

**OLDTIMERS, NEWCOMERS, AND SOCIAL CLASS:
GROUP AFFILIATION AND
SOCIAL INFLUENCE IN LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA**

**by
Chantelle Patricia Marlor**

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Department of Anthropology & Sociology
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date Sept. 22, 2000

Abstract

The results of an ethnohistorical study of Lethbridge, Alberta led to my questioning current presumptions in the Canadian social inequality literature that social class, income, educational attainment, gender and ethnicity are *principal* factors in shaping social inequality in Canada. The ethnographic evidence suggests that membership criteria associated with locally-defined, historically-evolved groups mark who has political influence (a specific form of social power), and where the ensuing social inequalities lie in Lethbridge.

A theoretical framework describing how historical circumstances lead to the redefinition of *which* socially-defined characteristics become local status markers is presented as the underlying theoretical orientation of this thesis. The framework does not preclude the possibility that social groups other than those studied in this thesis use social class, occupation, income, education, gender and ethnicity as status characteristics or group membership criteria. The framework is my attempt to clarify the often-unclear relationship among social inequality concepts.

A mail-out social survey (N=238) was used to empirically test the hypothesis that Lethbridge group membership is a better predictor than social class, income, educational attainment, gender and/or ethnicity of who has political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making. Data was analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA), bivariate correlation, and multiple regression. Mixed levels of support were found for the Lethbridge group hypotheses, with the "fits in" and "local trade/business people" receiving considerable support; North/South/West sider, and religious affiliation receiving some support; and Old-timers receiving no support. In contrast, the only social inequality hypothesis to receive more than minimal support was level of education.

It is concluded that status characteristics are more fluid, local and historically negotiated than assumed in the social inequality literature. Suggested directions for future theoretical and empirical work include refinement of the relationships among social inequality variables and further empirical tests of the theoretical framework proposed here.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Two years ago I moved to Lethbridge, Alberta from Vancouver, British Columbia. Although I have traveled a considerable amount, the move was substantial for me because it was the first time I had *lived* outside Vancouver, British Columbia. Besides, I had thought, how different could it be? It was, after all, still Canada.

I soon discovered *how* faulty my reasoning was. My immediate reaction to Lethbridge was not positive, and the longer I remained, the more I disliked the city. I found it really difficult to meet people. It was summer, and there were no adult recreation courses being offered. I could not find any social or hobby clubs that interested me, and there were very few community events taking place. The only option I had for meeting people was to join a church, but this did not appeal.

I noticed that people in Lethbridge react to me differently than do people in Vancouver. My smiles and polite gestures which had been well-received in Vancouver with shop clerks, fellow-customers, and fellow-pedestrians, were returned with blank looks or cold stares in Lethbridge. People made less of an effort to answer my questions, and paid less attention to me than I was accustomed in similar situations in Vancouver.

The longer I stayed, the more I realized that Lethbridgians and Vancouverites assess people in different ways. Lethbridgians regard me as younger and of less importance than Vancouverites typically consider me. Changes in my posture, behaviour, and dress invoke different responses in Lethbridge than I would expect in Vancouver. Most Lethbridgians think it strange that I am not associated with a church, a position I have difficulty understanding. It became apparent to me that Lethbridgians value different characteristics than do Vancouverites.

I spent my first fall in Lethbridge teaching a college-level sociology course on "Minority Group Relations" to a class of First Nations students. I approached the course from a grounded perspective, using southern Alberta as a "living laboratory." I decided to include historical readings about the national origins of early Albertan settlers to establish the context in which current social relations developed.

As I reviewed potential readings and collected additional historical information, I began to understand why Lethbridgians were different than the people I encountered in Vancouver. Out of my own interest, and with the hope of using the information in some way for my thesis, I expanded my research beyond what was necessary for teaching my course. I conducted lengthy informal interviews with Lethbridge inhabitants, including current and past politicians, a journalist, and two past presidents of the University of Lethbridge; built a file of clippings from the *Lethbridge Herald*; attended a number of public meetings; collected census statistics from the 1930s to the present; listened to oral history tapes at the Sir Alexander Galt Museum and Archives (the principal historical collection for the Lethbridge area); and collected previous studies and some unpublished survey data sets on Lethbridge political and social life. My research on Lethbridge grew into a substantial historical ethnography, summarized in Chapter 2.

It occurred to me that my observations of social life in Lethbridge were *inconsistent* with ideas expressed in the Canadian sociological literature. Current theories of social inequality in Canada contend that social class and standard demographic characteristics such as income, occupation, level of education, gender, and ethnicity are the basis of social structure, social inequality, power and influence in Canada¹ (for example, see Allahar and Côté 1998; Brym with Fox 1989; Curtis and Grabb 1999). It appeared to me, however, that these characteristics were poor indicators of social inequality in Lethbridge, where other (sets of) characteristics appear to be valued as much or more.

For my Master's thesis I decided to conduct empirical tests of (1) current Canadian sociological assertions regarding social class, income, occupation, education, ethnicity and gender, as predictors of political influence over community-level decision-making in Lethbridge; and (2) the predictive power of these variables compared to Lethbridge group membership. The specific research question I set out to investigate was:

¹ Considerable confusion exists in the social inequality literature regarding whether or not (1) income, educational attainment, and occupation are distinct from or components of social class, and (2) whether social class, income, educational attainment, and occupation are indicators or predictors of power. Both issues are addressed in Chapter Three.

Which is more strongly associated with political power² in Lethbridge: (a) class, education, occupation, income, gender, and ethnicity or (b) membership in locally-defined Lethbridge groups identified through ethnography?

I conducted a quantitative study--a social survey that I mailed to 600 randomly selected Lethbridge residents--to explore this question. The data from the survey was analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression. The findings indicate that the Lethbridge groups were better predictors of political influence in Lethbridge community-level decision-making.

As I stand at the beginning of the end—writing up my thesis research--once again I am confronted by the number of “rabbit holes” I could explore in this thesis. For example, there is a great political apathy article in the making from the survey data I collected; and I would love to write a detailed comparison between ethnographic and survey methods. I have, however, promised myself to keep on the straight and narrow so as to finish this thesis. The following chapters attempt to answer to the research question stated above, with as few diversions as possible. Chapter Two is an ethnohistorical account of Lethbridge. In it, I trace the city from its origins as a mining town in 1885 to present day (2000). In Chapter Three, I present the theoretical ideas relevant to this study. The first half of the chapter addresses the macro- and micro-theories of social structure, social groups, and inequality that are prevalent in the Canadian sociological literature. The second half of the chapter is a description of the theoretical framework that underlies my approach to the thesis research. The framework builds on ideas presented in Chapter Two, with connections made to similar ideas presented by other social theorists.

Chapters Four and Five describe the methodology used to conduct and analyzed the survey. Chapter Four contains a description of the sampling frame, sample size, and sampling methodology. Chapter Five is a list of the indicators used in the questionnaire, a description of how the indexes and composite variables were constructed, the hypotheses

² The term *political influence* is defined in detail in Chapter Three. Briefly, however, I use this term to refer to a specific form of power. Specifically, I use it in the same sense as political scientists use *political efficacy* to refer to the amount of impact an individual has over the political process (see Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990).

tested, and the method of statistical analysis. Chapter Six is a presentation of the survey results related to the stated hypotheses. Chapter Seven is my attempt to tie everything together, and suggest possible avenues for future research. The appendices contain the cover letter for the mailed-out questionnaire (Appendix A), the questionnaire itself (Appendix B), the reminder card (Appendix C), and an un-addressed copy of the letter to the respondents who won the draw for returning their completed questionnaires (Appendix D).

Chapter 2: Ethnohistory of Lethbridge, Alberta

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Lethbridge stands between the historical territories of the Bloods and the Peigans, two of the original nations of the Blackfoot confederacy (Treaty No. 7). Today, the Blood Reserve flanks the city to the southwest, and the Peigan Reserve lies 45 km to the west. People of European descent began settling in the area as early as 1874, but it was only in 1885 that a townsite developed (Johnston and den Otter 1991). Settlers were attracted to Lethbridge by thick black coal seams protruding from the banks of the Oldman River, from which the site derives its Blackfoot name Sik-oo-h-kotoki ('black rocks') (Johnston and Peat 1987). Commercial development of the coal seams began when the Canadian Pacific Railway decided on a southerly route through the prairies of what was then Assiniboia District of the North West Territories (Magrath; Johnston and den Otter 1991).

Canada's High Commissioner in London, Sir Alexander Galt, and his son were instrumental in raising the capital for the North Western Coal and Navigation Company, Ltd., the first and largest mining company in Lethbridge, and for another generation the city's largest employer (Magrath; den Otter 1976; Johnston and den Otter 1991). The largest number of employees were of British heritage, born in the British Isles, eastern Canada, or the United States. These men, who were firmly entrenched in the British hierarchical and class system, became managers and company officials for the Galt company in Lethbridge. British immigrants demanded higher wages for the dangerous mining work than the company wanted to pay (Fooks 1988; Johnston and den Otter 1991). Efforts were accordingly made to attract (and actively recruit) Austro-Hungarian, German, and Scandinavian workers by means of advertising an abundance of jobs, land ownership prospects, and a healthy climate (Vaselenak 1985; Priestley 1985; Chengler 1985; Kirkham 1991).

The British and British descendants who occupied the top economic echelons of the Galt company established themselves in the dominant social and political positions of Lethbridge. Their particular way of looking at the world, including ideas about religion, business, education and etiquette shaped the city's social and political organization. Miners

and their families (if they had any) lived outside of the townsite near the mines, in residential blocks organized by the company (Johnston and den Otter 1991; H. Watmough 1998; Creighton 1985; Cheng 1985). They worked long hours and were poorly paid, and were unable to afford the services and facilities their employers and supervisors enjoyed in Lethbridge (Cheng 1985; Fisher 1983). By the time the miners' settlements were annexed by the city in 1911, the city's government was well established, and its positions were filled by men from the original "South side" of Lethbridge (Fooks 1988; den Otter 1976; Winchester 1979).

This hierarchy established a framework into which all subsequent immigration has been absorbed and redefined.

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS WITHIN THE CITY

Despite their official integration, the two sides of the city developed as rivals. Consistent with their social Darwinian thinking, the South side residents felt that they were evolutionarily and culturally superior to the North side's "immigrants" and "bohunks" (Hackett 1983; McKillop 1979; Lacost 1998; Palmer and Palmer 1990; Fooks 1988; Findlay 1983; Priestley 1985; City Council Minutes Jan. 26, 1948). South side hostility towards the people from—quite literally--the other side of the tracks even led to violence, including fist fights, which apparently continued up to the 1950's (Fooks 1998).

As a result of this social division, the South side received more city services and facilities than the North side: trees were planted along the boulevards, roads were kept in better repair, and land was developed as parks on the South side (Black 1983; Virtue 1946; Swedish 1982; City Council Minutes January 27, 1947). The North-side "foreign element" were aware of the disdain with which the South-siders looked upon them (Findlay 1983; Fooks 1988; Priestley 1985; Singer 1978). They resented Anglo-Saxon dominance (McKillop 1979), but found it difficult to elect North-side representatives to the city council because a significant number of North-siders were not British subjects, and therefore not allowed to vote.

As Lethbridge expanded and became a regional service center for agriculture as well as a railway hub, new streams of immigrants arrived (den Otter 1976; Palmer and Palmer 1990). Some of the Chinese men who laid tracks for the railway launched businesses in Lethbridge, which were primarily laundries, restaurants, and small-scale vegetable farming (Hoe 1976; Creighton 1985; Leong 1994). Both North-siders and South-siders disliked the Chinese (Hoe 1976; Creighton 1985; McKillop 1979). One man of British ancestry talked (on an oral history tape) about horrid pranks his father played on his Chinese neighbours when he was a boy, such as snapping mouse traps shut on the hands of Chinese men, and smoking them out of their houses just to throw buckets of water on their heads (Kirkham 1991). The man thought his father's pranks were hilarious, and explained "of course, these days that would be considered racism, but in those days it was just good fun." As a result of the dislike against them, the city created a bylaw that restricted Chinese laundries to two blocks along the river (City Council Minutes June 6 1910) (which later became part of the downtown core), which resulted in a distinct "Chinatown."

BUSINESS AND THE BIBLE

With the arrival of the city's first minister, Charles McKillop, a distinctly strident "moral" force emerged in Lethbridge. McKillop aggressively wielded the fear of God in his efforts to restrain the hypermasculine wild-West mining society in which he found himself. McKillop epitomized the moral standards and ethnocentrism of the Lethbridge British, continually imposing his views on the entire population. He demanded that City Hall close the Chinese laundries on Sunday, abolish the red-light district, and suppress drinking (particularly of the "foreign" single male miners of the North side) (Carpenter 1975). Although sometimes regarded as a little extreme, his moral reform campaigns appear to have been supported by a sizable proportion of the city's Anglo-Saxon residents (Johnston and den Otter 1991).

Not long after Charles McKillop's arrival, the Catholic priest Father Van Tighem came to live and work among the North-side's Roman Catholics. "His was a lonely task, however, for unlike McKillop, whose sermons were published sometimes verbatim in *the*

News, Van Tighem did not enjoy the friendship and admiration of Lethbridge's social leaders, who belittled his work among the 'foreign element' " (Johnston and den Otter 1991: 72; Fooks 1988). He was considered dangerous by many South-siders because he organized a Roman Catholic school, preventing young newcomers from learning British values.

By the turn of the century, several communal religious groups found new homes in the Lethbridge area. The first to arrive were the Mormons, who were experiencing increasing problems in Utah as American settlements spread westward (Palmer 1972; Magrath). Due to the high cost of shipping coal, the Galts found it harder to make a profit than they had expected. They resolved to create a local market for their coal by encouraging the growth of local agriculture. The Galt company contracted with the Mormons to settle, farm, and develop an irrigation system in Southern Alberta as a nucleus for other farmers, in exchange for money and land. Other communal and fundamentalist religious groups such as the Mennonites, Hutterities, and (after 1945) conservative Dutch Reform and Evangelical congregations, found Southern Alberta *relatively* tolerant as well (Palmer 1972).

OLD-TIMERS AND NEWCOMERS

Life in Lethbridge was hard--much harder than many people expected or were led to believe (Hironaka 1988; Johnston and den Otter 1991). There was a feeling among the people who had settled and survived several years of life in Southern Alberta that they were tougher than other people, or that they were of a different breed (H. Watmough 1998; McKenzie 1980). "Old timers" were critical of every recent arrival; "newcomers" had to demonstrate that they were capable of surviving the rugged landscape of Southern Alberta, whether they came from Europe or from other regions of Canada and the United States. The distinction between "old timers" and "newcomers" was made explicit by the creation of the Pemmican Club³, which held an annual New Year's Eve party open to anyone who had

³ Later known by various other names, such as The Old Timers Association, The Lethbridge and District Oldtimers' Pemmican Club, and the Pioneer Pemmican Club.

settled west of the Great Lakes prior to January 1st, 1895 ⁴ (Bains 1984). The party was considered *the* social event of the year, and many of the “newcomers” were openly envious of the “old timers” who were allowed to attend (H. Watmough 1998). The club still exists today, and until recently admitted only those people whose families arrived in Southern Alberta before 1912⁵.

THE GREAT WAR AND NATIVISM

The First World War marked a time of great change in Lethbridge. Anglo-Saxon residents had come to consider Lethbridge an important, progressive city in the Dominion of Canada, a very important colony for the British Empire (Johnston and den Otter 1991). British-born⁶ men and women were quick to enlist in the Imperial armed forces. Fifteen to twenty percent of the city’s population mobilized to defend the Empire, the largest percentage of enlisted civilians in any Canadian city (Johnston and den Otter 1991; Kilford 1996). Many did not survive the war.

The war invoked strong feelings of sacrifice and community among those who were actively involved (Johnston and den Otter 1991; Kilford 1996). They were rewarded with a visit by the Prince of Wales in 1919 in honour of their wartime efforts, however, the city’s rapid economic expansion had stalled (Johnston and den Otter 1991). Immigration, the driving force behind the local economy, was negligible during the war, and the slowdown was a shock to the city’s extremely optimistic, expansionist businessmen.

The war posed new problems for residents with roots in non-British countries, especially those from countries with which the Empire was at war. Public expressions of loyalty to the British Empire were demanded, and many Central and Eastern Europeans were monitored by the police and required to make regular check-ins for security reasons (Kilford

⁴ While it is claimed that everyone who lived in Lethbridge before this date was allowed to participate in the club, photographs show no people of visible Asian descent at the event, even though there were Chinese- and Okinawan-Canadians in the area by this time.

⁵ This date was recently adjusted upwards and the geographic area was expanded outwards to include anyone whose family was living in Alberta, British Columbia or Saskatchewan by 1985 (Pioneer Pemmican Club December 1998 Newsletter) due to low membership numbers and a lack of interest among younger “old timers” to participate in “seniors” events (Harriet Watmough 1998).

⁶ British is used here to refer to citizenship, rather than country of birth.

1996). Germans received the brunt of public suspicion, many suffering from verbal and physical assaults (Johnston and den Otter 1991; Palmer 1982).

With the help of the Mormon irrigation project and mechanization, lands around Lethbridge developed into desirable farmland, with Lethbridge as the service center (Magrath; Palmer and Palmer 1990; Johnston and den Otter 1991). For several years after the war, climate conditions were favourable and crop yields were high. Then, in the mid-1920's, there were several exceptionally dry summers. For Alberta farmers, this marked the beginning of a regional economic contraction which segued into the Great Depression (Johnston and den Otter 1991; Palmer 1982).

Farmers were not alone in their suffering. The coal market was also beginning to decline in the 1920's, and most miners found themselves unemployed (Johnston and den Otter 1991; Kirkham 1991). The City found no alternative but to provide limited relief payments to its unemployed workers, comparable to present-day social assistance (e.g. City Council Minutes June 12, 1936).

This was a time of increasing hostility and racism. The Ku Klux Klan and its nativist agenda had begun to gain support in Alberta in the 1920's (Sher 1983; Henson 1977; Palmer 1982). Alberta nativists were preoccupied with maintaining solidarity against anyone who did not speak English, was not British, and was not Protestant. Their targets included Chinese, Eastern and Central Europeans, and French-Canadians. Lethbridge "Natives" associated their economic woes with "foreign" forces, a viewpoint further reinforced by the Second World War.

ANOTHER WAR RENEWS NATIVISM

The Dominion of Canada was still closely aligned with Britain. Although Canada issued its own declaration of war, Canadian patriotism was still strongly associated with loyalty to Britain and the Empire.⁷ Japanese-Canadians on the coast of British Columbia

⁷ In Lethbridge, British symbols and demonstrations of allegiance were still prevalent, as evidenced by the large membership in the Imperial Order of the Daughters of England, and the decision a few years earlier by city council to exclusively hire British subjects (City Council Minutes Dec. 2, 1929).

were "evacuated" to southern Alberta on the pretext of minimizing the risk of betrayal of Canadian military secrets to Japan (Palmer 1972; City Council Minutes June 19, 1944). Germans, and other "enemy aliens," were once again harassed and placed under surveillance (e.g. City Council Minutes October 9, 1945; November 19, 1945). Nervous breakdowns among the "immigrants," who had been establishing themselves as respectable business people in the city, were not uncommon during this period, as recorded oral histories attest (Loescher 1992). Everyone who was not of British heritage was under suspicion, and had the burden of proving their loyalty.

This public pressure for people to demonstrate British loyalties (and deny being German, Italian, or Ukrainian) promoted a new civic and national identity. People were now "Canadians" if only out of fear of being identified as anything else (Palmer 1990). Overt "ethnic" characteristics were concealed, modified or eliminated. The use of languages other than English at home fell sharply, and people of non-British ancestry publicly disassociated themselves from their countries of origin (Kirkham 1991). City officials made a point of recognizing those "immigrants" who proved their loyalty during the war, especially of the Canadian armed forces (Singer 1979; City Council Minutes July 2, 1940). Public vigilance, ridicule, and rewards reinforced an illusion of Anglo-Canadian homogeneity.

The principal student of Alberta ethnic communities, Howard Palmer, argued that the salience of ethnicity declined sharply after 1945 (Palmer 1982). My research, however, suggests that group boundaries were redefined, and persisted after this date.

AN INFLUX OF PROFESSIONALS

It was only in the 1940's that North-siders were successful in obtaining any seats on the City Council. An agreement had been reached between the established South side political leaders of the city, and North side residents: North-siders would be guaranteed one Council seat, as long as they advanced only one candidate (Black 1983; Winchester 1979). Although city elections are no longer explicitly governed by this bargain, municipal elections continue to return one (and usually only one) North-sider to the seven-member Council (Helmer 1998).

Migration to the city increased dramatically after 1945.⁸ One attraction was the growth of Agriculture Canada research activity in the area. Lethbridge soon boasted the largest Agriculture Canada research facility in Canada (Johnston 1977), resulting in a great increase in the number of university-educated professionals living in the city. At that time, Agriculture Canada promoted the idea of higher education among its employees (Johnston 1977), and by the 1960s the Lethbridge business community was advocating the establishment of community college (Fooks 1993). Once the community college had been authorized, business leaders successfully called for a university, which would become the third in the Alberta Provincial university system (Holmes 1972).

The barrier between the North and South side of the city began to erode with the resulting stream of professional newcomers. The “money-makers” of Lethbridge saw the university as an opportunity for real estate development, and to increase the population base for their businesses (D. Petherbridge 1998; Fooks 1993; Holmes 1972). The West side of Lethbridge, across the river from the original city plat, was still an expanse of dry farmland. Developers insisted that the university be located there as the justification for constructing a vast new high-rent residential area. At the same time, the university attracted well-paid professionals, including a large number of Americans, who were considered a threat to the established social elite of Lethbridge (D. Petherbridge 1998). The recently-Canadianized North-siders, who valued their enhanced status within the city social hierarchy, became allies of the “native” South side establishment in attempting to marginalize the new wave of scientists, engineers, professors, and students.

This breathed new life into the distinction between old timers and newcomers. A man who moved from England to Lethbridge just before the end of WWII to be with his Lethbridge bride told me that for years he was referred to as “the son-in-law of Roger,” and that he still feels like an outsider (D. Petherbridge 1998). People still ask him about his “funny accent” (at first I had not noticed that he had one). It was only recently, almost 50 years later, that he decided he should not let their attitudes bother him.

⁸ Based on computations of Census Canada data.

GEOGRAPHIC RE-SHUFFLING

The development of West Lethbridge triggered a process of considerable internal migration. In-coming professors and professionals "didn't know they weren't supposed to live on the North Side," (S. Petherbridge 1998) and settled in various different locations around the city. The West side became a magnet for South-side residents who wanted new houses and modern facilities, while upwardly-aspiring North-side residents took this opportunity to buy older homes in South Lethbridge (Watmough 1998).

In-migration and internal migration weakened the historical correlation between residence, ethnicity, and power within Lethbridge, but it did not put an end to social divisions within the city (Vaselenak 1985; Cummings 1998; Boras 1998), nor to the perception that these divisions are still correlated with geography. Neighbourhoods are less *visibly* differentiated, but the *idea* of a North-South tension (and now a West-South tension as well) persists, and influences electoral politics and the distribution of municipal services (North Side Water and Sewer Issues Public Meeting Nov. 25, 1998; Helmer 1998). Reinforcing this have been the latest waves of immigration: Salvadorans, Guatemalans and other Latin Americans escaping the deadly politics of their home countries, and thousands of Blackfoot escaping severe housing and job shortages on nearby Indian Reserves.

In the 1980's, the nearby Blood and Peigan Reserves experienced severe housing shortages, and hundreds of Blackfoot sought temporary (and sometimes more permanent) homes in Lethbridge (Barsh 1997). The Blackfoot had never been particularly welcome in Lethbridge—they had always had a different way of life than the accepted "standards" of Lethbridge, which has been a concern among many non-native Lethbridgians. Although Blackfoot live in rental units dispersed throughout the city, non-Blackfoot tend to associate Indians with vagrancy in the downtown core (Listener 1998; Weasel Fat 1998; Municipal Election Candidate Forum, Oct. 14, 1998). There is overt hostility towards Indians, and I have seen people go out of their way to ignore or avoid anyone with dark skin or long dark hair. A British graduate student at the university was shocked when she overheard two neatly-dressed older women remark, on passing a telephone booth that contained a broken beer bottle and bloody rag, "Oh, it was just some Indian" (Gibbs 1998).

OLD PATTERNS AND DISTINCTIONS

Lethbridge retains a social hierarchy defined by groupings which evolved long ago. People routinely refer to "old families" and "newcomers"; to "the establishment" or "old guard"; to "North-siders," "South-siders" and "West-siders"; to "Indians" and "Whites"; to Mormons, Evangelicals, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and other religious sects; and to those who "fit in" and do not "fit in" Lethbridge society. The term "old timer" is no longer in general usage, but seems to have been replaced by "native," which has broadly the same significance of distinguishing long-established local people from those who are more recent arrivals. Members of the City Council are still predominantly South-siders, and old-timers who have moved to the West side. Recent Asian and Latino immigrants are clustering on the North side where eastern Europeans were once concentrated. Most amenities, such as the public library, city hall, civic theatre and art gallery, history museum, Sportplex, both hospitals, and all of the cinemas are located on the South side.

A female professor at the University, originally from South America, told me that the local branch of Amnesty International, to which she belongs, consists of university professors and recently-arrived professionals; no one in the group grew up in Lethbridge (Montes 1998). This membership profile was not by design, she said, but because "native" Lethbridgians were not interested in joining. During a fund-raising campaign, moreover, she discovered that businesses would only donate to "local" charities. She assumed this meant that they would only participate if the money was going to stay in Lethbridge, but she also felt that businesses were avoiding any sponsorship of "newcomers." She subsequently declined the AI branch presidency because she felt that, as a visible Latina, her involvement would be detrimental to the group. After a year in Lethbridge, she concluded that being "local" means belonging to the right church and behaving like long-established Lethbridgians, whether or not you are locally-born (Montes 1998).

Very few people in Lethbridge would consider themselves racist, yet there is strong local anti-Indian sentiment. When asked about Indian-White relations in Lethbridge, one self-declared "informed" woman told me that Indians brought problems on themselves because they did not assimilate very well (Fooks 1998). To illustrate her point, she explained that Indians have a "cultural thing" about neglecting property, which she explained is "why all

Indians have derelict housing.” Another woman, on discovering that I was working on the Blood Reserve, visibly shuddered and said, “You would never catch me going out there. Those people scare me.”

Non-Indian Lethbridgians nonetheless feel that they deserve praise for letting the Blackfoot shop in “their” stores, enroll Indian children in “their” schools, and use public facilities in “their” city. Their “generosity”, however, is tempered by suspicion and mistrust. I heard many stories from Native people about being trailed by store security guards, or blatantly ignored (for up to an hour, in one case) by salespersons. Several larger stores, including Eaton’s, Sears, and Safeway, are reputed to have special bells which are rung by sales clerks to notify guards that a Native person has entered the premises. Non-Indian university students who have worked in local sales and services confirm these stories.

Thinly-masked hostility is also directed against Hutterites, Mormons, Mennonites, youth, and other groups that are “less than acceptable” (Helmer 1998). Teenagers are virtually demonized. Many people with whom I spoke are frightened of teenagers, and view them categorically as a local criminal element. Automobile accidents involving teenage drivers routinely get front-page banner headlines, while other accidents of similar severity are given brief mention on insides pages. Drunk driving is often blamed entirely on teenagers (e.g. “Casson, Nicol lay it on the line: we’ll be tough on drunk drivers”, *Lethbridge Herald*, December 16, 1998, A1), and every reported incident is followed by a stream of letters to the editor calling for restrictions on teen driving. The cause of “juvenile problems” is a topic of much local speculation, dominated by the idea that “the problem with delinquent kids today is that mothers should stay at home and raise a God-fearing family” (Farris 1977).

FITTING-IN

The Lethbridge of today is still actively engaged in moral reform and conformity. The city has been described as "the buckle of the Bible belt," with over 80 churches serving a population of approximately 65,000. Many local churches are precoccupied with monitoring the daily lives of their members. One woman, a single parent of three teenagers who is an active Latter Day Saint (Mormon), told me of a church meeting to which she was invited (Essex 1998). She was not informed until arriving at the meeting that the topic for discussion was how single parents are incapable of providing an adequate home for their children, and should therefore put their children up for adoption. Upset at being classified as an unfit parent, she (along with a married friend) stood up and defended single parents. The following week, she and her friend were each phoned repeatedly and reprimanded for speaking out against the church. Other residents told me similar stories about their denominations—such as being phoned by fellow church members to ensure that they were not out too late at night, or that they were not involved in unacceptable activities.

