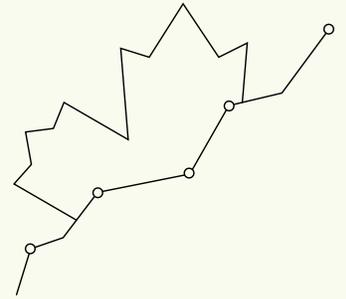


COMMUNITIES & RESEARCH

A TOOL FOR CHANGE



WELCOME

We'd like to acknowledge that this magazine was researched, written and compiled on the original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

This magazine is the first of its kind for the Manitoba Research Alliance (MRA), www.mra-mb.ca.

The MRA is a group of academic researchers, students, community and government partners producing community-based research on solutions to Indigenous and inner-city poverty. The MRA research is made possible thanks to three successive grants from the SSHRC, starting in 2005.

The MRA focuses research in the following four areas:

- Community Economic Development
- Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal
- Education, Training and Capacity Building
- Justice, Safety and Security

The MRA's research is interdisciplinary, widely accessible and facilitates the multi-directional flow of knowledge. Our genuine partnerships have given us unique community access and enabled an original contribution to an understanding of the complex problems we want to continue to study, and a clear understanding of our next steps.

The MRA has supported well over one hundred undergraduate and graduate students. Many of them have gone on to academic careers while others found meaningful work in the community where they did their research.

Within these pages are stories from research that has taken place over the past ten years. These stories are personal, compelling, and just a taste of what the MRA and our partners have done and will continue to do.

Thank you to the Winnipeg Foundation for supporting this magazine and to help share the results of this research

We hope you enjoy.

SARA ATNIKOV, EDITOR

COMMUNITIES & RESEARCH: A TOOL FOR CHANGE

NOVEMBER 2018

This magazine is available free of charge from the CCPA website at www.policyalternatives.ca.

Printed copies may be ordered through the Manitoba Office for a \$10 fee.

Help us continue to offer our publications free online. We make most of our publications available free on our website. Donating will help us continue to provide people with access to our ideas and research free of charge. You can donate or become a supporter on-line at www.policyalternatives.ca. Or you can contact the Manitoba office at 204-927-3200 for more information. Suggested donation for this publication: \$10 or what you can afford.



CCPA
CANADIAN CENTRE
for POLICY ALTERNATIVES
MANITOBA OFFICE

Unit 205 - 765 Main St.
Winnipeg, MB, R2W 3N5
ccpamb@policyalternatives.ca



ABOUT THE EDITOR

Sara Atnikov has worked in the non-profit and community economic development sectors for over ten years. She has worked at organizations like Spence Neighbourhood Association, The University of Winnipeg Collegiate Model School and Manitoba Green Retrofit, where she started and ran a successful social enterprise. She has also been a freelance writer for over ten years and has written for various outlets including CBC, Red River College and others.

She would like to thank the following people for their time, their patience and their willingness to share for this magazine: Aja Oliver, Cathy Campbell, Emma Bonnemaison, Maya Seshia, Shelley Sweeny, Ted Fontaine and the members of the Manitoba Research Alliance: John Loxley, Elizabeth Comack, Jim Silver, Lynne Fernandez and Shauna MacKinnon. She would also like to thank Anastasia Chipelski and Nick Luchak for eagle eye editing and creative layout skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the funding for the research presented in this magazine is from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through the Manitoba Research Alliance "Partnering for Change: Solutions to Inner-City and Aboriginal Poverty" project. Cover photo by Alannah from West End Commons.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada



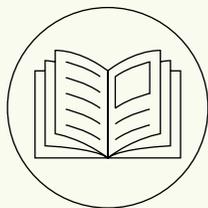
CONTENTS

2	The Indigenization of Thompson Research Project	
4	Remembering Larry	
6	Looking Back 13 Years Later: The Lasting Impact of Street Level Sex-Trade Report	
9	Understanding Community-Based Research	
10	From Hope to Homes at the West End Commons	
12	Healing Through Reunion	
14	Indigenous Archives Project Changes the Power Dynamic in Archiving Materials	
16	Rent Assist: Policy Change Through Research and Advocacy	
18	Lord Selkirk Park: When You're Here You're Home	
20	Through the Eyes of Women: Using the Photovoice Research Method in North Point Douglas	
22	The State of The Inner City Report	
23	MRA Books	
24	MRA Documentaries & Videos	

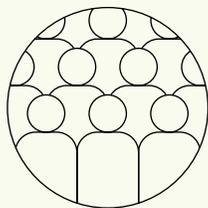
LEGEND



HOUSING &
NEIGHBOURHOOD
RENEWAL



EDUCATION,
TRAINING &
CAPACITY BUILDING



COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



JUSTICE,
SAFETY &
SECURITY



Credit: James Wheeler

The Indigenization of Thompson Research Project



While the Manitoba Research Alliance (MRA) has done much work with Indigenous peoples in urban Winnipeg, it hasn't focused as much on other communities. A new project aims to change that.

In February of 2017, the MRA began developing a research project on the Indigenization of Thompson.

At its core, the *Indigenization of Thompson* project is interested in the growth of the Indigenous population in the city and what employment opportunities are available. It will also examine the various Indigenous political, service and economic development organizations located in Thompson, and the role they play in the Indigenous community in and around the city. Thompson has seen a growth in the number of Indigenous people, to the point where they now constitute 37 per cent of the total population of Thompson.

The results of this study could be important both for Thompson and its neighbouring Indigenous communities, and for urban centres in a similar situation elsewhere; the study could have national implications.

Members of the MRA met with community members in Thompson to see if there was interest in the project and to help determine its scope.

A diverse group participated in the meeting, including members of Community Futures, University College of the North (UCN), the University of Manitoba (U of M), Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Vale, Mystery Lake School Division, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre, Thompson Crisis Centre, Manitoba Housing, the University of Winnipeg (U of W) and members of the Thompson city council.

After a lively discussion, specific research topics were agreed upon, including: housing for the vulnerable; increasing Indigenous employment in Thompson; studying who is poor in Thompson, why they are poor, and how they are poor; looking at how the Thompson economy works by studying the role of the urban reserve and linkages to other communities; and undertaking an Aboriginal archives project.

The MRA researchers who were at the meeting brought valuable research experience from projects they had been involved in in Winnipeg, other First Nation communities and Thompson.

For example, Marleny Bonnycastle and Colin Bonnycastle had already done research in Thompson on homelessness and housing for those in abusive relationships, so it was agreed that possible housing research projects could include housing accessibility in Thompson, housing and the poor, house prices and the future of the mining industry.

Shauna MacKinnon shared the results from her research on education, specifically projects in Fisher River Cree Nation and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) on post-secondary education supports and accessibility, and on the Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence at NCN.

John Loxley introduced ideas for community economic development research, including the possibilities offered by the NCN's urban reserve in Thompson, the economic linkages between Thompson and neighbouring Indigenous Communities, Indigenous employment in Thompson and building an archive of Indigenous organizations as well as an oral history of Indigenous leadership in Thompson.

Since the initial meeting, three research projects have taken off.

Henk Warner Brown, a PhD student, and Cassandra Szabo, a U of W master's student, are examining the ways that Indigenous individuals are supported and prepared for Thompson's workforce. High unemployment and poverty rates among urban Indigenous people makes it important to examine ways in which employment levels can be increased while also finding ways to improve employment retention.

The researchers will interview people who have worked for Vale and who work in the service industry in Thompson. Ultimately, researchers will find gaps in the current employment strategy being used in Thompson and provide policy recommendations for improvement.

An oral history archive project that aims to preserve the oral histories of the Thompson region as well as the primary documents related to local First Nations has been launched, and will end up in a digitized format. Delia Chartrand is the lead researcher and Warner Brown is co-investigator. They believe that the creation of a digital database for these narratives will preserve regional history and greatly improve community relationships through the formal recognition and promotion of Indigenous leadership.

C. Lee Anne Deegan from the U of M, Marleny Bonnycastle from the U of M, Warner Brown, and Jody Linklater from NCN have undertaken research on housing. Their project, called *Perspectives and Causes of Homelessness in Thompson and Surrounding Communities*, will identify causes and explore possibilities to prevent and reduce homelessness in northern Manitoba communities. They will include the perspectives of homeless people and key informants in Indigenous organizations.

All MRA members are excited to support northern researchers to do research on the North. There are high hopes that MRA's community-based participatory research model – so effective in the South – will deliver equally important and interesting results in the North.

