The Urban Indian community of Minneapolis, Minnesota : an analysis of educational achievements, housing conditions, and health care from the relocation of 1952 to today
by Leslie Ann Zimmerman

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts In Native American Studies
Montana State University

Abstract:
This thesis critically evaluates the improvements in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health care needs for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. I specifically focus on the Relocation Policy and how that Policy, instead of assimilating American Indians into mainstream society, became a vehicle for elevating the population of American Indians in Minneapolis to a level of "visibility." As well, I discuss how this once "invisible" urban community formed an urban coalition, the American Indian Movement (AIM), to actively seek social justices in education, housing, and health care for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The intent of the research is to determine whether the extensive funding and programs directed toward the urban Indian population of Minneapolis throughout the last four decades have brought about significant improvements; to determine the degree of, and changes in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health needs of the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. This project is the first evaluation of whether conditions within the urban Indian community of Minneapolis have improved since Relocation. I think this project was needed to critically evaluate a metro area like Minneapolis that has such an extensive history of programs and funding for the urban Indian population.

THE URBAN INDIAN COMMUNITY OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA:

AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS, HOUSING CONDITIONS,

AND HEALTH CARE FROM THE RELOCATION OF 1952 TO TODAY

By

Leslie Ann Zimmerman

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Arts

In

Native American Studies
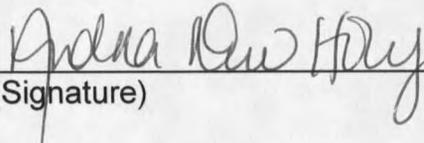
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

April 2004

ii

APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Leslie Ann Zimmerman

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliography style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

Dr. Alexandra New Holy, _____   4.15.04

(Signature)   Date

Approved for the Department of Native American Studies
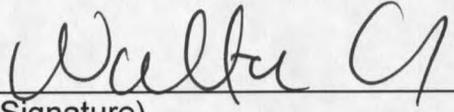
Dr. Walter Fleming, _____   15 Apr 04

(Signature)   Date

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies
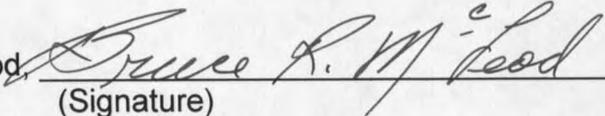
Dr. Bruce McLeod, _____   4-19-04

(Signature)   Date

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under the rules of the Library.

I have indicated my intention to copyright this thesis by including a copyright notice page, copying is allowable only for scholarly purposes, consistent with the "fair use" as prescribed in the U.S. Copyright Law. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this thesis in whole or in part may be granted only by the copyright holder.

Signature _____

Date _April 16th, 2004_

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS – CONTINUED

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF TABLES – CONTINUED

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This thesis critically evaluates the improvements in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health care needs for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. I specifically focus on the Relocation Policy and how that Policy, instead of assimilating American Indians into mainstream society, became a vehicle for elevating the population of American Indians in Minneapolis to a level of "visibility." As well, I discuss how this once "invisible" urban community formed an urban coalition, the American Indian Movement (AIM), to actively seek social justices in education, housing, and health care for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The intent of the research is to determine whether the extensive funding and programs directed toward the urban Indian population of Minneapolis throughout the last four decades have brought about significant improvements; to determine the degree of, and changes in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health needs of the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. This project is the first evaluation of whether conditions within the urban Indian community of Minneapolis have improved since Relocation. I think this project was needed to critically evaluate a metro area like Minneapolis that has such an extensive history of programs and funding for the urban Indian population.

INTRODUCTION

" Indian's in Cities?! You must be kidding." No just trying to set the record straight. Those who are living, working, or carrying out research about American Indian life in urban areas are aware that there is very little focused attention, research, or writing that relates to urban Native topics. A person cannot help wondering why, with more than half of the American Indian people now living in urban areas, there is so little urban-focused interest among researchers, writers, poets, and artists, and why there are so few books on urban themes and contexts (Lobo xi).

Urbanization is an exremely important phenomena because virtually all European writers imagine that "civilization" arises only with cities. Indeed, the very word civilization is derived from the Latin <u>civitat</u> and <u>civitas</u>. In particular, the city of Rome, is derived from <u>civis</u>, citizen. The word city, as well as the Castilian ciudad, is derived similarly (Forbes qtd in Lobo & Peters 4).

In academia, Eurocentrism is a dominant intellectual and educational movement that postulates the superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans (Battiste 58). A people that does not have cities or urban centers will ordinarily not be viewed as being "civilized" by eurocentric writers and, the dualistic split beween "nature" and "culture" in much of eurocentric thinking is also a "country" vs. "city" split. Most non-native writers picture Native Americans as people living on reservations, in rural areas, on the plains and pampas, or in small villages surrounded by mountains as in the Andes. Naturally, it becomes probematic for them when they discover that huge numbers of First Nations people reside today in cities such as Buenos Aires, Lima, La Paz, Guatemala City, Mexico City, Toronto, Denver, Chicago, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and so on (Forbes qtd in Lobo & Peters 5).

What many non-Native writers do not realize is that the First Americans have, in fact, gone through periods of deurbanization and reurbanization on various occasions in their histories and that urban life has been a major aspect of American

life from ancient times. In fact, it may well be that the Americas witnessed a greater process of urban development pre-1500 C.E. than did any other continent, with the growth of the most elaborate planned cities found anywhere. The evidence, with examples such as Cahokia, Moundville in Alabama, seems to indicate that from about 1600-1700 B.C. until 1519-1520 C.E., the largest cities in the world were often located in the Americas rather than in Asia, Africa, or Europe (Forbes qtd. in Lobo & Peters 5).

The metro areas of today are quite different than those found in ancient times, particularly in the diversity of people. Obviously, in cities like Cahokia, American Indian people were the majority. Today, American Indian people comprise a small segment of the population residing in metro areas. Even though there have always been Native people living in cities, the Federal Government's Relocation Program, from the 1940's through the 1960's, was instrumental in removing Indians, as many as one hundred thousand. Today, the majority of the 2.1 million Indians live in cities (Fixico 4).

Reluctant to leave their homelands, circumstances such as reservation landbases being too small, no viable economy, isolation, and neglect forced some American Indians to go to cities. Others were curious about "big city" life and eagerly volunteerd for Relocation. Unaware of the Government's motive in its Relocation Policy, Indian relocatees did not realize that Federal Bureaucrats wanted to integrate them into the urban mainstream.

