STAVE: In the introduction to your book *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* you have some comments about why it took a long time for Canadian urban history to develop, and I think you list a number of reasons. You point out that Canadian urban history seems to have finally taken off, but it was retarded by attitudes toward local history, the emphasis on political history, the French attitude toward the city and the British attitude toward open spaces, and the language question in Canada. Yet it seems to me from your own work and the work you have done with Gilbert Stelter that there is a lot of urban history going on now. But this is relatively recent. So what I want to do is to inquire into the development of this whole process of urban history in Canada and into your own development, your own work, how it fits into the trends in Canadian history and where you think those are going to go. First let’s start off with your own background and then we can move into the other questions. Do you come from an urban background and how did you get interested in urban history?

ARTIBISE: Well, I come from a relatively small town in Manitoba - Dauphin, Manitoba.

STAVE: How big was it?

ARTIBISE: About 8000, it is still roughly that. It is perhaps 9 or 10,000. I was born and educated there until grade eleven. Then I took my senior matriculation in another small town just across the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border, Yorktown, Saskatchewan. It was really a rural childhood in one sense. It is a small farming service community. My father was a barber. So I have no urban back-
most of the historians were Ontario-trained, and most of their courses were on Ontario political history which didn't interest me. I can't really explain why. It was just not something that I wanted to pursue. So I took a course from NNNNNNNN MacDonald who is an American historian who is doing comparative work on Van Couver and Seattle. He offered a course on American urban history. So I began my interest in urban history by looking at American urban history through him. But the paper I did for him was on Winnipeg. It struck me as very strange that no one had written anything about Winnipeg.

STAVE: That has changed since then.

ARTIBISE: Yes. In fact, I am always kidded about it by all my colleagues. I have turned Winnipeg into sort of a growth industry. In any case I wrote a long paper on that which formed the basis for my Ph.D. And I picked Winnipeg not only because I knew it better than other cities but it also seemed to be a very interesting city because of its ethnic makeup, its rapid growth and its MNN dominance until the 1950's. There were all kinds of questions that came to mind and so I found it interesting. But what you mentioned earlier about attitudes, when I spoke to people in the department there it wasn't that they were negative about that study. But they really wondered how it could be done. They didn't know whether or not Winnipeg had a city archives, what kind of records were available, what I was going to do precisely. Although I more or less sorted that out in my mind. One of the things that came across in the courses we took, in the readings we did, was that there is a lot of debate about how you do urban history. Very little urban history is being done. And so, I decided that I was going to go to Winnipeg and I was going to look at everything that was there. And I was sure that something would come out of it. I wasn't very worried. But I didn't know what directions it would take.

STAVE: How much guidance did you get from MacDonald?

ARTIBISE: On the one hand, not a great deal. On the other hand a great deal. I will
ground to speak of. In fact, I still remember my first visit to the big city—Winnipeg—when I was about 13 or 14. We went there to play hockey.

Stave: How big was Winnipeg at the time?

Artibise: Well, it would have been about 4 or 500,000 around then. So it was quite a contrast for me. I remember driving down the main street and looking at all these what I considered then to be very huge buildings. They weren't, but they seemed to be then.

Stave: This would have been what year?

Artibise: That would have been in the late 1950's.

Stave: Now how far away were you from Winnipeg?

Artibise: About 230 or 240 miles. But I come from a big family and our entertainment and life cycle was very much related to the outdoors. My father was a hunter and a fisherman. We always went to the lake for all our holidays. And because it was a big family we didn't take extensive holidays and big trips. And we didn't go to Winnipeg very often. There wasn't any need to. But that's were I went after I graduated from high school. I did my undergraduate work at the University of Manitoba. But at that time I had no interest in urban history. It wasn't part of any of the lectures I took in any of the courses or anything like that. It was something that really didn't develop until I went to the University of British Columbia. And even then I was in American history which was kind of interesting, in pre-Civil War American history. And I had already picked out a Ph.D. topic. I was working under Gready Mc on the South at the University of British Columbia, on the Confederate Congress.

Stave: That is a long way from Winnipeg.

Artibise: The real change was that I saw the lay in terms of the job market. And I figured what am I going to do. I am going to want a job. American historians weren't being hired, whether they were American citizens or Canadian citizens at that time. And Canadian history was beginning to be a real growth field. This would be in the mid 1960's. And at the University of British Columbia
explain that. He didn't know anything about Winnipeg. And he didn't know a great deal about Canadian urban history. There wasn't much literature around to read. But I was influenced very much by Sam Bass Warner's book *The Private City*. If anything was a model that I used that was it. And we had read his scaffolding article in the course and discussed a great deal about it. Not only what Warner said, but what I liked about Warner is that he said this is how you should do urban history and then went out and did it. A lot of the other people kept talking about methodology and never seemed to come up with a book that said this is the result of it. So I used it in one sense as a model although I quickly found that there are many differences between Canadian and American urban development. He was talking about a much older city, and I was talking about a western city that grew up very dramatically. But Norm Macdonald was an excellent influence on me in the sense that when I sent him chapters and so on he was up to date with the American literature and the new ideas and questions that were being asked. So my study in that sense, it changed it from being a local history to an urban history which is really in my mind a distinction about what questions you ask and how you organize the material.

STAVE: What kinds of distinctions did you make? I think in some of the reviews it is referred to an urban biography of the city. As you know in the United States the urban biography is a passe kind of notion. Now I would gather that you wanted feel that your book is passe, that your approach was urban biography in the sense of Bessie Pierce or someone of that sort, and maybe even of Blake McElvy who has done some very good stuff. How would you differ the urban from the local and the biography?

