly supports a status-blind approach to urban service delivery and self-governance (1996 v.4, c.7). Some have stated that having services delivered pan-Aboriginally could provide strategic benefits (K. Wilson and Peters 2005; Helgason 2002; Walker 2006a; Sgro 2002; Hanselmann 2003; Government of Canada 1996 v.2, c.3). It is even argued that pragmatic alliances of diverse Aboriginal voices can reflect new urban Aboriginal identities that are developing in cities (Andersen and Denis 2003; Andersen 1999, 315).

However, some people, such as representatives from the AMC, have argued that urban Aboriginal services should be framed and guided in terms of “treaty rights” or Indian status (Rust 2007, 31). This can be problematic because many urban Aboriginal people do not have treaty or Indian status, and even those who do have such rights and entitlements are effectively ignored by the federal government that considers off-reserve Aboriginal people to be a provincial or, at

¹⁶³ Boldt argues that the federal government originally used pan-Indigeneity (despite a lack of historical basis) to control First Nations groups and separate leaders from the community in order to get leadership consensus. Later, the federal government changed to group-specific funding in order to create “divisive competition” and prevent opposition to government, though it still used pan-Aboriginality during negotiations such as the Charlottetown Accord (1993, 87–88).

best, a shared provincial/federal responsibility (Government of Canada 1996 v.4, c.7).

Not surprisingly, the emphasis on working across Aboriginal groups has come from Aboriginal women (Peters 2006; Lawrence and Anderson 2005; Government of Canada 1996 v.4, c.7). Aboriginal Women have stated that the “artificial” divisions of Aboriginal peoples will not work in the city (Aboriginal Women’s Unity Coalition, cited in Government of Canada 1996 v.4, c.2). Having experienced the loss of status and/or band membership, some NWAC members have stated that they want the fighting between groups such as the AFN, MNC, and CAP to end so that Aboriginal women and men can be united and focus on their communities (Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg 1998; Lawrence and Anderson 2005).

Confirming this in fieldwork, the participants who were most adamant that urban housing issues be dealt with in a pan-Aboriginal or status-blind manner were women (and some men who had grown up without membership in any government-recognized Aboriginal group). One focus group participant in Winnipeg who had lived most of his life as a non-status Indian and had become a “C-31” summed up the distrust of Aboriginal political organizations. He said that while he is now legally a status Indian, he sees himself only as “Indigenous” and that Indigenous people must abandon government-created divisions in order to work together; their rights are inherent and not lost simply because of where they live.

Research participants in focus groups, female and male,¹⁶⁴ stated that the ‘solution’ to the divide and conquer approach imposed by government divisions is to come together as non-government-labelled peoples that recognize the multiplicities of Indigenous cultures. In Winnipeg, this happens non-institutionally (setting aside the ACW) through strategic actions through service organizations. In Edmonton, this is institutionalized through Wicihitowin and can be seen in the IAAW.

¹⁶⁴ Many adult children of women who had lost their status (both female and male) shared in the experience of being alienated from government-recognized groups.

Edmonton, then, offers some contrasts with Winnipeg in this important area of group membership and the politics of identity. Again, timing and history matter. The city's primary urban Aboriginal housing provider, MUHC, was started later, in 1982. By this point, the Métis Nation of Alberta¹⁶⁵ was a political force and able to take on a housing project just before CMHC started scaling down its large housing projects (and at a time when CMHC was "desperate" to offload material housing stock onto an organization willing to manage it). Métis self-identification was also at a new height, following the inclusion of the Métis in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Weinstein 2007) and the growing movement of Métis people away from the Native Council of Canada which went on to representing non-Status Indians.

The idea of having an Aboriginal housing program that houses Métis people 3 to 1 encountered no successful opposition and would have been certainly welcomed by Métis people who recognized that the federal government had been disproportionately investing in First Nations housing and other services — a sentiment that continues in the city today. There was no similar core (dominated by non-status or Aboriginal women) of Aboriginal people promoting a pan-Aboriginal approach. Today, despite focus group participants directing frustration at the MUHC for a number of reasons (mostly related to the long waiting list), the 3 to 1 system was not a complaint. Unlike any Aboriginal housing in Winnipeg, the MUHC is owned by a political organization.

We can conclude that a study of the two housing fields confirms that Aboriginal people in Winnipeg were more organized and at an earlier date and that women were included (Peters 2006, 320). This has entrenched a more pan-Aboriginal collective organization in the housing field and expectations that are manifested in self-governance initiatives as well, such as the ACW in opposition

¹⁶⁵ Much of this confirms the earlier findings that Edmonton's Aboriginal organizations started later than in Winnipeg and were more likely to have been started under the influence of provincial Aboriginal organizations (Clatworthy, Hull, and Loughren 1995, 33–36). This speaks to Winnipeg's organizations being more local and community-based; it was argued in 1995 that these organizations are also less reliant on government funding than in Edmonton (Clatworthy, Hull, and Loughren 1995, 53–54), though this study was unable to confirm this.

to the MMF and AMC. As already argued, Aboriginal women also demonstrated developed social networks, access to valued cultural capital (education, especially in social work), and bureaucratic capital — partly because they make more use of housing programs (either as employees or tenants) than men. This experience can translate into leadership, and is seen in Edmonton as well where the MNA and MUHC are led by women (and, as of 2012, Wicihitowin).

