PARTICIPATION, SOCIAL CLASS, AND THE VOTE:

A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF DOVERCOURT AND PEEL

SOUTH RIDINGS FOR THE 1971 PROVINCIAL ELECTION

by

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A Research Paper submitted as partial

fulfillment of the degree of

Master of Arts

McMaster University   1972

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In the existing literature which comprises the main body of
knowledge regarding electoral aspects of political geography, nearly
all work has been carried out at a city wide, provincial, or national
scale. Few political geographers have done any analysis of election
results within individual constituencies with an aim toward identifying
spatial regularities. The fact that disaggregation of census materials
is not usually available for geographic units corresponding to polling
districts has led to studies of larger areas of multiple constituency
or city wide scope, where overlapping of enumeration and political
areas can be generalized to a greater degree. The relatively few Canadian
studies which have dealt with voting in a single constituency have almost
totally ignored any spatial pattern in the constituency vote.[1] Instead
they have concentrated their efforts in a more sociological study of
determination of voter characteristics, while failing to show any form
of spatial regularities in their results.

It is the purpose of this paper to attempt a socio-economic
and spatial identification of voter groups within the two provincial
constituencies of Dovercourt and Peel South, and to compare the results
achieved with existing theories of political behaviour.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Participation in the political process may take many forms and may be influenced by a variety of factors such as socio-economic status, education, political efficacy and geographic location. From a geographic point of view the level and types of political participation engaged in bespeak a great deal about both the voter and the community in which he resides. Much of this theoretical background will therefore focus on factors which may determine voting characteristics of individuals, and in what way spatial groupings of such individuals according to these factors may be reflected in the spatial distribution of the vote.

Socio-economic Status

In analyzing the political sociology of the individual, both Van Loon and Milbrath present political participation in an active - passive spectrum, with the holding of political office (a gladiator role) at the pinnacle and the simple act of voting forming the lowest level of the scale.[2] For the sake of this paper, concentration has focussed on what they classify as the passive role of individual ballot casting. In order to elaborate on their model to the stage of determining the number of individuals, by geographic area, participating at various levels in this participation hierarchy would require detailed personal surveying beyond the constraints of this paper.

Van Loon's model for political participation utilizes,
but expands upon the standard factors of socio-economic charact-
eristics, personality, and political influences, and their related
effect on the participatory act of voting. Socio-economic status,
he feels, must also be looked at in terms of the resources, both
social and economic, available to persons of various classes. At
a simplistic level, how much money, or perhaps even more important,
how much time can a person devote to political activity ? Since
various forms of political activity such as office holding may be
continuous, while others such as voting are episodic, the cost to
the participant may vary greatly and thus affect his level of part-
icipation. Some political activities such as strategy planning,
fund solicitation, and contributions of time and money to a campaign
require greater social and economic resources than others, with the
result that we would normally expect people with the greater social
resources to participate more actively than others. Even simple
political activities such as hosting a ' meet the candidate ' coffee
party requires a certain possession of these socio-economic resources.
The degree to which a candidate or party is able to draw on such
resources may be a factor in the outcome of the election. One example
of the utilization of such resources is found in the affluent
Eglinton riding of Toronto, where in the course of one campaign,
Mitchell Sharp attended more than one hundred such coffee parties,
at the rate of four or five per day.[3]

Normally one would assume that if these people of higher socio-economic resources are more active at higher levels of the participatory hierarchy then they will also be more likely to regester a vote than people who are less politically involved. Van Loon's campaign activity index by socio-economic class shows that forty-one percent of upper middle class voters engaged in high (gladiator) or middle (transitional) activities, while this percentage showed a steady decline to twenty-eight percent for the middle class, twenty-three percent for the working class, and sixteen percent for the lower class.[4]

TABLE 1

Campaign Activity in Different Socio-economic Class Groups

Campaign Activity	Socio-economic Class			
	Upper Middle	Middle	Working	Lower
High	6 %	5 %	4 %	4 %
Medium	35 %	23 %	19 %	12 %
Low	58 %	71 %	77 %	84 %
N	226	1034	1223	96

While the rows showing 'medium' and 'low' levels of campaign activity are consistent with what we would normally expect in the way of participation from the respective class groups, the 'high' group would appear to be too uniform across class lines. This phenomenon

may be explained by the fact that during a campaign a certain number
of paid workers are needed, regardless of party affiliation, and
the most likely sources of such workers are those people earning
lower middle class incomes or less, since the small remuneration and
temporary nature of the jobs would not likely attract middle or
upper class people. Contributions of time by people in the higher
classes is more likely to be on the basis of a voluntary effort,
with a view toward politics as a social activity. For these reasons
a simple arithmatic relationship between personal income and propen-
sity to vote is not likely to be found. Milbrath, in fact, notes
from an Evanston, Illinois survey that middle income persons are
significantly more likely to be active in politics than low income
persons, but that high income persons are not significantly more
likely to be active than middle income persons. Also, Lane's studies
of the relationship between income levels and voter turnout suggests
a kind of declining marginal productivity of income on voting.[5]
Thus, for each thousand dollar increment in income, the absolute
increase and rate of increase in turnout decline.

Education

It is also generally accepted that voter turnout increases
with the education level of the voters. What is significant, however,
is that with increased education levels the proportion claiming to

have voted in all federal elections rises dramatically but those
professing a pattern of continual provincial voting declines con-
siderably. Nearly a quarter of the eligible voters with over
seventeen years of education profess to having never voted in a
provincial election, compared to only four percent in federal elect-
ions. At low levels of education the voter response to federal and
provincial elections is almost identical but as education level
rises so does the differential in those continually voting federally
but only intermittently voting provincially. In the study of a
provincial election, therefore, participation by voter groups may
differ significantly from the case of a federal election.

TABLE 2

Voting Frequency in Different Educational Groups[6]

Voting Frequency in Elections		Education (in years)							
	*	0-5	6-8	9-11	12-13	14-16	17+	N	%
All	F	51	50	55	63	64	69	1447	56
	P	50	46	46	48	52	38	1214	47
Most	F	36	26	29	25	26	16	712	27
	P .	35	26	31	26	22	29	734	28
Some	F	11	20	13	8	8	12	339	13
	P	10	18	14	11	11	10	356	14
None	F	1	4	3	4	3	4	79	3
	P	4	7	8	15	14	23	253	10
N		228	670	867	464	227	110		

* federal or provincial

In high socio-economic areas, which by implication we consider to
be composed primarily of better educated people, an expected high
voter turnout might be considerably tempered by the apparent lack
of involvement by this educated elite in provincial politics. Thus
despite a high degree of correlation between education and social
class, the influence of education on political behaviour is found
as an indirect product of attitude formation among the social classes
not as a direct influence itself on voting participation. Therefore,
where we might logically assume a high voter turnout and a large
degree of leadership to be asserted by the highly educated, in fact
a large percentage of those with university degrees have never voted
in a provincial election. As Peter Regenstreif notes,"whatever the
status of the Canadian intelligensia (such as it is), it remains
a relatively unknown quantity." [7]

Efficacy

Milbrath feels that a center - periphery analogy may be
applied to the question of participation, the feeling of closeness
to, or distance from, the center being an important correlate of
political participation.[8] The problem however lies in the definition
of centrality. It may be viewed in terms of communications or
relative perceived position in the power structure. The underdog,
characterized by low socio-economic status, little education, low

prestige jobs and low income, is likely to feel that he has little
power and thus not vote. If this is true, neighbourhoods exhibiting
these characteristics should be expected to have a much lower voter
turnout than higher socio-economic areas, although as mentioned
earlier, the rate of turnout is not simply an arithmatic relation-
ship with income.

While the underdog feels that his vote will be incon-
sequential to the outcome of the election, Nie and others have spec-
ulated that the ' better elements' in society participate more fre-
quently because they perceive that they have a greater stake in the
outcome of the election.[9] An offshoot of this idea is a return to
Milbrath's centrality concept that high status and more organizat-
ionally involved citizens are closer to the 'center' of society,
and therefore more likely to be involved with government in their
daily business. Nie's observations however seemed to prove the
contrary, that perception of a stake in election outcomes was not
an important link between class and participation. It was however
found that socially advantaged citizens assume political events can
be manipulated and controlled, and this sense of political efficacy
increases the likelihood that they will participate in politics to
some extent.[10] In direct contrast, the underdog lacks this sense
of efficacy.

Social status and education may affect this sense of efficacy in that value systems approving of political participation may be acquired in the schools and social organizations. Higher education and social status exposes the individual to situations in which the duty to participate is stressed. It is in this way that the influence of education in attitude formation may be exhibited politically. This may also be true in the case of social status. As Nie concludes, " social status tends to affect political participation through its impact on political attitudes and cognitions which, in turn, facilitate political activity." [11] Over a five nation study it was found that the higher social status groups in the society will have fifteen to twenty-five percent more political participants than the lower groups. [12] This result is not significantly different from the Canadian estimate by Van Loon, shown in Table 1.

Efficacy may also be exhibited by the working class in some situations. While the underdog may individually feel ineffectual, collectively his outlook might change. As Nie notes:

> " organizational involvement may represent an alternative
> channel for political participation for socially
> disadvantaged groups. The rural peasant, the industrial
> labourer, the disadvantaged black may become politic-
> ally active through his organizational involvement
> even though he may otherwise lack the status resources
> for political participation. " [13]

When such social organization takes on a political focus, dramatic

changes in electoral behaviour may result. The most obvious instance

of such organizational involvement is the well recognized support

of the New Democratic Party by the labour unions. Collectively,

the working class participation is greater than might ordinarily

be expected since one political party claims to represent their

interests. The organizational body of the union itself provides

a collective sense of efficacy not only from an economic but also

from a political point of view. The influence of this body is

seen in an assertion by Gagne and Regenstreif that: [14]

> ". while unskilled workers were being attracted by the
> NDP, skilled workers tended to support the party even
> more strongly. This happens because skilled workers
> are more highly unionized than are the unskilled and
> because since the formation of the NDP, the party has
> made a concerted effort to attract the union vote. "

PARTY IDENTIFICATION

Social Class

Considerable importance must be attached to the emerging

relevance of social class in its relation to party voting in Ontario.

Provincially, a party can compete to a greater extent on the basis

of social class than it could nationally, where the situation calls

for a more comprehensive spectrum of voters of all classes to ensure

success. Indeed, the smaller the political unit analized the greater

the possibility for class oriented voting. Thus at the polling booth

level, the effects of social class upon vote by party tend to be very apparent within the individual constituency. From a number of recent studies it would appear that the electors of Ontario regard social class as an important basis for choosing among the political parties. The Institute for Behavioural Research at York University found from a 1967 survey that the New Democratic Party image is clearly one of 'friend of the working man', whereas those people who expressed opinions on the Conservative Party stressed its efficiency. The Liberals, however, emerged with no clear cut image, the largest group expressing an opinion about the Liberals had only a vague 'general liking' for the party. It would therefore appear logical to expect New Democratic support to come from working class areas, Conservative strength from areas of professional and managerial class people to whom productivity is important, both politically as well as economically, and Liberal support to be less clearly defined both socially and spatially.

As Wilson and Hoffman have noted: [15]

> "It is generally the case that the dominant image of a party is a reflection of the principal characteristics of its supporters. Nowhere is this more evident than in the socio-economic characteristics of those electors who identify with the NDP. Compared to the population of the province as a whole... the party's support is clearly more heavily concentrated in the younger age groups, among skilled workers and particularly members of trade unions, and among men who describe themselves as members of the working class.
>
> The Conservatives are clearly attracting electors

whose interests are broadly opposed to those of NDP
supporters. Quite apart from a greater dependence upon
the older age groups, people who prefer to call them-
selves English Canadians, and adherents of the major
Protestant faiths, the most striking aspect of Conser-
vative support is its dominantly middle class character...
the party's strength is more heavily concentrated in
the higher socio-economic groups: nearly three quarters
of its supporters live in non union households and over
half of them describe themselves as middle class.

On the other hand Liberal supporters mirror nearly
every characteristic of the electorate, apart from a
superior strength among those aged 35 to 49 and the
customary dependence upon adherents of the Roman Catholic
faith and people of non British origin.