But, the Federal Government underestimated the strength and value of community within American Indian Nations. The external forces of the urban mainstream helped to forge an urban Indian identity shaped by urban Indians themselves. Like their ancestors, who had learned to function in communities on the plains, in the woodlands, and in other environments, Indian Americans formed enclaves in the cities. Extended families as a part of the tribe were continued when relatives came to the cities. Sometimes the urban extended family broke apart. This reliance on kinship and social practices enabled Indian cultural and

physical survival in the big city during the 1960's and 1970's. Many urban Indians were quick to participate in Red Power activism in the 1960's and in the protests of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1970's. Communal life led to the creation of American Indian social and political movements and organizations, especially in the 1970's and 1980's. Tribal barriers continued to dissolve during the 1990's as inter-tribal efforts proved important to programs and organizations in meeting the needs of urban Indians (Fixico 5,6).

This thesis critically evaluates the improvements in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health care needs for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. I specifically focus on the Relocation Policy and how that Policy, instead of assimilating American Indians into mainstream society, became a vehicle for elevating the population of American Indians in Minneapolis to a level of "visibility." As well, I discuss how this once "invisible" urban community formed an urban coalition, the American Indian Movement (AIM), to actively seek social justices in education, housing, and health care for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The intent of the research is to determine whether the extensive funding and programs directed toward the urban Indian population of Minneapolis throughout the last four decades have brought about significant improvements; to determine the degree of, and changes in educational achievements, housing conditions, and health needs of the urban Indian population of Minneapolis, Minnesota. This project is the first evaluation of whether conditions within the urban Indian community of Minneapolis have improved since Relocation. I think this project was needed to critically evaluate a metro area like Minneapolis that has such an extensive history of programs and funding for the urban Indian population.

For the most part, materials are drawn from previous studies, my independent collation and analysis of published data from the 1960's -1990's, newspaper articles, and academic journals. Some important literature reviews include: Donald Fixico's book titled, The Urban Indian Experience in America. This book

is the first detailed account of experiences of urban Indian people in major cities across America. It comprises the urban Indians' experiences of Relocation, education, housing, employment, and health. Vine Deloria's, Nations Within, and Gerald Vizenor's book Crossbloods give historical information, and information on the formation and founding of the American Indian Movement and other "Red Power" movements. A book on the Native American Veteran's called Strong Hearts Wounded Knees by Tom Holms gives stories of the changing attitudes of Native American men and women after WWII. American Indians and the Urban Experience by Susan Lobo and Kurt Peters is a compilation of art, poetry and prose that documents American Indian experiences of urban life. This book emphasizes that American Indian life is urban, rural, and everything in between. Data and information from the League of Women Voters documented from the 1960's through the 1980's helped in my compilation and analysis. Also, academic journals like American Indian Quarterly, and the Journal of American Indian Education provided me with academic articles containing relevant information.

Significantly, I was honored to get interviews and stories from George McCauley, Rose Scott, and Juanita Espinosa of the American Indian Center in Minneapolis (2002). Also, Mary, George, and Maurice, urban Indians in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis shared their stories.

The term "urban Indian" is used extensively in the following pages. It includes Native Americans who moved to cities and who experienced urban life. Throughout this thesis, the words "Native American," "American Indian," and "Indian American" are used interchangeably to avoid tedious prose. No part of this thesis draws upon any one particular American Indian person or Nation. It is evident that there exists not one urban Indian experience, but many experiences and multiple perceptions. Today, two-thirds of all American Indian people live in cities. Many of the urban Indians in Minneapolis and other metro areas, are third or fourth generation city dwellers, the descendants of those who first came to urban areas during the Federal Government's Relocation Policy (Fixico 5).

RELOCATION

History of Relocation

The "urbanization" of American Indians represents a late 20th century step in the U.S. Government's continual attempt to dispossess Indian people of the remaining 1.5 percent of the land under their jurisdiction in North America. The economic base of the Plains Indians was removed by slaughtering 50 million buffalo within a six-year period, and other subsistence bases such as fishing were severely disrupted. Tribal land holdings were broken up and transferred to non-Indians in the 1887 Dawes Act[1], (24 Stat. 388, amended, 25 U.S.C. secs 331-58), and a system of Government lacking checks and balances was imposed upon Tribal Nations in the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act. Finally, in the early 1950s, the Federal Government embarked on a Relocation program (Community Collective 7).

Government officials envisioned Relocation as a reform effort to assist American Indians in finding jobs and housing, but it was the 1830's Indian Removal Policy repeated when the Government ordered Indians relocated and removed to reservations, oftentimes very distant from their aboriginal homelands. In the 1950's it was removal from reservations to cities (Fixico 4).

While the Federal Government made Relocation sound like benevolent and beneficial help for American Indians self-sufficiency, Congress at the same time instituted another policy during the 1950's concerning reservations. The Termination policy abandoned the goals of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and ended its efforts to improve Indian social, political, and economic life on the reservation.

---

[1]The Dawes Allotment Act, named after Senator Henry Dawes, allowed the Federal Government to impose160 acre deeds onto each member of a tribe, if they refused, a local agent accepted for them. The remaining acres were sold to non-Indian settlers. The land mass of American Indian tribes was greatly reduced, and of the 140 million acres of land that tribes collectively owned in 1887, only 50 million acres remained in 1934 when the Allotment Policy was abolished (Pevar 7).

Termination ended all Federal benefits and support services to certain Indian tribes and forced the dissolution of their reservations (Pevar 7).

In 1953, Congress adopted House Concurrent Resolution No. 108, authorizing legislation to end Federal benefits and services to various Indian tribes "at the earliest possible time" (Pevar 7). In the decade that followed, Congress terminated its assistance to over 100 tribes. Each of these tribes were ordered to distribute their land and property as "shares" in a "tribal corporation" to their members and dissolve their governments (Pevar 7). The Termination Policy was in effect from 1953-1968. American Indian peoples were instrumental in ending this Governmental policy and eventually reinstituting tribal status to most terminated tribes[2] .

Professor Donald L. Fixico skillfully points out in his book titled, "Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy 1945-1960," between 1945 and 1960, the Government concocted Termination to end the Federal trust relationship[3] with the tribes and Relocation to urbanize Indians on an individual basis. Until Termination and Relocation, Indian policy fluctuated back and forth between dealing with Indians as members of larger polities (tribes and nations) and treating Indians as backward individuals to be incorporated into the American mainstream. The new policy was to be a grand, one-two punch that not only got the Federal Government out of the Indian business, but also moved Indians as individuals away from their home communities to a "better life" (Fixico qtd. in Holm 108).