BY LYNNE FERNANDEZ

RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- ***A Bit of Shame or Remorse May Go a Long Way: Exploring the Social Impact of Discriminatory Practises in Tompson, Manitoba***
Delia Chartrand & Chris Bignell (Feb. 2017)
- ***It's Time to Give Back to Manitoba's North***
Lynne Fernandez (Sept. 2016)
- ***Fast Facts: The Housing Crisis in Thompson***
Shauna MacKinnon & Charlene Lafreniere (Apr. 2009)
- ***City of Thompson Youth Homelessness / Housing Instability Count 2016***
Marleny M. Bonnycastle & Maureen Simpkins (July 2017)



Remembering Larry

Larry Morrissette passed away September 19, 2016. His passing left a void in not only the Indigenous community of Manitoba, but in the Manitoba Research Alliance (MRA). Larry had worked closely with members of the MRA for years as a researcher and collaborator.

Larry was a truly remarkable man. He grew up in Winnipeg's inner city on Jarvis Avenue and other streets on either side of the tracks. He quit school in grade 8 because the teachers treated him and other Indigenous kids so badly. He worked at various jobs that we would now call precarious labour and was often turned away after submitting applications because he was Indigenous. It was adult education that turned Larry's life around. As he wrote in a chapter that he authored in a book about Aboriginal adult education: "Like most Aboriginal children, my experience in the educational system was not positive.... I left school after one week of grade 8, and spent the next 10 years trying to find meaningful employment." In the early 1980s, on his second try, he was accepted into and later graduated from the University of Manitoba's Inner City Social Work Program, where he learned from and was inspired by both outstanding professors who really cared, and from a wave of Chilean and other refugees who brought to the classroom a range of new and radical political ideas that Larry soaked up. "It transformed my life," he wrote. He later went on to teach in that program, and in the University of Winnipeg's Department of Urban and Inner-City Studies, both of which are innovative and successful university programs located on Selkirk Avenue in Winnipeg's North End.

Larry had a huge impact on many people's lives, and was loved by the many whose lives he changed. He was a co-founder—as part of the Thunder Eagle Society—of the highly successful Children of the Earth High School. He was a co-founder of the original Bear Clan Patrol in the 1990s and played a key role in its recent revitalization. He was also the founder and Executive Director of *Ogjiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin* (OPK), a grassroots organization that works closely with Indigenous people in trouble with or at risk of being in trouble with the law. And he was, for many years, a university teacher, bringing a rare combination of street-level experience and academic training to the classroom. Students loved the authenticity and quiet passion that he brought to their learning experience. Larry was also a skilled researcher, involved in a wide range of inner-city studies, perhaps most significantly as co-author of the award-winning book, *Indians Wear Red: Colonialism, Resistance and Aboriginal Street Gangs* (Fernwood Publishing, 2013).

Larry believed deeply in the transformative power of the kind of adult education being offered today as part of the "Selkirk Avenue Education Hub" in Winnipeg's North End. He knew from his own personal experience what a difference this kind of education can make, and he encouraged young Indigenous people to follow a similar path. As Indigenous activist and Urban and Inner-City Studies student Lenard Monkman wrote upon hearing of Larry's death:

"He knew what the 'hood life was like, and the work that he did tried to change it. I found out last year that he was instrumental in creating Children of the Earth High School. It was the only high school that I ever attended. I was valedictorian of my class and just this past June I was invited to be their keynote speaker for their 25th anniversary. Larry was honored for his work on making COTE a reality, right before I went up to speak. We ended up sitting beside each other for the ceremony. While we were talking, he mentioned how proud he was of our generation. He spoke of seeing young, educated, Indigenous people being able to carry the torch for the type of work that he built his life around."

Larry was a proud Indigenous man with a deep and intellectually sophisticated understanding of the urban Indigenous experience.

Indigenous people in Winnipeg lost a great leader when Larry passed away, and many of us lost a great friend.

BY ELIZABETH COMACK AND JIM SILVER

Looking Back 13 Years Later

The Lasting Impacts of Street-Level Sex Trade Report



There isn't always an opportunity to follow up with a report author to see what lasting impacts the research process left them with, how they felt about the process and, in hindsight, what they would have done differently.

In 2005, the *CCPA-MB* published Maya Seshia's report *The Unheard Speak Out: Street Sexual Exploitation in Winnipeg*. The report used interviews with women and two-spirit people working in the streetlevel sex trade to highlight their experiences with violence and their recommendations to create a safer environment for them to work in.

While she talks about it in a chapter of the book *Practising Community-Based Participatory Research*, in the following interview, Seshia goes into greater detail about the power dynamics that are inherent in interview-style research, how she tried to reconcile her experiences as a settler woman of colour in relation to the mostly Indigenous people she interviewed and which aspects of the research process she still thinks about, more than ten years after her report came out.

Can you provide some background about how you got involved with women working in street level sex trade?

SESHIA: During my undergraduate degree I became aware of how my own life was structured by relations of power and privilege. This was a direct result of Jim Silver (urban and inner-city studies, University of Winnipeg) and Joan Grace's (political science, University of Winnipeg) courses.

These courses helped me reflect on my own experiences as a racialized woman and settler of colour in the Canadian context. I became more aware of topics such as racism, colonialism and patriarchy. I was exposed to various forms of critical theorizing and, more importantly, activism.

I became involved in a variety of feminist and community organizations in Winnipeg. One of these organizations was the University of Winnipeg Margaret Laurence Women's Studies Centre, which ran a once-a-week drop-in program for street-involved women. From 2004 to 2005 I volunteered and later worked at this drop-in program.

It was during this time that I did a research project about which resources and supports women who worked the streets felt were needed within the Winnipeg context. Participants of the drop-in identified a number of issues they faced, and they outlined service and support gaps as well as other solutions about how these issues are best addressed.

Unfortunately, the Margaret Laurence Women's Studies Centre was closed in 2005. After it was closed, I worked as an outreach worker at Sage House, a Winnipeg health, outreach and resource centre.

What made you want to author this report?

S: One of the pressing concerns participants identified in the report was that violence was a key concern when working the streets. This violence was perpetrated by a variety of individuals and was a direct result of the dehumanization participants were exposed to as a result of their status as a sex trade worker and, often, being an Indigenous woman and/or transgender woman.

As a result of this concern, my master's thesis focused on examining the nature of this violence and what solutions participants thought could address it.

In both projects, I had conflicting feelings about my role as a researcher undertaking a project on Winnipeg's sex trade. As a woman of colour settler, I experienced a variety of intersecting oppressions, which sometimes manifested in violent ways, but my position and experiences were fundamentally different from the gendered and often racialized, colonial and spatialized oppressions and dehumanizing processes the women I interviewed experienced.

My position and the power and privilege I occupied by being an academic and settler on

colonized land raised a variety of ethical issues relating to research, voice, power and privilege. My status as a settler of colour in academia writing on the street sex trade, coupled with the fact that I was able to pursue a degree through this research, were two major ethical issues I struggled (and continue to struggle) with.

With research that uses people's lived experiences, there's always the concern that you'll re-traumatize participants who are sharing their often hard-to-tell or traumatic stories. What steps did you take to ensure this didn't happen?

S: This is a very important question. Throughout the research process, I constantly asked myself, "who benefits from this research?" This question was constantly on my mind. It is a question I have not fully resolved to this day, ten years after this report.

Research such as this is premised on relationships, and relationships are shaped by power dynamics. Being reflexive and aware of one's position and of the power dynamics involved in research is a crucial part of research

but reflecting on one's position is not enough to resolve relations of power in research.

Asking participants about violence and solutions to this violence can be extremely triggering and potentially re-traumatizing. In order to reduce this, my research project underwent a review by the University of Alberta and University of Manitoba research and ethics boards and was circulated to staff



working at the community organization I was working in partnership with.

I sought feedback from participants about the questions I asked. Based on the feedback I received from participants in the report, staff at the community organization, my supervisors and the ethics committees, I constructed and edited questions accordingly.

Many participants expressed that just talking about their experiences and outlining solutions was empowering. However, there are a few issues I would have done differently.

Was there ever a time when you thought to yourself “what right do I have to be asking these questions?” or “what right do I have to these people’s experiences?”

S: Yes. Variations of these questions were constantly at the front of my mind during and after the research process. The purpose of asking questions about the nature of violence and solutions to this violence was to formulate comprehensive, participant-led solutions to address this violence.

For example: was this violence racialized and/or spatialized? Was it gendered? Was there a colonial element to this violence? Was it a result of working conditions and laws regulating prostitution? Was it a result of stereotypes about sex trade workers?

What solutions would make working conditions safer? What solutions would address the systemic character of this violence? What did the women who took part in this research think could be done to comprehensively address this violence and what solutions did women think would make working conditions and their overall lives safer?