ARTIBISE: I think that there are at least two distinctions and it's something that I tried to get across to my students when they are doing studies. The local
histories I have read, and God knows I have read a lot of them, that I find very, very difficult to file through. Usually, they are organized chronologically. They do not have any thematic basis to them. It is really a distinction about the questions that you ask. I tried in my Winnipeg book and in The History of Canadian Cities series or The Urban Biography series, as it began, that I know act as general editor for, to try to set up a framework whereby its chronological but within each chronological period you ask a number of thematic questions. You organize your study around quite obvious things, economic growth, population, society, politics, physical environment. And within each of those themes there are certain questions that must be answered. It is not so much a model, or conceptual framework, as the social scientists would say, but rather a set of questions, check points.

STAVE: This seems to come out in your writing in the Canadian City book, the way it is organized and some of the historical articles that have been developed, the three or four aspects of urban history that all come together. And looking at your syllabus very quickly it seems that this is the approach that you are telling your students to take as well.

ARTIBISE: Right. Well, it is something that Gilbert Stelter first developed. It made a lot of sense to me and I've added some things to it since then. But I've not yet found any other kind of list of questions that seems any better than that. This seems to deal with all aspects of the city. And what I was trying to do in Winnipeg was to write a book that other people could use, because while I'm not myself one of those people very interested in building models or large frameworks, methodologies, and so on, I recognize the need for it and I think work should be available to other people. And that of course is something that again I was influenced by a number of the American urban historians like Warner who taught his famous phrase about a series of discon-
lected local histories. That struck me as something that is always uppermost in my mind when I am doing my work and talking to other people about their work.

STAVE: How do you apply this to your Canadian Cities series? You have the first book that came out on Winnipeg, and there will be many others that will be coming out in this series. How are you going to define a comparative base so that you avoid a series?

ARTIBISE: Well, each author is writing a book for a series. They are not writing individual monographs where they have free sway. I give them about a 10 to 15 page outline. I ask them to write to that outline. Now every city quite obviously, and every historian at least admits this, whether they practice it or not, is unique. And I recognize that. And I say "In some cases the questions I want you to answer may not be applicable to your city. But rather than just leaving that out and some other historian coming along and wondering if it was just something that was not studied, we want you to say that urban reform in let's say Calgary did not apply in the same way as it applied in Toronto or Vanouver." So that for other historians and for social scientists for that matter, they will be able to quickly come across the information that they would need for their more general studies.

STAVE: Does this make more difficult for the author in the sense that they have to go outside of Calgary sources to determine this.

ARTIBISE: Right. We are trying and it is hard because there just aren't that many people working in the field to get people to have a good background already in urban studies or urban history, and also who have done a great deal of work on that community because to write a general history you have to have done a great deal of research to be able to make valid generalizations. We are running into problems, and I would expect that Volume 10 will be much better than my first
volume because they will be able to build on the volumes that have been written, and as the literature in the field expands there is more and more material available to make those kinds of comparisons. But it is a problem because some of the people we have of necessity contracted books with are not historians. Some of them are geographers. Some of them are not urban historians in the sense that they have taken courses or teach in those areas. So it is a building process. And I am learning and they are learning. We are going through, some of my authors I am sure are doing it right now, more drafts than we would like to try to fit it around a model.

STAVE: You mentioned the geographers. It seems to me from the material that I have read that they play a major role in urban history in Canada as it stands now, perhaps much more so than they ever played in the United States, although they have certainly been influential. People like Grant, for example. Why is this the case and how do the urban historians and the urban geographers mesh in Canada, the study of the urban process?

ARTIBISE: It is a good question. I am not sure of the correct answer to it. But one of the reasons that have struck me is that geographers since they don't call it local history. It has never had a negative connotation the way it did in historical studies. So urban things are part of their larger studies of regions and systems. When they do that work they have to use the local situations to provide the basis for the development of their work. So it has been a natural part of Canadian geography, XXXXXX that they were looking at cities and urban development. I think that the reason that historians and geographers in this country in the urban area work well together is because they are now very useful to each other. The models that geographers build which I usually disagree with, but I still find very useful in terms of providing questions that I should be asking of my material. And they are finding our work very useful when they try to do the more general studies.

STAVE: How?
ARTIBISE: Well, let's talk about for example in the central place theory or the gateway city theory. They have often borrowed these concepts from other countries. And when they try to apply them to Canada they find that it's very hard to make the generalization because those basic studies are not there. And the ongoing debate that I am having with my colleagues in geography now is about the elements that make a city grow or not grow. They usually deal with broad rationales for urban growth about resources and city systems and so on. And I am emphasizing the role of people in urban growth without denying those other things are important.

STAVE: Before you go on I think appropriate. One of the interesting things I noted in your Winnipeg monograph was your stress - I says this: "While the ecologists take the aggregate as the frame of reference, I have tried to emphasize the human and accidental, the contingencies of events and personalities." This is separating you off from more ecological analysts. What do you mean by this, the human and accidental? As you just said now you are more interested in studying people.

ARTIBISE: As I look at cities I'm always struck first by the perception that the people in the cities themselves have about how important what they did was to the growth of the city. So, the first thing that I should say is that whether I am right or wrong it's still an important part of urban studies to look at that. But I think it goes beyond that. I think it is an important element, and particularly so perhaps in western Canada, more so than in central Canada because of the nature of transportation. This is true also in the United States. Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, G are cities that grew up because of railways. And those railways in most cases went through those cities because the people in those cities attracted them. Now geographers argue that it is a question of whether Winnipeg was 12 miles one way or 12 miles another way. That is true to a certain extent, but beyond railways their efforts continued to influence decisions in terms of attract-
inge industry and immigrants and capital and directing the actual physical growth of the city. In many ways had they not been making those decisions and those decisions were being made less consciously by other kinds of forces without being debated in boards of trades and city councils, I think the physical product at the end would have been very different, the political nature of the cities would have been very different, and the size of the cities would have been very different. My problem is that I will never be able to prove that conclusively but I think it's true.

