

SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN URBAN AREAS: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH ¹

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Abstract/Resume

The author reviews much of the literature on Aboriginal people in terms of self-government and suggests avenues of further research. The paper considers both self-government arrangements and the demographic structure of the urban Aboriginal population.

L'auteur étudie nombre d'écrits sur les Autochtones sur le plan de l'autonomie et suggère des possibilités d'autres recherches. L'article examine les règlements pour l'autonomie et la structure démographique de la population urbaine autochtone.

While a substantial body of literature exists on the nature of, and the possibilities for, self-government for Aboriginal peoples with a land-base, there is relatively little work which explores opportunities for Aboriginal peoples in cities. Schwartz (1986) pointed out that urban Aboriginal peoples were not specifically represented at the First Ministers' Conferences on Aboriginal constitutional matters. According to Weinstein (1986:9-19) national Aboriginal organizations came to a tacit understanding to downplay issues relating to self-government off a land base in order to concentrate on other priorities. For their part, researchers exploring the possibilities of Aboriginal self-government have most often pointed out the difficulties in structuring and implementing self-government off a land base and concentrated on land base arrangements (see for example, Canada, 1983 [The Penner Report]; Lyon, 1984; Weaver, 1984).

There are a number of reasons why this focus must be changed. First, limiting the discussion of Aboriginal self-government to land-base situations inadvertently reinforces a long history of government policies which have equated the urbanization of Aboriginal peoples with their assimilation into non-Aboriginal society. A second reason is that any constitutional amendments concerning rights to self-government would apply to Aboriginal peoples in urban areas. While these people represent an increasing proportion of the Aboriginal population in Canada, we have little information about the implications of an amendment for them. Third, the apparent failure of general public service organizations to improve the socio-economic position of the urban Aboriginal population suggests that alternative approaches are required. Thus, while studying Aboriginal self-government on a land-base may be conceptually more convenient, it does not adequately address the aspirations of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

This paper identifies some important areas of research in relation to self-government for Aboriginal² peoples in urban areas.³ It argues that the possibilities for and challenges of self-government for Aboriginal peoples in urban areas have been inadequately explored in the literature, and that information about the demographic structure of the urban Aboriginal population, essential for implementing self-governing arrangements, is incomplete and geographically uneven. Following a brief, critical review of the existing literature on these topics, the paper suggests avenues of further research. First, though, there are a number of issues and definitions which must be addressed.

The possibilities for different configurations of self-government arrangements are wide ranging. Rather than detailing what urban Aboriginal self-government may involve, this paper argues that the topic requires further research. However, Boisvert's (1985:5) general definition is appro-

priate.

Fundamentally, what we are dealing with when talking about forms of self-government are the various institutional arrangements which can be put into place to enable the Aboriginal peoples to make their own collective decisions.

Any analysis of urban Aboriginal self-government must recognize that the urban - rural/Reserve dichotomy was created by and reinforced through various government policies (Falconer, 1985; Peters, 1991). An underlying principle of research in this area must be that the information collected and presented and the issues outlined should not work to perpetuate these divisions. Instead, the objective must be to unravel the implications of colonial policies and to explore flexible alternatives which can meet the aspirations of the Aboriginal peoples.

At the same time, the issue of "the urban" needs to be addressed. History cannot be instantaneously reversed, and past practices have created social divisions, institutional structures, expectations, attitudes and patterns of behaviour which have a certain longevity. Urban Aboriginal institutions have developed, for example, and may play an important role in emerging self-government arrangements. Second, even if the geography of Aboriginal self-government is based on an approach such as a First Nation's traditional territory, possibilities for levels of jurisdiction and institutional structures in urban areas vary from possibilities for areas where Aboriginal people have a land-base (Scott, 1992; Wherrett and Brown, 1992).⁴ Finally, the locations of institutions and services affect individuals' access, with the result that the geography of self-government must be addressed.