Judgmental attitudes extend beyond the bounds of the religious congregations. One local journalist I interviewed described a generalized dismissiveness towards anyone who does not share the attitudes, beliefs and experiences of "native" Lethbridgians (Helmer 1998). I found it was not uncommon to hear people described as "sinners" if they behave in ways that the natives find inappropriate.

"Natives" expect all Lethbridge inhabitants to conform to their social standards. Those who want social acceptance (natives and non-natives alike) mimic the expected social behavior. For example, a husband of a South American woman explained how his wife learned to dislike Indians within a few months after moving to Lethbridge: he believed that as a marginalized "newcomer" in town, she wanted to be accepted by her "native" Lethbridgian co-workers, so she copied their behavior and remarks (including how they treated Indians).

Accepting the dominant group's standards does not necessarily lead to a person's acceptance into Lethbridge "society", however. People who share the same ideology may continue to be excluded or remain on the periphery of dominant groups because they do not

meet other pertinent criteria such as skin colour, education level, or being married to someone who already "fits in."

DISAPPEARING INTO THE BACKGROUND

People who do not "fit in"--whether because of others not accepting them or because they do not accept Lethbridge's hegemonic standards--isolate themselves in small social networks where they feel safe, such as ethnic churches (*e.g.* Japanese Buddhists) and social clubs (*e.g.* Hungarian Old Timers, Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society, Japanese Heritage Club) which are virtually unknown to other residents. Some also form more cosmopolitan networks with friends who also do not "fit in." As one Lebanese-Canadian woman told me, "My friends are all the odd-balls of this place: Japanese Buddhists, gay men, people from strange places... I hardly know anyone who would be considered 'normal' here."

Nearly every resident with whom I spoke, regardless of their own "objective" demographic characteristics, believe most people in Lethbridge *do* "fit in," however. Not only are the class of Lethbridgians who do not "fit in" a negative identity group (groups with negative membership criteria, such as "does not belong to a church", "does not dress appropriately"), but they have evidently learned to avoid attracting attention, and are invisible even to one another.

Avoiding public attention means not attending public meetings, not participating on community committees, and not being active in city politics (Helmer 1998). Despite a large number of "visible minorities" in the city, including people of Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Latin American and First Nations heritage, there was only one visibly non-white person at any of the public meetings I attended. The only place I frequently heard people speak languages other than English was at the Farmers Market, where many German-speaking Hutterites and Mennonites from outlying religious colonies come to sell their produce, and where many others who still prefer to speak in their non-English mother tongues feel safe to do so while in public. Francophones have their separate elementary school, but are otherwise invisible and (in literal terms) inaudible.

THE PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL HARMONY

Despite the social distinctions people draw among themselves along hierarchical lines, and social pressure for conformity, there is an overwhelming perception among the inhabitants of Lethbridge that people in the city are (and always have been) socially responsible and free of prejudice (for example, Hackett 1983). When questioned about ethnic distinctions, people are quick to point out there are no visibly ethnic neighbourhoods. The perception of Lethbridge as a "harmonious" community was best illustrated by a local politician who told me, "people in Lethbridge know that crime happens everyday in a city like Calgary, but when they hear of crime happening in Lethbridge they react with shock, and wonder how it possibly could have happened here" (Nicol 1998). Lack of news coverage on fatal accidents caused by unsafe road civic maintenance (Gibbs 1998), and critical letters to the Lethbridge Herald editor about local racism, poor news coverage, and police harassment that remain unpublished (Bastien 2000) reinforce the view that Lethbridge is a safe, quiet city. The reluctance of those who do not "fit in" to become publicly visible and to challenge current hegemonic standards reinforces these perceptions.

Public rhetoric regarding social cohesion in Lethbridge--though inconsistent with their actual behavior--is a product of prior circumstance. Many of the original settlers of Southern Alberta were enticed to the area by false promises and all-out lies about what life would be like in this "new land" (Heinen 1995). Only a handful of Edwardian businessmen could afford to build mansions, but photographs of these few grand houses were cynically used in government advertising with captions suggesting that these were typical settlers' homes. Great losses during both world wars, the collapse of coal, the continuing vagaries of prairie agriculture, and lack of recognition of their presumed importance by other Canadians has perpetuated a sense of betrayal. Being an "old-timer" or "native" is associated with earned entitlement to a good life, but one that is rarely actualized.

Feelings of moral superiority, tenuous privilege, suspicion, mistrust, resentment, and entitlement all fuel the continued hostility towards others, and the public rhetoric which denies its existence. Many are bitter about the past, but the members of "the establishment"

(and those who aspire to join it), are also adamant that the city is great and conflict-free. After all, despite hardships and lack of outside support, it is *their* city.

Chapter Three: Macro-, Micro-, and My Theory of Social Inequality in Canada

From my ethnography, I concluded that membership in the identified historically-evolved local Lethbridge groups largely determines social status, access to political power, chances of economic success, and treatment by other residents. A number of theories have been advanced by others to define power, describe *which* social distinctions are important in influencing power, and explain *what* is the underlying social structure that leads to social inequalities and power differentials. While all of these previous theories provide some insight towards understanding the social organization of Lethbridge, none adequately explain my observations. In this chapter I review these theories, identifying strengths and weakness of each in relation to my observations in Lethbridge. I conclude the chapter by proposing a theoretical framework that potentially explains my observations of Lethbridge. The framework draws on my own observations, as well as integrating other's empirical and theoretical work. It is an attempt to bridge the gap between micro- and macro-social theories that is general enough to be applicable to other Canadian communities.

CANADIAN SOCIAL INEQUALITY THEORIES

Social inequality theorists explain social inequality in terms of intrinsic individual differences (e.g., natural abilities, motivation, willingness to work), socially-defined characteristics such as class, ethnicity, gender, occupation, or income (Grabb 1996: 2), or as social relationships within a given mode of production (Wright 1985). Social inequality theories that focused on *individual differences* conceived society as a mobile meritocracy, and were most popular from the 1960s to the 1980s (Porter 1965; Breton 1979; Boyd, Goydner, Jones, McRoberts, Pineo and Porter 1985; Curtis, Grabb and Guppy 1988). Theories that focused on *socially-defined characteristics* became more popular in the 1990s (Grabb 1993; Naiman 1997; Allahar and Côté 1998; Grabb 1999). These theories emphasized the social stratification level associated with an attribute of a characteristic. For example, a person with

an annual income of \$200,000 is part of a high social stratum. The shift in theorizing from merit-based inequalities to social characteristics presumably reflects the low level of intra-generational mobility found by researchers such as Creese, Guppy, and Meisner (1991).⁹ A third set of theories, which in practice often closely resemble theories that emphasize socially-defined characteristics, focus on *relationally-defined positions* within society. These theories draw upon Karl Marx's works, and have had a continuous following in sociology for many years (Murphy 1988: 15).¹⁰

KEY SOCIAL INEQUALITY CONCEPTS

The key concepts in current social inequality research are class, socio-economic status, power, gender, race, ethnicity, and social capital. There has been considerable disagreement as to the precise meaning of each of these terms, however, as I will now attempt to demonstrate.

Social inequality

A natural starting point for any discussion of social inequality is the concept *social inequality* itself. Not surprisingly, the term is used to convey a range of meanings. The term (and the corresponding topic of study) almost always refers to unequal and significant differences among individuals. For example, Grabb introduces the study of social inequality by saying "certain human differences regularly have significant consequences for the lives that we are able to lead in society. The study of social inequality is really the study of these consequential human differences" (Grabb 1999: vii).

Social inequalities are typically considered to be socially structured differences that affect how people interact. For example, Clement describes inequalities as "structures involving processes and principles of organization that guide relations between people, both

⁹ I have accordingly narrowed my review of the literature to theories that explain social inequality in terms of socially-defined characteristics and relationally-defined positions, and not as merit-based inequalities.

as citizens and as workers" (1988: 5), and Grabb describes inequality as, "consequential differences that become *structured*, in the social sense of the term, that are built into the ways that people interact with one another on a recurring basis" (1996: 2). Hunter describes socially structured differences as *relational* and *distributive* (Hunter 1986). By *relational*, Hunter is making the point that inequality can not exist in isolation--there must be contrasting states. For example, it is impossible to be "rich" if no one is "poor." Inequalities are *distributive* in the sense that there must be an unequal distribution of limited and valued resources for an inequality to exist.

There is a range of socially structured differences sociologists consider to be *of consequence* in creating social inequality. Some social theorists think of social class as the principal basis of social inequality (Grabb 1996: 3). Others, such as Wallace Clement, consider social inequality to be based upon a range of characteristics, including gender, region, ethnicity, power and class (1988:5; Grabb 1996).

Class

For the past thirty years, *class* has been the term most frequently associated with social inequality in Canada (Brym with Fox 1989: 92). The exact definition of class is obscure, however. According to the most recent synthesis of Canadian work (Grabb 1999, p. ix), the following five propositions are applicable:

1. Classes exist primarily as categories, and need not be actual social groups.
2. Classes are not merely equivalent to strata or ranked statistical aggregates, but are more deep-seated social cleavages.
3. Classes are sets of people *and* structural categories or containers that separate and encapsulate sets of people.
4. Classes are economically-, politically- and ideologically-based entities.
5. More than two classes exist in a capitalist society; class systems are complex or pluralist.

As can be seen, Canadian sociologists are still struggling to clarify their thoughts about the exact nature of social class in Canada.

¹⁰ Relational theories are often similar to or parallel social stratification theories of social class. I distinguish them here, however, because the conception of social class differs.

Despite the obscurity of exact class definitions, commonality among definitions does exist. Theorists who think in terms of socially-defined characteristics consider class membership to be based on characteristics such as income, educational attainment, and occupation (for example, see Clement 1988; Grabb 1996; Conley 1999; O'Connor 1999; S. Davies 1999). Additional characteristics such as consumer spending, property ownership, investments, total assets, attitudes towards capitalism, and potential for earnings (skills, previous training, field of education) may also be responsible for class distinctions (Ornstein 1988; Eder 1993; Grabb 1996; Grabb 1999; O'Connor 1999; Wright 1985). Class variables are often assumed to be inter-correlated, so that a high-status individual is expected to possess mainly high-status attributes of characteristics (see, for example, Curtis, Grabb and Chiu 1999, p. 372).

The degree of social status sociologists assign to the attribute of a characteristic (e.g. attributes of occupation are *lawyer*, *professor* and *doctor*) are based on either: (1) the ordinal rank intrinsically associated with the attribute (an annual income of \$21,000 is smaller and therefore lower-status than an annual income of \$56,000); or (2) the status the attribute is accorded, on average, by members of a given society (e.g. doctors are of higher status than child-care workers).¹¹

Eric Olin Wright, an American sociologist, takes a slightly different approach to analyzing class structure. Wright is a neo-Marxist, and his definition of class is relational. In his work, he attempts to unite micro and macro levels of analysis. Within a given mode of production, he asserts that class locations are determined by an individual's *relative* economic role. It is not Wright's intent, however, to reduce class structure to the properties of individuals (Wright 1991: 24). In Wright's own words:

To develop a concept of class structure at the microlevel of analysis is to elaborate the concept in terms of mechanisms that directly affect individuals within class locations. Such a microelaboration of the concept of class structure is essential, I believe, if we are to truly understand the causal relationship between class structures and class formations.
(Wright 1991: 23)

¹¹ Sociologists often determine the rank a characteristic values through survey or polling information. An example of this methodology can be found in Lenski 1956.

Class structure therefore has implications for both the individual and for society (Wright 1991).

According to Wright, Costello, Hachen and Sprague, class relations within the capitalist mode of production are as follows:

the bourgeoisie is defined as that class which owns and controls the means of production and is thus able to exploit and dominate the work activities of workers within the production process, whereas the working class is defined as that class which is dispossessed of the means of production and sells its labour power to capitalists and is thus exploited and dominated within production.

(1982: 710)

In addition to the bourgeoisie and working class, Wright et al. describe several intermediary class positions.

Wright's work is well respected and his approach has been adopted by several Canadians such as John Hagan, Marie Huxter and Patricia Parker (e.g. 1988), Fiona Kay (Hagan and Kay 1990), Rudy Fenwick (1989), and Michel de Seve (1994).

Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status (or status attainment) and social class are closely related concepts. Both concepts can refer to a single or combined measure of income, educational attainment, and occupation, or a related set of characteristics. The main difference between *socio-economic status* and *class* is how the relationship between the individual and society is conceived. Socio-economic status strictly refers to the social stratification level of the individual, whereas class can refer to relative positions within society (i.e. Marxist ideas of class relations). For theories that focus on stratification, the terms *socio-economic status* and *class* have been used interchangeably (for example, see Brym with Fox 1989: 92).

Socio-economic status is typically used as an indicator of social inequality (see Brym with Fox 1989: 92-95, 125 and Lin 1990: 247-250).

Power

Over the past 15 years, Canadian scholars have increasingly questioned whether class is a sufficient explanation for all social inequality. There has been considerable debate over whether inequalities associated with gender, ethnicity and race are the result of economic forces (and are therefore essentially matters of class), or constitute independent sources of inequality (Brym with Fox 1989; Clement 1988; Clement 1998; Grabb 1999). For many social theorists, the force underlying all forms of social inequality is *power*; in the words of Bertrand Russell, "the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics" (1938: 12).

The term *power* appears in a variety of theoretical contexts and connotes a wide range of meanings. Power has been described as a component of social inequality (Clement 1988:5; Turner 1984; Grabb 1999), the cause of social inequalities (Grabb 1996: 196), the outcome of a situation (including social inequalities), the potential to alter situations, tactical action (Stolte 1994), and a range of variations.

Unfortunately, most definitions of power are plagued with problems (Murphy 1988:132). Definitions of power as the outcome of a situation are often tautological, with no clear distinction between power as a cause and power as an effect (Stolte 1994; Bacharach and Lawler 1981). Definitions of power as the potential to alter situations lack specificity, so that almost anything can be explained as the result of "power." For example, defined as "the capacity to intervene in a given set of events so as in some way to alter them" (Giddens 1985) and "a differential capacity to command resources and thereby to control social situations" (Edward Grabb 1999 p. xvi) power can be used to describe almost anything people do. The narrowest definition I encountered is Weber's, in which he emphasizes compliance: "the chances that one man or a group of men have to realise their will in a communal activity, even against the opposition of others taking part in it" (Runciman 1978: 43).

Part of the problem associated with the term *power* is no doubt due to the complexity of the concept and wide range of phenomena to which it applies. For example, according to Weber, at least three different capacities underlie power: power to command, domination by virtue of a constellation of interests, and power to profit from (Murphy 1988: 134-136);

Russell identified several forms of power, including economic power, naked power, and power over opinion (1938: 36); and Grabb identified three "means" of power: control of material resources and production, control of human resources (people), and control of knowledge and ideas (1996).

Political influence

While the generic term *power* is often used in the Canadian social inequality literature, reference is rarely made to specific *forms* of power. As described above, power is a particularly broad concept and can apply to many different levels of social interaction. For the purpose of this thesis, it was necessary to focus on one specific form (political) and arena (community decision-making in Lethbridge) of power, which I refer to as *political influence*. It could be argued that Canadian social inequality theorists do not make predictions about political power, and therefore that the chosen research question is not an adequate test of ideas presented in the social inequality literature. While I agree that political power is rarely addressed directly (in the same way that other forms of power are not discussed), there is evidence that this type of power is (at least part of) what social inequality researchers had in mind. Examples of indirect reference to political power include:

Structured inequality involves a process by which groups or individuals with particular attributes are better able than those who lack or are denied these attributes to control or shape rights and opportunities for their own ends.

(E.G. Grabb 1999: vii)

Age-grading practices affect our access to rights and opportunities. Age is often an automatic trigger overriding merit or ability in determining the citizenship rights a person can, or cannot, enjoy.

(N. Guppy, J. Curtis and E.G. Grabb 1999: 255)

In the above two quotes, emphasis is placed on the rights people have. Rights are typically associated with legal or governing matters, which are, of course, related to the political system. More direct references to political power include:

Persons from the higher socio-economic strata and from more privileged or established racial, ethnic, gender, and age groupings...generally have more power and resources at their disposal than others do...For these reasons, it is argued, people of higher rank or social status are more likely to be active participants in the political processes that help to shape their society.

(J. Curtis, E.G. Grabb, and T. Chui 1999: 372)

Canada is a country where white, male, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, wealthy, middle-aged, and older heterosexuals hold power in the leading institutions (and are generally seen to do so legitimately for historical reasons). Therefore, it is the class(es) they represent who often define the "true" nature of social inequality.

(A. Allahar and J. Côté 1998: 5)

The [Canadian] bourgeoisie, defined in economic terms as the capitalist class and in political terms as the ruling class, own and control the major units of the country's economy.

(H. Veltmeyer 1986: 27)

Edward Grabb makes specific mention of political power in the introduction to Social Inequality in Canada, and in his book Theories of Social inequality: Classical and Contemporary Perspectives. In fact, Grabb describes political power as one of the three main "means" of power that lead to social inequality.¹²

Due to the lack of specificity regarding the *form* of power to which people refer, it is not surprising that the exact nature of *political* power is rarely discussed in the Canadian social inequality literature. Political scientists, however, have spent considerable time developing the concept. The term *political efficacy* is used by political scientists to talk about whether or not a person feels they have an impact on the political (democratic) process (Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990: 290). Craig, Niemi and Silver, who conducted research to improve the validity and reliability of the measurement of political efficacy, identified two important components of the concept: (1) *internal efficacy*, or beliefs of one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics, and (2) *external efficacy*, or beliefs about the responsiveness of governmental authorities and institutions to citizens demands (1990: 290; see also Converse 1972 and Balch 1974). I include both internal and external political efficacy as my definition of political influence.

Ascribed characteristics

Ascribed characteristics are characteristics which are inherent to an individual and (for the most part) can not be altered. Examples include gender, race, ethnicity, and age. *Gender* is typically defined as the social significance assigned to biological differences between sexes (for example, see Chodorow 1987: 249-54, or Jary and Jary 1991: 194).

Ethnicity can refer to racial, national, religious, a range of cultural groups, and/or ancestry (Porter 1965; Hou and Balakrishnan 1999; Gordon 1964). The meaning of *race* differs by historical period (Williams 1988), but currently is associated with differences in skin colour. Unlike achieved characteristics, which are regarded as acceptable bases for social ranking, ascribed characteristics have become unacceptable and unlawful bases for social status. Social discrimination based on ascribed characteristics nonetheless persists: women are frequently treated as less important than men (e.g. Kay, Dautovich and Marlor 1997) and First Nations are often considered lower status than other ethnic or “racial” groups (e.g. Barsh 1997a).

Social capital

There has been renewed interest in the role of social networks as a determinant of an individual's access to resources, political influence, power, and economic success. The term that has come to be associated with this concept is *social capital*. Bourdieu (1985: 248) described social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition.” James Coleman describes social capital as relatively intangible, being embodied within relations among persons that facilitate action (1990: 304). His example of social capital is the difference between two groups of people—one group with members who trust one another, and the other in which they do not. Members who trust one another will achieve more because they have access to more resources (e.g. emotional support, professional advice, money, materials) that the other group members do not have. In his view, “collectable” outstanding obligations are a major form of social capital. Alejandro Portes review of the literature on social capital finds scholars describing three forms of social capital: (a) a source of social control; (b) a source of family support; (c) a source of benefits through extrafamilial networks (1998: 9).

¹² For example, see Grabb's diagram on page 195 in his *Theories of Social Inequality* (1996).

After reviewing this literature, it is not apparent to me whether *social capital* is independent from, or an integral aspect of *power*.¹³ Both concepts are closely tied to a person's ability to fulfill their desires through social relations. Arguably, social capital places more emphasis on people wanting to help one another, whereas definitions of power emphasize compliance. This distinction, however, is neither made in the social capital literature, nor easily made in empirical observation.

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG CONCEPTS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Substantial confusion exists over the relationship among key concepts of social inequality. Although there is relative consensus that a causal connection exists between three of the "bases" of inequality--educational attainment, occupational status, and income (Curtis, Grabb and Guppy 1999: 49)—there is little theoretical explanation as to the importance of these variables, or their relationship to other social inequality concepts. For example, is purchasing power (income) considered the pinnacle form of social inequality? When offered, the most frequent explanation as to why income receives so much attention in the social inequality literature is that it "has to do with" power. As one author suggests, "[o]ne reason some people are concerned about the distribution of wealth is that they believe it has much to do with the distribution of power in society" (J.B. Davies 1999: 72). The exact nature of the relationship between socially-defined characteristics and power is not specified, however; it remains unclear as to whether socially defined characteristics are indicators or predictors of power. Curtis, Grabb and Chiu (1999) state that people from higher socio-economic strata "generally have more power and resources at their disposal than others do," while Grabb contends that social inequality both arises from the *exercise* of power (e.g. "[p]ower is defined here as a differential capacity to command resources, which gives rise to structured, asymmetric relations of domination and subordination among social actors," Grabb 1996: 196) and as a *result of* individuals' social characteristics, which lead to power inequalities

¹³ "Social capital," as a specific concept, is only minimally addressed in my thesis. Due to the similarities between social capital and power (or social influence), and my use of social influence as the dependent variable in my research, I found it somewhat redundant to address both concepts throughout the thesis.

(e.g. “[s]tructured inequality involves a process by which groups or individuals with particular attributes are better able than those who lack or are denied these attributes to control or shape rights and opportunities for their own ends” Grabb 1999: vii). These propositions can be reconciled if the exercise of power determines which individual characteristics become socially valued, and this in turn establishes the distribution of power. Although there is reference made to Giddens’s structuration theory (1984), the exact nature of this possible feed-back relationship has not been explored sufficiently (see Breiger 1990, who also argues this position).

The confusion is due, at least in part, to the fact that empirical studies typically focus on the *association* (correlation) between two or three characteristics, such as gender and income, occupation and ethnicity, or ethnicity, educational attainment and income (for examples, see Baer 1999; Henry 1999; Hou and Balakrishnan 1999), without placing the variables within the context of a specific theoretical argument. Describing a relationship between gender and income simply as “sexual discrimination” is not particularly useful, for example. What needs to be addressed is *how* a person’s gender affects their level of income, and *why* income is such an important marker of social inequality. The issue is summarized well by the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Richard Feynman:

If someone were to propose the planets go around the sun because all planet matter has a kind of tendency for movement, a kind of motility, let us call it an “oomph,” this theory could explain a number of phenomena as well. So this theory is good, is it not? No. It is no where near as good as a proposition that the planets move around the sun under the influence of a central force which varies exactly inversely as the square of the distance from the center. The second theory is better than the first because it is so specific; it is so obviously unlikely to be the result of chance. It is so definite that the barest error in the movement can show that it is wrong; but the planets could wobble all over the place, and, according to the first theory, you could say, “Well, that is the funny behavior of the ‘oomph.’”

(*The Meaning of It All*, 1998:19)

Without the development and testing of an explicit theoretical framework, empirical research on social inequality in Canada will never provide more insight than the basic correlational research now being conducted has to offer.

The lack of clearly-defined theoretical relationships has produced a tendency to treat social characteristics such as gender and occupation as inequalities *in themselves*, as opposed

to being markers of the social value assigned to particular members of a given society.¹⁴ In the small horticultural village I visited on the island of Negros in the Philippines, women were responsible for the primary care of children *and* community-level decision-making. Women's power was not a necessary or inevitable consequence of their role as child-care providers (as we can see from other cultures) but arose from the importance that their community assigned to child-rearing. In other societies, as in North America, being female has exactly the opposite social significance. Gender does not constitute or *explain* status, but may be a positive or negative status marker.

In Canada, similarly, income, occupation and education may simply be markers people use to decide who merits power. Income, occupation and education do not *in themselves* constitute or explain social inequality. They would merely be part of an underlying social process of assigning different values or significance to people.

While it is not uncommon for social inequality theorists to concede that characteristics are important because they have are socially significant (for example, see page 160 of Curtis, Grabb and Guppy 1999), the exact processes by which they become significant and shape social interaction is rarely addressed. A few sociologists, such as Nan Lin, Allahar and Côté and Peter Blau, have attempted to reduce the confusion between characteristics and their social significance. Lin considers occupation, income, and industry to be status markers used in (presumably North American) society. Unlike many other social inequality theorists, Lin clearly states that these characteristics are important because they are valued resources—"symbols and objects consensually considered to be meaningful and useful in a social system" (1990: 247)—not just inherently important characteristics. Lin fails to describe how they became valued, however. Allahar and Côté go a step further, and discuss how ideology influences our behavior, including how ideology determines which characteristics we use to make social distinctions. Blau reduces the confusion further. Blau uses the term *structural parameter* to distinguish characteristics people use for deciding how to interact with one another from the characteristics themselves. Social structure is therefore the system of social

¹⁴ While frequent reference is made to status characteristics being "socially defined", the implications of this distinction are rarely addressed. Thus, although the rhetoric implies that socially defined characteristics and social inequality are somehow distinct, there has been few attempts made to describe what this means and therefore leaving the impression that status characteristics and social inequality are one and the same.

relations that result from structural parameters (Blau 1975). Blau does not, however, explain *how* structural parameters shape social relations, or *why* particular characteristics become structural parameters. Despite their insights, this work still requires more clarification regarding how certain characteristics become status characteristics, and the process by which these characteristics shape social inequality.

MICRO-THEORIES OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY: EXPECTATION STATES THEORY

Expectation States Theory (EST), a laboratory-based social psychology research program that investigates inequalities among individuals in small task-oriented groups, provides an explanation for the relationship between personal characteristics, status markers, and social influence. EST researchers study the process by which group members predict and assess each others' competence at a task, and the impact their assessments have on subsequent interactions within the group (Berger, Fisek, Norman and Zelditch 1977; Berger, Wagner, and Zelditch 1985; Foschi 1992a).

Four important concepts in the EST literature that underpin this process are status characteristic, status cue, expectation state, and double standard. A *status characteristic* is a variable or personal attribute that individuals use to infer, predict, or assess task competence in themselves or in others. Examples of possible status characteristics include standardized test scores, education levels, gender, and ethnicity. A variable becomes a status characteristic when subjects consider it relevant for assessing competence at a task, *and* one or more of its "states" (i.e. values, such as "male") is accorded greater status than the others. A man who believes that men are more competent at mechanical tasks than women is likely to use gender to assess whether a particular individual can fix his car. For him, then, gender is a status characteristic (Foschi 1989, 1992a).

Status cues are cues or information used to infer "invisible" status characteristics. When wealth is a status characteristic, for example, the quality and style of clothing may be used as a cue to infer wealth; when ethnicity is a status characteristic, surnames may be used as a cue for ethnicity.

An *expectation state* is the expectation a group member forms, based on status characteristics, about a person's ability to perform a future task. An expectation state is relative to two or more actors, rather than being an absolute (e.g., "He is male, males are good at mechanical tasks, therefore I expect that he will be better than a female at repairing my car," rather than "I expect that he will be good at repairing my car") (Foschi and Foddy 1988; Foschi 1992a). Expectation states influence the offering and acceptance of opportunities, the evaluations received, and future offers and acceptance of opportunities within the group (Foschi 1989).