The purpose of this report was not to sensationalize this violence; the purpose was to name the nature of this violence, to identify what factors led to this violence, and to ask participants which solutions would enhance safety.

Despite being based on these objectives, the question of “what right do I have” –as a researcher in a position of relative privilege asking such personal and potentially painful questions –was a question that troubled

me. Other questions I continuously asked myself include “who benefits from this research?” and “what are the consequences of this research?” These are questions I continue to think about and have not fully resolved.

As a researcher undertaking a graduate degree, I clearly benefited from the project. I tried to come to terms with my conflicting feelings about my position of researcher undertaking this work and the benefits I gained from it by giving back to community organizations and services aimed at supporting sex trade workers and sexually exploited women and girls. I outlined, as best I could, the solutions participants identified.

Even the act of naming the gendered, racialized and spatialized nature of this violence was significant. Naming the characters of this violence drew attention to the specificity and systemic character of this violence, and how it manifested in very specific ways in Winnipeg.

Focusing on participants’ concern about the impact laws regulating prostitution had on sex trade workers’ safety was also significant as it reinforced the fact the certain laws regulating prostitution increased encounters with violence. Despite aspects of this research being important and significant, I continue to be troubled by my position of settler of colour in academia writing on this subject, and the power and privileges involved in this position. I have not come to terms with this, and I do not know if I ever will.

Were there things that were done at the time that looking back now, more than ten years later, you would have done differently?

S: There are two major issues I wish I could have done differently.

First, while I tried to review the interview transcripts with participants, this was not always possible. Some participants who took part in the project had never utilized the drop-in service or only utilized it on rare occasions, so it was hard to follow up. Having a contact phone number or email was not always possible because many participants did not have a phone and/or computer.



Beyond this, before each interview I carefully reviewed the consent form with participants. I stressed that participants were not, in any way, obligated to answer questions, they could stop the interview at any point and they could revoke the interview even after the interview was done. I gave participants a card outlining distress lines and emergency numbers.

Do you feel like the steps that were taken were enough? Why or why not?

S: I tried to conduct this research as ethically as possible. However, the reality is the research involved difficult and potentially triggering questions.

In hindsight, having a second part to the interview process where I had a more effective way of sharing the transcripts might have resolved, or partially resolved, this issue.

Second, many women told me it was empowering and important to share their experiences and outline solutions. However, a number of the solutions involved systemic change and were difficult to implement in a policy format.

Systemic change is particularly challenging when undertaken in Canada, a country whose, as Sunera Thobani says in her book *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*, nationalism and liberal ideology is based on the celebration of Canada as a multicultural and inclusive nation free of violence and inequalities.

We live in a country where a significant portion of the state and public deny the existence of racism, colonialism, patriarchy, heteronormativity and discrimination based on disability.

Canada's nationalism and liberal ideology make implementing systemic change challenging. How does systemic change occur in a country which actively denies past and present relations of power and privilege? How does systemic change occur in a country that denies that racism, colonialism, and patriarchy continue to exist today, and are fundamental to the construction of the nation and its identities?

In hindsight, I wish I had asked more questions about how to best address systemic change and, in turn, developed a more comprehensive plan on how to work toward systemic change.

This report came out over ten years ago. **Can you share any lasting impacts that you got from it?**

S: The report has shaped me in fundamental ways. The ethical questions I grappled with have made me acutely aware of the power relations involved in this type of research.

In addition, the findings from this report –specifically that this violence was often gendered, racialized and spatialized –has shaped how I, personally, understand the Canadian state and nation. My understanding of Canada is based on the fact that Canada is a white settler colonial nation premised on gendered and racialized violence.

This, in turn, has shaped my actions and understanding of my own positionality in the settler context. For instance, when teaching, I focus on colonialism and systems of oppression such as patriarchy, racism and heteronormativity. I encourage students to think about Canada, and their own situatedness and positionality within Canada in a critical and reflexive way.

Reflecting on issue such as patriarchy, colonialism, racism and heteronormativity and our own positionality within the colonial context is often not a part of the education we receive in school and university, so I try to focus on this in both my teaching and writing.

My teaching practice is one example of how research participants and this report continue to significantly impact me fundamental ways.

BY SARA ATNIKOV AND MAYA SESHIA

RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT
[POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/
OFFICES/MANITOBA](http://POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA)
AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- ***The Unheard Speak Out: Street Sexual Exploitation in Winnipeg***
Maya Seshia (Oct. 2005)
- ***Engendering Alternative Justice: Criminalized Women, Alternative Justice, and Neoliberalism***
Amanda Nelund Seshia (Jan. 2016)
- ***Cost of Doing Nothing: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls***
Marina Puzyreva and John Loxley (Oct. 2017)
- ***Book: Coming Back to Jail: Women, Trauma, and Criminalization***
Elizabeth Comack



Illustrations by
Nicholas Luchak

Understanding Community-Based Research



In the world of social research, different approaches are taken and various methods are used to gather data. The Manitoba Research Alliance (MRA) supports projects that use Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approaches. The articles in this magazine highlight some of the community-based participatory research projects that have been published by the MRA.

At its core, CBPR is a research approach that is a partnership between the researcher and the community that is being researched. It does away with top down, invasive forms of research that extract knowledge from communities and individuals much like mines extract resources from the land. Instead, CBPR is often led by the community, and is a collaborative, relationship-based research approach.

The book *“Practising Community Based Participatory Research: Stories of Engagement, Empowerment, and Mobilization”*, is best described as a collection of stories about doing community-based research (CBPR) with an eye toward social justice.

Shauna MacKinnon, associate professor in Urban and Inner-City Studies at the University of Winnipeg and co-investigator with the MRA, describes how many scholars have activist roots aligned with social justice, but the pressures and responsibilities of academic life all too often disengage them from the community. CBPR enables activist-minded academics to rediscover a role as agents of social change. It allows them to explore new approaches that respond to the needs and desires of community partners who share their hopes for equity and justice.

For students, CBPR can furnish a transition from their university life into the “real world.” Like their professors, students all too often become fixated on textbook knowledge and the demands of Western-defined scholarship. Of course, these forms of knowledge provide

an extremely important base, but as students learn, a world of knowledge lies outside the classroom. CBPR provides a context where textbook knowledge can be applied, but also where different forms of knowledge are learned. It allows researchers to understand how different forms of knowledge are learned. It also allows researchers to apply what they know while also learning what they don’t know. This can be a humbling and important lesson for seasoned researchers and students alike, as they step away from the protective walls of academia.

Involvement in CBPR can also come with great responsibility and self-awareness. Outsiders who undertake it owe much to their community partners for welcoming them into their world and trusting in them. Although researchers may be genuinely interested in non-hierarchical research that respects multiple ways of knowing, the realities of power and privilege cannot be denied. Indeed, tenured researchers who engage in post-research policy advocacy enjoy considerable privilege by virtue of their university ties, whereas many of their community partners remain vulnerable to the whims of governments and other funding agencies.

For the researchers and representatives of community-based organizations, involvement in CBPR provides an opportunity to demonstrate the depth and breadth of the knowledge they have garnered from their work on the front lines. These organic intellectuals play a central role in CBPR. Typically, community partners have been the drivers of the research – it is they who decide what needs to be explored. Although researchers can offer a variety of methods and tools, community partners will select the ones that best suit their means.

The basic formula for CBPR – grounded in a desire for transformative social change – is universally applicable. It includes the fundamental belief that research must be driven by and embedded in communities; that though researchers have much to contribute, what others bring to the table is equally important; and that the work doesn’t end when the final report is written. Transformative community based participatory research requires shared vision and long-term commitment to the shaping of a more equitable world.

BY SARA ATNIKOV AND SHAUNA MACKINNON

RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- **2010 State of the Inner City report: We’re in it for the Long Haul**
- **Is Participation Having an Impact? Measuring Progress in Winnipeg’s Inner City through the Voices of Community-Based Program Participants**

Shauna MacKinnon and Sara Stephens with Heather Bendell, Dave Brophy, Richard Bruyere, Michael Champagne, Tyra Maud, Erin Mitchell, Lorraine Nepinak, Tricia Seymour, Carey Sinclair, Sue Thiebaut, Nancy Thomas, Jason Wark, and Community Led Organizations United Together (CLOUT) (May 2013)

- **Video: Breaking Barriers / Building Bridges**



Credit: Matt

FROM HOPE TO HOMES *at the* WEST END COMMONS



Credit: Irv



Credit: Gisma



Credit: Sonia

There's the saying that many hands make light work, but in some cases the sheer volume of work requires many hands, or people, to get it done, and the load isn't necessarily lightened with the help.