Of the three parties then, the Conservative and
New Democrats are clearly rooted in dustinct sectors
of the electorate. But if, as seems likely, economic
status becomes an even greater influence on the vote in
the future, the fact that the Liberal Party does not
depend upon any special economic group may ultimately
be a source of weakness. "

These prognostications by Wilson and Hoffman open several

interesting avenues of thought. Will these socio-economic alleg-

iances strengthen over time? Can such allegiances be found at a

constituency level? Is the survey actually borne out by election

returns? These are questions which will be returned to later in

the paper.

Suburbanization

These questions, when viewed in terms of demographic

trends, bring on the need for recognition of a relatively new, strong,

and rapidly expanding force in North American society. Where

political parties were previously factionally divided, it was often on an urban - rural basis. Now a new group, the suburban voters, with their own attendant characteristics, have been added. In many cases, politically, they do not mirror either a rural or an urban outlook, or for that matter even a transition between the two. Kevin Cox, one of the few geographers to look into the relationship between suburbia and voting behaviour, found in his study of the London (England) metropolitan area that: [16]

> " both party preference and participation are related to
> suburbanism in particular, and to other socio-economic
> dimensions in general...(and) that while both aspects
> of political activity are directly related to suburbanism,
> suburban - central city differences also operate indirectly
> through other dimensions to effect geographical differences."

The growing dichotomy between the politically right-wing suburbs and the left-wing central city has been noted by American political scientists since the mid 1950's, and more recently than that in Britain. In the United States, according to Edward Banfield's estimates of population redistribution in urban areas, the Democratic urban dominance disappeared shortly after 1956 and recent suburban growth has been so rapid that by 1975 the city vs suburban voter imbalance will provide the Republicans with a metropolitan plurality in excess of two million voters.[17] This situation is one which is of prime importance in Ontario politics due to the rapidly growing suburban areas in the Golden Horseshoe region. As mentioned in

in preliminary releases from the 1971 census, the area enclosed by
the political division of Peel South, has the fastest rate of growth
in Canada.

One can speculate that demographic changes in an elect-
oral area can significantly alter the voting pattern in a community.
The data by which this concept may be tested, however, are very crude
and subject to great errors. Any study linking changes in residential
location to political behaviour and attitudes is faced with two poss-
ibilities. These possibilities might best be classified as the
' conversion theory' and the 'selective migration theory', the basic
difference between the two theories being one of sequence. The con-
version theory basically states that a migrant will tend to conform
and assimilate himself to the prevailing climate of opinion in his
new place of residence after a move, while the selective migration
theory pre-supposes a change in socio-economic status which then
precipitates a move to a new neighbourhood. Both theories may have
some merit and indeed some basis of fact, so that there is no need
for them to be mutually exclusive. Migrants moving from the city to
suburbia may change their votes as the result of a process of assim-
ilation, or perhaps the newcomers seek out suburbia as a result of
other forces which may have changed their political outlook. Upward
social mobility or a new outlook by descendants of immigrants may
engender new political allegiances as well as encourage migration to

the suburbs. The cause and effect pattern is difficult to untangle.

Certainly connections exist between socio-economic status, religion, ethnicity and party affiliations, however it can also be seen that the same type of connection exists between locality and party affiliation. The link between the two is found in the extent to which social prestige is a determinant of residential location. In the suburbs, as might be expected, occupations of the residents are typically those of higher social rank. A sorting process takes place in the move to the suburbs, resulting in the congregation of people with similar occupations, ethnic backgrounds, incomes and value systems. As Wood states the case: [18]

> " As proximity to a man's place of work becomes less
> important in the location of his home, given his ability
> and willingness to commute to work, the character of
> his neighbours and his neighbourhood becomes more imp-
> ortant. The substitute for economic interdependence
> and physical isolation that created old communities
> is a concious choice of a location in which values and
> customs are most likely to be shared. "

However the stimuli of increased home ownership, trad-itional right wing political climate, high communication probability as a result of fewer working women, and the homogeneous setting condusive to 'neighbouring' led Cox to a favouring of the conversion theory. Cox further stresses the process of migrant assimilation as a result of a new bias in the migrant's information field and contact space. He will, as a result of his relocation, be subjected to a

new set of stimuli and cues. As length of residence at a particular location increases the residual information and cues from the previous location are destroyed or sublimated and replaced by a new set of allegiances and loyalties. With this reduction of cross pressures Cox feels that: [19]

> (1) political behaviour will be less affected by short term factors and hence exhibits greater stability over a series of elections.

> (2) local contextual effects upon migrant political behaviour will increase.

Thus, recent residents are less likely to conform with the local political climate of opinion than are residents of longer standing.

Partially this may be the result of demographic characteristics different from residents of established areas. The major difference is one of age, migrants being considerably younger than the more established residents. From existing political sociology literature, it can be found that stable voting behaviour and strong party identification come with age. Cox also emphasizes the aspect of social conformity and its effect on the voting process. He points out that the neighbourhood minority party supporter is likely to be weaker in his party identification, and hence more inconsistent in his political behaviour over time than is the majority party supporter, who should have a stronger party identification and more consistent behaviour. In spatial terms, this would imply a greater voter participation by the majority party in any given geographic area, while

uncast ballots in that area may very well belong to one of the minority parties. Both length of residence and degree of participation would therefore indicate that older, established areas should exhibit more polarized voting results than newly settled districts. This, however, is dependent upon population stability in any given area. An older residential area exhibiting a high degree of population instability would naturally be expected to show the same characteristics as an area of young migrants.

This concept of neighbourhood and its spatial expression has served as the background for much of the theoretical speculation in electoral geography. David Reynold's proposal of a 'friends and neighbours' voting model is based on the spatial interaction of voters. The criteria from which he works are that: [20]

> (1) The individual's voting decision is to some extent dependent upon his access to information... which in turn is partially dependent upon his relative location in a communication network within social groups.

> (2) Direct personal contacts of a lasting and intensive nature are primarily established between individuals separated by short distances.

From this it is possible to assume that an individual will draw many of his political attitudes from an acquaintance circle exhibiting high geographic propinquity. It is in this concept of a limited information network that the conversion theory finds some credence. The new migrant is subject to only selected political information,

and social pressure from the rest of the community stresses con-
formity. The assumption that an individual's neighbourhood, as an
area of social contact, will influence his political behaviour and
attitudes is restated and expanded by Irving Foladare.[21]

> " The neighbourhood does serve as an important channel
> of contact whereby individuals with similar statuses
> may interact with each other and, in doing so, establish
> and reinforce political opinions. The greater the con-
> centration of individuals with like statuses in a neigh-
> bourhood the greater will be the likelihood that their
> interaction will produce a recognition of like interests.
> With consensus, social norms develop and create pressures
> for conformity.
>
> Living in a neighbourhood with high concentrations of
> people of the same status will concentrate the effect of
> that status as a source of political behaviour. For people
> with a particular status, who live among people with stat-
> uses providing counter forces, there is an erosion of the
> effect of their own status on their political behaviour."

Nearly all neighbourhood studies carried out have assumed
that some personal characteristic can be held constant. However, there
would appear to be no good theoretical reason why aggregate voting
behaviour cannot be treated as a partial function of certain variables
descriptive of neighbourhood characteristics. The major difference
between this and previous studies being that it does not try to inter-
pret at an individual level a relationship between social class and
voting. In this generalization, a high correlation between socio-economic
characteristics and party vote would be evidence of a neighbourhood effect.
If social neighbourhoods can be sociologically and geographically defined
the question is whether these coincide with political neighbourhoods.

THE CONSTITUENCIES

This study focusses on the two ridings of Dovercourt and Peel South since they provide a good example of contrast between suburban and central city locations. Peel South, composed of the southern portion of the Town of Mississauga as well as the Town of Port Credit, furnishes an excellent study area exhibiting great diversity of social class and housing type. This great socio-economic diversity is not to be found within the Dovercourt riding of west-central Toronto for several reasons. The fact that it is a much smaller and more densely settled geographic area of similar vintage housing partially contributes to a much greater socio-economic homogeneity of its population.

Both ridings contain new high rise apartments situated in proximity to older residential areas. In Dovercourt these new apartments are situated along the main arteries through areas of predominantly 1920 vintage housing on the back streets. Thus each polling district is composed of a blend of the two types of housing. This contrast of old and new is generally not as sharp in Mississauga since abundant room for expansion has resulted in a more gradual transition from old to new areas. In addition, many of the new high-rise developments are being situated in clusters near the outskirts of modern residential areas. The much larger average size of Mississauga

apartment buildings, as well as their high degree of clustering,
affects the polling results since many Mississauga polls are entirely
apartment areas; whereas in Dovercourt more polls tend to be a mix-
ture of apartment and residential areas.

Aside from the apartment dwellers, the tenant population
of Mississauga is very small, virtually all homes being owner occ-
upied. As a result extensive downward filtering of housing has not
taken place to any great degree since older houses have generally
been surrounded by newer houses of similar value. Dovercourt, however,
displays a much higher degree of multiple family occupance of a
single dwelling, through the division of large homes into two or
three flats, as well as occupancy of flats above business establish-
ments. As a result the tenancy rate in Dovercourt, exclusive of
polling districts which were entirely apartments, was calculated by
the author to be approximately forty-four percent. This follows
closely to Hoyt's concept of downward filtering of housing where
owner occupancy declines as the first owners sell out or move away
and are succeeded by a lower income class. In a Burgess concentric
zone model, Dovercourt could very well be described as being part
of the working class residential zone in which second generation
immigrants form an important element in the population structure.
This situation is documented by Robert Murdie, whose factorial

ecology showed increasingly strong Italian concentrations by 1961

when Dovercourt lay on the western boundary of a very strong Italian

ethnic area which was expanding westward.[22]

The more transient nature of the inner city population

is shown by the fact that of the sample population chosen in Dover-

court, sixteen percent of the names on the voters list in 1971 did

not correspond to the occupants of the dwelling, as listed in the

1970 assessment rolls. The existence of rooming houses and the

presence of roomers in private residenses in Dovercourt, if anything,

causes this figure to be underestimated. Murdie's figures indicate

that even a decade ago Dovercourt was undergoing a high rate of

population turnover and therefore a high negative change in pop-

ulation stability. This situation was particularly true in the

southern census tracts of Dovercourt, with a steady increase in

stability to the north.[23] Part of this high turnover may be attributed

to the ethnic change by the process of invasion and sucession whereby

large numbers of Protestants of British origin moved out and were

succeeded by Italian Catholics.[24]

In Mississauga greater residential stability is indicated

since the number of names which did not correspond on the voter and

assessment records was only slightly over two percent for the areas

of private residences. Although this figure seems low, it could

quite possibly be accurate due to the large number of relatively new, one owner households sampled.

Although most of the area involved in Mississauga is one of residential single family dwellings built as a continuation of suburban expansion of nearby Metropolitan Toronto, in the past decade rapid construction of high rise apartments has added a new dimension which may prove to be politically significant. This is the presence of a young migrant population of less rigidly structured socio-economic status, and presumeably therefore less entrenched party affiliations and acquaintance groups. The effect of this demographic transformation on electoral patterns will be discussed later in the paper.

The most notable difference between the two ridings, however, is their rate of suburbanization. In this case suburbanization being defined to include such factors as relative increases in population density, population potential, wage earners, mortgaged homes, household amenities, white collar employees, and household income, as well as decreases in the percentage of elderly persons and persons of low education. These criteria show Dovercourt to have a moderate rate of negative suburbanization and Peel South to have a strong positive rate of suburbanization.[25] This however is not surprising in the case of Peel South which, according to the 1971

census, has the highest growth rate of any area in Canada, a rate of approximately thirteen percent per annum.

From a political point of view, ridings for this study were chosen where none of the candidates were either cabinet ministers or ' big name ' personalities, so that the vote would more accurately reflect party loyalty. Neither riding mirrored the popular vote by party of the province as a whole, however the differences in party popularity between ridings, as seen in Table 3 is itself interesting.