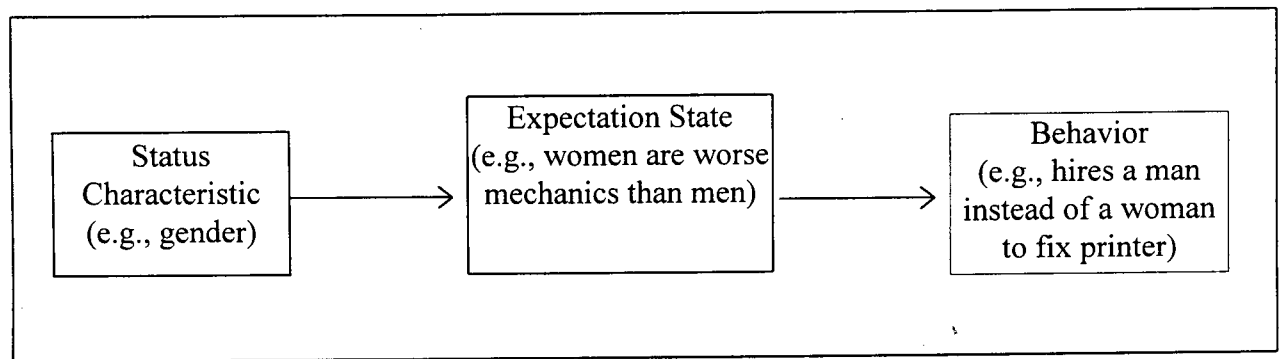


Figure 3.1: Status Characteristics, Expectation States and Behavior

People use standards to evaluate a group member's performance. Standards are based on status characteristics and expectation states. A *double standard* is said to exist when some of the members of a group are subjected to higher standards of task-performance evaluation because of the evaluator's expectations. If the evaluator expects men to perform better than women on a particular task, a man will *not* have to demonstrate as much ability as a woman in order to be assessed as equally or more competent at the task. The woman is said to bear the *burden of proof* because higher standards are applied to her performance. If competence on a particular task is sex-linked with females rather than males, the burden of proof will be reversed. Evaluation standards may differ depending on the type of task being performed (Foschi 1992b).

All people do not necessarily use the same characteristics as status characteristics. Women have less incentive to accept their lower status, for example, than men have to accept their higher status, therefore women may *not* use gender as a status characteristic (Foschi and

Foddy 1988; Foschi 1998). Whether a characteristic is accorded status, the amount of status each state is accorded, and the relative difference between states, varies by individual, culture and historical period. The process by which a characteristic becomes a status characteristic is only now beginning to be addressed, however, in the EST research program (for example, see Webster and Hysom 1998; and Ridgeway and Balkwell 1997).

COMPARING MY MODEL TO MACRO- AND MICRO SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES

Neither the social inequality nor the social psychological theories identified here adequately predict or explain the social distinctions and power relations I have observed in Lethbridge. Although social inequality in Lethbridge has been perpetuated by differential treatment based on socially-defined characteristics, my ethnography suggests that class, socio-economic status, educational attainment, occupation, and income, *as defined in the literature*, are not the sole or even the primary basis of many forms of social, economic and political power in Lethbridge.

Access to political power and unequal treatment in Lethbridge appear to be based on membership within locally-defined, historically-evolving groups.¹⁵ Membership in each group is based on a complex set of criteria which *may* include income, occupation, educational levels, and attitudes towards capitalism, but tend to assign greater weight to factors such as age, religious beliefs, local ancestry, neighbourhood, style of dress and lifestyle. While the members of a high-status group such as the "establishment" may enjoy a higher *average* level of income, this characteristic may *not* be relevant at all to the way the group defines itself, selects its members, or exercises its influence in local politics. For example, university professors and Agriculture Canada scientists have what sociologists often consider high-status occupations (Boyd and Grieco 1998; Chimbos 1987; Marr 1986), but I

¹⁵ My use of the term "group" is *consistent* with Weber's *status groups*, but I believe it extends beyond that intended by Weber. Based on Weber's discussion of status groups in *Classes, Status Groups and Parties* (Runciman 1978: 43-61), it appears that Weber conceived of status groups as relatively a-historical entities that develop and disappear only due to social and economic upheaval; I, on the other hand, am suggesting that group membership criteria evolve over time and in reaction to (sometime relatively minor) historical events, and that status groups form, re-configure and dissolve within historical periods.

found among many Lethbridgians that these "newcomers" were accorded equal or lower status than blue-collar workers who "fit in." Lethbridge social groups and their membership criteria have changed over time in ways that reflect specific historical contests, rather than changes in relative income, employment or educational attainment.

My ethnographic research also diverges from the social inequality literature on another point. It is assumed in the social inequality literature that consensus exists within society regarding which characteristics and attributes of characteristics are important, such as class, income and education (for example, see Lin 1990: 247). Although general consensus does exist within most Lethbridge groups, consensus does not necessarily exist *across* groups.

Canadian social inequality theory is not developed enough to make some forms of comparisons; as explained above, the relationship among key social inequality variables is largely undefined.

EST, on the other hand, provides a clear explanation of the process and maintenance of inequality in small groups, but does not attempt to explain: (1) how characteristics become status characteristics; (2) how status characteristics affect social relations in large groups,¹⁶ or (3) how prolonged social interaction among many individuals (or many groups) affects the power and prestige order of groups. In addition, EST researchers treat status characteristics primarily as discrete and independent of each other (e.g. gender is distinct from occupational status). Status characteristics are primarily explored in separate controlled experiments, and the subjects are strangers, limited to whatever information about each other the experimenter provides. In Lethbridge, people appear to assess others using a variety of status characteristics. Instead of assessing each status characteristic individually, people appear to form expectations based on the combination of status characteristics observed. So while EST provides clarity to the confusion regarding the relationship among social inequality concepts, it does not provide an adequate theoretical framework for understanding social organization in Lethbridge, either.

¹⁶ EST research has exclusively focused on the power and prestige order within *small* groups (two to three people), therefore does not provide insight into the power and prestige order of large groups (hundreds or thousands of people).

A POSSIBLE FRAMEWORK FOR A GENERAL THEORY

It is possible that no theory about specific groups (e.g. old-timers, newcomers), characteristics (e.g. income, level of education, occupation) or types of relationships (e.g. economic relationships, or social class) can explain social inequality across Canada; the specific characteristics used in forming expectations may vary by population and location. The only "good" theory (in Feynman's sense of the term) may be one that identifies the *underlying* processes or mechanisms that describe the relationship among expectations, status characteristics, groups, social inequality and power. The following is the beginnings of a possible framework for a general theory that is consistent with my observations of Lethbridge, and is based on these observations as well as the findings from other empirical sociological research.¹⁷

I must begin by clarify some key terms. I regard *social organization*, *social inequality* and *social structure* as inter-related terms; a society's social structure or social organization is the system of relationships that results in social inequality. Social structure is a complex system of structural parameters, expectation states, and status characteristics that shape social interaction. I use *status characteristics* to refer to empirically observable features such as income, hair color, or style of dress. I use the term *structural parameter* to refer to an idea used to form an *expectation*, such as the idea that women are inferior to men in regards to mechanical abilities (which leads to the *expectation* that men will perform better than women on mechanical tasks).¹⁸ People use structural parameters to select which characteristics they investigate in others (by asking questions, making observations, etc.) and evaluate in forming

¹⁷ Although it is based on my observations of Lethbridge, my readings, and my observations of social interactions outside of Lethbridge, this framework remains speculative because it has not been empirically tested beyond my own exploratory research.

¹⁸ I use the term *structural parameter* somewhat differently than Blau. Blau uses the term to distinguish between characteristics and the use of those characteristics as status markers. I, on the other hand, use *structural parameter* to describe the idea associated with the characteristics that is used as a status marker.

expectations about others.¹⁹

STATUS CHARACTERISTICS, GROUP MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA, AND SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION

The exact combination of features or characteristics associated with a particular group, or *group membership criteria*, are comparable to *sets* of status characteristics. For example, multiple criteria are used for assessing whether or not someone “fits in” to Lethbridge, including whether or not the person is married, has a family (if old enough), belongs to an acceptable local church, considers Lethbridge to be a great city, dislikes Blackfoot Indians, wears drab, relatively unfashionable clothing, and has a reserved, suspecting demeanor. The more information a person knows about another, the better able he is to assess the group(s) to which the other “belongs.” Group membership designations are used to form relative expectation states about oneself and an other.²⁰

Social classification is based on diverse types of data. Membership in some groups involves familiarity with other group members; most Latter Day Saints (Mormons) know each other (Fooks 1998), and most “old timers” can recognize each other by name, if not by face (Fooks 1998; Essex 1998). For other groups, however, membership is based on how well a person matches visible features and easily-identifiable personal characteristics associated with that group. In this way, criteria can substantially differ across groups.

Most people who live in Lethbridge know the local system of classification, and can recognize the members of other groups as well as their own. They can tell whether someone is an “old timer”, an “Indian”, or a member of “the establishment”, even if they themselves

¹⁹ The same process of model building (forming structural parameters and their associated expectations) is used in understanding the non-human world around us, such as learning about trees, other animals, rocks and minerals, and the solar system. In the same way that people use complex sets of structural parameters in forming expectations about other people (e.g. person A decided how to act towards person B based on how well person B fits one of person A's “profiles” of group membership. To do so, person A may assess person B's gender, dress, speech, body size and shape, and body language), people use complex sets of structural parameters to form expectations about *things*, such as the process of plant growth and how a ball reacts when bounced. Culturally associated sets of parameters (such as group membership criteria, or typologies such as what constitutes a tundra, boreal forest, or desert landscape) are relatively simplistic tools for assessing complex phenomena, and are therefore bound to have classification problems. As phenomena can not be neatly categorized, fuzzy boundaries and multiple classifications are inevitable.

²⁰ This echoes Thomas Dunk's (1994) conclusion that rural forest workers think of environmentalists as relatively well-off businessmen who live in big cities (such as Toronto and Montreal), who only spend a few days a year walking in the woods (i.e., an environmentalist “profile”), rather than just people who happen to hold a particular set of beliefs about the environment.

are not. A man with brown skin, dark hair, and certain facial features, will instantly be classified as an "Indian" who does not "fit in" to Lethbridge. If he then speaks with a Spanish accent, he will be re-classified as a "newcomer" (Tristan 1998). If a woman has "white" skin, she appears to be in her thirties or older, and her style of dress and appearance are "appropriate" for Lethbridge, people will presume that she "fits in" and treat her accordingly.²¹

The status individuals accord to a particular group largely depends on the group to which they belong; the members of different groups may use different status characteristics, or accord a higher or lower status to an attribute of a characteristic. A person who does not "fit in" may have a different set of expectations about "newcomers" than a member of "the establishment," for example. Social consensus over which characteristics or attributes of a particular characteristic are important does not necessarily exist across groups.

Individuals deduce group membership criteria and the associated expectations from interaction with others, moreover; there is no explicit list of criteria for group membership. Status characteristics and expectation states therefore vary to the extent that individuals possess different conceptions of membership criteria for groups—including their own. A particular shop-owner may be treated as a member of "the establishment" by most other member, for instance, but a few "establishment" members may treat her otherwise, due to the "improper" behavior of her grandfather back in 1956, or her conversion to an Evangelical Christian church. These latter "establishment" members place more weight on prior family behavior and church affiliation as "establishment" membership criteria than do other members.

Groups are never perfectly defined or bounded; there are always people who can "pass" as members of a group to which they do not properly belong (Goffman 1963)—such as the Eastern European Roman Catholics who moved to the South side and pass as members of the Anglo-Saxon "establishment"—and people who possess only *some* of the relevant membership criteria for a particular group, who are consequently treated as group members by some people but not by others (or as members in some social contexts, but not in others).

²¹ I have repeatedly attracted stares, comments, or avoidance behavior on account of my age and dress, and have learned how to manipulate these signals to alter people's behavior towards me.

Groups form for different reasons. Some groups have coalesced from people who were excluded from other groups, and who had no previously shared interests: the “newcomers” and people who do not “fit in.” Membership is based primarily on the *absence* of characteristics, or *negative identity criteria* (e.g. a “newcomer” does not display any of the behaviours which would indicate that she “fits in” to Lethbridge). Membership in other groups is based on *positive identity criteria* (e.g. to be a “local” you must belong to one of the city’s mainstream churches).

The members of positive identity groups are likely to be more familiar with the membership criteria for their group, and aware of differentiation within their group, than are outsiders. For example, an “old timer” who is not a member of “the establishment” may be more familiar with what it means to be an “old timer” than would a “newcomer”, but less familiar with the criteria for being a member of “the establishment.” This is not unusual; a sociologist will be more critical about whether another person is a “sociologist” than would someone who knows little about sociology.

Group identity in Lethbridge is fluid, negotiated, and situational, and membership domains overlap. Individuals have complex backgrounds, diverse interests, and interact in multiple contexts. Depending on the social context in which they meet, Lethbridge residents may use different sets of criteria for evaluating and relating to others. For example, a woman who is both a member of the establishment and a Mormon may treat a Mormon “newcomer” favourably when meeting at their ward (where the woman uses her “religious affiliation” criteria for assessing the “newcomer”), but less favourably at a city election forum (where she uses her “establishment” criteria for determining with whom she will talk). The complex overlapping of groups can best be visualized as a number of overlapping circles (a Venn diagram) representing multiple memberships.

Groups and group membership criteria evolve through a complex historical process. Unlike the weather and turbulence within waterfalls, social systems are internally chaotic and complex; we can never make predictions about human society to the same extent that we can about the behavior of non-conscious or inanimate objects. Humans develop individual interpretations of events, and make individual decisions accordingly. As members of multiple groups, situations arise when individuals will be exposed to conflicting uses of

characteristics as markers of status (e.g. income being used as a high status characteristic within one group, but an unimportant characteristic in another group), and will be made to choose between the two value systems. Every *implemented* individual decision (exerted social influence) has some impact on social relations within the system as a whole.

Group membership and membership criteria are maintained and negotiated through individuals' actions. Experience, expectations, structural parameters and behavior are part of an open feedback system; experiences shape people's structural parameters, which people use to form expectations; expectations shape people's behavior; experiences of behavior are interpreted through structural parameters (or, conversely, experiences can stimulate the development of new structural parameters), thus reinforcing old expectations or creating new ones.²² New ideas may gain currency within a society, and group members may identify with these ideas, or adopt them as a tactic to legitimize their rights to power and resources. For example, if Chinese cuisine becomes fashionable in a city, the local Chinese community may take advantage of this by identifying themselves more closely with their restaurateurs, chefs, and grocers. The cumulative effect of individuals acting on these "structural openings" changes group identity. As ideas change, new status characteristics emerge, new structural parameters evolve, and the status of groups may be challenged and defended, weaken or persist.

No social system exists in isolation. Lethbridge is also a part of Alberta, Canada, NAFTA, NATO, and the West. The influence of these linkages on Lethbridge society cannot be forecast from within Lethbridge simply using Lethbridge data alone, because they are not caused by anything found particularly within Lethbridge. The outbreak of World War I could not have been predicted using Lethbridge data alone, but the war profoundly affected the decisions Lethbridge residents made, as well as the way they perceived themselves and perceived others around them. The range of residents' possible interpretations and reactions to the war was limited, however, by their already-existing structural parameters, expectations, and status characteristics.

²² This idea superficially parallels Giddens' structuration theory, in which Giddens' describes an historical interplay between structural parameters and social outcome as a "duality of structure" (1984). Important differences exist between Giddens' structuration theory and the framework I propose here, however, specifically in respect to my description of groups and group membership criteria.

WIDENING THE CIRCLE: SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Social inequalities occur when individuals act according to structural parameters and have enough social influence (*i.e.* power) to create unequal outcomes for the people in question. When employers refuse to hire Native people (which is not uncommon in southern Alberta), or when shopkeepers have undercover security guards follow First Nations people in their stores, they are creating social inequalities.

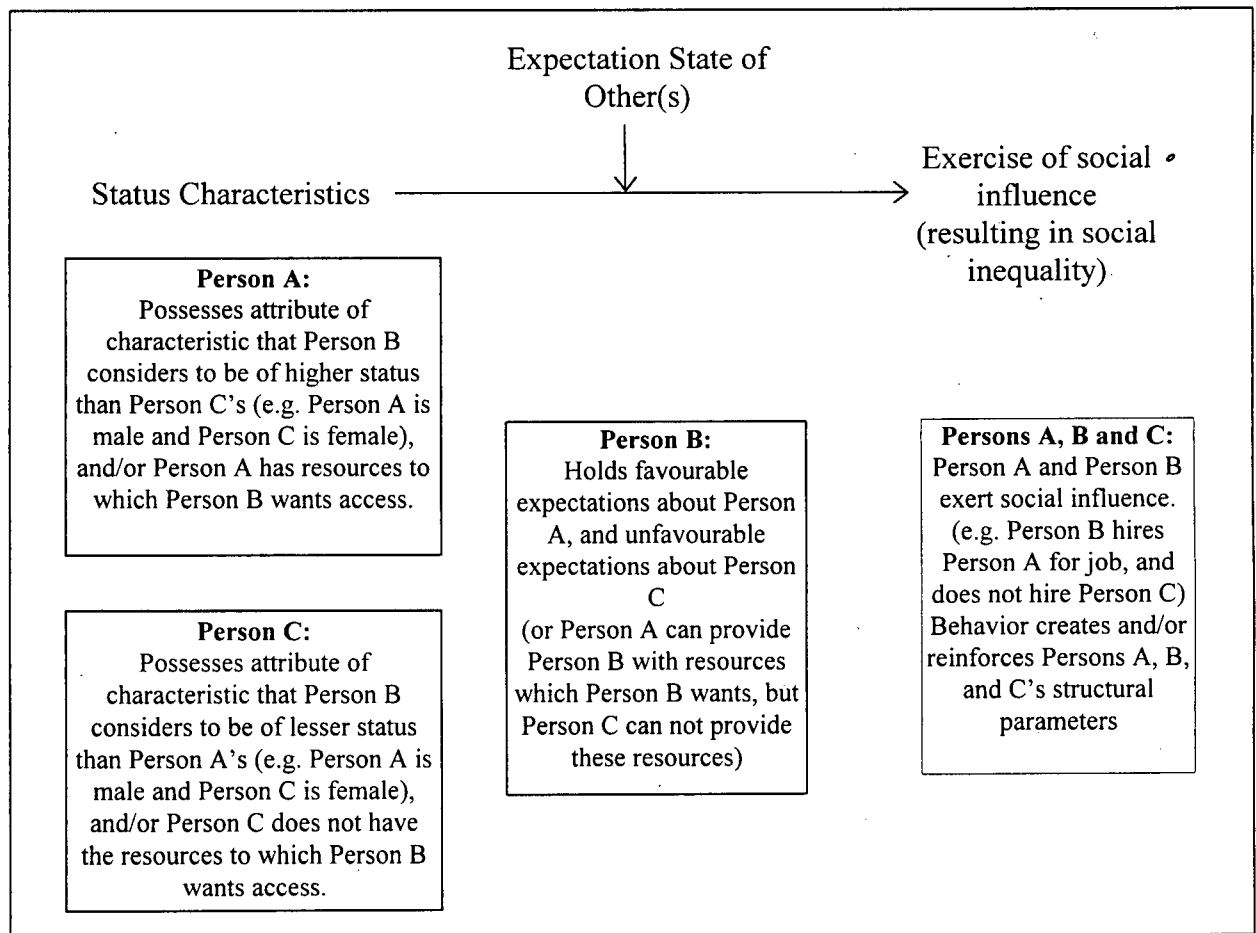


Figure 3.2: The relationship among status characteristics, expectation states and the exercise of social influence

Social influence, like *power*, is a complex concept, and I will only attempt a rather preliminary definition here. To have social influence, a person must be seen by others as

important enough to deserve a particular right or privilege (*i.e.*, possessing high status characteristics or belonging to a high status group) and/or having valuable resources at his disposal that he can use to leverage outcomes (*e.g.* money for hiring employees, desirable friendships). The relationship among status characteristics, expectation states of others, and the exercise of social influence are diagrammed in Figure 3.2.

People with large amounts of social influence typically represent or embody "objectified" structural parameters, such as a member of the establishment who has become the mayor or the chief of police. The culmination of prior events form a social landscape that bounds the range of future options; being (or becoming) an "important" person likely helped the member of the establishment gain an official title. As long as enough people consider him a legitimate bearer of this title, he will have a relatively large amount of social influence over the community.

Social inequality and social influence are therefore closely related. The difference is a shift in focus from the outcome (social inequality) to the activity that leads to the outcome. Social inequality exists if some people are treated better and worse than others in some respect. Social influence is the ability to *effect* a social inequality.

Above, I suggested how structural parameters and group membership criteria change over time. Social influence and social inequality are integral components of the relationship by which this occurs. In the basic case (Fig 3.3) a local employer's belief that women are less competent as accountants than men is given effect through the employer's social influence (being someone who distributes jobs) by preferentially hiring male applicants. This outcome in turn reinforces the employer's belief and his influence, and perpetuates social inequality based upon gender. The employer does not act in a vacuum, however. He is surrounded by information media, and by a world of changing events. He may encounter a growing number of media images of intelligent successful women, or encounter a growing number of women executives and professionals on trips out of town. He may attend conferences in other cities, or meet with executives of other firms, that have different beliefs. He may experience a shortage of minimally capable male applicants, or a flood of exceptionally talented women, due to national or international trends in the training and employment of accountants determined by factors far beyond his control. These historical factors, which are not

produced by the employer or, perhaps, even by his local community—and cannot be forecast from an understanding of the employer alone—may gradually erode the employer's disposition or ability to prefer male applicants.

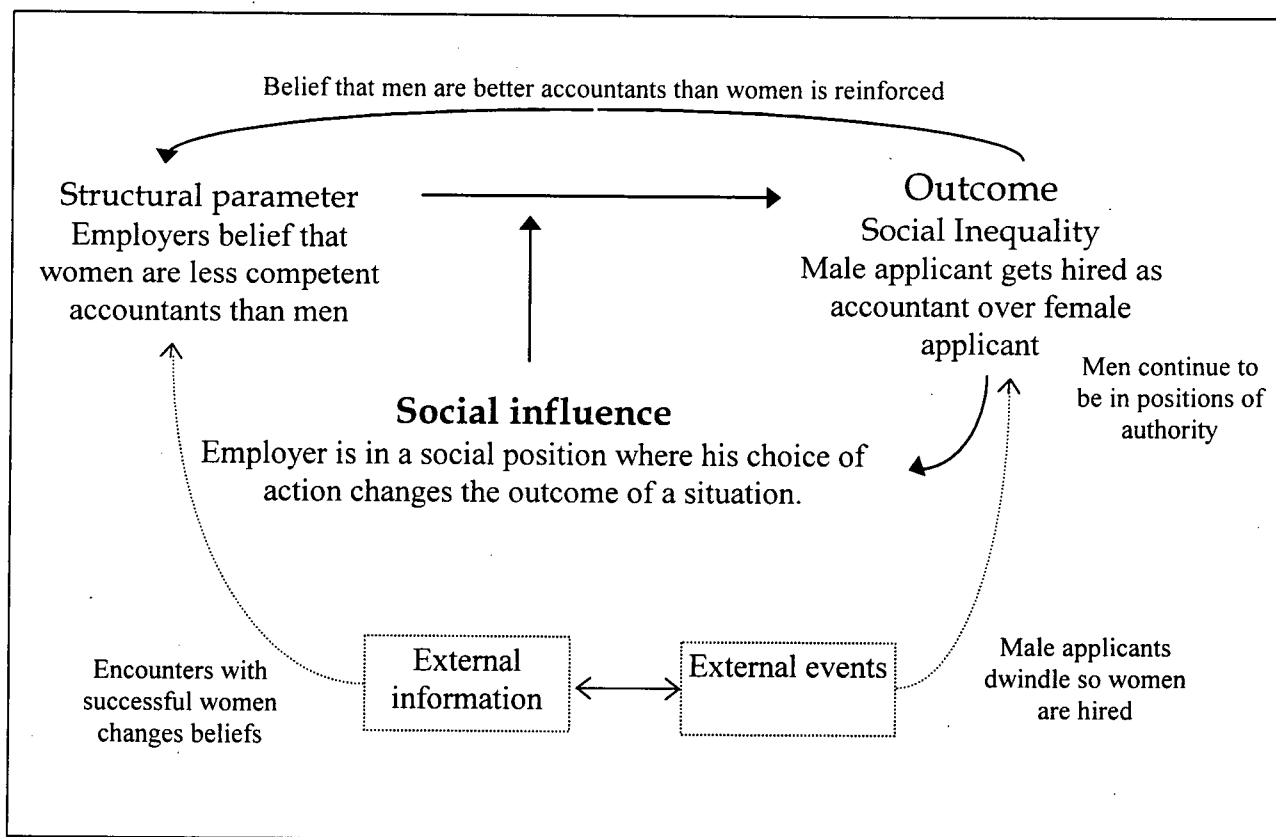


Figure 3.3: The relationship among structural parameters, social influence and social inequality under changing external conditions.

An employer in a small town in western Ontario may have considerably different experiences in this regard than an employer in a large Montreal firm. Social inequality in the small Ontario town may persist longer, or change in different ways than the same kind of (gender-based) social inequality in Montreal. Averaging the beliefs or the outcomes in these two communities does not help us understand what is actually happening in either community.

IN SUMMARY

In summary, the major difference between my theoretical framework and theories found in the existing social inequality literature are the mechanisms by which social characteristics and structural parameters *change over time* and *vary across local communities*. In social inequality theory, a predetermined array of characteristics, including social class, income, educational attainment, gender and ethnicity, are used as status markers throughout Canadian society.²³

I am not trying to suggest that social class, income, educational attainment, gender and ethnicity are never used as status characteristics; it is completely feasible that other groups use these characteristics as membership criteria. My critique of the current social inequality literature is that: (1) generally speaking, the relationships among key concepts is not clear; (2) there is no mechanism explaining how status characteristics (or socially-defined characteristics) become such; (3) social class, income, educational attainment, gender and ethnicity, *as they are defined in the literature*, do not appear to be the status characteristics used in Lethbridge, Alberta.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

The theoretical framework described above underlies the approach I took in my survey research. The framework also provides an explanation as to *why* I observed certain sets of characteristics being valued in Lethbridge more than those assumed supreme in the social inequality literature. The next step was for me to find additional empirical verification regarding the accuracy of my observations. The remaining chapters describe the research I conducted to test the accuracy of my observations. I begin with two chapters describing the methodology I used in my research.

²³ Social inequality theorists may believe that the use of social class, income, educational attainment, gender, and ethnicity as status characteristics arises from Canada's particular social, economic and state system, and that these characteristics will remain status markers for as long as the institutions exist. If this is the case, however, we must ask how it is possible for new social, economic or state systems ever to arise; if everyone is acting consistently with these institutions, then what would jeopardize these institutions?

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

In some ways, presenting an alternative theoretical framework before showing empirical justification for why one is needed is premature. As many would argue, I need empirical justification as to why the old theory will not suffice and why a new theoretical framework is needed.²⁴ Irrespective of the inroads qualitative research has made in Sociology, it seems that the only creditable findings are those based on quantitative research involving statistical analysis.²⁵ As I wanted my research to be taken seriously, it was of key importance to me that I test the research question with quantitative data.

The research I conducted for this thesis was a mail-out survey, which was used to quantitatively assess and compare my model and Canadian sociologists theories about social organization and inequality in Lethbridge. In this and the following chapter, I detail the methodology used in conducting this research. In this chapter, I explain why I chose this methodology, and describe the sampling frame, sample size, sampling methodology, the technique used to increase the response rate, and issues related to the confidentiality of the returned questionnaires. Chapter Five contains specific details about the indicators used, index and typology construction, the hypotheses tested, and the methods used in data analysis.

WHY A SOCIAL SURVEY?

I felt a social survey was the most appropriate methodology for several reasons: (1) My model was developed from qualitative data. To test my own ethnographic analysis validly requires the use of a substantially *different* methodology, such as statistical analysis of a random sample of Lethbridgians. (2) Surveys provide data from a relatively large, randomly chosen cross-section of a population, which I needed to ensure that my conclusions

²⁴ Indeed, the theoretical framework underpins the operationalization of my research question, which is why it is presented where it is.

²⁵ I shall boldly state this without example. Instead, I challenge the reader to find instances in which the findings of qualitative research are considered more creditable than quantitative research.

represented more than just the opinions of a select few individuals within Lethbridge with whom I had prior contact. (3) Most extant social inequality research is survey-based. Employing the same methodology reduces the possibility that my results will reflect differences of method rather than matters of substance.

Survey methodology is not without problems, however. Social status, power, and access to resources refer to complex patterns of interpersonal behaviour *as well as* subjective states of individuals. Even with a large set of indicators, measuring complex patterns of social behaviour through self-reports is problematic. People are often unaware of how they behave, or believe they behave in socially-appropriate ways even if they do not. Respondents may not realize their own prejudices against age, ethnicity, or income, or may not want to acknowledge that they judge people based on how they dress, walk, talk, or look (Fowler 1995: 20-29). Carefully crafted questions can minimize this problem, but can not eliminate it.