STAVE: The kind of approach you seem to be taking and your studying now boosterism in prairie cities...

ARTIBISE: That's right.

STAVE: And you have your emphasis on Leeds and your other work, the whole booster approach, it seems to be much like Trolly Glaab's work or Brownell's which is seen as one facet of U.S. urban history, but as a facet that has been diminished over the years in terms of the directions that it has gone to. Now do you think that this is a stage of Canadian urban history in what you are doing or do you think that this is something that is not going to be shunted off to the side by other approaches such as the social history approach?

ARTIBISE: Well, I think in one sense it is a stage. In other words the main distinction I see between American and Canadian urban history is that there has been so much more of it done in the United States. And there are a lot of very basic things that need to be done. And one of those questions is boosterism. Perhaps, after my study other people won't find it a topic that needs to be studied in more depth. However, personally I think that it is something that deserves a great deal of study. For example boosterism is still in a different form and we would use a different word to describe is still going on in the country. Just a week or so go the Canadian federal government and the province of Ontario gave 68 million dollars to the Ford Company to locate a plant in Ontario rather than Ohio. So this whole area of stimulating urban growth
which is what part of the booster concept is, it also has something to do
with what is going on in the community, the city as an entity. It is a
whole area where one can again organize your material, starting with the
booster concept. It is another framework that provides a set of questions
that one can ask about the sources.

STAVE: Is it a framework that depends more on rhetoric than other kinds of sources?
Is it more impressionistic?

ARTIBISE: That is a part of it. For example in Brownell's study on the urban ethos
in the south, that's the level he is dealing with. I'm trying to, not neces-
ecessarily go beyond that because I don't mean to diminish his study, but to
do that plus look at - Ok, this is the rhetoric, now what impact did it have?
When they talked about bonusing, was that a good thing or a bad thing? And
I argue in terms of prairie cities that until 1913 when a recession struck
that boosterism was very necessary. I mean it did make a difference to a
community. And if they had not offered inducements to immigrants, to industry,
to railways, they would not have grown up as major cities. But what is im-
portant, it seems to me, is that the rhetoric was so effective that they
started to convince themselves of things they first said to impress others.
They started to impress themselves. And the booster concept continued far
beyond the time when it was useful. After the recession of 1913 cities need-
to change pretty dramatically their approach to urban development. They
didn't. They continued to attract industry by giving away tax concessions
and land and so on, at a time when industries were now starting to play one
city off against the other, when they had very difficult financial troubles.
Virtually every western city was on the verge of bankruptcy in the 1920's.
And a number of them did go bankrupt. And that philosophy I would argue
has never really been got rid of in any Canadian city, and certainly in
western Canadian cities. Like Victoria. It is still very much a booster
town. And they will do anything to attract tourists and industry which is now a big thrust in this community, to try to create an industrial base here. I don't think that it is being looked at in a framework that I hope studies will be able to provide, that says there is a role for that but it needs to be looked at in a larger context. And it isn't.

STAVE: Now the work you are doing on the prairie cities is comparative, right?

ARTIBISE: Yes. I am taking five, the five major cities and looking at them from 1871 to 1931.

STAVE: How much of the frontier spirit is there and how much of the Turnerian kind of view do you find in Canadian history? How does this influence the kinds of things that you are doing and have been done in urban history. In my view much of U.S. urban history is a reaction to Turner. In Australia you have the image of the bushmen, the great Australian bush, as having played a major role and diverted the Australians away from what urban history is until relatively recent years. Most urbanized country in the world for a hundred years, and they didn't study it. With respect to the frontier myth here, is there much of it and how has it affected your own work?

ARTIBISE: It is something that is not very important, I think, in terms of understanding western Canadian urban development. Winnipeg is built very much on the Ontario model, I mean the influence of Ontario is very powerful. And continuing through to the cities of Alberta and Saskatchewan, the same thing applies. They started looking at Winnipeg which was built on Ontario. Sure the thing gets diluted but the whole metropolitan concept of J.M.S. Careless is more important in terms of understanding Canada and the west than using the Turner model.

STAVE: Can you expand on this metropolitan concept?

ARTIBISE: It is simply the argument that ideas, cultural baggage or whatever the phrase one wants to use, are transported almost intact to the frontier. We are talking about a physical area. And Winnipeg would like nothing better than
to be another Toronto. And similarly Regina wants to be like Winnipeg. And at some point in time rather they even go beyond that and say we are going to be bigger and better than Winnipeg and be like Toronto or Montreal and grow that way. So, the west is very conscious of what's going on in the east. And selectively, there are some things they do not like about the east and do not copy. And one could argue that that is a frontier experience. For example, in the political sphere, provincial and federal, and to a certain extent local politics are affected by the fact that the west is disenchanted with the old line parties, the liberals and conservatives. So they make conscious choices. But it not, it seems to me, growing out of the frontier experiences as out a unique set of circumstances. To talk in this general vein for a minute, I suppose my main goal is to continue to provide the kind of urban biographies or theme studies on a relatively small scale like taking five western Canadian cities, because the more work I do and the more I read in both American and Canadian urban studies, the less I am convinced that there will be any general theories that one can develop about and say that this is the Canadian urban experience and these kinds of things can be said about all Canadian cities. Even in my study of these five prairie cities a lot of the things that I hoped I would find as we all do because it makes it easier to write the thematic study, I'm finding that the generalizations I made in a couple of papers I did preliminary to actually doing a lot of the work, those generalizations are not true unfortunately.

