SENSE OF PLACE: DEFENSE OF PLACE

A CASE STUDY OF THE TORONTO ISLAND

by

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A Thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Toronto

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SENSE OF PLACE - DEFENSE OF PLACE: A CASE STUDY
OF THE TORONTO ISLAND

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February - March 1975: City of Toronto
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March - April 1974: City of Toronto Planning Board
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Publications for the Bureau of Municipal Research

Civic Affairs Series:

Land Banking: Investment in the Future, 1973 no. 1 (48 pp.)
Urban Open Space: Parks, People and Planning, Summer 1971 (61 pp.)
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#133 Municipal Gobbledygook, February 1972.
#130 Metro Centre: Venture Into the Great Unknown, November 1971.
#125 The Yonge Street Pedestrian Mall: Good Environment Equals Good Business, June 1971.
#123 Day Care: A Growing Problem, April 1971.
#122 Redevelopment and Open Space, March 1971.
#117 The Future of the CNR Beltline: Public Park or Private Property?, August 1
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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the dialectical relationship between sense of place (i.e., feeling of belonging in and having a deep emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning) and defense of place (i.e., specific political, legal and other actions taken to protect a place that is threatened). That is to say, when a place to which a person or a group of people is strongly attached is threatened in some way, the sense of place may lead to and condition the nature of the defense of place; and, when a place is threatened and defended, that defense of place, in turn, conditions and influences the nature of sense of place. In this dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place, the concept of threat occupies a position of central importance as a catalyst to action and a continuing influence.

The phenomenon of sense of place may exist in the absence of a severe threat or any defense of place. But when defense of place is evident, sense of place is the foundation upon which that defense of place is built. Sense of place, therefore, is given a position of primary importance in this investigation. It is argued that sense of place is a subjective phenomenon and, based on the information collected for this study, that it is composed of six, inter-related major components which have been termed: sense of history, sense of identity, sense of community, sense of environment, sense of control and sense of change.

Because of the nature of sense of place, this study adopts, as much as possible, an experiential perspective - i.e., attempts to under-
stand the phenomena of sense of place and defense of place from the perspective of the experiencing individuals, using their own words and actions as clues to how they relate to their particular place. In addition, in order to explore the complex, holistic, multi-faceted nature of sense of place and its relation to defense of place, this study presents a detailed, case study of a particular group of individuals (Toronto Islanders) and how they have related to a particular place (Toronto Island), which has been subjected to a variety of threats over a long period of time. In order to accomplish these ends, a variety of data sources and techniques were employed, most notably a lengthy period of participant observation (which involved living on the Island for approximately four months and extensive visiting over a period of six years) and interviewing of both Islanders (over eighty hours of taped interviews) and politicians (over twenty hours of taped interviews). In addition, analysis of the voluminous documentary records was conducted.

Evidence is presented that Toronto Islanders have experienced a sense of place and have repeatedly defended their special place against outside threats to radically alter or destroy it. By devoting one chapter to each of the six major components of sense of place, this study defines each component, provides copious evidence that Toronto Islanders have experienced each component, analyzes the Island and Islanders in terms of each component and analyzes the dialectical links between each component and defense of place. This study, therefore, also demonstrates (by constant reference to detailed observations and comments from individual Islanders) how each general component of sense of place may be applied and analyzed in a particular place and may serve as a guide to future studies.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the course of preparing this thesis, I have received a great deal of help from a large number of people and institutions, and I would like to thank them here.

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Naturally, while I received much assistance from other people, I must take responsibility for any errors that have crept into this document (unless, of course, anyone else wishes to come forward and take credit).
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

i. Sense of Place—Defense of Place: An Overview:

Using the Toronto Island as a case study, this investigation argues that there is a **dialectical relationship** between **sense of place** (i.e., strong emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning) and **defense of place** (i.e., specific political, legal and other actions taken to protect a place that is threatened). That is to say, when a place to which a person or group of people is strongly attached is threatened in some way, the sense of place may lead to and condition the nature of the defense of place; and, when a place is threatened and defended, that defense of place, in turn, conditions and influences the nature of sense of place. It is impossible to fully comprehend individual and collective responses to a threat without understanding the nature of the individual and collective attachment to that which is being threatened. Actions taken in defense of place, therefore, cannot be fully understood without appreciation of the participants' sense of place. Similarly, the very actions and experiences associated with defense of place may, in turn, heighten and/or otherwise influence participants' sense of place. In a situation where defense of place has occurred, therefore, participants' sense of place cannot be fully comprehended without a parallel understanding of their defense of place. It follows from this that in order to properly study a dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place,
both the specific nature of the sense of place and the specific nature of the defense of place must be investigated in depth (as in the case study presented here).

Sense of place is a phenomenon of considerable interest and importance to geographers and a phenomenon which may exist in the absence of any severe threat or any defense of place. When defense of place, however, is evident, sense of place is the foundation upon which that defense of place is built. Sense of place, therefore, is given a position of primary importance in this investigation. It is argued that sense of place is a subjective phenomenon and is composed of six inter-related major components, which have been termed: sense of history, sense of identity, sense of community, sense of environment, sense of control and sense of change.

It is also argued that in a dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place, the concept of threat occupies a place of central importance as the catalyst to action and a continuing influence. There would be no need to defend a place if there were no threat to change or destroy it. The threat, it is noted, must be perceived by the defenders as a severe one before action is taken. It is further noted that the specific nature of the threat and the context of the threat (e.g., the general political environment, the past experiences and resources of the major participants, and so on) also condition the nature of the response to threat. No argument, therefore, is advanced that sense of place alone conditions the nature of the defense of place—only that it does exert an important, frequently unrecognized, influence.

These relationships are diagrammed in Illustration 1, "Dialectical
Relationship of Sense of Place and Defense of Place. On the left is the box representing Sense of Place and its six major, interrelated components. This may exist in the absence of a severe threat or of any defense of place. But, when a major threat is posed (represented by the box at the top), and is perceived as severe, this threat acts as the precipitating event (represented by the dark, wavy line), as well as a continuing influence. When this happens sense of place leads to and conditions the nature of defense of place. This relationship is represented by the dark arrow leading from the threat line toward the box marked Defense of Place. As the defense of place occurs, it, in turn, conditions the nature of sense of place, which is represented by another dark arrow leading back to the Sense of Place box.

In addition, during the course of defense of place, each of the major components affects and is affected by those defensive actions. These relationships are represented by the dotted, two-way arrows.

The study which follows is based on a detailed investigation of the Toronto Island. It argues and presents evidence that Toronto Islanders have experienced a sense of place composed of six major components; that Toronto Islanders have perceived a series of severe threats to their special place; that Toronto Islanders have mounted a series of defenses of place in response to a series of threats; that Toronto Islanders' sense of place has led to and conditioned the nature of their defense of place; that Toronto Islanders' defense of place has conditioned the nature of their sense of place; and that the specific nature of the threats have conditioned the nature of both sense of place and defense of place.

In line with the aforementioned priority given to sense of place,
ILLUSTRATION 1

DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP OF SENSE OF PLACE AND DEFENSE OF PLACE

THREAT
- Specific Nature
- Perceived Severity
- Context

SENSE OF PLACE
- Sense of History
- Sense of Identity
- Sense of Community
- Sense of Environment
- Sense of Control
- Sense of Change

DEFENSE OF PLACE

Arrows indicate the dialectical relationship between Threat and Sense of Place.
this study is organized around the six major components of sense of place, devoting a chapter to each one. Each chapter gives evidence that Toronto Islanders do in fact experience the particular component under consideration; describes and analyzes the nature of the component and how it is expressed on the Island; and, finally, discusses the ways in which each component is engaged in a dialectical relationship with defense of place, by examining appropriate examples drawn from the political history of the Island. The remainder of this chapter introduces sense of place, defense of place and the Toronto Island in greater detail.

ii. Introduction to Sense of Place:

What makes people feel they "belong" in one place and feel "strange" in another? What makes people stay in a particular place, refusing evacuation, in spite of potential danger (e.g., from advancing lava or rising flood waters)? What makes people rebuild houses, villages or cities destroyed by natural hazards that are a constant threat, like floods, earthquakes and volcanoes? What makes people fight tooth and nail over long periods of time—often at great personal cost—against proposals to evict them from their homes or neighbourhoods or land? What makes people experience longing or nostalgia for a former place? What makes people refuse to move in order to enjoy a possibly easier, more affluent life elsewhere? What makes people reluctant to visit the site of former homes or neighbourhoods which have been radically changed or destroyed—or break down when they do return?¹

¹See also Appendix A "Examples of Sense of Place" for specific examples from around the world.
a. Definition of Sense of Place:

Recent writings have referred to copious evidence that places are much more than neutral backgrounds for human activity, but may be "centres of meaning," or "centres of felt value," or even "profound centres of human existence" and that people, under various conditions, develop what may be called a sense of place: i.e., a feeling of belonging in and having a deep emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning. Edward Relph, in his study of "place" and "placelessness", argues forcefully that "there are profound psychological links between people and the places they live in and experience" and, further, that:

distinctive and diverse places are manifestations of a deeply

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2 Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 138.

3 Edward Relph, Place and Placelessness (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 43. Relph expands upon the definition of "place" (p.22): Places in existenial space can therefore be understood as centres of meaning, or focuses of intention and purpose. The types of meanings and functions defining places need not be the same for all cultural groups, nor do the centres have to be clearly demarcated by physical features, but they must have an inside that can be experienced as differing from an outside. For many religious peoples places are holy and within the context of a powerful and sacred space. For the contemporary European or North American most places have a much weaker symbolic context than this and are defined largely by the meanings or significant associations attached to buildings, landforms, or areas in specific locations. But in both cases places constitute significant centres of experience within the context of the lived-space of the everyday world.

4 Ibid., preface.
felt involvement with these places by people who live in them, and that for many such a profound attachment to place is as necessary and significant as a close relationship with other people.¹

Definitions of sense of place (either implicit or explicit) have ranged from simple recognition of place (either that this building, clearing, town, etc., is a distinct "place"² or that "this place" is different from "that place"³) through to a more profound feeling of personal attachment to a particular place which has

¹Ibid.

²For example, Donlyn Lyndon, Charles W. Moore, Patrick Quinn and Sim van der Ryn, "Toward Making Places," Landscape (Autumn 1962), pp. 31-41. Moore writes (p. 34): "the strong sense of place and of city in downtown San Francisco" results from the strong "demarcation of edges" provided by the "rival gridiron plans on opposite sides of Market street" and "A sense of place might conceivably exist independent of such traditional ordering devices as processional axes, boundaries and landmarks; but basic to it is the division of inside from outside"; and van der Ryn writes (p. 37): "We require architecture, as distinct from building, to create a singular sense of order: a sense of place".

³For example, recognizing the special qualities of "this city" or "this district" that make it different from "that city" or "that district". Asa Briggs, "The Sense of Place," in Fitness of Man's Environment, Smithsonian Annual II (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), pp. 78-97, uses the term sense of place primarily in this way, referring to "sense of identity" of cities (p. 85) or the "identity of particular place" (p. 88) or "distinctiveness of places" (p. 90).
personal meaning and significance. This study is concerned primarily
with this deeper meaning of sense of place.

b. Subjective Nature of Sense of Place:

"Place may be said to have 'spirit' or 'personality'," Tuan has
written, "but only human beings can have a sense of place." Sense of
place is essentially an individual and subjective phenomenon and may
only be adequately studied by studying individuals and how they relate

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For example, Robert Aiken, "Toward Landscape Sensitivity," Landscape, 20 (Spring 1976), pp. 20-28, speaks, in passing, of "affection for place"; Harvey Cox, "The Restoration of a Sense of Place: A Theological Reflection On The Visual Environment," Ekistics, 25 (June 1968), pp. 422-424, discusses "the disappearance of a sense of place, of the significance of particular spaces and locations" (p. 422) and sees "the sense of continuity [of places]" as being "necessary to people's sense of reality" (p. 423); Tuan, Space and Place, op. cit. and Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit. Of this deeper meaning of sense of place, Relph writes (pp. 65-66):

An authentic sense of place is above all being inside and belonging
to your place both as an individual and as a member of a community
and to know this without reflecting upon it. This might be so for
home, for hometown or region, or for the nation. Such an authentic
and unselfconscious sense of place is perhaps as important and
necessary in contemporary societies as it was in any previous soci-
eties, for it provides an important source of identity for individ-
uals, and through them for communities.

The term "sense of place" has been used interchangeably with
a wide variety of other phrases, including: spirit of place, personality
of place, genius loci, awareness of place, identity of place, place con-
sciousness, experience of place, identity with place, field of care, root-
edness in place, sense of belonging, and attachment to place. Not all
of these phrases, however, are interchangeable with sense of place as it
is used here. For example, place consciousness, awareness of place and
experience of place apply more to recognition of place than to attach-
ment to place; and spirit of place, personality of place, genius loci,
and identity of place apply more to definitions of "place"—i.e., the
distinctive qualities of the place—than to the relationship between
people and place or the subjective experience of sense of place.

Yi-Fu Tuan, "Space and place: humanistic perspective," in Progress in Geography," vol. 6, eds. C. Board, R.J. Chorley, P. Haggett,
to particular, meaningful and well-loved places. Tuan argues in favour of adopting an "experiential perspective" to augment other, perhaps better known, perspectives adopted in the study of geography:

To the geometrical and ideographic perspectives that already exist in the discipline, a third is here added: the experiential perspective. Place is created by human beings for human purposes . . . To remain a place it has to be lived in. . . . To live in a place is to experience it, to be aware of it in the bones as well as with the head. Place, at all scales from the armchair to the nation, is a construct of experience; it is sustained not only by timber, concrete, and highways, but also by the quality of human experience.¹

Mercer and Powell echo these sentiments:

We must try...outlining some suggestions for research guidelines in human geography which have emerged from our lengthy review. The first is simple and will be expected, no doubt: the aims of society and human geography are to understand as well as predict. In order to do this it is essential that we make every effort to view problems and situations not from our perspective, but from the actor's frame of reference; not from the perspective of how some new theory says the individual ought to perceive reality but from the position of how he actually does so. It is vital that this realism be firmly incorporated into all our analyses, by whatsoever method we can employ.²

This study of a sense of place among Toronto Islanders adopts, as much as possible, an experiential perspective—i.e., it tries to understand the phenomenon of sense of place from the perspective of the experiencing individuals—using their words and their actions as

¹Tuan, "Place: An Experiential Perspective," op. cit., p. 165. Tuan, in "Space and place: humanistic perspective," op. cit., p. 213, also writes: "Place is not only a fact to be explained in the broader frame of space, but it is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning."

clues to how they relate to their Island.¹ (See also Chapter 2, Methods and Approach.)

c. Modes of Experience:

Sense of place, like experience of place, is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, which is built up not only from visual impressions, but also from auditory, olfactory, tactile, kinesthetic and even taste sensations. Every place and every individual's experience of place has its special sights, sounds, smells, feels, and kinesthetics. Aiken, for example, discussing the more general phenomenon of landscape perception comments on this:

These different images remind us that landscape is more than what we see. Our impressions of it are also compounded of sounds and silence, the tactile experience of wind, rock, and water, of movement, mood and atmosphere, of olfactory associations with nature and man's activities, and in some surroundings—the seashore being

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¹ Obviously, it is impossible for one person to "see" the world or "experience" the world as another person does. (See, for example, David Lowenthal, "Geography, Experience And Imagination: Towards a Geographical Epistemology," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 51 (1961), pp. 241-260.) But, by asking them how they feel and how they view the Island and related phenomena, by listening to what they say spontaneously in various situations and by observing how they behave, the researcher can approach the ideal set forward. In addition, to augment this where appropriate (e.g., when discussing reactions to the physical environment of the Island), the researcher may include some of his or her own reactions to the place under investigation, not as someone who has a deeply felt sense of place there, but at least as an "experiencing individual"—as someone who has made a point of experiencing the place under many different conditions. (See also Chapter 2, Methods and Approach.)
one—the taste of the elements.¹

Beyond this, sense of place (as well as experience of place) is fashioned not only by direct perception,² but also by memory, imagination, vicarious experience and so on. An individual develops bonds with a particular place not only through direct, contemporaneous perception of its physical attributes, but also through memory³ (e.g., remembering lost childhood places or recalling particular

¹ Aiken, "Toward Landscape Sensibility," op. cit., p. 24. As another example, Tuan, in "Space and Place: humanistic perspective," op. cit., p. 242, writes about developing "the feel of place": What are the means by which affective bond reaches beyond human beings to place? One is repeated experience: the feel of place gets under our skin in the course of day-to-day contact...The feel of the pavement, the smell of the evening air, and the colour of autumn foliage become, through long acquaintance, extension of ourselves—not just a stage, but supporting actors in the human drama.


² Direct perception itself is, of course, an extremely complex phenomenon which is affected not only by the nature of the physical stimuli, but also by such other factors as the culture, motivation, present (social and physical) condition, past experience and so on of the perceiver. See, for example: William N. Dember, Perception (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964); Julian E. Hochberg, Perception (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964); and Marshall H. Segall, Donald T. Campbell, Melville J. Herskovits, The Influence of Culture on Visual Perception (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966).

³ David Lowenthal, "Past Time Present Place: Landscape and Memory," Geographical Review LXV (January 1975), pp. 1-36, discusses some of the distinctive attributes of memory as a mode of experience, such as highlighting some features and diminishing or eliminating others.
sensations or significant personal events and associations with an existing place), through imagination (e.g., imagining some historical events or conditions which occurred in a well-loved place or imagining some possible future events or conditions which might occur), through vicarious experience (second-hand experience obtained through such media as books or verbal accounts or paintings, which may augment one's own direct experience), and so on. Study of sense of place must try to take into account these various modes of experience.

d. Time and Place:

It takes time to know a place and to develop a sense of place. This is true both because the place changes and because the person in the place changes over time.

First, consider place itself. Any place changes in the course of the day (day in the city or on the farm or in the wilderness is vastly different from night); over the course of the year (summer in the city or on the farm or in the wilderness is vastly different from the winter), and even, in many cases, during the course of the week (the Sabbath in the city or elsewhere may be radically different from the other days of the week; or, at the very local scale, various activities, like deliveries, may occur at particular times and give structure

\[1\] Direct perception passes almost immediately into past perception, so present perception is almost always buttressed by past perception (memories of sights, sounds, smells, etc.).
to the local rhythms of the place.\textsuperscript{1}

Places also change over time in less structured or systematic ways. For example, weather conditions change the nature of places (a foggy day on the waterfront is vastly different from a sunny day; a rainy day in the forest is vastly different from a dry day; and so on), because the range of experiences (the characteristic sights, sounds, smells and so on) change radically. And, over longer periods of time, of course, the nature of places may change;\textsuperscript{2} architectural styles may change, landforms may alter radically, significant historical events may occur, and so on, all of which contribute directly or indirectly (through perusal of such second-hand historical records as books, photographs, paintings, and old newspapers). All of this may influence a person's sense of place.

Second, consider the person in the place. Tuan emphasizes that

\textsuperscript{1}Yi-Fu Tuan, for example, emphasizes the importance of these cyclical changes, both seasonal and diurnal, in "Man and Nature," Landscape 15 (1966), pp. 30-36. Kevin Lynch, What Time is This Place? (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1972), illustrates these diurnal and seasonal rhythms in a photo essay and commentary on "Boston Time" (pp. 135-152). Similarly David Seamon and Christina Norden, "Marketplace As Place Ballet: A Swedish Example," Landscape 24 (1980), pp. 35-41 illustrate the weekly and seasonal variations of a periodic market in a small Swedish coastal town. And, for a rural example, Allan Anderson illustrates seasonal rhythms on the farm by the first-hand accounts of farm life contained in Allan Anderson, "To Everything There Is A Season," Remembering the Farm (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), pp. 50-61.

\textsuperscript{2}See, for example, Lowenthal, "Past Time Present Place," op. cit. See also Robert Sommer, Design Awareness (Corte Modena, California: Rinehart Press, 1972), pp. 67-81, where he discusses the "relevance of time to environmental experience and action" (p. 67) and points out that "time is a major constituent of architectural experience. People's reactions to a building are influenced by the past, the present and the future as well as its physical dimensions, color, material and style" (p. 70); and that "Environmental experience is affected by such attributes as duration...tempo...sequence...chronicity...and familiarity" (p. 70).
it takes time for people to experience or "to know a place". He writes:

Experience takes time. Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement. It is possible to appreciate the visual qualities in one short visit, but not how it smells on a frosty morning, how city sounds reverberate across narrow streets to expire over the broad square, or how the pavement burns through gymshoe soles and melts bicycle tires in August.

Tuan adds an important qualification to this statement, however:

If it takes time to know a place, the passage of time itself does not guarantee a sense of place. If experience takes time, the passage of time itself does not ensure experience. One person may know a place intimately after a five-year sojourn; another has lived there all his life and to him it is as unreal as the unread books on the shelf.

Finally, of course, the person changes over time, and these changes will also influence her or his sense of place.

Ideally, any study of sense of place must remain aware of these changes over time and try to take them into account.

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1 This is a debatable point. One may be bombarded by more distinctive visual stimuli than olfactory stimuli in the course of one visit, but whether one can truly "appreciate the visual qualities" in one visit is another question. Surely it takes time to sort out the important from the unimportant and to understand the pattern, rhythms, or structure of the visual experience. Surely some important sights would be missed altogether. And certainly one visit would not allow the visitor to see the place under the full range of conditions (summer-winter, night-day, sun-rain, and so on) necessary to build up a full range of visual experience.

2 Tuan, "Place: An Experiential Perspective," op. cit., p. 164.

3 Ibid., p. 164. On Toronto Island, therefore, it is possible that some people who have lived there only five years may have a sense of place which is as strong as, if not stronger than, some people who have lived there for twenty years.
e. Case Study Approach:

It is evident from the examples already given and the literature already cited that sense of place is important. But why does it develop? Under what conditions does it develop? Of what does it consist? Can it be created or encouraged to develop where it does not already appear to exist? It is one thing to say that places are "meaningful" or "important"; but it is another to understand in what ways they are meaningful and important. Although writers on sense of place have demonstrated this importance and have drawn examples from many cultures and many periods of time and many types of places, there has been a singular lack of detailed case studies of sense of place among people in one place.\(^1\) It is through such case studies that we can enrich our understanding of sense of place in general and begin to answer the questions noted above. Beyond this, it is only by studying defense of place in detail that the dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place stands out clearly. It is only by adopting this approach that the numerous, sometimes apparently small, interactive links between particular aspects of sense of place and particular political and other defensive decisions and actions can be identified, analyzed and set in a broader context.

It is for these reasons, therefore, that this case study of the

\(^1\) On the need for case studies, for example, Thomas F. Saarinen, Environmental Planning: Perception and Behavior (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), p. 90, writes:
It seems likely that people of all types and classes develop a strong attachment to place... It seems worthwhile to try to investigate this type of attachment more carefully in all sorts of settings, to determine what needs must be provided for in the largely artificial environment of the years ahead.
Toronto Island was undertaken. It was conducted not only to understand particular people and a particular place and a particular defense of place (an aim of some significance in itself), but also to contribute to the over-all understanding of sense of place and defense of place in general.

f. Toronto Islanders' Sense of Place:

Do residents of Toronto Island feel a sense of place? This is naturally the first question that must be answered. It cannot be said for certain that every one of the approximately five hundred adults feels a sense of place; but there is abundant evidence, both in word and deed, that many Islanders do in fact feel a strong sense of place.

First their defense of place itself is evidence of their sense of place. Perhaps the best evidence that Islanders feel a strong sense of place comes from the fact that they have been fighting fiercely, and often at great personal cost (in terms of time, energy, and even health), the policy adopted by Metropolitan Toronto to evict them, demolish their homes and community, and extend the Island park. Relph comments on this type of protest as being evidence of sense of place:

It is therefore disturbing that so much planning and remaking of the landscape proceeds apparently in ignorance of the importance of place, even though the protests of the expropriated and uprooted demonstrate this very importance.

That the significance of place in human experience goes far deeper than this [differentiating between different places] is apparent in the actions of individuals and groups protecting their place against outside forces of destruction, or is known to anyone who has experienced homesickness and nostalgia for particular places.1

The Metro policy was adopted in 1956. Since then, over four hundred houses have been demolished, the last major clearance being in the late 1960's. The remaining residents, who now occupy only the eastern end of the Island, really began their own battle to prevent the evictions and to change the Metro policy in 1967. Since then, and especially since the reaffirmation of the policy in December 1973, Island residents have dug in their heels and managed to delay (but not change) the policy. This opposition (as will be shown later) has actively involved most Island residents in one way or another. Obviously, a smaller group has been especially heavily involved; but most Islanders have contributed something—attended political meetings, appeared in demonstrations, telephoned supporters, written pamphlets or newsletters, typed transcripts and press releases, babysat for the children of people going to meetings, and so on. All of this may be construed as evidence of their attachment and commitment to the Island.

A second piece of evidence reflecting a sense of place among many Islanders is the fact that in spite of all the tension, uncertainty and stress associated with living in a place slated for demolition, Islanders have not moved off in great numbers. Some people, of course, have moved—some in the normal course of events (and for reasons similar to the reasons people in other places move—change of job, growing family, change in life cycle or life style, and so on) and some no doubt have moved because of the political uncertainty. But, in spite of all the tension and uncertainty, there has been no mass exodus from the Island.

As indicated later, Islanders prior to 1956 also opposed earlier schemes to radically change the Island as they knew it.
Islanders have also spoken about their attachment to the Island. For example, in November 1973, the Chairman of the Toronto Island Residents Association, Maureen Smith, addressed the Metro Parks Committee in an (unsuccessful) effort to persuade it to change the Metro policy of acquiring and demolishing Island homes. She said in part:

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. My name is Maureen Smith and I am here to represent more than 700 people who live in the Island community. In an attempt to save our homes, we have grouped together as the Toronto Island Residents Association and I am chairman of the organization. I want to make my presentation brief, but I would ask you to bear with me if I sound emotional at times, for I am here on an emotional errand, to try to save my home and the homes of my friends and my children's friends, all the 750 people who make up our community. Some of these families have lived there a very long time. The Wards for instance, after whom one of the islands is named, first came in 1830 and there have been Wards living on the Island ever since then....You know, it is all very easy to be a planner and say "We'll have to clear these houses off. They're in the way." But these are not just "squatters' shacks" as some people, who should know better, have claimed. It is not houses we are talking about. Not their lots. Not a prime piece of real estate. It is a living community whose character has been shaped over the years, generations in some cases, by the people who live there....I want to make it clear to you that we are not some kind of freaks or opportunist squatters or rapacious land speculators—just ordinary people. We want to stay on the Island because it is our home and because it seems unreasonable to destroy a community at this time.

In the interviews with Islanders that were conducted for this study, a number of people also spoke about the Island in such a way as
to confirm that they felt a sense of place.\footnote{Sense of place, as Relph and Tuan both emphasize, may be both consciously and unconsciously felt. Direct statements are often (but not always) expressions of copious feelings of sense of place. But just because someone does not talk about sense of place does not mean that she or he does not feel a sense of place. The unspoken, unconsciously felt sense of place may be as strong as, if not stronger than, the consciously expressed feeling. Tuan, "Space and place: humanistic perspective," op. cit., p. 235 writes: But we can have a sense of place in perhaps the deeper meaning of the term, without any attempt at explicit formulation. We can know a place subconsciously, through touch and remembered fragrances, unaided by the discriminating eye. While the eye takes in a lovely street scene and intelligence categorizes it, our hand feels the iron of the school fence and stores subliminally its coolness and resistance in our memory... Through such modest hoards we can acquire in time a profound sense of place. And Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 65, discussing "unself-conscious sense of place", writes: An authentic sense of place is above all that of being inside and belonging to your place both as an individual and as a member of a community and to know this without reflecting upon it.} Some of the more general statements are included here. It is important to note that they are made by all types of Islanders: summer and year-round, old and young, present and past, blue collar and white collar, and so on.

The Island seems almost to have cast a spell over many people who live, or have ever lived there. Alan Howard, who lived at Centre Island for forty-one years, from 1918 to 1959 when his family's house was expropriated, describes the hold that the Island has on people, even on those who have left:

The camaraderie which was developed is manifested in a very strange way. I haven't lived there since 1959. If I meet any old Islander that perhaps I knew by sight and didn't know to speak to, now this is an old and valued friend and you must get together and discuss whatever became of this one and that one. I had this happen in the Horticulture Building at Exhibition time. I was in there one afternoon and a lady and gentleman came up and were most effusive and I remembered them vaguely as a middle-aged couple that lived on the Island. I don't think I ever spoke to them in my life. But they...
told me their name and it had a vaguely familiar ring and automatically we’re old and valued friends meeting, simply because of the bond of this community living on the Island. And I think if you talk to the average old Islander, no matter where he is, Victoria or Montreal, he will tell that there really is no place anywhere quite like Toronto Island, right to this day. There’s a kind of distant look that comes into their eyes and a sort of a suggestion of a tear when they think of how good things were in those days. Well, not everybody thinks of his old community in quite that way.

"Daddy Frank" Staneland, who had spent summer on Ward’s Island since 1899, illustrated his, and his wife’s, profound attachment to the Island by having a picture of their cottage engraved on his wife’s grave stone. He kept a small copy of it in his garden:

This is my wife there [in a photograph]. She passed away a year ago last October. Well, she was so fond of the Island. She was so fond of the Island that I had a photograph taken of our cottage and that's on the [grave] monument. [Showing a copy of the stone], that's my cottage here. She loved the cottage so much and loved the Island so much that I had this all carved on the monument. This is a sample that they gave me first, to show me how it would look.

Wendy Hanger, a Ward’s Islander who grew up on Centre Island during the 1950’s, described how one Ward’s Islander broke down crying at the Christmas church service following the decision by Metro Toronto in December 1973 to go ahead with the park policy. At that time, some Islanders thought that this might be their last Christmas on the Island:

Two Christmases ago [1973], gosh, I can remember one day at Church, _______ who’s been here for years, you know.... You know, there’s been mixed feelings [about the 1973 Metro vote]. Some people took an optimistic view, some a very pessimistic view. I can remember________ reading something in Church and starting to cry during it. And that was really something. You know, everybody went "oh"... half of them started to cry too. Because that's really something, to see a man cry, doing something like that.

Jimmy Jones and Maxine Wilson, both former Hanlan’s Pointers who live on Ward’s Island, described the intimate relationship of people and place:
JL: You can't take this way of life and put it somewhere else and come up with the same feelings.

MW: Over here we're all paying the same thing, you know, and we all live in the same sort of houses, you know. There's the rich and there's the poor. There's the people on mother's allowance, people on welfare, and people make really good money. It's just a thing that happens, because the houses are the way they are, the fact that you have to rely on your neighbours, you know, like being cut off from stores and things. It's just something you can't put into something or something that just happens because it's the Island.

Another former Hanlan's Pointer, Tom Swalwell, who then moved to Algonquin Island, responded in 1974 to the prospect of having to leave the Island by simply saying, "I was born in my parents' house at Hanlan's Point in 1921. I'd be lost if I had to leave. It's not just a home to me, it's my way of life."  

Elizabeth Amer has lived year-round on Ward's Island for over twenty-five years (and spent summers there before that) and is a member of an old Island family. She describes her sense of rootedness, of being a part of the Island and of caring deeply for it:

It's very nice living in a house that was built by your grandfather, and a little unusual, I think, for Toronto people. They don't usually have those kind of roots where they're living. Some do, I imagine. But I think it's a bit unusual....For a house to stay in a family for generations is rather unusual and I find it satisfying to live in a house that he built.

I have a great sense of being part of the organism of the physical Island and the whole business of the house is an extension of that. I really feel that the house and everything is a part of the organism...and you and the house and the Island all being part of an organism.

Sometimes people reveal their sense of place when they are asked what they would miss if they had to leave. Some examples follow.

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1 Quoted in Cathy Berry, "Islanders Burn Their Eviction Notices/Now An All-Out War As Leases Expire," Star, September 2, 1974.
Ron Mazza, who grew up on Angonquin Island, summarized his feelings:

[I'd miss] the solitude. Being able to get away by coming home and being able to get out of the city every time you come home. The sense of community. Having a very familiar area, where you've grown up. Basically, coming "home". I think if I didn't have the Island, if the Island was destroyed, and became simply memories instead of a physical fact, as a residential area, I think I might be somewhat disoriented in space and time.

Mrs. Hopp, who lived on the Island year-round for many years while she and her husband ran a store on Ward's Island and who has spent summers on Algonquin Island since her husband died in 1964, commented on what she would miss:

This house particularly. And the Island has a tremendous emotional ... it's full of memories. I'm quite content to be here all by myself, because it's just full of memories, not that I want to live in the past, but that's just the way it is.

Jenny DeTolly, who moved to the Island in 1969, was one of several people who summarized their feelings by describing the Island as "home":

Everything. I'd miss my house. I'd miss my view. I'd miss summer. I'd miss the sense of community, which I do feel, though I know it's not totally non-existent in the City. I suppose you'd miss a place that you consider "home". I'd miss the physical aspects of it as well as the community aspects.

Mardi Webster, a member of a large, old Island family, had spent summers (and some winters during the '40's and '50's) on Ward's Island since 1924 and had trouble describing precisely what she would miss:

Oh, that's kind of your right arm. I mean, how can you describe it? I've had it all my life. I've never missed a summer over here all my life. That's 52 years [in 1974]....I couldn't describe it. I guess you'd have to adjust to it, but it would be like taking the right arm off anybody who had it before....We all feel that way. I don't know any other way to describe it. My dad calls it "God's country", always has. This is his 75th year. Our family, as you may have gathered, is a real close family....Over here, every time you walk out the door you're with your relatives. I couldn't even begin to count how many are over here now. I think it's about ten houses.

And Mary Madrick, who decided to move at the end of the summer of 1974
(but not to sell the house), described what she thought her children would miss:

It's hard. It's been her home all her life. It's even hard for our eldest daughter who lives down in Lindsay to realize that this will not be her home. It is. It always will be and if the situation changes and the kids want the house, they can have it.

Actually seeing the houses being demolished may trigger strong responses in people. For example, Fram Ward, who spent almost his entire long life on Ward's Island (which was named after his family), described how he reacted to the destruction of his son's, and other adjacent, houses in the late 1960's:

My son Bill, he's the lawyer, he lived right next door here in this lot behind me and his house was a compensation house so they knocked it down, December 1968. And I stood out here and watched it and I had a heart attack. [Looking at pictures of the demolition], you can see, there's my house there. This is the white house right here and there's his house. That's the way they're burning it... Now here's the start. They come up with this big thing here and they dig a hole in the ground with that shovel thing, they just tear it apart... Here it is, just ripping it apart. Had the house demolished in one hour. So that's the style of it. And as they go along, they shove all the rubble into this hole and they set fire to it and there it is burnt and there's the sand from the hole, you see. So here it is practically all finished and there's the end of it and then about the end of the day there's just a few smouldering embers, and they just push the sand in again. There's your house. Of course they paid [compensation] for it, so what can you do about it? They take my house, they're not paying [compensation] for it. Mind you, they might have paid for it by letting me stay here five years longer than him. I appreciate that part of it. I really do. But I still don't like them smashing something I've built.

Some of the strongest and most poignant expressions of sense of place come from people who have already experienced a loss of place.

(See also Sense of Change: "Human Costs".) Alan Howard described his former Centre Island home and his reluctance to return to the spot where it used to stand:

We stayed until we were practically the last house in the area. We could look three-quarters of a mile to the east before we could see a house. We were the last one remaining. Until the last possible day. The house was torn down in a little over a week from the day
we moved out... No, I've never really been back to look at the property. It's too sad a sight for me. Somehow when you don't see it cleared, you can imagine it as it always was. It's a quirk of the mind. You think of it as being unchanged. I know it isn't there, but you just somehow feel that you can see every blade of grass almost as it was. I had a sort of good pictorial memory. I can visualize things, right back to the time I was a tiny child, so that it's very real to me even now. And if you live in a house for 41 years, you can virtually sense every corner of it. You know where every creak is. You know what every door sounds like. Different rooms have a slightly different odor or smell. And this is all vivid to me right to this day. I can mentally go through the house and sense every corner of it. So I'd rather not go and look.

Jimmy Jones described a recent visit to the site of his former home on Hanlan's Point, which is now completely devoid of any of the houses that once stood there:

My mind is constantly going back to Hanlan's Point. And that's my favourite place. And if we had a chance to live back on the Island and they put houses back, I'd want to live back on Hanlan's. I feel very strange about [walking around there]. I've taken a walk over to Hanlan's. It was just last year, wasn't it Max, when I told you about walking from the wall up to where we used to live at Hanlan's and I stood at the tree that was only about maybe six inches in diameter and I remember when my brother tried to tap that tree and I stood leaning against that, which would be the fence line between our property and the man next door. I could just visualize. I could see the house and the house next to us, which was 602, and which was down the street, 612. Ya, I feel very... it gets me emotionally. And there was a tree on the beach that I watched Vern Thompson, Gordon's younger brother, it was a very small sapling to begin with and he would go out and take the small branches off the bottom of it, it was a poplar tree, and now that tree is in full bloom and as big as the tree in the backyard and the branches are quite high because he pruned the trunk so that it would grow bushy at the top.

Finally, another former Hanlan's Pointer described her former home and the devastating reaction her mother had the first time she went past the place on Hanlan's Point where it once stood:

It's dreadful [going back]. My mum at Hanlan's, in our house... well, first of all, the man who owned the house, Sam Stevenson, he'd come from the [Western Sand] Bar [part of Hanlan's Point now incorporated into the Island Airport]... and his wife had brought with her lilac trees that she had started on the Bar and there must have been ten of 'em all along our fence, you know, which, when
they had blooms, they were about ten inches long. I never saw lilacs like them. They were absolutely gorgeous.... And then Mum started peach trees from seeds along the other fence. She's got them over here too, that she started and crab apple trees. But the peaches on them were huge, like they'd hang over the fence and the kids would always steal them and that and they were just gorgeous and I think she had about five of those going. And when they took our house, they tore all that down. They tore the peach trees out and they tore all those lilac trees down. That had to be seventy years old. They left this one spindly pine tree that was dead when we lived there and that's what they left out of all the trees that were in there. And the first time that we had to go back to Hanlan's, from Ward's, to get a boat out of Hanlan's [because the Ward's dock was iced in], my mum was on the bus and she just absolutely went off her head, to the point that the people on the bus didn't know what was happening. They thought she was having a heart attack. She lost her breath and was crying and yelling and everything like that when they went by her house. And even now if the boats are going to Hanlan's, she won't go to the City. Like, she phoned me tonight and said, "Are the boats still going to Hanlan's?" And I said, "Yes." And she said, "I guess I'll wait and go and see Grandma", because every time she goes, she just breaks up. She can't bear to go to Hanlan's, past, you know, where our house was. Or she'll sit on this side of the bus and look out the window and pretend she doesn't see.

The trauma of losing a well-loved place can be great indeed.

8. Components of Sense of Place:

This case study of the Toronto Island has indicated that there are six fundamental components of Islanders' sense of place. These may be termed: sense of history (chapter three), sense of identity (chapter four), sense of community (chapter five), sense of environment (chapter six), sense of control (chapter seven) and sense of change (chapter eight). Each of these components is defined and described at some length in a separate chapter. Here, following some more general remarks, each component is described briefly by using non-Toronto examples.

First, it is important to emphasize that these six components were derived from an inductive process. As noted elsewhere, because of the relative lack of investigation into the phenomenon of sense of place,
there existed little theory to guide this research. What was required—and attempted here—was an exploratory study to generate new theory (rather than a study to verify existing theory). These six components arose from "hard study of much data", as Glaser and Strauss phrase it in their treatise on the value of the inductive approach to theory development and seemed "consistently able to embrace the data in a useful way, without strain", as Lynch wrote about his own five major elements of city images. Although subsequent analysis of a diverse literature relevant to study of sense of place seems to confirm the existence of six components, the components were initially identified by analyzing the data collected about the Toronto Island.

Second, although these components have evolved from the analysis of the Toronto Island and describe fairly comprehensively Toronto Islanders' sense of place, they may be generalized to other people and to other places. Whether they comprehensively describe sense of place elsewhere—or whether there are major omissions—remains to be seen and awaits the appearance of additional case studies. Nevertheless, the following examples are drawn from different scales (e.g., from individual homes to large tracts of wilderness or coastline), from different types of environments (e.g., village, city, farm, wilderness, sea, and so on), from different cultures (e.g., western European, North American, Indian), and from different periods of time (e.g., nineteenth century peasant villages and twentieth century urban neighborhoods). In short, there is good reason

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to believe that they apply not only to the experience of sense of place on Toronto Island, but also to the sense of place more generally.¹

Third, while these six components are evident and strongly felt by Toronto Islanders generally, this does not mean that every Islander who feels a sense of place feels equally strongly about each component (e.g., some might have a stronger sense of environment than sense of community, and others might have a stronger sense of community than environment). The individual's sense of place is simply, and fundamentally, individual. But keeping these different components in mind facilitates describing and understanding these individual feelings. Beyond this, identifying six components of sense of place does not mean that they all apply equally well to every other, non-Toronto Island situation. Lighthouse keepers may have little sense of community, but a very strong sense of environment; residents of remote peasant villages may have little sense of change, but a strong sense of identity; and residents of an urban neighbourhood under the threat of redevelopment may have little sense of control, but a strong sense of community, and so on. Using the various components, however, to a large degree may facilitate the description and comparison of different people.

¹ Two excellent "natural examples" of this framework are Boyce Richardson, Strangers Devour the Land: The Cree Hunters of the James Bay Area Versus Premier Bourassa and the James Bay Development Corporation (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975) and Robert Coles, Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers: Volume II of Children of Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971). Although done for different reasons and from different perspectives, each of these studies illustrates each of the six components of sense of place. Richardson's study concerned Cree Indians "in the bush" and, to a lesser extent, on the reserve. Coles' study concerned migrant farmworkers moving from farm to farm, Southern tenant farmers on "their" small farms and Appalachian mountain dwellers living in their hollows. These studies, therefore, concern scales, types of environment and types of people very different from Toronto Islanders and support the conclusion that the six components discussed here may be generalized beyond the Toronto Island situation.
and their places. (Studying, for example, in what ways the sense of place of residents in village A compares with the sense of place residents in village B or the sense of place of residents in urban neighborhood C.)

Finally, although six fundamental components of sense of place are identified, this should not be taken to imply that they are separate and unrelated. The phenomena under investigation are too complex for that. As each chapter makes clear and as is discussed at greater length in the concluding chapter, the six components are related to one another in a complex variety of ways. For example, sense of history may reinforce sense of identity; sense of change may heighten sense of community; sense of environment contributes to sense of community, and so on. Nevertheless, a separate discussion of each one is possible and clarifies the understanding of sense of place.

Some examples of each of these components of sense of place follow.

1. Sense of history: Yi-Fu Tuan quotes the moving address of an American Indian chief, who spoke eloquently about his people's attachment to their ancestral land. His profound sense of his people's history is clear:

On the sad occasion when native Americans had to cede land to Governor Stevens of Washington Territory, an Indian chief is reported to have said:

...Every part of this country is sacred to my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove has been hallowed by some fond memory or some sad experience of my tribe. Even the rocks, which seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur, thrill with memories of past events concerned with the lives of my people. The very dust under your feet responds more lovingly to our footsteps than to yours, because it is the ashes of our ancestors, and our bare
feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch, for the soil is rich with the life of our kindred.\textsuperscript{1}

Wallace Stegner writes with some feeling of bitterness about the lack of a sense of history he felt as a child growing up in a frontier town on the Saskatchewan prairies. No one taught him about the colourful local history. It was only later that he discovered it. He relates both the frustration and the joy of the discovery:

Once discovered, history is not likely to be lost. But the first generation of children to grow up in a newly settled country do not ordinarily discover their history, and so they are the prime sufferers from discontinuity....

It seems to me now an absurdity that I have felt it necessary to go as far as the Hardanger Fjord [in his mother's native Norway] for a sense of belonging.... The very richness of that past as I discover it now makes me irritable to have been cheated of it then. I wish I could have known it early, that it could have come to me with the smell of life about it instead of the smell of books.... All of it was legitimately mine, I walked that earth, but none of it was known to me....

[Recalling one dramatic incident of local history] I know how that October river bottom would have looked and smelled with the skin lodges and the willow fires and the roasting meat—the smells of autumn and the muddy banks, the Indian summer pungency of drying leaves and rose hips, the special, secret smell of wolf willow, the glint of yellow and red leaves shaking down over the camp in a chilly night wind. It is an actual pleasure to think that their boots and moccasins printed the gray silt of those bottoms where my bare feet would kick up dust years later.\textsuperscript{2}

\textbf{(2) Sense of identity.} Ronald Blythe, in his composite portrait of a Suffolk village, describes the villagers' sense of identity:

The villager who has never moved away from his birth place for anything more than military service retains the unique mark of his particular village. If a man says he comes from Akenfield he knows

\textsuperscript{1}Tuan, \textit{Space and Place}, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 155-156.

that he is telling someone from another part of the neighbourhood a good deal more than this. Anything from his appearance to his politics could be involved.¹

Robert Coles quotes a black tenant farmer from Tennessee, whose sense of identity is deeply rooted in "his" land and way of life:

I have to get the water [first thing in the morning] and that comes next. I take my oldest boy with me. He talks about going to a city one day, but I have an answer for him. I say: go, go North, go to Chicago or a place like that, and you'll pine for it here and you'll be sorry and you'll ache; you'll hurt, real bad it'll be. We're born to this land here, and it's no good when you leave. I did once; I was in the Army. I know what I could have done. I know how I could have stayed there, in the state of Indiana, up toward Chicago. But I asked myself if I wanted to be in a place I didn't want to be in—even with a check from the welfare people, or a job if I could get one or if I wanted to be back here, doing what I was taught by my daddy to do. You can see how I answered myself....

But [my son] knows what I'm telling him; for us it's a choice we have, between going away or else staying here and not seeing much money at all and living here, where you can feel you're you, and no one else, and there isn't the next guy pushing on you and kicking you and calling you every bad name there ever was. If you go, that's what you go to. If you go you can't hardly breathe, there are so many people, and you never see the sun, you never do. I used to wake up, when I was in the city on leave, military leave, and I'd ask myself, where is that sun, where does it hide itself from you?²

And Tuan describes how the Australian aborigine's identity comes from his and his ancestors' relationship to the landscape:

Landscape is personal and tribal history made visible. The native's identity—his place in the total scheme of things—is not in doubt, because the myths that support it are as real as the rocks and waterholes he can see and touch. He finds recorded in his land the ancient story of the lives and deeds of the immortal beings from whom he himself descended, and whom he reveres. The whole countryside is his family tree.³


³Tuan, *Space and Place*, op. cit., pp. 152-153
(3) Sense of community: Oscar Handlin describes the attachment to the land and sense of community felt by European peasants of the pre-North American migration era:

Stability, the deep cushiony ability to take blows, and yet to keep things as they were, came from the special place of these people on the land....The bonds that held these men to their acres were not simply the personal ones of the husbandman who temporarily mixes his sweat with the soil. The ties were deeper, more intimate. For the peasant was part of a community and the community was held to the land as a whole.

Always, the start was the village. "I was born in such a village in such a parish"—so the peasant invariably began the account of himself. Thereby he indicated the importance of the village in his being; this was the fixed point by which he knew his position in the world and his relationship with all humanity.

The village was a place. It could be seen, it could be marked out in boundaries, pinned down on a map, described in all its physical attributes....All these could be perceived; the eye could grasp, the senses apprehend the feel, the sound, the smell, of them....

Yet the village was still more. The aggregate of huts housed a community. Later, much later, and very far away, the Old Country-men also had this in mind when they thought of the village. They spoke of relationships, of ties, of family, of kinship, of many rights and obligations....

They would say then, if they considered it in looking backward, that the village was so much of their lives because the village was a whole. There were no loose, disorderly ends; everything was knotted into a firm relationship with every other thing. And all things had meaning in terms of their relatedness to the whole community.¹

And Michael Young and Peter Willmott, describing a very different place, discuss the strong sense of community felt by residents in the working class, East London district of Bethnal Green. First, they give some general, rather amusing anecdotes of people who have moved from one area to another, which illustrate these people's strong sense of community:

When people have to move away from one part of the borough to another, they can appreciate the difference. Mr. Gould, when he married, moved away from his parents and went about ten minutes' walk away to live near his wife's parents elsewhere in the borough, in this case in Bow. "I'd like to be back in Bethnal Green," he said. "I would really. In Bethnal Green we have good neighbours better than those in Bow I can tell you." Mrs. Tawney had moved as unwillingly in the other direction.

"We're both from Bow. We're not very well known around here. We've only lived here since we got married, you see. In Bow you knew everybody, grew up with everybody, everybody recognized you. Over here they're a bit on the snobbish side—they know you're a stranger and they treat you like one. They cater for you more in Bow. You like the place where you're mostly born, don't you?"

They then go on to discuss sense of community in general:

In Bethnal Green the person who says he "knows everyone" is, of course, exaggerating, but pardonably so. He does, with various degrees of intimacy, know many people outside (but often through) his family, and it is this which makes it, in the view of many informants a "friendly place". Bethnal Green, or at any rate the precinct, is, it appears, a community which has some sense of being one. There is a sense of community, that is a feeling of solidarity between people who occupy the common territory, which springs from the fact that people and their families have lived there a long time.

(4) Sense of environment: Boyce Richardson contrasts two views of "the bush", the intimate knowledge and love of the "insider", the Cree Indian, with the superficial disdain of the "outsider", the white pilot:

A young pilot efficiently hauled us into the air, and with bored indifference carted us upriver. Only the day before, we had been on the river with the old man, watching how every channel, island, sand bar, even every submerged rock was known to him and loved by him. Now we were in a machine, a marvelously ingenious machine that could hover, move sideways, climb quickly, drop suddenly, do everything but dance, and to the men running such machines the superb wilderness below was featureless, boring and meaningless.... "This is some of the most barren country in the world today," he

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2. Ibid., pp. 112-113
said. "It has all been scraped clean by glaciers years ago and virtually nothing has grown since." The other day, he said, he had flown inland to a Lake Vinclotte. "Now I know where nowhere is."