---

[2] Between 1954 and 1966 Congress terminated over one-hundred tribes, most of them in Oregon and California. There are still a number of tribes that have not regained their status (Pevar 7).

[3] The Supreme Court first recognized the existence of a 'trust relationship' between the Federal Government and the Indian Nations in its early decisions interpreting Indian treaties (Johnson v. McIntosh, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543 (1823)); (Cherokee Nation v. Georgia, 30 U.S. (5 Pet.)1 (1831); (Worcester v. Georgia, 31 U.S. (6 Pet.) 515 (1832)). Between 1787 and 1871 the United States entered into hundreds of treaties with Indian tribes. In almost all of these treaties, Indians gave up land in exchange for promises. These promises included a guarantee that the U.S. would create a permanent reservation for the tribe and would protect the safety and well-being of tribal members. The Supreme Court has held that such promises create a 'trust responsibility,' much like " that of a ward to his guardian" (Fixico qtd in Holm 108).

Relocation was officially introduced as a program in 1952 and open to all American Indians who qualified (Calloway & Fixico 2). It was so powerful and so effective that now two-thirds of the total Indian population lives in urban areas (Calloway & Fixico 2). The reason Relocation was so powerful was due both to the "push" of poverty and lack of job opportunities on reservations, combined with the threat of Termination by the Federal Government, and the "pull" of relatively good wages and job security to be found in the cities, even for unskilled, uneducated people (Lobo & Peters 190).

The chief architect of Relocation was a lifelong bureaucrat, Dillon S. Myer, whose primary qualification for the job was a dubious one: he had been a senior official in the program that interred Japanese-Americans into U.S. concentration camps during World War II. While Myer did not consider Indians to be "national security risks" like the Japanese, his goal was to assimilate Indians into the mainstream of American life. In doing so, he felt Indians would have more opportunity to improve their circumstances and shed their identity as a people; an identity that required "too much financial support" from the Government (Calloway 1).

Dillon Myer knew that his Relocation plan would especially appeal to the many American Indians who served in World War II. During the 1950s, patriotism was strong among American Indians. The extent of Native American participation in World War II surprised and satisfied officials in Washington. Although there were some American Indians who protested conscription and "fighting a white man's war," by and large Indians gave themselves over to the war effort. John Collier, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, authorized tribal agencies and Indian boarding and day schools to serve as draft boards and enlistment stations. Native American people responded with a one-hundred percent registration rate (Franco qtd in Holm 104).

At the War's end, there were over 25,000 Native Americans within the military services', the bulk of them in the U.S. Army (Holm 104). Today, there are more than 12,000 Native Americans serving in the U.S. military (Senator Tom Daschle).

Participation in World War II changed the attitude of many Indian people leading them to question their own second class citizenship. This attitude was especially prevalent among Indian men who served in World War II, and those who worked in war related industries who discovered economic opportunities off the reservation. By 1945, it was estimated that nearly 150,000 American Indians directly participated in the industrial, agricultural, and military aspects of the war effort. More importantly, more than 40,000 Native Americans had left their home communities to work in war-related industries in the cities (Holm 106).

The upshot of Native American sacrifices to the American war effort was a renewed Government effort to "amalgamate," or mix, Indians into mainstream American society. Many non-Indians took the Indian war effort as a sign that Native Americans were attempting to legitimize themselves as American citizens, gain entrance into the American mainstream, and share economically in the great victory over totalitarianism and oppression (Holm 107). In 1945, O.K. Armstrong, a writer with <u>Readers Digest</u>, wrote an article representative of the general mood titled, "Set the American Indians Free." He claimed to have interviewed Indians in all parts of the U.S. and stated that he:

> found that Indians possessed an unmistakable determination to demand full rights of citizenship, and that those Indians who return from the service will seek a greater share in American freedom. Moreover, those Native Americans who had labored in the factories and tasted economic opportunity for the first time would not be satisfied to live in a shack and loaf around in a blanket (qtd. in Holm 108).

Indian men who served in World War II knew the resources on reservations could not support the returning population and new insights of veterans. Economic opportunities for most Indians on reservations were limited. Reservation housing

often consisted of little more than shacks, without electricity or running water. In more remote areas, unemployment typically ran from 50-80%, and the average life span for both male and female Indians was barely 44 years (Calloway 2).

In the late 1940's, these hard economic and social realities motivated the Bureau of Indian Affairs to initiate its Relocation plan to encourage Indians to move to the cities, where there were jobs. Fixico recalls,

> Relocation was an experimental program. For it to work, there had
> to be a certain number of individuals 'volunteering' for relocation.
> Most American Indians did not know what it was. A lot of brochures,
> a lot of pamphlets circulated on Indian reservations really trying to
> convince the Indian people to voluntarily come to the relocation effort...
> to find jobs and find housing in large cities like Chicago and Minneapolis.
> It was kind of a package deal that you had to be between 18 years of
> age and about age 45. Most relocatees were American Indian men.
> They were single, and they were the first ones to go on relocation.
> But in order to make this work then a certain number of Indians had to be
> volunteering for relocation every year. The first year in 1952 there were
> 442 American Indians who were relocated, with a $500,000 budget
> (Calloway & Fixico 2).

The money was dispersed among many agencies to help the relocatees including: employment assistance programs, housing, education and health services. The Bureau of Indian Affairs contracted these services with private agencies to help the relocated Indian people.

The Role of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Relocation

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established in 1824 as the Federal Government's agency to deal with Indian affairs. The Indian migrants received assistance from the Relocation Program, created within the BIA. It was a long-standing policy of the BIA and Congress that the Bureau's special Federal services were to be provided only to reservation Indians eligible for such services. The basis of eligibility rested in treaties and residence on tax-exempt trust lands, reservations and allotments (BIA pamphlet 2).

The BIA's role remained relatively clear for most of its long history since the majority of people within its service population resided on reservations. But, with World War II, when thousands of Indians left the reservations for military service or for war time jobs, the steady movement off-reservations began taking place. The movement grew in the early 1950's with the initiation of the Employment Assistance Program under which the BIA helped Indian people by providing permanent employment in off-reservation areas. These services included assistance in obtaining employment, housing, vocational training, and orientation to the urban industrial community (BIA pamphlet 1).