STAVER: Such as what?

ARTIBISE: Well, Edmonton, for example, doesn't fit the whole booster model to the same extent as the other four prairie cities I'm looking at. One of the reasons, I suspect at this point, although I am just involved in the research now, is that Edmonton unlike the other four cities doesn't have as large a working class. It is very much a middle class city. So many of the generalizations I make about the board of trade element or the business group in Winnipeg
and the labor group don't apply to Edmonton. Factionalism there is very strong among businessmen, whereas in Winnipeg the business community works together very very well and factionalism such as it is does not surface very often. And I would argue, and I don't think this has been refuted by anyone so far that have done other work on the city, that business community unlike the case in most other cities work together very well right throughout the period of rapid growth. But in Edmonton they don't. I know this is almost a clique but Edmonton is unique as is every city. But the generalizations even in a small region like that where cities grow up side by side make it very hard to generalize.

STAVE: Well, do you think there are any universals in the process of urbanization? You may be familiar with Brian Berry's work *The Human Consequences of Urbanization* and the question of whether there are cultural differences or not about the process of urbanization and you can extend it to whether there are regional differences or just local differences as you are indicating now. What does this do to urban history if you come up with an Edmonton every place you try to study?

ARTIBISE: Well, I think one shouldn't be nihilistic about it. There are a number of things we can agree on. For example the structure of government, local government seems to be very important. And that structure has a long lasting influence. So I think in Canada, for example, we will be able to agree once enough of these studies are done, that certain directions we're taking in re-structuring local governments. And it depended on influences from the United States in terms of commission government and the strength of the executive and so on. A number of generalizations for the entire country will be able to be made. But beyond that the local conditions, the way that structure actually affected the community, we can say and agree that the structure does affect every community and there is an inertia in that structure that we still see in Canadian municipal politics. But how it precisely affected
each city is in some cases dramatically different.

STAWE: What factors would make a difference? You mentioned Edmonton, the lack of the working class.

ARTIBISE: Ethnic mixes is very important in the west as opposed to the east. It is striking to point out for example that around 1910 the city of Toronto was 95% WASP, whereas Winnipeg has 25% of its population of Slavic origin in 1910. So, there is real concern in Winnipeg about the vote and how local politics is going to be controlled because the elites in that community don't want this European riff raff to take over the cities.

STAWE: The voting was on property, right?

ARTIBISE: Yes. And not only did they control the vote by property but they controlled the structure of government by making the executive very strong, by trying to get appointed officials to control the government so that the masses could never take over the government. Well, that concern was not the same in Toronto because they weren't as concerned about the masses. There were still the working Anglo Saxons that some of the elites worried about but not to the same level. There is not this real...

STAWE: Class rather than culture.

ARTIBISE: That's right. And the other distinction is because it's a provincial jurisdiction. The franchise changes in every Canadian city. In the period prior to World War I it is based on property. And in the years after that it slowly become universal manhood suffrage, something that exists during this whole period at federal and provincial levels and not at the local. So that there's real distinctions between the three levels of politics about what's going on. You had to own property to vote and you had to own more property to run for office and even more property to run for the position of mayor. Plus, there was a plural vote.

STAWE: How long did this go on?
ARTIBISE: Well, it starts to break down around World War I. But every city changes at a different time. But I would say that in the decade from World War I through to the mid-twenties virtually every city adopts universal manhood suffrage. But they still retain things like the plural vote. In other words depending on how much property you can have that many votes, or in Victoria and in British Columbia for that matter we still have it that businesses vote.

STAVE: This is the corporation?

ARTIBISE: That's right because of the property they own. So the property principle is still very much a part of municipal politics in Canada. It is something, for example, if we are talking about what generalities we can derive from our study of urban development, that's one that is very important to understanding cities today, this whole development of civic government here. Another very interesting thing about Canadian urban government is the whole nonpartisanship idea in Canada. We have a myth in Canada that is very very strong still that politics at the local level should not be based on political parties that you just have the best men or women for whatever the case may be running for office. But we have really had political parties all the time. They just haven't been called that. When the business men got together they did so with a very important idea in mind and that was to keep labor from controlling the municipal corporation. And that has continued through to these days. All the nonpartisan leagues and associations or whatever the group calls themselves - they always have a name that implies that they are apolitical, whereas they are very political. But that myth has survived through to political politics today.

STAVE: I noticed in your book on Winnipeg: An Illustrated History, I guess in the biography series that you had a list somewhere on the various groups and their names, 1919 the Citizens' Committee of 1000, 1919-1921 the Citizens' League of Winnipeg, 1922 Citizens' Campaign Committee, and you go through 1971 the Independent Citizens' Election Committee.

ARTIBISE: And every city has something similar to that. Winnipeg's is different to the
extent that the Winnipeg general strike of 1919 was a pretty traumatic event for the business elite in that community. Other cities did not organize as effectively as did the Winnipeg business community. But none the less something similar to that takes place. So that's another generalization we can make.

STAVE: OK, this is a generalization that goes beyond Canada of course. You find this at least in the United States in most cities you'll have the same kind of upper class elite citizen participation.

ARTIBISE: But still the public mind and many social scientists, political scientists and others, still write as if there is nonpartisanship at the local level. That is a myth that is so deeply embedded in people's minds that it is going to take historians some time to convince them that just isn't how it happened. And decisions are still made on that basis in local governments.

STAVE: I was reading in a summary article you did with Gilbert Stelter on the Guelph Conference that the issue of urban reform had come up and the comparisons between the Canadian model and the United States model and the influence of, say, Sam Hayes which seems to be the kind of view you are following.