Dewey Nickerson describes the intimate knowledge of the sea and the coastline necessary for survival as a fisherman off Nova Scotia:

I started out in the fishing boat with my father before I could walk—just the same as he did with his father. I grew up listening and paying attention to everything he had to say....When they went out in those boats they were on their own—just themselves against the sea. A gale of wind might come up—we called them the "August twisters" in them days—they'd come up suddenly and the best you could do was make for shore as fast as you could. You had to know that water and every inch of shore like the back of your hand. There was no electronic equipment, not even a weather forecast. There was only yourself and what was inside your head. Sometimes I didn't know if I was gonna make land or not. See, the mainland of Nova Scotia might be eighteen or twenty miles away when one of these sudden gales would come up and there would be no way we could make it back. That's when we'd have to turn in to Sable [Island] to land our boats. If we didn't know the waters there, that would be the end of it.

And John McPhee describes "piney" Bill Wasowwich's ability to find his way unerringly around in the New Jersey Pine Barrens:

His name is Bill Wasowwich, and he lives alone in a cabin about half a mile from Fred....When he is not working in the bogs, he goes roaming, as he puts it, setting out cross-country on long, looping journeys, hiking about thirty miles in a typical day, in search of what he calls "events"—surprising a buck, or a gray fox, or perhaps a poacher or a man with a still. Almost no one who is not native to the pines could do this, for the woods have an undulating sameness, and the understory—huckleberries, sheep laurel, sweet fern, high-

1Richardson, Strangers Devour the Land, op. cit., pp. 156-157. Richardson's book is full of examples of the Indians' keen sense of environment: e.g., their remarkable ability to find their way across miles of, to the outsider, apparently featureless wilderness (p. 13); or their intimate knowledge of, deep personal association with, and memories of past events which had occurred along the river (p. 165).

bush blueberry—is often so dense that a wanderer can walk in a fairly tight circle and think that he is moving in a straight line. State forest rangers spend a good part of their time finding hikers and hunters, some of whom have vanished for days. In long, path-less journeys, Bill always emerges from the woods near his cabin—and about when he plans to.

(5) Sense of control: One young man, a sixth generation Newfoundlander, describes a fishing trip he took with his father, a fisherman for over fifty years, in order to understand why his father continues to undergo the rigours and dangers of a fisherman's life:

And I said: "Why do you do this? You know you've been almost fifty years out here? You've had countless opportunities to work on the shore, because you're a good worker." "My son," he said, "there's a freedom out here, a freedom. I don't answer to nobody but me." And I said, "You've almost drowned out here." "Oh, a couple of times, you know a lope, a big wave come over; I was a bit worried about it, and you bailed like crazy and you come out of it. But nobody has ever told me that I've got to be out at 8 o'clock in the morning, and nobody is not going to tell me, either. If I want to get up at three o'clock in the morning and go fishing I'll get up. Nobody ever calls me. I'm never going to have them call me."

And I said: "Well, what about the dogfish and the hazards and the sore hands and all that?" "You take that as it comes, that's part of it, part of the kind of life that I chose to live. I brought up five children, educated you all the best I could, and I take some satisfaction in that I was able to accomplish that without having to take the hole." And he said, "There's something about being out here, so wonderful, that I can't put it in words. I can tell you when she's going to blow; when there's going to be fish and when there's not going to be fish. I can get out here in a fog bank and I'll find my way home; all I need is a compass."

That's the kind of challenge I suppose he saw.1

And John McPhee describes the relatively isolated, but independent and self-sufficient life led by residents of the Pine Barrens. Their


pride in being able to survive in this unusual environment is also evident:

As the last of the iron furnaces gradually blew out and the substitute industries failed, people either left the pines or began to lead self-sufficient backwoods lives, and while the rest of the State of New Jersey developed toward its twentieth-century aspect, the Pine Barrens all but returned to their pre-Colonial desolation, becoming, as they have remained, a distinct and separate world. The people of the pines came to be known as pineys—a term that is as current today as it was at the turn of the century. After a generation or two had lived in isolation, the pineys began to fear people from the outside...

The pineys had little fear of their surroundings, from which they drew an adequate living....Another man, Scorchy Jones, who works for the State Fish and Game Division, said this to an interviewer from a small New Jersey radio station: "A sense of security is high among us. We were from pioneers. We know how to survive in the woods...."

(6) Sense of change: Herbert Gans generally plays down any sense of attachment to the West End that might be experienced by its residents. But he presents this striking example, which was inspired by the announcement of the urban renewal scheme which threatened to (and ultimately did) not only change, but destroy the area:

Subsequently I heard more anguished remarks that indicated how important the area and its people were to the speaker. In December 1957, the day after the federal government gave the city the go-ahead, one young Italian man said:

I wish the world would end tonight....I wish they'd tear the whole damn town down, damn scab town....I'm going to be lost without the West End. Where the hell can I go?

Boyce Richardson illustrates the effect that sense of threatened change may have on heightening a sense of place by quoting Charlie Bossum, a young Cree in his mid-20's who works part-time in the white man's mines and hunts and traps as much as possible on his father's territory and


who feels at "home" in the bush. Charlie Bossum talks about the possible destruction of his land:

It made me wonder and wonder a great deal when I heard they were going to flood and destroy the land.... It seems like I'm somebody cornered, an animal so desperate to get back to my land, because I have that feeling that I might lose it at any time. I guess I will feel desperate in the future, when I do actually see the land going underwater, which would be the end of it.... The white man, you see, is already here. But I still have that love and respect for my land.¹

Sense not only of change but of imminent loss may heighten sense of place and even lead to "irrational" behaviour, such as remaining in a place of danger. Betty Kennedy, writing about Hurricane Hazel's battering of Toronto on the night of October 15, 1954, gives the following examples of people who refused to leave their homes even as the flood waters were rising around them:

Jim McArthur and his family had a very different experience [from the motorist swept into the turbulent Don River]; their home was in the Don Valley north of the Prince Edward Viaduct for over fifty years. "... This homestead was a wild and beautiful oasis in the middle of the city as we grew up. Our homes were located on an elevated plot of land which became an island each spring. We were accustomed to the annual spring flooding of the Don River and would just wait it out. That Friday in October was something else again....

"My uncle Bill, who had lived in the valley all his life, refused to leave with us. He sat on the stairs to the second floor of his house and watched the water creep up, one step at a time. He tells of watching everything turn upside down. The lights began to pop and finally all went dark as the water shorted out the fuse box. The water eventually rose five and a half feet on the first floor and ruined everything."

Joan Prezzo's family lived on a section of land where Scarlett Road crossed the Humber River. For over forty years her great-grandparents ran an ice cream parlour at that location. During the hurricane her old granddad decided that if he had lived by the river most of his life, he'd die by it. But his sons liter-

¹Richardson, Strangers Devour The Land, op. cit., pp. 99-100.
ally carried him from the house. In the hours that followed, the water rose up to the eavestroughs.¹

Other examples—both general and specific to the Toronto Island—are given in the chapters devoted to each component of a sense of place.

h. Sense of Place: Motivation for Defense of Place:

As noted earlier, sense of place both provides the motivation for, and conditions the nature of, defense of place. With respect to motivation, Relph writes:

The places to which we are most attached are literally fields of care, settings in which we have had a multiplicity of experiences and which call forth an entire complex of affections and responses. But to care for a place involves more than having a concern for it that is based on certain past experiences and future expectations—there is also a real responsibility and respect for that place both for itself and for what it is to yourself and to others. There is, in fact, a complete commitment to that place, a commitment that is as profound as any that a person can make, for care-taking is indeed "the basis of man's relation to the world"....²

Islanders' care for and sense of responsibility toward the Island (as they know it) and toward other Islanders is well demonstrated by their long fight to prevent the demolition of their homes and to be allowed to remain there, which is discussed below.

iii. Introduction to Defense of Place:

a. Definition of Defense of Place:

Defense of place is composed of the specific political, legal and other actions taken by individuals or groups to protect and defend the integrity of a place to which they are emotionally attached. The scale of the place defended may range from individual homes and

¹Betty Kennedy, Hurricane Hazel (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), pp. 53–54, 56.
²Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 38.
properties, \(^1\) to neighbourhoods, \(^2\) to townships, \(^3\) to broad regions \(^4\) and nations. \(^5\) The defensive actions themselves may range from taking

\(^1\) English common law recognizes the sanctity of the home and the right of individuals to protect it from intruders, as in the famous seventeenth century legal phrase "An Englishman's home is his castle." At a more emotional level, John McPhee describes the attachment to his land of Pine Barren native Bill Wasovitch and his willingness to defend it, if necessary. Mr. Wasovitch had been engaged in the back-breaking job of clearing out a four-acre bog given to him by his employer in order to grow cranberries and expressed the following sentiments:

I asked him if the land was actually his. He said that his employer had given it to him, but that he had no deed. "It's as good as my bog," he went on. "They can't take it away from me. They could legally, but they'd have to get the state troopers. They take this bog, they take me with it. I'll get up here with my rifle. I took out stumps in here the size of chairs." McPhee, \textit{op. cit.}

Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick provides another example. During the 1960's and early 1970's, 260+ landowners were expropriated to create a national park. Toward the end of the 1970's, a few of the former owners tried to return to their land:

Edward Gaunce, co-ordinator of the Kouchibouguac Committee for Justice for the Expropriates, says: "Let me say it in plain words. We either get the land back or we destroy it completely. Fire in the woods, oil to pollute the rivers."

John (Jackie) Vautour, a 51-year-old father of 10 who has been heading the move to reclaim the land, speaks of the growing possibility of murder. "If they want this land back, they'll carry bodies out of here," he says motioning toward the four chipboard shanties he built for his family [on his former land] and stocked with 23 rifles.

Barbara Yaffe, "\textit{Squatters Pledge To Continue Fight As Tension Mounts At Troubled Park,}" \textit{Globe and Mail}, April 26, 1980.

\(^2\) The urban renewal and redevelopment literature provides numerous examples of this scale of defense. See, for example, Graham Fraser, \textit{Fighting Back: Urban Renewal in Trefann Court} (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert, Ltd., 1972) and J.L. Granatstein, \textit{Marlborough Marathon: One Street Against A Developer} (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd. and James Lewis & Samuel, 1971).

\(^3\) The Pickering Airport controversy outside Toronto is an example.

\(^4\) See for example, Richardson, \textit{op. cit.}

\(^5\) As an obvious example, nations at war, when one responds to invasion by another.
appropriate political and legal action through to civil disobedience and even violence (either individual or collective). On the Toronto Island, the scale involved is neighbourhood and individual homes and the type of action taken (as of summer 1980) has been primarily political and legal. Civil disobedience and individual violence have been discussed in recent years, but not yet resorted to, since the political and legal actions have delayed any possible confrontation between residents and those sent to evict them.

b. Threat:

In a dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place, the concept of threat occupies a position of central importance, both as a catalyst to action and as a major influence on that action.

First, threat as a catalyst to action. Obviously, there would be no need to defend a place if there were no threat to change or destroy it. The existence of a threat, however, is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for defense of place. A threat (even a severe one) may exist without stimulating any response to defend that place. In order to stimulate a defensive response, the threat must first of all be perceived as a severe one and the general context or political environment must be conducive to taking action. For example, in the West End of Boston described by Herbert Gans,¹ there was a severe threat (an urban renewal scheme to demolish the area), which was even perceived by some as being a severe one (albeit only at a

¹Gans, The Urban Villagers, op. cit.
relatively late point in time.\footnote{Many West Enders, however, did not perceive the scheme as a severe threat. "[T]hey could not quite believe that it would happen," Gans wrote. (Ibid., p. 290.) They therefore did not take action to prevent it from happening.} But relatively little (and certainly little effective) defensive action was taken, primarily because the general context of the threat was not conducive to such action being taken. For example, the potential defenders (the ethnically diverse, working class residents of the area) were unorganized, unable to organize, distrustful of the few leaders who did emerge and relatively fatalistic about the scheme.\footnote{They shared the belief that "it was impossible to fight city hall." (Ibid. p. 296.)} Meanwhile, those who developed and supported the scheme (largely middle-class professionals and businessmen) were not sensitive to notions of the value of community preservation: they perceived of the area as simply a "slum" and as deserving of redevelopment;\footnote{Gans’ book did much to alter perceptions of so-called "slums" and to fuel the community preservation movement which emerged from urban renewal experiences such as this.} and generally felt no political pressure from the West End to change their views. As a result, the urban renewal scheme went forward and the West End as it existed in the 1950’s was destroyed.

Second, threat as continuing influence. The nature of the threat also influences the nature of the response to that threat.\footnote{This discussion emphasizes political threats and political responses (rather than natural environmental or other types of threats), because the case study has a high political content. The general points, however, would seem to apply in other types of situations.} Sense of place, as noted elsewhere, is not the only influence on defense of place. Any study of the relationship between sense of place and
defense of place must also carefully analyze and take into account the nature of the threat being posed. Obviously, the specific nature of the threat itself directs and conditions the actions taken to defend the place: whether it is a federal decision to build an airport, a provincial decision to construct a hydro-electric scheme, a municipal decision to build an expressway, or a private decision to construct a highrise apartment complex; whether it proposes immediate or only long-term change; whether it proposes relatively minor change, radical alteration, or total destruction; whether it affects a small group or a large group; whether it involves provincial legislation or procedural matters or municipal by-laws; whether a decision has already been made (and must be changed) or is simply in the planning stage; and so on.

The specific nature of the threat, in sum, necessitates certain types of actions, encourages some types of actions, limits the range of possible actions and completely prevents certain other types of actions.

In addition, the general context of the threat, naturally, shapes the nature of the response: the attitudes and resources of the defenders (e.g., whether they have the money; the numbers; the political, professional, organizing and other skills; and the over-all will to try to counter the threat); the attitudes of the threatenes toward the defenders and toward the issues being raised (e.g., whether there is a long history of conflict, whether they share common values and images of the place being threatened, whether there is an element of personal bitterness or antagonism); the structural relationships within the political system (e.g., whether there is a strong mayor or weak mayor system; whether there is a single party, two party, multi-party or non-partisan system; whether decision-makers are appointed, directly elected
or indirectly elected); the formal and informal nature of the decision-making process (e.g., whether there is a right to appeal to some other authority; whether the formal decision-making body is simply a "rubber-stamp" for decisions made elsewhere; whether decisions are made at the top and flow down, or vice versa); the informal, political relationships (e.g., whether the elected representatives follow the bureaucrats; whether one or two politicians dominate the others; whether the political representatives respect and listen to residents' or other special interest groups); the more ephemeral situational conditions (e.g., whether an election is imminent); the accepted code of political behaviour (e.g., whether mass demonstrations or direct challenges to authority are tolerated—if not encouraged); the prevailing political ideologies (e.g., whether there is a sense that it is possible to fight City Hall or a sense that historic buildings or viable communities should be preserved); and so on. These are the sorts of factors which may fall within the general context of a threat and which may also influence the nature of the defense of place.

c. Toronto Islanders' Defense of Place:

Islanders' sense of place has been the foundation upon which their defense of place has been built. As this investigation indicates, when their special place has been threatened with radical change or destruction, Islanders have been strongly motivated to try to defend and protect it.¹

¹Copious evidence that Islanders have defended (successfully and unsuccessfully) their place against outside threats is also presented in the rest of this investigation. See below, "Brief History and Description", pp. 47–60, as well as the final section of each chapter describing a component of sense of place.
For example, in 1937, when the City decided to build an Island Airport at Hanlan's Point, which required the removal of over fifty houses along West Island Drive, Island residents did not quietly stand by and watch their houses be destroyed. They responded by forming the West Island Drive Association and taking quick action to counter the threat and obtain new Island sites for their homes. They presented briefs, sent large delegations to City Hall, and lobbied and negotiated with politicians and civil servants. Eventually, the City was persuaded to open up Sunfish Island for cottage development and over forty of the threatened houses were floated over to Sunfish (which was renamed Algonquin).¹

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Islanders opposed a series of plans to radically alter the Island as they knew and loved it. In 1947, the City Planning Board presented a proposal to demolish all the existing Island houses,² to build highrise apartments and hotels, and to construct a tunnel, a cross-Island Boulevard and large parking lots (Map 21). Island residents (most especially the year-round residents) responded by forming the Inter-Island Council (IIC) in 1948 and opposing the Planning Board. In 1949, when the City Planning Board made Official Plan recommendations based on its 1947 proposal, the IIC again opposed the recommendation and presented its own plan (Map 22), which was basically to improve the status quo: the park and beaches would be improved, the existing residential areas would be retained and enhanced.

¹ The others were moved to new sites on Hanlan's Point or demolished.

² By this time, because of a severe housing shortage, many people had moved to the Island for year-round living and the year-round community was growing rapidly. As this study indicates elsewhere, the growth of the year-round community had major political consequences.
and no cars would be allowed to sully the natural character of the area. No final decision was made by the City. In 1951, a Joint Plan by the City Planning Board and the Toronto Harbour Commission was presented, which was similar to the 1947 plan in most respects (it also proposed radically altering the lagoon system: straightening and enlarging part of it and filling in part for car parking lots and amusement areas). (Map 23) Again, the IIC fiercely opposed it. Again, no final decision was made. In 1953, Mayor Allan Lamport made the most radical proposal of all to change the Island: not only did he recommend demolishing existing housing and building a tunnel, roadway and parking lots, but he also recommended building docking facilities and warehouses. (Map 24) Once again, Islanders (as well as others) fiercely opposed what they regarded as desecration of the natural beauty of the Island and the IIC, again, issued a counter-plan, which was similar to its 1949 plan.

It is interesting to note, however, that Islanders did not oppose the proposal to transfer the Island from the City to the newly-formed Metro for "parks purposes only". Prior to the transfer, they had been battling with the City for many years over a variety of issues, such as winter transportation, inadequate flood protection and these radical plans to change the Island. Islanders apparently hoped (even expected) that Metro would treat the Island (and the Island residents) with more respect (i.e., would avoid destroying the natural character of the Island, etc.) and did not realize that transfer to Metro would mean the destruction of their houses and community. Even after the decision to demolish all the houses, in stages over the next 10-15 years, was made (in late 1955), Islanders did not mount a concerted,
effective campaign against the decision or against the reality of the demolitions. As noted elsewhere, the political environment of the late '50's and early '60's was not conducive to successful opposition. For example, there was a strong Metro Chairman (Fred "Big Daddy" Gardiner) who was intent on building up the power of Metro, partly by producing impressive physical projects (like the Island Park) and intent on eliminating Island houses. In addition, there was no prevailing sense that Islanders (or others) could successfully fight City Hall.

With the assistance of their politically astute alderman, David Rotenbèrg, Islanders began to oppose the continued demolition of Island houses. The Lakeshore battle of the mid-60's was fiercely fought and only came to an end with the demolition of the final Lakeshore houses in 1968. Meanwhile, residents at the eastern end of the Island on Algonquin Island and the eastern end of Ward's Island finally began to become politically active. As discussed elsewhere, these residents had remained relatively uninvolved in the earlier political battles. But, in 1967, faced with the termination of their own leases in 1968 (a clearly perceived threat), they banded together and gained an extension to 1970. In 1969, with the rise of the citizens' movement on the Mainland, the growing feeling that community preservation itself was a desirable goal and the growing sense that residents' groups could indeed fight City Hall, the remaining Islanders formed the Toronto Island Residents Association (TIRA) to organize the political (and any other necessary) defense of the Island. From that time on, Islanders mounted a strong defense of their place.

In 1970, 1971 and May 1973, Islanders and their political
supporters succeeded in winning short-term lease extensions. But, on December 11, 1973 (shortly after the City had finally taken a strong official position that the community should be preserved), Metro Council refused to extend Islanders' leases, for a variety of reasons that are discussed elsewhere. This decision radically changed the situation. Islanders were no longer covered by even a short lease extension. To survive on the Island, they would either have to change that decision or find a way around it (e.g., by legal actions or by persuading the Province to intervene on their behalf). Since 1974, rather than becoming intimidated by the heightened threat and leaving the Island, Islanders have continued to fight, have become ever more determined to stay and have been both resourceful and energetic in the defense of "their" Island. They mounted a major campaign in the spring of 1974 to change the policy of Metro Council (which failed to attain this political goal); they launched a series of legal actions in the summer of 1974, which protected them until October 1978; they began putting pressure on the Provincial government to intervene on their behalf (with mixed results); and they again launched legal actions in the summer of 1980. From all of this, it is clear that Islanders have had a strong commitment to the Island and a strong desire to defend their place from the outside threats.

In conclusion, Islanders' defense of place has been a long and complex one. The Island issue has come before various City and Metro Committees and Councils literally dozens of times in the last forty years or so. And, in recent years, it has even come before a variety of Provincial groups (including the Legislature, the Cabinet, and the Party caucuses). This study does not attempt to explain all aspects.
of Islanders' defense of place in terms of their sense of place. Other factors (such as force of personality, political inertia, the building of Metro power, the rise of the citizens' movement, personal bitterness, and so on) are certainly important and are noted where appropriate. But looking at defense of place from this perspective casts light on some aspects of the political history of the Island that might otherwise remain in the shadows and clarifies some responses that could only be inadequately understood by other means.

iv. Introduction to Toronto Island:

a. Torontonians' Fascination With the Toronto Island:

Yi-Fu Tuan has observed that "the island seems to have a tenacious hold on the imagination." ¹ Certainly, in Toronto, for well over a century, Torontonians have felt a fascination, bordering on obsession, with "their" island, the Toronto Island.² On July 18, 1856, for example, the Leader published an editorial which bemoaned the condition of the Island (then actually still a peninsula, but popularly referred to as "the Island") and recommended that action be taken "to render it an attractive place of public resort". Since that time, an extraordinary amount of newspaper space has been devoted to the subject

¹ Tuan, Topophilia, op. cit., p. 118.

² As Tuan implies, islands generally are seen as exciting, mysterious, exotic places. Over the centuries, novelists, philosophers and ordinary people have held many images of the island: an earthly paradise, a place beyond the law, a place of abandonment or imprisonment, a place of adventure, a utopia, a return to nature (either "red in tooth and claw" or nature simple and virtuous), a place of romance or holiday or retreat, and so on. Investigating these images would make a fascinating study. In any event, such popular and literary images may consciously or unconsciously have contributed to Torontonians' fascination with the Toronto Island.
of enjoying and/or improving the Island, and a great deal of time has been devoted to this subject by politicians, bureaucrats and others. This has been especially true since 1956, when Metro Toronto took over the Island from the City of Toronto and adopted a policy of demolishing the houses in order to extend the Island Park (which had been established in the 1880's). This policy decision, of course, sparked the controversy which was still unresolved in the summer of 1980. The Toronto Island issue, in fact, is probably the longest-standing unresolved issue in Metro's history and every well-informed citizen probably has an opinion on the subject. It is, clearly, much more than "just another local issue". This is not to belittle the importance of such "local issues", but only to emphasize that in the history of Metro Toronto, the Toronto Island issue (in terms of its duration, the number of participants involved and the political passions aroused) is in a class by itself.

b. Brief History and Description:

The Toronto Island is really a complex of smaller islands which is about 3½ miles long (excluding the Island Airport), contains approximately 600 acres and lies about a mile south of the City of Toronto in Lake Ontario. (See Map 1.) The Island is accessible only by boat and no private cars are allowed on it.

The first permanent white settlers on Toronto Island (or Peninsula, as it was until 1858) were scattered fishing families, one of whom was named Ward. Ward's Island was named after him and some of his descendants still live on the Island. By 1833, a hotel was opened and the era of the Island as a popular resort was established. In 1867, what was once romantically known as "the Island of Hiawatha" came into
Source: Students of Toronto Island Public School, A History of the Toronto Islands, 1972

detail from PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE TORONTO WATERFRONT, published by forwards,
46 Waverly Road Toronto, 50c
Cartography by Canadian Cartographer.
City ownership. At the same time, a plan was registered and cottage development (on publicly-owned land) officially began. In the 1880's, the City established Island Park (at Centre Island), which covered 200 acres and still forms the nucleus of the later, expanded park. Meanwhile, the scramble for Island lots continued and residential development grew on land owned by the City and leased to individuals.

Three residential areas developed—Hanlan's Point at the western end, Centre Island, and Ward's Island at the eastern end. Hanlan's Point was the site of the first summer cottage community, as well as of a major amusement area (which had, among other well remembered wonders, an elaborate hand-carved merry-go-round), a baseball stadium, a large hotel (Hanlan's Hotel) and related facilities.

The Centre Island community along the Lakeshore included many large cottages built by wealthy Torontonians, like the Gooderhams and the Masseys. Eventually, when the wealthy owners departed for more fashionable summer resorts north of Toronto (in the late '20's or so), many of these large houses were converted into apartments and rooms, which were rented to eager young bank clerks and secretaries and other more "middle class" summer enthusiasts. Manitou Road, popularly known as the "Main Drag", with its hotels, entertainment spots, shops, fire and police stations, was strategically located to serve both residents and visitors. This road is now the rather stark, formal garden promenade, Avenue of the Islands.

The Ward's Island community developed later than the Hanlan's and Centre Island communities and was physically sharply divided between the relatively large houses of the western stretch of Lakeshore Avenue and "tent city" further to the east. Most of the large cottages were
built between 1910 and the early 1920's, although some were built much more recently. The tenting area, with appropriately diminutive lots, was staked out around the turn of the century and by 1918 over 80 tents were in place. The two main residential areas of Ward's Island were separated by a village green, which also contained the Ward's Hotel (1883) and the Wiman Baths (1881), Wiman Terrace and Wiman Shelter (1885).

By the 1880's, the summer people on the Island were numerous enough to support an Anglican Church, St. Andrews-by-the-Lake, which was moved many years later by Metro from its original location west of Manitou Road to its present more eastern location. By 1888 there were also enough residents to support a one-room schoolhouse (although in 1901 the enrollment was still only 12). And by the turn of the century, there were some 3,000 summer residents, as well as many enthusiastic park visitors. Local historians claim that in its heyday the Island, with its parkland, beaches, residents and amusement areas, was visited by as many as 100,000 (and, more frequently, by 60,000) on a peak day. Now the peak reached is about 40,000.

Island life continued on basically unchanged until the 1930's when the Toronto Island Airport was constructed (1937) at Hanlan's Point, on the site of part of the residential and amusement areas. As a result of political pressure created by Island residents, the City allowed the affected Islanders to move their cottages to other lots on the Island. Over forty of the Hanlan's Point cottages were floated to previously uninhabited Sunfish Island (now known as Algonquin Island), where they can still be seen on the perimeter lots. It was during the 1930's as well that wooden cottages replaced canvas tents on Ward's
Island and that cottage owners on both Algonquin and Ward's signed ground leases with the City, which formed the basis of subsequent leases with Metro. The leases signed in 1938 were for 21 years (with up to 10 years extension) on Algonquin and for only yearly tenancy in the former tenting area of Ward's. They contained, among other conditions, a clause stating that the Lessee (i.e., the cottage owner) would receive no compensation if and when his land lease was terminated (residential leases in other parts of the Island were compensatory--cottage owners would, and did, receive compensation). The remaining residents on Algonquin and Ward's would therefore receive no compensation for their houses if Metro did acquire them.

During the '30's and early '40's, the winter community was still very small, numbering only a few hundred. Then during the later war years and especially immediately after the War, year-round occupancy began in earnest. When Toronto was feeling the pinch of an acute post-War housing crisis, many Islanders winterized their cottages and either spent the winter there themselves or rented to other people who did. The City fathers initially acquiesced in, and even encouraged, the development of the winter community. And by the early 1950's, the winter population is said to have reached a peak of 3000-4000 (while the summer population reached a peak of some 8000-10,000). The Island school population, which now numbers about 100, climbed to over 500 in the early '50's. But the development of the winter community brought with it certain problems, most notably the need for (and the demand for) improved winter transportation services. This was a major factor in the transfer of the Island from the City to Metro in 1956.

The modern era of planning for the Island began in 1947. In
that year the City of Toronto Planning Board presented a proposal which envisioned replacing the cottages with more solid residences (including apartment buildings), developing more parkland, constructing a highway and providing parking for 5000 cars. (Map 21) The Planning Board did not endorse this proposal (although they later endorsed a similar one), but simply presented it to stimulate debate. And stimulate debate it did. Islanders responded with their own plan, which basically supported the status quo. They advocated maintaining (but improving) the existing residential areas, keeping the Islands free of private cars, and developing the wilder parts of the Island parkland. (Map 22) A number of other plans were proposed, and these took a different approach. They included proposals for highways, warehousing, highrise apartments, luxury hotels, and so on. With the exception of the Island residents' own plans, plans proposed for the Island prior to the creation of Metropolitan Toronto in 1953 and the transfer of the Island to Metro in 1956 were aimed at overcoming the financial drain (caused by the cost of winter transportation) on the City, the Toronto Transportation Commission and the Toronto Harbour Commission.

Meanwhile, Metropolitan Toronto was created in 1953 and, under the strong (some would say autocratic) leadership of Metropolitan Chairman Fred "Big Daddy" Gardiner, was beginning to flex its muscles. The appeal of redeveloping the Island exclusively as regional parkland was considerable. Not only did the provision of additional regional

\[^1\text{A federation of the City of Toronto and the surrounding suburban municipalities. Metro had control over certain designated functions and shared control over others with the local municipalities.} \]
parkland on the waterfront appear to be inherently "good", but the "pure park" concept also had the virtue of simplicity. For a variety of reasons, the idea of transferring the Island from the City to Metro was a mutually attractive one. From the City's perspective, it was unloading a financial burden onto a larger body that presumably could more easily carry it. From Metro's perspective, it would be gaining a large, potentially highly attractive regional park (as well as building up its own power base). Spurred on by the high water and flooding of the Island in the early 1950's (which, among other things, were nuisances and expensive to cope with), the City in 1954 asked Metro to assume control over the Island and develop it for park and non-commercial purposes only. Metro Council acceded to this request in 1955 and the transfer was accomplished in 1956.

With this transfer from the City to Metro in 1956, a new chapter in the history of the Toronto Island commenced. Initial plans for the Island included raising the level of the area to prevent future flooding and developing it as a recreational resource. The presence of the 600-odd cottages was seen as an impediment to both aims; and the demolition of the houses began. Removal of the buildings started at Centre Island and Hanlan's Point and swept along the Lakeshore to just west of the remaining Ward's Island houses. The ground leases for most of these houses had been for 21 years with a right of renewal for another 21 years. The Lessor (Metro), however, was not compelled to renew and if the leases were terminated (as they were) the Lessees were compensated for their buildings. The lease terminations and demolitions proceeded with relatively little opposition from Island residents throughout the late '50's and early '60's. (See Appendix I).
"Demolition of Island Properties". But, as they proceeded visibly and, at least at first, seemingly inexorably along the Lakeshore east of the "Main Drag", Islanders began to protest. Initially, their opposition was unsuccessful, and houses continued to come down. But, as the 60's proceeded, their protest became fiercer, more expert and more successful. Guided and represented by their sharp-witted and sharp-tongued alderman, David Rotenberg, they managed to delay the demolition of a number of the Lakeshore houses on Ward's Island for several years. But, ultimately, in 1968, these too were lost and demolished (bringing the total of demolitions to over 400). This was the last large-scale demolition of Island houses.

Only two groups of houses totalling approximately 250) now remain clustered under a heavy growth of trees at the eastern end of the Island complex: a group of 104 one to one-and-a-half storey frame houses on Algonquin Island and another group of 147 houses on Ward's Island. Altogether the residential areas occupy less than 5% of the Island. The hotel and other commercial facilities that used to grace Ward's Island have been demolished. Each Island has a large, frame Clubhouse used for a variety of community activities and Ward's Island has tennis courts, bowling greens, and a baseball diamond set in "the park". The present, relatively spacious arrangement of houses on Algonquin was laid out in 1938 when the first cottages were floated over from Hanlan's Point. The houses are now set on lots of 50' x 100', which are arranged along a regular grid system of fairly broad pedestrian streets. The eastern tip of Algonquin is occupied by the Queen City Yacht Club, many of whose boats are moored picturesquely along the lagoon separating Algonquin from Ward's Island. Algonquin is
connected to the main island by a steeply-arched wooden bridge. The houses on Ward's are set in two clusters. A small group of 24 houses lies between the Ward's Island Clubhouse and the Ward's Island beach. And the main Ward's Island neighbourhood--123 houses, which line narrow, irregular, carless streets--lies across the green. On Ward's, the houses are set on extremely small lots (generally 40' x 45') which reflect the tent origins of the community. The physical impression left by the two communities--Ward's and Algonquin--is therefore quite different. (See Map 2.)

The ground leases for the remaining residences were due to expire in 1968 and Metro originally set this as the time for the removal of these houses and their residents. In 1967, however, the residents in this part of the Island dug in their heels and managed to gain an extension until 1970.

After this initial success at the eastern end of the Island, the political climate on the Mainland began to change. In the late '60's and early '70's, fuelled by opposition to public and private redevelopment schemes in the City's core and to transportation plans (notably the Spadina Expressway proposal), the "citizens' movement" was growing in the City of Toronto, as in other major North American cities. Islanders both benefited from and contributed to this development. As a reflection of this new mood, the remaining Island residents (on Ward's and Algonquin Islands) formed the Toronto Island Residents Association (TIRA) in the summer of 1969 and became more outspoken in their political dealings with City Hall. Because values seemed to be changing and the issues were becoming more complex, Metro was persuaded to grant additional temporary stays of execution in 1970 and 1971.
Meanwhile, the burgeoning neighbourhood preservation movement (closely related to the more general citizen participation movement) culminated in the December 1972 municipal election, when Islanders' staunch supporter, David Rotenberg (ironically also the prime target of many "reform" politicians and their supporters because of his "pro-development" stands on Mainland issues), was defeated by David Crombie (an equally strong Island supporter) and a "reform" City Council, sympathetic to community preservation arguments, was elected. Islanders now had very strong support at the City level.

The mood of reform and sensitivity to community preservation arguments, however, did not extend to Metro Council. During the early 1970's, therefore, City and suburban politicians on Metro Council clashed over a variety of issues, including the Island issue, which came to a head in 1973. In the spring, Islanders and their political supporters, buoyed by the electoral success of "reform politicians" at the City level in 1972, tried to persuade Metro to grant them not just a one year extension, but a five year extension. Metro politicians were unwilling to grant this, but, in May, they were persuaded to give Islanders another one year extension (to August, 1974) and also to ask both the City and the Metro Parks Commissioner to prepare reports on the future of the Island residential areas. The City's staff report, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods (September 1973) recommended that the Island residential areas be returned to the City and retained as a permanent community. The Metro Parks Commissioner recommended that the Metro policy of acquiring and demolishing the remaining houses in order to expand the Island Park be reaffirmed and carried out. City Council, by an overwhelming majority, endorsed the report prepared by
its staff; but Metro Council (in an almost straight city-suburban split), on December 11, 1973, rejected the idea of a permanent life—or even an extended life—for the Island community and set August 31, 1974 as the date when all Island leases would be terminated.

Recovering swiftly from the shock of this loss, Island residents launched a major campaign in the spring of 1974 to reopen the issue and change the policy of Metro Council. After months of exhausting work (rallying public support, gaining endorsements from numerous residents' groups and special interest groups, such as Labour and Church organizations, lobbying politicians, and so on), Islanders again went down to defeat at Metro Council. First, on May 31, 1974 and again on June 18, 1974. On both occasions, they failed to even have the issue reopened, let alone have the policy changed.\footnote{In April 1975, Islanders again tried to get a motion through Metro Council. This time it was a relatively weak motion, which would have delayed the termination of the leases and demolition of the houses until the issue was studied by a special committee. Again, they were soundly defeated.}

At this point in time, summer 1974, Islanders went to the courts and launched various actions, which took another several years to run their course. Again, they ultimately lost. But they managed to delay the execution of the policy for another four years, until the end of October of 1978. They then decided not to make the final legal appeal (which would have only gained a short delay), in order to put the issue back in the political arena, the only place where an ultimate solution could be won.

With the Islanders back in the political arena, the Provincial government (being in a minority government position and faced with the fact that both opposition parties were in favour of retaining Island
homes) reluctantly entered the fray. But rather than acceding to the request of Islanders and the City and to a resolution passed by the Provincial legislature to introduce legislation to transfer the land from Metro to the City in order to create a permanent residential community, the Provincial government announced in December 1978 that it would act as a mediator in the dispute between the City and Metro. The City's negotiator, Mayor John Sewell, made three offers to Metro's representative, Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, including offers to buy all or part of the Island. No offer was accepted. With the failure of these negotiations to reach an agreement, the Provincial government introduced a bill containing its own proposal on October 19, 1979. It proposed that present Island residents be allowed to remain as long as they wanted, but, as soon as they died or moved, their property would be transferred to Metro, which could either demolish the houses to extend the park or, less likely, keep the houses to provide accommodation for such needy people as senior citizens. The plan was labelled a "slow death" for the community and was vociferously rejected by the Provincial opposition parties, City politicians and Islanders alike. As a result, the Province did not press forward with its plan, but let it die at the end of the session.

Before the Provincial legislature reconvened in 1980, Mayor Sewell decided to approach Metro Council directly with his offer that the City buy Ward's and Algonquin Islands from Metro. On February 26/27, 1980, however, Metro Council narrowly rejected a compromise motion (to set up a committee to investigate the details of a transfer) and voted instead to enforce the writs of possession (i.e., to evict Islanders) if the Province did not pass legislation similar to its.
October 1979 proposal by June 31, 1980. Shortly after this Metro meeting, the Province did reintroduce its original proposal. This was once again soundly rejected by the Opposition parties, City politicians and Island residents, for the same reasons as before, since it meant that, ultimately, the community would disappear.

As the June 30, 1980 deadline set by Metro Council approached, Mayor Sewell, backed by Island residents and a large group of City politicians, was determined to make another attempt at Metro Council. In concert with other City aldermen, he prepared a proposal for the City to buy back Algonquin Island and Ward's Island east of Pontiac Avenue in order to preserve the existing residential areas and to expand the community (by as much as 250 housing units). City Council endorsed this proposal on May 14, 1980. But the Mayor was unable to find any member of Metro Council who was willing (and procedurally able) to sponsor a motion to reopen the issue at Metro Council so that the City proposal could be presented.\(^1\) The City proposal, therefore, could not be put before Metro Council.

Meanwhile, at the Provincial level, Islanders and the Opposition parties continued to reject the proposed Bill (Bill 5). Finally, on the last day of the session, Intergovernmental Affairs Minister, Thomas Wells, announced that because of this opposition, the Government would not bring Bill 5 forward for second reading. He also announced

\(^1\)According to Metro rules of procedure, since the Island issue had already been discussed and a decision made during this term of Council (in February 1980), the subject could only be discussed again if someone who had voted with the majority (i.e., against Islanders in February) changed his or her mind and was willing to sponsor a motion to reopen the issue.
the formation of a five-person commission under lawyer (and former Conservative candidate) Barry Swadron to study and report on the future of the Island residential areas by the fall. Mr. Wells asked the City and Metro to each appoint two members and asked Metro not to enforce its writs of possession (i.e., not to evict Islanders) in the interim. At the last Metro Council meeting before the June 30 deadline, Metro Council on June 24 simply "received" the letter from Mr. Wells and took no action (e.g., to stay the execution of the writs or to appoint representatives). Metro was determined to proceed with evicting Island residents. In the face of this extreme threat, Islanders held a large public rally, which attracted over 2000 supporters on July 1, 1980, to demonstrate both public and political support (e.g., Mayor Sewell, M.P. David Crombie and other politicians made speeches of support) and their own determination to stay. Islanders (supported by the Provincial Attorney-General's office) then launched another court action, arguing that Metro's writs of possession were not valid. On July 27, the Ontario Supreme Court ruled, however, that Metro's writs were valid and the Sheriff prepared to enforce them. Islanders immediately sought leave to appeal this decision. Before this request was heard by the Ontario Court of Appeal, the Acting-Sheriff decided to try to serve the eviction notices on July 28, 1980. Islanders, upon hearing that the Sheriff was about to land, put into operation their elaborate defense system (which included transporting workers and supporters back from the City, patrolling the Island itself, communicating via a CB radio system and so on). TIRA representatives—backed by several hundred Islanders who were linking arms and singing "We will not be moved"—met with the Acting-Sheriff at the Anogonquin Bridge and persuaded him
not to try to proceed until the leave to appeal was decided. On July 31, the Ontario Court of Appeal granted the Islanders leave to appeal the earlier decision and ordered Metro not to proceed with the evictions until the appeal case was decided. The appeal was not expected to be heard until at least the end of September, so Mr. Wells announced that, since Metro had refused to appoint two representatives to the provincial commission, Mr. Swadron would proceed as a one-man commission and would try to report before the appeal was heard in the fall. Islanders would have a temporary breathing space since the writs could not be served at least until the fall. The next round would depend on the operation and results of the Swadron Commission.

c. Social Profile:

The following is a brief social profile of the community today. Much of it is based on the 1973 City report, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods (September 1973).^2_

The Island population varies both seasonally and from year to year (largely because of the attrition due to the demolitions during the '50's and 60's), so it is nearly impossible to arrive at a precise figure. In 1973, the total summer and year-round population was between 700 and 750. There are no reasons to believe that this figure has changed substantially. (See Appendix G, "Problems in Estimating Island Population").

^1 On July 21, 1980, City Council, which was eager for the Commission to be set up and start working, appointed two members, as requested by Mr. Wells.

^2 The City Planning staff organized a survey in July 1973. Useable returns were received from 192 or 78% of the houses on both Islands—81 on Algonquin and 111 on Ward's. They contain information on 556 people on both Islands (225 on Algonquin and 331 on Ward's). Not every respondent answered every question, so the totals for each question may vary somewhat.
The Toronto Islanders form what is mostly a year-round community, with a large proportion of the houses (80%) being occupied during both summer and winter and a large percentage of the population living there year-round (75%). There are, however, significant differences between the two Islands. Algonquin is almost completely a year-round community (91% of the population), whereas Ward's has a larger number of summer-only residents (34% summer-only).

The age profile developed indicates, among other things, that the percentage of young adults aged 20-34 is higher on the Island (35%) than in either the City (29%) or the suburbs (23%); and that there are differences between the year-round and the summer-only groups. Children and the elderly make up a greater proportion of summer-only residents than year-round residents (summer-only: 32% aged 0-15 and 15% aged 60+). The young adults group, however, is significantly larger among the year-round residents (year-round: 32% aged 25-39; summer only: 24% aged 25-39). As the City report hypothesized, the summer climate provides a healthy environment for the young and the old; but the winter climate is perhaps too harsh for the elderly; and the general climate of uncertainty about the future perhaps does not encourage families with young children to come or to stay. Young adults, particularly those with no children are more mobile and therefore perhaps more able to withstand the climate of uncertainty.

A relatively large percentage of Islanders could be classified

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1 The Toronto Island Residents Association (TIRA) reported that 87% of all the houses were occupied during both the summer and winter in 1973.
as middle to upper income: 21% (of the 187 households that replied) had a total 1973 annual household income of $9,000 - $11,999 and another 46% earned $12,000 or more (the amount estimated as necessary to be able to purchase a house in Metro in 1973). One third earned less than $9,000 and 14% less than $5,000.

Islanders are a relatively well-educated (only 10% of the responding adults had less than a high school equivalent), essentially white collar group of people (only 6% of the occupations reported were classified as "blue collar"; 40% were general white collar, another 40% were professional and, interestingly, a full 13.4% were in the arts).

Finally, despite the uncertainty of recent years, many members of the Island community have deep roots and a remarkable number of people have lived on or come to the Island for a long time. Only 36% of all the people covered by the 1973 survey had been there for less than 5 years (this figure included young children as well as adults) and 44% had been on the Islands for more than 10 years. Once again, there is a significant difference between year-round and summer residents. A larger proportion of the year-round residents have been on the Island for less than 5 years (38% compared with only 15% of the summer residents) and a smaller proportion for more than 10 years (42% compared with 56% of the summer residents) and for more than 20 years (23% compared with 40% of the summer residents). This is perhaps not surprising, since year-round residents, particularly those with children, are likely to be more affected by the uncertainty than the summer residents.
In short, the Toronto Island community is predominantly a year-round, relatively well-educated, middle-class community of approximately 700 people, many of whom have relatively deep roots there.

The next chapter discusses the methods and approach adopted in order to study both sense of place and defense of place on the Island. This is followed by six chapters, each of which discusses a separate component of sense of place and how it relates to defense of place.
CHAPTER 2

METHODS AND APPROACH

1. Introduction:

This chapter provides a brief description of the approaches and methods employed in this investigation, the reasons for the choice of these particular methodologies and the problems encountered in adopting them.

The previous chapter indicated that a sense of place is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon, which therefore requires the use of a variety of data sources and research techniques. It emphasized that sense of place is essentially an individual and subjective phenomenon, which can only be adequately investigated by studying individuals and how they relate to particular, personally-significant places. It emphasized the importance of adopting, as much as possible, an "experiential perspective"—i.e., of attempting to understand the phenomenon of sense of place from the perspective of the experiencing individuals (in this case, of the Toronto Islanders)—using their own words and actions as clues to how they relate to their place and their Island). The first chapter also emphasized that there are different modes of experience which contribute to the development and experience of a sense of place. Sense of place, like experience of place generally, is built up not only from visual, but also from auditory, olfactory, tactile, kinaesthetic and even taste sensations. Beyond this, it is
fashioned not only by direct perception, but also by memory, imagination, vicarious experience, and so on. Study of sense of place, therefore, must try to take into account and tap these different modes of experience. The first chapter also emphasized that it takes time to know a place and develop a sense of place, because both the place changes (e.g., seasonally or historically over longer periods of time) and because the person in the place changes over time. Any study of sense of place must also be aware of and take into consideration these changes over time. Finally, it is evident from the first chapter that this study of sense of place is exploratory. Even if it had been advisable, it would not have been possible to develop an adequate, reasonably comprehensive list of hypotheses to test on Toronto Island.¹ There was simply not enough known about the phenomenon of sense of place to make this possible. This study, therefore, had to be flexible and open enough to generate new ideas and let them emerge from the data.

In summary, the approach to studying sense of place incorporated the following:

1) a multiplicity of data sources and techniques of analysis;

2) a focus on the individual as a unit of observation;

3) a perspective emphasizing the individual's experience of place;

¹ Some researchers argue that quantitative study of phenomena like sense of place is inappropriate and misses the significance and deeper meaning of such phenomena. For example, Yi-Fu Tuan, in Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977), pp. 200-201; E. Relph, Place and Placelessness (London: Fion Limited, 1976), Preface and p. 89; and, more generally, Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor Paperback, 1961), p. 71.
4) a recognition of the varieties of the modalities of both direct (active) and indirect (passive) experience;

5) an awareness of temporal changes affecting both the place experienced and the experiencing individual;

6) a research design which permitted the data itself to suggest new themes and original ideas.

Investigating defense of place requires a somewhat different approach, which relies to a greater extent on such traditional sources as official minutes and newspaper accounts. Furthermore, the approach adopted for studying sense of place conditions and limits to some extent the approach adopted for studying defense of place. As an obvious example, one could not be a participant observer in two different places—on the Island and at City Hall—at the same time. Furthermore, entering the world of the politician—the backrooms and private conversations and informal non-public life of the politician—to the same extent as entering the world of the Islanders was simply not possible. Nevertheless, several of the comments made earlier about sense of place also apply to studying defense of place. First, the experiential perspective adopted in the study of sense of place is adopted in the investigation of defense of place, which analyzes the political conflict as much as possible from the perspective of Islanders on the one hand, and politicians on the other, again using their words and actions as clues to their respective, often conflicting, views or images of the Island. And secondly, the political history is a long one and it is essential, even when analyzing contemporary events, to take into account the time dimension. Present attitudes and actions do not take place in a time vacuum; they are to a great extent influenced by past experiences and events. Many politicians have been involved with the
Island issue for many years (in some cases over 20 years) and their current responses to new proposals are conditioned by their past positions and past experiences. The same is true for Islanders, many of whom have been intensely involved in political activity for 10 or 20 or more years. There is, for example, a legacy of mistrust, bitterness and emotionalism on both sides—a legacy which undoubtedly influences current events.

As indicated previously, Relph writes that "the essence of place lies... in the experience of an 'inside' that is distinct from an 'outside'... To be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with the place."¹ He identifies four levels of insideness, which can be used not only to describe the general relationship between people and places (Relph's emphasis), but which can also be used to describe and guide different research postures or behaviour (the emphasis here).² The posture adopted by the researcher conditions to a large extent what he or she discovers: what questions are asked, who is observed or spoken to, what is seen (or regarded as significant), how it is interpreted and so on.

Vicarious insideness is experiencing the place as a significant place, but doing so second-hand. An analysis of place which was based solely on analyzing documents (novels, diaries, newspaper descriptions

¹Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 49.
²Ibid., pp. 51-52. He also identifies three levels of outsiderseness: existential outsiderseness (self-conscious alienation from people and places); objective outsiderseness (deliberately dispassionate attitude toward places in order to describe their attributes, as in much academic geography) and incidental outsiderseness (experience of places as unnoticed backgrounds for activities).
and so on), photographs, paintings and other second-hand material, would fall into this category.

**Behavioural insideness** is simply "being in a place and seeing it as a set of objects, views, and activities arranged in certain ways and having observable qualities...." Behavourial insideness involves deliberately attending to the appearance of that place.¹ This involves a so-called objective assessment of the place. Much of the research on environmental perception and spatial behaviour—on "images", relations between people and their built and natural environments, and so on—may be described by this behavioural category.

**Empathetic insideness** involves consciously trying to understand the meaning of the place—"Empathetic insideness demands a willingness to be open to the significance of a place, to feel it, to know and respect its symbols—much as a person might experience a holy place as sacred without necessarily believing in that particular religion".² It presupposes, but goes beyond, behavioural insideness and involves understanding not only residents', but also one's own experiences in the place: "To be inside a place empathetically is to understand that place as rich in meaning, and hence to identify with it, for these meanings are not only linked to the experiences and symbols of those whose place it is, but also stem from one's own experiences. Thus the identity of places experienced through empathetic insideness is much

¹Ibid., p. 53. In his Ph.D. dissertation, Relph described behavioural insiders as being "simply there, aware of little more than the physical features and activities". E.C. Relph, The Phenomenon of Place: An Investigation of the Experience and Identity of Place (Toronto: University of Toronto, Department of Geography, 1973), p. 101.

²Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 54.
deeper and richer than that known only through behavioural insideness."\(^1\)

Finally, existential insideness is "the most fundamental form of insideness" and "is that in which a place is experienced without deliberate and self-conscious reflection yet is full with significances."\(^2\)

"Existential insideness is part of knowing implicitly that this place is where you belong...someone who does experience a place from the attitude of existential insideness is part of that place and it is part of him."\(^3\)

Islanders, therefore, are the only ones who would experience existential insideness.\(^4\) (Under recent stress and the need to project their image to the public, as well as to understand their own reactions to the political threat, many Islanders' experience of "insideness" and what it means to be an "Islander" has probably become more self-conscious.)

Frequent visitors to the Island, and researchers who have lived and/or spent a good deal of time on the Island, may, with deliberate effort, attain "empathetic insideness". Less-involved, clipboard social scientists are more likely to achieve only "behavioural insideness".

Following the introductory remarks regarding the need to adopt an experiential perspective and to take into consideration the different modes of experience and the dimension of time, the aim of a major part of this research has been to achieve a posture of "empathetic insideness"—that is, as much as possible, to experience and to

\(^{1}\)Ibid., pp. 54-55.

\(^{2}\)Ibid., p. 55.

\(^{3}\)Ibid., p. 55.

\(^{4}\)Or, possibly, former researchers who "have gone native" and become so much a part of the people and place that they were once studying that they have lost the ability to consciously analyze the situation. Research, of necessity, requires a measure of detachment and self-conscious effort to understand what is before the researcher.
understand the Island as Islanders experience and understand it. This has involved living on the Island for approximately four months, formally interviewing at length a selection of Island residents and making numerous visits at all times of year, under all kinds of conditions, and for a variety of different purposes. (See Appendix C, "Island Visits"). In addition, a group of politicians was interviewed at length, and numerous Council and Committee meetings at both the City and Metro levels were attended and observed in order to reconstruct the political history. These two major approaches to studying both sense of place and defense of place have been augmented where appropriate by a third approach—extensive analysis of documents.

The remainder of this chapter presents, first, a personal account of the writer's initial involvement with the Island issue and, secondly, a description and discussion of each of the major methods employed (participant observation, interviews, and document analysis). A discussion of some of the ethical questions and problems raised by this type of research is presented in a final section.

ii. Initial Contact With the Toronto Island:

My involvement with the Toronto Island and the Toronto Island issue (i.e., whether or not the remaining 250+ houses should be taken over by Metro Toronto and demolished in order to extend the Island Park) began in July 1973, when I was hired by the City to take primary responsibility for preparing the City's report, Toronto's Island Park
Neighbourhoods. This report was issued in September 1973, adopted by City Council in November 1973, and has since continued to form the basis of both the City's and the Island residents' positions—i.e., that the remaining community should be preserved, that the houses should not be demolished and that the residential area should be transferred from Metro back to the City.

This period represents a phase of "detachment" from the issue. I had taken no public or private position on the issue. I had had no prior personal contact with the Island, apart from the occasional visit to the park, and I had known no Islanders personally. During the summer while I was preparing the report and even during the fall of 1973 when, like many Islanders, I was following its progress through various committees at both City Council (where its recommendations were overwhelmingly endorsed) and Metro Council (where its recommendations were soundly rejected), I was careful to maintain distance from Islanders. During the summer, we had asked for and received various types

1 A committee was established of representatives from various civic departments (parks, works, legal, etc.), who provided extensive background information in their areas of expertise, and Toronto Island residents were also asked to provide some information. But responsibility for writing the report rested with a small group of the City Planning staff. I was responsible for drafting all of the report except the sections on 'Waterfront Context', 'Municipal and Retail Services' and 'Costs'. (Various relatively minor revisions were made to the original draft after I completed my assignment.)

2 There have been some differences which need not be detailed here. City politicians, for example, have tried on occasion (for political reasons) to persuade Metro to accept modified conditions (e.g., short lease extensions). But, ideally, both City politicians and Island residents would like to see a permanent community on the Island.

3 I was probably inclined to feel that the existing community should be preserved unless there was extremely strong evidence that a greater public interest would be served by demolishing it. As the report makes clear, I never found the arguments for extending the park or the other arguments sufficiently convincing.
of information from Islanders; Island representatives had attended several meetings with City officials; and I had certainly become familiar with Islanders' arguments and positions on various matters (largely by reading previous public briefs and reports that they had prepared, rather than by "consulting with" them). In fact, during this period, I treated all information provided by Islanders with a fair degree of skepticism (recognizing, after all, that they had an obvious vested interest in influencing the report), checked it as best I could for bias, and treated it as only some of the relevant information. City interests and Islanders' interests could not be regarded as the same on all issues. Throughout this period, my relationship with Islanders remained essentially distant and formal, so that neither I nor the report could legitimately be accused of "bias" or of being "simply a mouthpiece for Islanders".¹

During the summer of 1973, therefore, I worked my way through a large amount of material and through the relevant issues concerning the park, housing, neighbourhood preservation, and social equity, all of which are presented in the City report, along with the relevant data that was available at the time. This report still contains the most complete compilation of "objective" data available on the Island (population characteristics and SES data, building statistics, types of tenancies, land use data, maps, legal background and options, and so on) and forms much of the factual, descriptive background for the

¹Various Metro politicians who attacked the report made such charges anyway (about the report, not about me personally). I then began to learn how extraordinarily emotional the issues is and how entrenched many politicians' positions are.
later research.\(^1\) During this period, which predated my decision to embark upon the present study of Islanders' sense of place and defense of place, I was what might be called an "unselfconscious participant". I was a participant in one phase of the Island political history, but I was not analyzing my role from the perspective of a researcher.

In the course of the fall of 1973 I wrote various short, supplementary reports for the City. I also attended, and tape recorded, the various political meetings. By this time, I was publicly committed to the idea of preserving the Island community (under certain specified conditions), although my position was not a "high profile" one.\(^2\) Finally, during this period, I was meeting more Islanders and beginning to form personal relationships that were developed further later.

This initial period of involvement had some very important results for my research. First, it provided me with the opportunity to do a great deal of background research, which would be necessary for any further study. Secondly, it gave me access to specific information which would not otherwise have been available to me (e.g., Islanders' individual—but anonymous—responses to several open-ended questions on the 1973 City Planning Social Survey and detailed ferry statistics). Thirdly, it enabled me to make preliminary contact with a number of Islanders, which later led to meeting more Islanders and easing my

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\(^1\) When the Swadron Commission makes its report and background information available, it should provide the most extensive, up-to-date information of this type.

\(^2\) Various City officials and politicians knew of my role and some Islanders knew of it, but by this time I had essentially reverted to an observer's role. Few Metro politicians, for example, would have been able to recognize me or would have known that I had drafted much of the City report.
entry into the community. And fourthly, it led, I believe, to establishing a vital rapport with Islanders: I had taken a public stand which if not identical to theirs, was certainly complementary and sympathetic to theirs. This sense of trust led to the development of a rapport between me and many Islanders which was essential for this (or any similar type) of research and certainly gave me access to people and information that simply would not have been available otherwise. For example, many people were willing to spend hours discussing Island life generally, showing a degree of candour—especially about such potentially sensitive topics as their views of various politicians, their views of other Islanders, their willingness to stay on the Island, their recommendations for future political strategy, the effects of political uncertainty and stress on their personal lives, and so on—that they might well not have shown to someone else. I was allowed to attend meetings, for example of the Toronto Island Residents Association, which I certainly would not have known about or have been allowed to attend if I had not been regarded as a trustworthy sympathizer. I was given access to personal files dealing with various aspects of the political history. And, in many ways, I was generally given "privileged information" about the Island. These are the main, and very substantial advantages which resulted from my participation in the preparation of the City report.

1 Much of the participant observation literature discusses how to develop the necessary rapport. A note of caution is sounded, however, by S.M. Miller, "The Participant Observer and 'Over-Rapport'," American Sociological Review 17 (1952), pp. 97-99. I do not believe, however, that any major lines of research relevant to my Island study were blocked as a result of "over-rapport" (and certainly many fruitful lines were opened up as a result of good rapport).
Were there any disadvantages? The main potential hazard, I believe, is that by being identified with a pro-Islander, pro-City stand (i.e., the retention of the Island community), I risked being unable to gain interviews with Metro politicians who were vehemently against this position or, if I did get an interview, of being faced with a respondent who was more interested in arguing with me and attacking my position than in calmly, and probably more revealingly and candidly, stating his or her own position. As I noted earlier, most Metro politicians were unaware of my position. Although I did have more trouble gaining interviews with non-City, anti-Islander Metro politicians, I have no reason to believe that this was a rejection of me personally. By and large, I do not think my involvement with the City report had any major, negative effects on the research and it certainly had many positive effects.

iii. Participant Observation:

Anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists have, for many years, employed participant observation as a method of researching and understanding a wide range of subjects. Used properly, it is a legitimate, well-respected and well-documented method of research.¹

¹A great deal has been written about the advantages and disadvantages, uses and misuses of participant observation. It is not the intention to review all of these here, but to highlight only those issues of particular interest to this study. Two collections of papers on participant observation and other "qualitative" research techniques (as well as any number of standard texts in social science research techniques) are useful background reading: George J. McCall and J.L. Simmons, eds., Issues In Participant Observation: A Text and Reader (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969) and William J. Filstead, ed., Qualitative Methodology: Firsthand Involvement With the Social World (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1970). Many of the articles referred to in this chapter are reprinted in one of these collections.
Geographers, however, have not used this approach to any great extent, although it seems a highly-appropriate way to study many topics of interest to geographers.

What is participant observation? It has been defined in a variety of ways. Morris and Charlotte Schwartz, for example, define it as follows:

For our purposes we define participant observation as a process in which the observer's presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and, participating with them in their natural life setting, he gathers data.

A period of participant observation was deemed essential for studying both sense of place and, to a lesser extent, defense of place for a number of reasons, most of which can be grouped under two major headings. First, in order to approach the understanding of "empathetic insideness", to study sense of place from an experiential point of view, and generally to understand the full range of meaning that the Island holds for Islanders, it was felt essential to experience Island

1Morris S. Schwartz and Charlotte Green Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," American Journal of Sociology 60 (1955), pp. 343-354. Noting that "[t]hus, the observer is part of the context being observed, and he both modifies and is influenced by this context", they provide a useful discussion of potential biases and problems which might enter into participant observation studies. McCall and Simmons, Issues In Participant Observation, op. cit., provide a somewhat broader definition, regarding participant observation as a characteristic blend of techniques which may involve any of the following: direct observation (of relevant people and events in their natural setting), informant interviewing (informal interviewing of key people, who may or may not know that they are being interviewed for research purposes), respondent interviewing (formal, though often unstructured, interviewing of people who are obviously aware of the fact that they are being interviewed for research purposes), direct participation (in the social situation), and document analysis. For ease of discussion, and because they were used in non-participant observation contexts as well as in a participant observation context, I have discussed formal interviewing and document analysis separately from participant observation.
life first-hand and to come to know a variety of Islanders at a deeper, more personal level than would be allowed by other methods. Perhaps the most frequently mentioned advantage of a participant observation approach is that it enables the researcher to "get close to the data", to get closer to the subjects' view of the world and to gain greater understanding of the meaning and significance of the various phenomena under study. Secondly, in an exploratory study such as this, it was essential to adopt a flexible, open approach—one which was not restricted by a prematurely-formed, rigid theoretical scheme or an unnecessarily restricted methodology. What was needed was an approach which would encourage the discovery of new ideas and generate new hypotheses. This is, of course, a frequently mentioned characteristic

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2 Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean, "Limitations and Advantages of Unstructured Methods," op. cit. See also Herbert J. Gans, The Urban Villagers (New York: The Free Press, 1962), p. 350, who concluded in his discussion of methodology that: Participant observation is the only method I know that enables the researcher to get close to the realities of social life. Its deficiencies in producing quantitative data are more than made up for by its ability to minimize the distance between the researcher and his subject of study.
of participant observation.

a. Description:

The period of participant observation on the Island can be divided into two phases: living on the Island and post-residency visiting. My husband and I lived on the Island for approximately four months, from May to August 1974 (and briefly, for two weeks in August 1975), living for two months in one house on Ward’s Island and for two months in three different houses on Algonquin Island. I therefore got to know both islands, becoming more intensely aware of some of the differences that Islanders themselves identify, and got to know a wider range of people than would have been possible by simply living in one location for the entire period.

1 For example, see McCall and Simmons, Issues in Participant Observation, op. cit., passim. They comment on p. 142 that "one of the outstanding strengths of participant observation studies, a strength acknowledged even by many severe critics, is the historic importance of these studies in generating many of the seminal ideas in the social sciences." This idea is echoed by Allen H. Barton and Paul F. Lazarefeld, "Some Functions of Qualitative Analysis in Social Research," in Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie 1 (1955), pp. 321-361, who suggest that qualitative, as opposed to quantitative research, can suggest important relationships which can later be statistically tested. Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in "Discovery of Substantive Theory: a Basic Strategy Underlying Qualitative Research," The American Behavioral Scientist 8 (February 1965), pp. 5-12, go further than this. They argue that "qualitative research—quite apart from its usefulness as a prelude to quantitative research—should be scrutinized for its usefulness in the discovery of substantive theory." They regard qualitative research—whether utilizing observation, intensive interviews, or any type of document—as a strategy concerned with the discovery of substantive theory, not with feeding quantitative researchers. From a practical standpoint, Blanche Geer in "First Days In the Field: A Chronicle of Research in Progress," Sociologists at Work, ed. Phillip E. Hammon (New York: Basic Books, 1964), provides a good example of how her views changed and major hypotheses were identified in the field (rather than solely in the study). Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean, "Limitations and Advantages of Unstructured Methods," op. cit., cite flexibility as one of the major advantages, but also caution that "the great flexibility of unstructured observation and interviewing, besides being a major advantage, is also a clear invitation to bias that must be guarded against."
Finding houses was one of the many practical problems encountered. I initially visited almost every one of the 250 residences and distributed a notice to every house. Although this initial house-hunting period was time-consuming and somewhat nerve-wracking, it had unexpected advantages. I met a lot of people whom I probably would not have met otherwise, and I entered a lot of different houses that I certainly would not have seen otherwise. After the first two months elapsed, we were faced with the problem of finding another place to stay. Fortunately, at the last minute we found several places on Algonquin, which enabled us to spend the rest of the summer there.

My husband's participation in the study was also a somewhat unexpected advantage. He was able to participate in various activities that I could not or did not join in (e.g., soccer games or daily commuting by ferry to the city), thereby meeting a variety of people who extended our range of Island acquaintances. He contributed also a number of observations on Island life and frequently added a second opinion in cases where we had both observed the same situation (e.g., a public meeting where Islanders discussed their political situation).

During this period of living on the Island, we participated in day-to-day life (travelled by ferry, carried groceries home across the Bay operated "Island homes"—including one with a faulty toilet and leaking pipes, and so on), experienced the Island under most weather conditions and at all times of day, explored previously unknown corners, attended various Island festivities and public meetings, engaged in casual conversation with a variety of people, became well acquainted with some, and generally tried to observe and experience life from the perspective of an Island resident. All of this provided rich data for
the sense of place aspect of the study. Among the main benefits were the leads provided for constructing questions to be asked in subsequent formal interviews. Often an interesting point would come up in casual conversation, which I could pursue at greater length and record more precisely in an interview. Of particular importance for the investigation of defense of place is the fact that I received all the notices and newsletters that other Islanders received, heard the same rumours, actively participated in some "mass demonstrations" (e.g., in front of the provincial legislature at Queen's Park, and at City Hall), and attended numerous meetings of the Toronto Island Residents Association Executive. I kept a diary, which contained reports and reflections on conversations, meetings, events and experiences, which ultimately filled over four hundred pages. This was useful not only as a recording device, but also as a method of sharpening my observation and self-discipline in the field.

After we left the Island, I entered a second phase of the participant observation study. I continued to visit, observe and participate in Island life. (See Appendix C, "Island Visits"). I travelled periodically, and at all times of year, to the Island to visit Islanders for social reasons, to interview a number of Islanders formally, to attend and often tape-record major public meetings, and to attend numerous meetings of the Toronto Island Residents Association, where I acted as secretary from the summer of 1974 to January 1976 (see below pp. 87-88). Many of those meetings that were attended as a means of

1 For example, one comment made in passing led to the chapter on sense of identity.
staying in touch with the political situation also provided a wealth of information about other, non-political aspects of Island life.

b. Entry:

Every participant observer is faced with the problem of how to gain "entry" into the social situation to be studied. Sometimes this can be extremely difficult. For example, both William F. Whyte and Herbert Gans, who were studying working-class, Italian areas, describe the major problems they faced and how they overcame them by being "sponsored" by local residents.¹ This initial phase of gaining entry and acceptance is, obviously, crucial to the success of the rest of the study.² One mistake (for example, antagonizing a community leader) may

¹William F. Whyte, "Appendix," Street Corner Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943), pp. 270-358. Gans, "Appendix - On the Methods Used In This Study," The Urban Villagers, op. cit., pp. 336-350. Gans' experience in Levittown, however, was quite different. There he apparently encountered little problem, because there were no obvious class or ethnic barriers between him and his subjects and because everyone in the town was new and searching for friends. See Herbert J. Gans, "Introduction - The Setting, Theory and Method of the Study," The Levittowners (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books Edition, 1969), pp. xv-xxix. Other factors can impede entry. For example, Robert Coles, "Observation and Participation," Children of Crisis (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 25-34, in his study of school desegregation in the American south, describes the problems he encountered in trying to overcome not only class, but also racial barriers. And H.M. Trice, "The 'Outsider's Role' in Field Study," Sociology and Social Research 41 (1957), pp. 27-32, describes the problems he encountered in a study of alcoholics when he was too closely identified with those in authority (e.g., the doctors and other medical staff). It was only when he redefined his role as an "outsider", as an independent researcher, that he was able to gain the confidence and cooperation of the people he wished to study. Robert Kahn and Floyd Mann, "Developing Research Partnerships," Journal of Social Issues 8 (1952), pp. 4-10, discuss some useful strategies for gaining entry into social situations.

alienate a whole segment of the population—or prevent entry altogether.

No major problems were encountered in "entering" the Island community and gaining acceptance there. No obvious ethnic, class, cultural, racial, linguistic, political, or other barriers separated me from Islanders. In addition, the Island is a fairly open community. There is, for example, a transient population (of artists, graduate students, and others, who rent places for the winter from summer residents) and a fair mix of people, so as a "bird of passage" I would not be regarded as particularly unusual in any way. Furthermore, as noted earlier, I had already taken a public position in favour of preserving Island homes, a position which was in sympathy with most Islanders. I was, in effect, a "known quantity" and therefore was perhaps less of a threat than some other newcomer might have been. I also knew a number of Islanders (many of them politically active, well-known community leaders) who could "vouch for me" and, although I never sought or received formal sponsorship, I am sure that I did enjoy a kind of informal sponsorship.

c. Overt Versus Covert Research:

Another problem faced by participant observers is whether or not to tell the people they are studying that they are doing research.
This has both practical and ethical implications.¹ For both practical and ethical reasons I was quite open about my research intentions. I simply would not have felt comfortable or morally justified in

¹The issue of covert versus overt research has been discussed at length. See for example, Henry W. Riecken, "The Unidentified Interviewer," *American Journal of Sociology* 62 (1956); pp. 210-212 (a study of an apocalyptic group); Mortimer A. Sullivan, Jr., Stuart A. Queen and Ralph Co. Patrick, Jr., "Participant Observation As Employed in the Study of a Military Training Program," *American Sociological Review* 23 (1958), pp. 660-667 (a study of the U.S. airforce training program in which the participant observer not only was unannounced, but had also taken on a completely different identity and personal history); and John F. Lofland and Robert A. Lejune, "Initial Interaction of Newcomers in Alcoholics Anonymous: A Field Experiment in Class Symbols and Socialization," *Social Problems* 8 (1961), pp. 102-111, which are three cases where covert participant observation was used and justified by the authors, but criticized elsewhere in the participant observation literature. Kai T. Erikson, in "A Comment on Disguised Observation in Sociology," *Social Problems* 14 (1967), pp. 366-373 and Fred Davis, "Comment on 'Initial Interaction of Newcomers in Alcoholics Anonymous'," *Social Problems* 8 (1961), pp. 364-365 argue strongly against covert participant observation. Julius A. Roth, "Comments on 'Secret Observation'," *Social Problems* 9 (1962), pp. 283-284, argues that proponents and opponents of covert participant observation oversimplify their arguments. He acknowledges that there are important moral issues involved in failing to be honest and reveal the research purpose; but he also suggests that under some circumstances hidden participant observation is justified and, moreover, that "the gathering of information will inevitably have some hidden aspects even if one is an openly declared observer." He suggests that the researcher may not know everything he is searching for when he starts out (and cannot therefore gain permission in advance); that in many cases the observer does not want to influence the subjects' behaviour by letting him know what he is looking for; and finally that even if he did give precise and detailed information to the subjects, they might well still not understand or interpret the information in the same way the researcher does (they therefore might not be able to give informed consent). He concludes that "The point of all these illustrations is that social science research cannot be divided into the 'secret' and the 'non-secret'. The question is rather how much secrecy shall there be with which people in which circumstances?"
hiding the fact that I was doing research. I acknowledged my research interest, although I naturally did not precede every conversation or question by saying "I'm doing my dissertation about the Island and I wanted to know..." However, I was never terribly precise about what my research intentions were, other than saying that I wanted to study "sense of place" and "defense of place"; and I must admit that while I would acknowledge my interest in researching Island life if asked, I did not actively encourage discussion of my research. I was content to let that knowledge slip into the background so that people would not be overly influenced (and act or speak differently in my presence). For their part, Islanders seemed satisfied by my general statement that I was doing my thesis about the Island. Perhaps, again, they were content with this general explanation because I had already taken a public stand and they knew I was a supporter of their cause. Perhaps also, as Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean say, "Acceptance of the field worker depends more upon the kind of person he is than the perceived value of his research. Informants want to be reassured that the researcher is a 'good guy' and can be trusted with what he uncovers. They are not usually interested in the complete rationale for the study."¹

From a practical standpoint, there seemed to be more to be gained than lost by revealing my research interests. Obviously, if I had not said I was doing research, I could not have conducted the formal

interviews, which were a vital part of the over-all research. In addition, as a number of participant observers have pointed out, revealing that you are a researcher gives you the license to ask a lot of questions that otherwise you could not ask (or that would seem naive and even suspicious to the people who are being studied). I certainly took full advantage of this license and peppered people with questions. Acknowledging my research interest also gave me access to the personal files of several politically active Islanders. Finally, I was able to gain admission to meetings which otherwise would have remained closed to me, either because I did not know about them or because my presence would have been both awkward and suspicious.

d. Role:

Another issue which every participant observer must resolve is what general role he or she wishes to adopt—how actively and in what way he or she should participate in the social situation being studied. There is a full range of roles possible, from a complete
observer to a complete participant. (The decision about overt versus covert research is also related to this role decision.) In the course of my Island study, I found that my role or level of participation varied according to the situation.

I was an active participant in day-to-day Island life; an active participant in some "mass demonstrations" (although, because of the size of the groups involved, I was still a relatively inconspicuous or "low profile" member); and an active participant in several special activities, like helping to prepare a brief or telephoning people to alert them to up-coming events. These activities were natural ones and fell in line with the "good-Samaritan-with-self-interest" which characterizes the participant observation

1 Many commentators have discussed the importance of the role adopted. McCall and Simmons, Issues In Participant Observation, op. cit., p. 29, write:

The role which he [the observer] claims or to which he is assigned by the subjects—is perhaps the single most important determinant of what he will be able to learn. Every role is an avenue to certain types of information but is also an automatic barrier to certain other types. The role assumed by the observer largely determines where he can go, what he can do, whom he can interact with, what he can inquire about, what he can see, and what he can be told.

Raymond L. Gold, "Roles in Sociological Field Observations," Social Forces 36 (1958), pp. 217-223, describes four possible roles: complete participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant, and complete observer, a scheme which is usefully amplified by Marion Pearsall, "Participant Observation As Role and Method in Behavioral Research," Nursing Research 14 (Winter 1965); Schwartz and Schwartz "Problems in Participant Observation," op. cit., describe roles as ranging along a continuum of activity or involvement with the people being studied, from the "passive" participant observer to the "active" participant observer and as ranging along an emotional or "affective" continuum which describes the emotional involvement of the researcher with his subjects from "sympathetic identification" (or empathy) to "projective distortion" (or going native); Robert Janes, "A Note on Phases of the Community Role of the Participant-Observer," American Sociological Review 26 (1961), pp. 446-450 makes the useful point that the researcher's role is not a static phenomenon, but may well change over time.
situation. In none of these cases, however, did my level of participation (as far as I can tell) significantly affect the behaviour of Islanders.¹

I was an "inactive participant" at TIRA Executive meetings, where I acted as secretary, but did not engage in any of the discussions. I agreed to take on the secretarial role² for a number of reasons. First, before becoming secretary, I felt out of place and conspicuous frantically scribbling copious notes as the meetings progressed. No one else in the small group of roughly eight to fifteen people was taking such extensive notes (not even the appointed secretaries) and I felt that such note-taking was a constant reminder that I was a "researcher" and this might indeed influence the discussion—or at least make others uncomfortable. I felt much more comfortable when I was performing a recognized role within the group and had a legitimate reason for taking notes. Second, being secretary meant that I was automatically told when and where the meetings were to be held. Before that, I usually only found out by chance or by deliberately asking someone, which I found somewhat embarrassing after a while. Third, acting as secretary confirmed my image as an Island supporter (I had already taken a public stand in the City report; but it did not do any harm to reaffirm this.) And finally, acting as

¹Such "observer effects" are, or should be, one of the prime concerns of participant observers—i.e., the possibility that the observer's very presence or participation might change the behaviour that he or she is trying to study. The researcher, therefore, must always ask herself or himself "To what extent might my presence be affecting this situation?"

²Whyte, Street Corner Society, op. cit., p. 305, also found being secretary a convenient role, because it enabled him to take extensive notes during meetings of the "Italian Community Club".
secretary enabled me to be useful (the Executive had had constant problems finding someone to perform this tedious task), and, in some measure, to return a service for the privilege of having access to the meetings. They never asked for any kind of recompense, but I was glad to be able to provide some. In summary, acting as secretary was a mutually satisfactory arrangement.

Finally, in some situations, such as at public meetings on the Island or at public meetings at City Hall, I was strictly an observer. I never spoke or offered public opinions on these occasions, not only because I was afraid of influencing what I was supposed to be studying and of possibly alienating groups who held opposing views, but also because I honestly believed that, as a non-Islander, I really had no right to offer an opinion on what the political strategy should be, or on a whole host of other issues.

e. Informants:

Many participant observers use and benefit greatly from the use of "informants"—knowledgeable members of the group being studied who (knowingly or unknowingly) provide the researcher with information
about the problem(s) being studied. The term "informant" has a somewhat underhanded or Machiavellian ring to it. In fact, however, using informants may mean simply talking with knowledgeable, articulate members of the group being studied about matters of interest to the research. Here, "informants" were employed primarily as "observer's observers"--i.e., as people who could tell me about events that I could not or did not observe myself (such as private meetings with politicians, or events that occurred before I became involved in the Island situation). There were also many conversations with people who could be termed "informants" which were both very stimulating and useful: these related to all manner of things.

1 For example, Whyte, Street Corner Society, op. cit., relied extensively on information and insights provided by such informants as "Doc". Informants may provide important information. For example, they may provide information about events that the researcher has not or could not observe (e.g., because they happened before he was doing his research or because he was doing something else at the time or because he was unaware of their existence, or because for some reason he would be denied access to the situation); or making sense of things which the researcher has observed but is puzzled about; or providing totally new ideas for further research. But, as many commentators point out, informants' (like other respondents') information must be used with care. The informants' data may be biased in a number of ways: her memory may be faulty; his opinions may not reflect the opinions of others; she may have a variety of reasons for knowingly or unknowingly distorting information (e.g., to present a more favourable picture of himself or his group; to tell the researcher what she wants to hear and so on); and so on. See Donald T. Campbell, "The Informant In Quantitative Research," American Journal of Sociology 60 (1955), pp. 339-342; John P. Dean, Robert L. Eichhorn and Lois R. Dean, "Fruitful Informants For Intensive Interviewing," in ed. Doby, op. cit., pp. 284-286; and John P. Dean and William Foote Whyte, "How Do You Know If the Informant Is Telling The Truth?" Human Organization 17 (1958), pp. 34-38. This latter article does not distinguish between "informant" and "respondent"; but provides a useful discussion of possible sources of bias in both cases, as does Morris Zelditch, Jr., "Some Methodological Problems of Field Studies," American Journal of Sociology 67 (1962), pp. 566-576.

2 Zelditch, op. cit.
concerning Island life and attitudes.

f. Sources of Stress:

Participant observation is frequently both stressful and time-consuming. It is stressful partly because, like any interview situation, it is an intense social situation. However, while a formal interview has a clearly defined beginning and end, and is of relatively short duration, participant observation is a full-time occupation. The researcher enters as an "outsider" into an on-going social situation. He or she is also potentially "at work" and on display at all times. This means that the researcher must always be vigilant--on the lookout for relevant information and on guard against making "mistakes" that may damage rapport, and so on. Although in many respects it can be a very enjoyable form of research, one can never really relax.¹

Furthermore, as noted earlier, my hope was to become an "empathetic insider". I think that I had expected to feel more like an "Islander" than I ultimately did. I worried about this fact, which was also somewhat stressful. I began to realize that while I was on the Island, I could never really be an "Islander".² What I realized later is that becoming an "empathetic insider" does not require becoming an "Islander", but does require sympathetically understanding, or seeking to understand, the Island as Islanders understand it. The lingering sense of detachment, in fact, remains a necessary part of being a researcher. William F. Whyte, discussing

¹Whyte, Street Corner Society, op. cit., p. 297, discusses this point. Schwartz and Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," op. cit., also discuss "anxiety as a source of distortion".

²For example, although I was living there and sympathetic to the cause, my future was not as directly tied up with the results of the political battle; I did not stand to lose my "home"; I could always--and eventually did--return to my home elsewhere.
the pros and cons of becoming intimately familiar with the people and situations he was researching, observes that "I had to balance familiarity with detachment, or else no insights would have come." It is helpful to keep this observation in mind.

Another source of stress arises from the very flexibility and unstructured nature of participant observation. The lines of research are often not clearly defined in advance, which, of course, means that the researcher is freer to pursue unanticipated avenues of inquiry and to change course in mid-stream. But it also means that he is always in a state of uncertainty. This is particularly true at the beginning, when he is asking himself such questions as: What should I be looking at? Have I missed something critical already? Whom should I talk to? When will "something" happen? and so on. The participant observer, therefore, has to be willing and able to tolerate a greater measure of uncertainty than he would in many other research situations.

Finally, participant observation, especially in a situation like that reported in this study which involves an open-ended political process (as opposed to a closed-end political process like an election which occurs on a specific, previously-known date), is time-consuming. The participant observer is to a great extent at the mercy of events. It takes time to get to know the people and the place; it takes time for "important things" to happen; it takes time to make

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1Whyte, *Street Corner Society*, op. cit., p. 357. Similarly, discussing the relative advantages and disadvantages of being an "outsider", or an "insider", oral historian Paul Thompson writes, "Clearly, the ideal is to be close enough to understand, but not so close as to be unable to step back if need be." Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 118.
sense of the phenomena being studied.

Participant observation, in sum, offers great rewards, but also involves certain frustrations that the researcher must be able to tolerate.

iv. Interviews:

A second major source of information was in-depth, relatively unstructured formal interviewing of both Islanders and politicians, which provided a great deal of additional information about both sense of place and defense of place. These interviews were vital complements to the participant observation activity, which enabled countless leads to be followed-up at more leisure, in more depth, and, in terms of recording data, with more precision since the interviews were tape-recorded. They allowed a corroboration of various items and observations and comments made by other members of the community. They also enabled the research to proceed in areas that it would have been impossible to research by participant observation alone (e.g., Island history or private behaviour or privately-held beliefs about sensitive topics like whether or not a person would break the law in order to stay on the Island.)¹

The relatively unstructured, unstandardized nature of the interviews also permitted a deeper probe into various aspects of Islanders' and politicians' experiences, attitudes and feelings than would have

¹Let me add a cautionary note about over-reliance on interview data. The things people say are not necessarily the things that they feel are most important, but may be the things that they can most easily articulate. In the Island study, for example, Islanders spoke more extensively about matters relating to "sense of environment" than "sense of identity". This may be not because "sense of identity" is less important, but because it is less easily discussed than "sense of environment". This underlines the value of employing a variety of complementary research techniques.
been possible by a more rigidly standardized approach: it facilitated following up unexpected but interesting and revealing comments made in the course of the interview; and it provided an opportunity to plumb any specialized knowledge that the individual respondents possessed. Standardizing the questions and/or quantifying the responses would have been undesirable—or, at best, would have drained the responses of much of their meaning.¹

Two sets of interviews were conducted—one with Islanders and one with politicians. These are described separately below.

a. Interviews With Islanders:

Formal interviews were obtained with 39 Islanders (38 present or former Island residents and the school principal), of which 6 were double-interviews—i.e., arrangements had been made with one member of the household to conduct an interview, but when I arrived at the house (all but 6 interviews were held in Islanders' homes), another member of the household stayed for all or part of the interview. In most cases, the extra person contributed interesting comments, so his or her presence was an unexpected benefit.²

Illustration 2, "Island Interviews: Summary and Comparison",

¹A great deal has been written about the advantages and disadvantages, uses and misuses of unstructured as opposed to structured interviewing, and of interviewing as opposed to observing of other forms of data collection. It is not my purpose here to comprehensively review these matters or such matters as how to word questions or how to conduct interviews or what pitfalls to avoid in analysis. All of these are covered by standard text books on social science research techniques. See, for example, Claire Selitt, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods In Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Revised One-Volume Edition, 1959).

²I do not think their presence inhibited the main respondent—which is the usual reason for trying to avoid multiple interviews—but it is not possible to be absolutely certain.
summarizes the people interviewed and indicates that the sample consisted of a wide range of Islanders: people from both Islands, people of all ages (except, unfortunately, children or teenagers), relative newcomers and "old" long-time residents, summer Islanders and year-round Islanders, movers and stayers, and politically active Islanders and politically inactive Islanders.

The interviews were conducted over a twenty-month period between May 1974 and January 1976. Each interview was tape-recorded and lasted at least an hour; many lasted two to three hours; and one (with someone who had been very politically active over a long period) lasted nine hours over three days. A total of over 80 hours of recorded interviews was obtained, which translated into over 2,000 pages of transcribed material. In general, I found Islanders remarkably articulate, co-operative, open, and generous with their time. As for myself, I tried to

---

1 This time dimension obviously has to be taken into consideration when the responses are analyzed. For example, no blanket statement can be made about "Island morale", because this would vary according to the political situation—whether Islanders had just won a legal case or had just been defeated at Metro Council. But more limited statements could be made about morale at time X compared with morale at time Y.

2 I was aware of the fact that the tape-recorder might intimidate or influence the responses of some people. But, in fact, most people seemed to forget that the tape-recorder was rolling and seemed to me to be as spontaneous as they would be in any other interview situation. A few seemed guarded, perhaps for other reasons as well as the presence of the tape-recorder, but most seemed relaxed and open.

3 There were no language barriers between Islanders and me. Beyond that, Islanders from all backgrounds were very articulate. Quite a number of them have, over the years, been interviewed and were used to interview situations and expressing their ideas. Others have appeared in public (e.g., at City Hall or at ratepayers meetings) to present their case, and, again, are used to expressing their ideas. Not one Islander whom I approached refused to give me an interview. Some, however, were obviously more guarded than others.
ILLUSTRATION 2
ISLAND INTERVIEWS - SUMMARY AND COMPARISON

TOTAL: 39 (38 Present or Former Residents; School Principal)

SEX:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
<th>1973 Survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE:</td>
<td>20 (19 excluding School Principal)</td>
<td>MALE: 53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE:</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>FEMALE: 47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AGE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson (estimate)</th>
<th>1973 Survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20's:</td>
<td>9 (23.7%)</td>
<td>20's: 34.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30's:</td>
<td>6 (15.8%)</td>
<td>30's: 25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40's:</td>
<td>9 (23.7%)</td>
<td>40's: 19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50's:</td>
<td>6 (15.8%)</td>
<td>50's: 9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60's:</td>
<td>5 (13.2%)</td>
<td>60+ : 11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70's:</td>
<td>1 (3.0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80's:</td>
<td>2 (5.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ISLAND:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
<th>1973 Actual (25% households)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward's</td>
<td>21 (56.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algonquin</td>
<td>16 (43.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Centre</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Hanlan's:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson by Households:</th>
<th>1973 Survey* (includes children)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward's</td>
<td>18 (58.1%)</td>
<td>5 and under: 192 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algonquin</td>
<td>13 (42.0%)</td>
<td>6-10 : 111 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Centre</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Hanlan's:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>over 20 : 145 (27%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YEARS ON ISLAND:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
<th>1973 Survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 and under</td>
<td>8 (21.1%)</td>
<td>5 and under: 192 (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>4 (10.5%)</td>
<td>6-10 : 111 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>5 (13.2%)</td>
<td>11-20 : 93 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 20</td>
<td>21 (55.3%)</td>
<td>over 20 : 145 (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESIDENCY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
<th>1973 Survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Only: 5 (2 formerly Y.) (13.2%)</td>
<td>Summer Only: 128 (23%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Round: 33 (8 formerly S.) (86.8%)</td>
<td>Year Round: 409 (74%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Only: 19 (3%)</td>
<td>Winter Only: 19 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
<th>1973 Survey*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Only by Households: 5 (15.6%)</td>
<td>Summer Only by H/H: 39 (20%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Round by Households: 27 (84.4%)</td>
<td>Year Round by H/H: 152 (80%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Only by H/H: 2 (1%)</td>
<td>Winter Only by H/H: 2 (1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MOVERS—STAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayers</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POLITICAL ACTIVITY—EXECUTIVE (TIRA or earlier):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gibson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Executive</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Social Survey Conducted by City Planning Staff based on responses from 192 (78%) households, with information about 556 people (including adults and children). See City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods (September 1973) for further details.
adopt a friendly, non-argumentative, non-evaluative, sometimes naive posture. For example, I tried to avoid being drawn into any substantive discussion and I did not volunteer any opinions. I was there to find out what they thought (not to display what I thought). Occasionally, however, it was impossible not to reveal an opinion without seeming to be rude or unreasonably evasive.

Although the interviews were relatively unstructured and consisted mostly of open-ended questions designed to elicit wide-ranging responses, each interview was guided by a list of questions. Each interview was divided into a section dealing basically with "sense of place"\(^1\) and another section dealing basically with "defence of place".\(^2\) Each section of each interview included both questions that I asked all—or almost all—Islanders\(^3\) and specially-designed questions that I asked in order to tap the individual's particular knowledge or

\(^{1}\) For example, what do you like/dislike about living on the Island? What sort of people do you think would be happy/unhappy living on the Island? If you had to move, what would you miss? Outsiders tend to lump all Islanders together, but that may not be accurate; do you think there are any differences between Ward's and Algonquin Islanders? Do you think there is anything special about living on an island? If you had to move, ideally, where would you move? This last type of question was asked not so much to find out where in fact the respondent would move—it is very difficult, as many commentators suggest, to try to link words and actions or to predict behaviour from stated preferences—but to elicit information about the respondents' residential and general environmental values. For the problem of linking words and actions see: Irwin Deutscher, "Words and Deeds: Social Science and Social Policy," Social Problems 13 (1966), pp. 233-254.

\(^{2}\) For example, when did you first become active in Island political life? What role did you expect Mayor Crombie to play? Have your views about municipal politics changed as a result of your experience? What were the goals of the Committee?

\(^{3}\) For example, when did you move to the Island? Why did you move to the Island? What do you like/dislike about living on the Island?
experience.¹ (See Appendix D, "Islanders' Interviews: Sample Questions").

b. Interviews With Politicians:

The interviews with politicians had a more limited focus than the interviews with Islanders. They were used only to elicit information about the political history. The emphasis was on the post-summer 1973 period; however, information about earlier periods was gathered from some of them. Interviews with 21 politicians, and 2 assistants to politicians, were held between March and July 1975. The interviews generally lasted between an hour and an hour and a half, amounting to some thirty hours of taped material, which totals about 800 pages of transcribed material. Respondents were people holding a wide range of political views—from strong supporters of Islanders and retaining the Island homes, to strong opponents of Islanders and retaining Island homes. Twelve of the politicians could be classified (on the basis of their voting records and public statements) as "anti-Islander" (or, as some of them would prefer to phrase it, as "pro-park") and nine could be classified as "pro-Islander". Twelve of the politicians interviewed were City politicians and nine politicians were from the Boroughs. Six politicians who were approached for an interview either refused outright or made it so difficult to obtain an appointment that interviews could not be held.

The interviews were designed to tap the individual's special knowledge of the political history, to give the respondent a chance to

¹For example, what was the tent community on Ward's Island like? How successful do you think the Committee was? Most respondents were chosen because they had specific knowledge about some aspect of Island life or history.
express his or her position, and, more generally, to reveal his or her attitudes toward Islanders and the Island. (See Appendix E, "Politicians' Interviews: Sample Questions".) As in the case with interviewing Islanders, I tried to adopt an open, friendly, non-argumentative, occasionally naive posture. For example, even when they expressed political views diametrically opposed to my own (unspoken) views, I obviously did not argue. I was interested in getting them to reveal their position, not in trying to change their minds.

c. Representativeness:

One of the most frequently raised questions about this type of research (and about participant observation generally) is how "representative" is it? How much can be said about all Islanders on the basis of interviews with this particular group of Islanders? After all, it is a relatively small group (only 38 of some 500+ adults); it is not randomly selected; and the responses cannot be precisely compared and quantitatively analyzed. The simple answer is that we cannot be absolutely sure that the answers are representative. But that does not mean that we cannot say anything significant or of a general nature.

The people interviewed were not selected to form a random sample, but because they were special in some way and had special knowledge deemed valuable to the over-all study. Nevertheless, to what extent do these Islanders reflect the over-all composition of the Island population? Are there any groups that are greatly over-emphasized? Are there any major groups that are left out? Comparing the characteristics of the people interviewed with the available statistics about all Island residents (Illustration 2), indicates that the sample interviewed does in fact reflect the over-all make-up of the Island fairly well. The
main differences are the following: (1) the sample over-represents
the 60+ age group and somewhat under-represents the younger groups;\footnote{This is a logical consequence of the interest in "oral history" and speaking to older residents who could report on earlier life on the Island.} (2) the sample over-represents long-time residents and under-represents the shorter-term residents;\footnote{Again, this is a logical consequence of the interest in Island history.} (3) the sample somewhat over-represents year-round, as opposed to summer-only residents, but this
difference virtually disappears when households rather than individuals are considered, since all six of the double-interviews were
with year-round residents; (4) the sample certainly over-represents
the "politically active" segment, which is a logical consequence of
investigating the political history. Unfortunately, respondents were
not asked whether they were tenants or owners, so the data cannot
tell if the sample reflects the over-all composition of the Island
along this dimension (some 62 of the 250 houses in 1980 had tenants
all or part of the year). One omission from the sample is absentee landlords. All other major groups are represented in the sample—
and in a proportion not too different from that in the total Island
population.

Obviously, because the answers are not strictly quantified,
precise statistical statements about the group sampled or about the
larger population of Islanders are inappropriate. Nevertheless, use
is made of what are called "quasi-statistics"\(^1\) or "rough statistics". Throughout the text, terms such as "many", "most", "some", "a few" are employed. These terms are not used arbitrarily, but are based on careful consideration of all the available evidence—not just the responses of these individuals to my interviews, but the plethora of other evidence collected about these and other Islanders.

Another aspect of the question of representativeness is how much may be said on the basis of this relatively small group? Many studies have been based on small samples and are open to criticism on this point.\(^2\) The main point to be made is that the conclusions are not drawn solely on the basis of the responses of this group to the

\(^1\) See, for example, Allen H. Barton and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Some Functions of Qualitative Analysis In Social Research," op. cit., who discuss the uses, and possible misuses, of such "quasi-statistics." They conclude:

On the other hand it is argued that a careful observer who is aware of the need to sample all groups in the population with which he is concerned, who is aware of the "visibility bias" of the spectacular as opposed to the unspectacular case, who becomes intimately familiar with his material over a long period of time through direct observation, will be able to approximate the results of statistical investigation, while avoiding the considerable expense and practical difficulty of quantitative investigation.

Gans, The Urban Villagers, op. cit., p. 348 also describes his small sample (how he had "intensive contact" with only some 20 of the people in the West End) and his "impressionistic", but free, use of "quasistatistical terms".

\(^2\) For example, Gans, The Urban Villagers, op. cit., was based on intensive contact with only about 20 of the 3,000 people who lived in Boston's West End; Michael Young and Peter Willmott's Family and Kinship in East London (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1962) was based primarily on 45 couples in Bethnal Green (1955 population of 54,000) and 47 in Greenleigh; and Kevin Lynch's The Image of the City (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1961) was based on 60 interviews: 30 in Boston and 15 each in Jersey City and Los Angeles.
interviews. But, even there, it is not unreasonable to suggest that a great deal can be said on the basis of eighty hours of interviews, so long as it is kept constantly in mind that this is a select group.

Finally, although it is often useful to make general statements and "representative" statements, it is not always wise or possible to do so. Some subjects do not lend themselves to such treatment. Individual statements—which admittedly are that and only represent that one person—are also important. If we wish to develop an "experiential geography" and to look at the Island (and other phenomena) from the perspective of individual Islanders, to try to understand the deeper, more personal meanings of "sense of place", we should also pay close attention to individual expressions. Throughout the text, this has been attempted: general statements, inferences and conclusions are followed by generous supporting illustrations drawn from individual Islanders.

Many of the above points may also apply to the question of the representativeness of the sample of politicians. Most importantly, they were not selected to form a random sample of politicians, but to tap special knowledge of the political history. In terms of numbers, the City and pro-Islander politicians are "over-represented". The sample, however, was chosen deliberately to include people who reflected the full range of opinion on the subject (from hard-line opponents through mild opponents and mild supporters, to hard-line supporters). This range of opinion is reflected in the analysis. In addition, in many cases where politicians are quoted, they are not quoted as representatives of a group, but only as representatives of themselves.
d. "Truthfulness" and "Accuracy":

Another frequently raised question about interviewing (both structured and unstructured) is how do we know if respondents are telling the truth? How can we trust the information that is given?\(^1\) Obviously, as many methodologists emphasize, the quality of the data obtained in any interview depends on the ability and the willingness of the respondent to report it.\(^2\) Any statement, therefore, must, as a matter of course, be evaluated in the light of a number of questions and the researcher must start from a basis of scepticism when evaluating the material (in what ways might this particular statement be untrue or biased?)

As far as Islanders are concerned, they obviously have an interest in presenting themselves in as favourable a light as possible because of their tenuous political situation. But the potential influence of this interest is tempered in a number of ways. First of all, it is not at all clear in many of the questions and subjects discussed just what might be judged "favourable" or "unfavourable" from a

\(^1\) See, for example, Dean and Whyte, "How Do You Know If the Informant Is Telling the Truth?", op. cit.; and George J. McCall, "Data Quality Control In Participant Observation," in McCall and Simmons, Issues In Participant Observation, op. cit., pp. 128-141, who discuss possible "sources of contamination" of interview data (pp. 133-135). Dean and Whyte make a useful distinction between "Informants' Report of 'Subjective Data'" (their own feelings, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) and "Informants' Report of 'Objective Data'" (reports of "facts", such as when certain events occurred), providing questions to be asked about each.

\(^2\) For example: Is his memory accurate enough to report what he is being asked to report? Was he present at the event being discussed or is his information second-hand? Does he have any reason, conscious or unconscious, for falsifying his information—e.g., to justify his own actions; to present himself or his group in a good light; to ingratiate himself or to please the interviewer? Is he perceptive enough or articulate enough to express his ideas and answer the questions being asked? and so on.
political standpoint. For example, obviously political self-interest might influence the response to a question, such as whether or not the respondent owned a house elsewhere and the answer may tend to underestimate the number;¹ but it is hard to imagine what political implications a response like "liking isolation on the Island" could have. Most questions, therefore, were probably not affected. Second, there was enough time and opportunity to build up relatively good rapport with respondents and to gain a sense of whether (or when) they may have been guarded.² This good rapport also meant that, generally, people were quite open, revealing, for example, things that could be regarded as "politically sensitive". Third, and most important (for evaluating this or any other potential bias or bar to spontaneity or honesty), the interviews formed only one part of the research—albeit an important part. Many of these individuals were observed under many different circumstances and in many different situations. Respondents' answers could often be corroborated against what they had said or done on many other occasions (social encounters, Island public meetings, demonstrations, and so on).

As far as the politicians were concerned, they, too, have some obvious interests which might bias or limit the spontaneity of their responses—notably to justify their position on the Island issue and to present themselves, perhaps, as intelligent, honest, "objective" guardians of the public interest. In addition, not too surprisingly, a variety of apparently "taboo" subjects were discovered. Many

¹This is why this type of question was not asked directly, although some relevant information was spontaneously offered.

²In a few cases, people were especially guarded or suspicious; this fact must be taken into consideration when their responses are evaluated.
politicians seemed reluctant to discuss "lobbying" or to reveal any behind-the-scenes manoeuvring. The interviews, therefore, can give only an incomplete picture of political behaviour. Politicians also seemed reluctant to discuss their personal feelings about Islanders. Since some politicians did discuss this (and did reveal private, perhaps unguarded comments by their colleagues), it is obvious that such subjective—even emotional—factors can influence political stances. But, again, the interviews were of only limited value in investigating this aspect of political decision-making. ¹

In conclusion, the final decision about the accuracy and truthfulness of any interview data (and participant observation data generally) ultimately relies on the good judgement of the researcher.

v. Document Analysis:

A great deal has been written about the Toronto Island, which
naturally provides a wealth of information for studying both sense of
place and defense of place. This material includes, among other
things: (1) Toronto newspapers and magazines, which over the years
have devoted an extraordinary amount of attention to the subject;
(2) Island newspapers (e.g., The Ward's Island Weekly, 1917--; the
TIRA News, 1974--; and the Goose and Duck, 1971-1974); (3) numerous
briefs and pamphlets written by Islanders and presented to politi-
cians and the public at large; (4) minutes of the Toronto Island
Residents Association, which was founded in 1969 in order to promote

¹I was inclined to regard the information provided by politicians with
even greater scepticism than that provided by Islanders, because I had less time or opportunity to build up rapport with them
as respondents, had less opportunity to "enter their world", and had
fewer alternative sources against which to check their responses than
I did with the Islanders. Nevertheless, even looked at sceptically, the interviews provided a good deal of useful information about the
political history of the Island.
the political interests of the Islanders and which has been active continuously since then; (5) minutes of City and Metro Council and various Committees of both Councils; (6) reports by various City and Metro officials; (7) Provincial Hansard; (8) diaries of prominent Torontonians or visitors to Toronto who have commented on the Island since Mrs. Simcoe's time; (9) local histories, which have sometimes included lively contemporary accounts of Island life, as well as the more traditional historical accounts of earlier eras.