SAMPLING FRAME

The population to which I wanted to generalize the results of my survey are the adult residents of Lethbridge. There is no known list of all adult Lethbridge residents and their mailing addresses. The best options for a sampling frame that I had available were the Henderson Directory (the local criss-cross directory) and the Lethbridge telephone book. The comparative accuracy of each information source was unknown. I chose the 1999 Lethbridge telephone book as my sampling frame because I had access to a format that reduced the amount of work I had to perform; the Lethbridge Public Library had the 1999 telephone directory for Lethbridge on CD-ROM, which alleviated me from having to re-type the information. The CD-ROM database was designed so all commercial listings can be filtered out, and selected entries can be printed or transferred into other software programs.

Despite its advantages, the telephone book is an inaccurate sampling frame in at least four ways. First of all, some people--for whatever reason--people are not listed in the telephone book: they have an unlisted number, they do not have a telephone, or they do not have a permanent address (i.e., they are homeless). Second, others have more than one phone

listed in their name, or have a fax line that is listed in the residential listings. Third, the phone listings do not contain the most current information—people move, change their phone service, and change their names. Fourth, while there may be several adults living in a household, only one is listed in the phone book. Even with these problems, though, the telephone book was the best sampling frame I had available.²⁶

SAMPLE SIZE

I required a minimum of 10, and preferably 20 cases, within each group of comparison for valid statistical analysis. My intended analysis involved comparisons between a number of locally-defined social groups, social classes, and socio-economic strata (income, occupation, education) and the respondent's amount of political influence. There was no way to know how these characteristics were geographically distributed within the Lethbridge population; all I could do to increase the chance of having a minimum number of cases per subgroup was to make my sample size as large as possible. I had limited funding to conduct the research, however, so my sample size was dictated by the financial resources I had available. Thanks to a \$2,000 research stipend from the *Equality, Security and Community* research team (ESC) at the Centre for Research on Economic and Social Policy at the University of British Columbia, and \$1,000 contributed by Drs. Mustafa Koc (Department of Sociology, Ryerson), and Bill Ramp (Department of Sociology, University of Lethbridge), from their research project on globalization and prairie cities, I was able to finance a survey with a sample size of 600 potential respondents.

SAMPLING METHOD

The procedure I used to randomly select my 600 households from the CD-ROM version of the Lethbridge telephone book's residential listings was to select every 50th

²⁶ I could not do much to overcome the first three problems with using the telephone book as a sampling frame. I did, however, attempt to overcome the fourth, as I describe in the "Sampling Method" section.

entry, starting from the listing that corresponded to a seed number randomly selected from 1 to 50, inclusive.²⁷

Approximately 20% of the 600 selected listings did not include an address, and approximately 10% had incomplete postal codes. I used the local criss-cross directory and the postal code book to complete the majority of the missing information. Listings that remained incomplete were deleted from the sample, and the telephone book listing from directly above the deleted one was selected instead.

All addresses in the sample were compared to the printed version of the year 2000 telephone book. Any address discrepancies were changed to match the 2000 listing. Listings that no longer appeared in the 2000 book (i.e., the person had moved away from Lethbridge, passed away, or got an unlisted number since the prior year) were deleted and replaced with the 2000 listing located directly above.

Eventually, I had a listing of 600 first and last names with corresponding addresses. I thought the chance of someone in the household opening the questionnaire package would increase if I addressed the envelopes to a specific person in the household. As many households house more than one adult, I had to develop a procedure for randomly selecting the potential survey respondent from the individuals within the household. Simply asking the person to whom the envelope was addressed (the person whose name was listed in the telephone book) to complete the questionnaire would likely create considerable selection bias. For example, heterosexual couples usually list their phone in the man's name, and I did not want to send my questionnaires to a disproportionately high number of men. Consequently, the instructions in the introductory cover letter directed the addressed recipient to pass the questionnaire to the member of the household who had the most recent birthday.

INCREASING THE RESPONSE RATE

I was extremely concerned about obtaining a high response rate. Many Lethbridge inhabitants appear to have a negative attitude towards academic research. In a phone survey—a method typically associated with higher response rates than mail surveys (Fowler

²⁷ The seed number was 5.

1993:45; Mangione 1995: 60)—conducted by another sociologist in Lethbridge, the interviewers were only able to interview 33% of those they attempted to call (Clark and Brown 1995: 5).

I decided to use two techniques for increasing the response rate: (1) a reminder card, and (2) a contest for all those who returned a completed survey. Fifteen days after the questionnaires were mailed, a reminder card was sent to all addresses from which a response had not yet been received.

Three hundred dollars was used as two \$150 prizes for encouraging survey recipients to complete and return their questionnaires. To participate, each respondent was asked to record his name and address on an entry form that accompanied the questionnaire and introductory cover letter. The entry form was returned to me by mail in a stamped, self-addressed envelope that I provided. On April 19th, two entry forms were selected as winners. The winners were notified by mail, accompanied by a money order for \$150 made out to the prize winner.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort was made to keep questionnaire responses confidential. At no place were respondents' names and address recorded on the questionnaire, and respondents' were instructed not to do so. The questionnaires were identified by an identification number only. The entry forms for the contest were returned in an envelope separate from the one in which the questionnaire was returned. A listing of respondents' corresponding addresses and identification numbers, used to identify the respondents to whom a reminder card needed to be mailed, was kept in a locked file. The list has since been destroyed, and the data is identifiable only by questionnaire identification number. All procedures were approved by the University of British Columbia's Ethical Review Committee.

OPERATIONALIZATION, HYPOTHESES, AND OTHER METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The above is a description of the general parameters of the survey I conducted. In Chapter Five, I discuss the specifics of the questionnaire and its analysis, such as how I operationalized the key concepts, which indicators were used, the hypotheses tested, and the method of statistical analysis.

Chapter 5: Concepts, Indicators, Variables and Indexes

In this chapter I have the burden of explaining how I transformed the theoretical ideas I talked about in Chapters Two and Three into empirically testable hypotheses. There are three sets of concepts I operationalized: (1) the social inequality literature variables-- social class, income, occupation, education, ethnicity, and gender, (2) Lethbridge groups, and (3) political influence. The chapter is organized three corresponding sections, each with a description of the indicators used, how indexes (if any) were constructed, and any problems encountered with the data. The chapter ends with a list of the hypotheses tested, and a brief description of which statistical techniques used in data analysis, and why.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY CONCEPTS

SOCIAL CLASS

Eric Olin Wright developed a class typology which is frequently used in Canadian research on social class (for example, see Hagan and Kay 1990, 1995; Hagan, Huxter and Parker 1988); Fenwick 1989; and de Seve 1994). By both Wright's (Wright 1991: 21) and my own assessment, other existing class concepts are more abstract and less applicable to micro-levels of analysis than his. I therefore chose Wright's class typology for use in my survey.

Wright's typology is based on a set of questions about the respondent's occupation and work setting. The questions are combined to create a number of intermediate indexes and typologies, and the final class typology. Five intermediate variables and typologies were used to construct social class:²⁸ decision-making, authority, managerial location, number of employees, and autonomy. I have indicated the operational structure of decision-making in Table 5.1, authority in Table 5.2, autonomy in Table 5.3, managerial location in Table 5.4, and the class typology in Table 5.5.

²⁸ For a full description of the typology, see Wright, Costello, Hachen, and Sprague 1982.

Table 5.1: Operational structure of Decision-making, used in constructing the class typology

| Decision-making | Amount of participation in policy-making decisions at place of work | Question 22 |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Participates directly in making at least one decision | 1-3 |
| 2 | Does not participate in any decisions, but provides advice on at least one. | 4 |
| 3 | Non-decision-maker. | 5 |

Table 5.2: Operational structure of Authority, used in constructing the class typology

| Authority | Authority Title | Description of authority | Q23 | Q24 | Q25 |
|------------------|------------------------|---|------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Sanctioning supervisor | A supervisor who is able to impose positive and/or negative sanctions on subordinates | Yes | n/a | Yes |
| 2 | Task supervisor | A supervisor who cannot impose sanctions, but does give orders of various kinds | Yes | Yes | No |
| 3 | Nominal supervisor | A supervisor who neither gives orders nor imposes sanctions | Yes | No | No |
| 4 | Non-supervisor | No subordinates of any sort | No | n/a | n/a |

Table 5.3: Operational structure of Autonomy, used in constructing the class typology

| Autonomy* | Description | Question 32 |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | High autonomy | 1 |
| 3 | Moderate autonomy | 2 |
| 5 | Low autonomy | 3 |
| 6 | No autonomy | 4 |

* Autonomy values are not continuous due to a discrepancy between Wright's and my construction of this variable. Wright created intermediate categories between high and moderate, and between moderate and low. These were created from an open-ended question. The question I used was close-ended, and did not allow for the intermediate categorizations. I adopted Wright's autonomy values for consistency.

Table 5.4: Operational structure of Managerial location, used in constructing the class typology

| Managerial location | Decision-making | Question 31 | Authority |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | 1 | 1, 2 | 1, 2 |
| 2 | 2 | 1, 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 | 3 | 2-4 |
| 4 | 3 | n/a | 1 |
| 4 | 3 | 1, 2 | 2 |
| 5 | 3 | 3 | n/a |
| 6* | 2 | 3 | 3, 4 |
| 8* | 3 | 1, 2 | n/a |

* The values 6 and 8 were created to include those who were not otherwise included in Wright's typology. For the purpose of the class typology, they are treated the same as managerial locations 3 and 5.

Table 5.5: Operational Structure of the Class Typology

| | Number of employees (question 20) | Managerial location | Autonomy |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Bourgeoisie | 11 or more | n/a | n/a |
| Small employer | 1-10 | n/a | n/a |
| Petty bourgeoisie | 0 | n/a | n/a |
| Manager | n/a | 1 | n/a |
| Advisory manager | n/a | 2 | n/a |
| Supervisor | n/a | 4 | n/a |
| Semiautonomous employees | n/a | 3, 5, 6 or 8 | 1-3 |
| Workers | n/a | 3, 5, 6, or 8 | 4-6 |

Wright distinguished eight classes: *bourgeoisie* (self-employed, with 11 or more employees), *small employer* (self-employed, with 1 to 10 employees), *petty bourgeoisie* (self-employed, no employees), *manager* (with authority over other employees), *advisory manager* (no direct decision-making powers, but provides advice; able to sanction other employees), *supervisor* (no decision-making powers, but able to sanction other employees), *semiautonomous employees* (moderate to high autonomy, position not classified as managerial or supervisory) and *worker* (low or no autonomy, position not classified as managerial or supervisory). The distribution of respondents by each of these eight categories is listed in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Distribution of social class for sample respondents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Bourgeoisie | 1 | .4 |
| Small employer | 15 | 6.3 |
| Petty bourgeoisie | 13 | 5.5 |
| Managers | 23 | 9.7 |
| Advisory managers | 10 | 4.2 |
| Supervisors | 0 | 0.0 |
| Semiautonomous employees | 37 | 15.5 |
| Workers | 40 | 16.8 |
| Unclassifiable cases | 99 | 41.6 |
| Total | 238 | 100.0 |

Ninety-nine of the 238 cases could not be classified. Unclassifiable respondents were those who had either not provided responses to the class-related questions,²⁹ or were not in the labour force (42.7% of the sample were retired, unemployed, students, or homemakers).³⁰ All respondents, including those who were retired or unemployed, were asked to report their current (or prior, if retired or unemployed) occupation. I used this variable, combined with the other work-related data, to estimate the class to which unclassifiable cases belonged.³¹ Estimates were based on response similarities in occupation and demographic data between unclassifiable and classifiable cases. For example, a mechanical engineer near retirement who did not provide all his occupation data was classified as being in the same social class as a mechanical engineer of approximately the same age who did complete all occupation questions. The updated information was entered into a revised class variable.³² The number

²⁹ Cases missing only one or two responses were classified according to Wright's typology and included in the class frequencies. Missing information for these cases was estimated from the other occupation data provided by the respondent. For example, if a person claimed they were a receptionist, and they did not indicate whether or not they supervised anyone, it was assumed they did not.

³⁰ Several retired respondents answered the class-related questions even though they are not currently employed. These individuals were included in the relevant class categories in Table 5.6.

³¹ As occupation data was used in the construction of social class, I did not think it was appropriate to construct another "occupation" variable. Occupation and class are therefore collapsed in data analysis.

³² Unless otherwise stated, the revised class variable is the variable used in data analysis.

of unclassifiable cases was thus reduced from 99 to 36 cases (15.1% of the sample). The cases that remained unclassifiable were either missing too much data or were those for which I had no comparison case(s) from which to estimate class. The distribution of sample respondents by the revised social class variable is presented in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Distribution of social class for sample respondents, including estimates for those with incomplete information

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Bourgeoisie | 2 | .8 |
| Small employer | 20 | 8.4 |
| Petty bourgeoisie | 15 | 6.3 |
| Managers | 26 | 10.9 |
| Advisory managers | 13 | 5.5 |
| Supervisors | 2 | .8 |
| Semiautonomous employees | 63 | 26.5 |
| Workers | 61 | 25.6 |
| Unclassifiable cases | 36 | 15.1 |
| Total | 238 | 100.0 |

EDUCATION

Level of education was measured by the question “What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?” Response options were:

- Some elementary or high school
- Grade 12 or high school equivalency diploma
- Courses in trade/ business/ technical/ vocational
- A trade certificate or other non-university certificate or diploma
- Some university or university-transfer courses at college
- University with an undergraduate degree
- University, with a graduate or professional degree

I encountered one unforeseen problem with the education data. The design of the response categories assumed a hierarchy of education levels (e.g. “some trade courses” was ranked higher than “completed high school”). This proved problematic when I realized some respondents had not completed “lower” education levels, but had completed “higher” ones. For example, some respondents indicated they had taken some trade courses but had not

completed high school. By my own estimation, a high school diploma can be, in many cases, a higher level of education than the combination of elementary school and a few trade courses. I could not re-classify respondents who had trade courses but no high school diploma, however, because respondents were not asked to indicate what other forms of education they had obtained. I decided to collapse the first three categories (elementary or high school, high school diploma, and some trade courses) into one to overcome this problem.

ETHNICITY

Measuring ethnicity is always problematic. To begin with, there is the question of definition—to what does “ethnicity” refer? The term has been used to mean everything from group membership, to a way of life, to ancestral heritage, to skin colour. The most common usage of this term in the social inequality literature is national ancestry (e.g., the family originated from Italy, England, Lithuania, or Mexico) (see Porter 1965: 80-81; Brym with Fox 1989: 105).

The question used for assessing ethnicity was “What is your ethnic background?” I provided thirty-three response categories, along with blank spaces for unlisted nationalities, for responses. I allowed multiple responses for anyone with more than one ethnic background.

The data was summarized as a single variable. Respondents were categorized as British (including Irish), Native North American,³³ Northern European,³⁴ Southern European,³⁵ Eastern European,³⁶ Central and South American, Middle Eastern and Asian, or mixed or multiple ethnicities. The distribution of respondents by ethnic background is presented in Tables 5.8.

³³ Respondents who are Cree, Metis, and “other” native North American.

³⁴ Respondents who are Belgium, Dutch, German, Icelandic, Scandinavian and/or Swiss

³⁵ Respondents who are Italian and/or French

³⁶ Respondents who are Austrian, Czech, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian, and/or Ukrainian

Table 5.8: Ethnicity of sample respondents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------|
| British | 70 | 29.4 |
| Native American | 2 | .8 |
| Northern European | 40 | 16.8 |
| Southern European | 6 | 2.5 |
| Eastern European | 24 | 10.1 |
| Middle Eastern and Asian | 7 | 2.9 |
| Mixed or missing | 89 | 37.4 |
| Total | 238 | 100.0 |

Ideally, ethnic categories would be individual nationalities instead of regional groupings. Unfortunately, two issues prevented this. The first was the large proportion of respondents reporting multiple ethnic backgrounds. By combining national origin into regional groupings I reduced the number of multiple responses. The second problem was that many nationalities had fewer than five cases, thus preventing valid statistical analysis.

LETHBRIDGE GROUPS

GROUP DISTINCTIONS BASED ON MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Of the locally-defined Lethbridge groups identified in my ethnography, I selected eight for further exploration.³⁷

- People who fit in (Lethbridgians);
- People who do not fit in;
- Old timers (or natives of Lethbridge);
- South-siders;
- North-siders;
- West-siders;
- Indians (Blackfoot);³⁸
- Religious groups (Mormons, Catholics, Protestants, Evangelical Christians).

³⁷ I decided not to include the establishment or elite group in my exploratory survey research because the membership criteria associated with this group is difficult to identify. Most Lethbridge elites are known by name, and thus membership criteria are not as much generalized characteristics as they are details about specific individuals. Coupled with the logistical problem that very few people form the elite of Lethbridge (and thus very few were likely to be included in my sample), I decided not to include this group in my research.

³⁸ None of the respondents indicated Blackfoot heritage, so it was impossible to test any hypotheses related to differences between Blackfoot and "Whites."

I began operationalizing the Lethbridge groups by listing membership criteria associated with each.³⁹ The items ranged from relatively easy to incredibly difficult characteristics to measure. For example, criteria for fitting in to Lethbridge included: (i) being married and have a family (if old enough), (ii) belonging to an acceptable local church, (iii) considering Lethbridge to be a great city, (iv) disliking Blackfoot Indians, (v) wearing drab, standard, relatively unfashionable clothing, and (vi) having a reserved, suspecting demeanor. The first three items are assessable through straight-forward questions such as "How old were you on your last birthday?" and "How do you feel about living in Lethbridge?" The fourth item (disliking Blackfoot) can be a sensitive topic, even for those who are openly racist. Respondents may want to answer in a politically correct manner, or may not even realize that by other's standards they would be considered racist. The fifth and sixth items are explicitly related to behavior and outward appearance, which are both difficult (if not impossible) to assess through a questionnaire. Concepts such as racism were operationalized through indirect measures such as "Do you think economic partnerships with nearby Indian Reserves would be a good form of economic development for Lethbridge?"⁴⁰ Characteristics such as clothing style and demeanor, which were likely to result in unreliable measures, were dropped from the list.

Table 5.9 presents the operational structure used for determining group membership. The Lethbridge groups under examination are listed in the left column, the question responses associated with membership criteria are located in the centre column, and the questions used to measure the criteria are indicated in the right column.

³⁹ As discussed in Chapter Three, group membership criteria are often implicitly learned through observation of other's behavior. I have attempted, therefore, to use criteria I was familiar with that I believe are in wide usage.

⁴⁰ In some cases, as with the Indian Reserve example, it is debatable how valid these indirect measures were. To be conservative, I ended up excluding these from use as operationalized group membership criteria.

Table 5.9: Lethbridge groups, indicators used as group membership criteria, and corresponding survey question number

| Group | Group Membership Criteria | Questionnaire number |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Fits in to Lethbridge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marital status: <i>not</i> living common-law, or single at the age of 30 or older • Has children (unless under 30 years of age) • Religious denomination, if any: Protestant, Evangelical Christian, or Catholic • Ethnicity – not Native American (“Indian”) • Ethnicity – not Middle Eastern or Asian • Considers Lethbridge a good or great place to live • Feels most others in Lethbridge value the same things as they (either agrees or strongly agree to question 43.1) • Considers most others in Lethbridge to be friendly, open-minded, community-interested, putting others interests before their own, welcoming people of all colours and religious beliefs, non-sexist, and considerate of all people regardless of their way of life (scores 2 or lower on the “Friendly” index, meaning that on average, the respondent either agrees or strongly agrees with the above) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 and 59 • 65 and 59 • 69 • 69 • 6 • 43.1 • 55.1, 55.2, 55.3, 55.4, 55.5, 55.6, 55.7, 55.8, 55.10 |
| Does not fit in to Lethbridge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not think Lethbridge is a good place to live • Feels most others in Lethbridge <i>do not</i> value the same things as they (either disagrees or strongly disagrees to question 43.1) • Does <i>not</i> consider most others in Lethbridge to be friendly, open-minded, community-interested, putting others interests before their own, welcoming people of all colours and religious beliefs, non-sexist, and considerate of all people regardless of their way of life (scores 2.5 or higher on the “Friendly” index, meaning that on average, the respondent either agrees or strongly agrees with the above) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 43.1 • 55.1, 55.2, 55.3, 55.4, 55.5, 55.6, 55.7, 55.8, 55.10 |
| Old timer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First family member to live in Lethbridge had arrived by 1960 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 |
| South-sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives on the south side of Lethbridge • Self-identifies as a South sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 • 8.5 |
| North-sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives on the North side of Lethbridge • Self-identifies as a North sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 • 8.4 |
| West-sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives on the West side of Lethbridge • Self-identifies as a West sider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 • 8.6 |
| Member of a religious congregation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of a religious congregation in Lethbridge • Attends church at least once a week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39/ 40 • 41 |
| Indian (Blackfoot) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity – Blackfoot (Blood, Peigan, or Siksika) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 69.6, 69.7, 69.8 |

SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Although there is no public consensus in Lethbridge regarding group labels, I was curious to see whether or not respondents' self-identified themselves as Lethbridgians, North-siders, South-siders, or West-siders, or a newcomers to Lethbridge. The self-identification data related to geographic affiliation was used in constructing the North/South/West side groups. The Lethbridgian and Newcomer self-identification data was analyzed independently, as additional indicators of the "fits in" and does not "fit in" groups.

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

As already discussed in Chapter Three, power is a broad, complex, context-sensitive concept. It is impossible to measure all forms and manifestations of power in a single questionnaire. For my research, I focused on how much political influence people in Lethbridge have with regards to community issues, such as influencing city council decisions and city-level concerns. While this naturally excludes how much influence respondents have in interpersonal, provincial, federal or global politics, it is at least arguably one form of power.

In Lethbridge, certain groups have historically had more power (e.g. the establishment). Members of these groups have become the city's mayors, city council members, school board trustees, and public committee members of the city. They have access to the city's resources and have made the by-laws and community decisions. The status characteristics they consider important are used to assess the merit of others. It is their standards by which others are evaluated, and which others attempt to meet to gain influence (i.e., theirs are the hegemonic standards of the city).

The above point is important when conceptualizing the underlying phenomena that I am attempting to measure by survey questions. As discussed in Chapter Three, social influence is not only dependent on whether a person considers herself worthy of being influential, but whether others are willing to cooperate to create her intended outcome. In other words, social influence is a complex interplay among the current "social landscape" (which people within the population currently occupy "objectified" positions and have access

to desired resources), and the structural parameters (and ensuing expectations) of the actors wanting to affect a community decision. In the case of my research, the actors involved are the survey respondent and the Lethbridge elite (and anyone else who is involved in affecting community-level decision-making).

Survey questions are not direct measures of who has political influence in Lethbridge; survey questions can not directly measure behavior, such as whether the respondent has made or can make successful attempts at influence community decision-making in Lethbridge. Instead, I had to rely on the respondent's perceptions or cognitive model of how members of the Establishment (and everyone else involved in community decision-making in Lethbridge) have or will react to his attempts to influence community decision-making.

I have attempted to graphically represent the relationship among the elite's structural parameters, the respondent's cognitive model of those parameters, and the respondent's (and other Lethbridge residents') prior experience with influencing community decision-making in Lethbridge in Figure 5.1. The phrase "Outcomes of others" is used in Figure 5.1 to represent

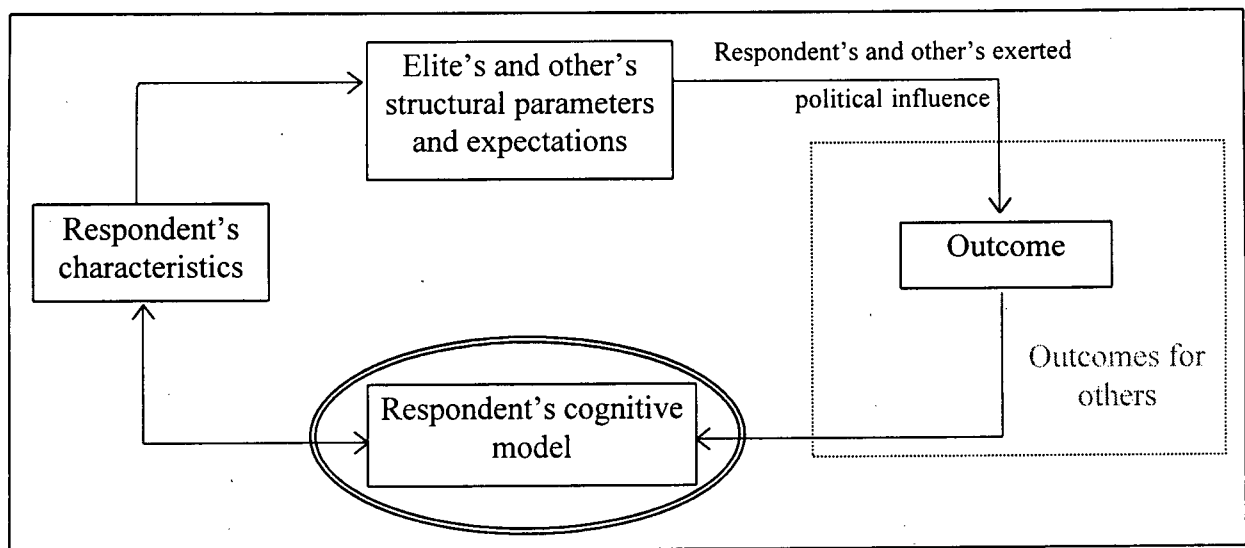


Figure 5.1: A model of the relationship between the elite's structural parameters, community decision-making in Lethbridge, and the respondents' perceptions of these structural parameters. The double-lined oval (around the respondent's cognitive model) indicates which part of the relationship I attempted to access for measuring the respondent's amount of political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making.

the events that have already occurred, in addition to the respondent's own prior attempts to influence community decision in Lethbridge, which shape the structural parameters of the

elite and the respondent (e.g. such as when the respondent's neighbour ran for city council, but lost). The double-lined oval indicates the part of the model I attempted to access for measuring political influence.

Initially, I had hoped to measure the respondents' level of influence over a range of community issues. I expect individuals have more influence over some issues than others. For example, a member of the Canadian Family Action Coalition may have more influence over pornography laws than the same person has over city maintenance crews fixing his faulty street drain. Differences in amount of political influence by social context proved incredibly difficult to assess in a relatively short questionnaire, however, so I ended up creating measurements which were only moderately sensitive to social context.

I attempted to measure political influence from a variety of perspectives. I asked four series of questions: "objective" questions about the respondent's political activism, and "subjective" questions regarding how much influence the respondent broadly feels he or she has over community issues, over specific civic issues, and the number of people he or she can mobilize for a public cause. The responses from these questions were used to create four indexes: community influence, civic influence, mobilization, and activism. The description of how each was operationalized is presented below.

COMMUNITY INFLUENCE

The underlying construct I was trying to measure with community influence was how much influence the respondent feels she generally has in the Lethbridge community. Two variables were used to create the index: the amount of influence the respondent feels she has in community-making decisions (with five response categories ranging from a huge amount to none at all); and, how strongly the respondent agreed that "people like me don't have any say about what the Lethbridge city government does" (with four response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree 3). Both items were based on measures developed in Craig, Niemi and Silver's research on political efficacy (1990: 307). The two items have good face validity, have a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.43, $p < 0.01$, and have an alpha

reliability score of 0.605. Cronbach's alpha is marginally lower than ideal, but is not too low for acceptability.

The community influence index was constructed by summing the values of the two items. Although the first item had a larger range of response options, the highest response category (a huge amount) was never selected. Consequently, both items were weighted equally in the index. The scores for this index range from 0 to 6, with 6 indicating the highest amount of influence. The distribution of respondents by amount of community influence is presented in Figure 5.1.