Because these Métis-based organizations have so much capital, they can actually dominate the urban Aboriginal housing field and set expectations of their own, conditioning people to accept these ideas when they are reliant on them for housing. As a political Aboriginal organization, the MNA is also complicit (like the MMF) in participating in and reproducing the Aboriginal field of official politics. Because of their connections, powerful individuals within the MNA (and, by extension, the MUHC) can resist participating in the local community and proceed straight to mainstream governments in the search of support. The extent to which these organizations, although led by women, can resist the patriarchal effects of ‘official’ politics — the old boys clubs of state and Aboriginal politics — remains to be seen.

As described, grass-roots structuring of the field is more visible in Winnipeg where ideas and behaviours have had more time to consolidate, Edmonton’s “newer” Aboriginal population, driven by in-migration during boom times explains its younger and less stable organizations. This comparison confirms how the housing fields, and the people within them, are mutually self-defining. They must match or else there is conflict and when people know how to behave in the field, they are better able to struggle for capital. In the 1970s, in Winnipeg, the right people (the active core) in the right place (a city with a large Aboriginal population that includes many non-status Indians and people unattached to/estranged from Aboriginal political organizations) at the right time (when the federal government was investing in housing) created a housing field that remains avowedly pan-Aboriginal. A different set of field structures and capital (and a city with a dominant Métis organization at the height of Métis

politicization) secured a valuable deal that has led Edmonton to a different housing field.

These divergent fields, because of their susceptibility to being dominated, are then conditioned by the different provincial and municipal political fields (while the national level tried to homogenize them). But the influence of the Aboriginal field matters in every housing field. Governments are not dealing with blank slates of identity-less Aboriginal actors. This is significant because it shows how studies of urban Aboriginal governance must know the Aboriginal people and the context in which they struggle.

Each city has an Aboriginal population that plans to manage the housing crisis and contest neoliberalism by attempting to mix governance (decision-making) and housing. It will be interesting to see if Wicihitowin's proposal to develop an urban Aboriginal housing advocacy body (if Wicihitowin succeeds in developing it) takes the form of something akin to MUNHA (which is largely unhelpful since MUHC needs no support from Amisk and Umisk), the B.C. (AHMA) model, or something else since Wicihitowin is meant to be community-based. With so many women and people of different Aboriginal backgrounds involved in Wicihitowin, will this body continue to respect MUHC's quota system or attempt to challenge it? What roles will Aboriginal political organizations play? Such a body would have to be pan-Aboriginal like Wicihitowin and Homeward Trust. With the MNA's refusal to participate in Wicihitowin, the proposal could prove to be the antagonistic catalyst or (group) identity crisis event that challenges the status quo and changes the field to match outside ideas about housing and governance.

7.5 THE PROSPECTS FOR CONTROL

Despite differences in histories, Aboriginal populations, ideas, and current systems for organizing the field, both cities experience similar barriers to developing self-determination strategies. As such, resistance to systemic oppression appears quite similar.

As noted in the case studies, there are some limited examples of resistance in practice but there are common ideas about what it should look like. Focus group participants showed that many people already know what needs to happen. Educating people about their position in the field and decolonizing is vital (Alfred 1999). Education can also help people gain the valued cultural capital that is useful in challenging state system (Bourdieu 2006). At the same time, Aboriginal people want to maintain their own cultural capital so as not to be co-opted into existing state systems. This is what makes resistance harder (New and Petronicolos 2001, 8; Wacquant 1992, 23). The evidence, cited in Chapters Five and Six, that such cultural capital may be beginning to be valued in certain contexts indicates that some resistance without assimilation is possible if Aboriginal people work together outside state spaces (Ramirez 2007).

Interviews with field actors described how they also try to effect broader changes. First, there were some participants in each city who said that they saw resistance happening. For example, the Homeward Trust representative noted that the organization provides valuable space for Aboriginal input into the housing field, the City of Edmonton employee stated that Aboriginal people can, and have, worked with city council to challenge state processes, and the women at AV and Ma Mawi who said that people are beginning to decolonize and question the fundamental basis of racialized and gendered inequality in Winnipeg's North End.