These sources are analyzed and discussed where appropriate in the text. Obviously, some sections rely more heavily on this material than others. For example, the following chapter on Sense of History relies on diaries, histories, newspapers and so on—although these accounts are augmented by "eye witness accounts" from people who experienced the Island in earlier days. The political history, especially for the period before 1973, also relies heavily on newspaper accounts, official records (e.g., Minutes of City and Metro Councils and Committees) and written briefs (by Islanders and other interested groups). When possible, these are augmented by interview material. As may be anticipated, reliance on documentary material increases as we go back further in time.

For this earlier political history, two major sources, the public record (City and Metro Council and Committee Minutes, etc.) and newspaper accounts worked quite well together. The public record provides a fairly straight-forward, factually accurate, but dry and limited, account of public actions (what motions were made, who appeared before the Committee, what the vote was, and so on). And the newspaper accounts generally provide a livelier description of many of the
same meetings, often including direct quotes from major actors, and reactions from people not at the event (e.g., of Islanders' reactions to City or Metro actions), all of which can be used to flesh out the bare bones picture presented in the public record. Furthermore, the newspapers have dealt with many significant political events that never appeared in the public record, but had important repercussions in the political history.

Several general, cautionary points should be made, however, about the use of newspaper material. First, newspapers have a tendency to cover "colourful" events and therefore can distort the relative importance of events. Second, there may well be errors in reporting (e.g., misquoting major actors). It is hard to guard against this, except to try to proceed cautiously. And third, in recent years, of course, the electronic media (radio and TV) have also reported on the Island and other public issues, but their reports are more ephemeral. Newspapers are still the major medium of record, although it may be debatable whether they are still the major medium of opinion formation. Relying solely on them may give a distorted picture of the media opinion of the era. For example, in the case of the Island, most radio and TV editorials have supported Islanders, whereas the Globe and Mail and Star have attacked them repeatedly in their editorials. Relying only on the print media would obviously distort any discussion of the "media image" of the Island.

vi. Ethical Considerations:

The final section of this chapter consists of a brief personal account of several ethical problems which have been highlighted by this
research.¹ (See also the discussion of "Overt Versus Covert Research", pp. 82-85.)

a. Anonymity:

I did not offer anonymity to either Island residents or politicians. Only one Islander asked not to have his name used, a request which was immediately granted, and one politician asked to be allowed to clear any direct quotations before they were included, which, again, was a request that was readily granted. All other people interviewed did so without asking for or being promised anonymity. In most cases where direct quotations are used, the information may be personal (e.g., memories of growing up on the Island in the early part of this century), but not "sensitive". There seems to be no reason not to identify and give credit to the person in these cases. But in other cases, the information may be "too personal" (e.g., health problems resulting from the political stress) or "sensitive" (e.g., criticism of neighbours) and revealing such information might be personally embarrassing or cause unnecessary problems with other Islanders. In these cases, the speaker has not been identified.

b. Morale:

Unless done with extreme care and sensitivity, the very act of interviewing people could have had some damaging results. The interviews were conducted during a particularly sensitive and emotional period on the Island, when Islanders were faced with a serious and uncertain political situation and with the prospect of losing their homes. Unless asked with care, questions about emotional attachment to the Island, about the political situation, about how the Island defense campaign has been run, and about people's plans for the future (e.g., whether they planned to move or not), could have had the effect of demoralizing people, making them panic or even fragmenting them into quarreling factions. I was acutely aware of these possibilities, tried to phrase questions in such a way as to avoid them, and tried to leave the respondent feeling in a positive rather than a negative mood. Researchers should always try to assess the possible effects of their questions on the respondents.

c. "Conduit Problem":

Another special problem I faced was what I refer to as "the conduit problem"; i.e., since I interviewed both Islanders and politicians, I was in the potentially uncomfortable position of having information that might be (or be seen to be) useful to each side of a major political issue. I could have been used as an intermediary (or a conduit) for passing information back and forth. I resolved this potential problem quite simply by deciding never to reveal to one group anything that I learned from the other in an interview. The respondents had agreed to give information "for research purposes"; and I would only use the information for these purposes. Without
conscious and deliberate attention to the problem, it could have been fairly easy to be drawn into a discussion which revealed interview information gained from other respondents.

d. Political Consequences:

Any report about an on-going, highly emotional, potentially explosive situation like the Island controversy is very likely to have political consequences. This prospect is somewhat unnerving and unsettling, because, although I have attempted consciously not to let my political views distort the research and the report, I do care about what happens. I would have felt much happier if the whole issue had been resolved before my report was completed, so that even if it angered some people (as it undoubtedly would), it could not affect the controversy, and I could feel less anxiety over using the information I possess. I have been given access to a great deal of potentially politically sensitive material (e.g., I have sat in on numerous strategy meetings). Although no Islander has ever placed qualifications on the use of the material, I nevertheless feel a responsibility to use the material judiciously. Howard Becker offered his own general guideline for what to report:

I ought properly, therefore, to express my own judgment. Briefly, it is that one should refrain from publishing items of fact or conclusions that are not necessary to one's argument or that would cause suffering out of proportion to the scientific gain
of making them public.¹

I have tried to follow this suggestion and hope that I have not betrayed the trust placed in me by either the Islanders or the academic community.

¹Becker, "Problems In the Publication of Field Studies," op. cit., p. 284. This applies not just to politically sensitive material, but to all types of potentially embarrassing or damaging material. See also Rainwater and Pittman, "Ethical Problems In Studying a Politically Sensitive and Deviant Community," op. cit. They address another important issue—the possible misuse of information—and argue:

At the level of strategy, however, this concern for the effect of findings on public issues sensitizes one to the question of how research results will be interpreted by others, and to his responsibility to anticipate probable misuses, and from this anticipation attempt to counteract the possibility of misuse. That is, though we do not feel a researcher must avoid telling the truth because it may hurt a group (problems of confidentiality aside) we do believe that he must take this possibility into account in presenting his findings and make every reasonable effort to deny weapons to potential misusers.

Since it is a reality of political life that material may be taken out of context and/or distorted or misused, this is wise counsel.
CHAPTER 3

SENSE OF HISTORY

i. Analysis of Sense of History:

The first fundamental component of sense of place to be discussed is sense of history: i.e., the awareness of and appreciation for the history of a particular place—the people, locations, events, legends and place names significant for that particular location. Every place has its own history, and knowledge of that history provides a strong link between people and place.\(^1\)

In the case of the Toronto Island, that history is very colourful and distinctive, and present-day Islanders show a remarkable awareness of at least the major facts and events in Island history. Most know that the Island was once a Peninsula; that an early lighthouse keeper disappeared under mysterious circumstances; that a "horse ferry" used to ply the Bay between the mainland and hotels on the Island; that

\(^1\) Yi-Fu Tuan, for example, has written in Topophilia (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 99 that "Awareness of the past is an important element in the love of place."; and in "Space and Place: humanistic perspective," in Progress in Geography, vol. 6 eds. C. Board, R.J. Chorley, P. Haggett, D.R. Stoddard (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), p. 245 that "...places are locations in which people have long memories, reaching back beyond the indelible impressions of their own individual childhoods to the common locus of bygone generations. One may argue that engineers create localities but time is needed to create place." Paul Thompson notes in The Voice of the Past: Oral History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 1: "Through local history a village or town seeks meaning for its own changing character and newcomers can gain a sense of roots in personal historical knowledge."
"the fashionable people" of the 1890's and early 1900's used to summer there; that hotels and an amusement park used to draw huge crowds to Hanlan's Point; that the Ward's Island community started as a "tent community"; that the original Algonquin Island houses were floated over on scows from Hanlan's Point, and so on.

Evidence of this awareness of their history is easy to produce. The Toronto Island School students published A History of the Toronto Islands in 1972. The Goose and Duck newspaper (published in the early 1970's) was published in part to make Islanders aware of their unique heritage. It therefore included pictures and other items from the past. Many amateur historians were encountered in the course of this research, several of whom have compiled excellent photograph collections of earlier life on the Island. Some interviewees spoke specifically about their strong feeling for the history of the Island and expressed bitterness and distress over the destruction of its physical form:

I feel very much the continuity of the community from its beginnings and so of course that includes past history. It bothers me to think of what was destroyed, but I don't know if I could do a lot of serious work [research] on the Island, because it does bother me so much.

(Freya Godard)

When we saw the situation [of the demolitions], we were very sad, because there was nothing there any more to remind us. That seems wrong. Some part should have been maintained, because it has a long history. I don't understand really why we have to wipe out the old. I think history is an important part of life. You don't have to keep everything, just examples, just so you can say, "I remember when..." and show the kids what it was.

(Mary Madrick)

1 Students of Toronto Island Public School, A History of the Toronto Islands (Toronto: The Coach House Press, 1972).
Finally, many of the more recent political events have emphasized the historical roots of the community: the Winter Carnival of 1974, which was both a recreational and political event, adopted the theme of the Island in the mid-nineteenth century; the old portage route over the neck of the Peninsula was to be re-enacted in the Spring of 1974; and a booth with posters made from old photographs of early life on Ward's Island was planned for the Spring Carnival of 1974.

Experience of a place is qualitatively different when one knows something about its history. Such knowledge creates a link with the past, that, in turn, changes one's feeling of the present. One senses, as Hilaire Belloc wrote, "a physical communion with the Past". Islanders who are aware of the Island's past have a qualitatively different feeling for the Island than the park visitor or the Metro politician who is ignorant of that past.

For a number of Islanders who knew the Island before 1956 in the pre-Metro park era, before the physical traces of their heritage had been virtually obliterated to make a Metro park, that general history has a very personal, even poignant, meaning. An elderly lady who had lived in the tent community on Ward's Island before moving to live in

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1 Hilaire Belloc, "The Absence of the Past," in Selected Essays, ed. J.B. Morton (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 167. W.G. Hoskins, describing an intimately known landscape strikes a personal note: "It is satisfactory to sit upon a Saxon boundary bank that commands a view of perhaps three or four miles... to be aware if you like that one is part of an immense unbroken stream that has flowed over this scene for more than a thousand years." Quoted by D.W. Meinig in "Reading the Landscape: An Appreciation of W.G. Hoskins and J.B. Jackson," in The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscape: Geographical Essays, ed. D.W. Meinig (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp 205-206.
a big house at Centre Island for many years, greeted an interviewer in her Ward's Island home by taking a framed picture of her former house off a table and talking about it lovingly. Some Islanders whose former places were demolished years ago have kept mementos of those former places. One couple who lived on Centre Island for many years transplanted climbing red roses from their Centre Island garden into their new garden on Algonquin Island. There the flowers now tumble over a white picket fence (also brought from Centre Island), a living link with the past.

Studying Island history is valuable not only because it shows what Islanders' particular sense of history consists of (the primary concern in this chapter), but also because it illuminates other areas of interest, such as elements in Islanders' sense of identity, their sense of community, their images of themselves, and outsiders' images of them and their political history. These are noted, where appropriate in the text. We find, for example, the early antecedents of various images of the Island: the "Island as summer resort", the "Island as place of retreat", the "Island as separate from the City", and the "Island as contrast to the City". We see earlier traces of the image that present-day Islanders proudly maintain, e.g., the Islander as an independent, unconventional, hardy and down-to-earth type. We find that some patterns of Island life—or elements of their "environmental lifestyle"—have long histories: coping with the lack of stores, coping with flooding, coping with a sense of isolation, coping with winter and winter transportation, enjoying the ferries and enjoying the summer fun. Finally, we see that there have been a
number of recurring issues in Island political history: e.g., the contrast between summer and winter residents, the need for improved access (the bridge-tunnel-roadway-ferry debate), erosion and shoreline protection, high water and flooding and winter transportation.

Sense of history is, of course, related to other components of sense of place. Sense of personal and family history, for example, may meld into general history and reinforce sense of identity. Sense of belonging to a group with a long and distinctive history may reinforce sense of community. Knowledge that important historical events or interesting historical characters are associated with a particular house or field or lake may increase sense of environment. In cases where there has been a history of self-sufficiency, autonomy or sovereignty, sense of history may reinforce sense of control. And sense of change (either actual or potential) may increase awareness of sense of history.

The history which follows is based as much as possible on primary sources. It quotes from contemporary accounts (such as diaries, early Toronto historians, newspaper articles, interviews with people who remember earlier eras) from all eras, not only in order to draw as accurate a picture as possible, but also to capture the spirit and feeling of each period. It outlines the history of the whole Island, not just that of Ward's and Algonquin Islands, because the Island is small and its history is part of the collective consciousness of remaining Islanders. In addition, a number of former Hanlan's Point and Centre Island residents now live on Ward's and Algonquin Islands; and many life-long Ward's Islanders and Algonquin Islanders remember those other
areas. There are even physical links with the other parts of the Island: the churches and the firehall from Centre Island were retained and moved closer to the east end of the Island; and over forty of the houses now on Algonquin Island once graced West Island Drive, Hanlan's Point.

ii. Historical Context:

a. The Early Days:

On a day long before the coming of the white man he[The Great Spirit] was in a mood of anger and, as he often expressed himself forcefully, the winds that day came with a terrific roar, laid the forests flat as matchsticks, whipped the waves as tall as tree-tops on Lake Ontario and made the earth tremble with their violence.... There was no island then off the northern shore of Lake Ontario but when the sinking and upheaval finished and the storm had ended an island had been formed and that island is now Toronto Island.¹

Thus Mohawk historian William Smith relates the dramatic, if apocryphal, Indian story of the birth of the Island. Most writers about the creation of the Island, however, prosaically attribute it to the incremental build-up of material eroded from the Scarborough Bluffs. By the time the town of York was established in 1793, the Peninsula, as the Island was at that time, stretched westward about 5½ miles from the mouth of the meandering Don River. (Map 3.)

The first frequenters of the Peninsula were the Indians, who found the area rich in fish and wild fowl. We are also told by that indefatigable diarist and correspondent, Mrs. Simcoe, wife of the first Governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, that the Indians repaired to the Peninsula when ill because "the air on these Sands is

¹Al Chandler, "Island Made In Hurricane," Globe and Mail, December 19, 1954. Mr Chandler, according to this article, spent some 25 years studying Six Nation history.
Copy of a Plan of York Harbour with the Soundings, Shoals etc.
Surveyed by Order of Lt. Governor Simcoe
by A. Atkin Surveyor 1793
the Soundings taken by Mr. Bouchette

Source: University of Toronto Map Library
percuiarly [sic] clear & fine.\textsuperscript{1} Upon her arrival in York, Mrs. Simcoe was immediately struck by the beauty of the Peninsula, which she noted "greatly improves the view\textsuperscript{2}" of the Lake. A few days later, she made her first trip to the Peninsula:

We rode on the Peninsula so, I called the spit of sand for it is united to the mainland by a very narrow neck of ground. We crossed the Bay opposite the Camp, & rode by the Lake side to the end of the Peninsula. We met some good natural meadows & several Ponds. The trees are mostly of the Poplar kind with wild Vines & there are some fir. On the ground were everlasting Pews creeping in abundance of a purple colour. I was told they are good to eat when boiled & some pretty white flowers like lillies of the Valley.\textsuperscript{3}

Thereafter, Mrs. Simcoe went for frequent rides and walks on her "favourite sands".

Governor Simcoe's perceptions of the Peninsula were somewhat different from his wife's:

The Gov. thinks from the Manner in which the sandbanks are formed, they are capable of being fortified, so as to be impregnable, he therefore calls it Gibraltar Point though the Land is low.\textsuperscript{5}

And during his tenure (in 1794), the first building was erected on the Peninsula, a blockhouse to guard the western entrance to the Harbour. (See Map 4.) Its military advantages, however, apparently bore no greater resemblance to its namesake than its physical appearance\textsuperscript{6} and after it had failed to protect the citizens of York from the invading

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{1} August 7, 1793, Mrs. Simcoe's Diary, ed. Mary Quaile Innis (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1965), p. 103.
\textsuperscript{2} July 30, 1793, Ibid., p. 101.
\textsuperscript{3} August 4, 1793, Ibid., pp. 101-102.
\textsuperscript{4} August 10, 1793, Ibid., p. 103.
\textsuperscript{5} August 10, 1793, Ibid., p. 103.
\textsuperscript{6} John Ross Robertson, Landmarks of Toronto, 6 volumes (Toronto, 1894-1914) vol. 2, 1896, p. 1102.
\end{flushright}
Americans in the War of 1812, it was dismantled. The name "Blockhouse Bay", however, remains.¹

The second building to be erected on the Peninsula was the Lighthouse, which was built in 1808 and heightened in 1832. The Lighthouse is still standing on the spot now known (improperly) as Gibraltar Point and for many years it was probably the best-known landmark in Toronto. It was also the scene of the best-known Island legend: the murder of an early lighthouse keeper by soldiers from York.² (See Illustration 3.)

As early as 1806, a bridge or float had been built over the opening of the Don River to enable residents of York to visit the Peninsula to enjoy not only the fresh air, exercise, and scenery, but also the excitement provided by a race-course.³ In the spring of 1813, during the War of 1812, the two bridges then leading to the Peninsula were destroyed for military purposes. By the 1820's residents of York regretted their inability to get to the Peninsula and petitioned for permission to build two new bridges. In 1822 these were built,⁴ but

¹"place names", novelist Hugh MacLennan has recently written, have "always been the most permanent things in the short little human story". Hugh MacLennan, Voices In Time (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980), p.16

²Robertson, Landmarks, vol. 5 (1908), op. cit., p. 383.
and Toronto Island School Students, op. cit., p. 11.

³Henry Scadding, D.D., Toronto of Old (Toronto: Adam, Stevenson and Co., 1873), p. 83. Scadding quotes an 1806 newspaper article which referred to "the Island". Frequently, in the period before the Island finally became an island in 1858, the Peninsula was referred to as the Island. It may be that although the Peninsula was physically linked to the mainland, it was perceived as being remote and therefore like an island. Remoteness is certainly still part of the Island image.

ILLUSTRATION 3

TORONTO ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

Source: Baldwin Room, Metropolitan
Toronto Library
obviously did not last long, for in 1835 two new bridges were constructed and handed over, with much pomp and circumstance, from the military to the Town of Toronto, to enable her citizens to "enjoy the salubrious air of the peninsula". Unfortunately, these bridges also had a short existence, being swept away a few years later.

After the dismantling of the Blockhouse, for a number of years the only residents on the Peninsula were the Lighthouse keeper and his family. By the 1830's, however, a few fishing families who were harvesting the rich fishing grounds off the Peninsula had also taken up residence on it and historians claim that among them was the Ward family, after whom Ward's Island is named.

The Peninsula must still have seemed very remote and wild to some residents of York in the 1820's and 1830's. Sportsmen could hunt quail, wild duck, partridge, geese and pheasant and "old timers of the 1820's claimed there were even bears". Whether or not there were bears, Mrs. Durnan, mother of the third Lighthouse keeper James, was afraid of other dangers:

When Durnan's mother heard that her son was to be lightkeeper [1832]...she was very much frightened and asked: "Are there Indians on the Island and do people who live there wear clothes?"

b. Development of the Peninsula:

The resort era of the Peninsula began in 1833, when Michael O'Connor opened his hotel, the Peninsula Retreat, at the eastern end

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1 Scadding, op. cit., p. 86.


of the Peninsula. O'Connor proudly announced the opening of his hotel in the *Courier of Upper Canada* of October 5, 1833, inviting "parties of pleasure, and individuals who may wish to inhale the lake breeze, with every kind of refreshments"\(^1\) and operated a "horse ferry", Sir John of the Peninsula, to transport patrons to his establishment.

In 1839 a building which was to be an Island landmark and centre of activity for nearly twenty years was built at the eastern end of the Peninsula—a summer residence for the Governor General of British North America, Lord Sydenham, who wished to avoid "that dread pest cholera" which was plaguing Toronto.\(^2\) After Lord Sydenham's death, Louis Privat took up residence in the house and opened it as a hotel: Privat's Peninsula Hotel (1843; see Map 5). He was joined in the following year by his brother, Louis Joseph, and between them they expanded and operated their resort until 1853. In order to attract visitors, the Privat Bros. also opened the Island's first amusement park, the Peninsula Pleasure Grounds, which had two enormous swings, a bowling alley, a merry-go-round and a small zoo. (See Illustration 4.) To transport the visitors they operated a series of ferries, the first of which was named the Peninsula Packet, but was known simply as "the horse boat".

In 1853, the Privats sold their hotel to John Quinn. In 1854 Quinn refitted his hotel, at considerable expense, and by 1855, two steamers were put into use, the *Citizen* and the *Queen of the Peninsula*. But 1856 saw the beginning of the end for Quinn's Hotel. The Harbour

\(^1\) Quoted by Edwin C. Guillett, "When the Island Was A Peninsula," 1966.

Master, Hugh Richardson reported to the Commissioners of Toronto Harbour in early 1857 that the shores of the peninsula were receding rapidly and Quinn’s Hotel was perilously close to the water’s edge. On April 13, 1858, a furious storm drove through the narrow neck of land connecting the Island to the mainland, swept away Quinn’s Hotel and created an eastern entrance to the harbour:

**THE PENINSULAR HOTEL WASHED AWAY**

That long threatened disaster, the washing away of Mr. Quinn’s Hotel, on the Island, has come at last. Between four and five o’clock yesterday morning the waters of the Lake completely swept over a large section of the Island, entirely carrying away the Hotel and its appurtenances, along with the excuse for a breakwater erected by the Harbor Commissioners, and making a permanent eastern entrance to the harbor, some five hundred yards wide.¹

The Island was at last indubitably an island.

**c. Toronto Island - 1860-1900:**

No radical developments occurred on the Island during its first few years of existence. By about 1860 or so, the Wards had built a homestead at the Eastern end of the Island. Young William Ward, son of David, had been born on the Island, or Peninsula, in 1848 and was the lone survivor of one of the worst tragedies in Island history. His five sisters were drowned one fateful Sunday when a storm suddenly came up and upset the small boat they were rowing across the Bay to attend church on the Mainland.² Some time later, David Ward decided to move his family away from the eastern end of the Island and built the Second

¹ *Leader*, April 14, 1958. Earlier in the decade, storms had created temporary gaps. The 1858 break proved to be a permanent one.

² The dates and even the people involved are somewhat hazy, and accounts of the tragedy vary. Interview with Francis Ward: Toronto Island School Students, *op. cit.*, p. 8, Robertson, *Landmarks*, vol 2(1896) *op. cit.*, p. 767, and E.G. Ramsay, *op. cit.* In any event, the drowning of 5 little Ward girls has become a part of the popularly-known Island lore.
Ward Homestead at Centre Island adjacent to what became known as "Ward's Pond". (See Maps 6 and 7.)

The seeds of development at Hanlan's Point were planted early in the 1860's. In 1862, having been ousted by a "terrific gale"\(^1\) from the Eastern end of the Island, John Hanlan Sr. floated his family and belongings down to the Western end where he built what became known as the "old Homestead". It was here that young Ned Hanlan, the famous oarsman, was raised. (See Illustration 5.)

1867 marked a new era in the history of the Island. The Crown land, with a minor exception, was granted by Crown Parks to the City\(^2\) some four days before Confederation. In the same year, a survey was conducted, a plan (D141) was registered, and cottage development officially was sanctioned (if not begun). (See Map 6.)

The first leases were granted in the early 1870's. The lots were about five acres in size and the rental was $5.00 per annum. Mrs. Parkinson built a hotel at the end of a long wharf at Centre Island and later sold it to the Mead family. (See Illustration 6 and Maps 6 and 7.)

In 1874, John Hanlan Sr. built a hotel on Gibraltar or West Point (later known as Hanlan's Point). It was a grand and picturesque edifice, constructed entirely of wood, as most Island buildings were. Built in what came to be known as the Stick Style, like contemporary hotels and summer residences across North America, it had broad verandahs and balconies wrapped around the exterior, elaborate wood and iron detailing,

\(^1\)Robertson, *Landmarks*, vol. 3 (1898), *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.

MRS. PARKINSON’S (LATER MEAD’S) HOTEL, 1862

Source: Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Library
and an impressive Second Empire roof, with towers from which patrons could admire the view.\(^1\) (See Illustration 7.) The Hotel Hanlan was a popular Island landmark for 35 years. In 1884, C. Pelham Milvany noted approvingly that dinner at the hotel "had come to be known as one of Toronto's luxuries"\(^2\) and journalist Augustus Brindle fondly recalled "the old inn that seemed to be just about to topple into that part of the Bay"\(^3\) and the large crowds that were already beginning to flock to band concerts in the 1890's when the nucleus of the amusement area was created.

The decade of the 1870's seemed to belong to Ned Hanlan, the "sculling phenomenon" from Toronto\(^4\)—the "Champion of Worth"\(^5\), who won his first single-scull race in 1873 and continued winning until 1884. As reward for his achievements, the City of Toronto granted him a free lease on the Island and his admirers bought him a home worth $20,000. He became a City Alderman and a tug that served the Island for many years was named after him. To this day, his statue stands in Exhibition Park near the Marine Museum.

In 1879, Globe editorial writers described the Island as "barren and unpleasant"\(^6\), but not everyone who knew the Island at this time

\(^1\)William Dendy, Lost Toronto (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 24-25.
\(^2\)C. Pelham Milvany, Toronto Past and Present (Toronto: W.G. Caiger, Publisher, 1884), p. 113.
\(^3\)Augustus Brindle, "Toronto's Sandbar Beyond the Bay," Globe, June, 1912.
\(^4\)Globe, July 1, 1879.
\(^6\)Globe, July 1, 1879. They suggested it should be properly landscaped to improve its appearance and to halt erosion of its shorelines.
ILLUSTRATION 7

HANLAN'S HOTEL 1874 AND 1907

THE HOTEL HANLAN
Hanlan's Point, Toronto Island
1874

Source: William Dendy, Lost Toronto

Source: James Collection, City of Toronto Archives
agreed with the Globe's bleak assessment. One lady looked back nostalgically to the days before the Island Park was opened (in 1888):

Today the Island presents the natural, yet finished appearance which is the great achievement in park planning. But to those of us who know and loved the Island, it cannot compare with the spot we so loved then... What we now know as Island Park was called Centre Island. In the midst of what is now the park stood the old Mead's Hotel, a large frame structure, whitewashed, and surrounded with very weepy, weeping willows which stood in what is now the "centre" of the park, as one went toward Manitou road... ¹

The 1880's ushered in an era of feverish building and development on the Island. In 1880, the City itself was debating whether or not to establish a public park, which sparked a "boom" in Island lots. ² Later that year, the City did in fact decide to establish an Island Park and an Island Park Fund ³ and finally, on July 2, 1888, the park was declared open...

The Island provided amusements of all sorts for Torontonians in the 1880's. (See Map 7.) In 1884, Mulvany described a trip to Hanlan's Point, which he compared favourably to New York's Coney Island and recorded a seven verse poem entitled "The Summer Paradises of Toronto - the Island", which included the immortal lines:

We're not tired of the pleasures that Hanlan's dispenses
"The Point" with its programme - boats, bathing and beer.

On Ward's Island, the Wiman Baths, donated by Erastus Wiman, were opened in 1881 and soon became "one of the main attractions of the

¹ Mary E. Frank, "Island Is Changed Much From the Old Days," Globe, December 16, 1916.
² Globe, July 20, 1880
³ City Council Minutes, August 2, 1880, #863 and November 1, 1880, #1111.
⁴ Mulvany, op. cit., p. 264.
Island". Four years later, the Wiman Terrace and the Wiman Shelter were opened near the Baths. In 1883, William Ward, who was now living in the third Ward's Homestead, back on Ward's Island, built Ward's Hotel. Not quite as elaborate as Hałan's Hotel, Ward's Hotel was still an impressive building, built in the familiar mode with large verandahs and balconies, a mansard roof, and a single large tower. It stood just south of the Ward's ferry dock until it was demolished in 1966. (See Illustration 22.)

Boating was another popular form of recreation and in 1880-1881 the Royal Canadian Yacht Club built its first club house on the Island on "Jim Crow Pond". (See Map 8.) As William Dendy points out, the rustic wooden RCYC Clubhouse, with its lakeside verandahs and tall tower from which to view events on the water, was very much like fashionable summer cottages of the period and was in "studied - and intentional - contrast" with the solid stone and brick architecture of mainland Toronto. This image of the Island as a place of "contrast to the City" is reflected in contemporary images of the Island.

More elaborate and occasionally bizarre forms of entertainment than "boats, bathing and beer" became available on the Island in the 1880's. An article in the Globe of July 5, 1888 described the "four minutes worth of dizziness" available on a wonderful wooden

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1 Ibid., p. 265. Turners Bathes were erected shortly after this at Hanlan's Point.

2 Dendy, op. cit., p. 22. This was destroyed by fire in 1904 and was "replaced by the white georgian classicism" of both the 1905 and 1919 structures.

3 See both Sense of Community and Sense of Environment.
merry-go-round, the "great and only museum of living curiosities" which included a 510 lb. fat lady from Central Africa and a "real live Zulu with an Irish accent", as well as the more conventional shooting galleries, tests of strength, swings and band concerts.

A more sober development in the period was the Lakeside Home For Little Children opened in 1883. It was intended to be well away from other residences and was to provide summer accommodation for the unfortunate little patients of the Hospital For Sick Children who "could lie on the broad verandah, breathing the delightful breezes of our lakes, watching the boats go by".

Residential development began to boom in the 1880's on land leased by the City to individuals. As with the recreational and resort developments, residential development occurred in three separate communities: at Hanlan's Point, Centre Island and, somewhat later, Ward's Island, with Ward's Island itself being split between the grander houses of Lakeshore Avenue and the more modest "tent city" to the east. (See Illustration 15.) As early as 1884, Mulvany noticed a change: "Since 1880, the Island has grown more and more popular, more and more a pleasure resort and summer suburb of the City." Cottages

Ironically, according to author Robert Thomas Allen, the Centre Island merry-go-round now swirls patrons around in Disneyland, Florida.

Hospital for Sick Children, Report, 1882, quoted by Mulvany, op. cit., p. 267. This home was destroyed by fire in 1915, rebuilt in 1917 and used until 1928.

"Toronto's Island Suburb," Globe, July 5, 1888, p. 8, contrasts the "busy, charming suburban pleasure resort" having a population of perhaps a couple of thousand in 1888 with the "sandbank" of 1881. Compare, also, Maps 7 and 8.

Mulvany, op. cit., pp. 264-265. Note that this development is not indicated on Map 7. Perhaps the 1884 map was published in 1884 but compiled earlier.
of all sizes and styles—"fine villas and wooden 'shanties'"\(^1\) were erected. Hanlan's Point developed first and the cottages tended to be modest (see Illustration 12), while Lakeshore Avenue, on the south side of Centre Island (the Island Park was on the north side) was the most fashionable Island address. Here George Gooderham, Casimir Gzowski, the Massey family, Bishop Sweatman (see Illustrations 8, 9 and 14), among other prominent Torontonians, maintained summer residences that looked out on the Lake. In the 1880's and early 1890's, a tent community was springing up at the eastern end of Ward's Island. \(^2\) (See Illustration 15.) Some were large, comfortable, and well-appointed canvas summer homes. \(^3\) But, nevertheless, there was no indoor plumbing and only communal outdoor water taps at Ward's until well after the turn of the century.

As the residential community grew (and by 1888 the summer population was estimated at "a couple of thousand"), so did the need for stores and other community services. In 1884, St. Andrews-by-the-Lake Anglican Church was opened. It was a small (25' x 45'), neat, unpretentious building, whose wooden skeleton originally was outlined in chocolate brown trim against white stucco panels. \(^4\) (See Illustration 9.)

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\(^1\) Ibid., p. 266.

\(^2\) The Staneland family was assigned the seventh tent lot by the City in 1899. People perhaps set up tents before the City became involved. It is highly unlikely, however, that anything like the 100 tents reported in the July 5, 1888 Globe article were on the Island. The larger homes on Ward's were built along Lakeshore Avenue mainly between 1910 and 1925 (see Maps 11 and 13), although the last ones were built in the 1950's.

\(^3\) Ibid. The article does not give the location of the tents.

BISHOP SWEATHMAN'S COTTAGE and ST. ANDREWS-BY-THE-LAKE c. 1884
Source: Baldwin Room, Metropolitan Toronto Library
Generations of Island residents and visitors have attended services here and in 1959, after most of the buildings at Hanlan's and Centre had been demolished, the church was moved farther east to its present location.

The Island School was also established. In 1888 a one-room school was erected on a site slightly east of the location of the present school and in November it opened with an enrolment of seventeen pupils.\(^1\) (See Illustration 10.) By the end of the decade, it could be fairly noted that:

The Island is a village in itself, with stores, churches, hotels, streets and well-planked sidewalks, wharves and an excellent ferry boat service. What a change in less than ten years.\(^2\)

By the 1890's the basic pattern of Island life was fairly well established:

There are three [ferry] routes to Hanlan's, the old Gibraltar Point; to Mead's Wharf or Centre Island, or Island Park as it is usually known; and to Ward's, the Eastern Point. The frivolous young man in search of pleasure, and the giddy young things who admire acrobatic exercises will patronize Hanlan's, where the Ferry Company provides during the summer all kinds of attractions musical, athletic and social. The family man or the more sedate citizen will go to Island Park, where he can lie on the grass and watch the children play, or stroll over to the promenade and enjoy the fresh lake breezes. The melancholy soul who pines for solitude, or the poet whose fervor radiates from him with such intensity as to scorch the vegetation, or the student who wants a quiet nook free from distraction will go to Ward's and lounge on the Breakwater, and commune with the wild waves.\(^3\)

Residential development continued apace at Hanlan's and Centre.

Cottage development seemed to be universally greeted with enthusiasm and was regarded as a natural part of a summer resort area, in no way

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\(^1\) Toronto Board of Education, *Minutes*, 1888, App. p. 219. In 1905 a fire destroyed the school, but it was soon replaced by a room which is still in use today and in 1923 a one-room extension was added.

\(^2\) "Toronto's Island Suburbs," *op. cit.*

detrimental to the development of Island Park as the playground of the people. In fact, one commentator felt that the area set aside for cottages could be vastly increased.

Meanwhile, in order to serve the great numbers of visitors and increasing numbers of residents, the Toronto Ferry Company was formed in 1890. It had a fleet of harbour vessels ranging in size from the little Arlington which carried 100 passengers and the popular Luella which carried 122 passengers all the way up to the sister ships Mayflower and Primrose which carried 900 passengers apiece. These two-decked, double-bowed paddle-steamers were "justly prized by their owners, [and] greatly appreciated by the general public", for "their appointments [were] as nearly as it is possible for them to be perfection".

Not everyone, however, was satisfied with the ferry service and a proposal was made to extend a street car track across a swing bridge over the western gap. The scheme was opposed by various interests and never carried out. The great bridge-tunnel-ferry controversy that raged through the late 1940's, 1950's and 1960's obviously has a long history.

d. Toronto Island: 1900-1930:

The Island's popularity continued. The magnificent side-wheelers Blue Bell and Trillium were launched in 1906 and 1910 and on a

1 Ibid, p. 20.

2 "Toronto Island Is A Park," Globe, May 1, 1897, pp. 1,2.


4 "Toronto Island As A Park," op. cit.; for a similar, somewhat later proposal, see "Street Car Line Across Island," Mail and Empire, September 10, 1901.
busy day it was not unusual for 60,000 people to visit the Island.\(^1\)

The pre-war period was really the heyday of the Hanlan's Point Amuse-
ment area. (See Illustration 1.) Crowds used to pour over to view
baseball games and to enjoy the variety of amusements:

Two ball games were played every Saturday and there were two roller-
coasters, an old windmill and quayside walk. That bandman, John
Philip Sousa, used to come every summer with big bands.

There were also an act where horses did a high dive into the har-
bour. They did it for the King and Queen before the First World
War. There were many more attractions, most of them used to come
up here from Coney Island.\(^2\)

Fires, unfortunately, took their toll at Hanlan's Point and
elsewhere on the Island. In 1903, for example, a fire at the Point
causd over $20,000 damage. Hanlan's Hotel escaped unharmed from this
fire, only to be completely destroyed in the great fire of August 1909
which destroyed everything except Durnan's Boathouse and the merry-go-
round.

The early twentieth century was also the heyday of the "society
era" at fashionable Centre Island. (See Illustrations 8, 9, 14.)

in 1968, journalist Betty Lee recreated the scene:

The glittering society era of the Toronto Islands began shortly
before the First World War, intensified during the Twenties, then
fizzled out in the Thirties when the Beautiful People discovered
motor cars and Muskoka. Even now, those years are liberally padded
with nostalgia and legend.

The Gooderhams, the Masseys, the Pettways built impressive season-
al hideaways in Lake Shore Avenue facing the open waters of Lake

\(^1\) Toronto Island School Students, op. cit., p. 38 and Alan Howard,
curator of the Marine Museum and former Island resident. Now 20,000
30,000 is regarded as a busy day.

\(^2\) John Durnan, quoted by David Jensen, "Only Memories Left of
Ontario. Yachts berthed in the lagoon at the back door. Live-in servants. The first private swimming pools in the Toronto area. Cricket and badminton on the lawn. White pants and boaters. Tea or champagne while Mrs. Lionel Massey entertained at the piano.1

A commercial centre to serve both tourists and residents burgeoned at Centre Island along Manitou Road in the pre-War era. From only a few stores and one Hotel (Mead's) in 1903 (see Map 9), by 1918 "the Main Drag", as it became popularly known, expanded to include, among others, English's Boathouse, several hotels, Price's Casino, the City Dairy, Ginn's Store and the Clayton Meat Company. (See Illustration 13 and Map 12.) Other services such as a fire brigade and police patrol also were provided for the growing community.

Houses continued to be built so that by 1918 houses graced the Lakeshore all the way to Ward's Island, although there were still a number of vacant lots that would be filled later. (See Maps 12 and 13.)

On Ward's Island itself, the tent community was growing apace. By 1913 it was necessary to lay out streets; in 1915, fill was used to increase the size of the area and by 1918 there were over 80 tent sites marked on the map. (See Map 12.) Tent life on Ward's Island continued to be rustic but enjoyable. (See Illustration 15.) "Daddy Frank" Staneland, whose family began tenting on Ward's Island in 1899, fondly recalls those early days, describing the communal spring ritual of "putting up":

All the men would come down and help you to put up your tent and

1Betty Lee, "These Islands Are Made Of Memories," Globe Magazine, September 28, 1968, p. 6. Actually, the start of the age of glitter was probably earlier. The author herself notes that "it became The Thing for members of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club - which located on the Island in 1881 - to entertain friends at their private villas."
ILLUSTRATION 13

PICNIC GROUNDS
ISLAND PARK
TORONTO

Main Street, Centre Island, Toronto, Canada.

Aquatic Sports at the Island, Toronto, Canada.
ILLUSTRATION 14

CENTRE ISLAND HOUSES

EARLY 1900's

A PRETTY SPOT, CENTRE ISLAND
TORONTO, CANADA

An Avenue at Centre Island, Toronto.
ILLUSTRATION 15

TENTING ON WARD'S ISLAND
EARLY 1900'S

Source: James Collection, City of Toronto Archives

Source: Ontario Archives
then you'd go to the next one and help them to put, to lift the ridge poles up. They're very heavy, you see. And then we'd put the four corners - about 12, 14 feet high. They went up. And you always had a "fly" above that. You had a double tent, you see. That was for the rains.

One of the hazards associated with Island tent life was wind, especially the east wind, as "Daddy Frank" relates:

It was so bad that often your tent would be blown in on at night. The East winds used to be bad and that dampness and wind coming in, no matter how warm it was, that dampness was coming in. We had some pretty bad storms here. We had one night with 165 tents all blown down in one night! ...And you know what that meant. People had dishes land up against the tent and smashed dishes and, oh, what a mess.

Some of the hazards of Island life—lack of reliable water, lack of electricity, wrestling with tents and so on—were peculiar to the early tenting days. But some—like lack of adequate shopping facilities and the ferry service—are more general and continue to trouble Islanders to this day. Then as now all major shopping had to be done in the City. One commentator recalls trips to the City in the 1880's when there was still only one store (Clarke's) at Centre Island and "sails lined the waterfront":

Of a Saturday morning our mothers were apt to take us to St. Lawrence market, whence we pulled home a loaded express cart. The penalty for that outing was wearing shoes and stockings. We would cross the bay [to Church Street wharf] by the Jessie McEdwards captained by Andy Timon with his walrus mustache and blue anchor tattooed on the hairy back of his right hand. Or perchance we voyaged on the Arlington whose skipper was young Jim McSherry. The fare for boys was an adult ticket torn in half.

This pattern was followed for a long time.

The ferry boat service has been a constant source of pleasure and outrage throughout the history of the Island. In the early day's

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2Ibid.
at Ward's Island, the last ferry to Ward's dock left the City at 6:10, although ferries continued running to Centre Island until about 11:30. The commuter service to Ward's was a fairly personalized one. According to "Daddy Frank", on the last boat (6:10), Capt. McSherry would find out who was not yet aboard and "at six o'clock he would toot the whistle to make sure to make them hurry and you'd see them running down the street...[then] away we'd go." There were, however, no ferries on Sunday because "they thought it was sacrilegious...to have somebody working...on a Sunday." If you had guests coming over to visit, you had to paddle, row or sail them over yourself.

The origins of organized community life at the eastern end of the Island and of a number of contemporary Island traditions are to be found in this early tenting period. The Ward's Island Association (WIA) was founded in 1914. The Ward's Island Weekly, which is still being published each summer, began in 1917. Regattas, Sports Days, weekly dances at "the Shelter" were all organized. Gala Day, which is still held in early August, originated circa 1916. "Supervision", a day camp for children, was also begun then and still operates each summer. "Daddy Frank" recalls nostalgically the social whirl of this era:

[The WIA was formed] for the benefit of the Island, for sports and everything else and for entertainment and everything. We had a lot more in our days than we have now. For ten weeks in the summer-time there was something doing every night in the week.

In the early days, the WIA had no Clubhouse so Ward's Islanders used the Wiman Shelter for their dances, meetings, Sunday services and so on, until the big WIA clubhouse was built in the 1930's.

Islanders have tended to be fiercely loyal to their particular spot: Hanlan's Pointers tended to believe that Hanlan's Point was the ideal spot; Centre Islanders felt the same about Centre Island, and so
on. "Daddy Frank", for his part, contrasts the life along the Lakeshore unfavorably with his beloved Ward's Island community. He once considered buying a house along the Lakeshore, but decided not to when a friend advised him:

He said, "Frank, it's the loneliest life you ever seen on that Lake front. Nobody ever wants to come and see you. Not like Ward's, dropping in all the same. Over there, not a soul dropping in to see you."

The Ward's Island tent community continued to grow through the mid-twenties. Fram Ward obtained his tent site in May, 1923, one of the last tent sites allowed. Ward's tent, like the others, was 12 feet by 24 feet. It was pitched on a wooden platform, with a verandah at the front and a cook/storage shed at the back. Ward's Island houses still reflect their tent origins, with their close spacing and the dimensions and lay-out of their interior space. He describes his tent:

This is where the tent was, right here [now the living room]. We used the shed to put in a cookstove. You see, when you're fiddling around with canvas, you're a little leery about sparks and that's why you had a wooden shed – a wooden shack, we called them. And so we went ahead and took the privilege in our own hands and built this. Old Dodd was over more than once, at my dad, hollering, "You can't put a big verandah like that on there, Frank." Of course, my dad knew him all his life and he said, "Run away, Walter. Run away. Jesus, after all, ain't we the Wards?"

It is evident from various comments from former tenters that the City exercised fairly strict control over the tent community. There were regulations about all manner of things: the location of tent sites, the size of the tents, the size of the kitchen area, even the colour of paint (green) and the hour when radios had to be turned off. And City employees enforced the regulations. Walter Dodd, Fram Ward notes, "ran the place with an iron hand". It is also evident, however,
that Islanders displayed a certain ingenuity and pleasure in circumventing these regulations where possible.¹

The other main change at the eastern end of the Island was the creation of Sunfish Island (now known as Algonquin Island), some time between 1907 and 1909.² Fram Ward, who was a small boy at the time, remembers this event and remembers that the name "Sunfish" derived not from marine life in the Lagoon, but from an airplane which was kept for a short time in a hangar on that island. The name of Billy Deane's strange-looking bi-plane (a Curtis Flying Boat) was the "Sunfish" and Island children soon named the island Sunfish.³ Sunfish Island remained uninhabited, except for summer YMCA camps, during the 1930's, until 1937–1938 when houses from Hanlan's were moved as the Island airport was built.⁴ During this earlier period, there was no bridge connecting it to Ward's Island, but Ward's children used to swim across the Lagoon to play in the wilds of Sunfish.

The winter community in the early part of the century remained quite small, around 100.⁵ It is no wonder it was small—there was no hydro, no running water, no stores, and very infrequent ferry service. Alan Howard recalls that his mother was far from happy at the thought of moving to "this backwoods community all winter" in 1918. But

¹See "Daddy Frank's" comments on p. 138.

²Island School Students, op. cit., p. 40. Sunfish Island is marked on the Coad map of 1910. (See Map 10.)

³"Deane's Hangar" is marked on the 1918 map. (See Map 2.)

⁴The houses shown in Illustration 12 were the ones affected by the Airport and moved to Algonquin.

⁵Mr. Alan Howard places the winter population of 1920 at about 110.
inducements were offered by the City—a large, 13 room house located next to his father's place of work (the filtration plant) and a special water line from the plant to the house.\footnote{This was a major convenience. Everyone else had to obtain drinking water by filling a big galvanized iron milk can and dragging it home by sleigh. Other bathing and washing water was obtained from wells or from holes cut in the Lake. Mr. Howard's father was a well-known bacteriologist, Dr. Norman Howard, whom the City was eager to employ.} The only connection with the City, until freeze-up, was one ice-breaking steel tug, the G.R. Geary that sailed from the foot of John Street three times a day—8 a.m., 9 a.m. and 4:10 p.m. When the Bay froze, however, the barrier was turned into a link and people could walk, ice-boat, even drive back and forth across the ice. Howard warmly remembers his years, during the 1920's, in the Island's one-room school house. He recalls in one year (1923)\footnote{See Appendix H. "Toronto Island School Attendance Statistics"} there were 16 pupils divided among nine grades. There were no washrooms in the school house and the building was heated by two stoves stoked by the senior boys. The students came from all over the Island since winter residents were scattered over the Island, although there were fewer at Ward's Island than elsewhere.

The Toronto Islands have been the object of many plans. One of the earliest was produced by the newly formed Harbour Commission in 1912. It envisaged the Island as a place for summer housing and as a recreational resource, with a scenic boulevard to run from Bathurst Street, along the length of the Island over to Cherry Street. There were to be two movable bridges, one over the Western Gap and the other over the Eastern Gap. Although the Dominion Government approved the general scheme for the Harbour in 1913 and agreed, among other things,
to build the two bridges, this plan had little effect on later Island development. (See Map 14.)

In the 1920's, the Toronto Island was still fashionable and still popular, but changes were on the way. More and more people began to buy motor cars and to travel north to newly fashionable resort areas in Muskoka. Owners of large Island residences began to sell their houses to people who divided them up into small apartments or rooming houses.

Changes were in store for Hanlan's Point as well. People continued to flock to Hanlan's during the early part of the decade to visit the amusement park and attend the baseball games. But in 1922, the Harbour Commissioners established Sunnyside Amusement Park on the Mainland, which acted as a counter-attraction to Hanlan's.

More significant was the disbanding of the Toronto Ferry Company and the take-over of the ferry service by the Toronto Transit Commission in 1927. At the time, both the Toronto Ferry Company and most of the amusement park, including the franchise for the baseball clubs, were owned by Lol Solmon, a colourful entrepreneur of the period who had also managed the Royal Alexandra Theatre. When the City refused to allow Solmon to raise the ferry fares, he moved his various enterprises to Sunnyside park and the TTC took over the ferries (ironically raising the fares). The TTC, Mr. Howard notes, did not have Mr. Solmon's interest in operating the Hanlan's Point area and there were fewer rides each year: "Hanlan's Point declined from the day the Toronto Ferry Company ended its franchise."

1 This account is based on information provided by Mr. Alan Howard of the Marine Museum in Toronto and author Robert Thomas Allen.
Source: City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, Map 4 (incorrectly dated as 1911).
e. Toronto Island: 1930-1950:

From now on, social and political history became enmeshed. Although the major social and physical developments are emphasized here, political developments are mentioned where appropriate.

The Island in the 1930's continued to be very popular. Alan Howard estimates that the Island summer population reached its zenith of about 8,000 (estimates range as high as 12,000) in the late 1920's or early 1930's and held that level through until about the mid-1940's. But the Island witnessed a number of major changes in this decade: a changing social mixture on Centre, the development of cottages on Ward's, the building of the airport which destroyed part of Hanlan's Amusement Park and led to the development of Algonquin Island and the growth of the winter community.

Although Hanlan's Point Amusement Park probably attracted fewer visitors after the mid-twenties it remained popular and important right up to its final demise in the late 1950's at the hands of the Metro Parks Department. (See Maps 15 and 16.)