TABLE 3

Percentage Popular Vote By Party

	Dovercourt	Peel South	Province
Conservative	34.59%	54.63%	44.50%
Liberal	28.63%	22.70%	27.75%
New Democratic	34.38%	22.66%	27.15%

Conservative strength in Peel South, traditionally a Tory stronghold, remained ten percent above the provincial average, with the other two parties five percent below their respective provincial marks. In the much more closely contested Dovercourt riding the narrow margin between Conservative and New Democratic support potentially shows a more homogeneous political ideology. The problem however is the one posed by Bunge in his salt and pepper analogy.[26]

In considering the electoral results from Dovercourt are we looking

at a situation of heterogeneity of equally strong voter groups, or

a more homogeneous political area than Peel South? The answer

obviously lies in the geographical location of the voting strengths

of each party. At this stage the problem takes on a spatial sign-

ificance which can only be looked at by utilizing the smallest poss-

ible data units - the polling district.

DATA COLLECTION

Within a single constituency, the enumeration census data

must be either recompiled to conform with the political areas of

the polling districts, or census and electoral materials transformed

to correspond with each other by means of superimposing an hexagonal

grid over both census and electoral divisions. However since adequate

Canadian census data are only compiled on a dicennial basis, and

then not immediately available, the possibility of obtaining electoral

and census information for the same year is, at best, tenuous.[27]

Therefore, in the absence of current census material, the author

has utilized Town of Mississauga and City of Toronto assessment rolls

covering the area of the two constituencies involved. Assessment

figures are not standardized between the two areas since they are

calculated on a different basis in each jurisdiction.

At the outset of the study a slight reduction of the
study area in Mississauga was deemed necessary since socio-economic
data, to be disaggregated in order to conform with individual polling
districts, had to be personally researched and recompiled. Since
Peel South was the second largest riding in the province, 54,122
eligible voters compared to a provincial average of 38,488 , it was
felt that a reduction by 99 of its 266 polling districts would not
be detrimental to results achieved, since spatial contiguity could
be retained in the major part of the study area. Part of this
omission was also required on the basis of different assessment
methods between the enclave Town of Port Credit and the surrounding
Town of Mississauga. The area of study in Peel South is therefore
limited to the southeastern portion of Mississauga bounded on the
south by Lake Ontario and the Town of Port Credit, on the west by
the Credit River, on the east by Etobicoke Creek and the Borough
of Etobicoke, and by highways #5, 10, and Burnhamthorpe Road on
the north. Area 50 to the west of the Credit River was included
since it provided a polarized case of high socio-economic factors,
while areas 112, 113, 114, 231, 235, 236, 237, and 238 in the north
and north west have been omitted due to their sparsely populated
nature and the size of the personal, non residential, landholdings
involved.

Dovercourt, consisting of only 121 polls and about one-

MAP 1

Shaded area indicates the polls of

Peel South for which a socio-economic

sampling was taken

Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile
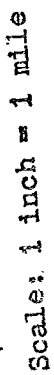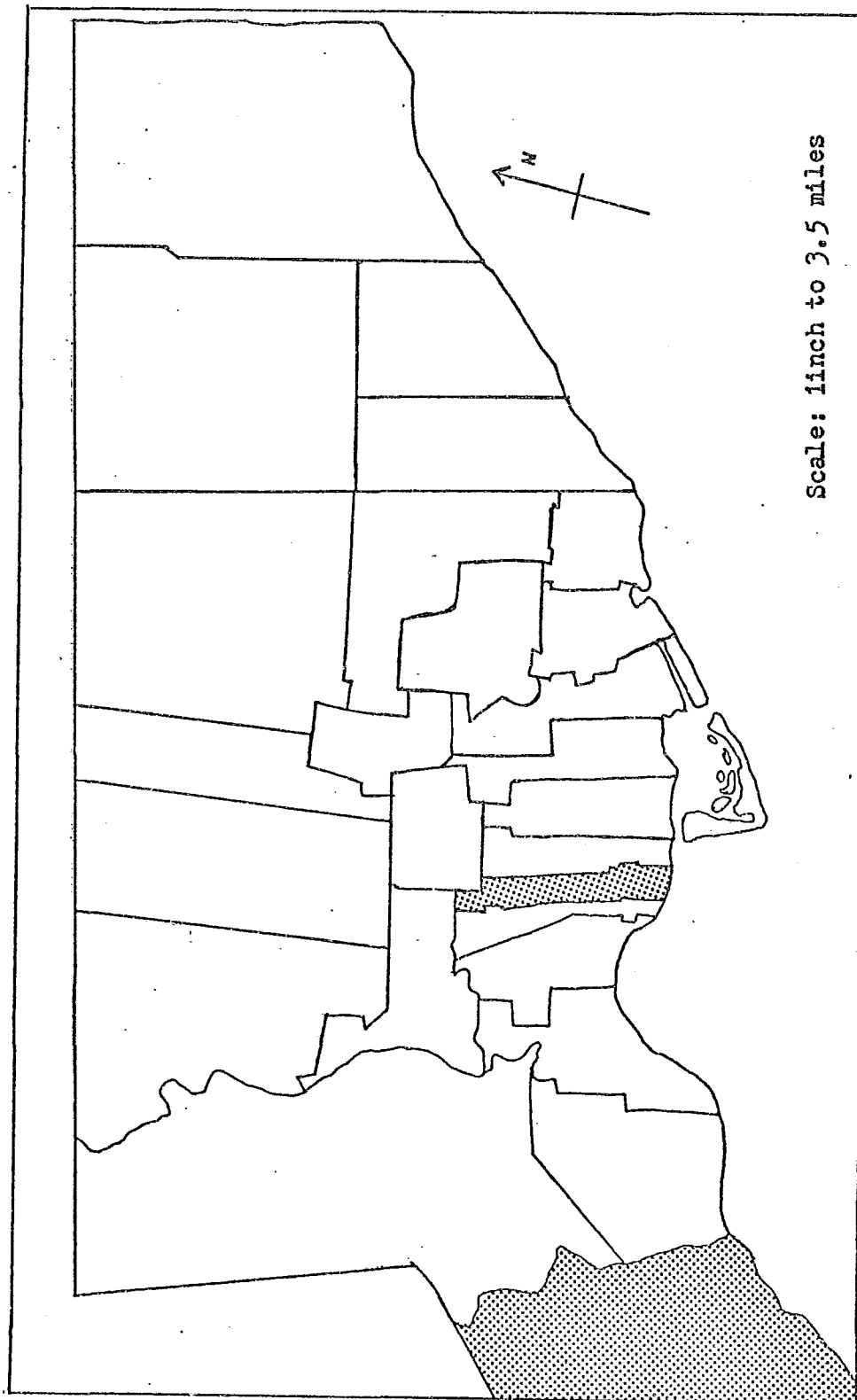
MAP 2

Shaded areas indicate the position of Dovercourt and
the eastern portion of Peel South ridings in relation
to Metropolitan Toronto.

third as many voters as Peel South, was studied in its entirety.

In these 121 polling districts a sample of 930 families was taken,

chosen on the basis of every twenty-fifth name from the voters

lists. A similar sampling in the 104 residential polling districts

of Peel South yielded 1106 families. From the assessment rolls it

was then possible to determine the assessed value of house and prop-

erty as well as the occupation of the head of the household. In the

66 apartment polling districts of Mississauga a total of 118 buildings

were sampled for the assessed value of a two bedroom apartment. It

should be noted that the number of apartment and residential polls

considered in Peel South does not sum to 166 due to cases of double

counting where an area is equally divided into residential and apart-

ment dwellings, or in the case of very large apartment buildings

which constitute two polling districts.

Due to the nature of buildings involved in the Dovercourt

riding, clear cut definitions of rental and owner occupied areas

were not easily determined as was possible in Peel South, where

only a few polls included a mixture of residential and apartment

buildings. Size, as well as composition, was also more varied in

Dovercourt where the number of voters per poll varied from 60 to

458; whereas in Peel South each polling district was delimited to

include approximately 200 to 350 voters, although exceptions to this

do appear. This occurs primarily in the case of nursing homes and

apartment buildings where a single building may constitute its own
polling district.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve some degree of areal generalization,
three strategies have been used in previous electoral studies to
interpret voting results. First, by applying political sociology
hypotheses of voter behaviour by social class to the actual voting
returns it is possible to compare and correlate the results. Second,
it is possible to compare political behaviour and social environ-
ment at different scales or different time periods. Third, it is
possible to infer from correlations of aggregate statistics the
behaviour of individual voters.

The first strategy has been the one chosen for use in
this study, primarily because the other two are fraught with inherent
weaknesses. Any time series analysis starts with the assumption that
social group and party ideology will remain constant over time, at
best a dubious assumption. Attempting to derive individual impli-
cations from correlations of aggregate data might also be considered
methodologically unsound since the variables used are percentages,
descriptive properties of groups, not descriptive properties of
individuals.[28] In an attempt to do this one would encounter what is

often referred to as Robinson's dilemma, which states that one cannot

safely draw inferences about individual behaviour on the basis of

aggregate data on a given population. In this paper, however, this

problem has been avoided since it is the areal distributions them-

selves which are of interest, not individual implications.

In order to carry out an individual correlation analysis

one would need personal survey data showing how individuals voted

as well as their socio-economic characteristics. Such information

is normally expensive to obtain either by means of personal inter-

views or by mailed questionnaires. Problems are also involved in

obtaining an accurate population sample from questionnaire response

as has been shown by both Jewett and Smith who found distinct

response rate biases by social class.[29]

The technique chosen for this study was that of ecological

correlation, which uses a group rather than an individual as its

basic unit, especially in cases where properties of individuals are

not available. It should be noted that, mathematically, ecological

correlations can not be used as substitutes for individual correl-

ations, although it is theoretically possible for both to yield the

same result. Ecological correlation however usually results in

considerably higher correlation coefficients than does individual

correlation. While ecological correlation implies, and is math-

ematically more accurate as a weighted correlation between N pairs of X and Y percentages which describe sub-groups, the ecological correlations involved in this study are computed without the refinement of weighting the sub-groups, since the numerical difference would be negligible with such a large sample of sub-groups involved.[30]

THE RESULTS FROM THE CONSTITUENCIES

As previously stated, it is the purpose of this paper to apply political sociology hypotheses of voter behaviour by social class, to the actual voting returns for the constituencies of Peel South and Dovercourt, and to identify through correlation and regression techniques, areal regularities between socio-economic groups and voting patterns.

Attempts have been made to test the following hypotheses.