These examples demonstrate how more powerful participants — especially the two in Edmonton that work in state or quasi-state bodies — whose habitus closely matches the field into which they are more integrated (Bourdieu 1999a) may have an easier time recognizing examples of resistance if what they find matches what they expect and want to see (Bourdieu 1998b). Not-for-profit, funding-reliant groups in the field are also more likely to be co-opted and, if they are, they must speak positively and show results — proof that they contribute — in order to justify their funding. As such, these potential members of a more capital-rich Aboriginal class (K. Graham and Peters 2002; Silver et al. 2006; Wotherspoon 2003) may still prove to be intermediaries for wider change by opening spaces for Aboriginal community members to get engaged in or

challenge the field structure. By looking at both cities, we can see that resistance strategies on broad levels (educate people about domination, secure more useful resources, etc.) are very similar in each city. The biggest differences between the fields are found in how these strategies are carried out as they are mediated by the field structure.

Once again, in Edmonton, the municipal government has proven a useful ally by opening space for dialogue on self-governance. This led to Wicihitowin, which (discussed more below) ‘officially’ mediates urban Aboriginal collective strategies. With no equivalent in Winnipeg, resistance is more spread out across community groups and social support programs that are older and more entrenched. When these groups are (strategically) recognized by governments as legitimate voices of the Aboriginal community (as is still the struggle for Wicihitowin), they can contest state power as, for example, DOTC did by avoiding the demolition of housing, AV did with hosting dialogues on how the hotel would be reused by the community, MUNHA tries by bringing the end-of-subsidies issues to the forefront, and Ma Mawi does by creating housing strategies that are culturally appropriate and question state intervention.

More pessimistically, there were people in both cities who noted that the barriers to collective resistance or change are too great. As a couple of examples taken from the previous chapters show, housing providers in Winnipeg said that people are too quiet (or overwhelmed) to do anything but survive, a homelessness case-worker in Edmonton claimed that too many people who are struggling lack the skills to engage in politics, and municipal employees and not-for-profit workers in both cities noted that funding for housing is too tightly controlled to do anything to challenge the status quo.

Undoubtedly, there are powerful people in both fields that do not want the status quo to change. Surprisingly, perhaps, the delegation of authority to Aboriginal organizations proved to be not so great an issue. Instead, it appears that governments want Aboriginal people to meet and make decisions about their priorities so that these can be articulated; UAS representatives, as well as state agents, showed how governments of the social investment era need to know

whom to fund through well-written (business) plans (that can explain the profitability of investment). At the same time, governments know that (government-created, as well as gendered) divisions in urban Aboriginal communities ensure that diverse groups and individuals will not be too strongly united (Boldt 1993; Sawchuk 2006). Playing groups off one another is still an option in both cities, despite different histories and structures of the Aboriginal field of power: Wicihitowin, the ACW, MUNHA and Homeward Trust have yet to unite different Aboriginal groups and emerge as a unified voice; Aboriginal women continue to form their own separate organizations because many women feel left out of the most powerful political organizations.

In addition to these barriers to collective action, a shortage of staff or volunteer community members with the skills to carry out work in the housing field has also been an issue, as evidenced in the high staff turnover at Aboriginal organizations in both cities — people either burn out from over-work or leave the non-profit sector to work in better-paying government positions (Government of Alberta 2008; Community Services Council 2003; Evans and Shields 1998). Similar to the case of the Yukon, self-government initiatives can be hampered when there are not enough Aboriginal people with the skills necessary to administer programs and provide services. This delays the expansion of programs, which delays access to more funds, which delays actual self-determination (Dacks 2004, 678–679).

Controlling the symbolic capital of deciding whom to recognize is a powerful and overlooked tool of government in the sphere of urban Aboriginal self-government. The implication here is that funding is not everything in the context of urban Aboriginal self-determination. While funding is important, issues over group membership, legitimacy, and voice (all issues that are obscured in a purely economic analysis that treats urban Aboriginal people as a homogenous group) must be discussed if any collective decision-making is to take place. Otherwise, powerful segments of people within the community can easily take self-governance strategies from being inclusive processes to just another mode of governance by a new elite (replacing one set of governors with another).

Much less easily overlooked is the government control over funding. Again, governments can download responsibility to make decisions, but ensure that there will be few challenges to government power by not downloading the necessary economic capital as well (B. Miller 2007). To recognize Aboriginal self-government without providing the economic capital to make it sustainable further reflects entrenched self-reliance ideals, demonstrated in Manitoba as much as in Alberta. As seen in the case of modern First Nation self-government agreements in the Yukon, access to funding clearly limits self-government and what can be done with it (Dacks 2004, 688).

Urban Aboriginal housing then becomes reduced to a voluntary-based form of mere self-administration, not a rights-based idea about ensuring quality of life to a historically and racially excluded group. The small increase in strategic, short-term funding only increases dependence and ties together this symbolic and economic domination. As the President of Wicihitowin said at the 2012 Housing Circle gathering: “You put a pool of money in our community and it wrecks things.” When projects do get funded, federal priorities around neoliberal ideas of employment take precedence, as do “women and children” projects, but not those that seek to transform existing structures to include women.