Centre Island was changing. The "Main Drag" was in full swing (see Map 17) and many young people rented rooms or apartments nearby to enjoy the fun:

The summer colony is a strange mixture. Only a few old families like the Gooderhams still go back year after year to their big houses on the Lakeshore. About three-quarters of the residents are business people and most of them seem to be young. Since rents at the Island are high, you'd find them living as many as three, four and five to a room in the old-fashioned wooden houses which line the Lakeshore and the streets running off it. "You're only in your room to sleep", the landlady invariably says to a prospective customer....This is almost true—at Centre anyway. Those who can afford to, get bicycles, and after office hours the streets are alive with them. For all its informality, Island life follows a certain routine. At five o'clock, even when the Lake is cold, the
HANLAN'S POINT AMUSEMENT PARK, 1951
MAP 17

MANITOU ROAD - "The Main Drag"
1931 and 1951

From Underwriters' Survey Bureau Ltd., Insurance Plan of the City of Toronto, January 1931, Plate 179. University of Western Ontario.
beaches become crowded. As soon as the crowd thins out there, the restaurants fill up. From then until midnight the Island hums with activity. Some people play tennis or badminton, others bowl or bicycle. There is always a steady stream eddying up and down the Main Drag—between the Manitou Bridge and the Lakeshore. Here Islanders eat and drink and gossip and sit around under the trees in front of phonographs dropping nickles in the slot to hear their favourite dance pieces.\footnote{Telegram, August 19, 1938.}

Ward's Island was changing as well. For years, Ward's Island tenters had been trying to get permission from the City to build houses. When their requests were refused, they found ways to build what were in effect houses disguised as tents. "Daddy Frank" Stanelands recalls:

A lot of us fooled them. We put the canvas outside and had wood inside with windows and they thought we had only canvas, and we had wood inside at each end. In the wintertime we'd take it down.

Then, in the early 1930's, the City granted permission for the first house and in a few years many tenters had built summer cottages and signed leases with the City. (See Map 18, which compares the "tents and shacks" of 1931 with the wooden cottages of 1938.)

In 1937, the City decided to build the Toronto Island airport at the western end of the Island, partly on land cleared of buildings and partly on land to be created. As a result, the baseball stadium and part of the amusement park were to be demolished, the Regatta Course was to be filled in and fifty-four houses on West Island Drive along the Western Sand Bar had to be either demolished or moved. West Island Drive residents acquiesced in the decision and turned their energies toward finding acceptable new sites for those houses which could be moved. By October, the City decided to develop Sunfish as a summer residential community with 103 50' x 150' lots.\footnote{"Two Schemes Are Approved For Islands," Globe and Mail, October 5, 1937.} Ultimately, about 40
houses from Hanlan's Point were floated down to Sunfish Island which was renamed Algonquin Island. Jimmy Jones, who was a boy at the time, remembers watching this extraordinary process in fascination:

They moved the houses on rollers. Horses would walk in a circle and a cable was on the house and the house was on rollers, so that the horses would walk on this turnstile. And then they would stop and they would move the horses and the turnstile way ahead and rearrange the wires on another house and start again and as a roller would drop out the back end, they would move it around to the front end, and they kept it going this way. They put them on barges and floated them down the first part of the Lagoon, put them in the park and they sat there. And then they put them in another barge on the other side of the Lagoon, which is Blockhouse Bay, and took them down here to Algonquin.

These Hanlan's Point houses were placed in the most desirable perimeter lots and formed the start of what grew to be the Algonquin community. (See Map 19.) But the growth of this community was not as rapid as the City had hoped. It is no wonder, for Algonquin at that time was "sand, just sand", as one reporter described it.¹ The City signed 21 year non-compensation leases with Algonquin residents and gave them three years' free ground rent to compensate them for having been forced to leave Hanlan's Point.

Until the end of the 1930's, the winter community grew rather slowly. In 1933, there was a colony of about a hundred families, or about 300 people, living almost exclusively on Hanlan's and at Centre. The main drawbacks to winter life were the infrequent boat service, the lack of a winter water line, the lack of entertainment for young people and the lack of adequate fire protection. The issue of

¹"Algonquin Island To Cost $75,000, Few Seek Land, Few Desirable Lots Available at Algonquin," Globe and Mail, July 19, 1938, p. 5 and "City Officials Disappointed by Response," Globe and Mail, July 19,1938, p. 5. By August 1938, only 38 houses were located on Algonquin Island. (See Map 19.) By 1951, however, Algonquin Island was virtually completely developed. (See Map 20.)
From Underwriters' Survey Bureau Ltd., Insurance Plan of the City of Toronto, vol. 3
1931 revised to August 1938

Source: University of Western Ontario
MAP 20

ALGONQUIN ISLAND, 1951


Source: University of Western Ontario
inadequate fire protection became acute in 1939 after the Island Aquatic Yacht Club burned to the ground. But City politicians, who regarded the Island as a summer resort rather than a year-round community, were reluctant to spend money on improving fire, or other, services, which had been requested by winter residents.  

During the war years, the Island continued to be popular; both summer (when there was gas rationing and leaving the City was difficult) and winter (when the housing shortage increased, reaching "crisis" proportions in the immediate post-war years).

During the summer, the ferries regularly carried well over a million people to the Island each year. (See Appendix F, "Ferry Statistics".) On a hot, popular day, one reporter noted in 1944, the congestion aboard the Bluebell and the Trillium was "something to frighten a sardine". The pleasures of the "Main Drag" were a magnet for Islanders as well as City dwellers. Jimmy Jones, who grew up on Hanlan's Point, recalls:

Centre Island was the playground and you'd go there to whoop it up. Whatever you wanted to do, you went to Centre Island to do it. You didn't do it in your own backyard.

During the 1940's, the Island was inundated twice by abnormally high waters—in 1943, when "park benches, normally high and dry, [could] now be reached quite easily—by canoe" and in 1947, when the Main Drag

1 "Firefighting Service on Island Not Adequate Alderman Phillips Says," Globe and Mail, January 20, 1939. By 1946, when the post-war housing crisis was becoming acute, City politicians reacted differently and moved swiftly to improve fire services in order to enable and encourage people to winter on the Island.

2 "30,000 Crowd Ferries In Flight From Heat," Globe and Mail, August 14, 1944.

3 "Centre Island Appears As Water Babies' Haven," Globe and Mail, June 16, 1943.
began to look more like a canal than a main street. 1 (See Illustration 16.) Floods had distinct political aspects, but, in contrast to 1952 and 1973, in the 1940's, it was the Islanders, not the politicians, who were on the attack, claiming that the City had been negligent in not providing adequate protection. 2

The major development of the 1940's was the growth of the winter community. The size of this community grew from about 300 at the beginning of the decade to about 1,800 at the end. 3 A contemporary observer described the winter community as a "quiet winter Utopia" where some 500 people have "rediscovered the satisfaction of small-town life" and extolled the friendly atmosphere:

Another young woman, moved over first this winter because of the housing shortage, vows she is going to stay there. "I've made more friends since I've been over here than I did in all my life in Toronto", she says. She has a small, snug upstairs apartment heated by a Quebec heater and double windows that look straight out over the angry water. 4

It was this housing shortage that sent many people over to the Island...

1"Worst Flood In Twenty Years Scourges Toronto Islands - Lawns, Walks Imundated," Telegram, June 9, 1947.

2"Island Folk Up in Arms - Charge City With Neglect in Flood Protection Work," Telegram, June 14, 1947. "Contrast this with the situation in 1952 when Mayor Lamport, eager to be rid of Island residents, created a false health scare and threatened to clear the Island of winter residents. (See pp. 145.)"

3Newspaper estimates are erratic. But "Hopping Mad Islanders May Battle With Votes," Star, January 7, 1948 estimated only 300 people lived on the Island during the winter in 1942 and 1,800 in 1948. Estimates ranged as high as 3,000 (Arthur Cole, "Tugs Float Zero, Crash Ice On Daily Runs," Globe and Mail, January 10, 1947), but most estimates fall around 1,500-1,800. Both the ferry statistics (Appendix F) and School Enrolment figures (Appendix H) indicate that the population began to increase sharply after the War. (See also Appendix G, "Problems in Estimating Island Population").

4"Island Folk Find Rural Quiet At City's Front Door - Make Their Own Amusements," Telegram, February 17, 1945. (See also Illustration 17.)
Manitou Road In Winter, Centre Island
Photograph by Mrs. Butler
Source: Toronto Island Archives
WRECKING CREW ON THE MAIN DRAG.

POLICE STATION AT LEFT.
in search of housing, and not all were as lucky as this young woman. A number of families decided to stay in houses which had not been winterized and where even the water had been turned off, but "they [had] nowhere else to go." 1

Inadequate winter transportation (which was provided by three smub-nosed tugs) was the major drawback to winter life in the 1940's and on into the 1950's. For a journalist, a tug trip might be a very colourful adventure, 2 but for those relying on it for daily transportation, the infrequent, often irregular, over-crowded service, was a real problem:

Women, particularly, object to the winter service, as they say it makes them feel cut-off. Men resent having to catch a ferry that gets them to work half-an hour or an hour early, and forces them to rush out of the office in the evening lest they be marooned in town until well after dinner. 3

But, in spite of all the problems, most Islanders, it was reported, would never consider moving to the City:

"I don't mind working there" [in the City], said one pretty miss. "But", her eyes widened, "I'd never want to live there." All Islanders are funny that way. 4

The Island became an increasingly political issue and every aspect of Island life, such as summer and winter transportation, high water and flooding, the need for a better seawall and so on, had political aspects. Over the next few years, the Islanders, who increasingly regarded the Island as "home" and as a "permanent community",

1 David Crawley, "Vacant Houses," Globe and Mail, October 3, 1946.
2 Arthur Cole, op. cit.
3 David Crawley, op. cit.
4 "'Hopping Mad' Islanders May Battle With Votes," op. cit.
became more vociferous and more demanding and the politicians, who began to revert to regarding the Island as a "summer resort community", became less sympathetic.

From 1947 until Metro took over the Island in 1956, a number of plans and schemes for the future of the Island were issued by a variety of groups. In 1947, the City Planning Board presented "for discussion" a proposal, which included the substitution of permanent residences (including apartment buildings) for the existing frame cottages, the development of additional parkland, the construction of a highway (including a tunnel under the Western Gap) and provision of parking for about 5,000 cars. (See Map 21.) In 1949, the Islanders, now represented by the Inter-Island Council, issued a counter-plan, which in essence supported the status quo—i.e., maintaining the existing residential areas, keeping the Island free from cars, and developing the wilder parts as parkland. (See Map 22.)

Planning for the Island intensified in the early 1950's. In 1951, the Toronto Planning Board and Toronto Harbour Commissioners issued a joint plan, which was similar to the earlier Planning Board proposal of 1947. (See Map 23.) Mayor Lamport entered the lists with his 1953 plan for warehousing and additional dock facilities, as well as a roadway, parkland and cottages. (See Map 24.) The Inter-Island Council, supported by large delegations of Island residents, responded to both of these plans with another plan which reflected their earlier one. Finally, after Metropolitan Toronto was created in 1953, Metro Chairman Fred Gardiner, eager to build up the power of the new level of government, became interested in the Island, declaring that it was a Metro problem and announcing that if Metro took it over, it would be
Source: City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, September 1973
Map 6 (incorrectly dated as 1952).
devoted to "parks purposes only". City politicians, for a variety of reasons (including the desire to be rid of the ferry deficits, and of the general nuisances involved in operating the Island and dealing with Islanders) voted on February 22, 1954 to ask Metro Toronto to assume the Island for parks purposes only and, on March 22, 1955, Metro Council voted to accept it. Metro assumed control over the Island on January 1, 1956. (See Map 25.)

f. Toronto Island: 1950-1970:

The history of the Island during the 1950's may be divided into the pre-Metro and post-Metro periods. In the pre-Metro period, the year-round community continued to grow and the two major issues were high-water and flooding (1951 and 1952) and winter transportation (1954-1955).

The winter community continued to grow through 1954. Then, after Metro made its decision to take over the Island and after the first demolitions took place, the population dropped precipitously. Perhaps the most reliable guide to the rise and fall of the population is the Island School, which grew steadily until it reached a peak in September 1954 of 587 pupils (Appendix H) and thereafter declined, slowly at first when one room was closed in 1955 and then rapidly when 10 of 17 rooms were closed in 1956. The pattern is clear: the community grew until mid-decade and shrank rapidly afterwards.

In the early 1950's, nature took a hand in the political drama

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2 Alden Baker, "Playground is $4,000,000 Gamble," Globe and Mail, May 21, 1956.
being played out on the Island. There were storms and abnormally high
water in both 1951 and 1952, when the level surpassed the previous
high of 1947. In February 1952, faced with a new record high for the
time of year, Islanders threatened a tax strike unless the City built
up the seawall. In response, Mayor Lamport raised the spectre of a
health hazard on the Island and proposed evacuation of winter resi-
dents. The more cynical among the Islanders wondered if the Mayor was
less concerned with their welfare than with forcing them off the
Island.¹ This view was given support when the Medical Officer of
Health reported that there was no health menace.²

The other main issue in the first part of the decade was winter
transportation. Even without any added problems, the service provided
was far from ideal.³ But when the TTC decided to triple the fares
(from 10¢ to 30¢), Islanders became enraged. They held meetings;⁴
they organized deputations; some even resorted to refusing to pay the
increase and once or twice to pushing TTC employees around.⁵ Finally,
on January 7, 1955, the Islanders staged what came to be known as the

¹"Trying To Scuttle Island, Residents Will Fight Ban," Telegram,
March 20, 1952. The water set a new record later this year and was a
hazard to residents, business people and visitors alike. Ultimately,
the City did build up the seawall, which proved to be effective. And,
by 1953, the Lake level returned to normal.

²"No Menace To Health MOH Assures Island," Telegram, March 25,
1952.

³Ian M. Ball "Unhappy Islanders Jam Tugboats in Winter," Globe
and Mail, January 5, 1955, p. 5.

⁴"Islanders Jam Session to Fight Ferry Rates," Globe and Mail,
December 15, 1954; "Plan Joint Meeting on Island Fares," Globe and Mail,
December 30, 1954.

⁵"Can't Expect Fares -Islanders Incensed By TTC Ferry Delay,"
Star, January 7, 1955."
"Great Tugboat Mutiny", which made front page headlines. On the fateful morning of January 7, one tug broke down, causing the other boats to run behind schedule. The early morning commuter crowd waiting for a boat at Hanlan's grew to over a hundred as several fully-loaded boats passed by without stopping. When the H.J. Dixon finally docked at Hanlan's, a large crowd of angry Islanders swarmed aboard; the Captain refused to set sail in an over-loaded boat; Islanders refused to budge; and the Harbour Police were called to try to straighten things out. Eventually other boats came to the rescue and Islanders were carried to the City, where many rushed through the turnstile without paying. In response, the TTC—most notably TTC Vice Chairman and former Mayor Allan Lamport—threatened to halt the service. The City later reprimanded the TTC for the threats and feverish negotiations were held between Islanders and City officials over how to resolve Islanders' complaints. Meanwhile, on the Island, the effects of both the fare increase and the pending Metro take-over were being felt. A number of people had already moved or were thinking of moving; business was down; and much of the Islanders' resentment was directed at Lamport: there was a general feeling that raising the fares was part of a plot to get them off the Island. Eventually, the 10¢ fare was restored and peace returned, briefly, to the Island.

2"Can't Expect Fares," op. cit.
1955, the year that Metro Council finally voted to assume Toronto Island for parks purposes, marked the turning point for the Island. Precisely what the change in control meant was not entirely clear initially. There was no agreed-upon plan for park development and no final decision had been made about whether residents would be allowed to continue on the Island. But the effects of the Metro decision and the continued uncertainty surrounding it, were felt immediately. The Main Drag, "once as colourful and busy as any resort centre in Muskoka" was closing up; the "aristocratic Pierson Hotel" was almost empty; the Casino, which once attracted crowds of dancers to swing to name bands, was a bowling alley, closed in summer; an open air dance floor was a "neglected patch of cement"; and the Way-side Inn, "looking like a colonial mansion" was also empty—its back-rooms "a graveyard for rusty bicycles" which used to be rented to visitors. And even before Metro officially took over the Island on January 1, 1956, demolitions began. In September 1955, Metro not only rejected the proposal that short-term (monthly) leases be granted to people whose leases expired between then and 1956, but also decided that any buildings acquired should be demolished.

Early in 1956, the newly-appointed Parks Commissioner Tommy

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2 David Lancashire, "Fares, Metro Blamed for Decline of Island," Globe and Mail, July 23, 1955. All quotes about the Main Drag are from this article.

Thompson, produced his first, of many, plans for the Island.\footnote{The Parks Department was created in the spring of 1955 and Thomas Thompson was hired in the summer of that year. Gordon Bleasdale, "Park, Family Resort to Cost $14,500,000" - Toronto Island Plan," \textit{Star}, February 10, 1956 describes the plan.} When the Federal government refused to finance the proposed tunnel,\footnote{Len Schrag, "Tunnelophobia-Metropolitan Toronto," \textit{Globe and Mail}, May 10, 1956 and Peter Simpson, "No Tunnel Aid From Ottawa-Winters," \textit{Telegram}, March 25, 1956.} Metro cut the plan drastically (from $14 million to about $4 million) to include purchasing property and raising the level of Centre Island.\footnote{Metro Shelves Plans For Tunnel to Islands," \textit{Globe and Mail}, April 25, 1956; "Tunnel Must Wait; Island Park Plan Cut to $4,080,000," \textit{Globe and Mail}, May 5, 1956; and Alden Baker, "Playground Is $4,000,000 Gamble," \textit{op. cit.}.} In May, the first demolition permits were issued, for houses on Lakeshore, Hiawatha and St. Andrews Avenues.\footnote{"Will Demolish Houses," \textit{Globe and Mail}, May 19, 1956.} But no official opposition to Metro was expressed by Islanders at this point. By January 1957, 125 buildings purchased by Metro had been demolished, including such Island landmarks as the old Casino, the Gooderham house, the carousel on Hanlan's Point and the Wiman Lodge on Ward's Island. "Few blocks had not lost at least one building";\footnote{Colin McCullough, "Island Houses Buried As Metro Bulldozers Make Over Play Areas," \textit{Globe and Mail}, January 10, 1957.} while other blocks had almost completely vanished: "The Island, as it is known by Torontonians who proudly call themselves Islanders, is vanishing quickly."\footnote{"Begin Work to Raise Centre Island Level," \textit{Globe and Mail}, May 11, 1957.} As demolitions continued, some Islanders became somewhat bewildered by the whole process; and others sounded what was to be a familiar theme...
through the 1960's—complaints about low compensation. But, whether bewildered, dissatisfied or angry, the Islanders accepted the clearing of the houses to make way for the Metro park as a fait accompli. They raised virtually no concerted, group opposition. And the demolitions proceeded. (See Illustration 18.)

Although the demolitions occurred in spots all over the Island, Centre took the brunt of the attack. (See Illustrations 19 and 20.)

By early January 1959, it was "practically dead" and only forty families were left. The closest Islanders came to opposing Metro was at this point, when they asked Metro to postpone acquiring these forty remaining houses until after the end of the school year in June.

Metro agreed to let most of them stay on for the few extra months, but then those houses were demolished as well. By the end of the decade, over a third of the houses had been demolished, the population had dropped drastically, and even the winter tug boat service which had been progressively dwindling since December 1955, was temporarily eliminated.

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3 "Islanders Ask Delay to June," Globe and Mail, January 3, 1959.
4 "Defer Island Evictions," Telegram, March 24, 1959, and Waeson, op. cit.
5 Westall, "The Great Tugboat Mutiny," op. cit. The tug boat service was eliminated on December 13, 1959 and Islanders then had to travel by "cable-fed barge" from the Airport over the Western Gap. This complex and difficult service was described by Stanley Westall, "Ward's Voyage An Adventure," Globe and Mail, December 23, 1959. The cable service proved to be inadequate and the tug service was restored in January 1960.
During the 1960's, planning and developing the park continued, but opposition stiffened. This opposition was accompanied by complex political manoeuvring which was orchestrated primarily by the Islanders' politically shrewd alderman, David Rotenberg, who was first elected in 1962. It was reflected in the slowed pace of demolitions. Between 1955 and 1959, 262 properties were acquired and demolished, but between 1960 and 1966 only 70 more were demolished and between 1967 and 1969 another 53 fell. (See Appendix I, "Demolition of Island Properties"). The final 262 homes on Ward's and Algonquin, of course, were not acquired at all.

The pace may have slowed, but, as one political battle after another was lost, the bulldozers continued to sweep eastward along Lakeshore Avenue until they were finally halted at Lenore Avenue by the Islanders' major political victory of the decade. On May 31, 1967, Islanders were able to save the 262 homes that remained on Ward's and Algonquin Islands. After a seven hour, emotional debate, attended by several hundred anxious but polite Islanders, Metro Council granted these holders of non-compensation leases an extension until August 31, 1970. This was the first of several extensions which prolonged the life of this part of the community through the 1970's. It was, however, only a partial victory, since Metro Council, at the same time, refused to extend the life of the last of the big Lakeshore houses. In October 1967, Alderman Rotenberg was able to gain a temporary reprieve.

1 Various elaborate plans were proposed, but not passed. The Avenue of the Islands—a formal garden on the site of the old Main Drag—various amusements, and large expanses of picnic areas were created.

2 This was one of many long, emotional debates held during the 1960's and attended by large numbers of Island residents.
for some of these houses until 1968, but this was the last reprieve granted to these houses. Not all the Lakeshore residents left quietly or on time. People remained in eleven of the houses when the August 31, 1968 deadline passed. By this time, it should be noted, relations between the residents and Metro officials were extremely bitter. The battles of the 1960's between Islanders and politicians and Metro officials have left a legacy of bitterness that provides the context for more recent political events.

By the end of the decade, only the houses that still remain on Ward's and Algonquin Islands were left standing. (See Map 2.) All others which had once stretched from Hanlan's Point through Centre Island, along the western part of Ward's Island up to Lenore Avenue were only a memory. But they were a particularly vivid memory to those who knew them and to those who saw them demolished. Some former residents have never returned to the spot where their houses used to stand. The experience would be too painful. But, as indicated in the first chapter, the houses live on in their memories. (See Alan Howard, p.22.) Other people who still live on the Island from time to time pass the place where they used to live and powerful memories may be evoked. (See quotations, pp. 23-24.) Actually watching houses being demolished was a very vivid, even searing, experience. (See Illustration 21.) Ruth Pufft, who lives on Algonquin Island, recalls seeing

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Island houses being demolished:

I'll never forget the sound. It [the wrecker] seemed like something prehistoric, you know, like a big animal—that you see in those science fiction movies—that go into a city and just wreck everything. I'll never forget it. It's just one of those things that's like a nightmare... It was just as if it was going right through me. It had big teeth on it and it was jointed like an elbow and wrist and it could reach out, with these claws, and it would just go into a roof and CRASH. It's an awful crashy, crashing, crunching sound. All the wood splintering and if it came down on the way and ripped out glass, there'd be all the panes of storm windows and windows all crashing. And I'd see all this DESTRUCTION. Wanton Destruction. Absolutely. Thousands of dollars. And the people who had lived there and had had to get out—they'd stand there. You could just tell that this was the end of it. They didn't know what they were going to do.

Well, as soon as they'd get them wrecked, they'd run the bulldozer over them and crush it all down and scoop it all up in a pile and they'd set fire to it. And it would never be erased from your mind, ever. Because this was the end. You just felt so terrible. There was just nothing there anymore. This was the final thing.¹

Islanders carry with them these memories as well as general knowledge of the Island's unique history.

iii. Sense of History - Defense of Place:

Islanders' strong sense of history has clearly had an impact on the nature of their defense of place. And defense of place, in turn, has had a marked impact on their sense of history.

a. Impact of Islanders' Sense of History On Their Defense of Place:

Islanders' and their political supporters, especially since about 1973, have argued that Metro should not destroy a well-established,

¹Commentary for TIRA slide show, Public Meeting, St. Lawrence Centre, March 20, 1974. See also Peter Cridland's description of the deep impression this destruction made on his and other Island Children. (See Sense of Change, p. 385.)
The historic preservation argument is closely related to the general neighborhood or community preservation arguments, which came into prominence after the December 1972 municipal election when David Crombie and a large number of City (and a few Borough) politicians were elected on neighborhood preservation platforms.

TIRA was formed in 1969, when the last of the Lakeshore houses had disappeared, as a political organization to defend the remaining community with its 250+ houses and 700+ residents.


The figure of 150 years perhaps creates an exaggerated image of the historical nature of the community since there were only scattered fishermen's huts on the Island in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, not a "community" in the usual sense of the word.
group of Island women, again dressed in period costume, presented City Council with a large, home-made birthday cake from the Island community and took the opportunity to emphasize (in a newsworthy fashion) their own sense of history. Spokesperson Maureen Smith said:

The Island Community has been under siege for many years and the islanders have a fine sense of history. Two weeks ago we celebrated our 150th anniversary and today we congratulate Toronto on its 140th birthday.\(^1\)

A March 20 public meeting at the St. Lawrence Centre was entitled "Death At 150 Years?" TIRA representative Bill Metcalfe emphasized Islanders' strong sense of community and sense of history:

We are bitter because the decision to destroy our homes is absolutely senseless and totally unnecessary. Our community has roots that go back before Confederation, roots that go back long before there were such things as suburbs. Perhaps that's why we are particularly bitter with Metro politicians from the suburbs, because they are the ones most anxious to pull out the last of our roots.

Much of the publicity sent out during the Campaign emphasized the historical nature of the community. Advertisements proclaimed:

``Help!! They're Killing Our Community``

On August 31, 1974, if "they" have their way, the last families will have to leave the Toronto Islands. A community which began before Confederation will be dead....

"No City that aspires to greatness can afford to trample on its past on its way to the future", wrote Toronto Star in an editorial last year. The Toronto Island homes are part of this city's past. And we don't want to get trampled on.\(^2\)

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\(^2\) A handsome poster with a sepia photograph of the old Ward's Hotel which had been demolished in the 1960's, and this quote from the Star beneath it, was also produced. The poster was doubly ironic since the Star had been in favour of destroying the Hotel as well as the homes on the Island. (See Illustration 22.)
Keep the Toronto Island Community

No city that aspires to greatness can afford to trample its past on the way to the future. A community's historic buildings—baroque, beautiful, follies of one kind or another—are the grace notes that provide continuity with the past as well as offering the necessary contrast with towers of steel and glass all around.

The *Save Island Homes* question and answer booklet (put together as part of the Spring Campaign and distributed for several more years) responded to the question, "Is it right for people to be living in a park?" by saying:

The land on which the Island residents live has never been parkland. It would be more to the point to ask: Is it right for a government to destroy a happy well-established community in order to create a park? For that is exactly what happened. People have been living on Toronto Island since before Confederation, and their community was an accepted part of Toronto life...  

The Island Spring festival (scheduled for May but never held because of the wet weather) was also organized around an historic theme. Islanders planned to hold an historical pageant (reenacting a portage across the "Toronto Spit" by fur traders), unveil an historical plaque and construct a special pavilion "devoted to the Island Community's history and struggle for survival", which was to have large blow-ups of photographs of early life on Ward's Island (e.g., views of the tents and of people brushing their teeth while clustering around the outside water taps). And, finally, the August 31, 1974 "Island New Year" celebration (held on the day the leases were supposed to expire) was billed as an event which "in true Island tradition will usher in our 150th New Year, to celebrate our past history and Day 1 of another 150 years to come!"

After the 1974 Spring Campaign, Islanders continued to emphasize

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2. They attached a detailed "History of the Island Portage" to their Press Release about the Festival.
3. This plaque was finally dedicated in August 1974.
4. *Island Spring, Press Release*, p. 2
the historic roots of the community. For example, in 1975, the first clause of the motion presented by City Alderman Art Eggleton, which was defeated by Metro Council on April 8, 1975, read: "Whereas a residential community has been part of the Toronto Islands for nearly 150 years." In 1980, once again faced with imminent eviction by the sheriff, Islanders pasted posters all over downtown Toronto. The poster showed a three-generation Island family in front of a Ward's Island House and proclaimed July 2:

**EVICTION DAY**

The Island Community is more than 100 years old. It is home for the people shown here—Rose Wilson, her children, her grandchildren, and 750 residents.... On eviction day, come to Ward's Island and help oppose this mindless destruction.

And at a July 1, 1980 rally to demonstrate public support, which attracted over 2,000 people, Islanders set up a photographic exhibit which included pictures of early life on Ward's Island, hung a banner which declared that "History Lives Here" and sold a "Save The Toronto Island Community" poster which was based on an old photograph showing an "Island Beauty" standing in front of tents on Fourth Street in 1928.

In conclusion, Islanders' strong sense of history has had a distinct impact on their defense of place. Throughout the more recent period of their political history (from about 1973 on), Islanders have emphasized the historic nature of the homes and the community not only because they feel it is important (a reflection of their own sense of history), but also because they think that other people—politicians and members of the general public—will feel it is important and will join forces to try to preserve the historic community.
b. The Politicians' Response:

Islanders' political supporters, for their part, have been sympathetic to Islanders' sense of history and, more generally, to historic preservation arguments. In contrast to such political opponents as East York Controller Howard Chandler, who observed (in 1975), "I think there's a place for history in our society; but I also think there's a place for history to disappear", and Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, who commented (in 1975), "I don't know what they mean by 'historic'": Many of Islanders' political friends have believed that the Island community is "part of Toronto's past", as historian and former City Alderman William Kilbourn expressed it.

For example, in April 1973, Mayor David Crombie told the Metro Executive, "You just don't knock out a community that's been there since 1917." During the first Metro Council debate of the issue after the December 1972 municipal elections, in May 1973, North York Controller Barbara Greene commented, "I support wholeheartedly the retention of the Island community, because it's a valuable, a unique part of the cultural mosaic and heritage of Toronto. It has been a part of my environment and a part of the environment of my parents and grandparents for many, many generations." At Metro Parks and Recreation Committee in November 1973, Alderman Elizabeth Eayrs suggested, "The Islands were inhabited and have been inhabited always, as far as the City of Toronto [which was created in 1834] is concerned; so that what we [Metro] are doing now is removing—or about to remove if this motion carries—the last remaining small number of residential uses on the

Toronto Islands." And, at the Metro Council debate on December 11, 1973, she commented sadly, "Well, I think it's going to be very lonely for the Islands out there. For the first time in perhaps 150 years, next winter the Islands will be sitting there without a single soul living on them." At the same debate, Mayor Crombie, in an emotional speech, expressed similar sentiments, "We can produce land there if we need more parkland. We've been producing land there through the Harbour Commission since 1912. We can't produce another community that's been there for 90 years.... Obviously, I think the Island should be preserved, the Island community. It has adorned this City and this Metropolitan area for a long, long time."

c. Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of History:

Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has sharpened and expanded their sense of history. David Amer, for example, one of the founders of the now defunct Goose and Duck newspaper, emphasizes that one of the reasons that the Goose and Duck was founded in 1971 was to make Islanders aware of their history, their neighbours, their environment and so on, so that they would fight to preserve the Island as they knew it. The editors, therefore, published old pictures of earlier Island life and interviews with old Islanders who remembered the tenting days or life on Centre Island in the pre-Metro era (as well as pictures of contemporary life and advice on how to cope with various Island problems, etc.). He attributes his own strong interest in Island history directly to being involved with the Goose and Duck.

Simply doing research for the various publications and political events directly associated with the defense of the Island has forced a number of Islanders to look into the Island's history more deeply than
they would have under other circumstances. They have looked into the portage route and the church's history in order to gain historical plaques; found old photographs for the proposed "Bulldozersama" (1974 Spring Festival) and other political booths at various events; and dug up facts and photographs for political booklets and posters (like the Ward's Island Hotel poster of 1974). The fruits of this research have been spread across the Island as well as the Mainland.

Fear of losing the Island as they know it has also undoubtedly sparked Islanders' interest in documenting their history "before it does disappear", as Jenny DeTolly remarked. The Island Archives was established in the spring of 1974 precisely for this reason. Faced with the imminent destruction of the last residential area and the dispersal of the last residents (many of whom had known earlier eras and had large collections of photographs and memorabilia), a group of Islanders decided to tap this resource and to gather as much information as possible before it was too late. This group, after gathering the material, has held exhibitions both on the Island and on the Mainland.

Finally, actually seeing much of the Island's physical fabric fall victim to bulldozers has also undoubtedly sharpened Islanders' sense of history, as Mary Madrick's statement in the Introduction indicated.

In conclusion, although Islanders may well have had a strong sense of history in earlier years, certainly in more recent years, when they have mounted a series of defenses of place in response to severe outside threats, their sense of history and their defense of place have been mutually reinforcing.
CHAPTER 4

SENSE OF IDENTITY

1. Analysis of Sense of Identity:

a. Introduction:

"Who am I?" is a fundamental human question—a question people spend their entire lives consciously or unconsciously answering. What amalgam of qualities makes me unique? What enduring characteristics separate me from others? I am a woman or a man, an author or a craftsman, a romantic or a pragmatist, an introvert or an extrovert, a mother or a father, a conformist or an eccentric, and so on. A fundamental component of a sense of place is the ability of that place to contribute to a person's sense of who she or he is. I am not only a woman or an extrovert or a geographer, I am also a New Yorker, a westerner, a country boy, a Quebecker, an East Ender, a Torontonian, a Californian, a Dunlopian, and so on. Ted Relph writes:

The most meagre meaning of "sense of place" is the ability to recognize different places and different identities of a place. ... In fact there exists a whole range of possible awareness, from simple recognition for orientation, through the capacity to respond empathetically to the identities of different places, to a profound association with places as cornerstones of human existence and individual identity.¹

Perhaps, as this quote implies, sense of identity is the most

¹E. Relph, Place and Placelessness (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 63. The concept of sense of place in this thesis does not include simple recognition of places as places, but involves a deeper relationship between people and place.
fundamental component of sense of place. (See also pp. 28-29.) At the deepest level, Ralph writes, association with places (where we were born, where we grew up, where we live now, where we have had moving experiences) seems to "constitute a vital source of both individual and cultural identity and security, a point of departure from which we orient ourselves in the world". ¹ The Cree hunter of the James Bay area who says, "When you talk about the land you talk about me and my family....What part you destroy of the land, you also destroy of me";² the "piney" of the New Jersey pine barrens who says simply, "I'm just a woods boy";³ and the struggling white farmer in the southern United States who says, "To me the land I have is always there, waiting for me, and it's part of me, way inside me; it's as much me as my own arms and legs ...."⁴--all derive, largely unconsciously, a sense of who they are

¹ Ibid., p. 43.
² Quoted by Boyce Richardson, Strangers Devour the Land: The Cree Hunters of the James Bay Area versus Premier Bourassa and the James Bay Development Corporation (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975), p. 247. Richardson describes how the Cree see themselves as an intimate part of the natural order (p. 7):
Unlike any other kind of human being, the man who earns his subsistence from hunting, who survives, as the Indians say, from the land, depends on knowing where he must stand in the strangely efficient and mysterious balance that is arranged for the propagation of life.

As the book makes clear, the Cree hunter is efficient and competent in the bush and on the land. He knows where he is and who he is in this world; he is not so secure in the White man's world.

⁴ Quoted by Robert Coles, Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers--Volume II of Children of Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 411. The farmer goes on to describe how he and his wife felt when they returned to their farm (when the bank forgave their debts) to start farming again, concluding, "...at last we were back with everything that meant something to us--back to ourselves!"
and where they fit into the scheme of things from their relationships with intimately known places and landscapes.

The sense of identity derived from intimately known places may be more self-consciously felt and expressed. Both examples which follow are accounts of revisiting and reflecting upon the places where the writer grew up. Suzannah Lessard, writing about the subsequent suburbanization of Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York, describes her childhood landscape as a "more or less open domain of fields, woods, marshes and beaches", which she "noticed and savored...with the same tenderness and romantic involvement with which Huck noticed and savored the Mississippi River".¹ After describing this landscape in some detail, she goes on:

This landscape is delicate rather than heroic, touching rather than awesome, its drama in subtle variation rather than in panoramic grandeur. It is characteristic of that middle section of the East Coast from Massachusetts to Virginia, and to some extent defines the boundaries of the region for its natives. For us, the Northeast, land of pines and rockbound coasts, is something else altogether as foreign as the red clay and hillbilly accents of the Deep South. The ways in which a familiar landscape becomes a personal touchstone defy analysis. Suffice it to say that in this landscape I am happy. In a way, it defines my identity—an American identity—realigning my instincts like a shadow Constitution.²

She describes her reaction to the suburbanization of this treasured landscape—her ability to perceive it selectively, to "drive through old haunts that have been built up for almost two decades and not see what's there...to recreate the old landscape"³ and blank out the new.


²Ibid., p. 48.

³Ibid., p. 51.
This becomes necessary to her, because:

When the landscape was whole, it was, for me, something outside myself which was supportive. I drew from it a sense of identity and of being a part of something larger. When it began to break up, it became something I had to combat. I had to edit and pervert the reality in order to create an illusion - to see a landscape that exists, for the most part, inside my own imagination.

Wallace Stegner writes about an entirely different landscape, the Saskatchewan prairie, a landscape which, in contrast to Long Island, is vast, dramatic, awesome and panoramic. It is a place, he writes, where "you become acutely aware of yourself. The world is very large, the sky even larger, and you are very small. But also the world is flat, empty, nearly abstract, and in its flatness you are a challenging, upright thing, as sudden as an exclamation mark, as enigmatic as a question mark." He goes on to describe his journey back to the place he had left forty years earlier and his attempt to recapture his childhood landscape and perspective. Finally, triggered by the pungent smell of wolf willow, memories come flooding back to him. He discovers, gratefully, that "the sensuous little savage [himself as a perceiving child]...has not been rubbed away or dissolved; he is as solid a part of me as my skeleton", and recalls how his early relation with the prairie firmly established his own identity as a separate and distinct person:

And he [the sensuous savage] has a fixed and suitably arrogant relationship with his universe, a relationship geometrical and symbolic. From his center of sensation and question and memory and challenge, the circle of the world is measured, and in that respect the years of experience I have loaded upon my savage have not altered him. Lying on the hillside where I once sprawled

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1Ibid., p. 54.


3Ibid., p. 19.
among the crocuses, watching the town herd and snaring May's emerging gophers, I feel how the world still reduces me to a point and then measures itself from me. Perhaps the meadowlark singing from a fence post—a meadowlark whose dialect I recognize—feels the same way. All points on the circumference are equidistant from him; in him all radii begin; all diameters run through him; if he moves, a new geometry creates itself around him.1

Loss of a particular place to which a person has developed a strong attachment may deal a strong blow to his or her sense of identity, personal happiness and ability to function.2 Psychologist Marc Fried discussed this phenomenon as it occurred in Boston's West End when it was redeveloped for urban renewal. He described the reaction of many residents who were forced to move as a genuine "grief response" and argued that, at least among the working class people he was studying, "a sense of spatial identity is fundamental to human functioning"3 and that "one of the important components of the grief response is the fragmentation of the sense of spatial identity".4

1 Ibid., p. 19.
2 See also Introduction, pp. 22-24 and 34-36 and Sense of Change, pp. 369 ff., for reactions to the destruction of places.
4 Ibid., p. 245. See also M. Fried and P. Gleicher, "Some Sources of Residential Satisfaction In An Urban Slum," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 27 (1961), pp. 305-315. Fried argues that it is hard for middle class people "to appreciate the intensity of meaning, the basic sense of identity involved in living in the particular area" (p. 232). Although the working class may feel more strongly, it is hard to reach such a conclusion on the basis of this study. We have seen examples of strong sense of place among people from different classes (including the Toronto Islanders, who are mostly middle class). Information about the working class, however, may be more extensive because it is usually the working class—not the middle or upper classes—who have been subjected to forced relocation (e.g., for urban renewal) and whose reactions have therefore been more readily apparent and documented.
Toronto Islanders know that they are "Islanders". In response to a question about whether there was anything special about living on an island, Hank Hanger said simply and succinctly: "They call us 'Islanders'." This is a fact so obvious to Island residents that they usually fail to mention it as something important or to reflect on just what it means to them. It is perhaps hard to put into words. They use the term all the time and respond to questions about "Islanders"; but they usually do not come out and discuss what being an "Islander" means to them in the same way that they discuss what the Island environment or the Island community means to them. In a sense, this entire thesis is a search for just what it means to be an Islander.

Occasionally, however, Islanders do reveal how important being an Islander is to their sense of identity. Bob Kotyck who was not born on the Island but was drawn to it in 1971 "for personal and psychological things", 1 reflects on its attraction and meaning for him:

It's like a village; you can get a sense of identity and self-worth. We have to make our own activities, too; it's not packaged for us. 2

Freya Godard recalls her reactions to the vote of Metro Council on December 11, 1973 to support the policy of demolishing the remaining Island homes in order to extend the park. The decision has since been stalled: but, at the time, it looked as if she was about to lose her home and her community:

I remember one of the things I thought after the vote in December was that I wouldn't be an Islander any longer. I'll be just like everybody else on the subway. I feel my identity very much as an Islander, rather than, you know, my occupation or sex or age or anything like that.

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2 Ibid.
And Elizabeth Amer, who has lived year-round on the Island for over twenty years with only temporary absences (and during the summers before that), discusses the symbolic value of living on an island and recalls one of the reasons why she was so unhappy during the year she spent in the small town of Newcastle, Ontario:

I think [living on an island] is symbolic of a certain temperament or a certain approach to things and maybe certain people are attracted to the idea of living on an island. And maybe when they get there, they become somehow changed by living on an island. . . . I guess if you want to identify yourself or if thinking of yourself as an individual separate from the mass is important to you, there may be some sense in which living on an island reinforces that effort. I can remember when I lived in Newcastle for a year. I really, I think I've almost taken on the aspect of a professional Islander, because I almost felt I didn't have any identity at all. I almost felt as though I had no identity at all, I so identified myself as an Islander.

Island children are also acutely aware of being "Islanders." 1

Author and former Toronto Island resident, Harry Bruce, describes this strong sense of themselves as being different and special:

Toronto high school teachers used to complain that Island kids were more troublesome than city kids. They were lippier. They were not exactly mean, but they were unruly. Their attitude was annoying. It was said they knew they were special because their hometown [Toronto Island] was special. They never wore shoes in the summertime and, like their parents, they knew they had it good. 2

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1 Jack Hodgins (author of Spit Delaney's Island, The Invention of the World and The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne, all set partly or completely on Vancouver Island) has lived all his life on Vancouver Island and, in addition to writing fiction, also has taught high school there for more than fifteen years. In a conversation about "Island mentality" (obviously a special interest of his), he observed that "Islanders" have a keen sense of where they are from (a strong sense of identity). He said, for example, that he could always tell who were the children from Gabriola Island (a small island off the coast of Vancouver Island), not only because they tend to be fifteen minutes late in the morning because of the ferry, but, more generally and more importantly, because they always mention Gabriola Island when they speak.

Wendy Hanger recalls, with some embarrassment, how younger Island children, at the Island Public School used to, and still do, distinguish themselves from non-Islanders:

When we were kids, we used to say, "Oh, here come the City slickers" and Hank used to call them "picnickers" and I notice my kids, the kids at School, doing this with the Science School kids. And we used to do it. I don't like it. It makes me mad when the kids do it now. But I remember we did it too. You know, they set themselves apart....Ya, you have that [sense of identity].

Ron Mazza, who grew up on Algonquin Island, says simply, "I was always sort of aware of being an Islander." And Elizabeth Amer, recalling her girlhood acquaintances, confirms this: "People were 'Islanders', you know. They were very conscious of the fact that they were 'Islanders' and that was something special."

Sense of identity is, of course, related to other components of sense of place. A person's sense of identity is nourished and formed, for example, by knowing one's antecedents (sense of history), by belonging to a group or a community (sense of community), by experiencing a particular environment in a particular and intensely personal way (sense of environment), and by exercising a measure of control over one's environment (sense of control). One's sense of identity may even be sharpened by the knowledge that it, or some aspect of it, is threatened (sense of change)—as was the case with both Freya Godard's fear of losing her Island home and Elizabeth Amer's experience of being away from the Island. Why may Toronto Islanders have a strong sense of identity? Some of the main reasons are discussed in the following sections.

1"To be open to the past," Cole Harris has written, "is, simply, to be open to the roots of what we are." Cole Harris, "The Historical Mind and the Practice of Geography," in Humanistic Geography: Prospects and Problems, eds. David Ley and Marwyn Samuels (Chicago: Maaroufa Press, Inc., 1978), p. 124.
b. Boundaries, Visibility and Contrast:

Ralph argues that the quality of "insideness" is a fundamental component of place (and, by extension, sense of place):

The essence of place lies...in the experience of an "inside" that is distinct from an "outside"; more than anything else, this is what sets places apart in space and defines a particular system of physical features, activities, and meanings. To be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with the place.¹

This sense of "insideness" is not created only by physical features (like clear boundaries, distinctive architecture, contrast to other physical areas, and so on). It is also created by distinctive environmental life-styles, community values and rituals and intense personal experience with the place. But distinctive physical features certainly help create a clear sense of "insideness" and a clear sense, as novelist Jack Hodgins phrased it, of "knowing where you are from".

Boundaries are probably the most important single feature. They clearly divide inside from outside and Islander from non-Islander. Toronto Islanders are "Islanders", of course, because they live on an island and the distinguishing characteristic of an island is, of course, that it is surrounded by water. (See Illustration 23.) It is very easy for an Islander, unlike people living in less clearly bounded areas, to know where she or he is from; to know who is an insider and who is an outsider. This clear boundary is emphasized by the fact that the only access is by boat. There are no bridges or tunnels to this island. Everyone who comes there must make a break in his or her journey to board the boat and cross the Bay. Everyone coming to

¹Ralph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 49.
ILLUSTRATION 23
BOUNDARY AND CONTRAST

[Images of urban scenes and buildings]
the Island is acutely aware of its separateness and of coming to a separate and distinct place. All of this forms the basis of an Island identity for both individuals and the community as a whole. (See also Chapter 5, Sense of Community.)

- The Toronto Island also has "high visibility"—that is, unlike most urban neighbourhoods, it has a distinct profile, which can be seen in its entirety from the boat as it ploughs across the Bay. Viewing the Island from the boat is one of the most distinctive Island experiences and, like the clear boundaries, reinforces Islanders' individual and group sense of distinctiveness—both aspects of sense of identity.¹

The obvious physical contrast between the Island (with its distinctive wooden-cottage architecture, little carless streets, proximity to nature and so on) and the City (with its towering glass and steel skyscrapers, broad car-clogged streets, removal from water, grass and trees, and so on) also clarifies "inside" versus "outside" and heightens Islanders' individual and communal sense of separatedness,

¹Yi-Fu Tuan observes that, unlike cities, "Neighbourhoods lack sharp physically defined boundaries, and they have no distinctive skylines that can be seen from vantage points outside themselves." (in "Place: An Experiential Perspective," The Geographical Review LXV (April 1975), p. 156.) The Toronto Island is an exception to this statement, which explains, in part, why Islanders probably have a stronger sense of place and identity than residents of most other urban neighbourhoods. Tuan discusses the value of "visibility" in creating a sense of place and observes:"Although an external event, such as urban renewal, enables a people to see the larger unit [the neighbourhood], this perception becomes vividly real if the unit, in fact, has strong local flavor, visual character, and clear boundaries. Houses and streets do not of themselves create a sense of place, but if they are distinctive this perceptual quality would greatly help the inhabitants to develop the larger place consciousness." Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 171.
distinctiveness and identity. The contrast between self and others, us and them, inside and outside, is a fundamental way of identifying the special characteristics of each and highlighting what makes me (or us) different from him (or them). Yi-Fu Tuan writes on this theme:

To the local people [of a village] sense of place is promoted not only by their settlement's physical circumscription in space; an awareness of other settlements and rivalry with them significantly enhance their feelings of uniqueness and identity.¹

¹ Tuan, Space and Place, op. cit., p. 166. Anselm Strauss takes up this theme in a discussion of "the promotion of city reputation" and provides an urban example in the form of boosterism: Residents' presentation of their city to the world — and to outside groups judged important to the city — is often affected by the specific other cities they take to be rivals. "Self and other become linked in a single set of imagery; and both get presented in contrasting or competitive terms."


R.D. Laing, discussing the formation and maintenance of individual identity, writes:
Every relationship implies a definition of self by other and other by self....A person's "own" identity cannot be completely abstracted from his identity-for-others. His identity-for-himself; the identity others ascribe to him; the identities he attributes to them; the identity or identities he thinks they attribute to him; what he thinks they think he thinks they think....


Tuan, discussing fundamental spatial ideas, writes: "Back and front" is one antinomic pair, among many, in man's categorization of his world....It is the essence of these binaries that though the two elements of each pair are opposed, they are nonetheless necessary to each other for meaning.

Yi-Fu Tuan, "Geography, Phenomenology and the Study of Human Nature," in Canadian Geographer 15 (1971), p. 188; and in Topophilia, op. cit., p. 15. Tuan argues that "The human mind appears to be disposed to organize human phenomena not only in segments but to arrange them in opposite pairs." All of this contributes to the notion that contrast (physical and/or social) contributes to a definition of an individual's or a group's identity.
In the case of the Toronto Island, which the City skyline looming across the Bay, the difference is given concrete form. ¹ (See Illustration 23.)

c. Island Houses:

Perhaps the most visible and concrete way that Islanders affirm and proclaim their individual (and collective) identity is through their houses. They are constantly redecorating and remodelling them and the results, by most urban standards or comparison, are highly idiosyncratic and personal.

Clare Cooper Marcus, dissatisfied with her sociological surveys of people's responses to the design of their houses because she had the nagging feeling that she was "merely scratching the surface of the true meaning of 'the house"", ² began to investigate the idea of the "house as symbol of the self". She writes:

Although impossible for most of us to define or describe, we are all aware of the existence of something we call "self": the inner heart of our being, our soul, our uniqueness - however we want to describe it. It is in the nature of man that he constantly seeks a rational explanation of the inexplicable, and so he struggles with the questions: What is self? Why here? Why now? In trying to comprehend this most basic of archetypes - self - to give it concrete substance, man grasps at physical forms or symbols which are close and meaningful to him, and which are visible and definable. The first and most consciously selected form to represent self is the body, for it appears to be both the outward manifestation, and the encloser, of self. On a less conscious level, I believe, man often frequently selects the house, that basic

¹See also Sense of Community and Sense of Environment for a discussion of the social and physical contrast between Islanders and others - i.e., city, suburbs and small towns.

protector of his internal environment (beyond skin and clothing) to represent and symbolize what is tantalizingly unrepresentable.\textsuperscript{1} She goes on to discuss the phenomenon of moving to a new house and making it one's own:

But why in this particular box should we be ourselves more than in any other? It seems as though the personal space bubble which we carry with us and which is an almost tangible extension of our self expands to embrace the house we have designated as ours. And as we become accustomed to, and lay claim to, this little niche in the world, we project something of ourselves onto its physical fabric. The furniture we install, the way we arrange it, the pictures we hang, the plants we buy and tend, all are messages about ourselves that we want to convey back to ourselves, and to the few intimates that we invite into this, our house. Thus the house might be viewed as both an avowal of the self—that is, the phychic messages are moving from the self to the objective symbol of self—and as a revelation of the nature of self—that is, the messages are moving from the objective symbol back to the self. It is almost as if the house—self continuum could be thought of as both the negative and the positive of a film simultaneously.\textsuperscript{2}

The houses we choose, the way we decorate and arrange them, both inside and out, express not only how we view ourselves (our identity), but also how we wish the rest of the world to view us as well.\textsuperscript{3} (See Illustration 24.)