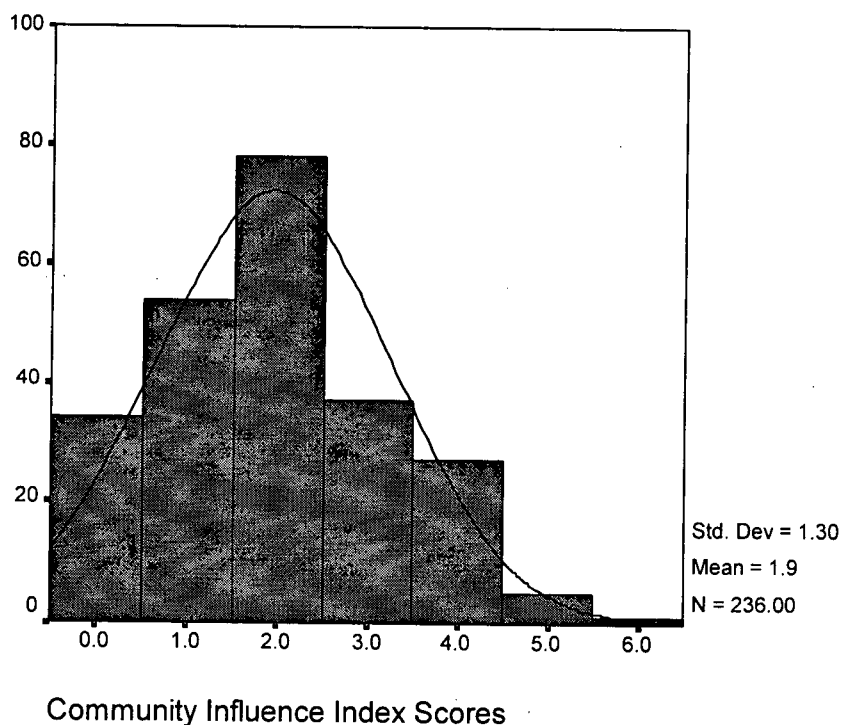


Figure 5.1: Distribution of respondents' community influence index scores

CIVIC INFLUENCE

The underlying construct I wanted to measure with civic influence was how much influence the respondent felt she had over the city government. Four items were used to create the index. The respondent was instructed to answer yes or no to whether or not they thought the city government would fulfill their request if asked to:

- Replace a damaged street sign on their block
- Fix a faulty street drain near their house that is prone to flooding
- Have the mayor return their phone call
- Appoint them to a public service committee.

The question items were not directly modeled after any known measures, but are consistent with the political efficacy measures created by Craig, Niemi and Silver (1990).

I attempted to design the items in a manner suitable for constructing a scale with the data.⁴¹ Unfortunately, while most respondents considered the first two items more accomplishable than the second two items, some considered the latter items more achievable. It was therefore inappropriate to construct a scale from the data. It was possible, however, to construct an index with the data. The items have face validity, and all item pairings are significantly correlated (see Table 5.10) except *fixing a street drain* and *appointment to a public committee*. Index item reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) is low but acceptable.

Table 5.10: Relationship between civic influence index items

| | Fix street sign | Fix drain | Mayor phone | Appoint to committee |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------|
| Fix street sign | - | .424** | .135* | .218** |
| Fix drain | .424** | - | .170* | .075 |
| Mayor phone | .135* | .170* | - | .450** |
| Appoint to committee | .218** | .075 | .450** | - |
| ** p< 0.01 (2-tailed). * p< 0.05 (2-tailed). Cronbach's alpha = 0.559 | | | | |

The civic influence index was constructed by assigning one point to each item that was answered affirmatively, and summing the points. The index scores thus ranged from 0 to 4, with 4 representing the highest amount of civic influence. Initially, I considered weighting some items (e.g. giving one point for a positive response to the first two items, and two points for a positive answer to the last two items). This raised the same concern I had with using these items as a scale--the respondents were not in consensus about which items were the

⁴¹ For a discussion of the distinction between indexes and scales, see Babbie (1995).

most difficult to achieve—and, as I could not make an accurate estimate of how much weight to give each item, I decided to weight each item equally. The distribution of respondents by their civic influence index scores are represented in Figure 5.2.

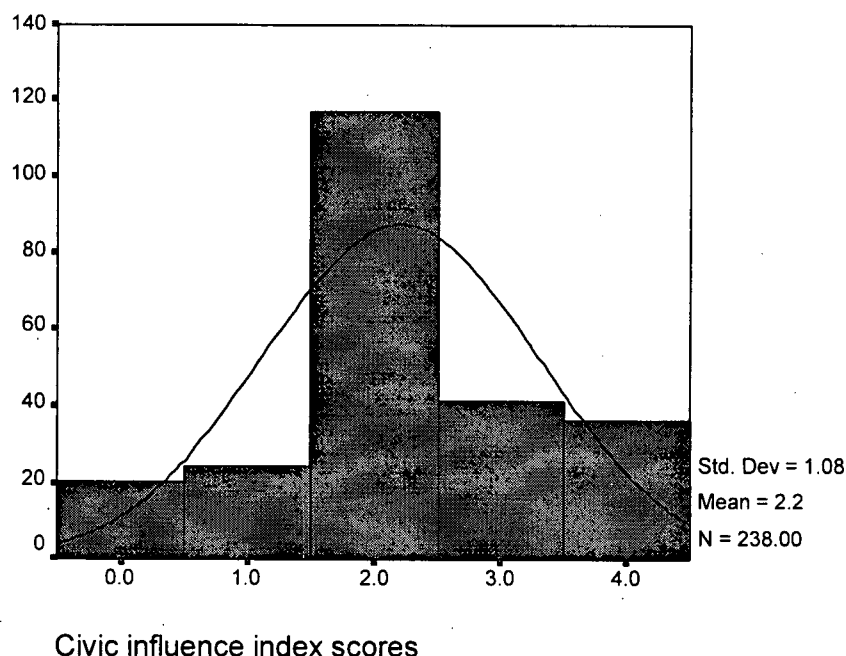


Figure 5.2: Distribution of respondents by Civic Influence Index score

A few respondents commented that they did not know how city hall would respond to their requests. While it was intended to be a subjective measure of whether or not the respondent *feels* he has influence over city hall, it raises a concerns about the reliability of this measure. This is possibly the cause of the relatively low alpha score.

MOBILIZATION

Social influence means being able to convince others to do something. It therefore made sense to assess how many people the respondent felt she could mobilize in support of a public issue. Ideally, the measure would include a means for assessing *who* the respondent

could mobilize. A person arguably has more influence if she can mobilize the mayor than if she can mobilize 5 college students. A measure that can distinguish between whether or not the people the respondent can mobilize are influential or non-influential would unfortunately be too long and confusing in a mail-out questionnaire. Instead, the measure used in the questionnaire was composed of six simpler items. Respondents were asked how many people in Lethbridge they felt they could convince to:

- sign a petition
- write a letter to the editor (of the Lethbridge Herald)
- attend a public meeting
- contact a member of the city council
- make a presentation to city council
- donate \$50 or more to support a local public issue.

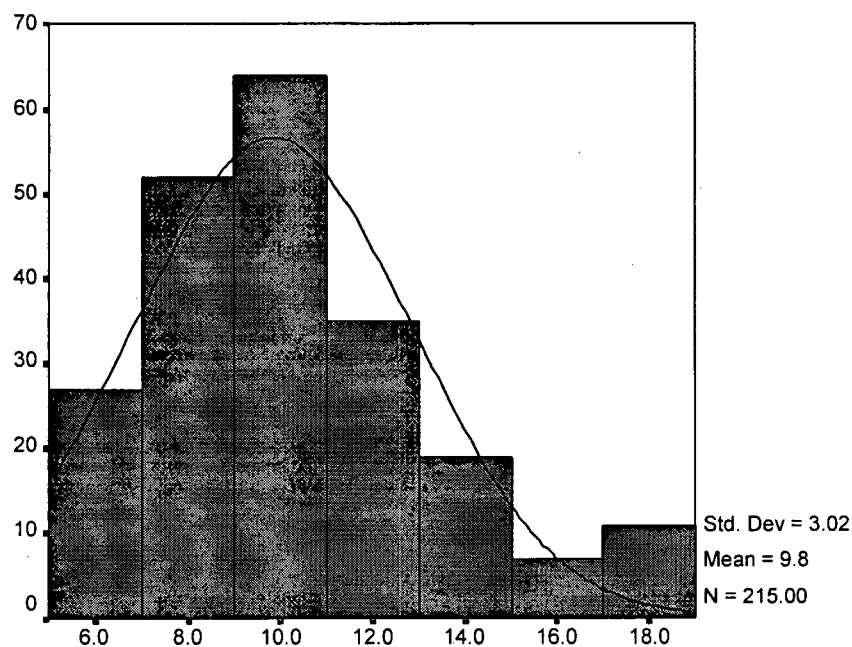
The index items have face validity, are significantly inter-correlated and the reliability among items is high (see Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: Relationship between mobilization index items

| | Sign petition | Write letter to editor | Attend meeting | Contact council member | Presentation to city council | Donate \$50+ |
|--|---------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Sign petition | - | .337** | .496** | .308** | .182** | .213** |
| Write letter to editor | .337** | - | .559** | .440** | .564** | .423** |
| Attend meeting | .496** | .559** | - | .564** | .486** | .505** |
| Contact council member | .308** | .440** | .564** | - | .520** | .507** |
| Presentation to city council | .182** | .564** | .486** | .520** | - | .555** |
| Donate \$50+ | .213** | .423** | .505** | .507** | .555** | - |
| Statistics reported above are Pearson's Correlation Coefficients | | | | | | |
| ** p< 0.01 (2-tailed). | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's alpha = 0.823 | | | | | | |

Construction of the mobilization index was more complex than for the other three indexes. Three response categories were used, and each were assigned a different value: able

to mobilize less than 5 people received a value of 1, able to mobilize 5-10 people received a value of 2, and able to mobilize more than 10 people received a value of 3. The values for all six items were then summed, and the total was divided by three. This created index scores ranging between 2 and 6. The distribution of respondents' mobilization scores is presented in Figure 5.3.⁴²



Able to mobilize people over an issue index scores

Figure 5.3: Distribution of respondents by Mobilization Index scores

ACTIVISM

The fourth index, activism, is the most problematic. I wanted an “objective” measure of how much influence the respondent has exerted on public Lethbridge matters. As my respondents were randomly selected from the telephone book, I did not know what issues, and in what way--if any--each respondent had attempted to exert political influence. Initially,

⁴² The actual mobilization scores presented in Figure 5.3 are the scores *before* they were divided by three.

I developed a set of close-ended questions for specific political activities such as whether or not the respondent had ever contacted a member of the city council, or written a letter to the editor of the daily paper, and what the outcome of the experience had been. I *did* include a subset of these questions (related to letter writing to the Lethbridge Herald editor), but the whole series was too long and cumbersome for a mail-out questionnaire. The final design was a simplified version in which the respondent was asked to indicate whether or not she had ever:

- signed a petition about a local Lethbridge issue
- rallied for a public Lethbridge issue
- attended a public meeting about a public issue
- donated money to a local charity
- donated money to a local campaign
- contacted a member of the city council to make a suggestion or complaint
- made a presentation to city council
- run for Lethbridge city council, or a provincial/ federal riding in Lethbridge
- sent a letter to the editor of the Lethbridge Herald in which you tried to influence people's opinions about a local issue.

The question design for these items was adapted from David Tindall's work on forestry-related social movements (e.g. 1994). Each item was modified to suit the particulars of Lethbridge.

There is weak statistical justification for constructing an index from these items. The correlation between several items are not statistically significant (see Table 5.12). Items significantly correlated to fewer than three other items were dropped from the index⁴³, reducing the number of items to seven. There was no particular pattern of inter-correlation among the remaining items. Reliability among the remaining items was relatively low.

⁴³ The items dropped were *donated money to a local charity* and *ran for city council*.

Table 5. 12: Relationship between activism index items

| | Signed petition | Rallied | Attend public meetings | Donate \$ to campaign | Contact city council | Presentation to city council | Letter to editor |
|---|-----------------|---------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Signed petition | - | .168** | .077 | .071 | .169** | -.025 | .143* |
| Rallied | .168** | - | .265** | .217** | .200** | .049 | .136* |
| Attend public meetings | .077 | .265** | - | .115 | .131* | .185** | .138* |
| Donate \$ to campaign | .071 | .217** | .115 | - | .160* | .223** | .072 |
| Contact city council | .169** | .200** | .131* | .160* | - | .217** | -.030 |
| Presentation to city council | -.025 | .049 | .185** | .223** | .217** | - | .090 |
| Letter to editor | .143* | .136* | .138* | .072 | -.030 | .090 | - |
| ** p< 0.01 (2-tailed). * p< 0.05 level (2-tailed). Cronbach's alpha = 0.501 | | | | | | | |

The activism index was created by assigning one point to each affirmatively answered item, and summing the points. Index scores potentially ranged from 0 to 7 (with the highest score reflecting the highest level of activism), but the highest *actual* score was six. The distribution of respondents' scores are presented in Figure 5.4.

Statistical analysis shows that the lack of information regarding the outcome of the respondents' political activities produced an invalid measure of political influence. The

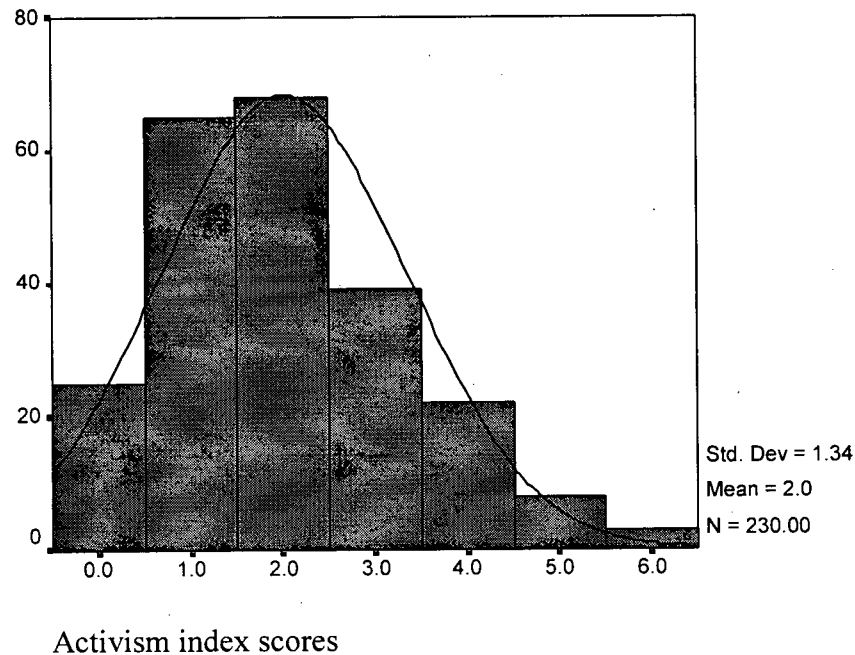


Figure 5.4: Distribution of respondents by Mobilization Index scores

number of political activities undertaken by respondents and the amount of influence they feel they have in community decision-making in Lethbridge is negatively correlated ($r = -0.171$, $p < .01$). For this reason, the activism index was not as an indicator of political influence in data analysis.

RESPONSE RATE

Six hundred questionnaires were mailed to a random sample of people living in Lethbridge, of which at least 31 were undeliverable (due to incorrect addressing). Two hundred forty-one questionnaire packages were opened and returned, 238 of which were completed. The response rate was 40%, calculated by dividing the 238 completed and returned questionnaires by the 600 questionnaires that were initially mailed. All completed and returned questionnaires were included in data analysis.

HYPOTHESES

The survey data was used to test thirteen hypotheses, listed in Table 5.13. Each hypothesis is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

Table 5.13: Hypotheses tested in data analysis

| Variable | Theory | Expected relationship to political influence |
|---|--------|--|
| Class | SI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bourgeoisie > small employer > petty bourgeoisie • manager > advisory manager > supervisor > semi-autonomous employee > worker • bourgeoisie > advisory manager > supervisor > semi-autonomous employee > worker |
| Income | SI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$85,000 and over > \$65,000 to \$84,999 > \$45,000 to \$64,999 > \$25,000 to \$44,999 > \$15,000 to \$24,999 > \$0 to \$14,999 |
| Education | SI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • graduate/professional degree > undergraduate degree > some college or university > trade certificate > less than s trade certificate |
| ("Local trade/business people") | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trade certificate >or= graduate/professional degree, undergraduate degree, some college/ university |
| Gender | SI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • men > women |
| ("Uppity Feminists") | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see Chapter 6 |
| Ethnicity | SI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British • Northern European • Southern European • Eastern European • Middle Eastern and Asian • Native American |
| Fits in/ does not fit in | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fits in > not clearly I neither > does not fit in |
| Lethbridgian | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethbridgian > others in sample |
| Newcomer | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcomer < others in sample |
| Old-timer/ Native of Lethbridge | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old-timer/ native of Lethbridge > others in sample |
| North, South, West sider | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South sider > North sider • West sider, outside university area > North sider |
| Religious affiliation | EL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream church members (Anglican, Presbyterian, and United) and Latter Day Saints > others in sample |
| Key for theory column: SI= hypothesis derived from Canadian social inequality literature EL = hypothesis derived from ethnography of Lethbridge | | |

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The two principal methods of statistical analysis used in data analysis were analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression.⁴⁴ Analysis of variance is appropriate for data with a continuous dependent variable and discrete independent variables. My political influence indexes are all ordered, discrete variables which can be analyzed as continuous data. The independent variables are nominal and ordinal discrete variables, some dichotomous and others with multiple response categories. As analysis of variance assesses whether or not the differences in means for each category are due to chance, it allowed me to test hypotheses regarding whether or not there is a statistical relationship among the categories of each variable and a particular form of political influence (i.e., community influence, civic influence, and ability to mobilize others). Examining the direction of the means (the relative size of the means for each category) allows me to see if a relationship matches prediction.

Multiple regression was a less desirable method of analysis than ANOVA for two reasons: (1) the exact function of the relationship (e.g. linear, curvilinear, nonlinear) between independent and dependent variables is unpredictable, and (2) analysis of variance is a more robust measure (Norusis 1992: 167). The only two assumptions associated with analysis of variance are: (1) each of the groups is an independent random sample from the normal population, and (2) in the population, the variances of the groups are equal (Norusis 1992: 238).⁴⁵

Multiple regression is used, however, to: (1) assess the relative power of each group/variable as a predictor of political influence, and (2) control for the effect of other variables.

⁴⁴ A third method, correlation, is also used on appropriate variables.

⁴⁵ The Levene test for homogeneity of variance was significant only for income for the mobilization index.

Chapter 6: Results⁴⁶

The research question I address in this thesis is:

Which is more strongly associated with political influence in Lethbridge: (a) class, education, occupation, income, gender, and ethnicity, or (b) membership in locally-defined Lethbridge groups identified through ethnography?

This chapter reports the results of the hypotheses I tested in my attempt to answer this question. The chapter is organized into three sections: results related to the social inequality hypotheses, results related to the Lethbridge groups, and a comparison of the relative merit of social inequality variables and Lethbridge groups for predicting who has political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making. As discussed in Chapter Five, political influence was assessed by three indexes: community influence, civic influence, and mobilization.⁴⁷ For all indexes, higher scores are indicative of larger amounts of political influence.

As discussed in earlier chapters, power is a complex concept. Even political influence—the specific form of power that was measured in this research—is a complex concept, as evidenced by the fact that the independent variables had inconsistent relationships to the various measured forms of political influence. For example, *Lethbridgian* has a significant relationship with community and civic influence, but not with mobilization.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY HYPOTHESES

SOCIAL CLASS.

In the social inequality literature it is suggested that social class is either a good predictor *or* a good indicator of power.⁴⁸ Large employers (bourgeoisie) and managers are

⁴⁶ The results presented in this chapter are those directly related to the hypotheses stated in Chapter Five. Considerably more data was collected, which are not reported here.

⁴⁷ Activism, the fourth index, was not used in hypothesis testing due to conceptual and statistical concerns associated with the index. For a discussion of the problems associated with this index, see the section on Activism in Chapter Five.

⁴⁸ For a discussion of whether class is a predictor or indicator of social influence, please see Chapter Three.

expected to have more political influence than the lower-level classes. The exact prediction is:

- bourgeoisie > small employer > petty bourgeoisie
- manager > advisory manager > supervisor > semi-autonomous employee > worker
- bourgeoisie > advisory manager > supervisor > semi-autonomous employee > worker.

Due to the small sample size, the variance among the political influence index scores within each class was expected to be large relative to the variance across classes. The only difference in means expected to be statistically significant, therefore, was between the lowest and highest classes (e.g. bourgeoisie and worker, manager and worker).

The results, presented in Table 6.1, suggest that higher social classes do not have more political influence in Lethbridge than do lower social classes.⁴⁹ The direction of the means are—for the most part—as expected, but the differences in means are not statistically significant. The bourgeoisie class—which by hypothesis should have the highest amount of political influence—has too few cases for valid statistical comparison. Small employers are expected to have more political influence than the petty bourgeoisie, which is indeed the case for civic influence and mobilization, but not for community influence. Managers have more community influence than advisory managers, supervisors and semiautonomous employees, who in turn have more community influence than workers, and managers can also mobilize more people than advisory managers, supervisors, and workers (but not more than semiautonomous employees). Conversely, advisory managers, supervisors, and semiautonomous employees have equal or more civic influence than do managers. One pattern that *is* consistent across all forms of political influence is that managers have more community and civic influence, and can mobilize more people, than workers. Despite these patterns, however, none of the differences in means are statistically significant; the F ratio for both community and civic influence was 1.0, and for mobilization was 1.1, with 8 degrees of freedom. What this means is that although there are small differences in the sample among

⁴⁹ To ensure the findings were not affected by the small number of bourgeoisie and supervisor cases (N<10), separate analysis of variance was conducted excluding these cases. The results of this analysis were not substantial difference from those reported in Table 6.1.

classes regarding their amount of political influence, these differences are not distinct enough that they can be generalized to the Lethbridge population (i.e., the differences could be due to sampling bias). The hypothesized relationship between class and political influence is therefore not supported.

Table 6.1: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by social class

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bourgeoisie | M=1.0 SD=.0 N=2 | M=2.0 SD=.0 N=2 | M=2.7 SD=.0 N=2 |
| Small employer | M=1.9 SD=1.1 N=20 | M=2.5 SD=1.0 N=20 | M=3.4 SD=1.3 N=19 |
| Petty bourgeoisie | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=15 | M=2.2 SD=1.0 N=15 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=15 |
| Manager | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=25 | M=2.2 SD=1.4 N=26 | M=3.5 SD=.9 N=24 |
| Advisory manager | M=2.1 SD=1.4 N=13 | M=2.2 SD=.9 N=13 | M=3.4 SD=.6 N=13 |
| Supervisor | M=2.0 SD=2.8 N=2 | M=2.5 SD=.7 N=2 | M=3.0 SD=0 N=1 |
| Semiautonomous employee | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=62 | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=63 | M=3.5 SD=1.1 N=55 |
| Worker | M=1.8 SD=1.3 N=61 | M=2.0 SD=1.1 N=61 | M=2.0 SD=1.4 N=61 |
| Unclassifiable cases | M=1.7 SD=1.4 N=36 | M=2.1 SD=1.0 N=36 | M=2.9 SD=1.0 N=28 |
| F ratio (df=8) | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| F ratios are not significant | | | |

The results for social class are consistent with my ethnographic observations. The people who are most influential over Lethbridge community decision-making do not appear

to be from a higher social class, in the sense that social class is used in the Canadian social inequality literature.

INCOME

The results for income are presented in Table 6.2. In the social inequality literature it is suggested that income is a good predictor *or* indicator of power. We should therefore expect a positive correlation between levels of income and amount of political influence. Such a relationship was not found for community or civic influence: the Pearson correlation coefficients were very small--0.05 and 0.07, respectively--neither of which are significant. The mean scores for community influence fluctuate between 1.8 and 2.2 without any apparent

Table 6.2: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by annual household income

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| \$0 to \$14,999 | M=1.8 SD=1.2 N=25 | M=1.9 SD=1.0 N=25 | M=3.4 SD=1.4 N=23 |
| \$15,000 to \$24,999 | M=1.7 SD=1.3 N=24 | M=2.1 SD=1.3 N=24 | M=2.8 SD=0.7 N=20 |
| \$25,000 to \$44,999 | M=2.0 SD=1.4 N=65 | M=2.3 SD=1.0 N=65 | M=3.3 SD=0.8 N=55 |
| \$45,000 to \$64,999 | M=2.2 SD=1.2 N=50 | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=51 | M=3.2 SD=0.9 N=50 |
| \$65,000 to \$84,999 | M=1.8 SD=1.1 N=28 | M=2.3 SD=1.1 N=29 | M=3.1 SD=0.7 N=26 |
| \$85,000 or over | M=2.1 SD=1.4 N=32 | M=2.3 SD=1.1 N=32 | M=3.7 SD=1.2 N=31 |
| F ratio (df=5) | .8 | .7 | 2.6* |
| Pearson's Correlation | r=.05 p=.22 N=224 | r=.07 p=.16 N=226 | r=.12* p=.04 N=205 |

* $p < 0.05$ level (one tailed for Pearson's correlation)

^a Pearson correlation coefficients calculated using the midpoint for each income category. The midpoint used for the \$85,000 and over category was \$104,999.

pattern, and while respondents with the lowest incomes (\$0 to \$24,999) had lower amounts of civic influence than those with higher incomes, the amount of civic influence had by each of these higher income groups was almost identical.

Whether the respondents' ability to mobilize others differ by her level of income is difficult to interpret. While both the Pearson's correlation coefficient and the F ratio indicate that there is a significant relationship between respondents' income and her ability to mobilize others ($r=.12$, $p<.05$; F ratio=2.6, $p<.05$), and the Bonferroni post-hoc test shows that the respondents with the highest income (\$85,000 and over) have more ability to mobilize others than a lower income group (\$15,000 to \$24,999), the expected pattern of declining means does not exist. In fact, people in the lowest income group have the second greatest ability (after those who have an income of \$85,000 or over) to mobilize others! The ability of respondents from the middle income groups to mobilize others has no particular pattern. The only explanation as to why the Pearson correlation coefficient was significant is that the positive correlation between ability to mobilize others and income for those earning \$15,000 to \$24,999 and \$85,000 and over was strong enough to affect a positive correlation for the entire equation. The statistically significant relationship withstanding, ability to mobilize others does *not* appear to be related to income in the way hypothesized in the social inequality literature.⁵⁰ The relationship between income and political influence is therefore not supported by any of the three indexes.

Like with social class, the results for income were not surprising. There is very little display of wealth in Lethbridge, as being wealthy is somehow not appreciated. This probably has to do with the lack of success people who "fit in" to Lethbridge have had at becoming financially successful. Many of the original settlers were lured to the West by unrealistic promises of wealth. Unfortunately for most, these riches never materialized. Those who moved to Lethbridge more recently did not do so to become rich, but because they wanted to

⁵⁰ It is possible that only the highest income groups have increasingly higher amounts of political influence, and that there is no pattern among people who are middle to low income earners. To test this alternative hypothesis, I examined finer income gradations than those presented in Table 6.2 to see if the largest income groups (\$85,000-\$94,999, \$95,000-114,999 and \$15,000 and over) did indeed have increasing amounts of political influence. Ironically, I found the relationship between income and mobilization was weaker when analyzed this way.

live in a small city, to be close to their relatives, or to take up a job in the university or agricultural research station. In fact, level of income seems to be a sore spot among many of the Lethbridge elite. It therefore follows that income would not be used as an important status characteristic among the Lethbridge decision-makers.

EDUCATION

Level of education is frequently cited in the social inequality literature as a good predictor of social inequality (Boyd and Grieco 1998; Porter 1965); people with higher levels of education are expected to obtain "high status" occupational positions such as engineer, university professor, doctor, or lawyer (as opposed to waitress, office clerk, or carpenter) (for example, see Manley 1995). It is therefore expected that those with higher levels of education will have more political influence. The exact prediction for relative amounts of political influence is:

- graduate or professional degree > undergraduate degree > some college or university > trade certificate > less than a trade certificate.

Due to the small number of cases being analyzed, the differences between each level of education may not be significant. If the hypothesis is correct, however, one would expect that the difference between political influence score means for the lowest and highest levels of education would be significant.