1. Participation in the electoral process is a partial function of socio-economic status.

2. Voter participation varies as a partial function of home ownership.

3. Voter participation is a partial function of party affiliation.

4. Party affiliation will vary as a partial function of economic status and occupation of the head of the household.

5. Party affiliation exhibits ' friends and neighbours ' characteristics.

Participation, measured as the percentage turnout of eligible voters, tended to support the hypothesis that electoral participation varies as a function of socio-economic status. This relationship was observable, not only within single constituencies, but over the whole Metropolitan Toronto area. The less affluent central city constituencies consistently recorded participation levels as much as five and six percent below the metropolitan average. This relationship may be seen in Map 3. Demographic shifts have resulted in lower socio-economic characteristics in the central city area as upwardly mobile persons migrate outward. As a result, the reality of political participation in the metropolitan area resembles a simplified version of the Burgess concentric zone model. The seven central city ridings, extending from Parkdale in the west to Riverdale in the east, all exhibit voter participation rates below the metropolitan average, however as you progress outward from this central area rates of voter turnout steadily increase. Deviations in the pattern naturally occur in some cases where
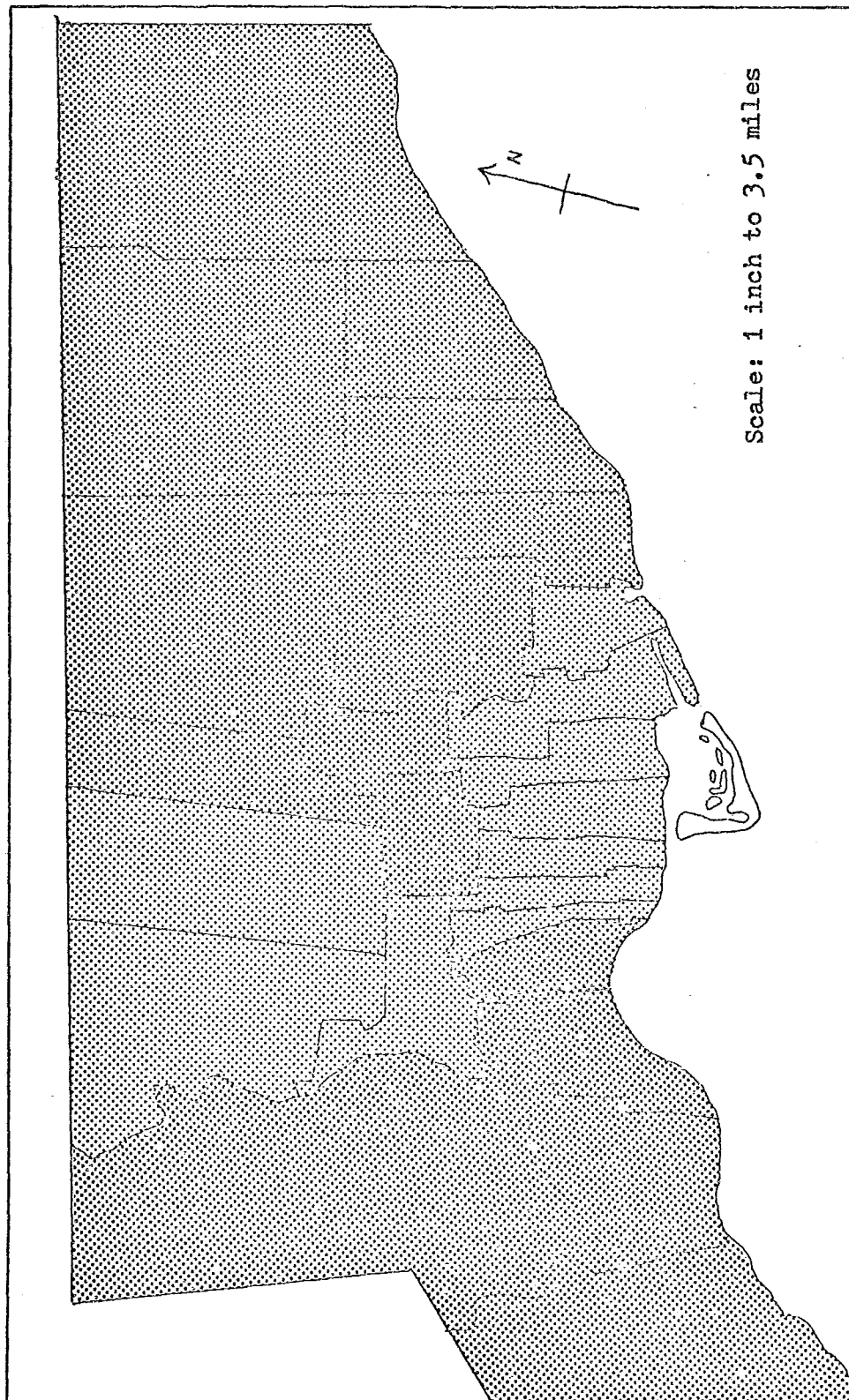
MAP #3

Areas of less than average voter participation
are shown by lighter shading.

extremely strong candidates are fielded in a riding which one
would normally expect to have a lower turnout on the basis of socio-
economic characteristics. Consistent with expectations, a compar-
ison of the relatively affluent suburban riding of Peel South with
central city Dovercourt riding shows Peel South with an 8.2 percent
greater turnout. These results can be seen to be consistently true
by comparing the turnout of the ridings bordering on Peel South
with those adjoining Dovercourt.

Within a communications network as set out by Cox, the
sources of relevant political cues are likely to increase with per-
sonal mobility and greater perceived action space of the individual.
Since people with the largest action space are subjected to the
greatest number of cues it is reasonable to assume that a higher
percentage response will be recorded by this group. Sociologically,
high socio-economic groups are likely to have larger action spaces
than lower groups. In most residential situations this wealthy and
politically active group tends to be located in the suburbs so high
participation rates in the suburbs are generally expected, due both
to social position and personal mobility.

Within the two constituencies, an analysis of participation
in terms of socio-economic status, as measured by property assess-
ment,yielded conflicting results. In Dovercourt, where assessment

values do not vary as greatly as in Peel South, a correlation

coefficient was obtained which possessed a negative value despite

the fact that it was not statistically significant. This would

tend to imply that voter turnout actually decreased in areas with

higher property values. The correlation coefficient, however, is

well below the level required for even a 5% level of significance.

The correlation and regression results summarized in Table 4 show

that in the case of Dovercourt an analysis of percent voter turnout

by polling district in terms of the average home assessment by

polling district yielded a correlation coefficient of -.1260 for

the 119 pairs of data units. For the relationship to be signif-

icant, however, a correlation coefficient of .178 would be required

at the 5% level. This would mean that if this magnitude of correl-

ation was achieved there would only be a 5% chance that the relat-

ionship was randomly derived.

The Peel South area of Mississauga yielded dramatically

different results from those in Dovercourt. In an area possessing

great diversity of socio-economic neighbourhoods, the average

property assessment in some districts reached levels four times

as great as in others. Not surprising then was the observed strong

positive relationship between voter turnout and residential prop-

erty assessment. In a situation where a correlation coefficient

of .250 would be significant at the 1% level, or would indicate

TABLE 4 :   CORRELATION AND REGRESSION RESULTS

		MISSISSAUGA				DOVERCOURT			
X Variable	Y Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Observations	C.C. for Significance		Correlation Coefficient	Observations	C.C. for Significance	
				5%	1%			5%	1%
% Turnout	Home Assessment	.4496	104	.193	.250	-.1260	119	.178	.233
% Turnout	Apt. Assessment	.3367	66	.241	.311	n/a	n/a	n/a	
% Turnout	% Conservative	.3420	266	.121	.159	-.1286	120	.177	.233
% Turnout	% New Democrat	-.4611	266	.121	.159	-.1560	120	.177	.233
% Turnout	% Liberal	.2908	266	.121	.159	.2602	120	.177	.233
% Conservative	Home Assessment	.6899	104	.193	.250	.1087	119	.178	.235
% New Democrat	Home Assessment	-.7305	104	.193	.250	-.2151	119	.178	.235
% Liberal	Home Assessment	.3218	104	.193	.250	.0983	119	.178	.235
% Conservative	Apt. Assessment	.4719	66	.241	.311	n/a	n/a	n/a	
% New Democrat	Apt. Assessment	-.5207	66	.241	.311	n/a	n/a	n/a	
% Liberal	Apt. Assessment	.3156	66	.241	.311	n/a	n/a	n/a	
% New Democrat	% Conservative	-.7772	266	.121	.159	-.3582	120	.177	.233
% Liberal	% New Democrat	-.4818	266	.121	.159	-.4518	120	.177	.233
% Conservative	% Liberal	-.1036	266	.121	.159	-.5590	120	.177	.233

n/a not applicable

that in 99 % of all cases that the resulting correlation could
not be randomly attainable, the actual correlation coefficient
derived was .4496 . Obviously this is well above the required
level and clearly indicates that voter participation rises with
increased socio-economic status.

This same basic relationship can be seen in a correl-
ation of voter participation rates with apartment assessment in
Peel South. The major difference between the correlations using
apartment assessment and the ones using home assessment as crit-
eria was in the strength of apparent relationships. Where corr-
elations between home assessment and participation showed a strong
relationship in Peel South, the strength of the relationship be-
tween apartment assessment and voter participation is much lower,
although it is still statistically significant at the one percent
level. The fact that apartment dwellers are not as great partic-
ipators is consistent with Cox's hypotheses regarding electoral
behaviour of migrant populations. These people have not experien-
ced the same assimilation factors as have groups of homeowners
since nearly the whole group are new residents, with no 'old guard'
with which to come in contact. Apartment dwellers in the case of
Mississauga, are almost certain to have moved within the past five
years, due to the large number of new apartment buildings occupied
within the last few years. As a result, the same degree of social

stability is not witnessed as in the case of homeowners. This
is reflected in the participation rate. As can be seen in Map 4,
the apartment districts along Highway 10 in the north west sector
of the Peel South study area and along Bloor Street East in the
north east sector, show considerably lower participation rates than
the surrounding residential areas. In most cases the participation
rate in apartment polling districts was between fifty and sixty
percent, with many polls below a fifty percent rate of turnout.
Residential polling districts, on the other hand, rarely fell below
a sixty percent rate of voter turnout, and were generally in the
seventy to eighty percent turnout range. Sociological character-
istics of apartment dwellers, such as age and income level, also
act as indirect factors in making their participation level lower
than that in residential areas.

One aspect of electoral studies which political geogra-
phers need to look at more closely is the differences in voter
behaviour and characteristics in apartment and residential areas.
In Peel South the sample of 118 apartment buildings exhibited much
greater socio-economic homogeneity than the residential polling
districts, when taken in the context of the whole riding rather
than by individual neighbourhoods. With greater socio-economic
homogeneity, one would assume that,politically,the vote by party
would be more evenly distributed than in economically polarized

MAP 4

VOTER PARTICIPATION BY POLLING DISTRICT

- less than 50%
- 50 to 60%
- 60 to 70%
- 70 to 80%
- over 80%

Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile

Lake Ontario
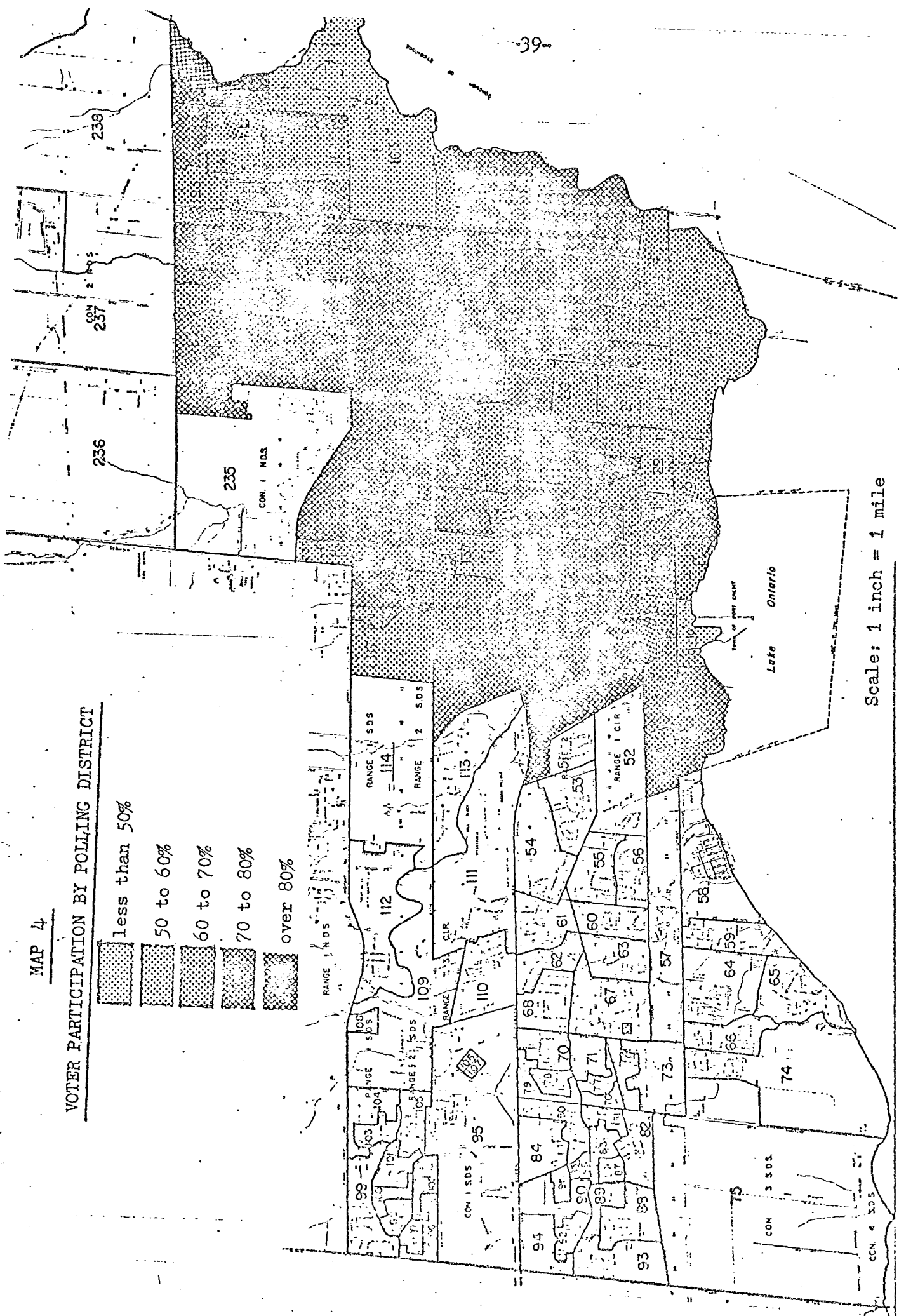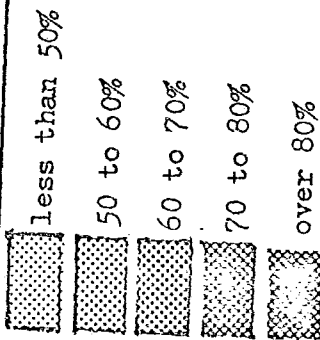
areas. This concept of more uniform party support in apartment areas, as compared to residential areas, can be seen in a comparison of the correlations of assessment to percent vote by party for both apartment and residential polling districts. As the following table indicates, areas of single family residential dwellings collectively tend to exhibit greater polarization of the New Democratic and Conservative vote than do apartment polling districts, in the context of the same community. Not only is the correlation