The need, or desire, to express our own identity—to "personalize" space, to leave our imprint on the spaces we live in and work in—is a theme taken up by various researchers and designers. Robert

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 131.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., pp. 131-132. My underlinings.

\textsuperscript{3}Commenting on the many studies which indicate that people in the United States, England and Australia tend to describe a free-standing, square, detached, single family house and yard as their "ideal" house, she suggests that the high rise apartment is rejected, at least in part, because "It is perceived unconsciously as a threat to one's self-image as a separate and unique personality...[It is] not a symbol-of-self, but of a stereotyped, anonymous filing collection of selves, which people fear they are becoming." Ibid., p. 134.
Sommer writes:
When we studied facilities occupied for longer periods such as college dormitory rooms, the need for individual personalization was readily apparent. Students resented built-in desks, lockers, and book cases which could not be moved or altered to meet unique individual needs. The students wanted to be able to express an individual identity in the room through posters, decoration, and even repainting the room to fit mood and personality.¹

There are several reasons why Island houses can be seen as particularly strong statements of personal identity. First of all, living on the Island is relatively cheap. By and large, people who live on the Island choose to live there. They are not excluded from the area because of the high cost of living. Secondly, most Islanders own their houses and therefore can decorate them as they wish (unlike, for example, apartment tenants whose options are limited). Third, for many years the houses have had very low resale value, because of the uncertain political situation. Islanders can therefore give freer rein to self-expression than they might elsewhere. They do not have to judge everything by how it might affect their ability to sell the house sometime in the future. Finally, there is an ethos of expression. Islanders see themselves as individuals—as being out of the mainstream—and personal, even idiosyncratic, expression is not only tolerated, but encouraged by group values. This is buttressed by a "conserver society" attitude which encourages people to "make do" with what they have or can find and to recycle old bricks or windows or found lumber,

all of which can lead to some creative and unusual results. (See Illustration 24.)

This is not to say that every house on the Island looks bizarre. There are many trim, neat, conventional little bungalows (which also reflect the values and personalities of their owners). (See Illustration 24.) There are also some run-down looking houses, which have surprised—even shocked—outsiders (like politicians). Interestingly, some of the outwardly run-down places have beautifully renovated interiors; if somewhat ignored exteriors. Many Island homes, however, do display unusual elements, which range from displaying smaller items like hand-made drift-wood gates and signs, to creating exotic colour schemes, painting large murals on the facade, and building entire rooms with unusual shapes and materials. There seems to be an especially strong desire to proclaim, through the medium of the house, that this is me; this is my house; I found this driftwood or I built this chimney.

Elizabeth Amer describes at some length how Island houses reflect the people who live in them and some of the qualities of Island houses that particularly appeal to her—their scale, flexibility and opportunities for personal expression.

I feel comfortable in this environment. The house is of a scale that I can enjoy and the houses are very flexible. Well, you can look around you and see. For instance, this summer Clark and Michael renovated this house with found lumber. These were two rooms that we're sitting in and now they're one. And all the beams that you see are beams that they found floated up on the beach in various places and dragged them back here and made the renovations themselves. And there's a certain amount of individuality about the way we [did it].

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1 See also Sense of Community: "Some Community Values", pp. 203 ff.
ILLUSTRATION 24

"HOUSE AS SYMBOL OF SELF"

Ward's Island

Algonquin Island
I suppose if you were in a City house, you'd always have to have an eye to resale. And if you have an eye to resale, well, you can't do anything too kooky in the place, because the next guy coming in may not like it and it may prevent you from selling it. But it's never a question of that here. You can't sell it much anyway...you can never make a profit on it or anything like that.

And I just like being able to mould the house to your needs, whatever they may be, and to the changes in your life. And it's really rather pleasant....I think that no matter what your style is, people here can really make the house reflect that and make it express them.

David Harris, who grew up in a large house in North Toronto, describes how his view of housing has changed as a result of living on the Island and how surprised he was by the level of creativity in the houses:

I was surprised that the houses were as creatively done inside, that the workmanship was as [good]. In other words, I guess I had the idea that a nice house had to be an expensive house and it really was interesting to see that rather than spending fifty dollars a square yard for a fantastic panelling, people could go down to the beach and pick up drift wood and creatively put it on their walls....I was surprised by the level of creativity that people had here, of making something with very little.

Jenny DeTolly, who was trained as an architect, has been especially impressed by the creativity of some Ward's Island houses. She describes some of them:

On Ward's I have been in some really, really beautiful houses. The houses there are smaller [than on Algonquin]; they are not in as good condition because a lot of them are built very close to the ground and a lot of them are older than the Algonquin ones. Because, on Algonquin, other than on the periphery, there are mainly houses built from 1948 on, which makes them a totally different kettle of fish. [The Ward's ones] being old and essentially summer cottages.

People who have done things to the insides of the houses have done it in a marvellously loose way. It's had a lot to do with the whole idea of the house having very little return value in terms of selling. And they've tended to make these places a very personal expression of themselves. There's a book called "Hand-made Houses" where they've done much the same kind of thing.

There's one on Ward's, for instance, where they've opened up most of the ceiling and the bare roof boards and roof rafters are exposed.
[They] are really lovely, because, being old, they are beautifully seasoned old wood. Apart from two bedrooms and the bathroom, the ceiling is open to the large roof space. And they've got a little sleeping platform in one part. They've used pieces of driftwood to prop up parts of the roof where it might otherwise sag. And there are hundreds of plants all over the show. You'll find that in most of the Ward's houses that you go into. Just masses and masses of plants all over the place. And a lot of very raggedy, but very interesting, furniture. You will seldom in an Island house find a living room suite, for instance. But you'll find a lot of eccentric, bitty pieces of furniture and chairs and things like that. And very often lots of sunlight. A couple of places in Ward's have put skylights in. And, for instance, Bob and Ann Kotyck have the most super little greenhouse off their bedroom, which is just made up of a whole lot of old windows. The most lovely little space, particularly in wintertime.

**Island Neighbourhood:**

People move to (or choose to remain in) places for a variety of reasons—economics, convenience, social status and so on. To a certain extent, the places we choose to live (when an element of choice is available) reflect our images of ourselves and an attempt to match that image with our image of a certain neighbourhood. The trendy, swinging single who chooses to live in an ultra-modern, high rise apartment complex, the executive-on-the-rise with wife and children who chooses to live in a well-appointed suburb, the professional couple who chooses to live in a chic "white-painted" central city neighbourhood, the college drop-out who chooses to live in a rural commune, all reveal something about themselves by their residential choice. To a certain extent, therefore, residential choice is a statement of personal identity.

Christopher Winters elaborates on this theme. Describing a growing phenomenon of the 1970's—the rejuvenation (or "gentrification") of many neighbourhoods in American cities—Winters identifies a number of distinct neighbourhood types which have emerged in such places as Boston, New York, Washington and San Francisco: the self-consciously
heterogeneous neighbourhood, the chic neighbourhood, the gay neighbour-
hood, the artists' neighbourhood, the family neighbourhood, and so on.

He attributes the emergence of these socially-distinct neighbourhoods, in part, to people's search for and desire to express their personal identity:

"Neighbourhoods undergoing rejuvenation are particularly likely to acquire a special social character, because these neighbour-
hoods experience a great deal of voluntary and highly self-con-
scious in-migration in a very short period. The decision to live in a rejuvenating area is rarely based on economic factors alone. Most socially distinct neighbourhoods result from people's need to identify and express themselves by their residential choice and during the 1970's the possibilities for self-identification have grown luxuriantly..."

Many [middle class Americans] incorporate their residential loca-
tion into the self-identification process. They search for community with propinquity. The result has been the blossoming of urban neighbourhoods reflecting personal identities.

As discussed elsewhere, the Island, over the years, has appealed to people who see themselves as independent, self-reliant, "out of the mainstream", not materially ambitious, tolerant, casual, valuers of "lifestyle over workstyle", lovers of nature and the outdoors, and, in some cases, romantic, artistic, and pioneering. Their choice of the Island as a place to live--with its little houses that need constant attention, carless streets, proximity to water and nature, distinctive architecture, heterogeneous community, and generally unusual lifestyle--reflects and reinforces these views of themselves.

In the following passage, for example, one resident explains how his choice of living on the Island reflects his image of himself as a...

1Christopher Winters, "The Social Identity of Evolving Neighbor-
hoods," Landscape 23 (1979), pp. 8, 14.

2See, for example Sense of Community: "Some Community Values", pp. 203 ff. and Sense of Control: "Inconveniences", pp. 322 ff.
nonconformist, a sort of renegade from Rosedale:

I had to wear a tie from about the age of seven on, as I went to private school, and that was sort of my parents' thing and I really didn't like it. Then I got into photography rather than go into business like my father did, you know, that kind of thing. And I can remember wearing jeans to film in, strictly because I got sick of wearing suits and getting them dirty, because you have to lie down for a shot or you'd be in a dirty area, and that kind of thing. And I started wearing jeans long before they became fashionable to wear. So, I guess I like the rural-pioneer flavour of this community.

I had to spend the summer in the City this last year and I went to Cabbagetown and spent a lot of money to rent a house in Cabbagetown and it was nice and great for [some] people. I'm not knocking it. But, for me, I just couldn't wait to get back to the Island. And I was in, you know, a $90,000 house. Just didn't dig it. I like a little bit of stained glass—we put it in a piece here. But it just seems there's so much in Cabbagetown. It's so art-directed.

Yorkville. I bought a building in Yorkville for my office, way back ten years ago [c. 1965], when Yorkville had, you know, the hippies, at the beginning. And I saw the whole transformation of Yorkville, from what was a nice, casual, relaxed sort of thing, through the let's-go-down-and-see-the-hippies, the streets crowded and jammed with people and coffee houses and all that stuff, go through to what it is now—a place that I would not even bother going to, where it's just plastic and expensive. They've taken any charm that Yorkville had and ruined it, as far as I'm concerned. And that's a bit of what's happening in Don Vale, the Cabbagetown area. It's becoming a bit chi-chi.

I hated Rosedale. I've lived in Rosedale and I found it was too uptight, the people, too much concern for money and image and that kind of stuff.

By contrasting the Island with these other places, he reveals what he values and how he views both himself and the Island.

e. Personal History and Association With Place:

Sense of place, like sense of identity, is built up over time.

"To know a place", Tuan writes, "is also to know the past: one's own past preserved in schoolhouse, corner drug store, swimming pool, and first home."¹ Personal history is an integral part of personal

¹ Yi-Fu Tuan, "Place: An Experiential Perspective," op. cit., p.164.
identity. As Lowenthal suggests, "Buffeted by change, we retain traces of our past to be sure of our enduring identity."¹ I am who I am because I have done this, thought this, experienced this, and so on. And personal experiences and associations with places are an integral part of this personal history and sense of identity. Places, in fact, are particularly potent symbols of personal history, for one tree or one building or one view or one smell can trigger a flood of memories and personal associations.²

Places gain significance for us by their association with major life events (like the church where you were married, the house where you gave birth, the room where your grandmother died), with yearly rituals (like Christmas or Gala Day or Winter Carnival), with "peak experiences" or "topophilic" experiences of landscape (like standing alone, in mid-winter, on the boardwalk, looking out over ice-covered rocks and an angry lake to the gray horizon and feeling the pounding of the surf and experiencing a mixture of awe, fear, and exhilaration)³ and with gradual accumulation of apparently non-spectacular but personally significant "place memories" (like the shimmer of wet stones on the beach, the view of ships from the bathroom window, the lagoon where


²See, for example, Jimmy Jones' account of a recent visit to Hanlan's Point when seeing one particular tree reminded him of everything that used to be there and certain things that he and friends had done there many years before. Sense of Environment: "Hidden Landscapes", pp. 280-281.

³E. Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 123, writes: "the impact [of such experiences] is deep and can lead to a change in self-awareness or constitute a touchstone by which we can judge all our other experiences of landscape."
you were tossed to learn to swim, the tree where you built a fort, the
shed behind which you sneaked your first smoke, the view of the Island
as you commute home on the boat, the fence where you saw a hummingbird,
and so on. "In particular," Relph writes (and some of these examples
indicate), "the places of childhood constitute vital reference points
for many individuals." Islanders' interviews are replete with des-
scriptions of personal associations (both childhood and adult memories)
of this sort and many are quoted elsewhere.

f. Group Identity:

Finally, a strong element in a sense of identity is the sense
of belonging to a group, of partaking of a group identity. Relph
writes about the link between individual and community identity:

An authentic sense of place is above all being inside and belong-
ing to your place both as an individual and as a member of a
community and to know this without reflecting upon it. This
might be so for home, for hometown or region, or for the nation.
Such an authentic and unselfconscious sense of place is perhaps
as important and necessary in contemporary societies as it was
in any previous societies, for it provides an important source
of identity for individuals and, through them, for communities. 2

Freyja Godard describes some of the things that, over time, have
made her feel like "an Islander":

Well, it's the sharing of experiences with other Islanders, experi-
ences that are unique to the Island, such as the ferry - especial-
ly the winter ferry, where the cabins are very small and cozy and
you're jammed in with a lot of people and you see the same people,
so you get to know them. And going to Metro Council meetings and
sharing that very intense experience with people makes you feel
part of the Island. All sorts of group events, large events on
the Island, like dances, the Christmas Boutique, where you see more
than your next door neighbour or your best friend - a lot of Island-
ners together doing the same kind of things. I have the feeling
very strongly every time I've been away for a while and, coming
back, coming off the boat, especially in the winter, and almost
every face is familiar. They're all friends....When things happen

1 Ibid., p. 37.
2 Ibid., pp. 65-66.
to friends. Just died and she was a part of a very large family. Just being able to go share that with them and with a lot of other friends she had made me feel very much part of the community....And things like sandbagging the flat [to keep out high water]....[Without some of the inconveniences] you'd be missing some of the shared experiences of great difficulty or working together to help people. I think there would be less feeling of being an Islander, because it's the experiences which are unique to the Island that give it its own special quality.

The next chapter elaborates on some of the things that bind Islanders together as a group and give them a strong sense of community.

ii. Sense of Identity – Defense of Place:

Sense of identity and defense of place are mutually reinforcing. First, and perhaps most importantly, sense of identity may provide the general motivation for defense of place. Because a threat to a special and personally significant place is also a threat to a person's identity—the sense of who she or he is at a deeply personal level—that person may be strongly motivated to protect and defend that place.

Life-long Islander, Ron Mazza, whose father built a house on Algonquin Island after the Second World War and who became Chairman of the Toronto Island Residents Association, illustrates very clearly this important link between sense of identity and defense of place:

It's home, eh?...It's unique, and if you did lose the Island you just wouldn't find another way of life like it anywhere. It's the only one I've known, and I'm going to fight damn hard to keep it.

I can't imagine losing the Island, because so much of what I am is here.¹

On the negative side is the fact that Islanders' strong sense of identity—of being "Islanders" and feeling that this is important, even an enviable mark of distinction—has perhaps made Islanders

¹Quoted in Spears, September 2, 1978, op. cit.
appear to some people (including politicians and journalists) as "arrogant" or "sanctimonious", thereby losing political support. For example, one City Hall insider (who in spite of this, was pro-Islander) made the following comment in an interview after the 1974 Spring Campaign:

[is] known as the archtypical Islander that the suburbs hate . . . wealthy, snotty, roughing-it-by-choice, summer-only residence, holier-than-thou... is the attitude. And, notwithstanding the fact that I like... a great deal, I think that description is very accurate, because he is incredibly supercilious to people he feels are not up to snuff.

And, on June 24, 1980 (when Metro Council was about to meet to decide whether or not to proceed with evicting Islanders), the Toronto Sun changed its former stand in favour of keeping residents on the Island and recommended that Islanders now be removed. It noted:

Meanwhile those like columnist John Downing remained aggressively unconvinced by the Sun's [former] editorial tolerance [of Island residents] and continue to scold the islanders, watchdog their antics, document their elitism, their arrogance, their disregard for law, their almost uncanny sanctimony.

References to Islanders' "elitism", "arrogance", "selfishness" and so on are found throughout the political history of the issue and derive, at least in part, from Islanders' apparent sense of superiority and assurance that being "an Islander" is something special.

Some politicians, however, understand the importance of the link between place and personal identity and their understanding has shaped their political behaviour. For example, reform alderman (later mayor) and urban activist, John Sewell, who has been involved in a number of campaigns to preserve neighbourhoods threatened by public urban renewal

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1The reaction is not unlike the reaction of teachers to Island children, which was discussed p. 156.
2"Island Farewell," Sun, June 24, 1980.
or private redevelopment projects, discusses his own boyhood neigh-
borhood, the Beach, and the sense of identity he gained from living
there and subsequently in Cabbagetown:

It was relatively calm and quiet — it was seen as a place of its
own, self-contained. Even when you reached high school and had
to go somewhere else in the city, it was like entering foreign
territory... It gives you a sense of identity. The neighbour-
hoods break the city down into units that each of us can deal
with.¹

One of the neighbourhoods Mr. Sewell has helped defend is the Toronto
Island.

Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had a marked effect
on their sense of identity. Simply experiencing the extreme anxiety of
the political uncertainty and attending long, emotional Metro
Council meetings with other Islanders, are among those "shared experi-
ences of great difficulty [and] working together" that contribute to
feeling like "an Islander," as Freya Godard indicated earlier (on

The Island defense has extended and reinforced the notion of
house-as-symbol-of-self—of using the house as a means of self-express-
ion—in this case, as a way of proclaiming defiance of Metro and an
intention to stay on the Island. Since at least 1974 when the first
eviction notices were sent to Islanders from Metro, many Island houses
have virtually become personal billboards. The eviction notices were
posted in prominent places and left long after the named date (August
31, 1974). And numerous other signs (sometimes created specifically

¹"Introduction to 'The Neighbourhoods' Series," Star, February
10, 1979."
for the house, like "Lake Ward's Yacht Club" and sometimes kept as mementos of participation in various events, like a "Godfrey Is A Home Wrecker" sign from a City Hall demonstration, left in a front window) are displayed. At a rally on July 1, 1980 (where over 2,000 people gathered to protest Metro's decision to evict Islanders as soon as possible after June 30, 1980), Island houses were festooned with signs—like "It Takes A Big Man, Mr. Godfrey, To Change His Mind" or "Let's Ward Off The Sheriff" or "We Will Not Move"—some simply posted for the occasion and others mounted more permanently. (See Illustration 25.)

Finally, participating in the defense of the Island may change a person's sense of who she or he is. For some, being involved forced them to "flex muscles" they did not know they had, as one person put it. They had to do things—like speak in public or confront politicians—that they did not realize they could do. For another, such experiences and such involvement generally "has given me a kind of identity that I didn't have before", as she put it. "It opened up my world, I guess. But only in a limited way, in that it's only here."

Beyond this, by participating in the defense of the Island, one is no longer simply an "Islander", but also an "Island defender" or, even, more generally, a "political activist". Some Islanders may welcome

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1This sign is posted over the door of a house which looks out over a wet meadow that from time to time becomes flooded and has been dubbed "Lake Ward's". The yacht club designation is a reference to the fact that the private yacht clubs on the Island are being treated better than the residents by Metro; their leases have regularly been renewed and they would receive compensation if the leases were terminated. Islanders, like this household, have wittily suggested that they should declare themselves to be a yacht club in order to benefit from similar treatment.
ILLUSTRATION 25

HOUSE AS SYMBOL OF POLITICAL SELF

"Lake Ward's Yacht Club"
the chance to express themselves as fighters and political activists, but for others the transition is more difficult. Shortly after the December 11, 1973 Metro Council vote to terminate Island leases, Bill McCalfe told his neighbours at a public meeting, "I've never considered myself a political activist, but, by God, if I have to chain myself to my front door ... they'll have to drag me away."¹ In June 1980, Anne Lisel de Haas, a thirty year Island resident who did not fight to save her former home on Centre Island, planned to save her Ward's Island home from the most recent threat, "I'm not a fighter by nature but I'll fight for the Island."² And sixty year old Maude Wideman, an Island resident for twenty-three years, was preparing to break the law for the first time in her life:

As far as I'm concerned, we're staying... I feel I'm in it for the fight all the way....If the sheriff nabs up the door, I guess I'll just come in the window at night. I'll buy a good strong crowbar....And if the bulldozers come, I'll chain myself to the door. A lock, a chain, and a crowbar—that's going on my list right now.³

In conclusion, defense of the Island, for some, may be the anvil upon which their sense of identity is forged.

²Quoted in Patricia Huchy and Virginia Corner, "Island Plans Resistance 'People Could Be Hurt'," Star, June 25, 1980.
³Quoted in "'We'll Defy the Law'," Sun, June 25, 1980.
CHAPTER 5

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

i. Analysis of Sense of Community:

a. Introduction:

A third fundamental component of a sense of place is a sense of community—the feeling that one belongs to and is part of a group whose members share some common ties, interact to accomplish certain goals, and occupy a particular area which is significant and meaningful to them. This is not to say that all communities must have a territorial base, but only that, in the case of sense of place, the group is grounded in physical space. Neither is this to maintain that the physically-defined community is the only community to which the individual members belong (they may well belong to other "personal communities" or "communities of interest"), but simply to maintain that, in the case of sense of place, the territorial community is a significant one. The place acts not only as a location, but also as a significant and meaningful focus for the sense of community.

Although the Island community does seem to fall generally within most definitions of "community", the purpose here is not to define "community", but to discuss the subjective sense of community and some
of the phenomena which may be associated with that feeling. Whether rightly or wrongly from a particular sociological perspective, Islanders see themselves as forming a community.

Evidence that Islanders certainly have a strong sense of community is easy to find: in their briefs, formal statements and publications, in their informal discussions and public meetings, and in -

1 There is certainly no agreement among sociologists over what constitutes a "community". Colin Bell and Howard Newby, for example, review theories of community in Community Studies (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971) and remark: "...it is impossible to give the sociological definition of the community" (p. 31). They note somewhat bemusedly, "It now appears that something of an impasse has been reached concerning the definition of community - some might even call it exhaustion." (p. 32). And, finally, they conclude, "A consensus on the theory of community appears as remote as ever." (p. 48). In the case of the Toronto Islands, Islanders are a relatively small group of people who occupy a clearly defined geographic area (an island), interact intensely, have an unusual environmental lifestyle, and share at least some common goals (most notably to preserve their homes, but also a number of others). They, therefore, appear to fall well within most definitions of community. For example, according to Bell and Newby, op. cit., pp. 27 ff., the three most commonly mentioned components of community are: area, common ties, and social interaction. Not all sociologists agree that area is a necessary condition of community (e.g., B. Wellman and P. Craven, The Network City, Toronto: Centre For Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, July 1973); but, according to Bell and Newby, op. cit., p. 29: "Hillary [who reviewed 94 definitions of community] found that no author denied that area could be an element of community". (Wellman and Craven, op. cit., pp. 38-41, for example, discuss "neighbourhood-communities", which are locally based.) In the case of the Toronto Island, geographic location and Islanders' identification with it is a highly significant, perhaps the most significant, component of community. This is not to argue that most Islanders do not have important non-Island ties. Unlike most "traditional communities", most Islanders do not work in the same place as they live; but travel to the City (there is only limited employment on the Island - e.g., at the School, local handymen, water taxi operator or self-employed artists and artisans). In fact, they are in many ways a highly dependent community: they live on publicly-owned and publicly-controlled land; they must work and shop and go to high school in the City; they depend on the municipally-operated ferry as their lifeline; and their very existence is dependent on the decision of the metropolitan and provincial levels of government. Nevertheless, ties to the Island and to other Islanders are highly significant for many Islanders.
their responses to surveys and formal interviews. For example, in the 1973 social survey conducted by the City Planning staff with the cooperation of Islanders, Islanders were asked what they liked (and disliked) about living on the Island.\footnote{City of Toronto, \textit{Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods} (September 1973). As the principal author of that report, I was able to analyze the individual, but anonymous, responses.} Their answers to this question reveal, among other things, the importance and their awareness of a strong sense of community. For example, one person wrote, "Sense of belonging to and being part of a community to which I feel responsible and from which I can expect companionship and assistance." Over and over, the words "community", "community spirit", "community feeling", "unique community" and "sense of community" appear. Not surprisingly, given the political context of the City report,\footnote{The comments were collected during the summer of 1973. Islanders knew that Metro Council would be voting later that year on whether or not to demolish the houses in order to extend the Island Park.} many of the comments reveal a political interest in preserving "the community". Nevertheless, the feeling of community seems genuine and widespread.

In the course of the interviews conducted for this study, similar sentiments surfaced. The following examples illustrate this and a number of other general points about Islanders' sense of community.

Alan Howard, who lived on the Island for 41 years before his Centre Island home was expropriated and demolished in 1959, discusses the sense of community evident in those earlier days before Metro took over the Island in order to extend the park:

The community at large...always seemed to draw people who became more and more deeply involved in the community. They might have started out saying, "Well, I'll go there and spend a summer and see how I like it," and eventually got to be a habitue who couldn't be pried off.
Life-long Islanders Jimmy Jones and Maxine Wilson describe the friendliness of the community (in contrast to their image of the unfriendly city), the closeness, the sense of security, the heterogeneity of the people and the fact that the people and the place are all of a piece and they conclude by saying, "You just can't take this way of life and put it someplace else and come up with the same feelings."

Jenny DeTolly, a more recent resident, who moved to the Island in 1969, also describes what she likes and would miss. She does not have as negative a view of the City as some other Islanders do. For her, too, the physical and social aspects are linked and the Island itself is a focus for community feeling. She also makes the point that there are different ways of interacting with people (as friends, neighbours, acquaintances), each of which contributes to the over-all sense of community:

I like mainly the kind of people that are here, although that doesn't mean to say I don't like City people. I find it very interesting that the group of people that one can meet and mix with, not necessarily on a socializing basis but that one can meet within this community and have something in common - i.e., the Island and the current struggle...

Some people were attracted to the Island partly in search of a sense of community. For example, Nina Kilpatrick observes, "The Island seemed like a great place [to move to], because it was a community, an archetype community, which really appealed to me."

Nevertheless, as Freya Godard points out, it takes time to develop a sense of community, just as it takes time to develop a sense of place:

I knew there was a community here. I really didn't know what it was like. I only really knew one person here. And it was actually some time before I actually did become part of the community. It didn't happen immediately.
She then describes some of the ways she met people (which are quite typical ones): her one acquaintance introduced her to other people; she helped a group of people push their cart through the show; she met neighbours through their children; she went to public meetings; she baked things for bake sales; she eventually served on the Toronto Island Residents Association Executive and through that got to know a great many Islanders.

Peter Cridland (who moved to the Island in 1963) describes some of his (fulfilled) expectations for Island life, and mentions how the political situation has strengthened the sense of community:

I think I found it much as I expected it to be, an urban village really. I assumed there would be more of a sense of community, but that it would have most of the advantages of a village and a few of the disadvantages. I think I found it to be like what I imagined a village to be in that one knows virtually everyone in the community and a lot about what people are doing. But, of course, it's due in part to the fact that we're under siege permanently and we need to know what's going on day by day.¹

Not only does it take time to develop a sense of community (as Freya Godard indicates), but perceptions of the community may also change over time. Peter Cridland observes that he had initially been "disappointed" in the apparent lack of interest of long-time Islanders in the work of the community associations. But, after he had lived on the Island for a while, "I began to realize that a lot of them had put in years of work" and, in fact, "that the community [on the Island] does support its own social associations to a far greater extent than is typical" elsewhere.

Bill Metcalfe (who lived on the Island between 1970 and 1978)

¹See also Sense of Change: "Community Under Siege" pp. 361 ff. and Sense of Community: "Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of Community", pp. 246 ff.
contrasts life on the Island with his life in the suburbs. He makes the point that the Island is more socially involving than suburbia, (as he experienced it):

I guess the difference really of living on the Island as opposed to any other place we have ever lived...is, whether you like it or not, you have to become involved with other people. The jazzy word, I guess, is interaction. Sometimes you like it. Sometimes you don't. Some people are a pain in the ass and some people are beautiful people. We have such a variety of points of view that coming in contact with them all the time, I think, it keeps your head open to new things. So the main difference is that in Don Mills if I saw somebody that I'd even think I didn't like, I never even gave it a chance to find out if there was something there or not. I could readily avoid that person. It's very hard to do that on the Island....So that's the main difference I think. Don Mills was probably the least involving place we lived.

Having a strong sense of community does not necessarily mean that one engages in a frantic round of socializing. Some Islanders (perhaps summer Islanders more than year-round Islanders and young "singles" more than others) may engage in a great deal of social activity, but not everyone does. For these others, community activities (such as helping at the school or working on the political campaign) may be important and the feeling that help is available if needed may be important, but a great deal of social activity is not. For this sort of person, the Island may provide a comfortable social backdrop for more independent endeavours. One of the most "community-minded" people interviewed (who has spent hundreds of hours on community activities) described the situation this way:

[I'd miss] the people, I guess, even though I don't have a lot to do with them. That is, I'm not perpetually socializing with them ....I'm on speaking terms with practically every Islander. I can stand and talk to almost every Islander, but I really have no [more] contact with them. We have no social life here. We never go out. We never go to dinner anywhere. We never go to dances. We rarely entertain people. We really are very self-sufficient people.
Finally, community life and having a great amount of contact with one's neighbours is not entirely pleasurable (as Bill Metcalfe hinted earlier on p. 191). Two Islanders discuss some of the negative aspects:

[living on the Island] tends to be somewhat incestuous. There are a lot of nice relationships, too. But grudges last a long time, too. My mother got into a lot of hassles with grudges between one group falling out with another and not forgetting the cause and sort of dragging [it] on.

I think it has many qualities of a small town. Nosiness would be one. An awareness of what people around you are doing... You are constantly having to face acquaintances on the boat and making decisions as to who you're going to sit with when you aren't really stating a preference formally, but somehow informally.... I didn't expect to see the small town negative qualities. If I think about it it seems quite reasonable. But I hadn't given it any thought. I had been aware of a small community characteristic but the fact that neighbours fight had never crossed my mind and I found that strange when I discovered it here. It was very common in my home town.

In spite of the negative aspects, both of these people have a strong sense of community and have both spent—many, many hours on community activities (especially the political campaigns).

As noted before, one of the main characteristics of a sense of place is a sense of "insideness"—the feeling of when one is "inside" and when one is "outside" and the knowledge of who is an "insider" and who is an "outsider". This may apply to groups as well as individuals, for the term "Islander" has both group and individual connotations. Islanders, as is already evident, have a strong sense of "insideness". People living on the Island invariably refer to themselves as "Islanders" and to non-Islanders as "City people" or "Mainlanders" or
"foreigners" (or, less flatteringly, as "picnickers"). But being "Islanders" seems to connote much more than simply living on the Island. It means, for example, understanding such small things as "Island time"; riding an "Island bike"; "living in an "Island house"; wearing "Island dress"; understanding "Island phrases" (like "gonna get an extension" or "can't talk now, gotta get the six"); participating in "Island activities"; knowing who "Daddy Frank" is (the oldest Islander) or who makes the best cheese cake or who has the best wagon; knowing where "the Gap" is, or "the park", or the AIA; knowing what an extension is or what December 11, 1973 meant; and sharing certain Island characteristics or values (like hardiness or individuality). Some of the physical circumstances, as well as the rituals, traditions, activities, values and experiences which seem to draw Islanders together as a group and strengthen their sense of community are discussed in this chapter.

Two themes which draw together a number of disparate aspects of Island life which are discussed in the rest of this chapter and which contribute significantly to Islanders' sense of community are the general need for mutual aid and the sharing of a distinctive "environmental lifestyle".

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1 Ascribing names to groups (even name calling) is a common way of distinguishing one group from another, insiders from outsiders. For example, natives of the Eastern Shore (of Maryland) refer disparagingly to (primarily black) day-trippers from Baltimore who come down for a day's fishing using chicken necks as bait, as "chickenneckers". See Boyd Gibbons, Wye Island: Outsiders, Insiders and Resistance to Change (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), pp. 4, 156. People born on City Island (in the shadow of New York City), as opposed to more recent and more affluent residents, are known as "clam diggers" and non-City Island residents generally are known as "off Islanders". See Barney Cohen, "The Landlubber's Guide to City Island," New York Magazine, August 1, 1977.
A number of sociologists\(^1\) have pointed out that while spatial proximity alone is not sufficient to create social interaction (let alone friendly or cooperative interaction), when there is a need for mutual aid, social interaction is more likely to occur (such as in ethnic communities or working class communities or new suburban areas). On the Toronto Island, Islanders, for a variety of reasons, depend on one another for mutual assistance to a greater extent than people in many other areas of the city. Their physical separation from the city, their lack of most conventional forms of urban entertainment (movie theatres, pubs, restaurants, etc.), their lack of most commercial facilities (grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, etc.), their small population, their dependence on a ferry (especially an infrequent and unreliable winter ferry), their periodic environmental hazards (notably high water) and their extremely uncertain political situation which threatens their continued existence as a community, all combine to draw Islanders together in a variety of ways—both formal and informal—to provide practical and emotional support for one another.

Islanders also share a fairly distinctive environmental lifestyle—that is, patterns of behaviour that are influenced\(^2\) by environmental

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\(^2\) Not determined, but influenced. The environment provides certain problems and opportunities that the residents (or others) respond to. The particular response may depend on personal characteristics (e.g., age, sex, personality, resources available, and so on), cultural or social norms, and so on. Nevertheless, it seems possible to say that the prairie farmer, the Cree hunter and the suburban businessman all have markedly different environmental lifestyles, which are influenced by the particular environmental problems and opportunities faced in each situation.
conditions such as the near-by park, the ferry, the weather, the floods, the carless streets, the lack of stores, and so on. Organizing life around the ferry schedule; dragging groceries and other personal belongings in express wagons and assorted carts; skiing to church or activities at the school; stamping around in big, black rubber boots; sandbagging to prevent flooding; commuting by ferry or canoe or personal motorboat; buying milk from a milk truck permanently parked in front of the fire station and paying the firemen; skating to catch the ferry at Hanlan's; putting plastic over windows each fall; recycling lumber or driftwood or discarded furniture; all of these are expressions of an environmental lifestyle which, again, ties Islanders together and provides common bonds which reinforce a sense of community. (See Illustrations 26, 27, 29, 30.)

Sense of community, of course, is related to other components of sense of place. For example, knowledge of a common history may act as a common bond (sense of history). Individual identity may be formed in part by relation to a community identity (sense of identity). Sharing a common and distinctive physical environment may tie people together (sense of environment). Community activity to change the local environment or to influence various decisions about the community may contribute to a sense of control. And, the existence of an outside threat of forced change, like the threat to demolish the houses to extend the park, may act as a common bond to draw people together (sense of change).

ILLUSTRATION 26

ENVIRONMENTAL LIFESTYLE

High Water 1973
Toronto Island Archives
The rest of this chapter describes some expressions of Islanders' sense of community, some of the main reasons why it seems to be so strong and the many ways that it is related to defense of place.

b. Community Life - Brief Description:

Island residents, in their low frame houses set along carless streets and among a heavy growth of poplars and willows, live a life that is highly unusual in the modern urban setting. Because many of the conventional forms of urban entertainment and almost all commercial facilities are absent from the Island, Islanders are more dependent on their own resources for entertainment than most Mainlanders and are completely dependent on the ferry and the Mainland for the necessities of life.

As a result of both the common pleasures and the common discomforts of Island living, as well as the uncertain political situation, Island residents seem to form a particularly closely-knit community. They have created two main social organizations: the Ward's Island Association (established in 1917) and the Algonquin Island Association. Each has its own clubhouse and sponsors an impressive range of social and recreational activities. Islanders have also formed a political organization, the Toronto Island Residents Association, whose mandate is to preserve the Island community. TIRA, established in 1969, keeps abreast of developments relative to the Island's future and keeps in close touch with its members. In addition to the social and political organizations, Islanders support an active Home and School Association and, through it, provide both funds and a variety of volunteer services that enable the small Island Public School to provide programmes that would otherwise be unavailable. Former principal Ted Currie has noted
"We really have a nice situation where we can refuse [help from volunteers], whereas almost every school in the City is begging for help.

There are also two churches and a variety of other special interest groups and facilities, such as the Island Canoe Club, the building co-op, the food co-op, the housing co-op and the Montessori nursery school, which have been organized by Islanders to solve particular problems and fill certain needs.

Island residents keep in touch through a variety of Island newspapers such as The Ward's Island Weekly (founded in 1917), the TIRA News during the winter months and the regrettably defunct Goose and Duck, an amusing and informative blend of public announcements, political comment and diverse Islandobelia (published 1971-1974).

In addition to the above formal community life, Islanders engage in intense personal interaction: borrowing of food or tools, general visiting among neighbours, unplanned encounters during ferry boat rides, and so on.

In conclusion, Islanders appear to share an active formal and informal community life. One Island resident aptly suggested that most Islanders subscribe to what he called "laissez faire socialism"—blending sturdy independence and individualism with mutual self-help.

**c. Boundaries:**

Clear physical boundaries are probably the single most important feature which divides inside from outside and Islanders from non-Islanders.¹ This is not to say that clear boundaries alone are enough to create a sense of community (some high rise apartment complexes and

¹See also Sense of Identity, "Boundaries", p. 168; and Illustration 23.
low-income housing projects have clear boundaries but precious little sense of community. But clear boundaries can be an important positive feature, as Ron Mazza notes, "The other thing that's nice about the Island, is the fact that it's a physically-defined community, which makes it a spiritual community as well."

d. Isolation

Physical isolation also reinforces a sense of community among Toronto Islanders. The Island, of course, is separated from the mainland by a mile-wide stretch of water, a separation which is reinforced by the fact that the only access is by ferry. The sense of isolation is particularly acute in winter when the ferry is less frequent and reliable than at other times of year.

Isolation has been a feature of Island life for many years. Former Islander Alan Howard (1918-1959) comments on the "strange camaraderie" created, in part, by "the isolation formed by the water barrier" that makes the Island "like a small village far removed from big communities, that has to provide its own entertainment, its own activities related to the people who live there."

Islanders have had a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward the isolation. Some enjoy it. Bill Metcalfe, for example, says unequivocally, "Love it. Love being isolated. It's not a problem." But others find it both good and bad. Jenny DeTolly, for example, found her first winter horribly isolated and lonely. Nevertheless, she has also been

fascinated and attracted by the "inter-reliance" and consequent sense of community created by the physical isolation. Even if the political threat were removed, she believes that the closeness of Islanders, while perhaps being somewhat reduced, would remain and, in her opinion, would continue to distinguish the Island community from other places.

5. Inconveniences:

Living on Toronto Island undoubtedly involves coping with a number of inconveniences: the lack of stores and other commercial facilities, the ferry and its fairly rigid schedule (and infrequent winter service), the periodic high water and flooding, the isolation, the houses which need constant attention, and so on. Islanders, however, point to a number of positive aspects of these inconveniences, one of which is enhancing a sense of community.¹ Freya Godard, for example, observes:

I think it's a pretty obvious truth that any sort of external problem does make the community pull together. And of course we have a political one, the political threat, and the various physical difficulties of living on the Island, such as fire and flood and the cold and frozen pipes and that sort of thing. I would hate to see us without some of these difficulties.

6. The Boat and Other Public Meeting Places:

The ferry boats, of course, act as a very important community link, both because the experience of travelling by boat is a very special one which Islanders share and because the boat itself draws people physically together. (See Illustration 27.) Jenny DeTolly comments on this aspect of Island community life:

There is, of course, always the common base of the ferry, which through any season you can meet people, which I think is one of

¹ See Sense of Control: "Inconveniences" pp. 322 ff. for a more extended discussion of Islanders' attitudes toward inconvenience.
the major contributing factors towards the business of community.

The winter ferry, as Freya Godard discusses, is an especially strong link because it is smaller, more arduous to travel (creating a bond of commonly experienced difficulty) and carries very few strangers, since few park visitors travel to the Island during the winter. By contrast:

In the summer there's a line up very often, just to get on the ferry, because of all the visitors. I suppose what it is is that you no longer know everyone on the ferry. You no longer know everyone you see, so in some ways the feeling of community [in the summer] is not very strong, because there are just all these people one doesn't know, even though we don't particularly dislike them. You just don't know them.

David Amer comments on how Islanders, in contrast to people in other places (like the small town of Newcastle, Ontario, where he spent a year), can meet people in "neutral territory"—public places like the boat or the beach or the park or the boardwalk or the baseball diamond or the carless streets—and make preliminary social explorations with new people, which can be followed up if desired:

Well, I think the first thing that's obvious [when comparing the Island to other places] is the boats—getting the 7:45, the 8:15 or the 8:45 in the morning, eventually you get to see people and who they are and the same thing with the boats coming home in the evening. There's no question if you lived in an apartment building or a subdivision you could get any of ten buses within a period of twenty minutes and it's entirely possible you could live at a place for two years and not even see the person who lived three or four doors away and that person could come into your proximity and out of your proximity without becoming a part of your life and could be a person who would be quite interesting. This way you get to see those people and you wonder who they are, what

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1 See also Ms. Godard's comments about the winter ferry on p. 180.

2 David Seamon and Christina Norden, "Marketplace As Place Ballet: A Swedish Example," Landscape 24 (1980), pp. 35–41, describe a periodic market in a small Swedish city where, as one market-goer suggested, "You can stop and talk without obligations" (p. 39) and which, the authors argue, generally promotes a sense of community.
there is about them and there's all sorts of neutral territory where you can meet them on the street and decide whether you want to invite them into your house. It probably doesn't happen in small towns.¹

2. Seasonal Rhythms:

1. General

Social life on the Island varies markedly according to the season, as Elizabeth Amer emphasizes, "As far as social life is concerned, there is a rhythm to it. It changes with the seasons." The summer residents and the park visitors flood over during the summer months; the ferries are crowded and there are long line-ups on weekends; the community social and recreational activities shift from Algonquin Island Association to the Ward's Island Association; everybody spends a great deal of time in outdoor activities; and the tempo of social life is generally faster.

2. Winter:

It is during the winter, however, when Islanders, perhaps more than at any other time of the year, become more aware of themselves as "Islanders" and as a closely-knit community.² Again, they are more

¹This phenomenon of having plentiful neutral territory is also in marked contrast to many suburban situations. Suzannah Lessard encountered the problem of there being no public, neutral territory (where an outsider could rest and observe the scene without feeling "intrusive") in suburbia, while she was researching "Reflections: The Suburban Landscape: Oyster Bay, Long Island," The New Yorker, October 11, 1976, pp. 44-79. She described suburbia (pp. 47-48):

It seems, indeed, that existence here literally consists of private realms, with few points of contact between them (and the only realm accessible to the outsider is his own car). Parks and luncheonettes of the kind in which people dawdle are rare in Oyster Bay. Such public areas as do exist — parking lots and supermarkets are hardly terra firma from which to observe and gather in a sense of place.

²See also Sense of Environment: "Winter", pp. 271-273.
isolated then; they encounter more distinct physical inconveniences then; there are fewer "outsiders" or strangers present then; and so on.

The important role of winter in creating a sense of community has a long history, as Alan Howard indicates in discussing the Island of the pre-Metro era:

It became quite a metropolis in winter time. A tremendously tight-knit community. All sorts of community activities. I remember one time they staged a great Christmas festival on Main Street and a bitter cold winter when one of the residents impersonated Santa Claus and the community associations had a gift for every child there and the whole street was strung with coloured lights and we all sang carols out there in the bitter cold. There were a great many activities which tend to knit a community together.

h. Cars and Social Life:

Islanders mention over and over again how important living in a carless environment is to them. Among the benefits cited is the positive impact of having no cars on Island social life. Several Islanders commented on this aspect of Island life:

Because you don't have cars, people will tend to go out to walk and do things and they get out and around and I think that does [help people meet each other]. (David Harris)

1 See also Sense of Environment: "Carless Environment", p.273, and Illustrations 29 and 30.

2 As Edward Hall points out, "automobiles insulate man not only from the environment but from human contact as well". Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), p. 177. In a car-free environment, it is much easier for people to go out walking, to see and come to recognize one another and to casually meet people, which, of course, may help to reinforce a sense of community. For a different, more positive view of the automobile and the highway strip as creators and sustainers of social contact see J.B. Jackson, "The Social Landscape" in Landscapes: Selected Writings of J.B. Jackson, ed. Ervin H. Zube (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1970), pp. 146-152.
In Etobicoke when I went out to see David in a track meet, a Saturday afternoon, absolutely nobody on the streets and I'm thinking, "If I had to move here, it would kill me. What is this?" That's not what people do. They sort of wander around and see each other. (David Amer)

1. Some Community Values:

Islanders are linked together not only by sharing a significant and meaningful place or by sharing common problems, but also by sharing some common values. The values discussed here certainly do not form an exclusive list (others, such as patience, toughness, love of nature and the outdoors, and participation in community life, might be identified), but the ones included here do seem to contribute to Islanders' images of themselves. Obviously, not every Islander holds every value discussed here. But these values appear to be fairly widely held. And some of the values appear to derive from—or at least be well in line with—the exigencies of Island living. It is just as well to value self-reliance if you are likely to have to repair a broken gas heater or frozen pipes without the assistance of a repairman or to value a scavenger society in a situation where it is very difficult to transport new building materials or new furniture. It is impossible to say, from the information collected for this study, whether people held these values prior to coming to the Island (or were attracted to the Island in part because they perceived it to be a place where other people held these values) or whether, through a self-selection process, those who remain on the Island develop them in order to fit in or adapt more readily to Island life. Probably both of these processes have been at work.

The discussion which follows is based on Islanders' self-perceptions, their images of themselves, and not on any judgement as to
whether they really are more independent or tolerant or self-reliant or non-conformist or socially mixed than other people.

1. Individuality and Tolerance:

Islanders see themselves as "individuals"—as independent people who think for themselves, who are "out of the mainstream" (discussed below), who are "non-conformists", and who are tolerant of differences in others. For example, in the introduction to their "Summary of the Island Residents' Attitudes—as reflected in block meetings", Islanders wrote:

Out of this activity came a surprising (for Islanders pride themselves on being individuals) degree of agreement on the principles which should govern an extension of life for the Island community.¹

In a similar vein, when appearing before the Metro Parks Committee on November 29, 1973 to present a brief in favour of retaining Island homes, TIRA Chairman, Maureen Smith, observed:

Perhaps it is appropriate that I am here to represent these people. Although I don't like being "typical" anything, I certainly like it better than being called a "squatter". But I am quite a typical Islander....

Responses to the 1973 City social survey demonstrated an appreciation for a lack of pressure "to conform" and a tolerance of individual differences, as did the interviews for this study:

I like the lack of pressure, I guess, the pressure to conform. (Jenny DeTolly)

[I'd miss] the informality of it. The fact that you can do what you like and nobody censors you for it. You don't feel that anybody really says, "Tut, tut, tut." Not that we do anything different. (Maureen Smith)

¹Appendix C, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, op. cit.
Certainly, something that a lot of people value, not only being able to avoid bureaucracy to a certain extent, but to be able to build, putter around and not have to be terribly concerned about officials or one's neighbours being affronted. Most people have a scruffy boat in some corner of the yard or maybe a scruffy old house over most of the yard, you know. That's certainly a common feature. (Pēter Crīdlānd)

2. Self-Reliance:

Islanders see themselves as being self-reliant, resourceful, and more self-sufficient than most people. They value self-reliance, for example, over convenience. They point out that simply surviving on the Island (keeping the houses going, organizing to cope with the lack of stores or inconvenient transportation service) requires a fair degree of ingenuity. "I think on the Island," Jenny DeTolly comments, "you've got to have a degree of personal resource just to survive. I'm absolutely convinced of that." And they show evident personal pride in coping with the various inconveniences of Island life.

3. "Out of the Mainstream":

Islanders see themselves as being "out of the mainstream", unconventional, different from most other urbanites. Mary Madrick, discussing the rigours of winter life at Centre Island during the 1940's, observes, "We were young, most of us and we rather enjoyed being different, because we were different." More recently, Terry Tyers comments simply, "It's different and I get pleasure out of its being different." Bill Metcalfe observes, "Probably it's the people who like to be isolated from the mainstream" who would like living on the Island and Elizabeth Amer says laughingly:

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1See also Sense of Control: "Inconveniences" pp. 322-326 for a lengthier discussion of this topic.
I moved year-round to the Island when I was about 15, so, as usual, I'm moving in the opposite direction of the mainstream, from the suburbs to the city. I guess you've got to be willing to be somewhat out of the mainstream in order to find your way over here, unless you were born here, and then I think the place has its effect on you. Once you get here, I think the place has an effect on people.

4. Anti-Commercialism and Anti-Materialism:

Islanders generally value the lack of commercialism of the Island as opposed to the City, and of the eastern end of the Island where they live as opposed to Centre Island where the hot dog stands and amusement park attractions vie for the attention (and the dollars) of park visitors. For example, Jenny DeTolly comments, "[When I arrived from South Africa], I was very aware of the commercialism of the City and what I considered the non-commercialness of the Island."