A. Self-Government Arrangements for Aboriginal Peoples in Urban Areas

This section begins with a description of the *status quo* in urban areas, and moves to an analysis of models of urban Aboriginal self-government.

1. Existing Institutions

While organizations currently providing services and political representation for urban Aboriginal peoples are not self-governing, studies about them are briefly reviewed here to provide a context for the material on self-government. The generally accepted failure of general public service institutions in meeting the needs of the urban Aboriginal population provides an argument for new strategies. While representatives from urban Aboriginal institutions indicate that their current levels of jurisdiction and

the scope for designing alternative structures place limits on their abilities to serve their clientele (Frideres, 1988; Tizya, 1992), these institutions demonstrate new approaches and may evolve into self-governing institutions.

a) General Public Service organizations

A number of studies of Aboriginal people in urban areas indicate that contemporary organizations providing public services have shown little success in improving their socio-economic status or in meeting many of their needs (Morinis, 1985; Reeves and Frideres, 1981). While programs and services for Aboriginal peoples have expanded rapidly in urban areas, Aboriginal people have participated primarily as clients rather than being involved in decision-making and administration (Reeves and Frideres, 1981). Frideres (1988) lists various reasons why general public service organizations have failed to adequately serve urban Aboriginal peoples: their objectives have been assimilation; they have failed to target programs to the majority of the population; their funding has been uncertain; and their mandates have been unclear. He indicates that, in many cases, the rationale for creating separate programs for Aboriginal people in urban areas was an attempt to garner legitimacy without disrupting other services or general standards. Frideres maintains that, while these organizations have dealt effectively with some individual clients, they have not met the general needs of urban Aboriginal people as collectivities.

Falconer (1985:33) is pessimistic about the potential for improving services to urban Aboriginal populations through changes in general service organizations. While he notes that incremental program reform accompanied by substantial increases in funding is one approach to the problem, he suggests that: "The results of recent increases in expenditures for Indians does not suggest the premise of this policy option is well grounded" (1985:33).

b) Aboriginal organizations

While urban Aboriginal institutions provide an alternative to general public service organizations, researchers have frequently commented on the general paucity of institutions providing services (Falconer, 1985; Frideres, 1984) or political groups representing urban Aboriginal interests (Clatworthy and Gunn, 1981; Falconer, 1990). Price (1978) noted that Aboriginal organizations found in urban areas frequently had the rural or Reserve population as their main focus. McCaskill (1981:89), comparing four major metropolitan centres on the prairies noted that: "There is little evidence to suggest that Indians are following the pattern of other ethnic groups by maintaining an ethnic identity through institutional complete-

ness.”

The view that formal and informal institutions represent essential adaptive and coping strategies (Kerri, 1976; Price, 1975; Renaud, 1967), provided the impetus for several projects to encourage Aboriginal people in urban centres to follow the strategies of immigrant groups. Dosman's (1972:183) study of Saskatoon contained a recommendation to create a “well-designed, self-governing, native, residential community inside the city” to foster the development of both formal and informal institutions. In the early 1970s, personnel from the Indian Métis Friendship Centre and the City of Winnipeg Planning Department undertook a \$78,000 federally funded feasibility study for a Native urban village in Winnipeg. Some of the stated objectives for the creation of this village were:

1. To provide a decent place for the urban Indian to live in the city where he can be with his own people, speak his own language, follow his own customs, and enjoy the supports and strengths inherent in this type of ethnic community...
2. To act as a reception and orientation centre for the Indian coming to Winnipeg from the reserve....
3. To provide facilities for education in his own language, training, personal development, the development of managerial and entrepreneurial skills (Indian Métis Friendship Centre, 1975).

The idea of an Aboriginal enclave in the city surfaced again in a 1978 consultant's report for Indian Affairs in Regina (Svenson, 1978).⁵ More recently, Falconer (1985:37-39) has proposed “a massive community economic development in urban areas” in an attempt to facilitate the establishment of Aboriginal cultural, social and economic institutions in the city.