TABLE 5

Vote Polarization in Mississauga

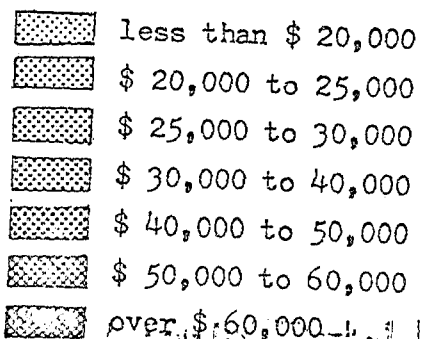| X Variable	Y Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Observations	C.C. for Significance	
				5%	1%
% Conservative	Home Assess.	.6899	104	.193	.250
% New Democrat	Home Assess.	-.7305	104	.193	.250
% Liberal	Home Assess.	.3218	104	.193	.250
% Conservative	Apt. Assess.	.4719	66	.241	.311
% New Democrat	Apt. Assess.	-.5207	66	.241	.311
% Liberal	Apt. Assess.	.3156	66	.241	.311

coefficient itself higher in the residential polling districts, but since the sample size is also larger, the correlation coefficient required for significance is smaller. Thus the differential between achieved and required coefficients is far greater for res-

idential areas than for apartment districts.

The relationship between socio-economic status and voter participation may be seen more clearly by a more detailed look at distinct socio-economic neighbourhoods in Mississauga. In the Peel South riding it is readily apparent from Map 5 that distinct spatial pockets of high and low assessment values exist. Low assessment districts in the south-eastern part of the Peel South study area, a section known as Lakeview, not surprisingly, also exhibits low levels of voter turnout. The polling districts in this area, with an average assessment of $19,873, only have a turnout rate of sixty-five percent. In comparison, those polling districts of high socio-economic status to the west of Highway 10 have an average assessment of $ 43,991 and a turnout rate of over seventy-seven percent. Between these two polarized socio-economic neighbourhoods is a transition zone of more middle class housing, with an average proprty assess-ment of $ 28,109 and a voter participation rate of seventy-three percent. These same results may be approximated by a comparison of the lower, middle and upper assessment areas of Peel South running from south to north rather than from east to west as was done in the example. In addition to verifying the hypothesis that partici-pation in the electoral process is partially a function of socio-economic status, these results bear out Lane's assertion that there is a kind of declining marginal productivity of income on participation.

MAP 5

HOME ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- less than $ 20,000
- $ 20,000 to 25,000
- $ 25,000 to 30,000
- $ 30,000 to 40,000
- $ 40,000 to 50,000
- $ 50,000 to 60,000
- over $ 60,000

Lake Ontario
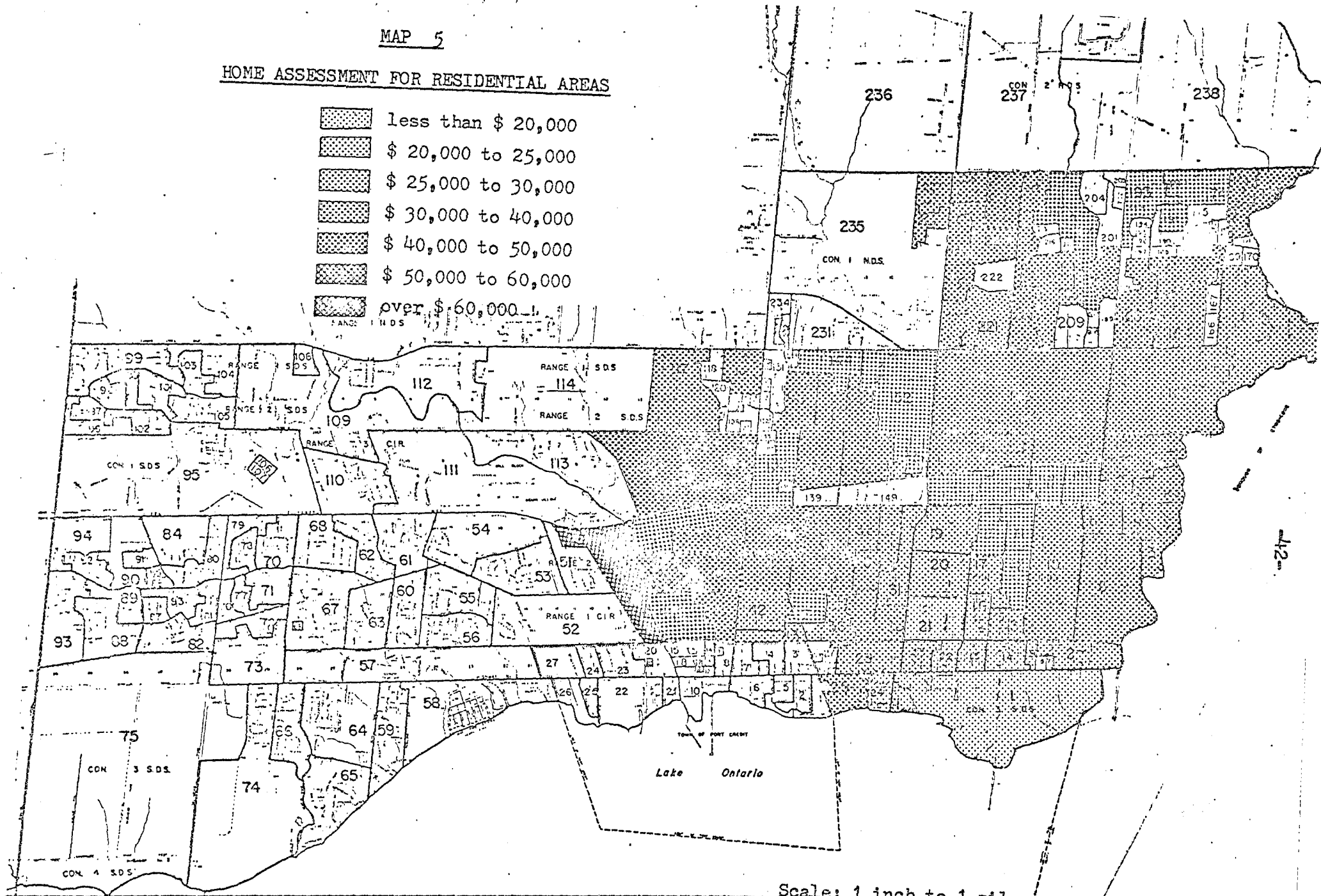
Scale: 1 inch to 1 mile

These same type of results were not obtained in the Dovercourt riding for a number of reasons. As Maps 6 and 7, on pages 44 and 45, indicate there are no clearly defined pockets of high voter turnout or areas of distinct socio-economic characteristics. One contiguous area of high assessment does exist,however the rest of the riding tends to be quite uniform,with only minor variations in assessment level. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a correlation coefficient between assessment and voter participation which is not statistically significant. Perhaps the most plausable reason for the inability to identify spatially distinct socio-economic neighbourhoods within the riding was the size of the riding itself. Where the study area of Peel South riding covered an area of approx- imately eighteen square miles, the much more densely populated and geographically compact Dovercourt riding was only about three square miles in size. Therefore, where it was possible to identify neigh- bourhoods in Peel South, Dovercourt might more properly be considered a neighbourhood, or part of a neighbourhood, in the context of Metropolitan Toronto. Murdie, in fact, classified the area surround- ing and including Dovercourt as being part of the Italian ethnic neighbourhood. As such, Dovercourt will exhibit its own character- istics, both socio-economically and politically, but it is unlikely to display sharp internal divisions. Generalized trends or tend- encies may however be observed in the riding, particularly in a north - south orientation.
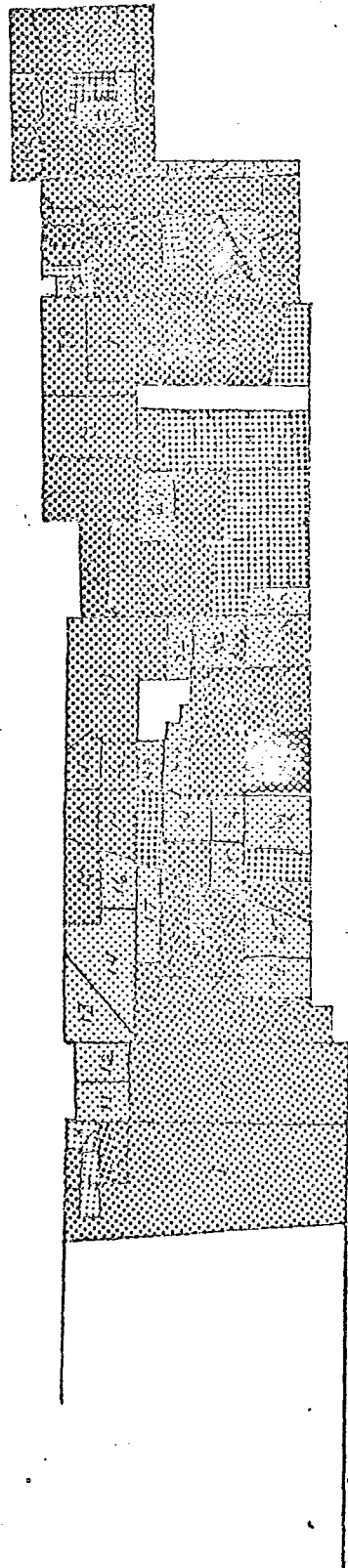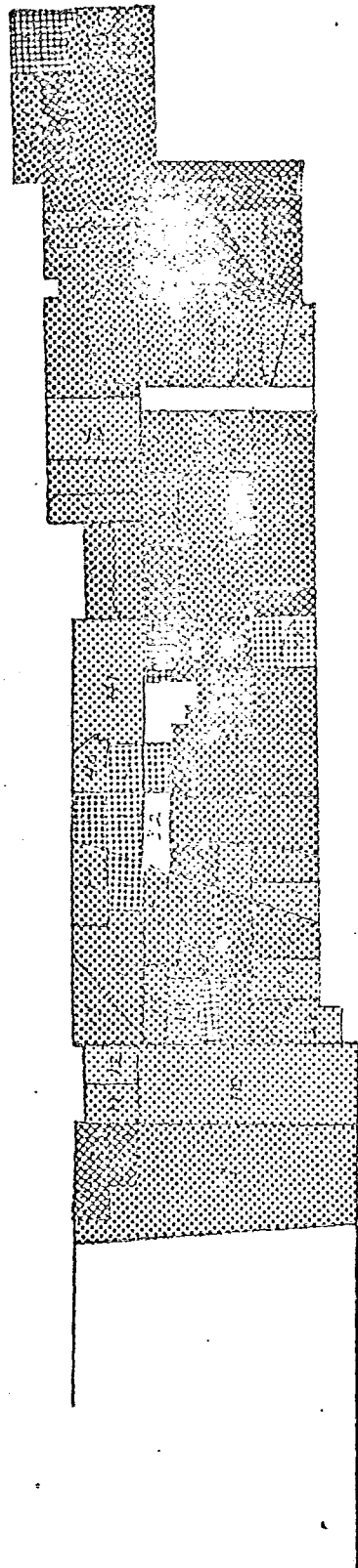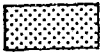
MAP 6