Early in the 1970s, Congress, the BIA, and the Secretary of the Interior, faced a dilemna in deciding what the future role of the Bureau should be in light of the significant locational shifts in the Bureau's service population and its interaction with increasing numbers of non-Federal Indians (see Termination Policy p.6) in off-reservation areas. It was decided to reconfirm BIA activities to the reservation setting. If the BIA services were expanded into the off-reservation areas it would be inconsistent with national policy and would tend to compete with services from other sources (BIA pamphlet 1).

But, the BIA wanted to see that all American Indians residing on or off-reservations received necessary services in housing, education, employment opportunities, and medical treatment. Therefore, the BIA assumed the role of working with other Federal agencies such as the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Health Education and Welfare, and the Departments of Labor and Commerce, as well as, state local agencies and private organizations to assure services were made available in a meaningful way to meet the many pressing needs of off-reservation Indian people (BIA pamphlet 2).

In his message to Congress on National Indian Policy, delivered July 8, 1970, President Nixon clearly spelled out the role of the BIA with regard to urban Indians:

> The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is organized to serve the 462,000
> reservation Indians. The BIA's responsibility does not extend to
> Indians who have left the reservation, but this point is not always
> clearly understood...Indians living in urban areas have often
> lost out on the opportunity of participation in other programs
> designed for disadvantaged groups. As a first step toward
> helping the urban Indians, I am instructing appropriate officials
> to do all they can to ensure that this misunderstanding is corrected...
> In a joint effort, the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Department
> of Health Education and Welfare will expand support to a total of seven
> urban Indian centers in major cities...the Departments of Labor, Housing
> and Urban Development and Commerce...will contract with the BIA
> for the performance of relocation services which assist reservation Indians
> in their transition to urban employment (BIA pamphlet 2).

BIA bureaucrats wanted to simplify the application process for Relocation to make it easier for American Indians to apply. Uncertain of what to do and untrusting of prior BIA policies, Native Americans hesitated to volunteer for the new program. But, along with factors discussed above, curiosity about city life soon induced many people to apply. Native Americans frequently would arrive at an agency office to inquire "what is this relocation that I have been hearing about?" A survey of people from the terminated Klamath tribe who commonly relocated to Klamath Falls, a small urban center near the reservation in Oregon, revealed that they were attracted to stores, schools, and movie theaters. In addition, veterans, relatives, and friends, among the first to relocate, talked to their reservation brethren about adventurous good times in the cities. The realities for relocatees seemed positive. But were they? (Fixico 10-11).

History of Phillips Neighborhood and Early Relocatees

Whether the relocatees experience was positive or negative depended, in part, on where the BIA relocated them. In the 1940's and 50's, the early years of Relocation, the BIA chose the eastern half of the Phillips neighborhood in Minneapolis, formerly called the 'near 'Southside' or 'Southside' for relocating American Indians, from many different tribal Nations. Although this is one of several different areas, the Phillips area is the "identified" urban Indian community.

Historically, the western half of Phillips included the wealthiest families of Minneapolis; the Pillsburys, Peaveys, and Washburns. However, the eastern half of Phillips was built for "working class people" and industries because of its close proximity to the Southtown Yards (formerly Milwaukee Road Railroad), mass transit, and because real estate developers bought up most of the farm land and built rental housing there (Marks 1).

Eastern Phillips housed a diversity of immigrants, including: Bohemians, African Americans, Scandinavians, Germans, Irish, and Jews. South of Franklin, near Cedar Avenue, housed a concentration of immigrant Russian and Romanian Jews (Marks 2). In fact, there used to be a Jewish Synagogue at the intersection where the Little Earth Native American Housing Complex now stands. A city map titled "Legacy of a Working City" labeled the east side of Phillips as "slum housing" for "foreign born" and "Blacks" (Marks 2). Phillips is still one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Minneapolis where the people of color account for the majority of the population. Between 1980 and 1990, the Phillips population increased 61.8%, from 5,864 to 9,488 respectively (Phillips Demographic Characteristics 1). Between 1990 and 2000, the African American population rose 58.4% from 3,677 to 5,825; the Hispanic / Latino population increased 557.4% from 667 to 4,385, and; the "other race" category, primarily Somalis, rose 852% from 248 to 2,361 (Phillips Demographic Characteristics).

It has been theorized that the BIA chose the eastern side of Phillips for the urban Indian population, not just for its close proximity to industries, public transportation, and that the area was labelled for "new immigrants", but because this area had one of the highest percentages of rental housing, a chosen option of many relocatees (Marks 3). Unfortunately, the people who bought the land built cheap housing, or sub-standard housing to alleviate the housing shortage. Many of these sub-standard buildings were not kept up, leading to deplorable living conditions for the residents of east Phillips. Until the 1930's, 15-25% of homes in the east side of Phillips were without electricity, running water, or indoor plumbing.

In the depths of the Great Depression in 1934, the situation deteriorated significantly. By the 1950s, two small sections of the neighborhood were "rooming house districts" or "residential lower middle class districts," while the western half of Phillips was divided between "transitional business/ light industry" and a "main apartment house area." Seventy-five percent of the houses in east Phillips were rentals, and 20% of the housing was considered uninhabitable. Those statistics are not much different today (Marks 2).

The Realities for Relocatees

In reality, the circumstances for Indians who relocated from the reservation to any major city did not improve significantly. For many, they exchanged one form of poverty for another. "They were trained to be housekeepers and cooks. They were taught trades, they were not taught to be professional people," said Pat Tyson of Saint Augustine's Center for American Indians. A significant number could not afford decent food or housing, and soon found themselves without public aid once their Government relocation support ran out (Calloway 3).

The BIA support for Indian relocatees to the city in the early years of Relocation looked something like this:

> After an initial inquiry about Relocation to a Bureau of Indian Affairs official at an agency or an area office, the paperwork began. After reviewing an applicant's job skills and employment records, the official usually contacted the relocation office in the city of the applicant's choice. With clothes and personal items packed, the applicant customarily boarded a bus or train to the designated city, where he or she was met by a relocation worker. Upon arrival, the newcomer received a check to be spent under the supervision of the relocation officer. The officer sometimes accompanied the new urbanite to a nearby store to purchase such items as toiletries, cookware, groceries, bedding, clothes, and a new alarm clock to ensure punctual arrival at work (Fixico 11).

