BROCHET AIRPORT

ELEVATION 1136 Feet
Aboriginal Canada

• Considering aboriginal people in Canada
• Begin with a profile of a small, remote First Nations community in northern Manitoba:
  – Brochet
Brochet MB

• Community of 700 on Reindeer Lake in NW Manitoba, almost 58 degrees North
• Most are Cree, of Barren Lands FN.
• 1 hour from Thompson by air
• 4-6 hours from Lynn Lake by winter road
• 1 store: the Northern, 1 family-run pizza place
Brochet MB

- Home town of playwright Thomson Highway
  - Now living in Paris
  - “I don’t do Canadian winters anymore” (2006)
Brochet

• Birthplace of actor Billy Merasty
Brochet Demographics

- 2006 Census only counted half the population
  - Inaccurate
- Census: Population of 306 in 2006
  - In reality: 700 or so
  - 4 per dwelling
- Grew approx. 6% 2001-6
- A young population: 10% are under 5
Brochet Demographics

- Only 5 people were counted in the 2011 census.
Land Treaties

• Brochet included as “an adhesion” in 1908 to 1870s-era Treaty Five
• First Nations then worried about potential for land and resource seizure without treaty protection in northern Manitoba
  – Churchill railway scheme
Two major dams in Saskatchewan

- Island Falls Dam (1929)
- Whitesand Dam 1942
- Flooded aboriginal land without compensation
- Disrupted wildlife, traditional aboriginal ways of life
Brochet

- Catholics established a mission station at Brochet
- Brochet children sent to Catholic residential schools
  - Damage to their culture, identity
  - Physical and sexual abuse
Brochet

- Traditional economy, local food sources disrupted by hydro dams
- Isolation restricts commercial alternatives, increases costs
- Brochet becomes dependent on government assistance
Slow development of Infrastructure

- Nursing station, improved radio added 1969
- Airport, TV arrive 1973
Governance

• Ottawa 1970s onwards devolves a lot of powers on the Band Chief and council
  – Allocation of housing, health care, welfare
• Difficult for community members to appeal decisions
Housing

• Barren Lands FN allocates the native housing
  – Varying in quality, location
• History of uneven allocation
Disorder

• May 1982: several Brochet residents went on a drunken rampage
  – Following the arrival of tax refund cheques
  – At the request of the band chief: School, nursing station closed, teachers and nurses evacuated to Lynn Lake

• Feb 2012: armed standoff resolved by RCMP using facebook
Poor administration: 1980s

- Jeanette Highway, the only magistrate in Brochet in the 1980s
- Admits signing every warrant the RCMP brought her
  - Gets 50 cents per signature
- But she has no training
- Government does not make it easy for her to attend training sessions
Health Issues

• Brochet faces periodic boil-water advisories
  – Maintaining water quality requires expertise, equipment, chemicals, money

• Houses crowded
  – 4+ per house
  – Mold and fungus issues

• Several lack water, sewer connections
Lac Brochet

• A Dene community formed in the 1970s north of Brochet

• 1000 people in 135 homes
  – 50% of homes need major repairs
  – Only 25% of adults complete high school
  – High rates of teen suicide

• Has had the highest TB infection rates in the world
  – For the past ten years
Furs

- In the 1990s Brochet trappers still getting furs
- But Prices suffering due to European anti-fur lobby since the late 1980s
Figure 4. Reported marten harvests and adjusted (based on 2003 Canadian dollars) average pelt prices from 1967 to 2003 in west-central Alberta, Canada. Note that marten harvests were reported for the study area but pelt values were the average marten pelt value for Alberta (Statistics Canada 2002).
Cost of Living in Brochet (Feb 2006)

- $2.50/litre for gasoline
- $16 for 10 pounds of potatoes
A. Women’s Leather Jacket with Sherpa Lining
- Removable sherpa collar
- Quilted lining
- Contrast stitching
- Sizes M, L, XL, 2XL
  000-45063 - 3-lb. - Black
  169.99

B. Men’s Zip-Front Leather Jacket
- Quilted removable vest
- Contrast stitching
- Elastic waistband
- Reese pockets
- Sizes M, L, XL, 2XL
  000-45060 - 3-lb. - Black
  179.99
**Waring Pro Food Slicer**
- 7½" undulated stainless steel cutting blade
- Adjusting slide control knob
- Heavy duty 130 watt motor
- Non-slip suction feet for stability
- Five Year Limited Motor Warranty
- One Year Limited Appliance Warranty

**Price:** $129.99

**Waring Pro Professional Deep Fryer**
- Brushed stainless steel casing
- Adjustable thermostat and 30 minute timer
- Condensation catcher
- Glass viewing window
- 1500 watt heating element
- Temperature-activated auto shut-off
- Limited one year warranty