As already stated, not many people believed that they were ‘doing’ self-government or politics in the city (the words most people used) — they either saw their themselves as coping or, if they were in positions of relative power/privilege, helping others. This helping (Aboriginal community-focussed or broader, non-profit or for-profit) was largely described as disconnected from political goals (Burnham 2000). This kind of work, as stated, fits better with ideas about self-determination. In both fields, people with valuable cultural capital (especially those with social work backgrounds) stressed that they were not doing self-government but practicing healing and decolonization — essential parts of self-determination (Alfred 1999; Salée 2006). Even some large Aboriginal organizations denied that they had any role in self-government.

Depoliticization is therefore a concern in that, despite so much talk of the benefits of urban Aboriginal self-government or self-determination in the past by

academics and by government (Government of Canada 1996; Yu 1994; Weinstein 1986; Boldt 1993; Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1995), many Aboriginal people may now believe that it is either negative, unworkable, or inappropriate for the urban context. As already stated, these ideas may now have been “appropriated by the federal government and the Aboriginal political elite” and manipulated by academics (Belanger and Newhouse 2008, 15). Various focus group participants, women and men, agreed that “politics” (the realm of the primary Aboriginal political organizations) is unresponsive. The fact that this response was more common among women (and that most political organizations are male-led) may show a discord between governing institutions and the service sector. As one elder stated in a focus group: “Politics gets into good things.”

With this depoliticization of the housing field, most Aboriginal people in focus groups said they were unlikely to get involved in formal politics. Some had been politically active, but they indicated that they had burned out the way that so many in the voluntary sector do, especially those with less resources, such as time and money. Interview participants at Aboriginal organizations — that are required to be political at times in order to compete for funding — were more equipped to fight the struggle but also disenchanted by the neoliberal political struggle that penalized their groups for asking for money while expecting them to do so much of what was once the government’s responsibility, with so little. The government’s divide and conquer approach has also helped ensure that most of the people that participated in this work would not turn to Aboriginal political organizations, even pan-Aboriginal ones. Again, keeping people focussed on services (separated from public control) maintained depoliticization in both fields.

The political sphere, both the state and Aboriginal organizations (and even service organizations), drew complaints from many people for not being responsive to the Aboriginal community. Most people *were* interested in decolonization (although only a few used that language *per se*). They described wanting to heal themselves and their community, being less reliant on government, being less impoverished, being treated as equals in society. But they also stated that before that can happen, the housing crisis that they face —

individually and as a community (women also identified the systemic gendering such as violence and their children's needs that made their housing situations even more dire) — must be addressed. This must occur *before* political action can be taken. How that is going to happen was not clearly identified. The analysis in Chapters Five and Six showed how important social capital (working together and knowing who to go to, to fix a problem), was identified as vital and some women stated that they believed that they had that resource. All groups stated that economic capital was also as important, but was not forthcoming from the governments that they believed were responsible.

Although many people spoke about the importance of addressing colonization by self-healing and working to heal their communities, they were also concerned about their personal housing needs. Collective healing (or decolonization) can lead to addressing the colonial relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that perpetuates domination (Ladner 2003; Alfred 1999). Slowly and locally, despite the above obstacles to urban Aboriginal self-governance, some Aboriginal people are attempting to carve out a space for local Aboriginal control over the housing field, through Aboriginal-led decision-making processes and in the redistribution of power and resources necessary to influence the field and contest existing power in it. In both cities, as described in the two case studies, some level of collective action does happen, but it is questionable whether these attempts at self-governance can lead to self-determination before being co-opted by more powerful state forces.

For example, the symbolic prestige accorded by those in power to *institutionalized* forms of self-governance, i.e. self-government, has allowed for some (again, limited) traction in Edmonton, notably because Wicihitowin is more easily visible (to state actors) and understood (again, by state actors since self-government bodies, requiring recognition and funding, are created with state support). There is no institutional equivalent in Winnipeg; the ACW does not speak for the community nor claim a role in self-government, leaving that up to group-based political organizations. Into this vacuum, MUNHA wants to fulfil some roles of self-government in the area of urban Aboriginal housing. It

aggregates the interests of key field members, though it should be noted that these are the *housing providers themselves*, not tenants. It also helps develop their capacity through some limited services, and advocates on their behalf, lobbying the different levels of government and even working with Aboriginal political organizations. Efforts to develop beyond this are hampered by the end of subsidies and the importance of keeping urban Aboriginal housing community-focussed and accessible, rather than driven by the free market alone.

As alluded to earlier, the idea of combining policy-making and services (the capital-generating housing units — and dedicated funding — that would provide a resource base) and creating an Aboriginal housing authority has been proposed in both cities, in different ways. But this step toward self-determination has been met with disinterest by the dominant housing providers. There has not yet been a struggle to move toward creating such an entity because proponents of the plan still lack the capital to move ahead with it and the community lacks the cultural and symbolic resources to do it.