It took a lot of people to make the West End Commons happen, and one of those people was Cathy Campbell. Campbell was the reverend of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, and a central figure in the vision, the mission, and ultimately the completion of the project.

Below, she offers some words about the vision and hope for the West End Commons alongside pictures taken by people who call the Commons home, which offer a glimpse into what residents see as their neighbourhood and their community.

Our congregation has a slogan: we've been here for 100 years; we want to be here for 100 more. We have a long-term commitment to the neighbourhood. When we were discussing options for the building, the choice was whether to try to renew it or to leave it. If we left it derelict it would have been devastating.

We knew the community that made up the neighbourhood was committed to the neighbourhood, so we wanted, and continue to want, to be a leavening agent/spirit in this neighbourhood. With that kind of view and relationship, a lot became possible.

Our fundamental commitment was that housing would be built for families, and for families that were in neighbourhood already; it would be affordable, not gentrified.

My sense has always been that if a small congregation like St. Matthew's could manage this kind of transformation, it would offer hope and vision to other groups to say "if they could do it, we could do it."

RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT
[POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/
OFFICES/MANITOBA](http://POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA)
AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- ***Here We're At Home: The West End Commons Model of Subsidized Housing with Supports,*** Jess Klassen (Mar. 2018)

- ***What Does It Take to House a Syrian Refugee?: Supporting Refugee Housing and Resettlement Beyond the Syrian Refugee Crisis***

Ray Silvius, Hani Al-Ubeady, Dylan Chyz-Lund, Dr. Carlos Colorado, Emily Halldorson (Jan. 2017)



Credit: Craig



Credit: Erika



Credit: Narajen



Credit: Olga



Credit: Arati



Credit: Clayton

All of what was done was based on a kind of hope. It was based on a common vision that can serve as a real vision, a real hope that we can bring people back into the community. It should be a place for families to flourish.

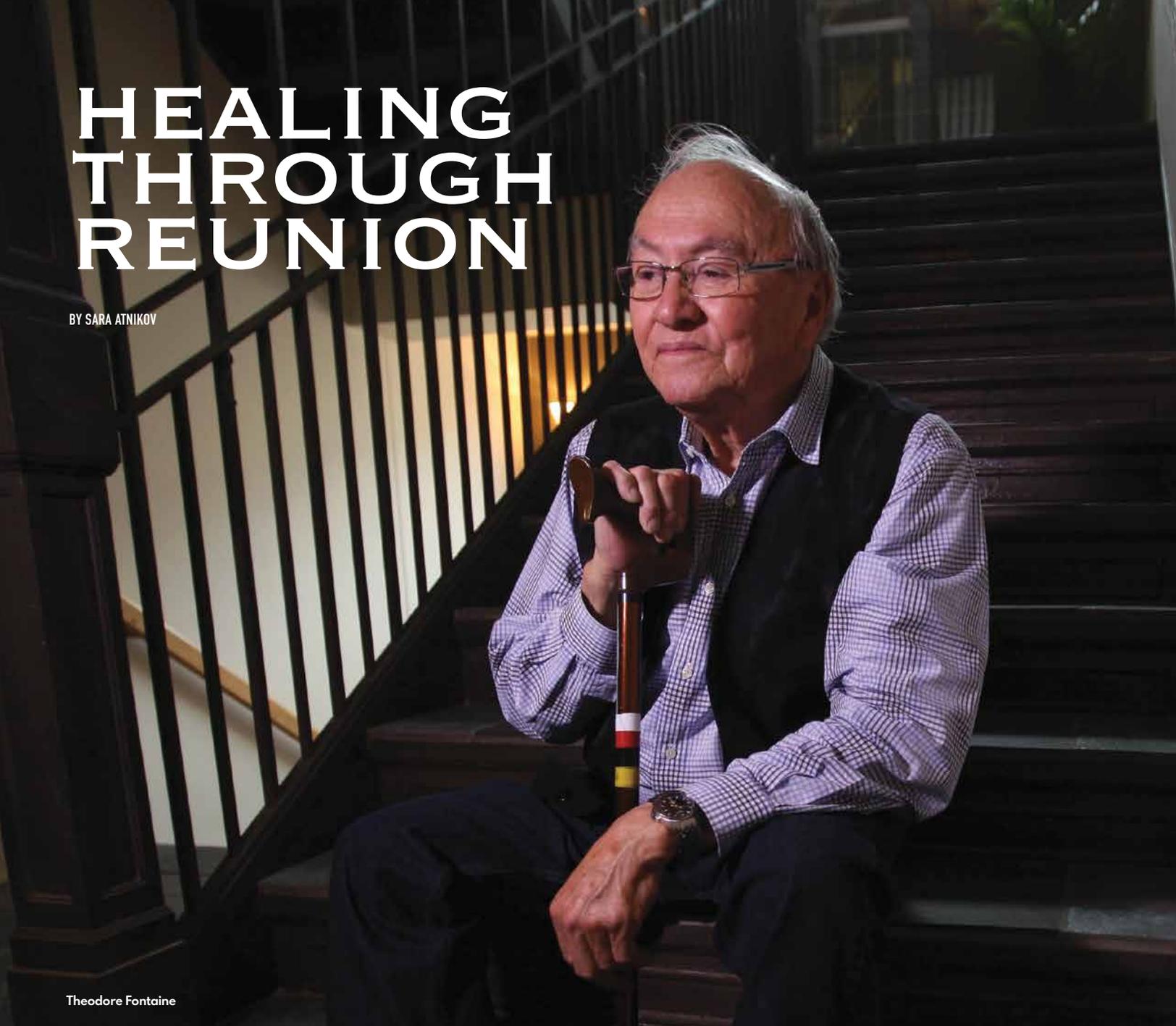
If people continue to value relationships, and the power of relationships, then all sorts of things are possible, and indeed the neighbourhood will be a place of wellbeing not just for the neighbourhood, but for the city. My hope is that it can dispel fear and be a hopeful sign of what makes this city a really extraordinary place to live.

BY SARA ATNIKOV AND CATHY CAMPBELL

- **Fast Facts: Newcomer Families; The role of housing and wrap around supports for Winnipeg,** Jill Bucklaschuk (Nov. 2016)
- **The IRCOM Model: Housing and Wrap-around Supports for Newcomers in Winnipeg,** Jill Bucklaschuk (Nov. 2016)
- **Fast Facts: National Housing Day; A profile of West End Commons,** Jess Klassen (Nov. 2015)

HEALING THROUGH REUNION

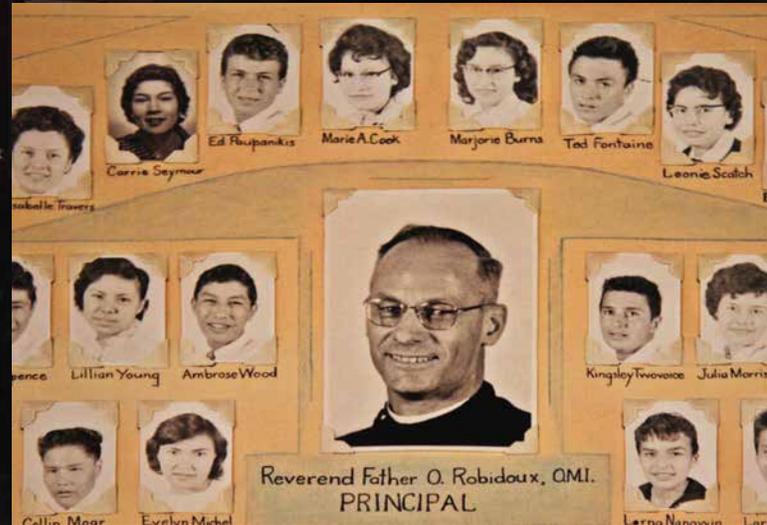
BY SARA ATNIKOV



Theodore Fontaine



Assiniboia Residential School as seen from Academy



On a blustery Saturday afternoon in June, 2017, a group of former students returned to their Winnipeg high school to give curious people a tour of the impressive three-story limestone and brick building. The high school stopped operating in 1973 and currently houses the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, but much remains of the original layout.

What drew people to the building was not what it is, but what it had been.

From 1958 to 1973, the building, nestled between from the tree-lined canopy of Academy Road and the Assiniboine River, had been the Assiniboia Indian Residential School.

Assiniboia was different than a lot of residential schools. It was the first Indigenous high school, and one of the few to be located in an urban setting.