ARTIBISE: Yes. That article of his on Progressivism is one I have used and read and found very helpful. Although now after doing a lot more work I'm finding that some of the things that I picked out of it and seemed to make sense in Canada, as we investigate more I think there are real regional distinctions in the country and real distinctions between municipal reform in Canada and the United States.

STAVE: Well, apparently at least one of the papers at Guelph considered the differences and the question of centralization decision-making, elite control. This was not the case in the cities studied. I don't remember offhand which.
ARTIBISE: I think the paper you are referring to is one on municipal reform in western Canada by Jim Anderson. What he argues in that paper and it's based on some of my work and other work that is going on in western Canada is that first of all the assumption that has been made by most people that American reform models were borrowed wholly or not in Canada and applied without much thought. He admits that that did happen in many cases and more so in central Canada than in the west but that indigenous conditions also had a great impact on our urban reform. What we were talking about a few moments ago, the fact that cities had, in the west particular, these strange ethnic mixes compared to central Canada. It had an important impact on the decentralization of decision-making in an elected, or in many cases, appointed executive, city commissioners or whatever they were called.

STAVE: Why this kind of immigration? You say in Winnipeg 25% were Slavic in 1910 and some figures that I was looking at in a study comparing Canada and Australia by Bonn and Logan (?). That 50% of Canada's urban population has been added since 1951. And in 1971 34% of Toronto was foreign-born; Van Couver, about 26%. The role of immigration obviously plays a major role in Canadian history. This has been going on now for at least the entire century from what you are saying. What are the implications aside from the ones that you have already mentioned of the ethnic factor in Canadian urban history?

ARTIBISE: If one is dealing with the question of urban growth the figures you just mentioned indicate that the immigrants coming to Canada want to go to Van Couver and Toronto, particularly. And when one asks the question why do they want to go there, it is a question of jobs and culture and the fact that an ethnic community builds itself. Greeks from Greece realize there are Greeks in Toronto so they go there and build on it. It goes back to what we were talking about earlier in terms of boosterism. One of the arguments that was made by people then, and I'm particularly interested in it, was that
the antibooster said that the best way to make our city grow is to make it a safe healthy community with plenty of jobs and so on, but particularly healthy and lots of social services so it's an attractive place for people to live. And that it will grow by itself. Well, one can argue that that's what is happening in Toronto now, and Van Couver. They are healthy communities in many senses, economically and culturally. So that in itself attracts immigrants to them. Whereas Winnipeg, for example, which overexpanded and had many of the problems of the 1920's, '30's, and '40's has never really recovered from that first great attempt to make itself the metropolis of first western Canada and Canada itself.

STAVE: Why the immigrants? Why the large population, Slavic population around 1910?

ARTIBISE: This is where one trying to do the study of even a city has to be very familiar with Canadian history generally. There is the whole question of the law and immigration policies then to settle the west. There is a specific attempt by through his Minister of the Interior, Clifford to attract Slavic immigrants to western Canada because he argued that they would be the best kind of immigrants to develop the west agriculturally. And tens of thousands of them came, many stopped in Winnipeg to make a few dollars so that they could set up the farm. And of course they just never made that transition. They remained in Winnipeg. And again there was a number of Jewish immigrants in Winnipeg, and it became an attractive place for them in itself because all these elements that were necessary for the transition were there. They could speak their own language. There was a whole ethnic community established in Winnipeg.

STAVE: This is interesting in looking at some of your tables. I noticed that the Jewish population was about 8% back 50, 60, 70 years and it has diminished. What has happened to these people? Where have they gone? Have they simply assimilated into the population? Have they left the cities? And does the immigration process in Canada lead to a flight out of cities by others who don't like the immigrants that come in?
ARTIBISE: No, I don't think it does. The figures in Winnipeg, the percentage decline of Jewish people in Winnipeg is apparent. But the numbers have not declined. There is still a very vibrant alive Jewish community in Winnipeg. Next to Montreal it is probably the biggest and one of the most active in the country. And of all the groups they have been the group that assimilates at one level, but because being Jewish involves also a religious belief as well as a cultural background, they have maintained their institutions quite well in fact. The Jewish element was very important in the city because they acted as the middleman. They could speak the languages of many different Slavic groups that came into the city. And there is of course, particularly around World War I, a great deal of nativism expressed by the Anglo Saxons in the cities directed at the Slavs and Jews. And there is an antisemitism in the city and no one can deny that. But the Jews have done well in Winnipeg. A number of people beginning in the post World War II era, the old Anglo Saxon business leadership in Winnipeg is no longer there. That leadership is now being taken up by the ethnics and many of them are Jewish. And they are the new force in the city.

STAVE: Boosters?

ARTIBISE: Yes, boosters, but it is a different kind. It is more European kind of boosterism. It is part of boosterism in Winnipeg. If you talk to most Canadians despite the weather and climate and location of Winnipeg, they will admit as a cultural city it is one of the best in the country. And part of that comes from the European immigrants who saw building a community not only in economic terms but in cultural terms and educational terms, sports and recreation.

STAVE: Two things. I saw a sign when I came to your office about some conference on Ukrainian influence in Canada. This is another large group in Winnipeg and in Canada generally I gather.

ARTIBISE: In the west.

STAVE: Well, again, when ethnic groups or ethnoreligious groups like the Jews or ethnic groups like Ukrainians come into an area, is there - you mentioned
nativism and anti-Semitism in the 1920's—does this affect the development of the city? I mentioned my theory about running away in the American city. But do you have this? Now you don't have the same racial issue that you have in the United States. So that is one factor that is factored out. But on the cultural issue, the notion of the spacial differentiation in neighborhoods. Is there a running away element. That as the Jews move in somebody else moves out, as the Ukrainians move in someone moves out and you have this pattern developed.