Outright Aboriginal community-based control of housing in Winnipeg will likely fail for the same reason as in Edmonton. A pan-Aboriginal housing organization would complicate matters if the Aboriginal political organizations¹⁶⁶ were to have a new competitor for economic and symbolic capital, especially if it possessed one of the most valuable forms of capital: property. These groups, the ones that claim the authority to pursue self-determination, must be involved in order to tap into the symbolic and economic capital that they possess. There is too much at stake for field actors who already have a precarious position in an urban field where rights can be questioned. In Winnipeg, authority over housing will remain in the disparate hands of the housing organizations that create the field (yet remain dominated extensions of the governments that hold the purse strings), while in Edmonton, the MUHC is secure in its position.

A formal or institutionalized Aboriginal self-government strategy, if it is not part of a plan for self-determination (United Nations 2007) will not bring positive results if it leads to governance based on colonial relationships and

¹⁶⁶ Also possibly for DOTCHAI which tries to house its Dakota Ojibway members first.

requires the internalization of colonialism (Alfred 2005; Alfred 1999). Like band councils that are subject to the *Indian Act*, or other self-government agreements that are criticized for giving too much authority to the state (Maaka and Fleras 2008; Coates and Morrison 2008), self-government that is not linked to self-determination and addressing colonialism is open to control by state governments. Again, it is the difference between being the governed and the governing.

But if urban Aboriginal self-government is not possible within the current neoliberal and colonial contexts of the housing field, what about community-based self-governance (rooted in self-determination goals) that is so easily overlooked? As was stated, a number of Aboriginal housing organizations in Winnipeg have tenants' associations in addition to their boards of directors. These methods of putting some power in tenants and community members' hands are (as can be expected, based on the trends in both case studies) largely done by women, confirming studies in other contexts that the acts of 'doing housing' at the grass-roots level is treated as 'women's work' (Wekerle 1979). Thus, if MUNHA does not adequately represent tenants or the community, there is at least some movement in Winnipeg to try to encourage Aboriginal participation in the housing field *via housing organizations*. Aboriginal Visioning further develops this in the North End's Aboriginal community, getting people to work together, contesting the individualizing forces in the urban field and speaking to (local) government actors to change how rules are used in the field. This is not done in the 'high' language of politics but as examples of groups of people getting by as a community. These steps in self-governance contributed to self-determination by opening room for Aboriginal control (albeit limited) over their housing situation (as part of their social, cultural, political, and economic goals) as well as collective control over *parts* of the housing field.

In a very different way, in Edmonton, the Aboriginal community rallied around the Dialogue process (and the city government that supported it) to come together over chronic problems such as housing. The resulting Wicihitowin process seeks to enable change through the Housing Circle. As stated, this is new and has met with little success, because it remains disconnected from the

community. If Wicihitowin fails, then Aboriginal people in Edmonton will, like those in Winnipeg, be left outside of the mainstream institutional processes but could find new ways to work together. Homeward Trust's Aboriginal advisory process may prove a much more workable way of dealing with government but carries with it the risk of being co-opted into a government-dominated process.

One aspect to these nascent attempts at urban Aboriginal self-governance that is common to both cities is that if these processes are going to be led by the disproportionately fortunate — the relatively capital-rich 'Aboriginal middle-class' — then there is no guarantee that *affordable* housing will be a priority. Looking at other social fields that came up in fieldwork, urban Aboriginal pursuits for control have tended to focus on areas such as education, business and economic development, employment, and health.

Many of these areas reflect, one can note, the priorities of the disproportionately male leadership of Aboriginal political organizations, areas valued by the neoliberal and patriarchal state, and goods associated with the universalized urban citizen. When housing does come up as a goal, it is often seen in homeownership programs that privilege a small number of applicants who already have the money to participate. Longitudinal study is necessary here, but it can be hypothesized that these are not housing programs that will lead to large-scale systemic changes of the field, nor are they likely to be of benefit to the disproportionate number of single-mothers counted among the urban Aboriginal population. Priority setting is easily hijacked to favour integration into the field instead of contesting what and who is urban.

Several people in Winnipeg mentioned one kind of housing as providing some relief from capitalist ideologies. Cooperative housing programming, one area of housing policy that the federal government abandoned before 1993, was once used to help provide affordable housing in the city (Cole 2008). As stated, Winnipeg is one of the only cities in Canada to have an Aboriginal housing cooperative. When asked why nothing similar to Payuk exists in Edmonton, the president of NACHA stated, "I think there are a couple of things that needs to happen. The first one being you have to have a core group that wants to bring it

forward. There have to be resources to support that core group.” Winnipeg had that core group in the 1980s but Edmonton did not when the development of cooperative housing was being funded. Again, timing is vital, as are the social and economic capital necessary to create cooperative housing.