Islanders also value the lack of obvious materialism on the Island. They see themselves as being materially unambitious, as being the opposite of conspicuous consumers and as being uninterested in lavish display of wealth or status. "People who are materially ambitious" or "who have to have a private swimming pool and that sort of luxury status symbol convenient around them" would not be happy living on the Island, according to Terry Tyers and Peter Holt. The small houses, the small lots, and the carless streets, of course, make all this possible (or necessary), as many Islanders are quick to point out. Islanders, in short, see themselves as living a more natural, more authentic, more honest, more relaxed (and more enjoyable) existence than would be possible elsewhere, where, in their view, status and wealth and making a fast buck and getting ahead and so on seem to govern human relations and human ambitions.
5. "Scavenger Society":

Islanders are living in what could be called a "scavenger society"—or, more politely, a "conservator society" or a "make-do society"—which is related to the fact that it is difficult to bring over bulky items (like building materials, furniture and large appliances) and to the fact that many Islanders subscribe to the tenets of the conservator society (against over-consumption, waste and so on). They recycle all sorts of things and place a high value on skillfulness in doing this. Skillful scavenger and recycler Michael Albrecht comments on this:

It just seemed like everything was free and if you just look in the right spot, well, everything is, or it's very, very cheap. And those were the things we looked for and so after a while, after so many walks on the beach, you begin to know what you can use. You just always bring home the best pieces and if you aren't going to burn them [in the stove], you build with them in the summer....Well, Margaret Copeland's house burned down. I brought back all the bricks from her chimney and they're going to go right up there and they're going to be our fireplace and chimney in our house, on the next floor, maybe in the next 2 or 3 years. All the panelling we got out of Paul Saltzman's house when they ripped it down. I knew what the Parks Department was going to do....They were just going to go in there and level Paul Saltzman's house. That's what they do every time. So, just a couple of days before they were going to do that, [I went in]. ...[Lots of Islanders] scavenge. Sure they do....It's terrible what [the Parks Department] has done, what they've destroyed. Taperman's takes the stuff apart and recycles it. But these guys, they just—the antiques they've destroyed.

It is not surprising that the Parks Department (which fenced off, bulldozed and burnt hundreds of houses during the late 1950's and early 1960's) and Islanders (who climbed over fences and helped themselves to whatever was portable—plumbing, furniture, lumber and so on) have clashed. According to their respective sets of values, each views the other as "vandals".
6. "Lifestyle Over Workstyle":

Islanders, as David Harris expresses it, tend to value "lifestyle over workstyle". Many Islanders see themselves not only as not being materially ambitious, but also as not being ambitious in their careers—a related phenomenon of course, since island life is relatively cheap and enables people to put other interests ahead of career interests. This is not to say that Islanders are not successful in their work; many are—only that they are less inclined to devote themselves wholeheartedly to "getting ahead". This is also not to say that every Islander is unambitious in his or her career, only that a number of them (of different ages and backgrounds and careers) acknowledged that they personally, and many of their friends, were not. The island itself, of course, has many attractions and opportunities for people who wish to concentrate on non-work pursuits (such as sailing, cycling, nature, and so on). And a number of Islanders place a high value on pursuing these other interests.

7. Social Mix:

Islanders see themselves as forming a socially mixed community and take pride and pleasure in this. The community may not be as

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1Christopher Winters, "The Social Identity of Evolving Neighborhoods," op. cit., pp. 9-11, discusses "self-consciously heterogeneous neighborhoods" (both racially and economically mixed) as a growing phenomenon of the 1970's. Rather than trying to sort themselves out according to race or economic status, some people are consciously and deliberately trying to live in heterogeneous areas. Whether they will be successful (whether the areas will remain mixed or will eventually become more homogeneous—and whether people will change their minds and decide that they really would prefer a homogeneous area, remains to be seen). Nevertheless, social mix has become a positive value for a growing number of people (and has entered the canon of "good planning principles").
socially or economically mixed as they perceive it to be (the 1973 City social survey indicated, for example, that only 6% of those reporting their occupations were "blue collar"), but they do have both rich and poor members; status and wealth differences are not as marked as elsewhere; and they do have residents with very different backgrounds and interests. The value of living in a mixed community (mixed in interests as well as social profile) was mentioned repeatedly in the 1973 City survey. One respondent, for example, wrote, "The community on the Island is a unique one, one which planners dream of, consisting of people of all ages and incomes." And, again, in the interviews conducted for this study, respondents emphasized the value of living in a socially mixed community. For example:

What makes the Island such a nice place is the unique people. I think this is what makes it such a nice place to live, because you just take my situation. I have a neighbour on this side and he's a potter and she does weaving. The other side, he's a lecturer and I could go down further and could find a plumber, people from every walk of life and I think that's what really gives it its flavour.

(Memory Shearing)

The wide range of people the community contains is very important. I enjoy the fact that there is variety here and value that... I don't think I want the straight-jacket of relating only to people who are doing something similar to that which we do.

(Terry Tyers)

Over here we're all paying the same thing, you know, and we all live in the same sort of houses, you know. There's the rich and there's the poor. There's people on mother's allowance, people on welfare, and people that make really good money. It's just a thing that happens because the houses are the way they are, the fact that you have to rely on your neighbours, you know, like being cut off from stores and things... It's not a money thing. And we didn't know until if came out in the paper that had

1 Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, op. cit. It is impossible to tell if there was any systematic bias in the reporting, for example if "blue collar" individuals were less likely to fill out the questionnaire.
that kind of money and their kid had just been in here playing
with Chris and they pay two dollars, the same as everybody else,
so their kid can go to Supervision. They're not sending them off
to some great exclusive camp or something. They're just interest-
ed in the way of life over here, the same as we are. And that's
kind of nice, to have that kind of mix, that everybody's the same
and there isn't this money distinction. (Maxine Wilson)

j. Ward's and Algonquin: Social Images:

Outsiders perhaps tend to lump all Islanders together into one
group, but over the years Islanders themselves have made finer dis-
tinctions among the different Islands and within each Island. Now, as
before when there were still residential communities at Centre and
Hanlan's Point, Islanders know their own Island best, engage in most
of their social activities on their home Island and generally feel most
favourably toward their own Island. The remaining Island community,
therefore, is not a homogeneous one. Some of the distinctions Island-
ers make among themselves between Ward's and Algonquin and within each
Island are examined here. These images are based on an amalgam of soc-
ial and physical features. While it is impossible to divorce completely
the one from the other, emphasis in this section is on social Images. ¹

1. Inter-Island Images:

Whether or not accurate from a statistical point of view, many
Islanders do perceive some distinct differences between Ward's and

¹See Sense of Environment: "Ward's and Algonquin: Physical
Images", pp. 274-276, for a more detailed discussion of perceived
physical differences.
Algonquin and some would agree with the life-long Algonquin Islander who observed, "There's a big difference between Algonquin and Ward's to my mind. They are really two separate communities." A preliminary note of caution should be sounded, however. The differences perceived should not be over-emphasized. Many Islanders, no doubt, would agree with Bill Metcalfe's comments that although there are differences, "Any sense of community I feel here, I feel about the whole thing."

Islanders tend to regard Algonquin Islanders as more conventional, more affluent, more stable, more family-oriented, more professional, even more "suburban" than Ward's Islanders. Conversely, they tend to see Ward's Islanders as more unconventional, transient, and "looser" (in their attitudes and social relations). One former Algonquin Islander comments on some of these differences:

I think they're different. The people on Ward's Island generally seem to be a lot looser than you would find on Algonquin. Algonquin seems sort of suburban. A lot of older people live on.

The following comments are based on the statistics collected for the City's report Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, op. cit. Some of the differences mentioned most frequently by Islanders are not borne out by the available statistics. For example, that Algonquin has more professionals than Ward's does (40% of the Algonquin respondents and 41% of the Ward's respondents held professional jobs); or that Algonquin Islanders are more affluent than Ward's Islanders (43% of the Algonquin respondents and 48% of the Ward's respondents reported earning more than $12,000; perhaps, however, a difference might emerge at a higher level of income than was investigated here). In fact, in terms of most categories investigated (such as age, income, education, occupation) Ward's and Algonquin residents appeared to be quite similar. Among the most notable differences (which are also reflected in Islanders' images) are the fact that Ward's has far more summer residents than Algonquin (34% of the Ward's respondents compared with 8% of the Algonquin residents said they were summer residents); and the fact that Algonquin has more families with children (59% of the Algonquin households compared with only 47% of the Ward's households), while Ward's has more non-family households (28% on Ward's compared with 20% on Algonquin) and more single-person households (Ward's has 16% compared with Algonquin's 8%).
Algonquin and they all have their little patch of grass and fence in front. You get the feeling they were fairly established and set in their views, whereas you never feel that about most of the people on Ward's. Partly they're so close to their neighbours. You have to be a bit looser. There seem to be a lot of professional people on Algonquin. I don't know about Ward's Island, what the proportion would be.

Many comments similar to these were made by people interviewed for this study.

2. Intra-Island Differences:

As Ward's Islander Freya Godard said, "The Island isn't just one social group with one set of rules. It is really a collection of subcultures and groups." Obviously, there are few clear boundaries between groups, but much overlap. Nevertheless, Islanders do make social distinctions within each Island.

On Algonquin, Algonquin Islanders identified (using various terms) such groups as: the "new Islanders" (i.e., people who have moved to the Island, especially in about the last 10 years) and the "old Islanders", the (young) professionals, the sailors, and the AIA activists.

On Ward's, Ward's Islanders identified such groups as: the "new Islanders" and the "old Islanders" (further sub-divided into Ward's Islanders and former Centre Islanders and former Hanlan's Pointers), the summer Islanders and the year-round Islanders, the "baseball players" (or "jocks", who tend to be old Islanders who also play hockey together), the (young) professionals, the artisans, and the "freaks" or "long hairs".

The most consistently mentioned distinctions (and the ones having the most significance for the political situation) are the summer Islanders (as opposed to the year-round Islanders) and the old
Islanders (as opposed to the new Islanders). There is a good deal of overlap, however, especially on Ward's between summer Islanders and old Islanders, because many of the summer residents have been coming to the Island for many years.

3. Summer Residents:

One of the toughest social issues on the Island is probably the fate of the summer Islanders. TIRA policy always has been to fight for them, as well as the year-round residents. But there is no doubt that the presence of the summer residents has damaged the Islanders' political case, especially in recent years. Politicians have continued to paint the Island as a "summer cottage enclave for the rich" (even when the statistics do not support such a view) and a number of politicians who favour saving Island houses from destruction are nevertheless opposed to allowing summer residents to remain.

Islanders themselves have mixed views on the subject of summer Islanders. Among year-round residents, the views range from outright (though generally concealed and unspoken) hostility, through ambivalence, to staunch support. Open hostility is candidly related in the following comments:

I hear my reputation with summer Islanders was a bit tarnished. Somewhere along the line they had learned what my attitude to summer Islanders was. Which wasn't very nice... Just to see the whole lot at the bottom of the Lake. Well, to be quite honest with you, I'd spent five years slogging my bloody guts out to save the houses here, doing the best I could, best job I could. And these bastards would come in the summer and bounce around saying, "Anyone for tennis?", as though it was their own bloody island. And then they'd push us around and act in such an arrogant way that they used to make me so angry I didn't even speak.

1 The City report, op. cit., pp. 38 - 39, points out that about 75% of the population is year-round and that 87% of the houses are occupied year-round.
to some of them... They'd all come over on the first of July and it was their island. That sort of feeling... And they'd done nothing. Nothing... They're not all like that. I mean, people like... the younger ones tend to be more realistic... And another thing is they seem to have the impression, "Nothing else happens on the island once we're gone." "The whole thing goes into limbo, because we're not here, nothing is happening." "Nothing else happens. The only thing that makes the island worth living here is the Ward's Association and what happens in the summer."

Others have mixed feelings about the summer Islanders. They feel neither whole-hearted support nor whole-hearted hostility:

The obvious conflict is: what are these bastards doing coming here in the summertime and that's all and how that jeopardizes our political situation. [Is that attitude widespread?] I certainly hope so. However, at the same time, my second thought is: they're entitled because they are our heritage; they made us what we are today to a large extent... To my mind it's part of the tradition that has brought this community together and gave us our history.

Well, I know... feels very strongly against summer Islanders. They've been here for a long time. You don't like to feel a whole bunch, because they're your friends and if you're going to get really uptight about them, you can't be their friends. So I don't feel...

And others are staunch supporters, who view them as friends and valuable parts of the community:

What the summer Islanders have given really is a sense of tradition. There's a Ward's Island Association. There's a clubhouse. There are events to take part in. There's Gala Day. There are all of these things and people have to work and pull together and [they have] this sort of community spirit.

No, please don't use that expression "summer Islanders". No, they're being tarred with a brush, which is most unfair. No, they are hard-working people... The summer people, they are extremely good in that [giving time and money to the community]. You'll find they are more the old-time people that have been here for a good many years. They not only give their money but of their time. They're the first to volunteer for any project.
Summer Islanders themselves reflect a number of views. Some feel a measure of guilt about their situation (and its possible impact on the future of the community); some feel a degree of paranoia (that the year-round Islanders resent them and might eventually jettison them); and some feel hostility toward year-round, especially newer Islanders. Part of this hostility is based on a generational conflict over such things as neatness (e.g., in personal appearance and house maintenance), as respect for the old way of doing things (e.g., declining prestige of the WIA), and as political strategy (e.g., whether to demonstrate at City Hall, which is discussed later).

Friction between the summer and year-round residents should not be over-emphasized. But it is natural that the two groups would have different perceptions and the potential for conflict does lurk beneath the surface.

k. Big City - Small Town: Social Images:

The special qualities of one place may be detected, in part, by comparing and contrasting it with other places. Islanders' images of the Island are related to their images both of the big city and the small town. In both cases, their images are mixed, containing both positive and negative features. Here the emphasis is on social images; but, as noted elsewhere, the social and physical aspects which form the total images cannot be completely disentangled.

1 See also Sense of Identity, pp. 169-171.

2 See also Sense of Environment: "Urban Proximity - Pastoral Retreat", pp. 276-278, for a discussion which concentrates on the physical aspects of Islanders' images of the City.
1. City Images:

Islanders have mixed opinions about the City. Some are attracted to the perceived excitement, diversity and opportunity presented by the City, while some are repelled, even frightened by its fast pace, noise, pollution, commercialism, perceived danger and unfriendliness. One respondent to the 1973 social survey, for example, commented, "People smile and kids are happy. Here you have a sense of belonging. It is far removed from that cancer called a City."

While perceiving an obvious physical contrast between the Island and the City, some Islanders perceive some social similarities (e.g., diverse population; presence of well-educated, interesting, sophisticated people). Some Islanders, like former Islander Alan Howard, see themselves as essentially "City" people and characterize the Island community as very "cosmopolitan".

Undoubtedly there are both cosmopolitan, sophisticated City-types on the Island, as well as more parochial, local-types who are basically uninterested in (if not repelled by) the City. By living on the Island, as David Amer suggested, "you can be as parochial as you want... or [as] expansive."

2. Small Town Images:

Islanders' images of their being socially similar to the City, at least in some respects, are clarified by their images of small towns. Some Islanders see the Island as being "just like a small town". Precisely what this means is not always specified, although

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1 See Elizabeth Amer's comments below on the differences between the Island and the small town, pp. 217-218.
presumably it means such things as its being perceived as a friendly place where everybody knows everybody else, where people are safe and secure, where people are involved in community affairs and exercise a degree of control over the community and where there is a true sense of community.

Some see the Island as having the benefits of a small town (such as friendliness and proximity to nature), without the disadvantages (such as parochialism, limited shopping, and so on), because it is located so close to a big city. "It's a nice compromise," comments Ron Mazza, "in the sense that you have a small town community sensation attached to all the advantages of a larger city, which you don't have if you are actually in a small town."

But other people deny that the Island is like a small town at all. Elizabeth Amer, who spent a lonely, unhappy year in Newcastle, Ontario, comments on the differences. She admits that, in contrast to on the Island, in Newcastle she was an "outsider", but she obviously feels that the differences stemmed from more than the differences between being an "outsider" or an "insider". She found the house and the physical surroundings beautiful, but the social situation less attractive or comfortable:

Newcastle [at that time was] full of small-town people and the Island is full of City people, so although it's a small number of people living together, they're city folks, you know, who I tend to think are different than small-town people. The mentality is different...It was very conformist, I thought... It was a very lonely year. That was the great thing that one appreciated about the Island, coming back to it, was that there was this opportunity for lots of contacts with people and lots of interesting people...I think [David and I] need to be in the

1 Some also see it as having some of the disadvantages of a small town, like nosiness and family feuding. See comments quoted on p. 192.
City in order to find people who are attuned to our peculiar approach to life. We can find people here on the Island. We could find them in the City, I think; but to find our sort of peculiar people who are not in the mainstream, to find associates and friends in a small town is very difficult.

1. Suburbia: Social Images:

Islanders' images of the City and the small town are mixed; but their images of the suburbs (which remain fairly undifferentiated and generalized) are virtually entirely negative. They see suburbia and suburbanites as being, in most respects, the opposite of the Island and Islanders as homogeneous, conformist, intolerant of individuality, socially uninvolved, and obsessed with cars, status, convenience, neatness, "getting ahead", and material success. Two Islanders reveal their negative images:

Sometimes you get a young couple here who've come here, they've got married and they've come here because it's very cheap and they're saving up for a down payment. Now, what they're really interested in is that split-level or brick bungalow in Oakville or some place and this'll do them until they get enough money together. And it's a decent place to have your kids if you're having kids. But their object is to bank money and get the hell out into where "real life" is taking place, in one of the suburbs. And they can start doing that there, in a wall-to-wall broadloomed, French provincial number. That's what it's really all about: making money and being neat.

Whoever it was who planned the Borough of Etobicoke - the perfect community - would be intolerant of the "slum conditions" [here] .... I think the conventions and therefore the by-laws of a planned community - if you go along with the Borough of Etobicoke and you're not supposed to hang out your washing, you have to have a dryer and you're not allowed to have a television aerial and you can't have your dog on a leash which is longer than ten feet, etc., if you really subscribed to all that stuff, then it would drive you crazy living over here, because there are just too many people who do not want to go along with that. If you can understand that people can function without having those things and still be interesting people, then I think you can live here.... I know people who can live in houses which should be condemned and function in them.

1 See also Sense of Environment: "Suburbia: Physical Images," pp. 279-279, for a lengthier discussion of suburbia which emphasizes the physical aspects.
and are interesting people. I know people who will wipe off their plastic doormat the minute you come in and they function and they're nice people. They can live here. So you can find people here who would prefer that things be super neat—all the visual stuff—all the things that bombard their senses—they can live here and you can enjoy their company a real lot and realize that they're part of the mosaic.

In conclusion, the first part of this chapter has investigated those aspects of the Island and Island life which draw Islanders together as a group and foster a strong sense of community. The second part of the chapter looks at the relationships between this sense of community and the political history of the Island.

ii. Sense of Community—Defense of Place:

The links between sense of community and defense of place are manifold.

a. Impact of Islanders' Sense of Community on Their Defense of Place:

1. Direct Appeal Based on Community Arguments:

Islanders' strong sense of community has provided a general foundation on which they could build a defense of their Island. Although Islanders and their supporters, as discussed below, have relied heavily on "community preservation" arguments only since about 1973, they have alluded to the strength and value of their community when responding to various threats over the years.

As early as 1937, for example, when 54 West Island Drive (Hanlan's Point) houses were faced with destruction in order to make way for the building of the Island airport, Islanders, in their attempt to find a new site on the Island for their houses, emphasized that in
recent years they had become a "real community" on Hanlan's Point. They had built a clubhouse (1925) and improved their local church, St. Emmanuel's. In a respectful appeal to the City Board of Control, therefore, the Hanlan's Point Association noted:

We want to leave this one thought clearly in your mind that we are a community as a whole and wish to remain that way. The removal of any considerable number out of our immediate section will weaken the whole.

We know you, gentlemen are kept busy and the daily problems are difficult of solution, but we want to leave you with the thought that you are dealing with a community that has friendly, co-operative interests and not with an isolated body of residents.

Eventually the City did find a new site, as requested, but not near Hanlan's Point. Algonquin Island (formerly Sunfish Island) was opened for cottage development.

As noted in Sense of History, the major development of the late 1940's and early 1950's was the rapid growth of the winter (and year-round) community. This led to a fundamental change in Islanders' image of themselves (as an established, residential community, rather than as a summer resort community) and in their relations with City politicians (who, for the most part, continued to regard the Island as a summer resort and were reluctant to spend money or encourage year-round

1 Hanlan's Point Association, "Brief to the Mayor and Board of Control," Minutes-City Board of Control, 1937, vol. 2, July 28, 1938, Item #321, p. 1. This is the first example of Islanders' using "community arguments" uncovered in this study.

2 Ibid.
A winter community on the Island, of course, needed more facilities and services than a summer one—winter transportation, additional fire and police protection, better flood control measures, more educational facilities, and so on. And permanent residents were more likely than summer ones to be both aware of inadequacies and less likely to put up with them. Their Island house, after all, was their permanent home—not their temporary Island retreat. So, as they grew in numbers, they became more demanding and aggressive in their relations with politicians and public officials. These, in turn, became more and more reluctant to spend money on the Island and, ultimately, decided to hand it over to Metro for parkland.

During this same period (prior to Metro's assuming control in 1956), when Island residents were increasingly seeing themselves as a year-round community, City politicians and other interested parties put forward a variety of proposals to radically change the Island. In order to respond to these proposals, and to generally represent their interests at City Hall, Islanders formed the Inter-Island Council (IIC) in 1948, which marked a turning point in Islanders' political behaviour and image of themselves as an established, year-round community.

1For a brief period in the late 1940's when Toronto was in the grip of a severe post-War housing crisis, City politicians did make improvements to such services as winter transportation in order to encourage winter living on the Island, but their encouragement was short-lived. As an example of politicians' regarding the Island as a summer resort, Mayor Lamport in 1952 suggested that there was a health menace because of flooding and threatened evacuation of winter—but not summer—residents. (See p. 145.) And, defending his own proposal in April 1953, Lamport commented, "As long as we have permanent residents on the Island, we will have permanent headaches and permanent deficits." Quoted in "Must End All-Year Residence on Island/Raise Level—Mayor," Star, April 14, 1953.
Contending that the Island was not only a City park, but "also an integral residential area of the City",¹ the IIC became an active, occasionally aggressive, voice for Island residents and at each stage countered these proposals with suggestions of its own which would have improved the park and housing conditions, but which would have left the existing residential areas alone. During this period, Islanders did, from time to time, allude to the value of retaining the existing community. In 1949, for example, Island spokesmen, supported by over 100 Island residents, objected to a City Planning Board Official Plan proposal to eliminate and replace the existing houses with new apartment buildings and hotels. IIC representative, Mr. A. Whiskin, observed that, in contrast to summer homes, "Permanent homes mean that people have a year-round stake in the Island. A permanent 'watchdog' population would be better for the Island in general."² and, further, "The greatest protection of the island as a park area is to have an interested community there."³ Then, in 1951, IIC spokesman Alan Howard opposed the joint Toronto Harbour Commission-City Planning Board plan (Map 23) saying, among other things:

The City Planning Board has stressed the fact that a large city suffers from loss of community spirit vital to the life of a city

¹ Inter-Island Council, Preamble To Part One of Its Brief Concerning the Future of the Island, April 12, 1948. This was issued several months after the first City Planning Board proposal in 1947 to eliminate existing houses and replace them with new apartments and other permanent housing. (See also Map 22.)


³ Ibid.
and yet here it would wipe out one tightly-knit community that is doing its best to assist civic administration.¹

But, in these early years, such references were infrequent and low-key. Islanders stressed other arguments in their political struggles.

For a number of years after Metro took over the island and began demolishing houses to extend the park, whatever sense of community Islanders felt did not translate into taking political action. There was little opposition to the demolitions during the 1950's and the battles for the Lakeshore houses (orchestrated by Islanders’ ward alderman and "champion" David Rotenberg) did not employ community arguments, presumably because neither Islanders nor their political supporters had any reason to believe that such arguments would fall on receptive ears. In the late 1960's, however, the general political environment began to change: the "citizens' movement" (which, among other things, grew out of urban renewal and neighbourhood preservation battles) was growing in the City of Toronto, as in other major North American cities. As a reflection of this new mood, the remaining Toronto Island residents (on Ward's and Algonquin) formed a new political organization to succeed the now-defunct IIC—the Toronto Island Residents Association (TIRA), "for the single purpose of preserving the Toronto Island community".² In an introductory letter to fellow Islanders to drum up support for the new organization, Peter Gzowski (President of the WIA) and Mark Harrison (President of the AIA)

¹Quoted in Marilyn Bell, "Fear No Place For Tots On 'Incubator Island' In Transformation Plan," Telegram, September 13, 1951.

referred to the new developments on the Mainland:

At least one new trend in Toronto politics is worth our paying attention to. It ought to encourage us. More and more, the people who make the decisions at City Hall - the civil servants as well as the politicians - are listening to the desires of various community groups. Rather than telling them what will become of them, they're asking them what should. The cases of Trefann Court and Don Vale are two strong examples. In each case, community organizations were able to affect the future of the communities they represented.¹

The same letter discussed the virtues of the Island community:

And all around Toronto, as in other megalopolises of the 1960's, town planners are looking for new ways to build the kinds of communities that already exist here, communities that mix together all ages and all income levels, all backgrounds and a variety of interests. What those town planners are seeking are new ways to counteract the sterilizing monotony of today's suburbia. We offer an existing example of what they're spending money to create.²

Nevertheless, although in the early 1970's some politicians made references to the value of preserving the Island community³ and Islanders began increasingly to debate among themselves the justifications for having a permanent community on the Island,⁴ Island residents continued to take the advice of their senior alderman, David Rotenberg, not to emphasize community arguments and to simply argue for temporary

²Ibid.
³On June 29, 1971, for example, Karl Jaffary told Metro Council, "We should not needlessly destroy a community" as he voted for a lease extension. Alden Baker, "Islanders Get At Least One Year Reprieve," Globe and Mail, June 30, 1971.
⁴For example, during the summer of 1971, the TIRA Executive engaged in several long and heated debates over whether to send a letter suggesting that the Metro Planning Board should investigate whether a permanent residential community should be created on the Island. They finally decided not to.
extensions of their leases (which they obtained in 1970 and 1971).

Community preservation arguments, like historic preservation arguments, only came to the fore after the December 1972 municipal elections. Mayor David Crombie, a large number of City aldermen and a small number of borough politicians, were elected on neighbourhood preservation platforms and a spirit of community preservation was abroad in the City (but, unfortunately for Islanders, not in the boroughs or on Metro Council). After the 1972 elections, therefore, Islanders and their political supporters (see below) have relied heavily on community preservation arguments: i.e., that the Toronto Island community is a strong and distinctive community which deserves to be preserved for this reason alone (quite apart from all the other reasons cited by supporters for why Island homes should be retained—e.g., because there is a housing shortage or because Islanders make a positive contribution to the quality of the park by adding a touch of diversity or a measure of safety, or because more parkland is not needed at this particular location, and so on). In November 1973, at one of the three public meetings sponsored by the City prior to the Metro Council vote on the future of the Island community (December 11, 1973), TIRA Executive member Peter Atkinson said:

We are a tight-knit community for a number of reasons. The main one is geography. We experience a good deal of isolation from popular forms of city entertainment, so we group together and run our own forms of entertainment... We are also a "together" group because we have lived under the threat of destruction for so many years.

Our viable community may be on the verge of destruction. If our point is not understood and appreciated at meetings such as this, the bulldozers may very well bury the last remnants of a strong
Later that month, TIRA Chairman Maureen Smith presented TIRA’s Brief to the Metro Parks and Recreation Committee. Noting that she was "here on an emotional errand", she tried to counter various charges commonly laid against Islanders (e.g., that they were transient or rich or greedy and so on) and made a strong plea not to destroy "a living community":

If we had to move, some of us would find it very hard to find new places to live, at prices that we could afford to pay and this particularly applies to old people, of whom there are quite a number on the Island. You know, it is all very easy to be a planner and say "we’ll have to clear these houses off. They’re in the way." But these are not just squatters’ shacks, as some people, who should know better, claimed. It is not houses we are talking about. Not their lots. Not a prime piece of real estate. It is a living community, whose character has been shaped over the years, generations in some cases, by the people who live there. We are, I agree, somewhat independent – free spirits perhaps – in an increasingly confined world. We like to make our own pleasures. We support our own community centres which we built and on which we pay taxes. We do things there which sometimes seem to people more like the activities in a small village. There are a lot of craftsmen on the Island – potters, weavers, artists – and next week the community centre will become a Christmas bazaar. But I’ve said enough about what kind of people we are. I want to make it clear to you that we are not some kind of freaks or opportunists or rapacious land speculators – just ordinary people. We want to stay on the Island because it is our home and because it seems unreasonable to destroy a community at this time. We in fact occupy very little of the space on the Islands and we know that we don’t get in the way of people from elsewhere in Metro enjoying visits to the Island Park. I’ve borrowed some aerial photographs which I’d like you to look at and they show what a small part of the Island our community does in fact cover. Does it really have to be destroyed?

Their plea, however, fell on deaf ears at Metro.

As is evident from the rest of this chapter, Islanders have continued to stress such community preservation arguments.

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2. Refusal To Split The Community:

In addition to leading to such direct appeals based on community arguments, Islanders' sense of community has affected their political behaviour in a number of other ways.

It has caused Islanders to react strongly against any attempt to "divide and conquer" their community. For example, it motivated them to reject a proposal of the Metro Parks and Recreation Committee in June 1971 to terminate Ward's Island leases but to extend Algonquin leases for a year. Maureen Smith describes Islanders' reaction to this attempt to split the community:

The community just went ZUNK! We're not going to be divided. It was fantastic, you know....There was a meeting in the WIA Clubhouse that night and somebody said, "Are we prepared to accept it?" And we said, "No! All or Nothing!" And it was really the first time in years that the two Islands had said, "We're in it together, through thick or thin."...Maybe, probably the odd voice in private [favoured accepting it]....There were a few Algonquin people who said, "Let's not jeopardize our year by supporting them" And they just got literally flattened by other Algonquin Islanders....We said [to Rotenberg], "No way," And we said, "It's just stupid. We can't take that. That's crazy." So, he said, "Don't worry. Don't worry."

TIRA rapidly put together a strongly-worded brief which stated emphatically that Islanders "consider themselves a single, united community", and "to destroy half the houses would be to kill the community." For the first time at Metro Council, Islanders developed a community argument which emphasized the social mix, the value of the community to the park and the historic nature of the community:

The car-free environment; the combination of residential and park—

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1. Toronto Island Residents Association, Brief To the Members of The Executive Committee and Council of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, June 29, 1971.

2. Ibid.
uses of land; and the variety of ages, incomes, interests and occupations of the residents make the Island the kind of community that many modern planners are trying to create.

For 125 years the presence of this residential community has provided mainland visitors with variety, contrast and human interest. Countless mainlanders have been rescued from drowning by Island residents. The absence of these residents will result in an increased and needless loss of life.¹

"To destroy needlessly a century old community", they concluded, "would be irresponsible and immoral."² On this occasion, Metro Council voted to extend all the leases of residents on both Ward's and Algonquin Islands.

Islanders' strong sense of community also enabled them to fend off attempts by Metro in 1974 to threaten and seduce Islanders into leaving the Island before the August 31, 1974 deadline (set by Metro Council on December 11, 1973).³ TIRA sent out the following appeal to Islanders' sense of community:

TIRA has managed to get a copy of a letter which will shortly be sent to you by Metro Toronto. These letters are being sent out by Metro on a street by street basis.

DON'T PANIC

You will notice that the letter is a direct appeal to you personally to book and leave early. If you believe the community should stay, as TIRA executive does, and as the vast majority of residents of the City and Boroughs do, you will want the community to act as a whole and not on an individual basis. Metro of course wants

¹Ibid. Nevertheless, this was only one of many arguments (lack of need for additional parkland, lack of park plan, housing shortage, access problems, lack of money for developing the area) and they still shied away from suggesting that there should be a permanent community established.

²Ibid.

³For example, in January 1974 Metro sent a letter warning Islanders to book the ferry so they could be sure of being able to remove their possessions and offering assistance in finding housing elsewhere and offering to return part of their rent and taxes if they left early.
to divide and conquer and will probably be doing other things in the future to try and get people on an individual basis. 1

Throughout their 1974 Spring Campaign to reverse the Metro decision of December 11, 1973 (to evict Islanders on August 31, 1974), Islanders took pains to demonstrate to the public and the politicians (as well as to themselves) that they were united—to project an image of solidarity. For example, in April, they had a meeting with Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey to put pressure on him to change his position against them and, failing that, to demonstrate to him that Islanders were a "solid community", 2 were determined "to preserve their community" 3 and therefore would not leave easily. The meeting was an abrasive one and, although Islanders disagreed over whether the approach they had adopted was the most appropriate one, 4 they did agree that they had succeeded in getting the community solidarity message across. 5

More recently, Islanders' strong sense of community and refusal to be split has motivated Islanders to reject Provincial legislation which, if passed, would enable present residents to remain on the Island until they moved or died, whereupon their houses would be transferred to Metro, which could either demolish them to extend the park in piecemeal fashion (or in one fell swoop at some future date) or keep them to provide summer housing for such needy people as senior


2 Notes For Meeting With Chairman Godfrey, April 16, 1974, p. 2.

3 Ibid., p. 1

4 TIRA Executive Meeting, Godfrey Post-Mortem, video tape.

5 Ibid. and TIRA Newsletter, April 19, 1975, p. 3
citizens. Present residents could continue living on the Island; but, eventually, the Island community would be eliminated.¹ Ron Mazza, Chairman of TIRA, expressed most Islanders' sentiments when he said at a public meeting in October 1979, "They [the Province] seemed to have missed the point that it's the community that we are trying to preserve, not our own individual rights to live here."

As pressure to accept the Provincial legislation became more intense (when Metro Council voted in February 1980 to proceed to evict Islanders if the Provincial legislation was not passed by June 30, 1980), Islanders continued to stand firm. At another meeting in April 1980 to discuss, once again, whether to accept the proposed legislation, one Islander argued against accepting it and echoed Mr. Mazza's earlier comment, "If you want to save your house vote to accept the Bill. If you want to save the Community vote to reject it."² Islanders voted overwhelmingly to reject the Provincial Bill (only 10 of the 200+ voted to accept it). They reconfirmed that decision by a smaller (but still large) margin at a long, emotional meeting on June 16, 1980.

3. Social Mix:

Islanders' strong desire, described earlier in this chapter, to live in a community with a "social mix" (rich and poor, potters and professionals, summer, and year-round, young and old) has also had a marked impact on their political behaviour.

¹Maureen Smith has emphasized that since 1970 when Metro adopted a similar approach and included an "attrition clause" (i.e., no selling or transferring of Island houses) in its lease conditions; Islanders have rejected this approach, because it was a sure way of killing the community gradually, but inexorably. Islanders, therefore, have continued selling houses rather than turning their leases into Metro when they moved.

As already indicated, Islanders have made a point of emphasizing the social diversity on the Island in their public statements. During the Spring Campaign in 1974, for example, they worked hard to get this message across. In their Save Island Homes booklet, in response to the question "What kind of people live on the Island?", in order to counter the "rich elite" image projected by opponents (see below, pp. 245-246) and as a reflection of their own image of themselves as socially diverse, they wrote:

All kinds of people. There's a little of everything on the Island: printers, writers, general handyman, architects, students, teachers, caretakers, lawyers, cashiers, secretaries, old-age pensioners and people on welfare.

And David Harris describes the message he was trying to relay in a slide presentation (showing Island residents standing solemnly in front of the houses they were about to lose if Metro Council did not change its policy):

What we wanted to show people in the City [and Metro] was...that there were real people that lived in those houses; that these real people had children...the tremendous mix that you would get from the whole thing: now there's an old couple in front of their house...here are some young people and here's a family...just to have all of these.

The high value Islanders place on maintaining social diversity on the Island has led many of them to accept the necessity for price controls on housing in order to provide the conditions necessary to maintain that mix (as well as to gain political support). This became an issue only in 1973 when Islanders were optimistic about winning

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1For example, Maureen Smith's remarks before the Metro Parks Committee in November 1973 (p. 226) and the 1971 TIRA Brief to Metro Council (p. 228).

2Toronto Island Residents Association, Save Island Homes (Toronto Coach House Press, 1974), p. 17.
longer leases and when a number of "reform aldermen" (like Dan Heap and Michael Goldrick) were now on City Council. As early as January 1973, Islanders were discussing "Possible Threats" of more secure tenure on the Island:

1. greater permanence will raise market value of houses.
   a. Islanders at present renting houses may be forced off the Island if their houses are sold at prices that they can't afford.
   b. Most new owners will tend to be wealthier than the present average.
   c. Thus the present socio-economic mixture of the community will be destroyed and the Island may become an expensive district inhabited by the wealthy.¹

And, after a series of block meetings later that spring, Islanders drew up a list of "community aims", which were later submitted to the City, with the following comments:

There was general agreement [at the block meetings] as to the "community aims". In the case of suggestions concerning maintenance of the Islands' socio-economic mix and price controls, there was widespread - though certainly not unanimous - agreement with the underlying principles involved. The main objections were on the grounds of impracticability of implementing the suggestion.²

Support for price controls in order to maintain the social mix grew after this time.

Islanders' commitment to social diversity (as well as their general opposition to any form of splitting the community, which was discussed above) also influenced their reactions to the idea of forming a non-profit housing association or cooperative and coloured the

¹TIRA, Agenda of TIRA Meeting, January 7, 1973. See also Sense of Control: "Reactions to Housing Cooperative" for additional comments which reflect Islanders' concern over possible negative side-effects of long tenure.

²City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, op. cit., Appendix C, p. 1.
particular type of association they have been willing to accept. They have been highly reluctant to accept a form which would eliminate either summer residents or wealthier residents. For example, life-long, year-round Islander, Jimmy Jones comments:

I didn't care one way or other [about INPHA] as long as we got to stay. But I didn't want it to be a thing where you weeded out people either. If part got to stay, I think we all should have got to stay. Because [diversity] was the thing that made the Island in the first place.

And, more specifically on the issue of income limitations, Freya Godard told the April 29 meeting called to discuss (and adopt) INPHA why she was opposed to such limitations:

I'd like to speak to the item concerning future residents. I know a lot of you may think, "Well, it doesn't matter what you do to the future residents, because we're here and we're safe." But I'm concerned with the upper limit of $18,000 a year. I'm not making $18,000 a year and I don't feel personally threatened by that except in the way that it will undermine one of the strengths of the Island, which has been its diversity - the possibility of living next door to just about any sort of person, whether rich or poor.

For similar reasons, Islanders seriously considered rejecting Mayor David Crombie's last ditch effort to save most—but not all—

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1 In March and April 1974, the Island Position Committee developed a proposal for the Island Non-Profit Housing Association (INPHA) as a basis for approaching Metro Council to change its position. INPHA would have let summer Islanders continue living on the Island as long as they rented their houses in the winter, but would have required all future residents to be year-round ones; and would have let richer Islanders stay, but might have placed an income limitation (like $18,000) on future residents. After a long debate on April 29, Islanders (primarily to gain political support) adopted this proposal. Metro Council, however, showed little interest.

2 TIRA has always seen its mandate as being to protect the entire community (summer as well as winter, rich as well as poor, renters as well as home-owners, new as well as old).
of the community in June 1974. Freya Godard, who would have been saved by the motion, was again strongly against the approach adopted. She explains why she was opposed:

He was dividing the community. You see, he was going to remove people who were already here and who were completely settled and active members of this community...It was going to eliminate some valuable members of the community and I couldn't really have supported that....I think every time you eliminate someone like that [students] that you are limiting the breadth of experience that you get on the Island, cut out people like that and you're cutting out the experience of knowing very wealthy people on the Island.... If there is no temporary winter housing like that, then you probably eliminate the possibility of perhaps students...moving here in winter. You're limiting the range of people....I think everything should be done to enable every type of person to live on the Island and not to have one group becoming the model. I wouldn't want everyone on the Island to be professional or very wealthy. But I could not support doing away with people like that.

She was not alone in holding this opinion, but political pragmatism ultimately triumphed and Islanders on this occasion did not oppose the motion (nor did they enthusiastically endorse it). Metro Council, however, rejected it anyway on June 18, 1974. After this rejection by Metro Council, one Islander commented with some relief at a public meeting that evening, "If you're an optimist, there's one good thing about today's meeting and that was that we're all in the same boat again."

There was no possibility of splitting the Island community.

1 Mayor Crombie's motion was designed to counter negative images of the Island community (as "transients" or as a "rich elite" or as a "summer cottage resort") and to de-emphasize the people on the Island (whom some Metro Councillors personally disliked) by setting criteria for future residence and by talking about preserving the houses (not the present "community"). His motion set certain residency requirements for future residents: they would have to be year-round residents and they would have to have a "low or moderate income" or they would have had to have lived on the Island for at least 5 years or they would have had to be 55 years or older. He hoped to catch about 90% of present residents in his net.
This same social mix, however, has had some negative influences on the political campaigns to preserve Island homes. Community organizer Dale Perkins, who was hired to help with the Spring Campaign of 1974, comments generally on the political problems associated with trying to unite together different factions, or groups:

This was the thing about the Island. Because we had divergent styles, lifestyles, where, and ways of doing things... trying to develop a united approach to dealing with issues was really difficult. The hope was that the issue would be intense enough that it would force a discipline on them; I think that was basically true.

Nevertheless, friction did arise among groups and strong differences of opinion over political strategy and tactics emerged from time to time, notably between "old" and "new" Islanders and "summer" and "year-round" Islanders. (As noted earlier, there is a good deal of overlap between these groups: many summer Islanders are among the older, more conservative longest-resident members of the community.)

Year-round Islanders have had ambivalent attitudes toward summer residents. (See pp. 213-214.) Generally, any negative feelings have been kept quiet, but, occasionally, under stress, they have floated to the surface. Perhaps one of the most extreme examples of public hostility toward summer residents occurred at a meeting on June 13, 1974 (when Islanders were discussing the Crombie motion, which would have eliminated summer residence). In response to one old gentleman who called out, "How about summer residents who have come here for fifty years?", another year-round Islander responded in almost vituperative terms:

You've got a house in the City... Are we going to worry about some guys coming over for 50 years? If that's brutal, OK. I don't have another house. I was first on Algonquin. There was one family on Ward's and that was mine... It's going to be dog eat-
dog. Save the homes [by accepting the Crombie motion] and 90–95% of the community may be brought along with them.

Throughout the Spring Campaign and the rest of that summer a certain amount of friction arose between TIRA and the WIA. Some WIA members, for example, were unhappy about TIRA using its small clubhouse as the headquarters for the Spring Campaign, and the editor of the Ward's Island Weekly once refused to print TIRA news in the summer of 1974 until instructed to do so by the WIA Executive. Two year-round, life-long Islanders comment on the "we-them" mentality that developed among some older, often summer, residents:

___: Well, there's lots of people who can't associate the fact that we're all members of TIRA and still members of our own respective clubs out there - Ward's Island Association and AIA. And they will cause great arguments when, say, TIRA wanted to use the small Clubhouse, people would say, "Well, TIRA cannot use that small clubhouse" because 'they' - like they were somebody else, not realizing that they were all part and parcel of TIRA. ___ was one of those who was really, really angry about TIRA using the small clubhouse as an Executive headquarters - the telephone and that sort of thing. She was really against it all and caused a big rift in the community.

___: Ya. And it was all "they" - and "we" and "them" - like there was just three different sections. There was TIRA; there was the Ward's Island and there was Algonquin. You classified yourself as one. And I finally said to her, "Well, who are 'they'?" "People in TIRA." And I said, "Ya, well, who are 'they'?" She said, "TIRA." I said, "Well, it's you." It was only then that everybody started to go, "Oh, ya."

Some summer residents and some "old" Islanders remained relatively uninvolved in the campaign. (Some, however, were deeply involved.) One summer resident, for example, said that she had not even

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1 The WIA was established in 1917 by summer residents and it still found some of its most loyal supporters among older Islanders, especially summer residents, who regarded TIRA sceptically - even jealously - as somehow trying to usurp the WIA's position of respect and importance in the community.
gone to many TIRA meetings during this critical period, because "My bowling takes up so much time. They always seem to be on bowling night." And one life-long Islander, who had become involved, commented on her husband's attitude (he was in his late 30's and had also lived on the Island all his life):

My husband doesn't like me to be involved. OK, he is very much a doesn't-like-to-be-noticed kind of thing. Doesn't like to put anybody out or be put out. He likes to live in privacy....I think if I carried a placard or became involved in that way, I would have to do it and not tell him....He prefers me not to do anything like that [telephoning]. I've done it and been hassled as I was doing it.

These differences have carried over into attitudes toward political style. Older Islanders, for example, have tended to oppose demonstrating at City Hall and elsewhere. One elderly lady (a year-round resident) said, "The demonstration at City Hall. We're of a different generation. It isn't our way of doing things." And the summer resident who did not want to miss her bowling commented, "A lot of their approach I haven't gone for....We had one ass throw something at [Scarborough Controller] Mallette [on May 31, 1974]. I think that was absolutely uncalled for. It is a nice community, a conservative community. They should have behaviour. I don't believe in demonstration." But other residents have agreed with one newer Islander who told a public meeting on May 29, 1974, 1 "It's time to stop being polite [to politicians]. Otherwise they're just going to politely push us off the Island" and have advocated a more aggressive approach to politicians. This has been a recurrent debate over the years.

1 Islanders were discussing whether and how to picket outside Queen's Park on May 30, 1974 and how to behave at the forthcoming meeting at Metro Council on May 31, 1974.
4. Suburbia:

Islanders' image of suburbia (e.g., as more conservative, less socially diverse, less socially involving, less tolerant of unconventional behaviour, less community-oriented) has also influenced their political behaviour. During their 1974 Spring Campaign, Islanders made over 200 visits to the boroughs in order to gain signatures on petitions (ultimately they amassed 30,000 signatures from across Metro) and endorsements from a variety of residents' and special interest groups. (See Appendix J, "Public Support: May 1974".) In addition to presenting the facts and arguments in the most appealing light, Islanders also tried to present themselves in the most acceptable manner. Periodic calls went out in the TIRA Newsletter for "volunteers from the respectable 'Over-40's Club'",¹ as East York Borough Captain Mary Anderson phrased it, to join the delegations. This concern for creating an image acceptable to suburbanites (as Islanders perceived them) extended even to matters of dress. For example, on the way to a borough meeting, one Islander, who usually wandered around in an ankle-length granny dress and sandals, announced that she had put on her "suburban dress" for the occasion and another Islander bought a suit for the first time in years for his expeditions into North York.

Throughout this Campaign, Islanders propounded community (as well as other arguments), although they did not always feel that they

¹TIRA Newsletter, March 1, 1974.
were able to get their message across in the suburbs. Elizabeth Amer commented, "[A slide show of community life] works really well in the City itself. But maybe not as much in the suburbs." And Ron Mazza said more emphatically:

Whenever we mentioned "community" [to suburban residents' groups], we always knew that they didn't know what we were talking about. When you talked about the value of maintaining the community, they just didn't know what a community was, which I found really frustrating, because to my mind, that was the strongest argument. They just weren't into saving houses just for the sake of saving the way of life that is associated with it.

Islanders, therefore, certainly came away from their campaign in the boroughs with the feeling that their own sense of community was much greater than—or significantly different from—suburbanites' sense of community.

5. Foundation For 1974 Spring Campaign:

The Spring Campaign was a massive undertaking, which relied on an extremely high level of participation by a large number of...

...With regard to suburban politicians, some of the Islanders' political supporters held similar, complementary attitudes. For example, John Sewell made the point that in the past Islanders had "played to the wrong issue, i.e., what a nice community the Islands is. Politicians in the boroughs don't understand the 'community argument' — they are free enterprisers, every man for himself." John Sewell, Brief to Islanders, January 20, 1974. And, at a meeting in late April 1974, City Alderman Dorothy Thomas made an interesting related point, which also suggested that suburban politicians not only did not understand or were not as concerned about the community preservation ideas, but, she told Islanders, they were actually antagonized by any such argument.

One other point is this business of the "elite". For your publicity campaign, one of the things that you seem to be pushing is the Island as a community, which I can certainly understand, but if you talk to some of these borough politicians, if you say "community", they hear "elite". They hear you saying, "We want to preserve our elite community"... I guess what I'm saying is you have to soft-peddle the community stuff, even though it may be one of your primary considerations — and it should be.
Islanders. (By the end of the Campaign, only about 10% had done
"absolutely nothing" to contribute to the cause, according to one
TIRA insider whose job was to involve people.) Islanders' strong
sense of community provided a solid foundation on which to build this
massive political campaign.¹ Most Islanders felt that they had to
contribute in some way. Organizers could use and elaborate on the
existing communications system (interpersonal networks, ferry tele-
graph, newspapers, hand delivery of notices, block captain system,
public meetings, etc.) in order to transmit information quickly and
mobilize people rapidly (in a matter of hours if necessary to attend
meetings or make community decisions or attend demonstrations and so
on). Organizers could readily tap the diverse talents of the community,
because they began the campaign with a fairly good idea of the res-
ources which existed within the community (knowing who the printers,
typists, lawyers, public speakers and so on were). In short, Island-
ers were able to mobilize their forces and mount a much larger camp-
aign in the short time available to them in the spring of 1974 than
would have been possible if they had not had a strong, existing com-
munity base on which to build. And they have been able to continue
to capitalize on this since that time.

b. Politicians' Responses:

Most of the Islanders' political supporters would probably.

¹For example, in order to spark Islanders to attend and bring
their friends to the public meetings in Scarborough and York, the
April 26, 1974 TIRA Newsletter appealed to their sense of community:
"We need a strong show - if you know anyone from Scarborough or York
get them there. We are a strong, cohesive community. LET'S SHOW THEM!"
(See also the appeal of January 1974, which was quoted on pp. 228-229.)
agree with Alderman Karl Jaffary's statement, "The argument that says the most to me about preservation of the homes on the Island is that it does seem to be such a well-functioning community." Again and again, especially since 1973, pro-Islander politicians have propounded community arguments. For example, Mayor David Crombie, during the first Metro Council debate on the subject after the 1972 elections, in May 1973, argued emphatically, "It's a residential community in the City of Toronto and the City of Toronto Council is dedicated to the proposition that residential communities should be preserved." At the same time, Alderman William Kilbourn spoke in favour of preserving the Island community because it is so distinctive and different from other communities:

I am committed to seeing that this remains a community. Alderman Beavis talks about conformity. I think it's to the glory and goodness of Toronto that it has diversity and it has character...I think we should not destroy a very precious, unique asset, simply because we want to import some abstraction of conformity.

He, and other politicians sympathetic to Islanders' particular sense of community, want to preserve the community precisely because it is so "different". He elaborates on this theme in a 1975 interview:

My strongest motive...[is that] it does represent a different lifestyle. It does give kids and everybody an opportunity either to be or to see a different kind of community, a community without the amenities so-called and therefore some of the problems and hardships...It's a different community. The very reason that I think ultimately threatens members of Metro Council who hate the Islands is the main reason why I want to preserve it.