Mary and her husband George (last name anonymous), tell their story of Relocation to Minneapolis in 1958:

> The BIA officers paid for my husband and me to move to Minneapolis. So we moved. We were young and we needed jobs. We both got jobs at the Green Giant factory. I got pregnant and he

got laid off and went to see four different unemployment offices. I was
scared. I felt lonely and wanted to go back [home]. I wanted a medicine
person for my pregnancy... I was pregnant. The BIA paid our
way here. How could we get back home? Would they pay?
I just wanted to go [home]...(Interview 8/ 20/2002 Mary & George,[Cree]).

Adjusting to urban life proved difficult for Indian Americans who still retained
traditional values and viewed life from a native ethos. Tribal values maintained
through generations and a native perspective set apart American Indians from
other immigrants and inhabitants in the cities. The retention of traditionalism was
challenged by urban mainstream values on a daily basis (Fixico 5).

In trying to adjust to the urban mainstream, many relocatees first encountered
the usual problems of living in the big city: crime, inflation, employment, and
exploitation. The street-life environment was enough to contend with, but their
problems did not end here. The pressures of urban life challenged Native
lifestyles, a traditional guideline that had served them well through the centuries.
Transforming from a rural, tribal lifestyle to the urban mainstream resulted in a new
set of problems. Social alienation, community prejudice, and racism made urban
life difficult, forcing 70% of the early relocatees to return to their reservations
(Fixico 5).

In places like Chicago and Minneapolis it was as if the tall buildings suffocated
Indian people, especially those from the Plains where wide open spaces were
their solace. They were also baffled with the use of elevators found in these large
buildings. There are stories of Indians stepping into an elevator for the first time
and not knowing how it worked, learning how to get on and off a bus for the first
time, and experiencing the urban frustration of being lost while trying to find street
addresses. Also, living according to a schedule was a new experience for many
relocated Indians. In some instances instructions had to be given on how a clock
worked, and the relocatee was taught to tell time. Other modern gadgets that
relocatees knew little about were stoplights, telephones, and credit cards
(Fixico 14).

Despite these sometimes negative and new experiences, especially by first generation relocatees, and reports that Indians in the city felt as though they were serving time with Government administrators who did not really care, the experiences reported by people I interviewed indicate that Relocation was mostly positive, especially in the latter years when Relocation was no longer a Policy and there were more urban Indian organizations to help in the adjustment. Here are some experiences shared with me about relocation to Minneapolis in the 1970's and 1980's.

In 1978, George McCauley of the American Indian Center in Minneapolis, relocated from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. He said,

> When I first arrived in Minneapolis I went to get a job. I went to the Employment Assistance Office and they told me to cut my hair. They said to cut my hair so I would have a better chance of getting a job. I told them I would not cut my hair. The one thing I would not do is cut my hair. The employment officer got mad at me and said I was being a stupid Indian. After having my hair cut in boarding school I told myself I would never cut my hair again. It [not getting a job] had nothing to do with my hair. I got a job here at the American Indian Center. I've left and come back. I've been here for over ten years. I like my job. When I go back to the 'rez' to visit my uncles I can't wait to get back to my job. I like visiting my uncles, but I get restless. I think it is a good idea to help people make it to places where there are jobs. We [urban Indians] could have used more money though! (George McCauley, [Lakota]).

Juanita Espinosa of the Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota, also employed by the American Indian Center in Minneapolis, says this of her experience with Relocation:

> I never intended on coming to Minneapolis. I never wanted to leave the reservation but my boyfriend was coming to Minneapolis in 1984, so I came. We came in a run-down Jeep with no heat in the middle of winter, and by the time we arrived, I was very sick. I went to the Indian Health Board and they helped me. While I was there I told them I was looking for a job and they told me to go into a room down the hall. I went into the room and they told me they were conducting a study for the University of Minnesota on diabetes in the American Indian population, and they needed me to collect blood samples from the community people. So, this other woman and I went around to the neighborhood people. We went door to door collecting blood samples for this diabetes study. We became known as the 'blood girls' (Juanita Espinosa).

These are just two examples, but for many Indian men and women who
have lived and worked off the reservation, there may be no real desire to
permanently return to it. Lack of job opportunities and the lure of the excitement
of "big city life" draw young Indian men and women into off-reservation training
programs or educational situations that expose them to a much broader range of
experiences than they feel they can get on the reservation. For those who want
to return to the reservation, especially after a college education, the problems of
being fully accepted as a member of the community may be great (Fixico 4).

The optimistic side of Relocation is a rise in the Indian standard of living in
urban areas during the last twenty five years and perhaps longer. A segment of
the Indian population has become educated and moved on to professional
careers, creating a Native American middle-class that resides primarily in the cities
(Fixico 6).

The early reports on Indians in the cities seemed to view a single urban way
of life for Indians. Today, it is useless and absurd to talk about "the urban Indian"
in the singular. The adjustment patterns, recreational behavior, employment, and
education expectations vary as much for people classified as 'Indian' as similar
expectations vary for the general population moving from non-urban to urban
life. Some come from other cities, or very large towns, or from villages; others
are rural but not from reservations, and many, of course, are from reservations.
It is therefore as difficult to talk about "the urban Indian" in Minneapolis as a
generalization, as it is to talk about the entire population of Minnesotans as a
generalization (Waddell & Watson 171-172).

An example of this difference is found in a comparison between first generation
and second generation Anishinaabe Indians in a city called Riverton. The first
generation of Anishinaabe to have grown up in Riverton are the children of people
who grew up on reservations, or in rural Indian communities, or small towns but
moved to Riverton. Members of the first generation are generally proud of their
Native American heritage and express their Indian identity openly. They talk

about growing up in a genuine sense of a community that had developed early on among their Native American parents who kept in touch with other Indian people through social connections such as potluck dinners, a bowling league, and work parties to help one another with home improvement projects. These first generation Anishinaabe urban Indians tend to be verbal and vocal about their Native American heritage; they talk about being Indian in public settings, among themselves, and with their children (Lobo & Peters 190).

It was a whole different experience for the second-generation of Anishinaabe Indians in Riverton. They talk about an elusive Pan-Indian heritage that hovered around the margins of their childhood, not quite present, yet never completely absent. They express the pain, confusion, and shame that seem to have constituted an all-too-salient aspect of their "American Indian heritage" during their childhood years (Lobo & Peters 191). Not growing up on their tribal land, not hearing their Native language, and not being around relatives and their ancestral community has left an emptiness inside. They have become tenacious in seeking their answers in the knowledge and practices of the cultural heritage they have come to feel is their birthright. They seek, in the words of Michelle Duncan, Anishinaabe, to "fill the holes in their hearts." She said:

> The majority of us [city-raised Indian people] walk around with this hole in our heart. We know we are different, that there is a piece of our life that is missing. And once we can find out what is missing, and fill that hole ourselves, then we see a whole person emerge. We start asking questions, and we become these enormous sponges, and we just want to absorb, absorb, absorb. And it fills that hole (Lobo & Peters 195).