Many women in the Winnipeg focus group¹⁶⁷ spoke about wanting to find cooperative housing — but not, one woman said, “that kind” of cooperative housing. While this was not defined, the general feeling from the discussion was that they were referring to shared housing, where more than one family lives in a building — that is, housing that does not follow the nuclear family model, the way that some focus group participants were used to living in reserve communities. They were talking about housing that is shared and subject to collective control, not individually owned. That is not to say that they believed that homeownership was a bad thing, but that it is the individualistic ownership that presents itself as a problem for so many — for those who cannot afford it, those who do not have the ‘right’ family structure, and for those who find ownership incompatible with their cultural desires and worldview. Some form of collective control by tenants over housing may come closest to an example of self-determining governance in the housing field; it would represent a case where Aboriginal people would have control over their shared resources and the ability to make decisions about how to use them while housing their communities (Maaka and Fleras 2008). The social and economic resources that it would take, however, to create something like that today remain to be seen in Edmonton, nor do any groups appear to be pursuing anything along these lines.

As discussed in Chapter Two, blaming limitations of self-governance or its slow progress on Aboriginal people’s internalization of symbolic violence cannot explain the totality of the distribution of resources or power dynamics in either field — although some Aboriginal people do choose (consciously or not) to be co-opted as a means of getting ahead and defining their personal success in the city, many Aboriginal people in both cities *recognized* the colonialism and

¹⁶⁷ One man in the Edmonton focus group had experience with cooperative housing in Vancouver and spoke about wanting to find something similar in Edmonton.

subordination that takes place. The difference between misrecognizing domination as natural and knowing what is predictable but unjust — that government and private sector interests are most likely to prevail in the housing field as it exists — affirms that it is not impossible for marginalized people to recognize domination or injustice in the field (J. Scott 1990).

In the competition for symbolic capital, governments in both cities showed how they must limit self-determination strategies lest Aboriginal people articulate and demonstrate legitimate needs or political demands for greater government spending in housing. The recognition of the inherent right of Aboriginal people to self-determination violates any insistence on difference-blindness (upsetting the racialized state based on the universal/white citizen) and could be used to justify downloading the resources, not just the authority, to self-govern. Urban Aboriginal self-determination, a threat to governments' and bureaucrats' monopolization of capital is restrained and contained within field structures, economic controls, regulations, rules, and popular ideas about what governments should do and fund (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010a). The resulting kinds of 'self-determination' that we see (referred to as "self-administration" or "negotiated inferiority") perpetuate colonialism, demonstrating the difference between being the governed and the governing; it is not *self*-determination (Coates and Morrison 2008; Maaka and Fleras 2008; Ladner 2003).

In each city's housing field, we see a different, though fundamentally similar, method of control. Wicihitowin is easily ignored (as it has been) and reliant on government funding. In Winnipeg, there is a lack of equivalent "official" urban Aboriginal voice (no downloading of responsibility) but the community organizations that try to pick up the slack (which governments selectively recognize when it suits them) also lack the core funds that are necessary for autonomy. In both cities, the relentless pursuit of project funding ensures that there are few changes in historic power dynamics.

The UAS, again different in each city because of history, structure, and local field agents, provides another example of a means for entrenching a

managerial class of urban Aboriginal decision-makers who have some (purposefully limited by government spending limits) say in the social investment granting process. In Edmonton, this is done through Wicihitowin, which can claim (accurately or not) to speak for the community. In Winnipeg this was done by a committee of representatives from relatively powerful organizations that each claim to speak for a segment of the Aboriginal population. As already demonstrated, both UAS processes led to little funding for housing despite it being a community priority. In addition to domination through the control of economic capital, the rules that prevent projects involving buildings and the imposition of the federal government's neoliberal priorities also limit what the UAS can do.

Thus, the urban Aboriginal communities in both cities are limited in their capacities to develop any level of self-determination in their housing fields, and to make decision-making processes accessible to a diversity of community members. As both housing fields share the same characterization of being so heavily dominated by the field of power and other social fields, urban Aboriginal self-determination (and most expressions of local self-governance) within the housing field remain elusive goals. Although one could suppose that the relative political insignificance of housing reduces the stakes for governments, making it a field where Aboriginal control is more permissible, the various governments' refusal to devolve levels of funding to the Aboriginal community ensures that non-state control of housing cannot happen; the amount of funding that would have to be devolved in order to make a difference is great enough that no government is willing to make it possible in a time of fiscal restraint.

Added to this are the common beliefs among non-Aboriginal actors that urban Aboriginal self-determination or self-government are either impossible, something negative to be prevented, or someone else's responsibility. With both housing fields subjected to political and economic pressure to conform with mainstream forms of capital (competing for funding), marketized/neoliberal ideals (i.e. profitability), government rules and regulations, and the general ideas of what the correct urban life is, it explains why so many Aboriginal people also are 'not

into' self-determination goals tied to a field of power with which they do not identify. This depoliticizing doxa appears to have been heavily internalized by many people in both fields. Whether Wicihitowin, or perhaps the ACW, will 're-politicize' the Aboriginal communities will depend on the abilities of their agents to convince people that 'politics,' that is, getting involved in the field of power, is not an inherently negative or impossible thing; it is something that communities can do.