“We can’t use same language to talk about this one as others, because it was different, but it was still a part of the residential school system that existed in Canada to get rid of the Indian,” Andrew Woolford said. Woolford is a professor

of sociology and criminology at the University of Manitoba whose research, according to his bio, “focuses on the field of genocide studies, with an emphasis on cultural techniques of group destruction as experienced by Indigenous Peoples in North America.”

IT WAS REALLY HEART-WARMING TO BE ABLE TO TALK TO PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN THERE

– THEODORE FONTAINE, ASSINIBOIA INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL STUDENT

While the horrific physical and sexual abuse that occurred at other residential schools didn’t happen at Assiniboia, at its heart, the school still existed to rid Canada of Indians through assimilation.

Duncan Campbell Scott, the head of the Department of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932 (and one of the orchestrators of residential schools), famously wrote: “I want to get rid of the Indian problem. Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department...”

According to Theodore Fontaine, residential schools were an “incarceration state of an institution with bosses carrying on a policy of not

educating us. They were concerned with getting rid of the Indian.” He added, “I was ashamed when I came out of the school. I was ashamed of Indians, that’s what the schools did to me, and to others.”

Fontaine was a student at Assiniboia for his high school years, but Assiniboia wasn’t the first residential school he attended. When he was seven years old, he started school at the Fort Alexander Residential School. Years later, when the truth about residential schools started to come out, Fort Alexander was one that was known for its particularly horrible cruelty, with many students telling of their experiences of physical and sexual abuse.

While over 200 people participated in tours of the former Assiniboia school’s building, that wasn’t the only component of the reunion. In order to properly acknowledge and give space to the survivors, and to gather knowledge to share, a whole weekend’s worth of activities was planned at the site.

“The reunion was an amazing way to gather knowledge and stories. People brought photos, someone brought a quilt, and these are things that would have never been found if not for the reunion,” Woolford said.

“Elder Betty Ross, who had attended the school, gave lectures and that night they had a graduation dinner of sorts, a commemoration dinner at Westworth United Church where the survivors were fed by members of the community. There was music and teatime where it was just survivors, so they had space and time together just to be. The next day there were three tents and a day of food and speeches and a sunrise ceremony,” he adds.

The idea for the reunion was born from conversations between Woolford and Fontaine. They had met at a conference, and in their conversations, they realized something should be done to recognize the students of Assiniboia.

Because Woolford was cognizant of the importance for the former students to have control over what they wanted to happen, he took a back seat.

“This was a survivor-led project. From the beginning, all I did was ask the Manitoba Research Alliance for funds to meet with survivors with no real set of planned outcomes. Everything was built in partnership with the survivor group,” Woolford said.

Some might question why people would want to hold a reunion for a place that existed to erase their identities. But coming together to talk and share experiences is part of the healing process.

“It’s not like it was a stereotypical reunion where there’s fun and dancing. It was kind of like a re-hashing what had happened, and a lot of times it was informational. It gave us an idea who was still alive,” Fontaine said.

“It was really heart-warming to be able to talk to people who had been there. There was a lot of laughter and joy to sit there across from my colleagues. It was a very, very huge step towards reconciliation and healing. It wasn’t intended just for people to have fun, it was intended to share information,”

On Sunday, a former student came up to Woolford and said the reunion had given them a “chance to create new memories, because we didn’t have good memories.”

Many of the 200 who went on tours of the building were people who currently lived or who had grown up in the neighbourhood. Because so little was known about the school, this was the first time that those who were aware of the building and maybe knew a little about the school’s history could get a fuller picture.

“Reconciliation means coming to terms with what was there and what happened. The benevolence that surfaces between the kids at the school and the community of River Heights, it was very much an ‘us and them.’ But now it’s a little less so ‘us and them’ mentality,” Fontaine said.

For Fontaine, the reunion was an important part of the path he’s on: “I became a victim when I went in, was a survivor when I got out, and now I’m a victor.”



RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- **Video: Stories of Decolonization: Land Dispossession and Settlement** (Oct. 2017)



From left to right: Larry Morrissette, Darrell Chippeway, John Loxley, Evelyn Peters, Crystal Greene, Kathy Mallett, Jesse Boiteau, Sarah Story, Molly McCracken, Louise Chippeway.

Indigenous Archives Project Changes the Power Dynamic in Archiving Materials



For decades, Winnipeg has been a hub for Indigenous activism. The '70s, '80s, and '90s saw the creation of vitally important organizations like Native Women's Transition Centre (now the Indigenous Women's Healing Centre), Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Children of the Earth High School, and others.

But because the people involved in these organizations were busy doing the work, some of the record keeping and record organization fell by the wayside. In the battle between doing the work and keeping track of what you're doing, doing the work wins.

John Loxley and Evelyn Peters saw an opportunity to work alongside the people who helped found these organizations and to utilize the resources available to them. Loxley and Peters brought the idea of creating an archival project to a group that included the creators of these key organizations, and, according to Loxley, there was "almost uniform enthusiasm and all were keen to help."

Loxley had formed relationships with the organizations through the work he had done through community economic development research through the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Evelyn Peters is an urban social geographer whose research focuses on First Nations and Métis people living in cities, and she had formed relationships through her research and work.

THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE WAS MOVING THE UNIVERSITY FROM A STRICTLY COLONIAL SETTLER NARRATIVE LIKE, 'GIVE US YOUR RECORDS AND GIVE UP YOUR RIGHTS.'

– SHELLEY SWEENEY,
HEAD OF ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (U OF M)

They both knew the importance of archiving work, but also knew that organizations are often under-resourced.

Because they wanted this to be a truly collaborative project, Loxley and Peters struck a working group comprised of Kathy Mallett, Larry Morrisette, Louise Chippeway, Darrell Chippeway and Crystal Greene, as well as themselves.

The working group decided that the project would consist of two parts: one would be the archiving of the material from the different organizations, and the other would be a collection of on screen interviews with the organizations' founders. From this group, *The Indigenous Archives project* was born.

When trying something that's never been done before, it helps to have a champion from an established organization in your corner. For *The Indigenous Archives project*, that person was Shelley Sweeney. Sweeney is the head of archives and special collections at the University of Manitoba (U of M), where the organizations' materials are held.

Sweeney saw this as an opportunity to support these organizations whose work was and continues to be vital. She also saw the project as being complimentary to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, which is located at the University of Manitoba.

Some of the materials that were archived in the project include minutes, agendas, photographs and articles of the history of the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, as well as other documents from organizations like Kinew Housing and the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg. In addition to the print materials, over forty video interviews were made, which are included in the collection.

Usually, when an archive acquires materials from an organization, the documents become the property of the archive. The working group didn't want this. Shelley had also seen this happen time and time again in her career, and she didn't want to repeat this pattern.

"The critical importance was moving the university from a strictly colonial settler narrative like, 'give us your records

and give up your rights.' That's the same old same old, people would take Indigenous records and use them and they would be left high and dry. This was a different narrative; it was like 'we have the resources so let's do this but be shepherds of the material,'" Sweeney said.

Doing things differently made for a lot of back and forth between the working group, Shelley, and lawyers who work for the University of Manitoba. Over the course of a few months, a document was created that met the needs of the organizations and the university.

"We came up with a letter of understanding. These Indigenous organizations are not giving up their material forever – we are stewarding them for the time being. If at a later time there is a more suitable place for them – an Indigenous place – we could transfer them there," Sweeney said.

For the first time, an archive is the steward – not the owner – of materials it houses. The letter of understanding effectively changes the relationship between archives and organizations that house their material there.

"It's a template for other projects. You can say 'here is a useful conciliatory activity we can do without stomping all over your rights,'" Sweeney said.

The video component of the archive, created by Darrell Chippeway and Darryl Nepinak, has interviews with George Munroe, Doris Young, Wayne Helgason, Kathy Mallett, Vern Morrisette and Larry Morrisette – all respected Elders. They spoke about their experiences creating key Indigenous organizations like the Native Women's Transition Centre (now known as the Indigenous Women's Healing Centre), Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, the Aboriginal Centre (now Neeganin College) and Children of the Earth High School. The video is an engaging accompaniment to the archives, as it brings to life the people on the pages.

– SARA ATNIKOV

RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT MRA-MB.CA
AND AT POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA

- **Video: Preserving Aboriginal Institutional History in Winnipeg**
Darrell Chippeway & Darryl Nepinak (Oct. 2013)
- **State of the Inner City 2010: We're In It For the Long Haul**
- **Offering our Gifts, Parneting for Change: Decolonizing Experimentation in Winnipeg Based Settler Archives**
Sarah Story (Oct. 2017)



Courtesy of Winnipeg Free Press Archives

Rent Assist

Policy change through research and advocacy



A shelter benefit called for by community advocates and developed in Manitoba is a model for the rest of the country. Rent Assist has offered new hope for low income people and is an innovative housing policy for Canada to build upon.