Assumptions about the applicability of the situation of European immigrants to urban Aboriginal peoples in much of this work must be questioned. More important, however, is the fact that the work on urban Aboriginal institutions has largely failed to take into account the policy context and its effect on ways in which Aboriginal peoples have coped in the urban setting (Falconer, 1985, is an exception here).

The Native Council of Canada's (1992:10) discussion paper points out that: “There is a strong, sometimes racist, perception that being Aboriginal and being urban are mutually exclusive.” This attitude reflects a long history of government policies which assumed that the eradication of Indian culture and identity was a prerequisite for participation in urban industrial society (Peters, 1991; White, 1987). Hawthorn (1966) described the underlying philosophy of the Indian Affairs Branch as follows:

[T]here has been an implicit assumption that the focus of Indian life was the reserve, and that the reserve was a training school for civilization. As a consequence, off-reserve residence has tended to carry an assumption that the integration process was proceeding satisfactorily and that the task of the Branch was ended.

It is not clear to what degree this attitude persists and what its implications are for the development of Aboriginal organizations in urban areas. Researchers have argued that the Reserve focus of federal government programs and policies and federal-provincial wrangling over funding have contributed to the failure of attempts by Aboriginal people to provide services to the urban population (Breton and Grant, 1984; Ryan, 1978), and have created problems for those organizations which have formed (Frideres, 1988). Falconer (1985) has suggested that the federal government's failure to admit responsibility for the Métis and non-Status Indians fragments the urban Aboriginal population, creating difficulties for cooperative urban Aboriginal institutions.

There are also major questions about the degree to which observations in the 1980s about the paucity of urban Aboriginal organizations applies in the contemporary situation. There are indications that in recent years new organizations have emerged, many of them with innovative approaches to the issues concerning urban Aboriginal people (see for example Tizya, 1992).

2. Models of Self-Government for Aboriginal People in Urban Areas⁶

Ideas about self-government for Aboriginal peoples in urban areas have evolved substantially since the mid-1980s. At the present time there appear to be three main approaches. Models emerging from the First Minister's Conferences initially focused on self-governing institutions in urban areas. Negotiations under the federal Self-Government Community Negotiations policy appear to have provided the impetus for more recent initiatives involving jurisdiction of land-based governments over their citizens regardless of place of residence. Ideas about Aboriginal self-government over traditional territories represent the most recent and most challenging approach. The latter dissolve artificially imposed urban-Reserve distinctions and represent an attempt to view self-government: "from the local people's perspective, from the perspective of sovereignty, from the perspective of the destruction of the colonial mentality" (Tizya, 1992:9).

a) Self-Governing Urban Aboriginal Institutions

Reeves' (1986) proposal for self-governing institutions for urban Aboriginal populations advocates constitutional entrenchment of a right to form

Native societies. These societies would be modelled on organizations in such professions as law and medicine, with responsibilities to represent the interests of individual Natives in their dealings with institutions in the larger Canadian society and to occupy positions in public service organizations or in private industry that deal on a regular basis with Natives. While Reeves' model appears too limited in scope, given the current objectives of many Aboriginal peoples in urban areas, he argues that these societies could take on more expanded powers in the future.

Dunn's (1986) work suggests that in urban areas, Aboriginal people could be treated as a "community of interest" whose "territory" would be cultural rather than geographical and whose jurisdiction would be defined accordingly. Dunn outlines four issues which must be addressed in relation to self-government for the off-Reserve Aboriginal community. First, he indicates that implementation should involve phasing in increasingly exhaustive areas of jurisdiction through judicially enforceable schedules which could be enabled through legislation, delegation or contractual arrangements. Second, areas of jurisdiction must be addressed. Dunn suggests that Aboriginal school boards, equitable access to health services and specially designed training programs are potential areas for initial increase in Aboriginal control. Finally, citizenship issues, including the definition of membership codes, and registration, enumeration and appeals procedures, must be decided upon. Dunn also elaborates on issues of financing and intergovernmental relations.