Finally, as stated in both case studies, the distribution of capital, combined with people's habitus, is crucial in limiting what can be done. Aboriginal people, especially the most marginalized, simply do not have the resources to be engaged with the urban political sphere. For some, this is because they lack the time and money as they are simply trying to get by. Others, even some of the most marginalized people in focus groups, proved that they understood politics but are simply uninterested. For many, this was because they did not believe in the people or the organizations that were using the language of self-government. Even people who are economically secure stated that they do not really participate in the "self-government area" and have no interest in it; they saw it as someone else's work. Distrust and historical experience went hand in hand. Symbolic violence has therefore been successfully applied to urban Aboriginal people (and non-Aboriginal people), to prevent politicization and the pursuit of collective self-determination. Any self-governance that actually takes place is misrecognized as apolitical because it does not involve the 'official' politics of the state and its recognized groups.

In the end, any approach to self-determination is a futile pursuit if people's minds are so heavily colonized by "colonial mentalities" (Alfred 2005). The future of urban Aboriginal study will have to look at decolonization, and decolonization *in an urban context* — something that has not been sufficiently addressed by academics, which will finally deconstruct the settler/Aboriginal urban/un-urban dichotomy. The "Indian problem" this presents cannot be addressed without confronting the colonial, patriarchal, and neoliberal ideas, actors, and structures that reproduce it.

7.6 MORE AREAS TO EXPLORE: LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

As with every study, there are certain limitations to this work. As described in Chapter Four, my own experiences, identity, and bias may have limited the approach to, and understanding of, Aboriginal people's or women's experiences and lives. My position as an outsider in the urban Aboriginal community may have limited my ability to access information and community members if I was unable to build up the necessary trust and social connections in the community.

Every effort was made to ensure that research participants came from diverse backgrounds, with attention to Aboriginal groups, sex, and class/housing situation. The limitations on resources prevented a thorough survey to ensure all segments of the Edmonton and Winnipeg Aboriginal communities and housing fields had been reached, although the data collected through the focus group questionnaires show that there was a diversity in participants' backgrounds that complements much of the statistical data given in Chapters Five and Six.¹⁶⁸

Timing was also a major factor in defining research. The urban housing fields are constantly changing. For example, new organizations were created during the course of this study and some folded. The representations of the housing fields included in the study are accurate for 2010 when the fieldwork was completed. Since then, there has been a provincial election in Manitoba, a change of Premier and Cabinet in Alberta, municipal elections in both cities, and a federal election. There has been more turnover at Aboriginal organizations than can be described here. Longitudinal studies of the housing fields would be valuable in demonstrating whether or not the conclusions identified in this dissertation can be projected onto long-term trends, whether the field changes more rapidly than expected, and whether one field may change more than the other in a given period of time. The data that will shortly be coming from the 2011 Census will also provide a useful update.

¹⁶⁸ Emphasizing that Indigenous people self-identify in different ways, respondents stated their identities in vastly different ways. Examples include: Cree, First Nations, Métis, Cree Non-status, Treaty Indian, Indigenous, Ojibway First Nations (treaty), Métis, Saulteau/Ojibway, MMF, and Crosslake (Pimichimak) but adopted out (60s scoop).

As stated previously, although this dissertation did look at homelessness in many aspects (many research participants were/had been homeless or worked specifically on homelessness), the broader approach to 'housing' used in this dissertation may have buried the issue of homelessness in the larger housing field. It would have been possible, for example, to limit this work only to questions of homelessness, the way that other works have focussed on the low-income housing sector or condo sector. The broad understanding of both housing and homelessness used in this work employed a multipurpose approach in order to include all levels of housing. This may have downplayed the homelessness crisis in both cities, the roles that homeless shelters play in the housing fields, and the lives and experiences of homeless people who are one of the hardest populations to consult for ethical research.

This dissertation also touched on a number of issues that merit further, independent study. As stated, the complex nature of women's shelters and domestic violence — that is, temporary housing for specific reasons which are treated and viewed differently within the housing field — can be served by greater study (and, related to this, the gendering of homelessness). Work that considers the role that actual violence, in addition to symbolic violence, plays in the lives of Aboriginal women and men would also expand the consideration of how their experiences are structured in the city (Gotell 2007). A deeper gendered analysis that looks at how these women and men are produced as subjects would also be illuminating.

Further, this study did not consider age as a demographic factor for study. The future of seniors/elders housing (Bilsbarrow et al. 2005) is important to consider and an issue significant enough to warrant independent study. This issue is soon to become its own crisis in Edmonton, if the city cannot keep up with what Winnipeg is doing. Although both Aboriginal communities are, on average, much younger than the non-Aboriginal population, the issue of housing for the elderly is no less pressing. As stated in the case studies, both Edmonton and Winnipeg have some small housing supports for Aboriginal seniors and the need for more units is going to increase. Equally pressing is the question of youth housing, which is tied

to the much larger and complex dynamics of child and family services and the issues of Aboriginal children in custody. No research participants under the age of 18 were consulted in this study; youth housing in the Aboriginal community is another important issue that merits further research as it approaches a separate crisis. MORN also requested that this report make a note that urban housing needs spaces for young people who are transitioning from living up North; there should be a home with house mothers to keep young people from being influenced by gangs. This recommendation should be investigated for implementation, especially since MORN's voice is gone from the discussion.