From my ethnographic research I had developed a counter expectation; I expected respondents with a trade, business, technical, vocational or other non-university certificate or diploma (referred to after this as *trade certificate*) to have *at least* as high a level of political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making as people with a university degree(s). This is for two reasons: (1) I frequently heard people refer to local trade and business people as the backbone of the Lethbridge economy and important members of the community, and; (2) education and intellectual accomplishments seem to be viewed as a threat by the majority of Lethbridge residents--in fact, many people are openly anti-intellectual, and refer to academics as "eggheads in their white towers."

The education data was examined using two different analytical techniques: ANOVA and Pearson's correlation. Level of education was converted to the approximate number of years required to complete that level of education so that the correlation coefficients could be computed. The results are presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by level of education

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Less than a trade certificate ¹ | M=1.6 ^a SD=1.3 N=107 | M=2.1 SD=1.1 N=108 | M=3.3 SD=1.2 N=94 |
| Trade certificate | M=2.4 ^a SD=1.2 N=39 | M=2.5 SD=1.0 N=40 | M=3.3 SD=0.8 N=37 |
| Some college or university | M=2.0 SD=1.5 N=34 | M=2.0 SD=1.2 N=34 | M=3.0 SD=0.9 N=34 |
| University with undergraduate degree | M=2.2 SD=1.1 N=33 | M=2.3 SD=1.0 N=33 | M=3.2 SD=0.8 N=31 |
| Graduate degree | M=2.3 SD=1.2 N=21 | M=2.4 SD=1.0 N=21 | M=3.3 SD=0.9 N=18 |
| F ratio (df=4) | 3.4** | 1.6 | .7 |
| Pearson's Correlation ^a | r=.16** p=.01 N=234 | r=.07 p=.16 N=236 | r=-.03 p=.33 N=214 |

¹ Less than a trade certificate includes respondents who have had some elementary or high school, have completed high school, and/or have attended some trade, business, technical, vocational, or other non-university credit courses (but have not completed a certificate or diploma by taking these courses).

^a p < 0.05 between *less than a trade certificate* and *trade certificate* (Scheffe).

* p<.05 (One-tailed for Pearson correlation coefficients)

** p < 0.01 (One-tailed for Pearson correlation coefficients)

^a Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated by first converting the level of education to the estimated number of years required to complete this level of education, then converting the amount of years to midpoints for levels of education that could have required a range of years, such as with less than a trade certificate, and some college or university. The estimated years used were as follows:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Less than a trade certificate | 11 years |
| Trade certificate | 13 years |
| Some college or university | 13.5 years |
| University with an undergraduate degree | 16 years |
| Graduate or professional degree | 21 years |

There is a positive but weak relationship between level of education and political influence for both community and civic influence. This relationship is statistically significant for community influence only (F ratio=3.4, $p<.01$; $r=.16$, $p=.01$). Despite the positive correlation, respondents with a trade certificate have the highest amounts of community and civic influence compared to all other levels of education. In fact, excluding respondents with a trade certificate from analysis strengthens the positive correlation between level of education and community influence ($r=.19$, $p=.004$). This suggests that two different effects are occurring: (1) higher levels of education are associated with more community influence, and; (2) trade certificates trump all other forms of education in regards to amount of community influence. In other words, the community influence results support *both* the social inequality theorists' and the Lethbridge groups' hypotheses. In contrast, the civic influence results support only the Lethbridge group hypothesis.

The respondents' ability to mobilize others does not appear to have any relationship to their level of education; mobilization scores for each level of education are almost identical.⁵¹

The two effects observed within the community influence results—the apparent relative importance of people with higher levels of education *or* a trade certificate—were unexpected but interesting. I would speculate that two disparate reasons caused these effects: (1) as discussed above, respondents with a trade, business or technical certificate are generally part of the small business force within Lethbridge, which is treated with high esteem by those who “fit in” to Lethbridge; (2) respondents with higher degrees, such as a bachelor, Master's or doctorate, have spent years in school working on their own self-development. Consequently, they have developed more self confidence and self assurance in their own importance than they had before, and in comparison to others. The ability to influence others has as much to do with one's own belief that they *can* influence others (and therefore try to do so) as it has to do with others supporting their desires. The people with higher levels of education may be more likely to try to influence others due to their own feelings of self-confidence.

My speculation as to why people with higher levels of education have more community influence than those with lower levels is quite different to that suggested in the social

⁵¹ The one exception is that respondents with some college or university have less ability to mobilize others than do other respondents. Some of these respondents are likely to be former University of Lethbridge students who decided to remain in Lethbridge, but who have not had much time to develop communities ties.

inequality literature. I did not have the foresight to include a measure which could test the validity of my suggested reason and that suggested in the social inequality literature, so it is impossible to tell which is more valid. The results do show (much to my surprise), however, that the relationship predicted to exist by Canadian social inequality researchers between level of education and community influence is supported.

GENDER

Gender is often referred to in the social inequality literature as one of the most powerful social differentiations that exists among humans (for example, see Brym with Fox 1989). The results for the Lethbridge data set indicate, however, that differences in amount of political influence between men and women are minimal (Table 6.4). The hypothesis that women have less political influence than men must therefore be rejected.

Table 6.4: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by gender

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Male | M=2.0 SD=1.4 N=113 | M=2.3 SD=1.0 N=115 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=102 |
| Female | M=1.9 SD=1.2 N=122 | M=2.1 SD=1.1 N=122 | M=3.2 SD=1.0 N=113 |
| F ratio (df=1) | .0 | 1.4 | .4 |
| F ratios were not statistically significant | | | |

This conclusion would seem to confirm that sexism does *not* exist in Lethbridge. I have, however, witnessed and experienced discrimination in Lethbridge based on my gender and would hate to suggest that people in Lethbridge do not use gender as a status characteristic. I believe the lack of support for this hypothesis arises because the relationship between gender and social inequality is more complex than typically discussed. For example, my ethnographic data suggests that many people in Lethbridge--men and women alike--feel women should stay at home and raise children, volunteer their time to local charitable organizations, or hold low-status jobs such as store clerk or hair dresser. Ironically, the

women who fulfill these “sexist” expectations are often treated with more respect by many Lethbridgians than are professional women.⁵² The women who challenge the status quo—those who attempt to break out of these sexist stereotypes—seem to have less influence in the Lethbridge community than other women.⁵³

Using General Linear Modeling, I conducted exploratory analysis to see if there was an interaction effect between the combination of the respondents’ gender and whether she felt people in Lethbridge are sexist, and the amount of political influence she has (see Figure 6.1).

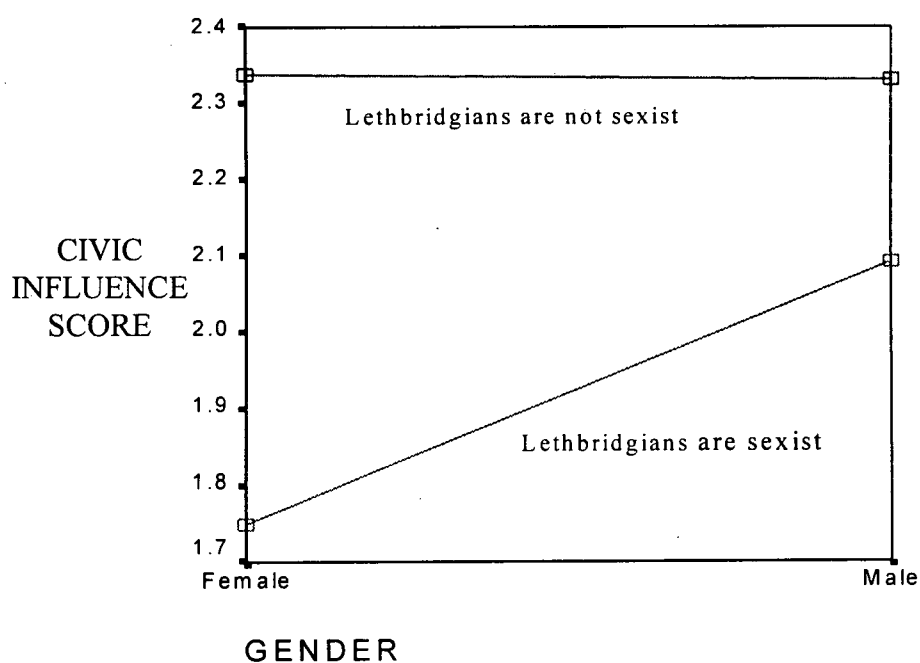


Figure 6.1: Interaction effect of gender and assessment of whether others are sexist on civic influence

The results show that men and women who feel people in Lethbridge are *not* sexist have equally high amounts of civic influence. Men who think others in Lethbridge are sexist (men who support Feminists) have the next highest amount of civic influence. Women who

⁵² The one apparent exception to this is women who own or manage small retail businesses, who are often regarded with respect by fellow Lethbridgians.

think others in Lethbridge are sexist ("uppity Feminists") have the lowest amount of civic influence. Analysis of variance shows that the relationship is significant (F ratio=3.3, $p<.05$). Scheffe post-hoc tests show that all differences in means are significant. The results support the idea that people use multiple criteria for assessing others (presented in Chapter Three); that gender *is* important as an assessment criteria or status characteristic, but only when combined with other criteria.

ETHNICITY

One of John Porter's key arguments in The Vertical Mosaic (1965) was that ethnicity dictates the amount of status and power an individual can have in Canadian society. British-born Canadians were said to be at the top of the social hierarchy and First Nations at the bottom. The order of the hierarchy has been challenged in recent years (see Brym with Fox 1989: 104-5), but there is a continuing belief that a hierarchy does exist. The hypothesis consistent with this perspective, based on Robert Brym's synthesis of more recent work (with Fox 1989:105), is that the following ethnic groups will have progressively lower amounts of political influence:⁵⁴

- British and Northern European
- Southern and Eastern European
- Middle Eastern and Asian
- First Nations.

Analysis of variance results for ethnicity are reported in Table 6.5. Ethnicity is reported for single responses only; respondents who identified themselves as being of mixed heritage were included in the mixed or missing classification. This is unfortunate, as it excludes

⁵³ This is consistent with Margaret Eichler's findings (1976). Eichler found that the prestige of housework ranked above average, even compared to other occupations typically held by women who were in the paid labour force (Brym with Fox 1989: 127).

⁵⁴ Ideally, this list would be composed of individual nationalities instead of regional groupings. Two issues prevented this. The first was that a large proportion of respondents reported multiple ethnic backgrounds (e.g. English and Scottish). The proportion of multiple responses was reduced by combining all national origin into regions. The second problem was that even with multiple response options there were fewer than five cases for most ethnic groups, thus preventing valid statistical analysis by national origin.

37.4% of the sample. There was no other valid way, however, to statistically compare means for ethnicity.

Table 6.5: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by ethnicity (single response only)

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| British | M=2.0 SD=1.4 N=69 | M=2.3 SD=1.1 N=70 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=65 |
| Native American | M=2.5 SD=0.7 N=2 | M=1.5 SD=0.7 N=2 | M=3.8 SD=0.2 N=2 |
| Northern European | M=1.9 SD=1.3 N=40 | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=40 | M=3.3 SD=1.2 N=35 |
| Southern European | M=2.4 SD=1.3 N=5 | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=6 | M=3.0 SD=0.4 N=5 |
| Eastern European | M=1.6 SD=1.5 N=24 | M=2.1 SD=0.8 N=24 | M=3.1 SD=1.0 N=19 |
| Middle Eastern and Asian | M=1.9 SD=0.4 N=7 | M=2.1 SD=0.7 N=7 | M=3.0 SD=0.8 N=7 |
| Mixed or missing | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=89 | M=2.3 SD=1.1 N=89 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=82 |
| F ratio (df=6) | .6 | .6 | .5 |
| F ratios are not statistically significant | | | |

The social inequality hypothesis related to ethnicity is not supported. It was expected that people of British and Northern European heritage would have the highest amount of political influence. This, however, was not the case for any measured form of influence. Similarly, the expectations related to the other ethnic groups were not born out by the relative sizes of the political influence index means.⁵⁵ None of the differences in means for any of

⁵⁵ There are some tendencies, however. For example, the respondents of British heritage consistently ranked within the top three ethnic groups as having the highest amount of community and civic influence and ability to mobilize others, while the Eastern Europeans never ranked above third.

the three index scores are statistically significant. The results show that the respondents' ethnic background does not appear to be related to the amount of political influence he has.

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY VARIABLES

Linear regression was used to assess whether the relationships between each the social inequality variables and the political influence indexes differed from the ANOVA and correlation results when other social inequality variables were controlled for.

The model analyzed included the variables social class, income, educational attainment, gender and ethnicity. Where necessary, transformations were made to the data. Class was transformed into three dummy variables: petty bourgeoisie, manager, and worker, each of which corresponded to one of the correspondingly-titled classes identified through Wright's typology. Income categories were transformed into nominal income levels by designating the midpoint of each income category as the respondents' level of income. Education was converted into number of years of education, which was approximated by identifying the number of years associated with that level of education (e.g. grade twelve = twelve years), and for education levels that potentially spanned several years (e.g. some college or university), the midpoint was used.⁵⁶ Ethnicity was grouped by whether or not the respondent were of British heritage or not.

Three different regression equations were run for each of the political influence index. The first equation included only the three social class dummy variables; I wanted to show the results of regressing the social class variables on the political influence data before controlling for any of the other social inequality variables because social class plays such a prominent role in the Canadian social inequality literature. The second equation included the "achieved" characteristics of income and education to the social class variables. The third

⁵⁶ Less than a trade certificate was calculated somewhat differently, due to the large potential range of years associated with this broad "level" of education. The designated midpoint was 11, which was a weighted value based on the proportion of people in this category who had *not* completed high school (approximately 30%). I assumed that most people had completed up to grade six (i.e. 6 years of education). The highest number of years possible (13) were those who had completed up to a year of trade courses (but had not received a certificate). The difference in possible years of education for this category is 7. Multiplying 7 by 70% (the percent with a high school degree), comes to 5 years; 6th grade + 5 years is 11 grade (11 years).

equation added the “ascribed” characteristics of gender and ethnicity to the other five previously included variables.

Table 6.6 presents the regression results for the social inequality model for predicting community influence. The social class regression slopes are in the directions expected in all three equations: worker is negative, and manager, petty bourgeoisie are positive. None of the three class variables are significantly correlated to community influence, however, in any

Table 6.6: Regression Coefficients for Social Inequality Model Predicting Community Influence (N=224)

| | Equation 1 | Equation 2 | Equation 3 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Social class: ^a | | | |
| Worker | -.06 (-.02) | -.01 (-.00) | -.01 (-.00) |
| Manager | .44 (.11) | .32 (.08) | .32 (.08) |
| Petty bourgeoisie | .44 (.08) | .46 (.09) | .48 (.09) |
| Income ^b | --- | -.00 (-.03) | -.00 (-.04) |
| Education ^c | --- | .06 (.17)** | .06 (.17)** |
| Gender ^d | --- | --- | .04 (.02) |
| Ethnicity ^e | --- | --- | -.13 (-.05) |
| R² | .02 | .04** | .05 |
| Adjusted R² | .01 | .02** | .02 |
| ^a Dummy variable coding for social class variables: Worker: 1=worker, 0=other Manager: 1=manager, 0=other Petty bourgeoisie: 1=petty bourgeoisie, 0=other ^b Income midpoints used were: \$7499.50, 19,999.50, 34,999.50, 54,999.50, 74,999.50 and 104,999.50 ^c Education (approximated years of education): 11 (less than a trade certificate) 13 (trade/business certificate) 13.5 (some college/university) 16 (university undergraduate degree) 21 (university graduate or professional degree) ^d Gender: 1=male, 0= female ^e Ethnicity: 1=has British heritage, 0=other --- Variable not included in equation * p<.05 (one-tailed) ** p<.01 (one-tailed) B: Unstandardized beta coefficients are followed by beta coefficients in parentheses. | | | |

equation. In other words, regardless of whether income, education, gender and ethnicity are controlled for, a person's social class does not appear to affect the amount of community influence he has. The slope for all other variables are also in the directions expected, except for income, which is slightly negative (when expected to be positive). The only slope which is statistically significant is that of education.

Overall, the results presented in Table 6.6 suggest that--when controlling for social class, income, gender, and ethnicity--people with more education have more community influence in Lethbridge. Conversely, people of a higher social class, with higher incomes, men, and people of British heritage do not appear to have more community influence than people of lower classes, lower incomes, women, or people who are not of British heritage. These results are consistent with the community influence ANOVA results presented in Tables 6.1 through 6.5. Thus, the only Canadian social inequality hypothesis that was supported was that level of education is positively associated with the amount of community influence a person has in Lethbridge.

The R^2 or variance is very low for all three equations; the model explains only 5% of the variance in respondent's amount of community influence.

There are a few differences between the results for community influence and civic influence (presented in Table 6.7) in regards to the social inequality model. As predicted, worker is negatively associated with civic influence. Counter to expectation, however, manager and petty bourgeoisie also have negative regression slopes. In addition, whereas the regression coefficients for the latter two variables are very small, and not statistically significant (like with the community influence regression results), the slope for worker *is* significant. In fact, the regression slope for worker remains statistically significant across all three equations. The regression results therefore support the social inequality hypothesis that workers have less civic influence than people from other social classes.

The income, education, gender and ethnicity regression coefficients, on the other hand, are small and not statistically significant in the equations they are entered. Amount of income, level of education, gender and ethnicity (whether or not the person is of British heritage) do not appear to affect how much civic influence a person has in Lethbridge, even

when controlling for other social inequality variables. Once again, the R^2 is really small; the social inequality variables explain only 4% of the variability in civic influence scores.

Table 6.7: Regression Coefficients for Social Inequality Model Predicting Civic Influence (N=226)

| | Equation 1 | Equation 2 | Equation 3 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Social class:^a | | | |
| Worker | - .44 (-.17)** | - .41 (-.17)** | - .43 (-.17)** |
| Manager | - .17 (-.05) | - .24 (-.07) | - .23 (-.07) |
| Petty bourgeoisie | - .01 (-.02) | - .05 (-.01) | - .03 (-.01) |
| Income^b | --- | .00 (.05) | .00 (.04) |
| Education^c | --- | .02 (.06) | .02 (.06) |
| Gender^d | --- | --- | -.03 (-.02) |
| Ethnicity^e | --- | --- | -.10 (-.05) |
| R² | .03 | .04 | .04 |
| Adjusted R² | .02 | .01 | .01 |
| ^a Dummy variable coding for social class variables: Worker: 1=worker, 0=other Manager: 1=manager, 0=other Petty bourgeoisie: 1=petty bourgeoisie, 0=other ^b Income midpoints used were: \$7499.50, 19,999.50, 34,999.50, 54,999.50, 74,999.50 and 104,999.50 ^c Education (approximated years of education): 11 (less than a trade certificate) 13 (trade/business certificate) 13.5 (some college/university) 16 (university undergraduate degree) 21 (university graduate or professional degree) ^d Gender: 1=male, 0= female ^e Ethnicity: 1=has British heritage, 0=other --- Variable not included in equation * p<.05 (one-tailed) ** p<.01 (one-tailed) B: Unstandardized beta coefficients are followed by beta coefficients in parentheses. | | | |

The regression results for the social inequality model, predicting the number of people a Lethbridge resident can mobilize, are presented in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: Regression Coefficients for Social Inequality Model Predicting Mobilization (N=205)

| | Equation 1 | Equation 2 | Equation 3 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Social class: ^a | | | |
| Worker | -.17 (-.08) | -.17 (-.08) | -.18 (-.08) |
| Manager | .20 (.07) | .19 (.06) | .19 (.06) |
| Petty bourgeoisie | .03 (.01) | -.06 (-.02) | -.04 (-.01) |
| Income ^b | --- | .00 (.12) | .00 (.12) |
| Education ^c | --- | -.02 (-.07) | -.02 (-.08) |
| Gender ^d | --- | --- | -.01 (-.01) |
| Ethnicity ^e | --- | --- | -.10 (-.05) |
| R² | .01 | .03 | .03 |
| Adjusted R² | -.00 | .00 | -.00 |
| ^a Dummy variable coding for social class variables: Worker: 1=worker, 0=other Manager: 1=manager, 0=other Petty bourgeoisie: 1=petty bourgeoisie, 0=other ^b Income midpoints used were: \$7499.50, 19,999.50, 34,999.50, 54,999.50, 74,999.50 and 104,999.50 ^c Education (approximated years of education): 11 (less than a trade certificate) 13 (trade/business certificate) 13.5 (some college/university) 16 (university undergraduate degree) 21 (university graduate or professional degree) ^d Gender: 1=male, 0= female ^e Ethnicity: 1=has British heritage, 0=other --- Variable not included in equation * p<.05 (one-tailed) ** p<.01 (one-tailed) B: Unstandardized beta coefficients are followed by beta coefficients in parentheses. | | | |

The social inequality variables explain very little of the differences between respondents regarding their abilities to mobilize others. As expected, the regression slope for worker is negative, and for manager and petty bourgeoisie are positive, but the regression coefficients are very small and not statistically significant. This is consistent across all three equations. Income, education, gender, and ethnicity also have very small regression coefficients, and the slopes for these variables are not statistically significant. In other words, when controlling for the other social inequality variables, social class, level of income, level

of education, gender and ethnicity do not appear to affect the number of people a respondent can mobilize. The R^2 is also very small; social class, income, education, gender and ethnicity only explain 3% of the variability in the respondent's ability to mobilize others.

Overall, the multivariate regression results are consistent with the bivariate analysis of variance and correlation results. The only big change that arose is that the worker class has a significant relationship to community influence. Of all the classes, this is the one class I have no difficulty in believing has less community influence than others. There is a segment of the Lethbridge population that I have only had contact with when visiting the back rooms of shops and small processing companies who I have never seen participating in public affairs. I am not sure what distinguishes these people from others (other than their social class), but when I think back on my encounters with them, there was something different about them compared to others in Lethbridge. Further ethnographic study may show that these people are distinguished from other Lethbridge residents in ways additional to that of their position within the occupational hierarchy.

LETHBRIDGE GROUP HYPOTHESES

FITS IN OR DOES NOT FIT IN TO LETHBRIDGE

The main distinction people make amongst themselves in Lethbridge is whether or not a person "fits in" or "does not fit in" to Lethbridge. The distinction can be made about oneself or others. More consensus exists over the membership criteria associated with "fitting in" than not. What those who do not "fit in" have in common is almost exclusively that—they *do not* share the pertinent characteristics associated with "fitting in."

As discussed in Chapter Three, fuzzy boundaries exist around each group. People who do not clearly match the criteria of either group may, in some social contexts, be perceived as someone who "fits in," while in other contexts is perceived as someone who does not "fit in." I therefore identified a third group of people, who neither "fit in" nor do not "fit in", which I refer to as "not clearly in either."

My expectation for the comparative size of the means for each group is:

- fit in > not clearly in either > do not fit in.

The results suggest that people who fit in to Lethbridge do indeed have more community and civic influence in Lethbridge than those who do not (Table 6.9). The comparative size of the means for community and civic influence by each of the three groups are consistent with my hypothesis. People who fit in have the highest amount of community and civic influence (2.4 and 2.5, respectively), those who do not clearly fit in either group have the second highest amount (2.0 and 2.2, respectively), and those who do not fit in have the lowest amount (1.3 and 1.7, respectively). Post hoc Sheffe and Bonferroni tests show that the difference in means between those who “fit in” and those who do not is significant for both community and civic influence. The difference in means between those who “do not fit in” and those who are “not clearly in either” are significant for community influence.

Table 6.9: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by fits in/does not fit in to Lethbridge

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Fits in to Lethbridge | M=2.4 ^a SD=1.3 N=44 | M=2.5 ^b SD=1.1 N=45 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=149 |
| Does not fit in to Lethbridge | M=1.3 ^{a, b} SD=1.4 N=31 | M=1.7 ^b SD=1.3 N=31 | M=3.4 SD=1.0 N=37 |
| Not clearly in either | M=2.0 ^b SD=1.2 N=161 | M=2.2 SD=1.0 N=162 | M=3.1 SD=0.9 N=29 |
| F ratio (df=2) | 6.4** | 5.5** | .5 |
| ^a p < .05 (Sheffe and Bonferroni) ^b p < .01 (Sheffe and Bonferroni) * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 | | | |

The results for the mobilization index suggest that respondents who fit in to Lethbridge do *not* have a better ability to mobilize others than those who are not clearly in either or those who do not fit in. While the mobilization means are in the expected direction for the three groups, the difference between the means is small and not statistically significant. This is an

interesting result, because it suggests that people who do not fit in are equally connected within social networks, even though these networks may not be associated with city hall or the Lethbridge elite.

I attempted to assess whether or not respondents consider *themselves* to be someone who "fits in" or does not "fit in" to Lethbridge. The terms which are sometimes used to connote such meaning are "Lethbridgian" (for "fitting in") and "Newcomer", "Temporary resident", and "not from here" (for not "fitting in"). Respondents were asked whether or not they would categorize themselves using any of these terms.

The hypotheses were that: (1) people who consider themselves to be Lethbridgians would have more political influence than non-Lethbridgians, and (2) people who consider themselves to be Newcomers (including those who consider themselves to be temporary residents and people who are not from Lethbridge) would have less political influence than non-Newcomers. The hypotheses are consistent with the other "fits in"/ does not "fit in" hypotheses.

The results, presented in Table 6.10, received mixed levels of support. People who consider themselves to be Lethbridgians *do* have more community and civic influence than Lethbridge residents, but no better ability to mobilize others; the Lethbridgian's civic and community influence means are larger than the non-Lethbridgian's means, as expected, and the differences in means are statistically significant, but their mobilization score mean is identical to that of the non-Lethbridgian. The hypothesis that Newcomers have less political influence than non-Newcomers is not supported; there is either no or minimal (0.1) difference between means for all three of the political influence indexes, and analysis of variance shows that the small differences in means that do exist are likely due entirely to chance variation within the sample.

The results were not entirely surprising. I would have been surprised if the "Lethbridgian" hypotheses were not supported, because there seems to be a definite association between the word "Lethbridgian" and people who are content living in Lethbridge. Conversely, I talked with many people who did *not* appreciate being referred to as a "Lethbridgian", and made a point of saying so. The term "Newcomer" (and "temporary resident, or "not from here") does not have the same currency in Lethbridge; while some

people referred to themselves as newcomers, others simply said they did not fit in, or had their own way of describing their relationship to the city.

Table 6.10: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by self-identification as Lethbridgian or Newcomer

| | | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lethbridgian | Yes | M=2.1 SD=1.2 N=107 | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=108 | M=3.3 SD=0.9 N=101 |
| | No | M=1.8 SD=1.3 N=129 | M=2.0 SD=1.1 N=130 | M=3.3 SD=1.1 N=114 |
| | F ratio (df=1) | 3.9* | 7.7** | .0 |
| Newcomer ¹ | Yes | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=72 | M=2.1 SD=1.1 N=72 | M=3.3 SD=1.1 N=69 |
| | No | M=1.9 SD=1.3 N=164 | M=2.2 SD=1.1 N=166 | M=3.3 SD=1.1 N=69 |
| | F ratio (df=1) | .1 | .4 | .1 |

¹ Newcomer includes respondents who self-identified as a newcomer, temporary resident, or a self-identified others from outside Lethbridge.
 * p < 0.05
 ** p < 0.01

OLD-TIMER/NATIVE OF LETHBRIDGE

The terms “old-timer” and “native of Lethbridge” are (or were) commonly used labels for demarcating various Lethbridge residents. “Old-timer” was used in the early history of Lethbridge to refer to people whose families had lived in Lethbridge for a notable length of time. It has since fallen out of use, but the term “native of Lethbridge” seems to have taken it’s place. People *not* native to Lethbridge seem to be considered inferior citizens than those who are. I expected, therefore, that respondents’ whose families had been in Lethbridge for a considerable length of time to have more political influence than recent arrivals. Respondents’ families who had moved into the area by or before 1960 were classified as old-timers for the purpose of data analysis.

Means and analysis of variance results for old-timer by the three political influence indexes are presented in Table 6.11. It does not appear that people who have been in Lethbridge for a considerable length of time have any more political influence than the more newly-arrived residents; the means for each political influence index are almost identical, and the differences that do exist between the means are not statistically significant.