Weinstein's (1986) suggestions focus on self-administration, which he defines as a more limited form of autonomy than self-government, involving Aboriginal control over the design and delivery of programs and services. Weinstein explores two models: an institutional model which involves specialized autonomous institutions and agencies in different areas of service delivery; and a political model, which involves central policy-making bodies which would administer service delivery institutions as part of a larger objective of promoting the general aspirations of Aboriginal people. Both models would apply only to Aboriginal people who chose to participate. Both models also require delegation of authority from appropriate federal and provincial governments. Weinstein argues that a constitutional amendment is required to implement these arrangements because there is a need to force governments to act, to prohibit them from terminating what they have established, and to ensure adequate fiscal provisions.

While the work described above provides a basis for examining self-governing institutions for urban Aboriginal peoples, many of the options and their implications remain to be fully explored. In particular, little of the work in this area fully realizes the potential complexity of creating self-governing

institutions for Aboriginal peoples in urban areas.

b) Citizenship Models

There has been some exploration of the possibility of providing opportunities for Aboriginal self-government to urban residents through the extra-territorial responsibility and jurisdiction of land-based governments. Most of the proposals have involved Reserve based jurisdictions which would extend to all members regardless of residence, but the principle could be extended to rural non-Reserve communities as well.

The Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en Tribal Council materials (Bish, 1986:9-13) note that citizenship is not the same as residency, and that some governments subject their citizens to some laws even if the citizen resides in another territory. Self-government may involve: "...regulations and services...[which] will be for *Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en citizens only, whether or not they reside in tribal territory.*" The proposal (1986:11-12) notes that, with respect to extra-territorial jurisdiction, the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en must decide on:

- 1) Criteria for automatic citizenship, e.g. hereditary.
- 2) Which Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en laws affect citizens who reside outside Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en territory.
- 3) What actions would result in termination of citizenship in the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en Nation...
- 4) How Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en citizenship rules relate to rules for Canadian citizenship and past decisions on Indian citizenship made by the Canadian government.

The draft Yukon First Nations Self-Government Agreement (Canada, DIAND, 1991b) provides another example. In addition to jurisdiction over their Settlement areas, Yukon First Nations have powers to enact laws in relation to their Citizens in the areas of: adoption by and of Citizens; guardianship, custody, care and placement of First Nations children; inheritance, wills, intestacy and administration of estates; and solemnization of marriage. Yukon First Nations can also pass laws concerning programs and services for their Citizens in areas of: spiritual and cultural practices; First Nations languages; health care and services; social and welfare services; training programs; and education programs for Citizens choosing to participate.⁷

Falconer (1985) has summarized some of the difficulties with and advantages to this approach to urban self-government. Concentrating on the Status Indian population, he notes that, with their general exclusion from decision-making on Reserves at present, urban Indians might have

no voice in designing self-governing structures and regulations unless urban representation was sought by Band governments. Second, because in many cases urban Indians would be in a minority, their concerns might be given lowest priority (see also Ponting and Gibbins, 1984:127). Finally, this approach could further fragment the urban Aboriginal community, since not all urban residents have a land-based community of origin and not all land-based communities will choose to have jurisdiction over urban residents. On the other hand, citizenship-based self-government could dissolve some of the artificial distinctions between on- and off-Reserve residents. It could also provide opportunities for establishing urban-rural commercial and industrial links, enhance the economic viability of Reserves, and allow urban Indians greater control over employment initiatives.

There has, however, been little careful specification of issues associated with the interface between these governments and other governments including other Aboriginal governments (Graham, 1992), their implications for the legal rights of Aboriginal individuals living in urban areas, and the degree to which they extend real opportunities to participate in self-government to urban residents.

c) Governing Traditional Territories

There is relatively little published work on this emerging model and it appears that these ideas are in the process of being developed. Aboriginal people contend that their right to governance was never extinguished,⁸ with the implication that the exercise of an inherent right to self-government may involve jurisdiction by Aboriginal Nations over their traditional territory.