The shortage of social and other subsidized housing means low-income people are often forced to turn to the private market. Renting housing on a fixed income in the private market forces many to choose between paying rent or buying food. Those renting privately have had to pay what the market demands out of eroding social assistance rates or fixed incomes. Assistance rates not indexed to inflation result in a decline in real dollars. This has left a large gap between shelter benefits and private market rents.

The Manitoba office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives documented growing community consensus on the need to address meager social assistance shelter allowances in the 2011 report *The Truth About Consequences*. The report recommended indexing social assistance shelter rates to 75 per cent of the Median Market Rent (MMR) as set by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The three-year community shelter benefit campaign followed, led by Make Poverty History Manitoba. The call to increase shelter benefits was eventually supported in varying degrees by all political parties. In 2014 the Manitoba government under the NDP introduced Rent Assist. The communities' call was answered in a new comprehensive benefit available to those on and off of assistance.

Rent Assist is indexed to 75 per cent of MMR and increased to match MMR annually. The amount a recipient receives is set based on their income, family size and residence. Tenants pay a base amount and then Rent Assist tops them up to 75 per cent of MMR. For example, the maximum amount paid to single individuals monthly is \$563 and single parents by \$787 (utilities included).

While Rent Assist is an improvement, housing advocates are finding it is still not quite adequate. The vacancy rate for units below MMR is very low. This results in tenants using food or basic needs budgets to cover market rent.

Another challenge is Rent Assist being used in the context of ending operating agreements for Rent-Geared-to-Income Units. These federal agreements offloaded to the provinces are coming to an end and tenants are being told to apply to Rent Assist. However Rent Assist is not set at the same level and treated differently for tax purposes. Tenants and housing complexes with RGI units must make tough calls – subsidize the RGI units internally or tenants can't afford to pay. This is very disruptive as some have lived in these units for years. It should be noted Rent Assist was not designed to deal with the challenges related to the end of operating agreements. It should be revisited to do so.

But overall, Rent Assist is a step in the right direction. Rent controls in Manitoba keep the ceiling on rents so landlords cannot take advantage of increased benefits to tenants.

As a portable benefit, Rent Assist gives tenants choice as to where they wish to live. It is portable and follows you if you move off of assistance or onto assistance. This breaks down the welfare wall. Rent Assist is designed as a program outside of the social assistance system and therefore does not come with the stigma of "being on welfare".

Social assistance recipients were automatically enrolled in Rent Assist and 24,000 received the benefit in 2017. Working poor and other low-income people must apply. When it was first introduced in 2014, 2,400 Manitobans applied, which has more than doubled to 7,000 recipients in 2017.

While in opposition, the Progressive Conservative (PC) party supported raising the shelter benefit for those on assistance to 75 per cent of MMR. However once forming government in 2016 the PC-led government raised the base amount (what tenants pay) for Rent Assist from 25 per cent of their income to 28 per cent, and now 30 per cent. This reduced eligibility for several hundred Manitobans in the program and cut shelter benefits to thousands of others.

Apart from this adjustment, the Rent Assist program remains largely intact after the change in provincial government and the program is even a point of pride. For example,

the inflationary increases to index Rent Assist to MMR were cited in the 2017 provincial budget press release. This is a testament to the education done by housing and poverty reduction advocates of the need for a progressive shelter subsidy.

Housing advocates across Canada have long been calling for something like Rent Assist: increased shelter benefits as part of a comprehensive national housing strategy.

In January, 2018, the federal government responded with the long-awaited National Housing Strategy. Central to this strategy is the \$4 billion Canada Housing Benefit. Scheduled to be launched in 2020, the Canada Housing Benefit has yet to be developed. The Rent Assist program could be used as a model across the country.

The federal government and provinces will negotiate bilateral agreements to implement the national housing strategy. The question remains as to what does an actual housing allowance look like?

Manitoba has found a way to address the complexities of reducing core housing needs amongst private renters. This can be upheld if the federal government requires their benefit to boost affordability so that low income people are not spending more than 30% of income on housing.

Housing advocates are calling for a rights-based approach in the new housing benefit to redress systemic inequities. A coordinated approach between levels of government is needed to enhance existing benefits and programs. But when new benefits from one level of government are introduced there can be a temptation by the other to use this to save money. This would be a mistake.

When introducing the new federal benefit, provincial benefits should not be clawed back. The federal benefit should dovetail with provincial benefits so low-income tenants renting privately can cover rent without using food or other basic needs budgets. The new federal Housing Benefit money does not let provinces off the hook. Moreover, cash benefits like Rent Assist does not obviate the need for investing in social housing, which remains a fundamental pillar of good housing policy.

An adequate shelter benefit is essential to ending poverty in Canada. This benefit must be well-designed so as not to subsidize, but rather complement, existing provincial programs in order to move people forward so that they afford good housing, healthy food & realize basic human rights. Canada and the provinces must get this right or we risk losing this important opportunity.

BY MOLLY MCCRACKEN

Previously published in CCPA National's Behind the Numbers Blog.



Images courtesy of A Good Place to Live



Lord Selkirk Park: When You're Here, You're Home



In 2012, Aja Oliver was a single mom living in a three-bedroom apartment with her four kids and her own mom. She knew she needed to move out, but her housing options were limited.

She applied for subsidized housing through Manitoba Housing, and was told there was a townhouse available for her in Lord Selkirk Park.

"I found out where it was and thought 'oh my god, not there.' It had a really bad rep. I was familiar with it – growing up I had family that lived there, so I knew what it was like," Oliver said. "When I moved in I hesitated leaving my house. You hear of people getting shot and people dying, and like, I had to live there. I went ahead, and I moved in. I thought I had to make this work, and it turned out to be the best thing. It completely changed my life," Oliver said.

When Oliver moved into Lord Selkirk Park in 2013, it was at the tail end of

a remarkable transformation that had begun almost a decade earlier.

Built in the '60s, the Lord Selkirk Park Housing Development was the second and largest urban renewal housing development in Winnipeg. From close to the start, there were issues that arose around the development; public housing wasn't the problem, but housing large numbers of poor people without any social or economic opportunities around them is a problem.

Over the years, Lord Selkirk Park (LSP) fell into disrepair, and became a hub of crime and violence. People were afraid to leave their houses, vacancy rates were high and many outside the developments had the same opinion of LSP as Oliver.

Change was needed, but it couldn't be a top-down overhaul of the neighbourhood. The change had to come from and engage with the people who lived in the area.

In 2005, the North End Community Renewal Corporation started meeting with tenants to see what they felt was needed in the neighbourhood. They were looking for things that would make the neighbourhood a community, and that would make it the kind of place people wanted to live because they wanted to, not just because they had to.

From those meetings The Lord Selkirk Park Resource Centre, a childcare centre, Lord Selkirk Park Adult Literacy Centre and Kaakiyow li moond likol Adult Learning Centre (Kaakiyow) were established and are still there today.

Around the same time, Manitoba Housing was looking at how they operated. They set up an office in LSP, which is something they hadn't done before. The idea was that the office could be a place for folks to exchange information so that Manitoba Housing staff could be better informed about what was going on.



RELATED READING

ALL REPORTS CAN BE FOUND AT POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA/OFFICES/MANITOBA AND AT MRA-MB.CA

- **Fast Facts: Public Housing Plays an Essential Role in Manitoba's Housing System**
Sarah Cooper (Jan. 2018)
- **Book: Solving Poverty: Innovative Strategies from Winnipeg's Inner City**
Jim Silver
- **Addressing Core Housing Need in Canada**
Sarah Cooper & Ian Skelton (Oct. 2015)
- **Video: A Good Place to Live**
Jim Silver & Ian Mauro (Oct. 2017)

In 2009, Manitoba Housing started extensive renovations of the homes in LSP. Both the interiors and exteriors were updated, and the homes got new appliances. While this was a major step in and of itself, the government at the time took the added step of hiring companies that employed people who lived in the area. The renovation project meant that people who were underemployed or unemployed got valuable trades experience.

When Oliver moved in, the transformation of LSP was nearing completion, and she was able to make use of the services that were steps away from her house.

"I was walking my kids to school and I saw a poster for an adult learning centre. I'd been on social assistance my whole life, and I was looking for things to do. I checked out Kaakiyow and it was amazing. It was one of the best decisions I've made in my life," Oliver said.

"The support there was amazing. I suffered a really traumatic experience in my life while I was there, and I quit school, and what brought me back was that the teachers and support staff came to my house to make sure I was okay."