**ARTIBISE:** At the individual city level, that certainly does happen. There is spacial differentiation in every community. In Winnipeg there is the famous North End which is the ethnic area of the city. But as time goes on that development added to the ethnic factor becomes a class. It is overlaid on top of it. So, for example, to speak of one group in that vein, the Jews begin by living in the North End in the ethnic community. As they move up the economic ladder they move to one of the more prestigious areas of the city, in the southern part of Winnipeg. So you can by looking at spacial patterns of development and overlaying ethnic and class you can see the rearrangement of the community; the physical rearrangement of the community is affected very directly by ethnicity and later by class. The same kind of pattern holds true, for example, in the city of Edmonton which is next to Winnipeg of the western cities the most effected by European immigration during this period. Not European. It is too broad a term. By Jewish and Ukrainian, the more groups that had a higher profile. Because there is lots of German immigration. That is the most important ethnic group in the west. But they tend to be a different kind of ethnic group in terms of assimilating much more quickly or at least giving the impression to the Anglo Saxons that they have assimilated, that they are not a problem.

**STAVE:** Aside from the obvious French influence in the east, what would be the major
differences between the eastern cities and the western cities in Canada?

ARTIBISE: You mean now?

STAVE: Over the century or throughout Canada's urban history.

ARTIBISE: Beginning when western cities started in the post Confederation period, that is after 1867, the main distinction right off the bat is the importance of the railway. To many cities of central Canada whether or not they got the railway would have an important impact on their rate of growth. But it wasn't a life or death situation because they had other means of transportation, usually water transportation. So in the west the railway is allimportant and this begins the whole concept of competing with your neighbor in the west for the railway and later for immigrants and industry. And that competitive edge in the west I think has had an important influence on western Canadian regionalism which is often talked about today because of the Quebec situation. The west has always felt that it got the raw end of the stick from the British North American Act and Confederation. One of the areas that I am finding interesting and it doesn't influence my research directly but I suspect in a few years down the road that I will be writing one or two articles or perhaps even a book about the role of urban development of western Canadian development in the broadest sense possible. I'm talking about how the prairies in British Columbia fit into the Canadian model. And what I'm finding is that the urban centers did not join together with the agrarian protests of the 1920's and '30's, a protests by the farmers against central Canadian control of the transportation systems and marketing systems and so on, because the cities felt themselves first different from their surrounding hinterlands. They felt that they had more connections with eastern Canadian business than they did with the farmers who lived right outside the borders of their own community. Secondly, the cities because they competed in this pre-1913 period for survival against each other, they never learned to cooperate after that. It's one of these holdovers I mentioned earlier. I'm beginning to think that it helps explain why western Canadian protest never really comes to gether.
Because it lacks the important leadership element that the urban elites could have provided. But they refused to join together with the Progressive Party in the twenties and later with Social - there are all kinds of labels - but all of those parties of protest have the same goal in mind and that is to make western Canada's place in confederation a more equal one as they view it. It is still a concern of western Canada and we still have the same lack of cooperation among the prairie creamiers (?) that has been evident right from the beginning. Cities play a very important role in understanding why that cooperation XXXXXX does not exist.

STAVE: OK. Let's go off this for a moment and on the work you do as editor of the Urban History Review. Can we talk a little about the origins of that and what you are trying to do with the Urban History Review, and how wide the circulation?

ARTIBISE: The real credit for beginning the Urban History Review has to go to Del Muise and John Taylor. Del Muise was at the time, he just recently left the National Museum of Man and moved to Carl (?) University in Ottawa. But he was then part of the history division of the National Museum of Man, and John Taylor who was then and is still at the Department of History at Carlton University. They began the Urban History Review, well we still use it on our introduction "As something more than a newsletter and something less than an established journal that publishes long articles". And it began very small with twenty or thirty pages, and it was basically an information sheet, something like the Newsletter in the United States and the Newsletter in Great Britain although it didn't start until 1972. It grew very slowly during those first years. I became directly associated with it in 1975 when I became Western Canadian Historian at the National Museum of Man. And I became co-editor with Del Muise and John Taylor. And since that time it has grown pretty dramatically reflecting on the one hand the growth of the
field, and on the other hand more energetic efforts on behalf of the editors and the editorial board to make it more than it was. It remained very much a newsletter for those first few years although there were some articles in it of some importance. But really we were getting feed back from most of our readers that the note section of it was very important in a country this large where traveling is expensive and university budgets are cut. But since then it is turning itself into a journal although we do not have any plans to make it a major journal to compete. I don't mean compete but to set itself aside the Canadian Historical Review or Social History or any of the other major journals in the country. But we are now publishing articles of twenty or thirty pages in length. We try to make the articles general kinds of articles that talk about how to do urban history or problems in doing urban history or reports on a series of studies that have been done and what kind of generalizations can we now make about urban Canada. But we also publish the odd article that just deals with a city or one or two cities. We try to make them more general. We also publish and try to do this on a regular basis historical graphical articles. In the February 1979 issue we have a fairly long article on urban historiography in Quebec which is slightly different than what's going on in the rest of the country. And so that kind of thing. I'm now sole editor of the Urban History Review and we are trying to push. We are also trying to broaden it in terms of - in two directions, one in terms of getting some contributions from American and British scholars who are working in the field both in terms of what's happening there and how they view what's happening in this country. Do they think we are making mistakes that they made or going in directions that we're going to find are not very fruitful in the long run. We just had an article by Sydney CheluKland on urban history in the British idiom, but he is a Canadian and
understands a bit about what's going on in this country. So we hope that by
him looking at British history he may be able to offer Canadian urban his-
torians some insights about directions we may take.