The old-timer result is interesting. Length of residence *used* to be very important during the early development of Lethbridge—as evidenced by the existence of the Old-Timer's Club and their annual ball—but the current “native to Lethbridge” distinction may be exclusively rhetorical. For example, perhaps the term “native of Lethbridge” has no particular meaning except to indicate that a speaker considers the individual in question to have the right to speak their opinion about Lethbridge or act in a particular way. Alternatively, it is possible that being a “native” is treated with higher status in only a few specific social contexts, such as when the person is running for city council. Further ethnographic study is needed to sort out the nuances of when and where “native of Lethbridge” is used, and the implications of its usage.

Table 6.11: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by whether or not the respondent is an old-timer (or native of Lethbridge)

| | | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Old-timer ¹ | Yes | M=1.8 SD=1.3 N=92 | M=2.2 SD=1.0 N=93 | M=3.3 SD=1.1 N=81 |
| | No | M=2.0 SD=1.3 N=141 | M=2.2 SD=1.2 N=142 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=131 |
| F ratio (df=1) | | 1.4 | .7 | .1 |
| * p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 ¹ An old-timer is a respondent who themselves or another member of their family has lived in Lethbridge since 1960 or earlier. | | | | |

NORTH-SIDER, SOUTH-SIDER, OR WEST-SIDER

While the distinction over which side of town you live in (i.e., the North, South or West side of Lethbridge) has weakened considerably since the development of the West side, there are still some people who believe North-siders are treated poorly compared to South and West siders. The relative amounts of political influence North, South and West siders have was expected to be different. Specifically, I expected:

- South sider > North sider
- West sider > North sider

North, South, and West sider groups were constructed from two variables: the part of the city in which the respondent resides, and whether or not the respondent self-identified as a North, South or West sider. Those who do not consider themselves a North, South or West sider were classified as "other." The results are reported in Table 6.12.

The hypothesis that North, South and West-siders have different amounts of political influence is not supported. Although the direction of the means are consistent with expectation, the relationship between the respondents' geographic residence and their relative amount of political influence is not significant for any of the three indexes.

Table 6.12: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by North sider, South sider or West sider of Lethbridge

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| North-sider | M=1.8 SD=1.5 N=37 | M=2.1 SD=1.1 N=38 | M=3.1 SD=1.0 N=32 |
| South-sider | M=2.0 SD=1.2 N=45 | M=2.2 SD=1.0 N=46 | M=3.2 SD=0.9 N=37 |
| West-sider | M=2.1 SD=1.4 N=30 | M=2.4 SD=1.1 N=30 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=29 |
| Other | M=1.9 SD=1.2 N=124 | M=2.2 SD=1.1 N=124 | M=3.4 SD=1.1 N=117 |
| F ratio (df=3) | .5 | .6 | .7 |
| F ratios are not statistically significant | | | |

As I witnessed North-siders behaving differently than South siders, and heard North-siders comment on how they had lesser amenities than the South and West side, I am surprised by the results of the survey. There are several possibilities for the lack of statistical difference in political influence means by geography of residence, including: (1) the two groups are treated different but not unequal, (2) the tactics used by the North side residents are different and more costly than South and West-side residents (e.g. more complaining), but North-siders are able to affect the same amount of political influence over the city in the end, or (3) the dramatic residential re-shuffling that occurred in the early 1970's substantially reduced the number of people who make the geographic distinction. Whatever the reason, there are *some* people who *believe* they are treated differently because they live on the North side of town.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Religious affiliation seems to be a consistent topic of discussion in Lethbridge. During my exploratory interviews, at least three interviewees informed me that the first question they were asked by co-workers when arriving in Lethbridge regarded church membership; others told me stories about their congregations; others still talked about the power of the "mainstream" churches in Lethbridge, and how Mormons are a "tight-knit, powerful group." Letters to the editor make frequent mention of religious issues, and "news" articles will include information about people's religious convictions. I therefore expected religious affiliation to be a strong predictor of political influence.

I was unsure of the relative amounts of political influence each religious group in Lethbridge would have. At a minimum, I expected Anglicans, Presbyterians, and United Church members (the "main stream" churches) and LDS' to have more political influence than people from other congregations and people who have no strong religious affiliation.

I measured religious affiliation by combining the respondent's religious denomination with whether or not they participated in congregational activities at least once a week. Those who were a member of a congregation and participated in activities more than once a week were counted as having a particular religious affiliation, whereas everyone else was classified

as “no strong affiliation.” The latter category includes people who are not members of a Lethbridge congregation.

Table 6.13: Community influence, civic influence and mobilization of respondents by religious affiliation¹

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Mainstream churches (Anglican, Presbyterian, United) | M=2.7 SD=1.5 N=9 | M=2.8 SD=1.3 N=9 | M=3.3 SD=1.3 N=8 |
| Baptist | M=0.8 SD=0.5 N=4 | M=2.0 SD=1.8 N=4 | M=3.6 SD=2.1 N=3 |
| Mennonite | M=2.0 SD=1.0 N=3 | M=2.0 SD=0.0 N=3 | M=1.0 SD=2.6 N=3 |
| LDS (Mormon) | M=2.5 SD=1.3 N=13 | M=3.2 ^{a, b} SD=0.8 N=13 | M=3.7 SD=1.0 N=13 |
| Reformed | M=2.0 SD=0.8 N=7 | M=1.6 ^b SD=1.3 N=7 | M=3.0 SD=0.9 N=6 |
| Roman Catholic | M=2.1 SD=1.1 N=19 | M=2.3 SD=0.6 N=19 | M=3.2 SD=0.6 N=16 |
| Other² | M=2.5 SD=1.2 N=10 | M=2.0 SD=0.9 N=10 | M=3.3 SD=1.2 N=10 |
| No strong affiliation | M=1.8 SD=1.3 N=171 | M=2.1 ^a SD=1.1 N=173 | M=3.3 SD=1.0 N=156 |
| F ration (df=9) | 1.8 | 2.1* | .6 |
| ^a p < .05 ^b p < .05 * p < 0.05 ¹ To be classified as belong to a particular religious affiliation, the respondent had to belong to a particular religious congregation and participate in congregation activities once a week or more. ² Religious denominations with fewer than 3 cases were categorized as “other.” | | | |

I encountered a significant problem during the data analysis of religious affiliation. Most denominational categories had less than three cases. I combined all denominations with fewer than three cases into an "other" category.⁵⁷

The results from the analysis are presented in Table 6.13. Unfortunately, the small number of cases per cell did not allow for adequate testing of this hypothesis. The LDS', who returned a respectable number of questionnaires, do appear to have more political influence than many of the other religious groups; they have the highest civic and mobilization means, and the second highest community influence mean of all the religious groups. The only difference in means found to be statistically significant was for community influence, between *LDS* and *those with no strong affiliation*. Further discussion of differences among means is not useful as the number of respondents within these categories are too small.

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF LETHBRIDGE GROUP VARIABLES

Linear regression was used to perform multivariate analysis on five of the Lethbridge group variables: "fits in", local trade/business people, area of residence, old-timer, and religious affiliation. Where necessary, transformations were made to the data. Respondents were re-classified as either fitting in or other (the "not clearly in either" and does not "fit in" groups). I created a *local trade/business people* variable by collapsing education into whether or not the respondent has a trade/business/vocational certificate. A dummy variable was also created for area of residence; I believed North siders would be the group who would potentially differ the most from the other two groups, and thus respondents were coded as either *North siders* or *other*. Due to the small number of cases within each religious congregation, I was restricted to a congregation for which I had at least 10 cases. I therefore compared LDS (Mormons) to all other respondents.

⁵⁷ Three cases per cell is an unacceptably small number. Unfortunately, a disproportionately small number of mainstream church members returned my questionnaire. To include the mainstream denominations in my analysis I combined members of the Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches into a "Mainstream Churches" category. Unfortunately, there were still only 9 cases in this category, which is too small from which to make statistical inferences.

Table 6.14: Regression Coefficients for Lethbridge Groups Model Predicting Community Influence, Civic Influence and Mobilization

| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Fits in to Lethbridge ^a | .63 (.19)** | .49 (.18)** | .11 (.04) |
| Local trade/business people ^b | .64 (.18)** | .45 (.15)** | .12 (.04) |
| North sider ^c | -.44 (-.09) | -.24 (-.06) | -.53 (-.14)* |
| Old-timer ^d | -.14 (-.05) | .06 (.03) | .03 (.01) |
| LDS (Mormon) ^e | .84 (.15)* | 1.24 (.26)** | .43 (.10) |
| R² | .09* | .11** | .03 |
| Adjusted R² | .07* | .09** | .01 |
| N | 233 | 235 | 212 |
| ^a Fits in to Lethbridge: 1=fits in, 0=other (<i>not clearly in either and does not fit in</i>) ^b Local trade/business people: 1=local trade/business person, 0=other ^c North sider: 1=North sider, 0=other ^d Old-timer: 1=old-timer, 0=other ^e Religious affiliation—LDS (Mormon): 1=LDS (Mormon), 2=not LDS (Mormon) * p<.05 (one-tailed) ** p<.01 (one-tailed) B: Unstandardized beta coefficients are followed by beta coefficients in parentheses. | | | |

The results for all three political influence indexes are presented in Table 6.14. Of the five Lethbridge groups, three have statistically significant slopes in the expected directions for both community influence and civic influence: fits in to Lethbridge, local trade/business people, and religious affiliation (LDS/Mormon). The two variables which do not have statistically significant relationships--North sider and Old-timer--have slopes which are in the expected directions, except for the old-timer community influence slope which is slightly negative. These results are consistent with the bivariate ANOVA results presented in Tables 6.9 through 6.13.

As with many of the ANOVA results, the results for the mobilization index are substantially different than those for the other two indexes. The only variable that has a statistically significant slope when regressed on mobilization is North sider. This is the first reported analysis in which North sider has had a significant relationship to any of the political influence measures. It shows that North sider may indeed be a status marker in some social

contexts, as in this case where it demarks who has *less* ability to mobilize others towards demanding changes within the sphere of the Lethbridge community.

Surprisingly, as with the multivariate regression results for the social inequality variables, the R^2 for the full Lethbridge groups model is very small; only 9%, 11% and 3% of the variability in the community influence, civic influence and mobilization index scores (respectively) are explained by this model. In other words, while fitting in to Lethbridge, being a local trade/business person, and being Mormon means you likely have more community and civic influence in Lethbridge than those who are not, and being a North sider means you have less ability to mobilize others, the actual increase in amount of community influence appears to be relatively small (however, see Chapter Seven for other possible interpretations). A higher proportion of variability in the community and civic influence data is explained by the Lethbridge group variables than the social inequality variables, which have smaller R^2 's.

COMPARING SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND LETHBRIDGE GROUP VARIABLES

A third regression model was developed to compare the relative importance of the social inequality variables to the Lethbridge group variables. Due to the small sample size of the survey, I was restricted by the number of variables I could include in this model; including too many variables would reduce the size of each analytical cell beyond the point of being valid for statistical analysis. The social inequality variables I included were worker--the only social class dummy variable that had a statistically significant relationship to any form of political influence--income, and education (as years of education). The Lethbridge group variables that I included were "fits in", North sider, and religious affiliation (LDS/Mormon vs. non-Mormon).

I created two separate regression equations for each political influence index: I first examined whether or not the worker class, level of income and amount of education were related to the three measured forms of political influence. A second regression equation was then computed to see whether these variables, plus "fitting in" to Lethbridge, being a North

sider and/or a LDS effects the amount of political influence a person has in Lethbridge. The results from this analysis are presented in Table 6.15.

There is very little change between the first (the social inequality variables only) and second (all variables in the model) equations for any of the three political influence measures. The only exception is that the significant relationship between worker and civic influence no longer exists when controlling for the Lethbridge group variables.

Each of the three political influence indexes yield somewhat different results to the mixed-variable regression model. Three variables have a significant relationship to community influence, when controlling for the other variables in the model: education, "fits in" to Lethbridge, and North sider. Only two variables have a significant relationship to civic influence, when controlling for the other variables in the model: "fits in" to Lethbridge, and North sider. Three variables--two of which did not have significant relationships to community and civic influence--have a significant relationship with mobilization: income, North sider, and religious affiliation (LDS/Mormon).

The presence of a statistically significant relationship between North sider and all three forms of political influence, when the social inequality and other Lethbridge group variables in the model are being controlled for, is very interesting; it paints a substantially different picture than do the ANOVA results. It would appear, therefore, that being a North sider *can* mean having less political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making than others.

The other result that is somewhat surprising is the statistically significant relationship between income and the ability to mobilize others. As will be recalled from Table 6.2, income had an unclear relationship to mobilization; while the F ratio was statistically significant, the relative size of the means for each income group had no particular pattern. However, once again, the results indicate that income has a significant linear relationship to mobilization, which supports the social inequality hypothesis that people with higher incomes are better able to mobilize others. Perhaps the lack of consistency among the income results is due to the small effect income has on mobilization, as evidenced by the small income regression coefficient.

Table 6.15: Regression Coefficients for Mixed Model Predicting Community Influence, Civic Influence and Mobilization

| | Community Influence | | Civic Influence | | Mobilization | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Equation 1 | Equation 2 | Equation 1 | Equation 2 | Equation 1 | Equation 2 |
| Worker ^a | -.08 (-.03) | .07 (-.02) | -.38 (-.15)* | -.26 (-.10) | -.19 (-.86) | -.12 (-.05) |
| Income ^b | -1.8 (-.00) | -.00 (-.01) | .00 (.04) | .00 (.02) | .00 (.12)* | .04 (.12)* |
| Education ^c | .06 (.18)** | .07 (.19)** | .02 (.05) | .01 (.04) | -.02 (-.06) | -.02 (-.08) |
| Fits in to Lethbridge ^d | --- | .73 (.22)** | --- | .44 (.16)** | --- | .05 (.02) |
| North sider ^e | --- | -.57 (-.12)* | --- | -.18 (-.05)** | --- | -.47 (-.13)* |
| LDS (Mormon) ^f | --- | .54 (.09) | --- | 1.12 (.23) | --- | .51 (.12)* |
| R ² | .03** | .10 | .03 | .10** | .02 | .06* |
| Adjusted R ² | .02** | .07 | .02 | .08** | .01 | .03* |
| N | 224 | | 226 | | 205 | |

^a Dummy variable coding for social class variables:
Worker: 1=worker, 0=other
Manager: 1=manager, 0=other
Petty bourgeoisie: 1=petty bourgeoisie, 0=other

^b Income midpoints used were:
\$7499.50, 19,999.50, 34,999.50, 54,999.50, 74,999.50 and 104,999.50

^c Education (approximated years of education):
11 (less than a trade certificate)
13 (trade/business certificate)
13.5 (some college/university)
16 (university undergraduate degree)
21 (university graduate or professional degree)

^d Fits in to Lethbridge: 1=fits in, 0= other (*not clearly in either and does not fit in*)

^e North sider: 1=North sider, 0=other

^f Religious affiliation—LDS (Mormon): 1=LDS (Mormon), 2=not LDS (Mormon)

--- Variable not included in equation
* p<.05 (one-tailed)
**p<.01 (one-tailed)

B: Unstandardized beta coefficients are followed by beta coefficients in parentheses.

Overall, the Lethbridge group variables are more strongly associated with political influence over community decision-making in Lethbridge than the social inequality variables; the amount of variance explained by the social inequality variables in the first equation compared to the complete mixed model increases from 3% to 10% for community influence and civic influence, and from 2% to 6% for mobilization. This supports my conviction, based on my ethnography of Lethbridge, that political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making is more dependent upon a person's affiliation with the relevant Lethbridge groups than on her social class, income, or level of education.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

As I write this last chapter of my thesis, I am surrounded by packing boxes for my impending move to New Jersey, USA. When I think back over the past two years, I cannot help but reflect on how much I have learned since moving to Lethbridge. While I am happy to be moving, my experiences here helped me develop a deeper understanding of culture, social conditioning, and community dynamics than I might have gained from living in Vancouver.

I began this thesis project shortly after my arrival in Lethbridge. I did not have a clear idea of what I wanted to study. While compiling the readings for a college course I taught on the Blood Reserve, I stumbled across the idea that history may have played a central role in shaping the social dynamics of people who live in Lethbridge. The idea led me to conduct an ethnohistorical study of Lethbridge, which in turn led me to question the idea often presented in sociology that social class, income, occupation, and education are the key status characteristics that determine who has power in Canadian society. Retracing the social history of Lethbridge enabled me to see how historical events in Lethbridge led to the formation of new groups, the reconfiguration and breakdown of old ones, and the alteration of membership criteria to fit circumstances.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

For my thesis research, I chose to focus my attention on evaluating and comparing the importance of local Lethbridge groups to social class, income, level of education, and occupation in regards to who is influential in community-level decision-making in Lethbridge. The Lethbridge groups I focused on were: people who "fit in" to Lethbridge, people who do not "fit in" to Lethbridge, old-timers (or Natives of Lethbridge), North/ South/ West siders, and those affiliated with a Lethbridge religious congregation.

MY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on my observations in and outside of my ethnohistorical study of Lethbridge, I developed a theoretical framework of the relationships among power, groups, and social inequality. Group members distinguish themselves from non-members by using sets of status characteristics. People develop structural parameters through their social interaction with others; they learn how they are socially defined in relation to others, and how others are defined in relation to themselves. People employ their structural parameters to form expectations about others, based on the observed characteristics of the other. Expectations shape how people interact. An individual who believes it is important to belong to a religious congregation, to get married, to have children at a young age, and to dislike Blackfoot Indians intensely will think more highly of another who exhibits these characteristics than one who does not, and will act accordingly.

The structural parameters employed by the residents of Lethbridge are complex. Groups do not have strict boundaries; some people clearly fit into a group because they exhibit all relevant membership criteria, whereas others only exhibit some of the membership criteria. Moreover, group membership is not exclusive; people have complex backgrounds, diverse interests, and interact in multiple contexts, and therefore belong to more than one group.

Social influence is exerted when people effectively act on their expectations. Social inequality is created when exerted social influence ends in unequal outcomes for the parties involved. The amount of social influence I can assert in Lethbridge therefore depends on: (1) the group or groups to which others perceive I belong, (2) the *importance* that others place on the group or groups to which they perceive I belong, and (3) the resources or connections that others can share with me, and/or that I can share with others, such as employment or participation in decision-making.

The process by which characteristics become status characteristics (and by which sets of characteristics become group membership criteria) is mediated through a feedback loop between structural parameters and social outcomes. People's experiences can either reinforce their prior conceptions (structural parameters), or lead them to question and revise what they

believed. Their revised conceptions shape how they react in future situations. Every *implemented* individual decision (exerted social influence) has some impact on social relations within the system as a whole. The cumulative effect of individual decisions is an *historical* process through which particular groups' status may be challenged and defended, weaken or persist.

The theoretical framework presented in Chapter Three attempts to find a balance between social structure (macro-level dynamics) and social agency (micro-level dynamics).

The framework has parallels to the work of other social theorists'. The idea of an historical feedback relationship between systems of relations and already-existing structures is superficially similar to Giddens' structuration theory in *The Constitution of Society* (1984). There are also obvious parallels to Raymond Murphy's development of Weber's exclusion theory in *Social Closure: The Theory of Monopolization and Exclusion* (1988), and to Thomas Dunk's ideas about identity and his interpretation of Bourdieu's "structuring structures" (1994).

The theoretical framework is general enough to apply to populations with different groups and/or that use other characteristics as membership criteria. This includes the possibility that income, educational attainment, occupational structure and other variables identified in the social inequality literature are used as status characteristics in these populations.⁵⁸ For example, another population may use Wright's operational definition of social class as membership criteria for one of their local groups. Alternatively, gender may be the sole criteria for membership in a particular population, and all women in the population will therefore have approximately equal amounts of political influence.

In addition, I would conjecture that groups and group membership criteria within one community *can* be markedly similar to that of other communities. For example, despite the differences between the two populations, the membership criteria associated with the most

⁵⁸ This differs somewhat from Weber's analysis of class and status groups. Weber distinguished between class and status groups, the former being based on "purely economic factors" and the latter on "a specific social evaluation of 'status', whether positive or negative, when that evaluation is based on some common characteristic shared by many people" (Runciman 1978:48). In other words, class is based on a real, immutable phenomena, whereas status distinctions are based on social evaluation. I, on the other hand, consider *all* distinctions, including economic, to have arisen from a combination of social perception and social/physical "reality." I see no point in distinguishing between *class* and *status group*.

influential groups in Lethbridge and Red Deer, Alberta may be quite similar. Many communities are part of larger regional, national, and international communities that are connected through the media, personal correspondence, and migration, and therefore share histories and experiences. Moreover, relatively unconnected communities can have parallel histories due to conditions that exist or develop in both places (e.g. similar weather patterns). It would be expected that people's structural parameters be shaped by these shared experiences.

THE HYPOTHESES

I used my theoretical framework to form the hypotheses tested in this thesis, including the hypotheses related to the social inequality concepts. The hypotheses distinguish power from status characteristics. Specifically, status characteristics or sets of status characteristics--group membership criteria--were used as the independent variables and political influence, a specific form of power, was used as the dependent variable. I believe group membership criteria *predict* who has power, rather than *indicate* who has power. Of course, this is only one part of a complex relationship. Structural parameters, social influence and social outcome are in a feedback loop. It is also feasible to construct hypotheses in which group membership criteria are the *dependent* variables and political influence is the *independent* variable.

The relationship among social inequality concepts is not clearly explained in the social inequality literature. To create testable hypotheses that were also comparable to the Lethbridge group hypotheses, I had to impose a relationship on the social inequality variables that does not explicitly exist in the social inequality literature. Specifically, I isolated political influence from the social inequality "groups" (social class, income, education, gender and ethnicity), suggesting that status characteristics and power are distinct components in a feedback loop (as described above).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I developed a survey instrument (located in Appendix B) to test my hypotheses. Groups membership was determined by whether or not the respondent matched a pre-determined list of criteria. In addition, two groups were additionally operationalized as whether the respondent self-identified with that group. The hypotheses were tested through analysis of variance (ANOVA), bivariate correlation, and multivariate regression.

SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis proved interesting. At a minimum, they suggest that locally-defined historically-evolved Lethbridge group criteria are superior predictors than are social inequality concepts of who has political influence in Lethbridge. A summary of these results is presented in Table 7.1. The table reports whether a hypothesis was supported by each of the community influence, civic influence and mobilization indexes. The table is divided into two sections, the left half reporting the results of the bivariate analysis (ANOVA and bivariate correlation) and the right half reporting the multivariate results (multiple regression). Two distinctions, along with several qualifications, are made in the Table: hypotheses that were not supported by the data (the means or association were not in the direction hypothesized or the relationship between the independent and dependent variable were not statistically significant) are indicated by an X; and, hypotheses that were supported (the means or association were in the direction hypothesized and the relationship between the independent and dependent variable was statistically significant) are indicated by an ✓.

Table 7.1: Summary of supported hypotheses by form of political influence and method of analysis

| Variable/ Group | Bivariate analysis | | | Multiple Regression | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization | Community Influence | Civic Influence | Mobilization |
| <u>Social inequality variables:</u> | | | | | | |
| Social Class ^a | X | X | X | X | ✓ (worker) ² | X |
| Income ^b | X | X | X ¹ | X | X | ✓ ³ |
| Education ^c | ✓ | X | X | ✓ | X | X |
| Gender | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Ethnicity ^d | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| <u>Lethbridge group variables:</u> | | | | | | |
| Fits in/ does not fit in ^e | ✓ | ✓ | X | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Lethbridgian | ✓ | ✓ | X | - | - | - |
| Newcomer | X | X | X | - | - | - |
| Local trade/business people | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | X |
| Uppity Feminists | X | ◄ | X | - | - | - |
| Old-timer | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| North, South, West sider ^f | X | X | X | ✓ ⁴ | ✓ ⁴ | ✓ |
| Religious affiliation ^g | X | ◄ | X | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁶ |
| <p>✓ Supported (the direction of the means or association were as expected and there was a statistically significant relationship between the two variables)</p> <p>X Not supported (means or association was not in the direction expected and/or the relationship between the two variables was not statistically significant)</p> <p>^a The dummy variables used in multiple regression were: Worker, Manager and Petty Bourgeoisie (for the social inequality model) and Worker (for the mixed model).</p> <p>^b Converted into the midpoints of each income category for regression analysis.</p> <p>^c Converted into approximate number of years taken to achieve that level of education for regression analysis.</p> <p>^d The dummy variable used in regression analysis was "British"—respondents were classified as either being of British heritage or otherwise.</p> <p>^e Included three groups (fits in, not clearly in either, does not fit in) in ANOVA, but only "fits in" as a dummy variable in regression.</p> <p>^f Dummy variable used in regression was "LDS (Mormon)"—respondents were classified as either being LDS (Mormon) or otherwise.</p> <p>¹ The relationship was found to be significant, but the direction of means was not as predicted.</p> <p>² Significant for Worker when controlling for other social inequality variables, but not when controlling for Lethbridge group variables.</p> <p>³ Significant when Manager and Petty Bourgeoisie (two of the social class dummy variables) are not being controlled for.</p> <p>⁴ Significant when controlling for the social inequality variables, but not when controlling for the Lethbridge group variables.</p> <p>⁵ Significant when controlling for the Lethbridge group variables, but not when controlling for the social inequality variables.</p> <p>⁶ Significant when controlling for both the social inequality and Lethbridge group variables, but not when only controlling for one or the other.</p> | | | | | | |

In general, there was more support for the Lethbridge group hypotheses than the social inequality hypotheses. The social inequality variables found to have some form of relationship to political influence (i.e., any of the three indexes) were worker (one of the social classes), income, and education. Each of these variables had a significant relationship with only one form of political influence. Education was the most strongly associated with a form of political influence, having a significant relationship to community influence in both the bivariate and multivariate analysis. The Lethbridge group variables found to have some form of relationship to political influence were: "fits in"/does not "fit in" to Lethbridge, Lethbridgian (another form of "fits in"), local trade/business people, uppity Feminists, Northsider, and LDS/ Mormons (one of the local Lethbridge religious congregations). The strongest associations were found for "fits in" and local trade/business people; "fits in" and local trade/business people was significant for two of the three political influence indexes, in both bivariate and multivariate analysis. The Lethbridge group variable receiving the least support was uppity Feminists, which was analyzed using General Linear Modeling, and supported only by the civic influence index. The other Lethbridge group variables received support that ranged between that of the "fits in" and local trade/business people groups, and the uppity Feminists.

The results are consistent with the ethnographic evidence; social class, income, gender, and ethnicity, *as defined and described in the social inequality literature*, are generally not important status characteristics in determining who perceives themselves as having political influence in Lethbridge. In other words, the characteristics considered by social inequality theorists to be the key determinants of social inequality and, therefore, of the ability of individuals and groups to "control or shape" their "rights and opportunities for their own ends" (Grabb 1999: vii) (i.e., their amount of social influence)—only have weak empirical relationships to the amount of political influence (a form of social influence) that Lethbridge residents believe they possess. The only characteristic identified by the social inequality literature as being an important status marker that seems to affect the amount of political influence a Lethbridge resident has is his level of education.

As stated above, the hypotheses tested in this thesis impose a structure on the social inequality variables that does not explicitly exist in the literature. A re-structuring of the

relationship among social inequality concepts may, however, lead to different (more favourable) results. At a minimum, my research suggests the need for an alternative formation of the relationship among social inequality variables.

There are several possible reasons why some hypotheses were not supported across all forms of political influence (and why other, such as old-timer and ethnicity, were not supported at all): (1) for Lethbridge groups, the characteristics identified as being important membership criteria were actually not the key criteria, and thus did not accurately distinguish members from non-members (e.g. length or residence is not a good indicator of who is a native of Lethbridge, but other variables are); (2) membership in this group is not considered an important status distinction in the context of community decision-making, or in regards to a specific form of political influence (community influence, civic influence, or mobilization); or (3) the group does not exist.

My ethnographic observations suggest that the Lethbridge groups should be associated with all three forms of political influence, so there is no clear answer, beyond those suggested above, as to why they were not. I could speculate that trade, business or technical certification is valued more by Lethbridgians as a whole, while the decision-makers at city hall are more likely to have (and to value) university degrees. I could also speculate that, while a broader range of religious denominations are acceptable to the general Lethbridge population, the people at city hall represent strongholds of Christian religious conservatism. These are only guesses, however, and would require additional research for confirmation.