Tizya (1992:8) provides a conceptualization of this approach based on work by the United Native Nations in British Columbia⁹

The Musqueam still consider Vancouver Musqueam territory, the Squamish still consider the north side Squamish territory and so for the elders to be consistent, for us to be consistent, what they're saying is when it comes to dealing with the land issue then it's not either the provincial or the federal government that we deal with, it's the Musqueam or the Squamish or the Capilanos or the Burrards. To take myself as an example, I am a G'wichin speaking person from the Yukon living in Vancouver; I would be a G'wichin living in Musqueam territory—not an off-reserve status, non-treaty registered Indian.

Some of the implications are that on-/off-Reserve distinctions would be dissolved because Aboriginal governments would have responsibility over all their members in that territory, and Aboriginal people living in their traditional territory would have certain rights whether they lived on an Aboriginal land-base or not. Aboriginal governments of traditional territories

could have some jurisdiction over Aboriginal peoples from other territories.

In terms of organization, this approach could incorporate structures and institutions from other models. Tizya (1992) outlines some additional suggestions. In urban areas where there are Aboriginal people from many Nations an Elder's Council could act as an advisory body. A governing body would emerge from the Elder's Council with representatives from different constituencies including the old and the youth, men and women, different Nations in the area, and Aboriginal residents from out-of-province.

There is relatively little published material providing details on how this approach to governance would be worked out. The intent has been, rather, to focus on concepts and approaches which shatter entrenched ways of thinking and generate creative alternatives with work on concrete details later. One major issue which must be resolved soon, however, is the place of the Métis in a system of self-government based on traditional Aboriginal territories.

Summary of Research Issues

There is considerable scope for researchers to build on and expand earlier work on Aboriginal self-government off a land base. In particular, research is needed which explores Aboriginal perspectives on these issues, addresses the complexity of initiatives in urban areas, provides more concrete detail about how various arrangements would be implemented, and indicates what their legal implications are.

1. Aboriginal Perspectives

Most of the literature on self-government for urban Aboriginal peoples to date has been produced by non-Aboriginal writers. One of the first steps in research therefore should be an attempt to obtain Aboriginal peoples' perspectives on what these approaches could and should involve.

Citizenship models and approaches based on governing traditional territories necessitate a focus beyond urban boundaries. While there does not appear to be a lot available in published form, it is clear that various groups of Aboriginal people have explored a number of approaches to governance which would involve urban residents. The process of selecting contacts to explore these questions must be a careful one, and the scope must be broad and wide-ranging.

Since the available literature on self-government arrangements for Aboriginal people off a land base is highly theoretical, an attempt to specify models of urban self-government would also benefit from studying existing urban Aboriginal institutions. Clearly, these organizations would not have levels of power or jurisdiction contemplated in self-governing institutions. Nevertheless, examples may illuminate particular issues and problems,

and personnel in these organizations represent a source of creative ideas about the possibilities for self-government arrangements for urban residents.

2. Models

There are a number of general research issues emerging from the proposals for urban Aboriginal self-government. With respect to structure, all the approaches require work on: issues related to the interface with municipal, provincial, federal and other Aboriginal governments; membership or citizenship criteria and provisions for appeal and adjudication procedures; potential areas for increased Aboriginal control with an exploration of levels of jurisdiction desired in different sectors; funding sources; and the implications of different "opting out" provisions. In particular, research which addresses the complexity of these initiatives stemming from potential memberships which include people with different Aboriginal rights, political affiliations and relationships with other levels of government, and variations in the political, social and economic characteristics of different urban places, must be addressed.