However, there was, and is one commonality among many urban Indians in cities like Minneapolis, and that is a need for equal opportunities in education, health, housing, and employment. Instead of assimilating into the mainstream, the intention of Dillon Myer's Relocation Program, most American Indians did what they knew best, they formed their own community in these metropolitan areas. Concentration in urban areas, a result of Relocation, helped to 'boost' the

American Indian to a level of visibility achieved by other populations fighting for equal rights in the 1960's, and 1970's. Relocation provided a strength in numbers for the urban Indian population of Minneapolis that became a vehicle in providing a stronger 'voice' for the urban Indian community, and eventually, for many Native people. This 'voice' turned into activism in the 1960's for achieving better education, health, housing, and employment opportunities for this segment of the population that continued to grow throughout the following decades in Minneapolis.

POPULATION

Miscounts and Misrepresentation in Census Numbers

The population count of the urban Indian population, and the American Indian population in general, has always been undercounted, and has included persons claiming to have 'Indian' blood. In the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau's statistics, Native Americans in Minnesota were undercounted by 4.5%, and those living on reservations were undercounted by 12.2% (Farrar 1). Census numbers released from the 2000 census show that overall, Minnesota's American Indian population grew 10%, from 49,474 to 54,967, counting only those who said they were 100% American Indian. The picture is somewhat fuzzy with another 26,000 people in Minnesota who said they were American Indian plus another race, mostly white, and it is not clear how those people were counted in 1990 (IMDiversity 1).

Nationwide, the Census Bureau reports that the number of people who identified themselves since 1990 as American Indians increased 26%, to 2.5 million. An example of a program providing a more accurate census count of urban Indians is the "Strength of Nations Project" at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. In 2000, a group of University students took the first urban Indian census count for the city of Milwaukee. "The census will increase our visibility as well as our numbers," said Katherine Clute, from the Tonawanda Band of Seneca (Clute 1). Also, the Census Bureau instituted an Outreach Program using respected tribal leaders and elders, both on and off-reservation, to gain a more accurate count of the American Indian population in the 2000 census. Does that add up to a rapidly growing Indian population? Not necessarily. Native Americans are far more difficult to count than most ethnic groups (Shukovsky 2).

Several explanations for this miscalculation of the urban Indian population in Minneapolis, as well as other cities, include: (1) A high mobility among the urban American Indian population. Many people travel back and forth between reservation living and city living. This makes it hard for the Census Bureau to track

this segment of the population. But, the hardest thing for Native American people is to trust the Government, given their turbulent history. This deep-seated suspicion of the Government likely prompts many Native Americans to avoid being found. In the past, when the Government wanted to find Indians, it was always for a negative outcome, whether it be to remove them to another land-base, or to oppress them in one way or another. Also, there is a lack of interest, and a lack of awareness about how census numbers work and how they are used (i.e., education, housing, health, and job training for a particular group of people) (Shukovsky 3).

The U.S. census count is calculated from one of two forms; a short form with eight basic questions, or a long form with fifty three detailed questions (households are chosen at random for the type of form they receive). Households are given a form in mid-March, and have until the first day of April to mail forms back to the Census Bureau. However, the mail response rate for all populations, has dropped consistently between 1970 and 1980 (Farrar 1).

According to a recent study, only 3% of the Native American and Alaskan Native community is likely to respond to the census. The study, conducted by Yankelovich Partners, a marketing research firm based in Connecticut, categorizes Native American and Alaskan Natives together. Most people falling within the 3% who respond are 28 years old or older, educated, and live in urban areas. The 78% least likely to respond, include adults and elders with little or no education who live on reservations and have disassociated themselves with the census, or don't believe they could benefit from participating in it. The study also reveals that 19% of the Native American population is undecided and passive regarding the census; this segment consists of adults age 18-50 who live on reservations or in urban areas and have a high school education (Farrar 2).

Another issue that complicates accurate census counts for Native Americans is that the new census forms give people the option of writing in additional races and checking off as many races as they want, making 63 race categories possible

once the forms are compiled by the Census Bureau. This change was made after an extended debate in the 1990's about how to count people with parents of different ethnicities who wanted to include both heritages, or perhaps more than two (Glazer 2). This allowed 4.1 million people to self-identify as having some degree of Indian ancestry in the 2000 census (Shukovsky 3).

This "multi-racial" option, which is part of the Census 2000 Redistricting Data Program (Public Law 94-171) plays into the whole "can of worms" of the blood quantum issue. The most striking aspect of the American census of 2000, compared to previous years, is that the short form, that goes to all American households, consists mostly of questions on "race" and "Hispanicity." Two questions ask for the respondent's race and whether the respondent is of "Spanish/ Hispanic" origin including: Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto-Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish-Hispanic origin. Both questions go into considerable detail to determine just what race, and just what kind of "Hispanic," the respondent is. The race question lists many possibilities to choose from, including, to begin with, "white" and "black," as well as "American Indian," with an additional request to list the name of the tribe, "Eskimo," or "Aleut," or "Cree," etc. Then under the general heading " Asian or Pacific Islander (API)," it lists as seperate choices: Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Asian Indian, Samoan, Guamanian, or other race (Glazer 2).

The mixed-race choices complicate the issue of choosing a base to measure the progress of, or possible discrimination against, minorities, an important step in affirmative action programs. That is the reason some minority leaders opposed allowing the mixed-race option. If the base becomes smaller, the degree of discrimination a group may claim by noting how many members of the group have attained this or that status is reduced (Glazer 9). For example, if someone chooses "American Indian" and another race, is that person included in the count of American Indians? The Office of Management and Budget oversees the race and ethnic statistics compiled by Federal agencies, and it has determined that for

their purposes (affirmative-action monitoring and the like) all multi-race respondents who chose "white" and a minority race are counted as the minority, a decision that has pleased minority advocates (Glazer 8). Although some people have expressed gratitude that the options on the census forms allow them to acknowledge their heritage(s), it is anyone's guess how this will affect programs. In 1990, each person, regardless of race, counted on the census brought $1,500 over a 10 year period to their community, and it is estimated that each person in the 2000 census will bring $2,500 to their community (Farrar 2).