DOVERCOURT. VOTER TURNOUT

less than 60 %

60 to 70 %

70 to 80 %

over 80 %
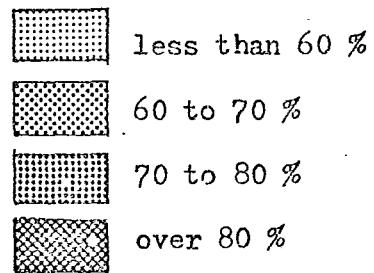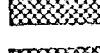
Scale: 1 inch to .6 miles

MAP 7

DOVERCOURT ASSESSMENT LEVEL

Less than $ 2000

$ 2000 to.$ 2500

$ 2500 to $ 3000

$ 3000 to $ 3500

$ 3500 to $ 4000

over $ 4000

Scale: 1 inch to .6 miles

It has often been postulated that the occupation of the head of the household may have a significant effect on the electoral activity of the household. Although this factor will likely play a more decisive role in the nature of the electoral activity in which the person engages, it would be assumed that all political activity, including voter participation rates, will be affected. The following table shows occupation categories for Dovercourt and Peel South ridings. The fact that occupational status is much higher

TABLE 6

Occupational Classifications

Classification	Peel South		Dovercourt	
	%	N	%	N
Professional/managerial	26.1	289	4.0	37
Skilled labour	35.4	391	24.0	209
Unskilled labour	24.5	272	50.0	443
Retired / student	6.0	67	8.0	74
Unaccounted for *	8.0	87	14.0	126

* assessment records do not indicate type of employment

in Peel South than in Dovercourt might partially account for the eight percent difference in voter participation, since the 'underdog' element is considerably smaller in Peel South. At the same time, the Peel South riding appears to be over-representative of professional and managerial class occupations.

In order to determine the extent to which occupational status affects voter participation within the individual constituency, the districts of Peel South with over 80 % and under 65 % voter turnout have been analyzed for the occupation of the head of the household, as have those districts in Dovercourt above 75 % and below 60 %. The limits are 5 % lower in Dovercourt in order to reflect the lower average participation rate and to establish an upper boundary which would yield a sufficient sample size. These areas , however, only include polling districts composed of single family dwellings,in the case of Peel South.

TABLE 7

Participation and Occupational Groups

	Turnout	N	Retired Student	Occupation of Household Head		
				Unskilled	Skilled	Professional Managerial
Peel South	80% +	133	6.8%	16.5%	35.2%	41.4%
	65% -	95	12.6%	49.5%	33.6%	4.2%
Dovercourt	75%+	58	7.9%	58.6%	27.4%	7.9%
	60% -	201	11.8%	53.8%	29.8%	4.6%

Peel South again shows strong contrasts in the voting characteristics of its population, particularly in the geographic location of the professional and managerial classes. Nearly half

of the households in areas with over eighty percent voter turnout

could be classified as professional or managerial, however only

four percent of those in districts with less than a sixty-five

percent turnout could be so classified. In these low turnout dist-

ricts 49.5 percent of the households were headed by unskilled

labourers. The occupational component, as well as the home assess-

ment surrogate for income which yielded a high positive correlation

with voter turnout, indicate that in Peel South social class has

a very definite affect upon voter participation.

In Dovercourt, where social class is more uniformly

distributed spatially due to greater socio-economic homogeneity,

the occupational and assessment results do not lead to any con-

clusive findings. Among the professional classes there was a slight

tendency to be located in districts which displayed a somewhat higher

participation level, although this feature is not as pronounced

as it was in Peel South. It might also be noted that in both ridings

there is a much greater tendency for polling districts containing

a large number of retired persons or students to experience lower

rates of voter participation, possibly as a result of lower mobility

among this group or possibly as a result of lack of feeling of

political efficacy. In both cases the percentage of the population

retired or students was nearly twice as great in areas of low voter

participation as in districts with high participation rates.

The second hypothesis to be tested stated that " voter participation varies as a partial function of home ownership. " Although the results from just two ridings cannot be considered conclusive, it would appear that the hypothesis is indeed valid. In Mississauga, as mentioned earlier in the paper, the study area could be readily divided into apartment and residential districts with little overlapping of the two. It was also fortunate that less than two percent of the single family residential dwellings were not owner occupied. Since this percentage was so small it was overlooked when calculations were made, the assumption being that single family residential districts constituted one hundred percent owner occupancy. Apartment districts were considered one hundred percent tenant occupied. A comparison of the participation rates in the two types of districts would appear to confirm the hypothesis that electoral participation rises with home ownership. For the 104 poll-districts composed of home owners a participation rate of 73.2 percent was determined, compared to a rate of only 63.2 percent in districts composed entirely of tenants.

In Dovercourt, where in a sampling of 930 families, 53 % of which were home owners and 47 % tenants, the average participation rate was 65.3 percent. This was between the two rates achieved in Peel South, although considerably lower than the over all average in the Peel South riding.

The third hypothesis, that " voter participation is
partially a function of party affiliation " would also appear to
be validated. In Peel South strong correlation coefficients were
derived for voter turnout and percentage vote Conservative and
New Democrat, although the New Democratic coefficient indicated a
strong negative relationship. Although not as strong as either of
the other two, the coefficient for turnout and percent Liberal was
positive, and statistically significant at the one percent level
of confidence.

The figures show that areas which voted strongly Con-
servative in the election were the same areas that experienced
the highest rates of voter participation. At the same time, an even
stronger negative relationship indicates that the stronger New Demo-
cratic support was in a district, the lower the rate of voter part-
icipation. Liberal support rose with turnout, but not as strongly
as Conservative support. This measure alone, however, does not give
a complete picture of the situation, since it is impossible to tell
from it whether high percentages of voter turnout are the result of
efficient party organization or whether politically concious people
identify with the Conservative Party. In order to determine this,
correlations were carried out using vote by party and correlating
it with home and apartment assessments, as well as with the vote for
the other two parties.

While there may be a relationship between voter part-
icipation and vote by party within a single constituency, the results
in that one area may not be applicable to other ridings. Broad gen-
eralizations such as " highest participation rates are found in
strong Conservative areas ", while they may hold true in some ridings,
are not universally applicable. This point is illustrated by compar-
ing Peel South and Dovercourt constituencies. Where there was a strong
positive relationship between turnout and Conservative vote in Peel
South, not only was the relationship not statistically significant
in Dovercourt, but it was negative. As already mentioned, local
party organization may play some part in this relationship, but
other socio-economic, religious or ethnic factors which vary from
one area to the next may alter the relationship, as would the local
political tradition.

The two hypotheses regarding party preference in relation
to socio-economic characteristics of the voters and their geographic
location, are based on the premise that it is possible to spatially
identify political neighbourhoods which correspond with socio-
economic neighbourhoods. In Maps 8 and 9 on the following pages ,
distinct areas of strong New Democratic and Conservative Party supp-
ort can be readily identified. Concentrations of Liberal Party stren-
gth are not as easily identified due to the lower range in the
percentage vote for the Liberals. Their greatest support, however,

MAP 8

PERCENTAGE VOTE FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

less than 40 %
40 to 50 %
50 to 60 %
60 to 70 %
over 70 %

Scale: 1 inch to 1 mile

Lake   Ontario
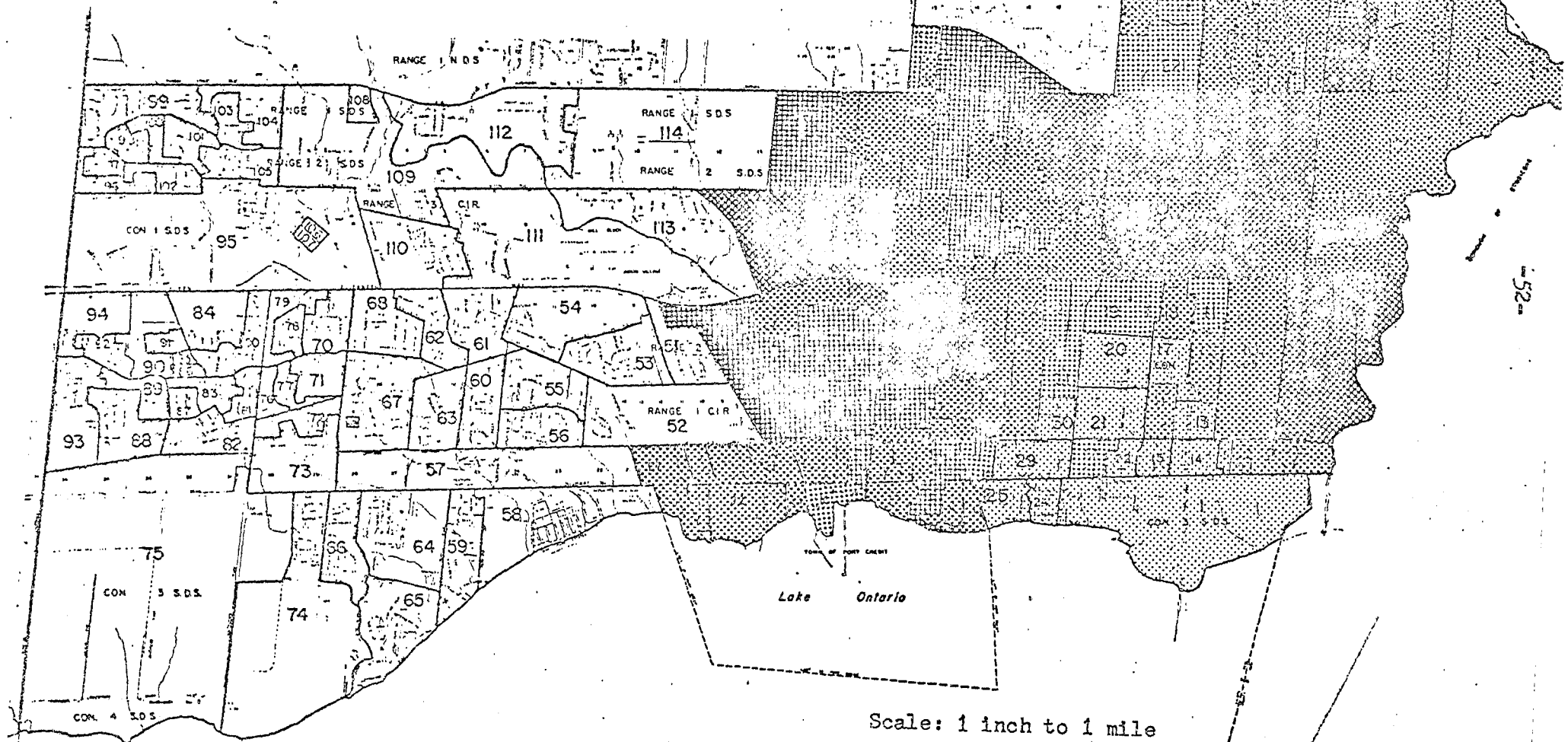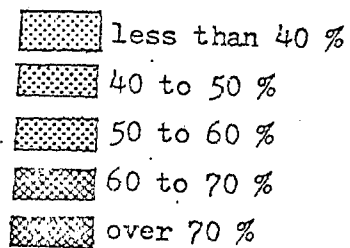
MAP 9