By going to Kaakiyow, she was able to get her high school diploma. She also got a job.

I FEEL GOOD TO SAY I TOTALLY BROKE THE CYCLE...

- AJA OLIVER, LORD SELKIRK PARK RESIDENT

"When I graduated I was like 'I gotta get back in there, I can't just leave.' I had a plan to return and volunteer, but then the community support worker position came up and I applied, and I got it," Oliver said. "This is the very first job I've ever had. I'm a single mom, I'm 35 years old, I've had a lot of volunteer experience and a lot of life experience, and they saw what I had to offer," she adds.

Oliver said that the good that places like Kaakiyow and communities like LSP offer spills over from one person to the next. While she was at Kaakiyow, she was bragging to her family about this awesome school she was going to. Her cousin came to check it out, and then

her cousin's partner came, and they all ended up graduating together.

This past September, Oliver became a full time university student, something she never pictured for herself. She's studying at University of Winnipeg's Selkirk Avenue campus, called Merchants Corner.

"I never thought that I'd go to university. Just the life that I've lived, people like me don't go to university. I feel good to say I totally broke the cycle that was happening, like, we're still poor, but I have my education, and I'm a student and I'll keep up with my education," Oliver said.

Today, there are many people like Aja who live in LSP and have turned their lives around.

LSP is fully occupied – 50 per cent of the units were boarded up in 2005 – and there is a wait list to get in. About 95 people have graduated with their mature grade 12 from Kaakiyow; the literacy program is full and has a wait list; the childcare centre is thriving; and the community is safe – it's "a good place to live," as residents now say.

BY SARA ATNIKOV



Through the Eyes Of Women



Using the Photovoice Research Method in North Point Douglas

The saying “a picture is worth a thousand words” is especially true when it comes to the photovoice research method.

Rather than a researcher writing down what participants say and creating a report, photovoice puts cameras and other media in the hands of research participants and asks them to document their everyday lives.

While this method is beneficial to the people doing the research since they gain access to stories and experiences they may not have otherwise, it can also have an empowering effect on the research participants because they truly are the ones telling their stories and showing their lives.

It was this aspect – empowering people to tell their stories – that drew Emma Bonnemaïson to use photovoice in *The Voice from Point Douglas* project. A graduate student in peace and conflict studies at the University of Manitoba, Bonnemaïson conducted the project for her master’s thesis. It also culminated in an art show where the photos the participants took were displayed, along with their captions.

“I wanted to commit myself to research that was community led and that involved community at a grassroots level. Research is so extractive, and if you are a settler living on occupied land, you have to be extremely conscious of how you are working with communities, and also how you are representing communities,” Bonnemaïson said.

“I feel the best way to do research that isn’t extractive, or what I call ‘parachute research,’ is for it to actually be led by the individuals who are affected by the issues. It puts power back in the hands of individuals that are marginalized by the colonial state. It’s levelling the playing field,”

Along with being empowering, photovoice, like many arts-based research methods, is accessible, and provides an opportunity for holistic representation of lived experiences, something Bonnemaïson felt was of vital importance.

“Photovoice, like any arts-based research, is not only accessible– it’s expressive and a way for people to tell their stories. It’s empowering because you’re able to talk about issues. Participants were really able to talk about things in a holistic way. Not just a good thing or a bad thing, it’s just what it is. In this visual narrative there are so many stories to tell,” Bonnemaïson said.

The Voice from Point Douglas project was born from Bonnemaïson’s experiences with the North Point Douglas Women’s Centre (NPDWC). As a Board member and a volunteer, she saw what the women who accessed the centre were dealing with while living in Point Douglas,

one of Winnipeg’s oldest, poorest and most stigmatized neighbourhoods.

“I really wanted to look at this idea that space matters, like spatial justice and how essentially people are affected by their spatial geographies, and the multiple forms of violence that women face that are a direct result of colonial dispossession. If there are dispossessing forces still at place, which there are, this project was an attempt to take back space, and to look at active forms of resistance, an act against dispossession,” Bonnemaïson said.

Having the NPDWC as a home base where researchers and participants could meet helped with the process.

“When you’re working within a community, it’s important to have some sort of anchor, so an organization or a community group (helps) because it creates a sense of safety to begin with, people are familiar with the organization and the people within it. The reason this worked so well was because the women knew each other really well, and those relationships became strengthened by working together,” Bonnemaïson said.

While you might think sending people out with cameras and seeing what they come back with sounds like an easy task, you’d be mistaken, as there is much more involved with photovoice.

“Our process was (to hold) about 12 sessions with the women.... The women decided they wanted to do community walks. In that sense the women were doing research in the experiential manner,” Bonnemaïson said.

“Also, two sessions were dedicated essentially to just caption writing. Women decided they wanted to write a poem or do a mind map, or they just wanted to talk and (have) me listen and write down words. Photovoice is accessible, but there is still the caption writing aspect and that part needs to be made creative,”

Ultimately, Bonnemaïson says that the relationships that were formed and fostered through this project are really what matters.

“First and foremost, what you’re doing when you’re doing community research is building relationships, which can take a long time. There’s a lot of collaboration and building those relationships enough so that you can actually be partners, so it was so great to work together, and to coalesce and apex into an exhibit was amazing for (the participants),” Bonnemaïson said.

BY SARA ATNIKOV

The State of the Inner City Report

The SIC Report is an annual research collaboration drawing on strengths in the inner city of Winnipeg while connecting challenges to suitable policy and program responses.

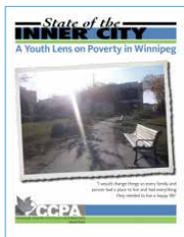
Started in 2005, the following reports have been supported by SSHRC via the MRA:



BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING BRIDGES (2012)

- **Who's Accountable To The Community**
- **Fixing our Divided City**

By Shauna MacKinnon, with Lynne Fernandez and Sarah Cooper



A YOUTH LENS ON POVERTY (2013)

- **Literature Review Of Youth & Poverty: Safety, Housing and Education**
- **Youth Photovoice Project**

By Molly McCracken, Josh Brandon and Laura Fedoruk

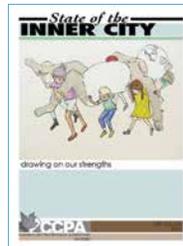


COMMUNITY, RESEARCH AND SOCIAL CHANGE (2014)

- **It's More Than A Collection Of Stories**
- **It Takes A Community To Support a Family: Community-Based Supports and the Child Welfare System**

By Shauna MacKinnon

By Molly McCracken



DRAWING ON OUR STRENGTHS (2015)

- **High and Rising Revisited: Changes in Poverty and Related Inner City Characteristics 1996 – 2011**

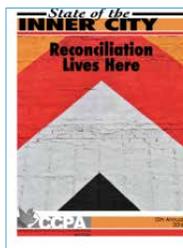
by Darren Lezubski and Jim Silver

- **Indigenous and Newcomer Young People's Experiences of Employment and Unemployment**

by Keely Ten Fingers

- **Beneath the Surface and Beyond the Present Gains in Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg's Inner City**

by Jim Silver



RECONCILIATION LIVES HERE (2016)

Introduction by Niigaan Sinclair

- **A Marathon Not a Spring: Reconciliation and Organizations in Winnipeg's inner City**

by Tamara Margaret Dicks

- **Bringing our Community Back: Grassroots and Reconciliation in Winnipeg's Inner City**

by Timothy Maton



BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: CHALLENGES IN MEASURING VALUE AND IMPACT IN COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMMING (2017)

by Ellen Smirl

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY AND POVERTY (2018)

by Ellen Smirl (forthcoming December, 2018)

Manitoba Research Alliance

Books

The following books have been supported in part by SSHRC via the MRA:



COMING BACK TO JAIL: WOMEN, TRAUMA, AND CRIMINALIZATION

Elizabeth Comack
(2018) Fernwood Press

Drawing on the stories of forty-two incarcerated women,

Coming Back to Jail examines the role of trauma in the women's lives. Resisting the popular move to understand trauma in psychiatric terms — as post-traumatic stress disorder (ptsd) — the book frames trauma as "lived experience" and locates the women's lives within the context of a settler-colonial, capitalist, patriarchal society.



BUILDING FINANCIAL RESILIENCE: DO CREDIT AND FINANCE SCHEMES SERVE OR IMPOVERISH VULNERABLE PEOPLE?

Jerry Buckland
(2018) Palgrave Macmillan

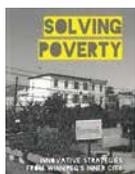
This book examines how credit and finance schemes affect the financial lives of vulnerable people around the world. These schemes include payday lending, matched savings, and financial literacy in the Global North, and micro-credit and mobile banking in the Global South.