In addition to age, the cleavage of disability was not fully investigated in this dissertation. A number of people in the focus groups spoke about the barriers in housing they were facing because of disabilities brought on by diabetes, health problems, age, and other factors. The question of ability in housing is too often ignored and should be investigated (Harrison 2001). Similarly, a number of focus group participants spoke about the intersecting discrimination (and economic barriers) they faced finding homes as Aboriginal people living with HIV. I would have liked to follow up on this but such a question deserves a more detailed avenue of study than I could provide here. Further, emphasis on a deeper gendered analysis could include more detail on the experiences of those outside the socially-constructed gender binary, such as two-spirited or other queer Indigenous peoples, that experience marginalization in the mainstream urban community and, in many cases, within Indigenous groups as well (Napoleon 2002).

Other important and systemic issues in housing were not addressed by this dissertation although they are beginning to be examined in other works, including research at the University of Alberta. This includes: housing for people after their incarceration, the relationship between housing and residential schools, and the impacts of addictions on housing situations. The very different issue of on-reserve housing, which has most recently made its way back onto the front pages of the papers, was not addressed by this dissertation because of its unique (legally, historically, constitutionally, politically) position. Comparison between on-reserve

and off-reserve housing issues and experiences would be extremely difficult but interesting if it could be accomplished.

Different case study contexts, with similar questions and variables, would also be valuable. Vancouver, with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association in British Columbia, comes first to mind, but also non-‘Western’ cities, such as Toronto and Montreal, where Aboriginal people make up a much smaller percentage of the urban population, would make for interesting comparisons with Edmonton and Winnipeg.

Finally, a more historical approach to urban housing fields would be useful. This dissertation’s case studies were rooted in history but the most detailed information only goes back approximately five years. With institutional memory so low and the founders of the original urban Aboriginal programs passing away, historical research into how these organizations were founded, unburdened by all of the contemporary data necessary for a recent field study, would provide fascinating and invaluable information to gather before it is too late.

7.7 FINAL THOUGHTS

Despite very different field structures, there are significant similarities in Edmonton and Winnipeg’s housing fields. As multileveled examination shows, the influence of neoliberalism and patriarchal colonization coming from the most dominant fields of power, state governments (and their actors) create some common experiences in each field. The history of local fields and differences in local population’s beliefs and behaviours does lead to some divergence in structures and ideas. However, even these trends can only be temporary as governments and the powerful ideas that they impose are subject to change. Although fields perpetuate the division of power and Manitoba may always remain ‘less neoliberal’ than Alberta, shifts in the sites of power will change if the symbolic responsibilities for providing resources and addressing urban Aboriginal people’s housing needs are successfully passed between scales.

Comparative study between cases shows that even the biggest differences in structure, habitus, and capital also led to common outcomes; urban Aboriginal

self-governance in the two cases studied proved to be limited, albeit in slightly different ways. At the moment, a neoliberal climate (demonstrated most strongly by attempts to download housing, or make it no longer a public good using the language of individualizing self-reliance) puts the (Aboriginal) community-based governance of housing in a difficult position. As social housing is treated as an artefact of the bygone welfare era, and difference-blindness punishes Aboriginal people who attempt to make collective claims against the state, urban Aboriginal empowerment and autonomy strategies, in both cases, become more and more about participating in depoliticized, government-sanctioned bodies that are subject to state funding and regulatory control. State participation in urban Aboriginal governance can be increasingly seen as a method of reproducing oppressive power relations.

By understanding differential impacts on actors in the housing field, we can recognize that some urban Aboriginal people are embracing neoliberal or SIS ideals. Others do not, but have not yet found large-scale methods to collectively contest their imposition. Detailed case studies that investigate the differences between the experiences of Aboriginal women and men also shed light on how the colonial, political-economic, and patriarchal shaping of the housing field continues to recreate certain common (though not universal) experiences, certain kinds of Aboriginal people, and the structures and organizations that they form in their attempts to manage their lives and help each other. Strategic and limited contestations of the influence of the whitestream field of power do take place, but are also hampered by a lack of resources.

Recognizing the multiplicity of useful and valued resources, besides the economic, shows the importance of social, cultural, and symbolic goods in the field as well. Urban Aboriginal women and men do have access to some useful resources, in differing amounts and in differing ways, as well as sources of foreign resources that can put them at odds with the field or disrupt it. The creation of an urban Aboriginal middle class, imbued with a diversity of resources, may well prove the catalyst, as it did when it first appeared in the 1980s, for new anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal change, or it may facilitate

further integration into the dominant dispositions of the neoliberal urban field. What remains to be seen is how urban Aboriginal people will continue to contest the urban/Aboriginal dichotomy and show how participating in the urban housing field can be done on Aboriginal, not solely mainstream, terms.

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