There is also scope here for careful research about the assumptions and biases underlying historic and contemporary government policies with respect to the urbanization of Aboriginal peoples and about the implications of these policies. This type of research could provide an important context for the current situation and identify ways in which policies must change.

3. Legal Issues

There has been almost no attention to legal issues associated with urban Aboriginal self-government. The rights of Aboriginal peoples are, both in theory and in law, no different for peoples on and off a land base. This raises an important question: If the right to self-government is defined as an Aboriginal right, what are the implications for urban Aboriginal peoples? The formation of self-governing institutions in urban areas raises issues of: the relationship between the Charter and jurisdiction based on citizenship; whether the jurisdiction of Aboriginal organizations in urban areas infringes on the rights of Aboriginal individuals to equality with non-Aboriginal individuals in the same areas; and the rights of non-Aboriginal peoples to the services provided by Aboriginal organizations. Other issues may also come to the fore during the process of research.

B. Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of Aboriginal populations in urban areas and the relationship between urban and non-urban populations

constitute important parameters for governance in the urban setting. Certain threshold populations are essential to support self-governing institutions. The spatial distribution and mobility patterns of the urban Aboriginal population affect decisions about where to locate institutions and about the desirability of cooperation between groups and places. Socio-economic characteristics of these populations determine needs for services and abilities to participate in and provide support for various initiatives. Migration patterns, length of residence and destination choice have implications for membership criteria. As the following sections demonstrate, information about these factors is uneven and inadequate.

1. Population Numbers

It is difficult to obtain counts of the total Aboriginal population in a particular urban area. Information about specific Aboriginal groups is even more scarce. The ethnicity question on the 1991 Census read: "To which ethnic or cultural group(s) did this person's ancestors belong?," and the possible responses included "North American Indian, Métis, Inuit/Eskimo." A subsequent question asked: "Is this person a registered Indian as defined by the *Indian Act* of Canada." However, answers to Census questions about ethnicity do not necessarily match legal definitions and categories. In addition, there is evidence that administering the Census through mail-in questionnaires may result in under-counting Aboriginal populations in urban areas (Hull, 1984).

There are relatively few alternative sources of information. Although the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development created customized Status Indian variables using 1981 Census data (Klein and Wright, 1985), this did not solve the problem of counting other Aboriginal groups. Band lists kept by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development provide counts of the Status Indian population living off the Reserve but records are not regularly up-dated and the data do not indicate where individuals are living (Canada, DIAND, 1991a). The reinstatement process associated with Bill C-31 compounds the difficulty associated with identifying present and potential population numbers in particular cities (Canada, DIAND, 1990). Estimates of the Status Indian population in particular cities vary widely (White, 1980:6). Data on Métis and non-Status Indian populations are not consistently available, and estimates for these populations are even more variable than estimates for the Status Indian population (Taylor, 1979).

Much of the information which has been collected does not lend itself to providing population estimates amenable to planning for self-governing institutions for Aboriginal peoples. In both the 1981 and 1991 Census,

questions were asked about the ethnicity of ancestors, not how respondents defined their own identity. The latter may be more important for urban Aboriginal self-government. An attempt to evaluate the implications of Reserve-based citizenship models or models based on governance of traditional territories, requires information about membership in Bands and First Nations which is not generally available. Information about urban residents' affiliations with various Aboriginal organizations would be useful to evaluate prospects for collective strategies.

2. Socio-Economic Characteristics

Information on the socio-economic characteristics of urban Aboriginal peoples is not equally available for all geographic areas. Where studies have been conducted, many researchers have employed a case study technique with small population numbers, and very few studies rely on data collected through random sampling techniques.¹⁰ Surveys in Winnipeg (Clatworthy, 1980; Peters, 1984) and in Regina and Saskatoon (Clatworthy and Hull, 1983; Peters, 1987), provide the most comprehensive recent picture of the socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal peoples in urban areas.