Author Sherman Alexie, a Spokane who grew up on the reservation, said he sees " a real danger in overcounting in urban areas because of people saying they are Indians when they don't really have any cultural, financial, or political stake in their tribe or its interest." Alexie said that the self-identification by 'wannabees' allowed in the 2000 census may skew the count, and shift Federal dollars away from reservations to serve newly identified urban Indians who really are not Indian (Shukovsky 4).

Although this "multi-racial" category is new on the 2000 census form, it is not new for people to indicate a mixed racial heritage. It is not a new phenomena for people to indicate some level of Indian heritage, even if the 'blood quantum' level is only 1/ 64th.

The blood quantum issue, and self-identifying with a tribal heritage have always been controversial subjects. In 1928, Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, commissioned The Meriam Report, the first detailed report on the dire conditions of Native Americans. The Secretary of the Interior wrote of the Twin Cities' (Minneapolis & Saint Paul) urban Indian population as being middle class and fiercely determined to remain Indian:

> One gets the impression in St. Paul and Minneapolis that most of the persons claiming to be Indians have but a slight degree of Indian blood. From, "Lists of Indians" furnished by the several reservations, many were reached whose personal appearance indicated French or Scandinavian blood, rather than Indian. In a number of cases a claim of

> only 1/ 16, 1/ 32, or 1/ 64 Indian blood was made, yet great insistence
> was put upon the right to be designated " Indian." Some of the so-called
> Indians were found to be persons generally believed to be white, who
> were living in the type of home that fairly prosperous young
> professional or business folk generally enjoy (Ebbott & Rosenblatt 80).

This statement demonstrates the long-standing debate over who is Indian. One dominant, stereotypical idea is that someone is more "Indian" if they have more Native blood, or "look" more Indian American. If you ask many Native American people 'blood Quantum' alone does not make a person part of a tribal community. It is living the culture, learning the traditons, speaking the language, and participating and being part of the American Indian community.

Also, the fact remains that some Native Americans identify themselves as White/ Caucasian on the census form. I interviewed Rose Scott, a Chippewa / Oneida Indian at the Minneapolis Indian Center. Rose never grew up on a reservation and also said she " never understood what it meant to be an Indian." When she came to the Minneapolis area, she married a white man and had four children. She admits to marking the box labelled White/ Caucasian for her children. It was not until her fourth child that she finally started marking the box labelled Native American. She said she never had the Native American cultural experiences that she feels gives people their true self-identity as being ' Indians.' To Rose, and many other American Indians, the issue of racial identity is not just about 'blood quantums.'

As one reads the following sections on the population of urban Indians in Minneapolis, take all of the undercount and misrepresentation issues into consideration, especially in regards to the Census Bureau numbers.

Tribal Affiliations Among Urban Indian Population in Minneapolis

Priscilla Buffalohead, Director of the American Indian Program of the Osseo school district, identified these tribal affiliations among part of the urban Indian population.

Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Cherokee, Inca, Mexico, Comanche,
Koomeeaay (Mission Indians), Miami, Mohawk, Cheyenne,
Potawatomi, Metis, Washoe, Navajo, Powhatan, Carrier, Tlingit,
Ojibwe (Sault ste. Marie, White Earth, Mille Lacs, Red Lake,
Turtle Mountain, Bois Forte, Grand Portage, Leach Lake),
Dakota (Sisseton-Wahpeton, Shakopee-Mdewakanton), and
Lakota (Rosebud, Pine Ridge, Cheyenne River)
(Priscilla Buffalohead, Interview, 09/30/02).

Although there is a lot of tribal diversity in the urban Indian population of

Minneapolis, the majority come from the Dakota and Ojibway Nations from

reservations in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, and of course,

Minnesota (see Maps #1-5).

The Trend of the Urban Indian Population of Minneapolis

In 1940, the U.S. Census reported 145 Indians in Minneapolis, and 426 in

1950. These figures were regarded by many as lower than the actual numbers,

and it was acknowledged that some Indians had been "absorbed" by the majority

society and did not identify themselves as Indians (League of Women Voters

1968, 2).

In 1960, the U.S. Census reported 2,077 urban Indians in Minneapolis. This

number was 0.4% of the total population. By 1970, the Minneapolis Indian

population tripled to 5,829 or 1.3% of the total population. In 1970, the Census

Bureau also stated the following regarding the urban Indian population in

Minneapolis:

Many people believe that the numerical count is a conservative one
due to the difficulty of locating and identifying some Indians, but the
trend is clear. Increasingly, Indians are leaving the reservation where
unemployment is extremely high in search of a better life in the city,
and their families are growing (qtd in League of Women Voters 1971, 2).

The 1980 Census reported that approximately half of the Indian population

resided in urban areas from small towns to large metropolitan areas, like Chicago