PERCENTAGE VOTE FOR THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

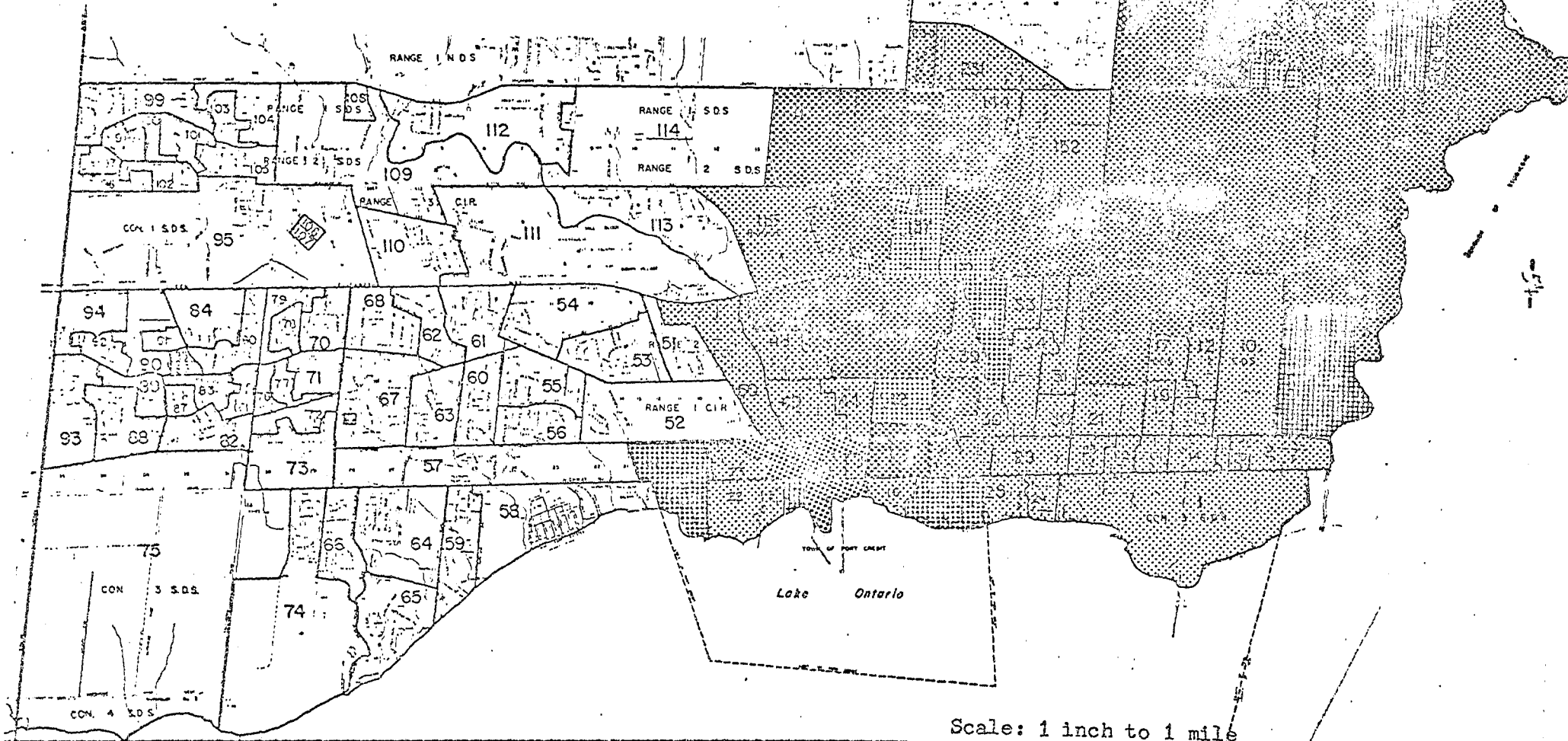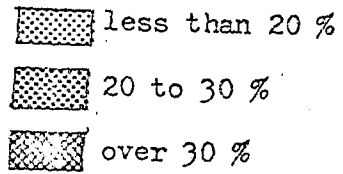less than 10 %

10 to 20 %

20 to 30 %

30 to 40 %

40 to 50 %

over 50 %

Scale: 1 inch to 1 mile
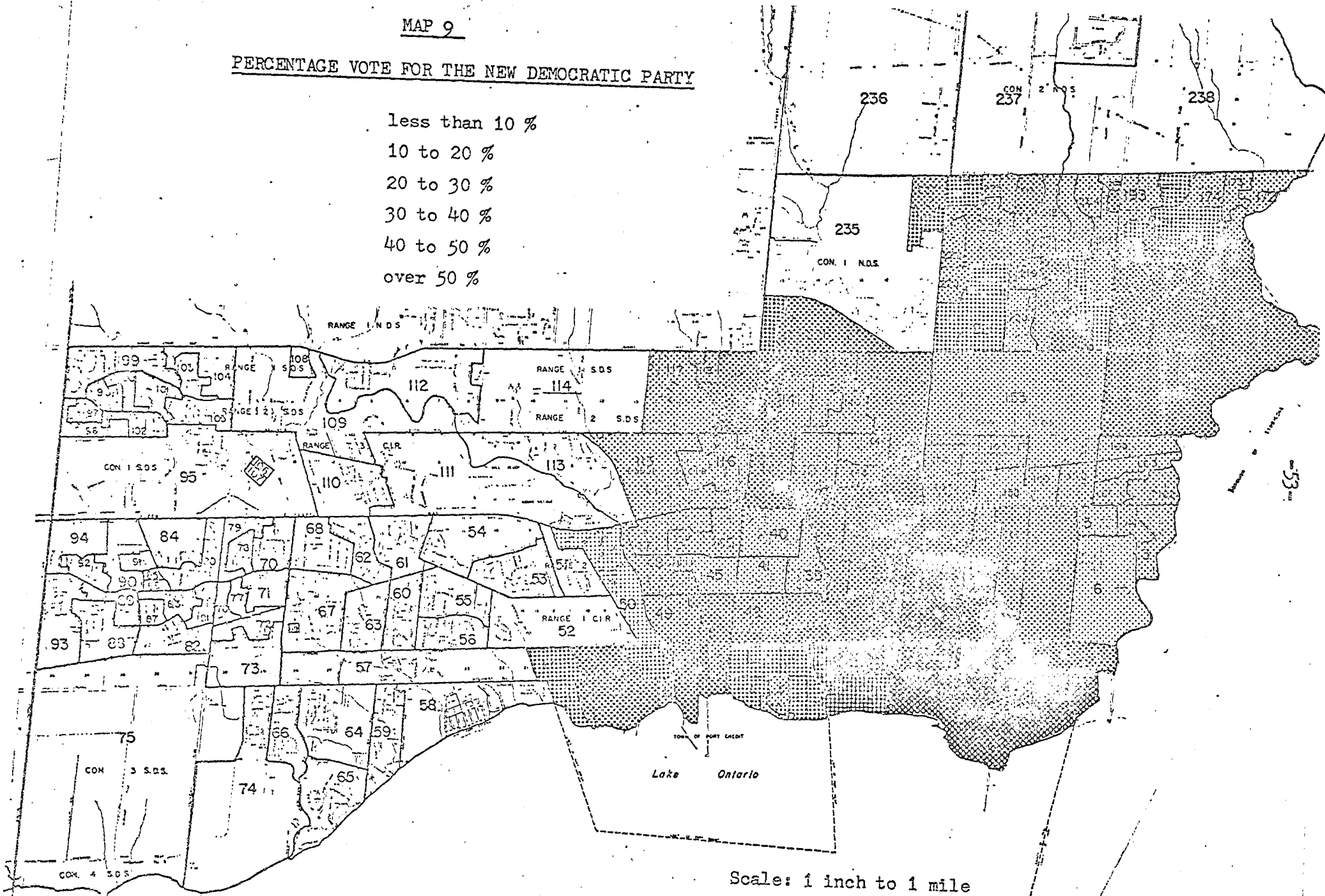
MAP 10

PERCENTAGE VOTE FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY

▓	less than 20 %
▓	20 to 30 %
▓	over 30 %

Scale: 1 inch to 1 mile

is found concentrated in the area of north-east Peel South, for
reasons which will be discussed later.

In the riding of Peel South, the belief that political
pattern would follow very closely with socio-economic patterns
would appear to have been validated. Areas of high Conservative
vote tended to correlate very strongly with areas of high home and
apartment assessments, with a good positive relationship between
assessment level and degree of Conservative vote. This relationship
may be seen graphically in Maps 5 and 8 which show a very distinct
concentration of Conservative votes in the polling districts to
the west of Highway 10 in the western extreme of the study area,
an area which also displays the highest assessments in Peel South,
averaging from $ 40,000 to upwards of $ 60,000. Together with the
fact that sixty-five percent of the household heads were employed
in either professional or managerial capacities, this would obviously
indicate that the neighbourhood was one of high social and economic
status. Consistent with expectations for such a neighbourhood,
voter participation was very high, in no case below 70 percent.
The strength of local identification with the Conservative party
was also witnessed in the fact that in this one neighbourhood the
percent voting Conservative was twice as great as those voting for
the other two parties combined. Obviously then Foladare is correct
in saying that living in a neighbourhood with high concentrations

of people of the same status will concentrate the effect of status
as a source of political behaviour. [31]

While the climate of political opinion in the neighbourhood
is important for shaping the political responses of migrants to the
area, through information biases and pressure for conformity, there
is also an important aspect of having a high status neighbourhood
in a community, which is brought out by Peter Regenstreif. [32]

> " The importance of these high status groups cannot be
> overestimated, for while their members are relatively few
> in number in comparison with the entire electorate they
> are the ° opinion leaders ' in their communities. The
> process of information flow in public affairs is usually
> downward. Persons looking for advice on political matters
> tend to look to those of higher status for guidance. When
> the ideology of an open class system prevails, as it does
> in most of Canada, then this is yet another factor turning
> all eyes toward them and acting to reinforce aspirations
> of upward mobility. In an atmosphere in which questions
> of ' status ' and economics loomed large this ° opinion
> leadership ' was significant.

It would therefore seem likely that the political attitudes and
voting patterns of the upper class ‹ are more likely to be witnessed
in the middle class areas than would any unique attributes held by
lower social classes.

This middle socio-economic group in Peel South, with
assessments in the $ 25,000 to $ 40,000 range, was primarily
located in a wide belt from the Queen Elizabeth Highway to Highway 5,
but including the polling districts on either side of these in the
eastern part of the riding. Where one would normally expect a some-

what more even distribution of votes by party, nearly all polling

districts recorded between fifty and seventy percent of the vote

for the Conservatives. Most of the remaining vote in the area, as

was also true in the high social class area, went to the Liberal

rather than the New Democratic Party. The fact that in an area

where the largest single occupational group was composed of skilled

labourers or salesmen, the presence of a large group of professional

and managerial persons may have provided the opinion leadership,as

postulated by Regenstreif. From this it would appear that the middle

class felt that their political loyalties lay closer to those of the

upper than the lower class.

The spatial identification of a concentration of New

Democratic Party support was the most clearly defined of any of the

three parties, as seen in Map 9. The main concentration of this New

Democratic strength was found in south-eastern Mississauga in an area

known as Lakeview, composed largely of mid-1940's vintage single

storey frame houses. Economically, the area is dominated by assess-

ments of less than $ 20,000 although some are in the $ 20,000 to $ 25,

000 range. Occupational data for these polling districts showed 65

family heads employed in unskilled positions, 27 in skilled labour

or sales positions but only 2 in professional or managerial positions.

In all of the polls in this district the New Democratic Party achieved

either a majority or plurality of the vote. Map 4, on page 39, also

indicates the low levels of voter participation achieved in this
neighbourhood, the turnout in any given polling district not being
greater than seventy percent. As Milbrath suggests, a sense of pol-
itical efficacy may be missing among lower socio-economic groups,
especially in the case of this group when they are minority party
supporters.

As Table 4, on page 36, indicates, there is a very strong
rejection of the Conservatives as well as a significant rejection of
the Liberals in districts of New Democratic support. Conversely, the
political ideology of the New Democrats can be seen to be strongly
opposed in areas of Conservative or Liberal strength, although these
parties are not mutually exclusive. A correlation between Conservative
and New Democratic vote indicated a very strong inverse relationship.
In an area where either of these parties did well the other did very
poorly. A similar, although not quite as strong relationship was
found between the Liberal and New Democratic parties. These figures
would seem to indicate that party ideology was much closer between
the Conservative and Liberal parties than between either of these
two and the New Democratic Party.

Since highly contiguous political neighbourhoods could be
identified which corresponded almost perfectly with socio-economic
neighbourhoods the main hypothesis would appear to be valid, at least
for the riding of Peel South.

In Dovercourt riding the possibilities of distinguishing distinct political neighbourhoods were not as great since socio-economic characteristics did not vary as much throughout the riding as in Peel South. As discussed earlier in the paper, due to its much smaller geographic extent, Dovercourt might more properly be considered to be part of a neighbourhood rather than an area which separate neighbourhoods are going to exist. While no spatially distinct neighbourhoods may be identified within the Dovercourt riding, general trends between the northern and southern portions may be noted due to the elongated nature of the riding.