Research on prairie cities demonstrates what a number of case studies suggest are the characteristics of the urban Aboriginal population: a higher proportion of women and younger age groups compared to the general urban population; low participation and high unemployment rates; considerable poverty and a high degree of dependence on transfer payments; a large proportion of families which are mother-led, and very few non-family households. At the same time, it is clear from these studies that the Aboriginal population in urban areas is not homogeneous and that Aboriginal people are represented in many occupations and at all levels of socioeconomic status (see also Dosman, 1972; Nagler, 1970). It is not clear, however, whether the characteristics of prairie populations are representative of Aboriginal populations in cities in other areas of the country. This issue must be addressed.

3. Migration Patterns

Much of the early work on the migration of Aboriginal people to urban centres assumed that the move was intended to be permanent, motivated by lack of employment and educational opportunities in rural Aboriginal communities (Davis, 1965; Lagasse, 1958) and represented a rejection of Aboriginal identity and culture (Asimi, 1967; Hirabayashi, 1962; Zeitoun, 1969). With time, alternative interpretations emerged. Researchers suggested that, because migrants had a variety of objectives in moving to the

city, their intended length of stay was also variable (Denton, 1970; Guillemin, 1975; Nagler, 1970; Peters, 1984; Stanbury, 1975). Many migrants had no intention of making their stay in the city a permanent one (Lithman, 1984; Stanbury, 1975), and McCaskill (1979:iv-v) concluded that:

A 'commuter' model which views the migration of Native people as a single network involving a pattern of commuting between the reserve and the city is more accurate than an 'acculturation/assimilation' model to explain Indian urbanization.

Much of the migration research is based on case studies (Siggnier's [1977] analysis is an exception), many studies are dated, and the focus has been on Registered Indians and the general Reserve—urban movement. An information base for planning for urban self-government requires attention to other Aboriginal groups, and requires work on other patterns of movement, for example between non-urban areas, between urban areas, between provinces, and from urban areas back to rural areas. Studies which provide information about migration to and from particular places and about trends and variations in different regions of the country are essential for planning purposes, since patterns may vary locally.

Information about the characteristics of migrants is also scarce. In particular, little is known about the family status of migrants, a characteristic which has major implications for their needs and opportunities on arrival in the city (Peters, forthcoming, is an exception here).

4. Destination Choice

Little information is available on why migrants choose a particular destination. This type of information is essential for estimating the impacts of self-government arrangements on the size of the urban Aboriginal population. Demographic analyses indicate that particular immigrant groups in Canada have tended to cluster in larger metropolitan centres (Canada, EIAC, 1991). There are few studies on the location choice of these groups, but Bartells (1988) study of U.S. immigrants concluded that "about the only thing that can be said is that all of the immigrants prefer to live in cities where their fellow-countrymen are already located." The availability of socio-cultural infrastructures including ethnic foods, support groups, and cultural institutions also appears to be important in attracting in-migration (Canada, EIAC, 1991:27). Increased populations in turn support an expanded institutional structure with the result that concentration in particular centres is further reinforced.

The extent to which Aboriginal peoples would demonstrate similar patterns is not clear in the context of their attitudes toward their ancestral territories, particularly if there are developments in self-

government arrangements in rural areas and progress in land claims settlements (see Gerber, 1979; 1984). The locational preferences of Aboriginal peoples and the potential effects of institutional development on the migration and settlement patterns of different groups of Aboriginal peoples should be examined, however.

Summary of Research Issues

While research into demographic characteristics is seriously needed, it is also important to avoid additional surveys of a population which has already been "studied to death." The Aboriginal Peoples Survey recently conducted by Statistics Canada, may provide much of the required information. The survey provides considerable detail about self-identification as North American Indian, Inuit or Métis, and information about registration under the *Indian Act* and reinstatement under Bill C-31. The subjects of mobility patterns and reasons for moving, employment patterns and strategies, and other socio-economic characteristics are covered in detail.