STAVE: Right. He's at the University of Glasgow.

ARTIBISE: The second direction that I hope to take the Urban History Review in and this
is something John Taylor at Carlton has been particularly interested in, is
to try to bring us into a closer liaison with social sciences. Again, in one
of the recent issues we have an article by [name from the Center]
for Community Studies at the University of Toronto about how he sees the
relationship between history and social science in the urban field. And that's
something we are particularly going to emphasize for the next couple of years,
quite
because I think there is a great deal we can learn from each other [obviously
although I tend to be more the historian than the social scientist. Some of
my colleagues move more in that direction as social scientists. But, none the
less it is an exchange that I hope will be very useful to both groups and I
think will be.

STAVE: Much of your work is aimed not simply at a scholarly audience but things that
are done for the National Museum of Man are aimed at a general audience. And
you've published in things like City Magazine and Plan Canada. And you have
a book coming out called The Useable Past with Gilbert Stelter. How do you
see history, urban history particularly, being used as part of the useable
past and what role do you see in aiming or what affect do you see occurring
as you try to broaden the audience for urban history. Do you see it as having
advantages and disadvantages, or just advantages?

ARTIBISE: That is a very broad question. Perhaps I should begin by saying that my
experience at the National Museum of Man was very useful to me as a historian.
It's an experience that most historians don't have.

STAVE: Can you tell me a little about it? I don't know very much about this.
don't think that it is very good. I think a lot of people writing what they call popular history have little appreciation of the methods of history. They make sweeping generalizations that should not be made or cannot be made on the basis of the research done or the evidence itself. And I felt that one of the weaknesses of the historical community in Canada was that we argued one, that popular history couldn't be done or two, it is not something we should be spending our time on. We get into the whole question of the historical profession or the universities that we all work in. And quite frankly when Winnipeg: An Illustrated History came out no one said it to me but I have the feeling, whether it is there or not, that people said "Well, that is the sort of thing that you do on the weekend or when you've got a few spare weeks. But when it comes down to dealing with promotions they want to see the big scholarly study." But I strongly believe and there's growing support for this idea among the historians in my generation that this is something we should be doing seriously. I mean writing popular history, but doing it very consciously so that we are giving our best to it. It is not something that is a sideline. And a number of other people are moving into that field. And a number of publishing houses are. They are having historians write books. They don't call them popular because of the connotations of that term. But they are aimed at a general audience. The series that I am doing, the western cities study for, is the Social History Series which are 200 odd page books.

STAVE: Who is editing that?

ARTIBISE: Michael Cross from Delhousier University (?) formerly from the University of Toronto. There are about five volumes out in it now.

STAVE: This is your prairie study?

ARTIBISE: Yes. You might be familiar with one of the books - Terry Cobb's Anatomy of Poverty which is a study of Montreal. That book has sold more than 10,000 copies now. It is being used in university courses. But it is also being
purchased by the public. So The History of Canadian Cities Series is something that is being aimed not only at the public. But that is our prime concern because it is supported by the National Museum. But we also hope by the scholarly community. Ideally, when thirty volumes are done, the thirty first volume can be a history of the Canadian city, that the person doesn't need to go out and do the research. They can take those thirty volumes and say "OK, what can we say about the development of urban Canada," and the basis will be there; the statistics will be there; the interpretation will be there but a lot of questions will just have been answered if only in simple form.

STAVE: Now those books are published by a regular publisher but subsidized by the museum?

ARTIBISE: Right. It is an arrangement that is made on a volume by volume basis between the National Museum of Man and James and Company which is a publishing firm in Toronto. There is a . Once the volume goes to press the publisher takes over totally and this is an advantage to the government in that they don't worry then about publicity or maintaining stocks and so on. The publisher takes that over.

STAVE: You were saying that your generation of historians thinks that this is important.

ARTIBISE: Well, many of them do. Not all of them.

STAVE: Do you see any disadvantages in trying to go public? Does it affect the kind of history you are writing?

ARTIBISE: Yes. If I had a single major concern about history, despite the fact that Gil Stelter and I are coming out with a book called Useable Urban Past I think that we are in danger of becoming very concerned about being relevant. And as soon as we become relevant we are no longer historians. That stems from the pressure on us in institutions to get public support for universities and for publishing programs. But it also stems and this is more important, I think, from the pressures that being put on us by social scientists to often
dismiss historians as people who sort of dabble but never really get down to the nitty gritty of building models and coming up with answers to current problems which I do not see historians having a role in. For example, in The Useable Urban Past what we are arguing is: We don't have solutions. The past is useable, we say, because without it you can't understand the problem that you are trying to solve. We don't come up with any solutions. We simply say that human development and society is very complex. That is a simplistic statement but it's often forgotten in many of the studies I read by social scientists because they assume away so many parts of reality to build their model that it's no longer reality they are talking about. So it is dangerous and it is something that I think the historical profession has to be very careful of, particularly because funding agencies have now been infected with that logic. A personal experience of mine which fortunately has a happy ending with our major granting agency here, the Canada Council. I put in a proposal for this western study. And I more or less said—it was a bit more involved than this, but that I want to look at five cities. I want to look at what happened between 1871 and 1931. And one of the ideas that I am trying to understand is this concept of boosterism. But I didn't say that I wanted to prove this or disprove that. My thinking back, having been refereed by a number of people I know who were not historians. And they said "look you have got to have a conceptual framework to do research. You just don't read a bunch of old newspapers." It has become an important matter to the point where we have to stand up and say ok, what are we doing as historians? What is our role in XXX society? Because if we don't and those kinds of people keep looking at our research proposals we are not going to be getting any money to do anything. The next thing that will happen is that universities will start questioning because the students will be affected by that. They will be saying why should we take history?
STAVE: In the Useable Urban Past, what kinds of articles will appear and what is the useable urban past?