and Minneapolis (Fixico 4). The 1980 Census listed 8,933 Indians in Minneapolis,

a 53% increase over the previous decade. Given this increase, Minneapolis
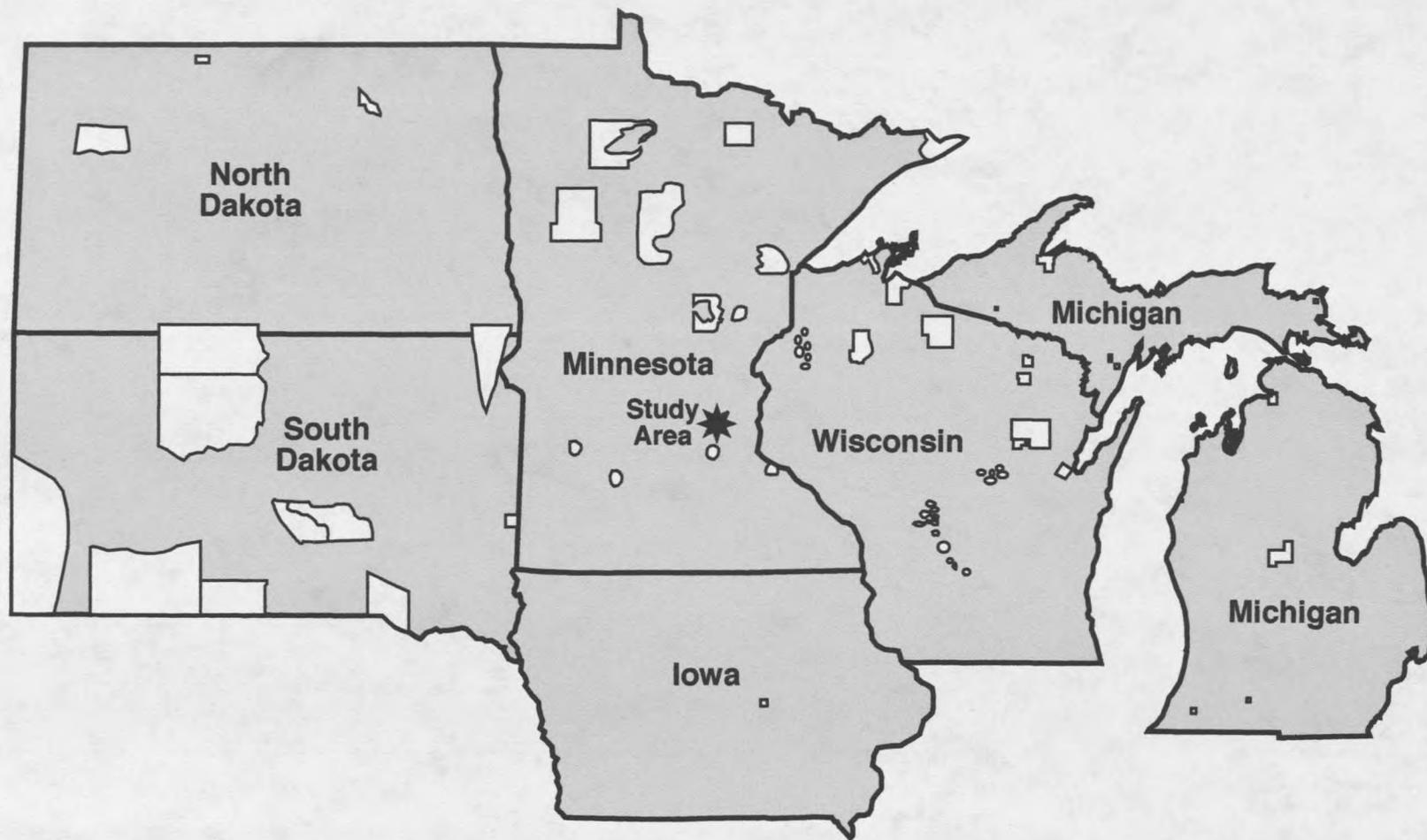
Map 1:
★ **The Urban Indian Population of Minneapolis is mostly derived from the**
Federally recognized Reservations located in these six contiguous states.
(See maps on following pages for individual state reservation specifics.)
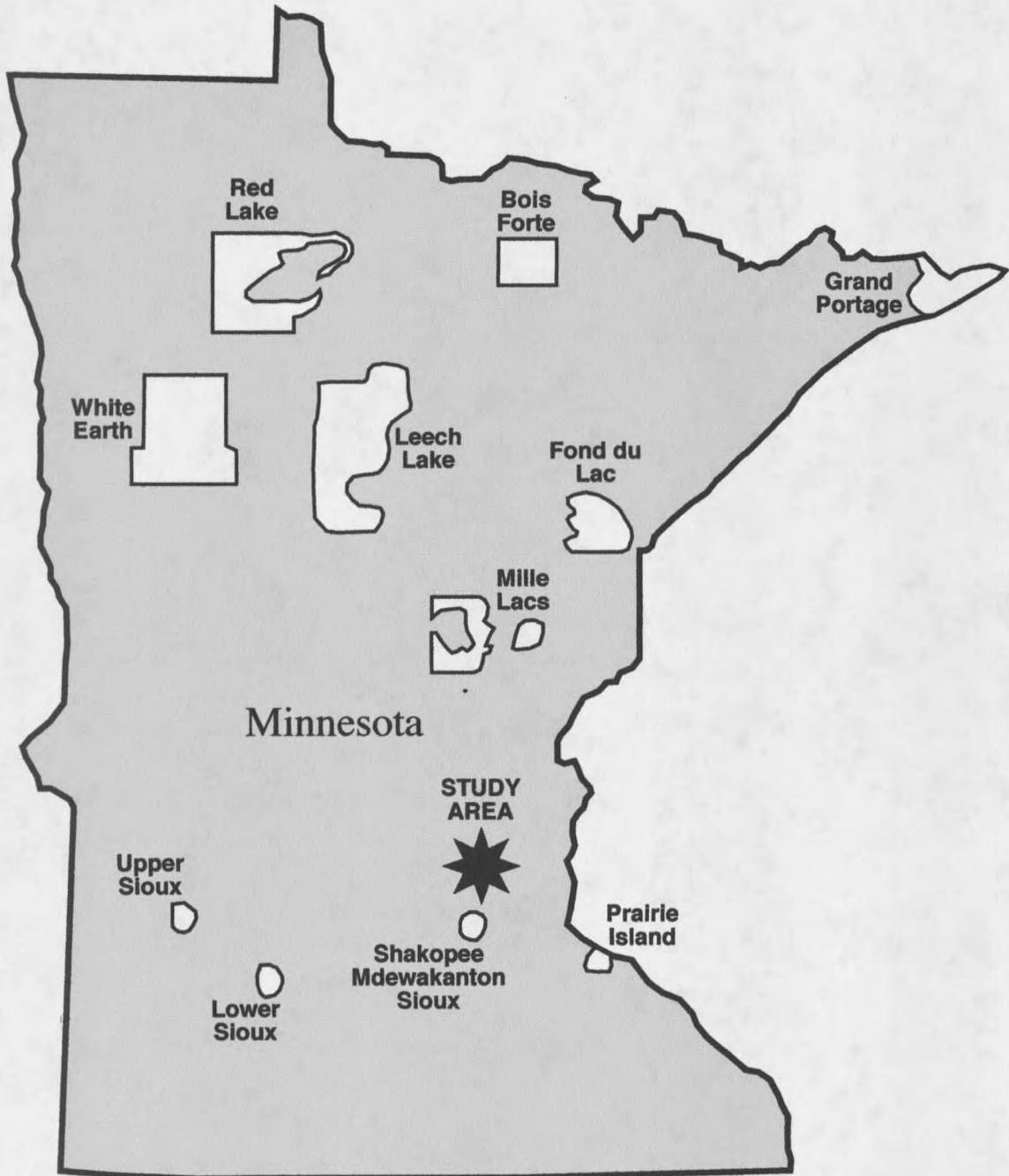
Map 2:
Federally recognized Reservations located in Minnesota.