**Price:** $149.99

**Commercial Coffeemaker**
- Brushed stainless steel
- Will brew 12 cups of coffee in 4½ minutes
- 30-cup water reservoir
- 2 Warming plates • 2 Carafes
- Instant hot water spigot for soup, tea, hot chocolate

**Price:** $269.99

**SAMONA 10" Meat Cutting Band Saw**
- Includes meat grinding attachment with 5mm, 39 hole, 8mm 18 hole, 12mm 8 hole blades
- 3/4 horsepower, 120V
- 18" x 24" sliding table
- 8/4" minimum cut width
- 9/4" maximum cut width

**Price:** $499.99

**As Low As...**
- $13.99
- $21.99
Air Travel Costs

- **Perimeter Air**, Winnipeg to Brochet 2006:
  - $26 + GST for up to 12 pounds of general cargo ($2.16/lb)
  - Passenger flights about $693/person, each way

- **2014**
  - Passenger flights now $735+ Winnipeg-Brochet
  - $3.17/lb for general cargo
Brochet

- **Air links fairly fragile**
  - Weather-dependent
- **Companies come and go**
- **Northern airstrips too short for large aircraft**
  - Small planes make flights expensive
  - Recent flying accidents at Brochet
Ice Roads

- Vital winter road system serves 25 remote aboriginal communities in northern Manitoba
- In many recent winters, warm weather makes the roads unreliable
Brochet

- When leaving by air people talk of ‘going out’
  - They get asked to run errands in Thompson, fetch things from the store
- When ice roads go in
  - School closes to allow school buses to be serviced
  - People rent cube vans and head into Thompson, Lynn Lake, Winnipeg for supplies
  - Supplies come in
Thompson MB

- Third-largest city in Manitoba
  - INCO nickel smelter, being closed by Vale Inco
- Its motels offer freezer space
  - So that northerners can store their purchases
PH 677-5777
FAX 778-7516

TRUCKS ONLY ON
GRavel ROADS

NELSON HOUSE GILLAM
LEAF RAPIDS LYNN LAKE
SPLIT LAKE
CROSS LAKE
NORWAY HOUSE
OR ANY OTHER GRAVEL ROADS

WE OFFER CHRYSLER
DODGE & JEEP PRODUCTS
Brochet

- Community is split into “Town” and “The Reserve”, with a causeway in between
  - Reserve: the Cree
  - Town: the outsiders and non-Cree
- Town: established around a Catholic church, store, school, nursing station
- Reserve: social focus is the ‘Blue Hall’
Cree and Dene

• Brochet had both Cree and Dene until the 1980s
• Tensions with the Cree one reason for the Dene to relocate to Lac Brochet
Brochet School

- Administered by Frontier School Board
- K-9, 200 students
- 15 furnaces
Elders' Tea

When: Monday, February 13th
Where: Brochet School Homeec room
Time: 6:00 pm

Come out and enjoy yourself, eat some snacks, drink some tea, share your stories and don't forget your dabbers.

A special story telling by JB Herasty
Hosted by the Grade 8/9 class

Brochet Silver Wolves

Buy the NEW Brochet Shirt!!
only $20.00  See the office about payment + sizing
Brochet

• Gets its electricity from a diesel generator
  – Prospect for a greenhouse powered by its waste-heat

• Manitoba Hydro proposing to link Brochet to the grid
  – Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
  – Would cost $300,000 per customer
Brochet

• Tradition of eating country food
  – Berries, game, fish etc.,

• High cost of food flown or trucked in
  – People fish, trap, hunt
  – Ptarmigan: ‘chicken’, Caribou, rainbow trout …

• Bears, wolves a potential threat too
Caribou

• Brochet within the range of the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd
  – 500,000 strong in NWT, SK, MB
• Regional caribou herds conserved by an Aboriginal management board
  – Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board (BQCMRB)
Late 1970s

- Caribou herd numbers had dwindled
- Qamanirjuaq herd down to 44,000 animals from 150,000 since 1950s
- Brochet hunters had to travel hundreds of kilometres to hunt
- Important beginnings made in native-directed caribou conservation
Caribou Hunting

- Brochet hunters used to have to travel 150 kms to hunt Caribou
- Caribou have come closer in recent seasons
- Caribou hunting is a guy thing
- A tradition, a necessity, sustainable
- We went north, up the Cochrane River after the migrants of the Qamanirjuaq herd
Brochet

• Community is in fair shape but faces some challenges
  – Few of the young people complete high school
  – Community offers few jobs
  – Climate change affects winter access
  – Issue of all-weather roads being raised
  – Community short of trained professionals
Brochet

- Isolation makes health-care difficult
- Community is vulnerable to rising energy costs, climate change
- Climate change scheduled to make big changes in this zone
- Community leaders must navigate through difficult circumstances