COMMUNITY BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: METHODS, PRACTICE AND TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

Shauna MacKinnon (Ed.)
(2018) UBC Press

This book presents stories about community-based participatory research (CBPR) from past and current Manitoba Research Alliance projects in socially and economically marginalized communities. Bringing together experienced researchers with new scholars and community practitioners, the stories describe the impetus for the research projects, how they came to be implemented, and how CBPR is still being used to effect change within the community.



SOLVING POVERTY: INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FROM WINNIPEG'S INNER CITY

Jim Silver, (2016) Fernwood Press

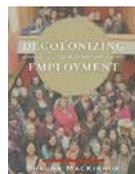
Solving Poverty provides an analysis of the deep complex poverty in urban settings—a poverty which is much more damaging than the poverty experienced in the past. This book also describes a variety of creative and effective urban community development and anti-poverty initiatives that have been successful in Winnipeg's inner city and offers a comprehensive, pan-Canadian strategy to dramatically reduce urban poverty in Canada.



THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN MANITOBA (SECOND EDITION)

Lynne Fernandez, Shauna MacKinnon, and Jim Silver (Eds.)
(2015) Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba

We know what makes us sick...right? Bad genes, germs and viruses, fast food, smoking, stress, lack of exercise. In short, luck and lifestyle. But an examination of people's living conditions tells us much more about who gets sick, and why. Researchers have identified specific social and economic conditions that convincingly explain what makes people sick.



DECOLONIZING EMPLOYMENT: ABORIGINAL INCLUSION IN CANADA'S LABOUR MARKET

Shauna MacKinnon, (2015)
University of Manitoba Press

This book is a case study with lessons applicable to communities throughout North America. This examination of Aboriginal labour market participation outlines the deeply damaging, intergenerational effects of colonial policies and describes how a neoliberal political economy serves to further exclude Indigenous North Americans.



POOR HOUSING: A SILENT CRISIS

Josh Brandon and Jim Silver (Eds.), (2015) Fernwood Publishing

Across Canada, there is a severe shortage of decent quality housing that is affordable to those with low incomes, and much of the housing that is available is inadequate, even appalling. Using Winnipeg, Manitoba, as an example, Poor Housing examines the real-life circumstances of low-income people who are forced to live in these conditions.



RACISM IN WINNIPEG

(2015) Fernwood Publishing [e-book]

In response to the Maclean's article that dubbed Winnipeg Canada's most racist city, Fernwood Press compiled excerpts from several books about Aboriginal racism, racialized poverty, colonialism, and Winnipeg and have made it available electronically for free.



ABOUT CANADA: POVERTY

Jim Silver
(2014) Fernwood Publishing

In *About Canada: Poverty*, Jim Silver illustrates that poverty is about more than a shortage of money: it is complex and multifaceted and can profoundly damage the human spirit. At the centre of this analysis are Canada's neoliberal economic policies, which have created conditions that make a growing number of people vulnerable to low income, vanishing public services and poor physical health.



MOVING FORWARD AND GIVING BACK: TRANSFORMATIVE ABORIGINAL ADULT EDUCATION

Jim Silver (Ed.)
(2013) Fernwood Publishing

Drawing upon the voices and experiences of Aboriginal adult learners themselves, this book describes the initiatives and strategies that have proven successful and transformative for adult Aboriginal students.



INDIANS WEAR RED: COLONIALISM, RESISTANCE, AND ABORIGINAL STREET GANGS

Elizabeth Comack, Lawrence Deane, Larry Morrisette, and Jim Silver
(2013) Fernwood Publishing

Indians Wear Red locates Aboriginal street gangs in the context of the racialized poverty that has become entrenched in the colonized space of Winnipeg's North End. Drawing upon extensive interviews with Aboriginal street gang members as well as with Aboriginal women and elders, the authors develop an understanding from "inside" the inner city and through the voices of Aboriginal people — especially street gang members themselves.



RACIALIZED POLICING: ABORIGINAL PEOPLE'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE POLICE

Elizabeth Comack
(2012) Fernwood Publishing

Policing is a controversial subject that generates considerable debate. One issue of concern has been 'racial profiling' by police, that is, the alleged practice of targeting individuals and groups on the basis of 'race.' *Racialized Policing* argues that this debate has been limited both by its individualized frame and the concentration on police relations with people of colour, which results in far less scrutiny given to Aboriginal people's encounters with police.

REMEMBERING ASSINBOIA: LIFE AT AN INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL IN WINNIPEG

Theodore Fontaine, Caroline Perreault, Daniel Highway, Dorothy-Ann Crate, Joe Malcolm, Jonathan Flett, Noelle Dietrich, and Andrew Woolford. (Forthcoming).



The Inclusive Economy: Stories of Community Economic Development in Winnipeg

Manitoba Research Alliance Documentaries & Videos

THE INCLUSIVE ECONOMY: STORIES OF COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WINNIPEG

CCPA-Manitoba; MRA; Canadian CED Network, Rebel Sky Media (2018). Available on YouTube.

All around us we see the results of the gaps that capitalism leaves. The Inclusive Economy gives a glimpse into the world of Community Economic Development (CED), and showcases the good work that's going on right here in our province. Economists, CED practitioners, and employees of Social Enterprises and Co-ops share their experiences to give a full picture of an economy that is for and by people.

A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING IN LORD SELKIRK PARK

Ian Mauro and Jim Silver (2017). Available on YouTube.

This video follows the transformation of Lord Selkirk Park in Winnipeg's North End community. Lord Selkirk Park is a public housing complex built in 1967. A product of 'urban renewal', this complex a government owned and managed housing complex for low-income residents. While initially welcomed as good housing, over the years, a concentration of poverty and lack of social resources for residents turned LSP into one of Winnipeg's least desirable neighbourhoods until community came together to transform LSP into a good place to live again.

MINOYAWIN: MANITOBA FLOOD HEALING VOICES

Myrle Ballard (2017). Available at manitobafloodhealingvoices.com.

In 2011 thousands of First Nation (FN) People were evacuated due to flooding in Manitoba. At the time of this research project (2016), 30,000 FN individuals remained displaced. This web-based and video project documents the stories of those who were displaced and developed tools on how to heal and move forward from the 2011 flood.

STORIES OF DECOLONIZATION: LAND DISPOSSESSION AND SETTLEMENT

Teddy Zegeye-Gebrehiwot, Gladys Rowe and Liz Carlson (2016). Available on YouTube.

Stories of Decolonization is a multi-film interview-based documentary project that shares personal stories in order to explore accessible understandings of colonialism and its continued impact on those living on the lands now called Canada. It also explores notions and actions of decolonization.

ROOMING HOUSES TO ROOMING HOMES

CCPA - MB (2014). Available on YouTube.

In Winnipeg's inner city, and especially in the West Broadway and Spence neighbourhoods, older homes converted to rooming houses are an important type of housing for many people living on low incomes. However, rooming houses are fast disappearing due to an uncoordinated policy and regulatory framework and market pressures.

MEET ME AT THE MERCH

Carole O'Brien (2014). Available on YouTube.

Once a flashpoint for community frustration and a symbol of decline, the Merchants Hotel, also known as "the Merch," is now being redeveloped into an innovative educational, student housing and retail complex called Merchants Corner.

PRESERVING ABORIGINAL INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY IN WINNIPEG

Darrell Chippeway and Darryl Nepinak (2013). Available at policyalternatives.ca/multimedia.

Darrell Chippeway together with film maker Darryl Nepinak interview key Aboriginal leaders regarding the formation of many key Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg.

BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING BRIDGES

CCPA-MB (2012). Available at policyalternatives.ca/multimedia.

On October 13th, 2012, CCPA's Manitoba Office facilitated an intergenerational learning and youth exchange at Thunderbird House in Winnipeg. In attendance were four elders and 30 students from Community Education Development Association's (CEDA) Pathways to Education program, College Beliveau, and Grant Park High School. The idea was to bring together people who would otherwise not meet in person, to share ideas, and talk about things that are often not talked about openly in Winnipeg. This video captures some of the dialogue and experiences shared during the *Breaking Barriers/Building Bridges* event.

TOGETHER WE HAVE CLOUT

CCPA-MB (2010). Available on YouTube and at policyalternatives.ca/multimedia.

Together We Have CLOUT looks at a coalition of 9 community based organizations that provide services for inner-city individuals and families.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Unit 205 - 765 Main Street ccpamb@policyalternatives.ca
Winnipeg, MB, R2W 3N5 policyalternatives.ca
204-927-3200