Of the two correlations which displayed statistical significance in Dovercourt, the inverse relationship between percentage vote for the N.D.P. and home assessment was consistent with the findings in Peel South. As the assessed value of property rises by area, the strength of New Democratic Party support declines. Both other parties however show a positive relationship between assessment and party support, even though in Dovercourt the correlation coefficients were not high enough to be of statistical significance. This correspondence between New Democratic strength and property assessment may be seen in a comparison of Maps 12 and 7. There is a general decline of property values from north to south and a gradual increase in percentage vote for the NDP as you move southward. A similar southward decline in the level of voter turnout may be seen in Map 6, however

MAP 11

PERCENTAGE VOTE CONSERVATIVE

less than 20 %

20 to 30 %

30 to 40 %

40 to 50 %

over 50 %
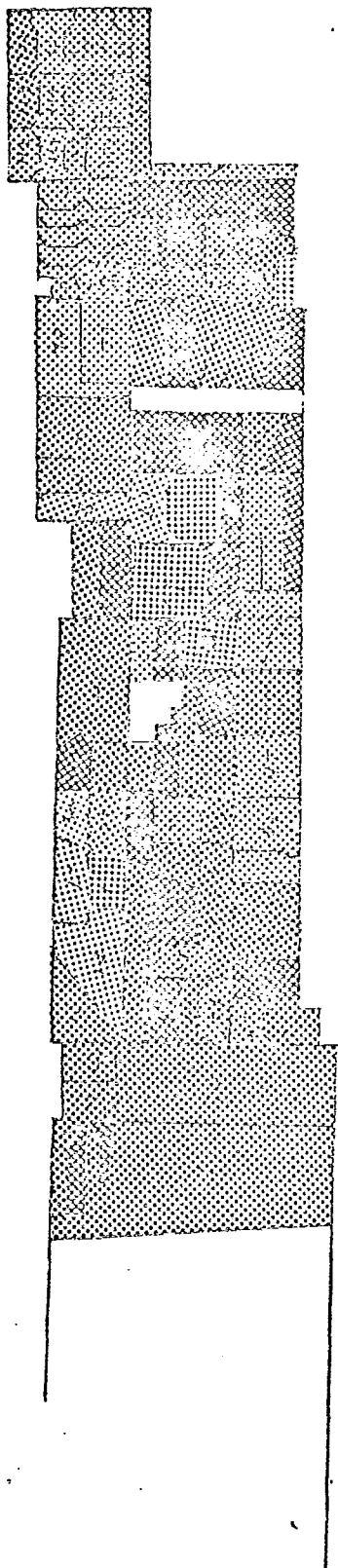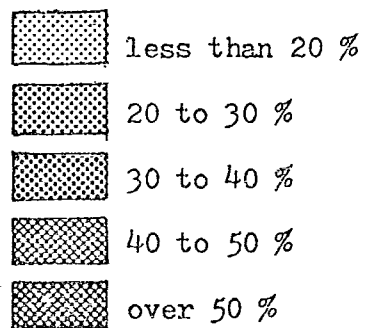
Scale: 1 inch to .6 miles
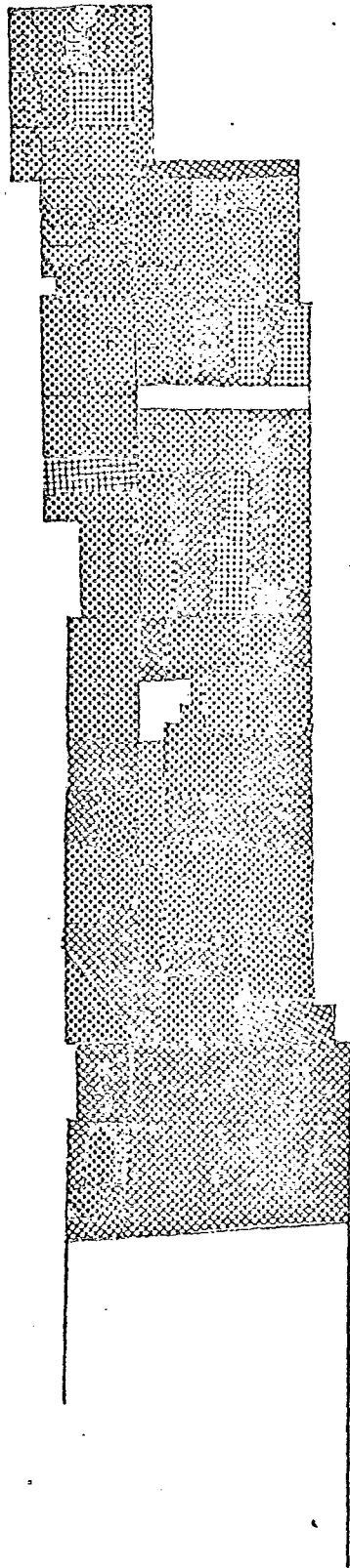
MAP 12

PERCENTAGE VOTE NEW DEMOCRATIC

less than 20 %

20 to 30 %

30 to 40 %

40 to 50 %

over 50 %
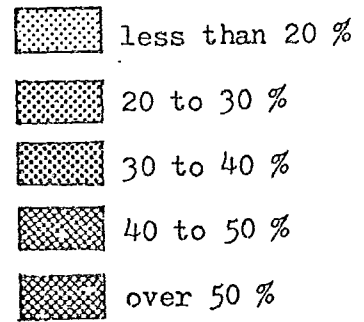
Scale: 1 inch to .6 miles
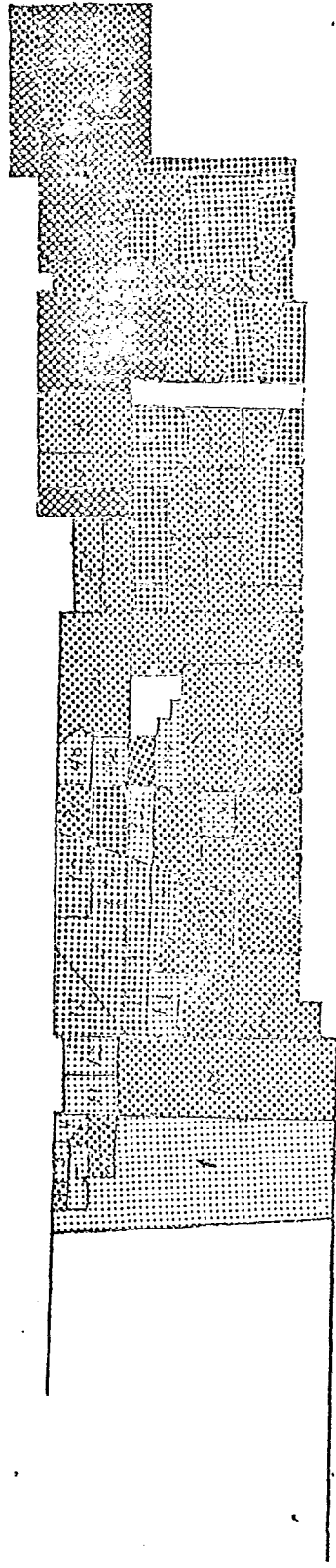
MAP 13

PERCENTAGE VOTE LIBERAL PARTY

▦	Less than 20 %
▦	20 to 30 %
▦	30 to 40 %
▦	40 to 50 %
▦	over 50 %
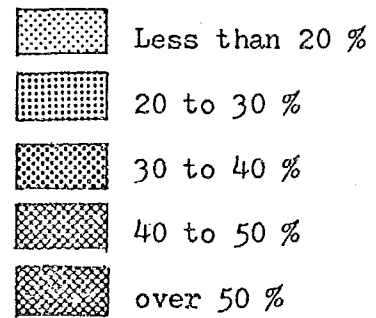
Scale: 1 inch to .6 miles

a correlation between voter turnout and percentage vote for the
NDP did not produce a significant correlation coefficient, although
an inverse relationship was noted.

A very high degree of Liberal support may be identified in
the northern section of Dovercourt despite the fact that the Liberals
placed third in the total number of votes polled in the riding as a
whole. This pocket of support cannot be explained in terms of assess-
ment levels since the correlation between assessment and percentage
voting Liberal was far below the level required for significance.
One possible reason for this strength might be the ethnic-religious
factor which this paper has avoided due to lack of data. This northern
section is heavily populated by Italian Catholics who would tend to
vote Liberal on the basis of that party's stand in favour of greater
funding of separate school education.

As Map 11 and Table 4 indicate, Conservative support in
the Dovercourt riding tended to be quite evenly distributed spatially
although a slight tendency was seen for areas of higher assessment
values to be somewhat stronger in their support of the Conservative
party than were areas of low assessment. This relationship, however,
was not pronounced and was not even statistically significant at the
five percent level of confidence. Thus, distinct political neighbour-
could not be found to correspond to socio-economic neighbourhoods in
Dovercourt riding, since neither could be spatially identified.

CONCLUSION

While previous studies by such people as Anderson, Meisel

and McDonald felt that religion and ethnicity were important as

determinants of electoral behaviour, it is the conclusion of this

paper that social class and neighbourhood values, particularly in a

suburban context, are the major determinant of voting patterns. As

Regenstreif points out , [33]

> " while religious affiliation does have some influence in
> suburban communities in Central Canada, its importance is
> essentially peripheral. Suburbanites seem to be undergoing
> all sorts of social dislocations from older, more traditional
> and established patterns. Religion is taking a new and differ-
> ent meaning in the life of these people. It is social and
> oriented toward secular and neighbourhood values rather than
> group-identified or personal and therefore its consequences
> here are mitigated by more powerful forces impinging upon
> the individual "

With increasing rates of suburbanization and demographic

movement in Canada, societal values are changing, with the result

that religious affiliation and ethnicity are declining in importance

as determinants of voter behaviour. However the willingness of people

to distinguish among themselves on the basis of social class and

residential location has not diminished. Indeed it is possible that

within the collective suburban anonymity a voter's major tie to his

neighbours may be social status derived from attributes such as income,

occupation, education, home ownership and residential area. It can be,

and has been argued, that in urbanized areas of Ontario, the middle

class persists in dividing itself along racial and religious lines in support of the two older parties, while the working class is increasingly turning to the New Democratic Party and the upper class to the Conservative Party. This study has shown this phenomenon to be true not only on a provincial or federal scale but also within single constituencies. Political opinion can be spatially identified as being coincidental with socio-economic neighbourhoods.

FOOTNOTES

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3. Brian Land , op. cit., p. 70-71

4. Rick Van Loon , op. cit. , p. 384

5. cited in Milbrath, op. cit., p. 120

6. Rick Van Loon, op. cit. , p. 385

7. Peter Regenstreif, " Group Perceptions and the Vote: Some
   Avenues of Opinion Formation in the 1962
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9. N.H. Nie, G.B. Powell, K. Prewitt, " Social Structure and
       Political Participation: Developmental Relation-
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10. Nie, et al., op. cit. , p. 817

11. IBID, p. 825

12. IBID , p. 820

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14. W. Gagne and P. Regenstreif, " Some Aspects of New Democratic
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15. John Wilson and David Hoffman , " Ontario: A Three Party
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16. Kevin Cox, " Suburbia and Voting Behaviour in the London
       Metropolitan Area " Annals of the Association
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17. R. Wood , Suburbia: Its People and Their Politics, p. 140

18. IBID , p. 125

19. Kevin Cox, " Residential Relocation and Political Behaviour:
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20. David Reynolds, " A 'Friends and Neighbours' Voting Model as
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21. Irving Foladare, " Effect of Neighbourhood on Voting Behaviour"
       Political Science Quarterly, vol. 83, 1968, p. 525

22. Robert Murdie, *Factorial Ecology of Metropolitan Toronto 1951 - 1961* , p. 127

23. *IBID* , p. 137

24. *IBID* , p. 127

25. *IBID* , p. 117

26. William Bunge, *Theoretical Geography* , p. 68

27. Necessary data from the 1971 census is not available at the time of writing.

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29. P. Jewett, *op. cit.*
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30. W.S. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 355

31 Foladare, *op. cit.*, p. 525

32. Regenstreif, *op. cit.*, p. 239

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