The one group hypothesized to affect the amount of political influence which was *not* supported by the survey data is Old-timers or "Natives of Lethbridge. The results related to this variable are particularly interesting because they show that two empirically-based measures of the same phenomenon, one derived from ethnography and the other from a survey, can produce contradictory findings. There are various possible reasons for this, not the least of which being that Lethbridge residents *are* distinguished by their length of residence, but that both have equal amounts of influence.

When I think back on how the term "native of Lethbridge" is used, I realize I do not know how *long* "natives" have lived in Lethbridge. Although "old-timer" (which was based

on length of residence in Southern Alberta) was definitely once a status characteristic in Lethbridge, the replacement term may operate differently. "Native of Lethbridge" may only serve as a rhetorical label for identifying someone whom the speaker considers a "legitimate" Lethbridgian, regardless of how long he or she has resided in Lethbridge. The implication is that these people have resided in Lethbridge for a long time, when in fact what matters may be how well they have assimilated in the time they have been in Lethbridge, or some other factor(s). Alternatively, the importance of the "native" distinction may be declining, only being relevant to important choices such as who to vote for in the mayoral election. Further ethnographic investigation is needed to clarify the source, outcome, and implications of this belief.

The hypotheses used in this research were not designed to test the underlying theoretical framework developed in this thesis. In fact, a direct test of all components of the framework is not possible; structural parameters can not be directly measured because they are ideas people hold in their heads. Structural parameters are, however, reflected in the characteristics and expressed beliefs group members have in common. The framework was presented, in part, however, to provide an explanation as to *how* and *why* different (sets of) status characteristics other than those identified in the social inequality literature can affect who has political influence in Lethbridge. The historical process of re-defining group membership criteria has led certain characteristics to become important markers in determining who has political influence in Lethbridge community decision-making. Although far from conclusive, this research does suggest that status characteristics are more fluid, local and historically negotiated than assumed in the social inequality literature.

LIMITATIONS OF MY RESEARCH

There are several "scope conditions" as well as limitations on the research presented within this thesis which should be clearly identified. My measures of political influence are: (1) not indicative of all forms of power, or even of all forms of political influence, and (2) weak measures of political influence. As discussed in Chapter Three, power is an extremely complex concept that applies to a wide range of social behaviors and outcomes; power exists

in many forms (Murphy 1988; Russell 1938). Social influence within the context of community decision-making in Lethbridge is just one power arena within one population. It is possible that social class is a better predictor of influence within Lethbridge businesses, or restricted economic spheres. Wright's measure of social class is, after all, a measure of authority within the work context, and one would expect structured relationships of authority within the work context to have a direct bearing on the amount of influence an individual has *in* that context. This does not mean, however, that an individual's class standing has significant weight *outside* that sphere.

The argument might be made that, while not a useful predictor of community-level political influence within Lethbridge, class *is* correlated with the political influence of Lethbridgians at the provincial, federal or global levels. This is possible; beyond Lethbridge there are different groups, with different sets of membership criteria, and some of these groups are associated with higher-level decision-making. For example, I know of a Lethbridge resident who would have a hard time getting the Lethbridge mayor to meet with him, but who advises high-ranking United Nations officials on a regular basis. His characteristics are not valued in Lethbridge, but are valued in other arenas of power. Some groups may have political influence at the provincial, federal and global level because the members' shared characteristics are valued at those levels, but have no influence in Lethbridge where their characteristics are not even utilized as status markers. The importance placed on a characteristic (or set of characteristics) differs from person to person, group to group, and population to population.

The multiple regression results suggest there is a possible problem with my political influence measures. The low amount of variability explained by the independent variables is surprisingly low for all three models (the social inequality, Lethbridge groups, and mixed models). To a certain extent, this was expected because: (1) the dependent variable was an indirect measure of political influence, and (2) the sample size was small. The dependent variables were indirect measures of a very complex concept; the political influence measurements are created from responses to questions about the respondents' *perceived* amount of community and civic influence, and about the number of people he *thinks* he can mobilize over an issue. People's perceptions can be wrong, however. For example, people

may *think* they hold influence over others until they actively try to utilize that influence, at which point they discover otherwise. Ideally, my measure of political influence would have been based on empirical observations of people's responses to actual situations. As I chose to use a social survey, I was necessarily restricted to self-reported measures of political influence. I did originally intend to collect data on the outcome of each respondent's social activism within Lethbridge, but this proved too difficult to incorporate into a realistically brief survey format. My measure of activism therefore did not include an assessment of the outcome of their activism, and moreover was plagued with problems (as described in Chapter Five), hence it was not used in data analysis. It was expected, therefore, that the political influence measures would contain a relatively large amount of measurement error, which would diminish the strength of the association between the independent and dependent variables.

The estimation of the standard error, used in calculating the statistical tests reported here, is based on the variance and the *size of the sample* (Fowler 1993: 28-29). The confidence interval in which the results can be safely assumed to represent the population are *larger* for smaller samples. This means that the significance levels calculated for each statistical test are designed to demonstrate more conservative estimates of association for smaller samples than for larger samples. Following this, the R^2 for each regression model will be smaller than it would be if the sample size was larger.

As indicated, however, the amount of variability explained by the independent variables is lower than expected, even when taking these factors into account. My only guesses as to why this occurred are: (1) neither the social inequality nor the Lethbridge group variables are the best explanation as to who has political influence in Lethbridge (i.e., other unidentified variables are better predictors); or, (2) some of the group membership criteria used to create the Lethbridge groups are *not* used as membership criteria as consistently as other criteria, thus my Lethbridge group membership measures were not as strong as they could be. Further statistical tests, refinement of the dependent variable, and further ethnographic study may shed light onto the mystifyingly-low variance results.

Some readers may consider the low response rate I received in this survey (40%) to be problematic. While I agree that the response rate was less than ideal, I do not think it created

a huge distortion in the results because I was not reporting distributions within the sample (e.g. 40% of the sample were male, 25% said they liked Lethbridge), and therefore it was not as important that it be a representative sample. The focus of the analysis is on patterns found *within* the respondent herself (e.g. associated sets of characteristics such as whether or not she possess all the "fits in" criteria and her corresponding perceptions about the amount of political influence she has). The only data that is compared across respondents--and only in an indirect sense--is the amount of political influence each respondent has. As this is a relative rather than an absolute comparison (i.e., how much political influence a person has relative to other people in my sample, rather than what proportion of the respondents obtained a community influence score higher than 3), the relatively low response rate is not as big a concern as it would be if this were a study reporting demographic distributions.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The results of my survey are encouraging because they suggest that ethnographic research is an important preliminary tool for quantitative research. As argued throughout this thesis, I believe that *emic* distinctions (i.e. structural parameters used by the population in question) are more insightful for predicting who has power than *etic* or externally imposed distinctions (such as the concepts used in the social inequality literature).

The unsupported Lethbridge group hypotheses impressed upon me how important it is to use triangulating research methods. Had I only conducted an ethnography, I would have concluded that Old-timers (or Native of Lethbridge) have more political influence than people who have settled in Lethbridge more recently. Had I only conducted a survey, I would have concluded that length of residence had no bearing on political influence in Lethbridge. As with gender, the phenomena I am attempting to understand is likely more complex than initially thought. What is needed is more ethnographic study to discover the nuances of each distinction to develop a refined hypothesis and/or measure for each group that reconciles the different results.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although it is impossible to extrapolate their relevance to other Canadian locations, the results of my research suggest that a careful re-evaluation of social inequality concepts and their interrelationships can increase the empirical validity of Canadian social inequality research. As discussed in Chapter Three, there is considerable confusion regarding the relationships among identified social inequality concepts (not to mention confusion over the precise definitions of these concepts). For example, *power* is described as both a *cause* and a *consequence* of social inequality (e.g. differences in amount of power lead to unequal amounts of power) (Grabb 1996: 1999); *income*, *occupation* and *educational attainment* as predictors *and* indicators of social inequality (Brym with Fox 1988); gender inequality is due to differences in power and because it is a socially-defined characteristic (i.e., status characteristic) (Saunders 1999; Curtis, Grabb and Guppy 1999). Moreover, status characteristics are presented as if they *are* social inequalities, in themselves. Clarifying the relationships among key social inequality concepts (as well as clarifying the concepts themselves) is an excellent first step for creating better empirical tests that will further our knowledge of the process by which social inequality is created and maintained.

My case study of Lethbridge provides support for, but does not adequately test the general theoretical framework I proposed in Chapter Three. Research on Lethbridge tells us nothing about the similarities in social psychology and sociology between people in Lethbridge and Windsor, Ontario or Vancouver, British Columbia. My own experiences corroborates my idea that characteristics become structural parameters among people with a shared history and in frequent social contact, and that characteristics do *not* have a prescribed, inherent value. My experiences are far from quantitative "proof," though. The historical process by which group criteria are created needs further examination. More sophisticated research, including numerous in-depth interviews that are developed from ethnographic evidence and conducted with a random sample of people (instead of relatively-short questionnaires with little adaptability to the respondents' situation), would be an excellent start. Comparative case studies of such a description would lead to greater insights and better data for evaluating my proposed framework.

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Appendix A: Introductory cover letter for questionnaire

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Anthropology and Sociology
6303 N.W. Marine Drive
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z1

If there is more than one adult (person 18 years of age or older) living in your household, please give this package to the adult who had the most recent birthday.

Dear neighbour,

I am asking for your help in completing my study on life in Lethbridge. The title of the study is Social and Economic Organization in Lethbridge, Alberta. The research is for my graduate degree in Sociology at the University of British Columbia, and is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. David Tindall. The results will be used to help sociologists develop a better understanding of the social and economic organization of Canadian cities.

The questionnaire I am asking you to complete requests information about your personal beliefs and experience, such as your participation in local organizations, your work, what you consider important, and how much influence you have (or feel you have) within the city.

Your household was randomly chosen for participation in this survey from the Lethbridge telephone book. The adult in your household who had ***the most recent birthday*** should complete the questionnaire. This will ensure that all adults in Lethbridge have an equal chance of participating. (If the person in your household who had the most recent birthday can *not* complete the questionnaire for any reason, another adult in your household may fill in the questionnaire instead.)

In exchange for completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire, you will have a chance to win one of two \$150 prizes. Since this questionnaire is being mailed to only 600 households, you have a good chance of winning.

To participate in the study, and in the drawing for the cash prizes, all you need to do is:

- (1) Complete the enclosed questionnaire;
- (2) Place the questionnaire in the large stamped, self-addressed envelope and seal it;
- (3) Write your name and address on the contest entry form (located in the small white envelope), place the entry form back in the small envelope and seal it; and
- (4) Put both self-addressed envelopes in the mail!

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Section A: Your residency in Lethbridge

1. How long have you lived in Lethbridge? _____ years

2. Have you ever lived somewhere *other* than Lethbridge?

☐ No ☐ Yes → Where? _____

3. When did the first person from your family come to live in Lethbridge?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Before 1900 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Between 1961 and 1980 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Between 1901 and 1920 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Between 1981 and 1990 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Between 1921 and 1940 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. After 1991 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Between 1941 and 1960 | |

4. *What part of Lethbridge do you live in?* (Please check the statement that **best** applies)

the North side....

- ☐ 1. within 10 blocks of Canadian Tire (in Lethbridge Center Mall)
☐ 2. *more* than 10 blocks from Canadian Tire (in Lethbridge Center Mall)

the South side....

- ☐ 3. within 10 blocks of the new City Hall
☐ 4. *more* than 10 blocks from the new City Hall

the West side....

- ☐ 5. within 10 blocks of the University of Lethbridge
☐ 6. *more* than 10 blocks from the University of Lethbridge

5. *Why do you live in Lethbridge?* (Please check the statement that **best** applies.)

- ☐ 1. I grew up in Lethbridge and never left
☐ 2. I grew up in Lethbridge, went away for school/work, but prefer living in Lethbridge so I came back
☐ 3. I moved here because of a job
☐ 4. My spouse or a relative lived here (such as parent, brother, cousin, etc.)
☐ 5. I came here to attend school (university or college)
☐ 6. Other _____

6. *What sentence best describes how you feel about living in Lethbridge?* (Please check **one** only)

- ☐ 1. Lethbridge is a *great* place to live.
☐ 2. Lethbridge is a good place to live.
☐ 3. Lethbridge is as good as any other place is to live.
☐ 4. Lethbridge has a few serious drawbacks as a place to live.
☐ 5. Lethbridge has many serious drawbacks as a place to live.

7. How *safe* do you feel Lethbridge is as a place to live? (Please check one)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Very safe | <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Unsafe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Safe | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Very unsafe |

8. Do you think of yourself as:

(Please check all that you feel apply to you)

- ☐ 1. a Lethbridgian?
- ☐ 2. a native of Lethbridge?
- ☐ 3. a Lethbridge old-timer?
- ☐ 4. a North-sider? (the North side of Lethbridge)
- ☐ 5. a South-sider? (the South side of Lethbridge)
- ☐ 6. a West-sider? (the West side of Lethbridge)
- ☐ 7. a newcomer to Lethbridge?
- ☐ 8. a temporary resident of Lethbridge?
- ☐ 9. other: _____

Section B: Consumer activities

9. Where do you (or the people in your household) do the majority of your grocery shopping?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Asian Supermarket | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Super Sams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Costco | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. The Farmer's Market |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. IGA | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Value Village Market |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Real Canadian Wholesale Club | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. The food bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Safeway | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Save-on-Foods & Drugs | |

10. Which Lethbridge restaurant do you eat at the most? (Please check one only)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Anton's at Lethbridge Lodge | <input type="checkbox"/> 13. O'Riley's Restaurant and Bar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Beefeater Steak House | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Peking Garden's Restaurant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Boston Pizza | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Regent Restaurant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Burger King | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Shanghai Chop Suey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Chow Baby's | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Streetside Eatery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Coco Pazzo Italian Café | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Sven Ericksen's Dining Room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Dionysios (Greek & Continental) | <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Taco Bell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Earl's | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Taco Time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Henry's Restaurant | <input type="checkbox"/> 21. The Keg |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Luigi's Pizza and Steakhouse | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. The Saigonese Restaurant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. McDonald's | <input type="checkbox"/> 23. Wendy's |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Moxies' Restaurant | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. Other: _____ |

11. What type of vehicle(s) do you drive?

(If you do not have a vehicle, please check the box on the bottom right.)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Pick-up truck | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Small car | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Sports coupe (sports car) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Sports Utility Vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Medium car | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Luxury car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Minivan | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Large car | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. I do not have a vehicle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Van | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Station wagon | |

12. How many vehicles are owned by people living in your household (including yourself)?

- ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 or more

Section C: Economic and social development in Lethbridge

13. What do you consider to be the backbone of the Lethbridge economy? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1. Small business retail stores
- ☐ 2. Small business manufacturing and processing
- ☐ 3. Agricultural services and supplies
- ☐ 4. Large scale manufacturing and processing *(such as food-processing)*
- ☐ 5. Educational services *(Lethbridge Community College, University of Lethbridge)*
- ☐ 6. Agricultural research *(Agriculture Canada Research Station)*
- ☐ 7. Providing supplies and services to nearby Indian Reserves
- ☐ 8. Other: _____

14. What kind of economic development do you think would be good for Lethbridge? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1. Small business, retail stores
- ☐ 2. Small business, knowledge and technology *(research, science, engineering)*
- ☐ 3. Small business, manufacturing and processing
- ☐ 4. Tourism
- ☐ 5. Seniors' services *(such as seniors homes, seniors activities, etc.)*
- ☐ 6. Large scale manufacturing and processing *(such as a hog plant, food-processing, etc.)*
- ☐ 7. Large scale knowledge and technology industry *(research, science, engineering)*
- ☐ 8. Not interested in seeing the Lethbridge economy grow

15. Do you support the...

1. withdrawal of VLTs from Lethbridge hotels and restaurants?

(Video Lottery Terminals)

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. privatization of municipal services? (such as recreation services)

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. downsizing of municipal services? (such as the cutbacks on bus service)

☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Do you consider the University of Lethbridge to be an asset to the city?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes

Please explain why _____

17. Of the following, which do you consider to be *significant* problems currently facing Lethbridge? (Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Crime | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. The Downtown Hard-to-Serve population |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Lack of economic development | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Lack of facilities for seniors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Water quality | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Youth violence | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. No significant problems in Lethbridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. City government accountability | |

Section D: Your work

18. What type of work do you do? (for example: bank clerk, electrical engineer, homemaker, student, etc.) If you are retired, please indicate that you are retired and what your occupation was before retirement. If you are unemployed and looking for work, please indicate that you are unemployed and list your prior occupation.

_____ occupation(s)

19. Are you *self-employed*? (Do you own your own business, or act as an independent consultant or contractor?)

- ☐ No ☐ Yes



20. How many employees do you have? Please check the one that *best* applies.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. No employees | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. 16 to 30 employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. 1 to 5 employees | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. 31 to 40 employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. 6 to 10 employees | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. 41 to 100 employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. 11 to 15 employees | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. 101 or more employees |

21. Are you currently employed by someone other than yourself?

- ☐ No (please skip to Section E) ☐ Yes

22. Do you participate in policy-making decisions in your place of work? For example, do you - by yourself or with others - make decisions that have to do with budgets, investments, and various aspects of operation. (Please check the one that *best* applies.)

- ☐ 1. I directly participate in all or most policy-making decisions
- ☐ 2. I directly participate in some policy-making decisions
- ☐ 3. I directly participate in at least one area of decision-making
- ☐ 4. I do not directly participate in decision-making, but I provide advice in one or more areas of decision-making.
- ☐ 5. I do not directly or indirectly participate in decision-making.

23. Do you supervise anyone on your job?

☐ No ☐ Yes
↓

*For each question below, please check the answer that **best** applies.*

24. Do you give directions to this person(s)? (Such as assigning them work?) ☐ Yes ☐ No

25. Can you reward or discipline this person(s)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

26. Does anyone you supervise in turn supervise anyone as part of his/her job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

27. Do you receive supervision from anyone on your job?

☐ No ☐ Yes
↓

*For each question below, please check the answer that **best** applies.*

28. Does this supervisor give you directions? (tell you what to do or how to do it?) ☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Can this supervisor reward and/or discipline you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

30. Does this supervisor receive supervision from someone else? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. How is your position classified?

☐ 1. Managerial ☐ 2. Supervisory ☐ 3. Other

32. Are you required to design important aspects of your own work and to put these ideas into practice?

- ☐ 1. Yes, all or most aspects of my work and to put these ideas into practice.
- ☐ 2. Yes, some important aspects of my work and to put these ideas into practice.
- ☐ 3. Yes, a few important aspect of my work and to put these ideas into practice.
- ☐ 4. No, I am not required to design any aspects of my work (beyond a few small details).

Section E: Participation in local activities

33. Are you a member of any of the following types of clubs or associations? (Please check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1. A social, hobby, or music club (for example *Stitch and Chat*, *Duplicate Bridge Club*)
- ☐ 2. A service club (for example *Rotary Club*, *Kinsmen Club*)
- ☐ 3. An ethnic or cultural association (for example *Hungarian Old Timers Association*, *Italian Canadian Cultural Centre*, *Multicultural Women's Centre*, etc.)
- ☐ 4. A political party (for example *Reform Party*, *Liberal Party*)
- ☐ 5. A neighbourhood association (for example *London Road Neighbourhood Association*)
- ☐ 6. A self-improvement club (for example *Overeaters Anonymous*, *Chinook Stroke Club*)
- ☐ 7. A sports club (for example *Lethbridge Curling Club*)
- ☐ 8. A human rights or moral reform association (for example *Amnesty International*, *Canada Family Action Coalition*.)
- ☐ 9. Another type of club or association
- ☐ 10. I do not belong to a club or association in Lethbridge (skip to question 35)

34. If you are a member of a Lethbridge club or association, which one(s)?

35. Do you volunteer time to clubs, associations, or community projects in Lethbridge?

☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Are you a board member of an association, club, or other institution in Lethbridge?

☐ Yes ☐ No

37. How do you keep yourself informed about what is happening in Lethbridge? (Please check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1. Reading the Lethbridge Herald
- ☐ 2. Watching CISA news
- ☐ 3. Watching the Miracle channel
- ☐ 4. Talking to people
- ☐ 5. Attending meetings
- ☐ 6. Listening to local radio
- ☐ 7. Watching city council meetings on TV
- ☐ 8. Other (please specify: _____)
- ☐ 9. I do not pay much attention to what is going on in Lethbridge

Section F: Participation in religious activities

38. Are you a member of a Lethbridge religious congregation?

☐ No (please skip to Section G) ☐ Yes



39. Which Lethbridge church or congregation do you belong to?

40. Which religious faith is the congregation?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Anglican | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Reformed (or Christian Reformed) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Baptist | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Salvation Army |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Chinese Alliance | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. United Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Congregational | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Roman Catholic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Evangelical Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Ukrainian Catholic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Japanese United | <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Baha'I |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Jehovah's Witnesses | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Buddhist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Latter Day Saints (Mormon) | <input type="checkbox"/> 21. Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Lutheran | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. Islamic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Mennonite | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Pentecostal | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. Other (please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Presbyterian | |

41. How often do you participate in activities organized by your congregation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Once a year or less | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Twice a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Once a month, or several times a year | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. More than twice a week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Two or 3 times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Every day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Once a week | |

Section G: Social and Political influence

42. How much influence do you feel you have in community decision-making in Lethbridge?

(Please check the one that best applies.)

- ☐ 1. A huge amount ☐ 2. Quite a bit ☐ 3. Some ☐ 4. Hardly any ☐ 5. None at all

43. How strongly do you agree with the following statements? (Check the answer that best applies.)

1. Generally speaking, people in Lethbridge value the same things I do.

- ☐ 1. Strongly agree ☐ 2. Agree ☐ 3. Disagree ☐ 4. Strongly disagree

2. Generally speaking, people like me don't have any say about what the Lethbridge city government does.

- ☐ 1. Strongly agree ☐ 2. Agree ☐ 3. Disagree ☐ 4. Strongly disagree

44. Would you say that the Lethbridge city government is... (Check the one that best applies)

- ☐ 1. Run by a few people who are looking out for themselves, or
☐ 2. Run for the benefit of all Lethbridge residents

45. Do you think the Lethbridge city government would provide better services if they had more tax revenue to spend?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

46. Do you make a point of going to public meetings regarding community issues?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No



47. If no, why not? _____

48. Do you think the Lethbridge city government would fulfill your request if you asked them to:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Replace a damaged street sign on your block. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Fix faulty street drains near your house that are prone to flooding. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Have the Mayor return your phone call. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Appoint you to a public service committee. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

49. **Have you ever:** (Please check the answer that **best** applies)

1. Signed a petition about a local Lethbridge issue? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Rallied for a public Lethbridge issue (such as VLT's, hog plant, etc.)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Attended a public meeting about a public issue (such as water quality)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Donated money to a local Lethbridge charity? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Donated money to a local campaign (such as VLT's, election candidates)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Contacted a member of the city council to make a suggestion or complaint? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Made a presentation to city council? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Run for Lethbridge city council, or a provincial/federal riding in Lethbridge? ☐ Yes ☐ No

50. **Have you ever sent a letter to the editor of the Lethbridge Herald that in which you tried to influence people's opinions about a local issue?**

☐ No ☐ Yes



51. **Approximately how many letters of this kind have you sent to the editor?**

☐ 1 ☐ 2-4 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 11 or more

52. **How many of these letters have been published?**

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2-4 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 11 or more

53. **Which statement *best* describes how you felt about sending your letter(s)?**

- ☐ 1. I knew the Herald wouldn't publish it, but I wanted the people at the Herald to know what I thought
- ☐ 2. I was not sure if the Herald would publish it, but I needed to say something
- ☐ 3. I was pretty sure the Herald would publish it
- ☐ 4. I was confident the Herald would publish it

54. **If you considered a Lethbridge issue important and in need of support, how many people in Lethbridge do you think you could convince to:** (For each item, check the one that **best** applies)

- | | Less than 5 people | 5-10 people | More than 10 people |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sign a petition? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Write a letter to the editor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Attend a public meeting? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Contact a member of the city council? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Make a presentation to city council? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Donate \$50 or more to support the issue? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section H: In your opinion...

55. In general, would you describe the people who live in Lethbridge as:

(For each item, please circle the number that best applies.)

| | Strongly Agree | | | Strongly Disagree |
|---|-------------------|---|---|----------------------|
| 1. Friendly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Open-minded..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Community-interested..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Putting others' concerns before their own | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Welcoming people of all colours | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Accepting people with different religious beliefs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Treating men and women with equal respect..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Supporting mentally or physically handicapped people.... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Familiar with the world outside Alberta | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Considerate of people with different ways of life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

56. Please rank the following professions by how important you think each is compared to the others listed (1=most important, 6=least important). (For example, place a 1 beside small businessman if you consider small business men to be the most important occupation listed.)

- _____ Big businessman
- _____ College instructor
- _____ Doctor
- _____ Minister, priest, or other church official
- _____ Small businessman
- _____ University professor

Section I: Background information about yourself

57. Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female

58. Are you: (Please check the one that best applies)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Single | <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Living common-law | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Divorced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Married | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Separated | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Widowed |

59. How old were you on your last birthday? _____ years

60. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? (Please check the one that best applies.)

- ☐ 1. Some elementary or high school
- ☐ 2. Grade 12 or high school equivalency diploma
- ☐ 3. Courses in trade/ business/ technical/ vocational
- ☐ 4. A trade or other non-university certificate or diploma
- ☐ 5. Some university or university-transfer courses at college
- ☐ 6. University, with an undergraduate degree
- ☐ 7. University, with a graduate or professional degree (for example law, medicine)

Is English the first language...

- 61. You spoke? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 62. Your mother spoke? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
- 63. Your father spoke? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
- 64. Your spouse spoke? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
- 65. Your children spoke? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

What languages, other than English, do....

(Please use the line next to the question to write any languages that are applicable. Please check the box on the right if English is the only language spoken and/or understood.)

- 66. You speak and/or understand? _____ ☐ None (other than English)
- 67. Your mother speak and/or understand? _____ ☐ None
- 68. Your father speak and/or understand? _____ ☐ None

69. What is your ethnic background? (Please check all categories that apply.)

British Isles:

- ☐ 1. English
- ☐ 2. Irish
- ☐ 3. Scottish
- ☐ 4. Welsh
- ☐ 5. Other : _____

Native North American:

- ☐ 6. Blood
- ☐ 7. Peigan
- ☐ 8. Siksika
- ☐ 9. Cree
- ☐ 10. Metis
- ☐ 11. Other: _____

African:

- ☐ 12. African

European:

- ☐ 13. Czech
- ☐ 14. Dutch
- ☐ 15. French
- ☐ 16. German
- ☐ 17. Hungarian
- ☐ 18. Italian
- ☐ 19. Polish
- ☐ 20. Romanian
- ☐ 21. Russian
- ☐ 22. Scandinavian
- ☐ 23. Slovakian
- ☐ 24. Ukrainian
- ☐ 25. Other: _____

Central and South American:

- ☐ 26. Colombian
- ☐ 27. El Salvadoran
- ☐ 28. Guatemalan
- ☐ 29. Mexican
- ☐ 30. Other: _____

Middle Eastern and Asian:

- ☐ 31. Chinese
- ☐ 32. East Indian
- ☐ 33. Iranian
- ☐ 34. Indonesia
- ☐ 35. Japanese
- ☐ 36. Korean
- ☐ 37. Vietnamese
- ☐ 38. Other: _____

70. What was the total income of your *household*, before taxes, for 1999? (Please check one category below that gives the *best estimate*.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. No household income | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. \$45,000 to \$44,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Under \$4,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. \$45,000 to \$64,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. \$4,000 to \$9,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. \$65,000 to \$74,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. \$10,000 to \$14,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. \$75,000 to \$84,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. \$15,000 to \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13. \$85,000 to \$94,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. \$20,000 to \$24,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. \$95,000 to \$114,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. \$25,000 to \$34,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. \$115,000 and above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. \$35,000 to \$44,999 | |

Thank you very much for your time and effort!

If you have any additional comments about topics covered in this questionnaire, please use the space

below, or feel free to attach an additional page. Any comments will be greatly appreciated!

For instruction on how to enter the contest and to return this questionnaire, please see front page.

Appendix C: Reminder card

Appendix D: Unaddressed copy of letter to draw winners