A detailed specification of the spatial distribution, socio-economic characteristics and movements of Aboriginal peoples represents an essential starting point. While it is clear that this analysis must go beyond urban boundaries, it is not obvious what kinds of geographies are appropriate to the various models extending opportunities of self-government to urban Aboriginal peoples. This issue requires careful thought to maximize the usefulness of the analysis. At the same time, as long as questions remain unanswered about the distinctiveness of processes operating in different locales, the analysis should be disaggregated at the level of particular places and regions.

Research in this area should pay careful attention to the implications of different definitions for population numbers, and should deal with potential biases due to the under-counting of the urban Aboriginal population. Studies should also attempt to identify sub-populations relevant for different approaches, including counts of individuals who identify themselves with different Aboriginal groups and Bands.¹²

Finally, mobility patterns and reasons for moving may help to identify elements influencing choice of destination and allow researchers to explore the potential impact of urban self-government on patterns of migration. While conclusions would necessarily be speculative, different scenarios may be useful in planning for and implementing urban Aboriginal self-government arrangements.

Conclusion

The aspirations of the Aboriginal peoples are not focused only on non-

urban areas. There are considerable numbers of Aboriginal peoples in many major metropolitan areas (Table 1), and these populations may continue to grow. Increasingly, Aboriginal peoples are requesting that they have more in-put and jurisdiction over the elements that affect their lives, and this includes services, employment and cultural institutions in the city.

Table 1: Aboriginal Populations* by Metropolitan Area, 1986 Census

Area	Aboriginal Population	Percent of Total Population
Halifax	3,925	1.3
Montreal	22,700	0.8
Ottawa	13,590	1.6
Toronto	32,955	1.0
Winnipeg	28,320	4.4
Regina	8,610	4.5
Saskatoon	10,015	4.8
Calgary	15,245	2.2
Edmonton	27,950	3.7
Vancouver	32,035	2.3
Victoria	6,340	2.5

* "Aboriginal" refers to all those who indicated they had Aboriginal ancestry for the ethnic question in the 1986 census.

In this context, researchers would do well to devote some energy to issues concerning governance for Aboriginal peoples in urban areas.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at a research symposium organized by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Ottawa, 30 April 1992.
2. The term "Aboriginal peoples" is used in this paper to refer to all of Canada's First Peoples, recognizing that there are many differences and distinctions between them. The differential access to and opportunities for self-government in urban areas for various Aboriginal groups are identified where appropriate. In reviewing the relevant literature, the paper uses the terms employed by particular authors.

3. While Aboriginal people live in a wide variety of settlement types, the work reviewed in this paper is most applicable to Aboriginal people living off-Reserve in urban areas in which they represent a sizeable but still a minority population.
4. Clearly Reserves within urban areas represent an exception in this regard.
5. While the idea of a territorial basis for urban Aboriginal self-government in this work is interesting, there are a number of problems. Apart from a series of legal questions about an urban enclave, the potentially negative consequences of residential concentration may outweigh any supposed benefits.
6. The proposals reviewed below are in general circulation. However, this area appears to be generating a good deal of attention at present, with the possibility that a number of creative alternatives will soon emerge.
7. Two communities in the Yukon have completed their negotiations and their self-government agreements address issues of membership, "opting out," and appeals.
8. Sanders (1990:128) indicates that: "there is strong reason to believe that the [Supreme] court would uphold rights of self-government as surviving aboriginal and treaty rights based in pre-contact Indian sovereignty".
9. The United Native Nations is a political organization that speaks for the Aboriginal people in British Columbia who do not live on Reserves.
10. While case studies are essential to illuminate patterns and relationships which may not be accessible through large-scale surveys, information about general characteristics is essential for planning for urban self-government.
11. Stanbury's (1975) large survey is probably too out of date to be relevant.
12. The 1991 Census may provide some information about the particular Bands to which Aboriginal people in urban areas belong.

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