ARTIBISE: A number of articles deal with urban government and what they are trying to suggest is that the structure of urban governments as we discussed earlier are something that last a long time and influence current problems in cities. We have a number of articles on urban growth, trying to understand boosterism. I have one in there. There is another on Guelph. There is one dealing with urban development in the Maritimes. But all these people are trying to say "Look, in the past these things happened. This is the way development took place. So a lot of the theories and generalizations that are made in the present about how to influence the directions of urban growth." You have to understand that in the past this was tried and didn't work. But you should know that in the past that it was tried and didn't work, that the structure of government, because now the urban reform movements, the modern urban reform movement in Canada which really reached a peak in the late sixties and early seventies is in the doldrums right now and they are regrouping, the reformers. Their first attempt was to reform the structure. And in many cases that happened. Ward systems were created because they had been done away with. But it didn't change things. I think we can give some of the reasons why it didn't work by looking at the past and seeing that structure is important. But structure is only a reflection of something else in that society, and it is controlled in many cases by a small business elite who have a very definite ends in mind. The other thing I think that will come out of the book, and the thing that I think both Gil and I feel most strongly about is that no prescription is going to work totally. What comes out of that book is how complex urban development is in this country and how regional distinctions, how important regional distinctions are and how important even developments in individual cities are. The study on western Canadian municipal government points that out, that there are real differences between Calgary and Saskatoon (?) and Winnepeg, and then again between Montreal local history whether it is of a region or of a city, there are some things
that we can help you with. And we are going to start putting together little
booklets and holding seminars." A number have been held in Manitoba very
successfully on how to write up local history. And urban history in that sense
is important. I hope in the next couple of years in Victoria to start offering
every other year perhaps a course downtown at noon hour or in the evening to
people on the history of Victoria where we'll start by reading about methodology
in urban history and reading histories by urban historians of other communities
and then by reading some local history. I would hope out of that experience
that they will be able to write not to the set prescription for the history of
Canadian City Series but stuff that later we'll be able to use. It is a selfish
motive on one hand.

STAVE: Who will XXXXX sponsor this?

ARTIBISE: The University is doing that sort of thing now.

STAVE: As an extension?

ARTIBISE: Right. We have a very active extension program as most universities do. There
are a lot of people out there who want courses. It is important for universities
to move into that area. As I said both out of conviction and out of necessity
they're doing this. I am very interested in that. One of the fascinations
that urban history has is that wherever you live you can work in that envi-
ronment. And someday I'm going to work on Victoria and British Columbia generally
I more or less restrict myself to prairies right now because there is so much
to do there. After this booster work I would like to another one of two urban
biographies of the other cities.

STAVE: Are there any other words you want to add on Canadian urban history, your own
work, or anything?

ARTIBISE: I don't think so. At least not at the moment that I can thing of to comment.

STAVE: Are you optimistic about the future of Canadian urban history?
ARTIBISE: Yes. One thing that perhaps I should say a thing or two about is having read your book on *The Making of Urban History* in the United States, I don't agree with a lot of the things that those people interviewed said. Sam Hayes Thernstrom and Warner and so on. I find reading those interviews that they are social scientists rather than historians. They say that the field of urban history is not really a distinct field. I don't think that it is a distinct field that is going to separate itself from history for example. Ultimately as I mentioned earlier in terms of western Canadian regionalism, things that we do in urban history will help explain about Canada. Ultimately that is what we are all working for as Canadian historians because we are Canadian historians first. But also the direction that they seem to be moving in the social science field is something that I don't think is happening among most urban historians although there are several who are more of that mold than the mold that perhaps Gil and myself or other people are in. Like Michael Katz, for example.

STAVE: Michael is of course an American.

ARTIBISE: Right. And I think it has to do with the distinction in age between the discipline. It is much older and much more highly developed. Maybe we will end up there in ten years from now. I don't know. But I don't see that as a positive development myself. I think there is a scope for spending the rest of my career doing exactly what I'm doing now at different levels. My ultimate goal right now over the next decade is to write a history of prairie urban development that would cover all aspects of it.

STAVE: Do you think part of this is a result of the kinds of sources that are available to you in Canada?

ARTIBISE: Fortunately for me, or unfortunately we don't have in the west because of the 100 year rule on the census, we don't have all the massive data to use. So it is not a problem to come to terms with. And ultimately it will be. Sources are part of the answer to that I think. But it also is something more profound
than that in terms of what role does a historian play in society. Is it his role to form policy and to be relevant and to provide answers to problems for government or for whatever. I say no. I think whereas the social scientists are trying to provide order. And I don't for a moment question the importance of that or say that that shouldn't be done. I encourage it. I just think that the historian has to be the one, while they are providing the order and using paradigms to develop their research for models and frameworks, that we have to be the ones that often take those frameworks and say it doesn't apply when you look at the city or that city. That framework doesn't work. I find myself doing that with many of the models geographers have built. Now all of us as academics did it would be chaos, but we don't all do that. And I think historians have a particular role to insure that those models which begin as research models but then become policy-oriented by government and are being applied to provide "solutions" \footnote{XXX} to current problems. I think we have to say "Look, no solution is going to work all the time." That doesn't mean that governments don't try to do that. But we have to be the people within the entire society who keeps saying a sense of time and of place and uniqueness is always there. Human society is very complex. And we have to provide that element.

STAVE: I think on that provocative point and that assignment for historians we are going to have to stop because of that. It is a good place. I thank you.