And, during that same May 1973 debate, North York member, Ken Lund, echoed this theme and made an emotional appeal in favour of retaining the community:

I can only conclude that there is something other than size here, which makes this park, this piece of Toronto Islands something special within our city and I accept that all Islanders are
different, all Islanders are special in some way, and I must conclude that there is something extra-special within our Metropolitan area about this particular piece of island and I conclude that we look back or look to it in nostalgia, looking back at this small remnant that still exists of our small town past and the people who dwell there certainly exist as a community. This impresses me all the more because, as representing a suburban area, I know how difficult the concept of community and the actuality of community is to nourish and so I look with admiration at this flourishing on Toronto Island and conclude that every step that is reasonable ought to be taken to give it an opportunity to survive. This group seems determined to hang on to its communities of the past and I think we should support any reasonable method which would enable them to do this.

At City Council in November 1973, Alderman Jaffary spoke of the need to develop effective controls on Island housing (notably to prevent escalating house prices and "windfall profits"):

I think it is important for the Council to say... simply saving the houses is not enough. It's the community [with its social diversity] that we want to save. We think the pressures that will be placed on that community if the houses are simply saved and nothing more is done, will be intolerable and it will change. This Council would like to work with the community to make sure that does not happen.

As noted earlier, because Islanders themselves have shared this fear and have had a strong desire to maintain a "social mix" on their Island, they have agreed that such controls are necessary. Then at the crucial Metro Council debate on December 11, 1973, North York Controller Barbara Greene spoke passionately in favour of preserving

1In September 1973, the City planning staff issued Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, which, among other things, strongly recommended that the Island community be preserved and, in order to accomplish that end, that the residential portions of the Island should be transferred back to the City. At this November 1973 meeting, City Council voted overwhelmingly (17-2) to adopt this report, with only minor changes and, although for pragmatic political reasons City politicians did not press for either permanent status or a land transfer at Metro Council on December 11, 1973, this report has remained the basis of the City position ever since. And since 1975, the City has made repeated, but unsuccessful, attempts to have the land transferred.
the Island community:

I am going to be brief. I think it is absurd that we are even considering destroying a community that is as healthy, as happy, as politically active, as capable of lobbying us to this extent, as capable of getting these kinds of numbers out to a meeting. I think we should feel, be awarding them a medal today. I think that this is a community which deserves to be saved and I see absolutely no justification for including 29 more acres in the Toronto Islands. I know of no other park which does not have residential houses near it....Well, my God, if you're here to preserve communities, I really cannot possibly see how you can possibly justify destroying one of the best communities in this entire Metropolitan Toronto area.

Politicians have put forward such community arguments literally dozens of times throughout the political history of the issue, right up to the most recent stage, the entrance of the Province into the debate. For example, referring to the legislation put forward by the Provincial government in October 1979 as "death by asphyxiation of the Island community",¹ N.D.P. M.P.P. Richard Johnston said in Committee of Supply on October 15:

-Our party remains committed to maintaining the island community. I would like to emphasize the word "community", not just the particular houses of individuals....

-I do have concern that what is seen to be a compromise is, in fact, just a very easy way of bringing about the destruction of the community while maintaining individual homes for a brief period of time.²

Most recently, at a public rally to demonstrate public and political support for the Islanders on July 1, 1980, a number of politicians emphasized the importance of preserving communities like the Island community. Toronto Mayor John Sewell received a standing ovation when he told the 2,000+ supporters, "The Toronto Island.

²Hansard.
community is here to stay" and emphasized "that this is a fight we're all in....It's a fight that we all have to pay attention to because we know that you can't go around destroying communities. [If] they destroy this one, they'll destroy others." N.D.P. leader M.P.P. Michael Cassidy echoed this sentiment, saying, "This is a battle not just for one community, but I believe it's also a continuing part of the battle to keep communities alive and to maintain a diversity of communities across Toronto and across this whole province of ours." He also brought the news that the 1,300 delegates to an N.D.P. party convention had just passed unanimously the resolution "that the New Democratic Party of Ontario supports the struggle of Toronto Island residents to defend their homes and community." Bringing greetings from the "land-locked [Federal] riding of Broadview-Greenwood", M.P. Bob Rae spoke more philosophically about the value of communities:

T.S. Eliot once wrote that: When the stranger asks what is the meaning of this city, what will you answer? Will you answer we huddle together to make money from each other or will you answer that this is a community? It seems to me that this is a battle going on here, and in other parts of the country...of people saying that their city is a community...and that notion of community and that sense of community is far more important than those people who think that a City is merely a place where people come together to make money from each other. I simply want you to know that you people on this island are not alone...[This issue] affects people all over Canada. Whenever a government decides a community will no longer exist, the community has to speak for itself and say: You can't take away our existence. We exist. You're the ones who have problems justifying your existence. Not this community.

Finally, Scarborough Controller and Metro Councillor Joyce Trimmer spoke in a more personal vein, recalling her first home in Canada 26 years earlier—a small apartment in an "immaculate" clapboard house on Chippewa Avenue—when she had become "part of a community—and a very warm and welcoming community it was 26 years ago". She
concluded somewhat ruefully:

As a politician, we have thousands of by-laws that supposedly help us to produce the perfect community. And how ironic it is that when we have the perfect community in mind and spirit and people, we don't recognize it and the first thing we want to do is destroy it.

Over the years, Islanders' supporters and opponents have tended to hold very different images of Islanders and their community. Indeed, it is sometimes hard to believe that the two groups are even discussing the same people and the same place. While Islanders' supporters have tended to give great weight to community arguments and to have a positive image of Islanders and their community (e.g., as mostly year-round, socially-mixed, egalitarian, distinctive, well-established, charming, deeply rooted and so on), Islanders' opponents have tended to either ignore community arguments altogether (to discuss, for example, impersonal "housing conditions" rather than the people who live in a "community") or to discuss Islanders and their community in negative terms (e.g., as a rich elite, squatters, privileged few, rip-off artists, media manipulators, transients, summer cottagers with second homes, primitive, run down, unhealthy and so on). On the positive side, for example, Alderman Karl Jarrary described his impression of the Island community (in 1975):

The community issue, I guess, is the strongest [reason for my support] and my having become persuaded that the number of people who were using the Island for summer cottages and nothing more were really very few in number and that there were a lot of people [who] had real traditions of using the Island year-round....I'm really impressed with the community and have liked Islanders very much. The argument that says the most to me about the preservation of the homes on the Island is that it does seem to be such a well-functioning community. And I guess the egalitarianism of the thing is what appeals to me as much as anything else. Great ranges of incomes with everybody living in essentially the same kinds of houses, not having cars and dressing in sort of the same kinds of clothes because they have to walk through the mud and so most of the indices of wealth that stratify other communities just aren't
there and that seems to be really appealing and I just find that a very healthy thing.

On the negative side, Scarborough Controller (later Mayor) Gus Harris comments (in 1975):

I think there's a great misunderstanding about the Island community. They've tried to convey the idea that it's a mixed group of various people all living together very happily, etc., etc. It's my opinion that it's just developed into a smaller group of people that's very well-heeled financially and have other accommodation elsewhere that would like to have this kind of thing for weekends and summer holidays and renting it to others etc. And they're sufficiently well-organized and well-educated that they've been able to dig their heels in and get the rest of the community to come along with them for self-preservation mostly and they're putting on tremendous pressure in order to stay there.... I don't know that there are that many permanent ones.... Maybe 20 or 30 families... are living there permanently.

Islanders' opponents have also tended to see Ward's and Algonquin Islands as "parkland manqué"—i.e., because the area is designated as "parkland" on maps and in various plans and proposals, it is "really" parkland, not housing, and the remaining houses are merely an obstruction to attaining that desirable state. By contrast, Islanders' supporters, of course, have tended to see Ward's and Algonquin Islands as a "well-established, distinctive community" located on land that has never been parkland. This theme is discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

c. Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of Community:

Islanders, as a number of them point out, have been a community under siege for many years.¹ This outside threat, combined with the actual process of defending the Island against a series of severe

¹See for example Freya Godard's comments on p. 199, Peter Cridland's comments on p. 190, and Peter Atkinson's comments on p. 225. See also Sense of Change: "Community Under Siege", pp. 361 ff.
threats, has had a marked, largely positive effect on Islanders' sense of community. (See Illustration 28.)

This has been particularly evident since 1974. At that time, the severity of the threat increased sharply: as a result of Metro Council's December 11, 1973 decision, Islanders were no longer protected by the security of even a short lease extension and unless they took quick action to reverse or circumvent that decision, they would lose their homes, community and Island on August 31, 1974. And, in response, Islanders mounted a major campaign to deal with the situation. Islanders faced two basic tasks as the August 31 deadline approached inexorably: first, to reverse the Metro decision; and second, to maintain community solidarity. Although they did not attain their first goal of reversing the Metro decision (they lost resoundingly at Metro Council on both May 31 and June 18), they did go a long way toward achieving the second goal (there was no mass exodus from the Island prior to the August 31 deadline) and laid the groundwork for continuing the fight beyond this deadline. During that Campaign, almost every Islander got involved in some task to contribute toward attaining the common goal of preserving their homes and community. There were frequent public and committee meetings; on-Island communications were improved (e.g., a newsletter was begun and the Block Captain system was rejuvenated); and frequent appeals were made to Islanders to help defend the community, to act like a community and to present themselves as a solid community. As a result, there was a heightened sense of common purpose and common action—and a heightened sense of community.

Although they failed to achieve their political goal of reversing the Metro Council decision, for many Islanders, like Enid Cridland
ILLUSTRATION 28

COMMUNITY POLITICAL EVENTS

1974 Winter Carnival

"New Year's Eve" Parade
August 31, 1976

Meeting The Sheriff
July 26, 1980

Rally, July 1, 1980
who observed that the Campaign "held the community together", the main value of that Spring Offensive was that it demonstrated to Islanders themselves that they were in fact a community and that if they stayed together, they would be a strong political force. Two Islanders comment on this aspect of the 1974 Campaign. First, Bill Metcalfe (in the winter of 1975) discusses how important the outside threat (of Metro's demolishing Island houses) has been in creating and testing Islanders' community and sense of community:

I learned [from the political campaign] about the community that it really was. It was not just a community in name. That it had a great resource when the situation came along that forced it to use it. That it wasn't just a fantasy. You can talk about it a lot and "this community, blah, blah, blah". That there really was a sense of community. And a sense of community really only shows up when things are really extreme. You can live in a nice place and say that you're in a community and make all sorts of assumptions about it, fantasize about it, but when it really comes to the crunch, we really had a community. They had their ass against the flame and they were prepared to stand there and try to put out the fire.

He goes on to comment on the importance, politically, of remaining a solid group:

I feel that we are a political force, because we are a bunch of people, in a well-defined area and I'm quite confident that the politicians are going to have a hell of a job getting rid of us because of that... So what I learned about politics is that groups of people can be a political force as long as they remain a solid group. And I think we still are.

Jenny DeTolly (in the summer of 1975) echoes these sentiments in her evaluation of the Campaign:

The entire value in that exercise [the Spring Campaign] is that we worked together. We got to know one another... The fact that we worked together, that we got our message across to a couple more people, the fact that people realized that we were around was the most important thing... I think in the past three years [c.1972-], the Islanders have assumed their own identity, leadership and strength... If all 600 are fairly solid, I still feel we've got a fair chance.
The 1974 Campaign had both positive and negative effects on the social splits within the community. As noted earlier, during that Campaign Islanders extended the range of their acquaintances and became a more cohesive unit; e.g., people from Algonquin Island got to know more people from Ward's; "old" Islanders got to know "new" Islanders; and so on. As a result of their defense of place, therefore, Islanders overcame some of the long-standing splits within the community such as the AIA-WIA rivalry. "It's all really one now since TIRA has been formed," commented Wendy Hanger in January 1976. "It's really one community now. I think it was [more separate before]." But, on the negative side is the fact that under extreme stress, deep-seated differences sometimes became sharper, more acrimonious and, unless dealt with very carefully, explosive and damaging to community solidarity. (See for example, the comments of the year-round Islander which were directed at a summer Islander in June 1974, pp. 235-236.) Many sharp exchanges between people holding radically different views on appropriate political strategy, tactics and style occurred during this period. This has continued to be true. For example, in the course of a long, emotional debate in June 1980 over whether or not to accept an amended version of Provincial legislation, Peter Atkinson felt moved to try to bridge the gaps and appealed to Islanders' over-riding sense of community:

I'm a little bit concerned about the divisiveness and the antagonism that was present in last night's meeting and that is present in tonight's meeting. We seem to have two camps, obviously. Both sides feel that the other side doesn't feel any loyalty to the Toronto Island community or that their acts are activated by personal interests. I just don't think that's true. I think that everybody who is here really feels very, very strongly about the Toronto Island community. We've all fought for it.
We all want to maintain it....I hope that after this vote is taken, no matter which way it goes...we can come back together and pull together. If we [vote to] go to the blockades, then let's go together. And let's put aside this personal antagonism that's creeping in.

The 1974 Campaign was followed by several years of legal battles, when the sense of threat was reduced. By June 1980, however, Islanders were once again under the gun—faced with imminent evictions and the need to pull together in order to try to avoid that end. At the aforementioned June 16 meeting, life-long Islander Pat Coyle appealed to Islanders to act together as a community and, in so doing, indicated the extent to which Islanders had become more of a community in the years since 1968 as a result of working together to defend their special place:

I, too, lost a house at Centre Island. We had to move in 1968. And Bill [Ward] pointed out...that people at that time didn't stick up for each other. There was no solidarity. We lost. That's because we were all divided. And the ironic thing is, if you go for this Bill, which he's pushing so hard, that's exactly what's going to happen again. We won't have solidarity. We'll be individuals again. And what Bill Ward's gone through before, he'll have to go through again. And this time, it'll be the end.

As the threat of eviction became ever more severe over the next few days, so did Islanders' statements of community solidarity. On June 25, TIRA Chairman Ron Mazza emphasized that Islanders intended to face the sheriff as a group, not as individuals:

When the sheriff comes to take away [any] house, [he'll be] dealing with eviction and destruction of the whole community. The community views every house as equally important. The community views every house as collectively theirs. There is no individual who is facing the sheriff alone. Each individual will be facing the sheriff collectively for the sake of the community. We don't want anybody to get hurt. But we're going to do everything possible short of violence to protect the
community.¹

And TIRA Executive member Peter Dewdeney, who organized a major public rally (which attracted over 2,000 people on July 1), commented on Islanders' morale, "The community is tighter now than I've ever known it in the eleven years I've lived here. It's a tremendous feeling of togetherness."²

In conclusion, there is little doubt that over the years, Islanders' defense of place has significantly reinforced and strengthened their sense of community.

¹CBC Radio, 7:30 A.M. News, June 25, 1980. This statement was designed both to reassure and calm individual Islanders who were nervous about facing the sheriff and to warn Metro that even if Metro tried to evict only a few households at a time (e.g., summer residents or wealthy residents), other Islanders were still planning to come to their defense. They would not stand idly by and watch even one house be taken.

²Quoted in Paul Dalby, "Islanders Call Allies To Dominion Day Rally," Star, June 30, 1980.
CHAPTER 6

SENSE OF ENVIRONMENT

i. Analysis of Sense of Environment:

a. Introduction:

A sense of environment is a fourth fundamental component of a sense of place. Every place has a special combination of environmental features, such as sights, sounds, smells, kinaesthetics, patterns and rhythms. But not every place elicits a strong sense of environment. Sense of environment implies having a deep awareness of and strong positive attachment to these physical features.\(^1\) It is more than a superficial appreciation of the environment; it is a deep, personal attachment to it.

The Toronto Island has a particularly rich and distinctive physical environment. It is full of Island sights (such as the boardwalk on a misty morning, the ferry at sunset, sailboats slipping silently across the end of streets, ice formations on huge lakeshore rocks,

\(^1\) Some physical environmental features - like pollution or dense living conditions - might not elicit a positive response, although, as the urban renewal experience demonstrated, it is risky for an outsider or someone not very familiar with the people and their reactions to their own environment to interfere or assume that a particular area is a "slum" or that local people are not deeply attached to the area in question. See, for example, Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (New York: The Free Press, 1962); Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962); and Marc Fried and Peggy Gleicher, "Some Sources of Residential Satisfaction in an Urban Slum," *Journal of the American Association of Planners* XXVII (November 1961).
and the twinkling City skyline at night; Island sounds (the pounding surf of an angry lake, the eery whistle of wind in the rigging of yachts moored in the lagoon, the honking of geese, and the symphony of squeaky cart wheels dispersing from the Saturday morning market ferry); Island smells (such as water, chemical toilets and ferry oil in the Ongiara cabins); and Island kinaesthetics (such as the rhythmic bumping of the boardwalk under bicycle wheels, the sinking of heels into the sand as one walks along the beach and the strain of climbing the steep rise of the Algonquin Bridge).

As this chapter demonstrates, Islanders are sensitive to their surroundings and reveal a strong sense of environment. Some expressions of this feeling follow:

One thing about the Island that's great is that whatever is happening in the environment is very, very strong here. Well, we just noticed it. We're sitting here in the living room and suddenly the wind came up and we were quite aware of that....So one of the nice things is that you always have to respond to the environment here....And I like all the weather that's offered. I like to go out in the rain. I like to go out in the snow. I like all, everything that's going on in the environment.  

(Elizabeth Amer)

[Living on the Island] I think affected your feeling of space around you. Many people are inhibited [by the City]. If you ever talk to Westerners, they say it's so closed in, there are no distant mountains; you can't go out and look at mountains fifty miles away and feel the distance. Well, the Island provided that feeling of spaciousness. The air was pure and fresh. You could see sky and water under every condition. If you've ever lived by sky and water, it's different every day - the pattern of clouds, the sun on clouds, the sun on water. It's completely different and I think that has a profound effect on people. I think it's healing to the soul to live under those conditions of spaciousness and freedom....It's terrible to move from that to the confinement of the average city dwelling.  

(Alan Howard)

Snake Island. That's all sort of wilderness back in there. I just walk around and it's sort of a peaceful thing for me to do. I do that now. And I walk out the back here where the Gap is and walk
through that area. It's a very close thing with me, like with Nature and God, if you like. I often think of it that way.

(Jimmy Jones)

And, I guess [I'd miss] the environment, the fact that I can walk out and go bird watching in the mornings, you know, watch the weather and just generally live in a rural, semi-rural environment...To do what I did this morning, which was before the kids were up, get the binoculars and walk out there in my bare feet, all down there over the field, in the dew and look at the wild flowers and look at the birds, that sort of thing.

(Maureen Smith)

We had believed even before we came to Canada [from Germany] that it was a very, very important value to live in, let's say, beautiful surroundings. It's not good enough to live 20 miles away from beautiful mountains [where] you can go in your car on Saturday or Friday evening. It's much more valuable to be right somewhere where you can look out of your window and have nature there and nice.

(Al Schoenborn)

People who have voluntarily moved to the Island have come for a variety of reasons—to enjoy the inexpensive living, to own their own home, to escape from the pressures of urban life, to find a sense of community, and so on. But probably the foremost attraction is the physical environment itself. Bill Metcalfe, who moved to the Island in 1970, expresses this view:

I guess the Island is the kind of place we always wanted to live. ...It had all the qualities of the type of place that we liked to live. Quiet, for one thing. We like the outdoors. We like trees and grass. Water. So physically, I guess, it had everything we liked.

After living there for a while, other aspects of Island living might become as important (e.g., sense of community), but the physical environment always remains important. Peter Cridland, who moved to the Island in 1963, expresses this view—and generally how important the physical environment would be if he had to move:

I couldn't possibly exaggerate the importance, to me anyway, of
the physical environment. Just to walk to the ferry boat in the morning is a terrific lift. The idea of commuting on a boat rather than a bus or a train is still, after all this time of doing it twice a day, every day of your life, is a big thing for me...I always assume that if I'm going to relocate that really, absolutely above all, the important thing to achieve is an environment, a physical environment that has as many of the good things that this has as possible. I don't think it could be repeated. You could get a few of them...[If we had to move] we always would be looking not for the house, not really for the neighbourhood, but mainly for the sort of immediate environment--trees, the proximity of the park.

What sort of people have been captivated by the Island's physical environment? A number of Islanders characterized themselves as "outdoors people". In fact, some Islanders are so enthusiastic about the outdoors and the Island environment generally that they positively relish some inconveniences and discomforts that would certainly discourage other people:

I find that a lot of physical discomforts give life a little more quality. Walking home from the boat on a cold day and you get here [at the far end of Algonquin] and there's a pleasure in arriving. It just makes you appreciate arriving at home and somehow you know you've lived and are living. (Terry Tyers)

I sort of like roughing it anyway. It makes you feel like you're alive. (Nina Kilpatrick)

"Roughing it", in Nina Kilpatrick's case, meant spending her first winter on the Island in an unwinterized summer cottage on Algonquin. Some Islanders, not quite so keen on roughing it, register a dissenting opinion. Jenny DeTolly comments:

Well, the dislikes, I suppose, are all things that are little and very nit-picking. I don't like my waterpipes freezing...I suppose I don't enjoy the cold so much as one is communing with the elements. Sometimes I wish it weren't quite so intimate.

But even in her case, while perhaps not relishing discomfort, being in an environment with strong physical elements is very important:
When I stayed in residence [at University in South Africa] for several years, I had a room that faced the mountain. The mountain is a very strong element that becomes a part of you. It changes mood... Well, [the mountain] was something that we missed terribly for about the first three years [we were in Toronto] and I would hazard that we would have moved on had we not been living here [on the Island] and had we not found other physical things [like the water] that keep us, which is really what they've done.... We like having these physical things that take over a part of us. A friend of ours came and visited us a couple of Octobers ago and they were about to buy a place in Cape Town. And we were saying how we would like to live with a view [like the view of the City across the Bay] and they were saying the view didn't matter to them.... They didn't feel that they needed this predominant external thing to sit and gaze at. They were far too busy to sit and gaze at things, which I suppose says a lot about us! We tend to gaze. It is a big thing.

For some people, a move to the Island was a move to a "familiar place", because the Island reflected elements of other places where they had lived. For example:

I guess we thought of the Island because it was close to the water.... My growing up years were on the North Shore [of Vancouver] and the latter part of that was way up the mountainside. We were very isolated. I would come down to the City every day. I'd have to run for a mile down the hill, to catch the bus, and then tramp home again at night. It was similar to the Island in many ways.

(Nina Kilpatrick)

I wouldn't say [my background was] urban, because I began in similar surroundings to the Island. We lived for six or eight years in what was very much like an Island house. My earliest memories were of this place and it was actually a converted summer cottage on a cliff overlooking the lake, so that in a way it was really like returning to that when I came to the Island.... My family have lived in Toronto for generations and for anybody who lived in Toronto for long, the Island was very much a part of Toronto. It was always there.... The idea of the Island was nothing strange to me. It wasn't an alien place. (Freya Godard)

I suppose you'd call it an urban environment [where I grew up]. It was a London County Council housing estate. I don't know how many thousands of houses there were. It's a very green estate, that is, there is a lot of grass and trees and long gardens. So I wasn't really born into a world of concrete backyards and streets with no trees and grass. There was lots of parkland. My parents always
took us away on holiday. The yearly seaside holiday was an institution in my family. And we weren't that far away from the country. We used to go out blackberrying, on treks. We were really fairly close to the country. A bus ride or a bike ride. And then, as soon as I was able to ride a bike, I was away. I was all over England on a bike. So, although I was born in an urban society, it always struck me as fairly rural. But everything was there. The subway was there before I was born; I always travelled by subway. (Maureen Smith)

For other people, a move to the Island has been a move to a completely novel place, as Jenny DeTolly indicates:

It was all so remote from anything that we had ever experienced. For instance, I had never been in a frame house until I came to this continent, because there's no such thing in South Africa. The whole thing was all just completely new and I remember for the first three months writing these constantly lyrical letters about this incredible place. Well, it was just so novel.

After this joyous initial reaction, she was hit by the rigours of her first Canadian winter, which she describes as "hideous"—cold, bleak, and isolated. But, having survived that, she developed a deep attachment to the Island environment.

For some people, their love of the Island was almost immediate. Bill Metcalfe describes his reaction: "I was programmed for it. It was sort of a perfect matrix for something that I'd never really put into words. It just suited me totally." But for others, it took longer for the Island to weave its spell.\(^1\) David Amer, who grew up in North Toronto (Willowdale) in a fairly "straight" suburban environment, reveals that his initial reaction to the Island was less than enthusiastic: "It looked like a slum, I thought. That was my first response."

Other people have found, not surprisingly, that their initial

\(^1\) Some people, of course, are never captivated. Maxine Wilson tells of a couple who moved over, stayed for only 2 days, and packed up again, saying, "There's no way we can live over here."
reactions have altered over time. Freya Godard, for example, found
the house of her first Island friend "delightful," but observed that
"I must say I was shocked the first time I used his toilet...."
"Now", she goes on, "I prefer them to flush toilets. I think flush
toilets are wasteful, the amount of water they use and I think there
must be better methods. It should all be used for fertilizer." She
also describes her initial reactions to her own house: "Well, it
smelled of gas and mildew. It may still do, but if it does, I'm used
to it. It's home now."

These evolutions highlight an important point: that initial
reactions (whether positive or negative) are often modified. It takes
time to really develop a strong sense of environment, to develop the
sense that you are not simply an outside observer or an objective ad-
mirer of the environment, but that you belong in this environment; that
it has in some respects become a part of you, that you feel comfortable
here—and somewhat "strange" elsewhere. By intimate, daily contact
with a distinctive place, seeing it and otherwise sensing it, at all
times of day, at all times of year, and under all kinds of conditions,
a person builds up a sort of personal memory bank of environmental
sensations and associations which create a strong link between that per-
son and his or her environment.

Why do people seem to develop a particularly strong sense of
environment on Toronto Island? There are, of course, a number of rea-
sons. First, perhaps simply because it is an island, which is in and of
itself a distinctive environmental feature. Islanders themselves are
well aware that there is something special about living on an island,
although they find it hard to say just why. Peter Cridland expresses this sentiment:

I know there's something different about living on an island.... I don't think it would be quite the sort of place it is if it weren't an island. But I've never really tried to put it into words.

It has clear boundaries; it is approached only by boat (which provides a distinctive range of environmental experiences: seeing the island in the distance, passing other boats in the harbour, watching the city recede, and so on); and it is, of course, surrounded by water. But the experience of "islandness" perhaps is more than just the experience of these individual features.

Second, there are a whole range of distinctive environmental features (water, sky, carless streets, little wooden houses and so on), which are discussed in the rest of this chapter.

Third, it is, for some reason, an evocative place. Islanders apply terms like "magical", "romantic", "fantasy world", which describe an amalgam of environmental experiences.

Fourth, it is in marked contrast to near-by mainland environments, which highlights, even more, its distinctive environmental features. As Ron Mazza observed, "There is the City and the Island. All the City seems somewhat homogeneous and the Island is a distinctly different place." The City is regarded as big, noisy, artificial, crowded, car-dominated, and removed from water and nature; whereas the Island is seen as small, intimate, peaceful, car-free, and close to water and nature. (See below pp. 276 ff.)

Fifth, and perhaps most significant, is the fact that although both natural and artificial elements are important in Islanders' sense
of environment, the natural ones predominate. It is interesting to note, for example, that in the first series of general quotations (pp. 253 - 254), most were related to elements of the natural environment. In fact, Islanders tend to use the term "environment" to mean "natural environment". Relph has observed:

There has, in brief, been a separation of man from landscape and nature. This is true in the very literal sense that we are not as close to land, sea, wind, and mountain as our ancestors, nor do we have the same involvement in creating the forms of man-made landscapes, but spend increasing amounts of time in air-conditioned, centrally-heated buildings with artificial lighting, made by someone else. This separation, combined with the changes in society and economy, has had a considerable influence on the types of environment that have been created and on the way in which we experience landscapes.¹

Yi-Fu Tuan sounds a similar note: "In modern life physical contact with one's natural environment is increasingly indirect and limited to special occasions."² Islanders are not separated from their natural (or built) surroundings in this manner, but some are aware of the possibility. Bill Metcalfe recounts his own experiences:

I think [being aware of the environment] has always been important to me. What happened was that through gradual osmosis of moving from an outdoor area, relatively wide-open suburban, to a lesser suburban, to finally a townhouse thing ... it just gradually disappeared from my life. I wasn't aware of it. I used to have an underground garage and drive to an underground garage and walk across the street. That was my exposure on a day to day basis. So I guess it was nice to have it back. I didn't realize that I had lost it. I just don't want to lose it again.

Islanders, perhaps in contrast to most city-dwellers, are constantly aware of their surrounding environment. Their frame houses are much


less substantial and insulated from the elements than the average city house or apartment building. So they can readily hear the wind come up or the rain come down, or the temper of the lake change. Most importantly, they do not have cars and are forced into frequent, intimate contact with the environment, no matter what the weather. Jenny DeTolly mentions this point:

I think one's relation with the outdoors is a very much stronger thing [on the Island] because you don't have this alien element. You also, if you live on Algonquin, are forced to walk that 15 minutes approximately to the ferry. So there you have a very much stronger relationship to the outdoors than you would in the City. And in the City you can hop into that same alien element, the car, or public transit, and be sheltered from the elements. Whereas here [on the Island] your contact is an intimate one. I mean, if it rains, you damn well get rained on. There's no option.

Finally, it is hard to over-estimate how important this carless environment is for enabling people to have intimate contact with their surroundings (notably their natural surroundings, but also their built surroundings) and to develop a strong sense of environment. Islanders walk. When you walk, of course, you can stop and gaze at a particularly beautiful vista, or bend down and smell a flower or stop and listen to the geese. You have more direct, more complete experience of the environment than you have when you are speeding along in a car, unable to pause at will and insulated from the outside by your glass and steel shield. As Robert Aiken suggests, "To the walker, the cultural landscape takes on a intimate quality....[O]n foot, we can develop personal association with landscape."¹ And Yuan attributes a decline in the feeling of a sense of place to, among other things, "the loss of intimate contact with the physical setting in an age when people seldom walk.

and almost never loiter. Islanders have not suffered this loss of intimate contact with their surroundings. They both walk and loiter. Not only are Islanders forced to walk (or bicycle, which affords many of the same environmental opportunities and experiences as walking), because they have no cars, but they also like to walk. Their surroundings are not dominated or sullied by the noise, fumes and presence of cars. The beautiful natural surroundings, of course, act as a positive magnet to draw them out of their houses to enjoy and contemplate nature directly. (See Illustrations 29 and 30.)

The next sections of this chapter describe some of the distinctive environmental features of the Toronto Island mentioned by Islanders. These include both natural features (water, sky, wildlife and so on) and artificial or built features (houses, streets and lay-out and so on).

It should be emphasized again that sense of environment is not, of course, independent of other components of sense of place. A person's sense of history, for example, may be sharpened by encountering physical elements of historical import. A person's sense of identity is certainly bound up with personal reactions to and personal associations with various environmental features. A sense of community is certainly created in part by people sharing a common, distinctive environment, having similar reactions to physical features and overcoming common environmental hazards or discomforts. A person's sense of environment may be enhanced by making decisions about how to use, design or otherwise exercise control over various environmental features. And a sense of change is certainly related to a fear that a familiar and cherished environment will suffer alteration (even eradication).

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Having noted that a sense of environment does overlap with other elements of a sense of place, let us now proceed to isolate and discuss some of the particular environmental features that together create in Islanders a strong sense of environment. The environment, as noted elsewhere, is experienced by all the senses: sight, sound, smell, touch and even taste (as when near the sea). The remainder of this chapter begins by looking at three ways to sense the environment: seeing, hearing and smelling.

b. Island Sights – General:

Of the senses, seeing is the dominant one in interpreting and experiencing the environment and most of the environmental images recalled by Islanders are visual ones.¹

David Amer, co-editor of the Goose and Duck recalls some of the distinctive Island sights that would spark an instant shock of recognition in Islanders:

Orange carts. A visual thing that Island people respond to. It’s common. It’s everyday. I remember seeing a picture that Bill George took which was a close-up of a puddle in the boardwalk and in the puddle was reflected the trees above. That’s instant Island memorabilia and everybody would know exactly what it was and it

¹It may be that, in our culture, our vocabulary for describing sounds and smells is less rich than our vocabulary for describing sights. And, although these other senses are very important, their effect is more subliminal and unstated. It may also be that urban environments have a tendency to dull these other senses: traffic noises may overpower other sounds, or gas fumes and other forms of pollution may overwhelm other more pleasant smells). For a discussion of different ways of sensing space (and other environmental features), see Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966). See also Georges Matoré, "Existential Space," Landscape 15 (Spring 1966) p. 5, who argues that in our culture and over time the sense of sight is predominant.
would evoke all sorts of emotional things for Island people.... Nina Kilpatrick [did] a little drawing [for the Goose and Duck] of that waiting room at the dock which you pass ten times a day .... A mother struggling from the fire hall to the boat in the wintertime with her coat flying and some kids and some groceries... We once took a picture of Jenny DeTolly with the baby carriage loaded with stuff and the kid walking. That was a great picture. Once again, in the summertime, looking across the Bay, calm with all the colours and the lights reflected .... The classic shot... was a shot from the tennis court which showed the geese, a bicycle in silhouette, the sailboats and a sunset. That's beautiful Island stuff.

Other visual images are scattered throughout the rest of this chapter.

c. Island Sounds:

David Amer also recalls some familiar Island sounds:

I think a walk on a summer night is great. There can be that hum from the city; the warmth that comes from a cottage with its lights on, the sound of the ducks, the sound of the gangplank coming down on the boat, the sound of the water taxis, the sound of the police car and if there's any kind of wind, the sound of the rigging on a boat, the way the water slaps against the breakwall. There's a definite change from silence to crash on the beach. It can be perfectly silent and then all of a sudden, the waves start coming in at night, regularly. It's something I noticed at 36 Lakeshore.

Freya Godard remembers her first night on the Island:

One of my strongest memories is the first night I spent on the Island [in my own house]. I remember waking up in the middle of the night and hearing the rain on the roof - I think it was coming through onto the ceiling. Hearing the ducks and the fog horn. And I can still remember how it felt and being quite cold in bed.

The sense of hearing, like other senses, is very selective and people can develop a very keen sensitivity to particular sounds (and

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1 See Illustration 26.

2 Sounds reinforce and often add emotional depth to sights. Tuan writes in Topophilia, op. cit., p. 8:

The eyes gain far more precise and detailed information about the environment than the ears but we are usually more touched by what we hear than by what we see. The sound of rain pelting against leaves, the roll of thunder, the whistling of wind in tall grass, and the anguished cry excite us to a degree that visual imagery can seldom match.
an ability to tune out other sounds—like the crashing of the car-crusher across the Bay from Ward's Island). Nina Kilpatrick, for example, who moved from the Island to a townhouse on a downtown street near the university (several miles from the harbour) was amazed to discover that "always, every morning I still hear the eight o'clock [boat] whistle."

d. Island Smells:

There is a whole range of distinctive Island smells—not all of them pleasant. David Amer notes, "Well, basically, there's sewage .... There's the fish on the beach, in the springtime when they wash up." (See also Freya Godard's initial reactions on p. 258.)

But many smells are pleasant and very evocative. Smelling a familiar scent can trigger apparently deeply buried memories. Elizabeth Amer recalls such an experience:

One great thing we did as kids, was with the Supervised playground, we used to camp overnight at Snake Island. And this was the main highlight of the summer, where the whole group would go over there and build houses—none of your lily-livered tents, you know. You'd spend a whole week building a house, just the raw bush. You'd conquer the raw bush over on Snake Island! Building those houses with willow and poplar reeds that grew there in abundance. And they smell divine. I was over there the other day, bumping around, and just smelling that brought all that back to me. All those willow and poplar reeds have a distinct smell.

\[1\] The sense of smell is perhaps the most evocative of all the senses. For example, Wallace Stegner, in Wolf Willow (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, Laurentian Library edition, 1977), pp. 17-19, describes visiting his boyhood home of "Whitemud", Saskatchewan, forty years after leaving it and trying to recapture the emotions and experiences of his childhood. It is all "a pumping operation"—the memories fail to flow spontaneously until he smells "an odour that I have not smelled since I was eleven, but have never forgotten—have dreamed, more than once", the "wholly-native smell" of wolf willow. "It is wolf willow, and not the town or anyone in it, that brings me home."
e. Water:

Not surprisingly, probably the most frequently mentioned environmental feature was the water. Many of the comments already quoted have included references to water. Nearly every Islander interviewed mentioned it somewhere in the course of the interview. And the pages of the Goose and Duck, for example, are full of articles and photographs which reflect the Islanders' maritime orientation.

Water is an important part of life for every Islander: they have to cross it to get anywhere else; many have views of it from their houses; they have to fight it when it rises and threatens to swamp them; they play on it and in it; and they can enjoy it in all its moods.

A number of Islanders were attracted to the Island because of the water (like Nina Kilpatrick who was quoted on p. 256; Peter Cridland who was a product of the English seaside holiday tradition; and Freya Godard who felt "I have to be near the water, having begun my life more or less living on the Lake.").

Some Islanders who had no previous exposure to living by the water have also developed a strong attachment to it. For example, Jenny DeTolly commented, "I'd grown up in semi-desert and really felt the lack of water and greenery and this is why now that I've found it, I would find it very hard not to live near water now."

A number of Islanders who moved away, have moved close to water. Alan Howard moved to an apartment where he could "look out on the Island and the Lake" and Wendy Hanger suggests that "A lot of old Islanders [like her parents] have gone close to the Lake. They seem to like to be able to see the Lake. When they're out of the house for five minutes, they want to be able to see water, where they can see forever."
They don't want to be closed in."

When they discuss where they would move if they had to move and what they would miss if they had to move, Islanders almost invariably mention water. A number mention liking the Beaches area of Toronto, because of its architecture (some old frame dwellings), boardwalk and, most important, its proximity to the Lake. Water even enters into their fantasies about the ideal place to live. Bill Metcalfe's ideal spot would be "a house overlooking the water, part way up a cliff probably, or on top of a high area, somewhere the waves were crashing in."

Finally, a number of Islanders expressed the belief that the bond between people and water is a very strong and "fundamental" one—that living near the water has a deep, and not always salutary, effect on people. For some, as Mary Anderson and others suggest, it may have a "calming effect"; for others, as Elizabeth Amer suggests, it may intensify the emotions and have (especially during the winter) a depressing effect. But for most Islanders, living near water is a distinct attraction, and very important.

f. Sky:

The other major natural element is the sky. Dale Perkins, who comes from the prairies of Saskatchewan, commented that the Island was the only place in Toronto where you can see the sky. And, the expanse of the sky is one of the first things a visitor notices when he or she leaves the skyscraper canyons of downtown Toronto to visit the Island.

Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow*, op. cit., p. 7, writes about the "overpowering" Saskatchewan prairie sky and the dramatic combined effect of earth and sky. Islanders, as noted in the text, talk about a very different sky and a different "fusion", that of sky and water.
It is, of course, the combination of sky and water which creates many of the special environmental effects noticeable on the Island. Elizabeth Amer describes some of them:

I like to walk on the beach very much. It's very nice at sunset to strike out over the beach and walk out there and walk back and watch the sun setting. It's lovely....You can really enjoy them every night, worth planning on appreciating each night. One thing about sunrise I noticed this morning, looking out the window when I was waking up at about seven - the gulls were doing one of their routines in the sky and the whiteness of the gulls was catching the rising sun and they were almost like rosy-orange and it was really quite an amazing sight to see them doing an almost fiery motion. It was almost a fiery look about them. It was really wonderful. You get some great light effects here. The trees are so big and you get a lot of sky here, which I guess you don't get [in the City]. Some amazing things happen in the atmosphere here, like, I can sit here and look out that window and watch a thunderstorm, rainstorm, come across the Bay. Just see the black thing move right across the Bay until finally it hits the window.

g. Spaciousness:

Alan Howard (p. 253) and Wendy Hanger (p. 266) observed that living on the Island by sky and water created a feeling of spaciousness and their sentiments are echoed by other Islanders. For example, David Amer comments:

I think what I'd miss is the sense of space around me. The idea of being able to look for two or three hundred yards unobstructed is what I'd miss. I remember when we did live in the City you would look out your window and there would be living units all around you.

This feeling of spaciousness is created in large part by living next to a large body of water, where you can see the horizon and great stretches of sky, and also by living in a place with many natural, open areas to see and visit. The idea that Islanders have a strong sense of space may come as a surprise to those who think of Islanders as living in tightly-packed little houses. But the feeling of spaciousness here comes not from the size of the houses, but from the
relation of the house and the people to the outside. In fact, the contrast between small houses, intimate streets and the open sweep of sky and water may enhance the feeling of spaciousness. Although the houses, especially on Ward's Island, are indeed tightly packed together, many (perhaps 40%) have views of open places -- the Lake, the Bay, "the park" and so on. And even people who live in the interior of blocks, with no unobstructed view from the house, are only a few minutes walk from the Lake or Bay or other open area.

h. Storms:

Storms (like Hurricane Hazel in 1954) or other environmental threats (like high water) make people acutely aware of their environment. Such events, in fact, often become dramatic highlights in people's "environmental memories". Many Islanders, therefore, recall past storms and frantic sandbagging activities in order to keep the Lake back not only in 1973 (the last major high water year), but also in the 1940's and 1950's before the seawall was improved (when the effects of storms and rising water were even more dramatic).

i. Wildlife:

Island wildlife, especially the ducks, geese and other birds, play an important part in Islanders' sense of environment. Many Islanders, including some who admitted to finding birds "dull" before moving to the Island, formally and informally birdwatch. Nina Kilpatrick became positively rapturous when she recalled Island geese, from her City duplex, "They're pretty spectacular if you watch them for a while. Just terrific." And the Goose and Duck, true to its name, published many informative and humorous articles about Island wildlife. (See, for example, Illustration 32.)
j. Night:

The character of places changes radically in the course of the day. Therefore, to understand the Island environment as an Islander experiences it, the outside observer must experience it at all times of day. Perhaps the most "Island" time of day is night, especially late at night after the last ferry has departed and no more park visitors remain. Only Islanders are there until morning when the first boat arrives. Seeing the Northern lights or lying on the Beach gazing at the stars or hearing the muffled motor of an unseen boat or taking a walk over newly fallen snow gleaming under a winter moon—all of these are vivid Island experiences recalled by Island residents. Night also creates an intimacy. The community is drawn together and defined by the shine of the old street lights and the warm glow of cottages, which contrast with the vast, somewhat threatening darkness of the empty park. There is the sense that safety and security lie within the boundaries of the little community; and that uncertainty and possibly danger lie without it.

k. Seasons:

Just as the character of places changes in the course of the day, so it changes in the course of the year. (See Illustration 29.) In order to experience the Island in the way that most Islanders do, it is therefore necessary to experience it not only on a bright, warm, sunny summer day (when most park visitors come), but also on a crisp fall day, a bitter cold winter day and a rainy spring day. Islanders are particularly aware of seasonal rhythms not only because, as elsewhere in this part of the world, seasonal differences are marked (from cold, snowy winter to hot, dry summer), but also because Islanders
THE SEASONS.
themselves are in intimate contact with their environment and because
the changes in the ferry schedule and the yearly influx of summer
Islanders and summer park visitors emphasize the differences. Each
season has its special attributes. Spring calls to Islanders' minds
such things as high water, smelts, rubber boots, muck, trees and bulbs
in flower, warmth, mushrooms and rebirth. Summer brings to year-round
Islanders' minds greenery, sun, beach, swimming, sports, socializing,
freedom, frantic activity, laziness, ferry line-ups, park visitors.
Migrating birds, colder weather, fewer visitors, slowing down, plastic
on windows, melancholy are some of the characteristics of fall re-
called by Islanders. And bitter cold, erratic ferries, frozen pipes,
snowy walks, skating on the lagoons, "cabin fever", isolation are some
of the characteristics of winter mentioned by Islanders. Winter is
probably the most "Island" season (in the same way that night is the
most "Island" time of day). There are very few park visitors and so
the beauties and the trials of being on the Island are experienced
almost exclusively by Island residents. Some Islanders prefer winter
to other seasons precisely for this reason. It is a period of retrench-
ment (in contrast to summer, which is a period of expansiveness). The
community is drawn together; the ferry is smaller; and Islanders share
a keen sense of facing the elements together—of sharing hardships.¹
They are more isolated from the City than at other times of year, be-
cause the ferry is relatively infrequent and sometimes erratic; and
more dependent on their own resources for entertainment and "survival"
(or, at least, "comfortable survival"—for they fix their own frozen

¹See also Sense of Community: "Winter", p. 201 ff and Sense of
Control: "Inconveniences", pp. 322 ff.
pipes and broken heaters). Surviving winter, in fact, is a point of pride among Islanders, and is almost an initiation rite, before becoming a "real" Islander. No Islander remains non-committal about winter; each voices strong opinions (although they have mixed opinions, for there are both pros and cons to winter on the Island).

Most Islanders (who moved to the Island as adults) have particularly vivid memories of their first winter on the Island. For some like Jenny DeTolly it was a far from pleasant experience, "The first year was an indescribably isolated year. It seemed to be an endless winter and was an indescribably isolated winter. It was hideous—just hideous." But other Islanders like David Harris were immediately swept up by Island winters, "I hated winter. Couldn't remember enjoying winter since I was a kid. And [I] totally enjoyed the winter on the Island....Loved it. Just loved it."

In addition to the problems of keeping warm and keeping Island houses functioning and travelling to the City, some Islanders also mention feeling "cabin fever". Elizabeth Amer comments on this problem:

People get pretty stir-crazy. We always did, you know, by the end of winter. Essentially, the house is too small to contain three seething adults and one six year old. And, just by the end of the winter, you know, it really becomes a problem if you've got too many people in one of these little houses. We used to try and figure out what to do. We used to try and make sure that everybody wasn't at home together at all times. And week-ends were a particular problem....That's a sort of post-Christmas to springtime cabin fever that I think a lot of people feel, especially families and especially if you've got too many people for the size of the house, which happens a lot here 'cause the houses are very small.

But, in spite of the problems, winter has its advocates. And for some Islanders, like David Harris, it is one of the favourite times of year:

[One of my favourite times] is the really dead of winter, when there's nice fresh snow and clear blue skies...to wake up in
the morning and look out that front window and see all that fresh snow. Just even that. The vista. To look up and see the stars...I like running on the boardwalk, because, you know, especially in winter, you get just some incredible things. ...And, of course, skating in the lagoon has got to be one of life's greatest experiences, because if you've ever had a fondness for skating, to be able to go out there when the lagoon is frozen and there's no snow over it and it's smooth and to be able to skate from Ward's to Hanlan's to catch the boat is just one of life's greatest experiences, to me anyway.

1. Carless Environment:

Again and again, Islanders mention how valuable it is to them to live in a place where there are no cars and most would agree with Terry Tyers' comment that "there's no doubt that the absence of cars is of inestimable value to one's quality of life". The introduction to this chapter stressed how important the lack of cars was to creating a strong sense of environment, how it enabled Islanders to explore more directly and intimately their surroundings and how that environment, in contrast to other modern environments, is not dominated by the car. We have already seen, for example, that walking is not only a necessity, but also a pleasure for Islanders. Beyond this, in an environment where there are no cars, other environmental features (sights, sounds, and smells) can become more prominent. On the Island, Peter Holt reflects, there is a "high profile of human noises", as opposed to the "white noise" of City traffic, and a child's little musical pull toy (not a car's horn) is an Island "street noise." Finally, Island parents again and again emphasized what a wonderful, safe, free place the Island is to raise children and that this is due in no small measure to the fact that there are no cars there. (See Illustration 30.)
CARLESS STREETS
m. Scale:

One of the strongest impressions a visitor to the Island has is how small and compact the community and the houses are. This is due certainly to the contrast between the little one-storey houses and the great towering trees and, more importantly, to the contrast between the Island and the City, which is readily evident simply by looking across the Bay. The small, intimate scale of the Island residential environment is, of course, made possible by the fact that the streets do not have to accommodate automobile traffic and take on the character of broad sidewalks. There is, as Ron Mazza puts it, a "walking scale".

Peter Holt conveys this intimate scale in his comments:

When I first visited the Island it was in winter. When I came over, there were all these little lights and little lane streets and little gingerbread cottages, little noises coming out of each house....It was just a tranquil, peaceful scene.

n. Ward's and Algonquin: Physical Images:

Long familiarity and close contact with an environment make people aware of small nuances and differences that would be unnoticed by others—the slant of a roof, the curve of a street, the texture of a pathway. It is not surprising that Islanders perceive distinct physical (as well as social)\(^1\) differences between Ward's Island and Algonquin Island. (See Illustration 24.) The perceived differences should not be over-emphasized. The two Island residential environments are closer to each other than to most others. Although many people refer to Algonquin as "suburbia", Algonquin is more like Ward's than any more conventional suburbia. Most Islanders, therefore, would

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\(^1\) Sense of Community: "Ward's-Algonquin: Social Images" emphasized the social differences perceived. The two are, of course, closely related and overlapping.
probably agree with Algonquinite Bill Metcalfe, who said that "if I had the choice of living there [Ward's] or not on the Island, then there would be no choice at all. I would live there."

The main physical differences between the two Islands, which Islanders are well aware of, are in the style and spacing of the houses. The Ward's houses are tightly-packed and set on very small lots (generally 40' x 45'), which reflect their tent origins. Most of the streets are not straight. The Ward's houses are generally older than the Algonquin houses, were built originally as summer cottages, often reflect the layout of their canvas predecessors and have grown sporadically (adding a room here or a dormer window there, as needed). The relatively more spacious arrangement of Algonquin was laid out all at once, in 1937-1938 when the first cottages were floated down from Hanlan's Point to make way for the airport. The houses are set on larger lots (50' x 100') and are set further from each other and from the streets. Apart from the old Hanlan's houses, found on perimeter lots, most Algonquin cottages are newer, more substantial, and more "four square" in appearance than Ward's houses. The streets are wider and straighter than the Ward's streets.

Some Islanders, like Michael Albrecht, are somewhat flippant about the differences:

We joke about it. I still joke about it. That's "Algonquin Heights" over there and this is the "slum" down here. It's like a subdivision. Their houses are bigger. It gives them, you know, loftier thoughts.

But some Islanders are very serious about the differences between the two Islands, and feel more "comfortable" on one rather than the other. One Ward's Islander commented on the differences:
Well, the houses on Algonquin are newer and I think mostly bigger and because they're newer, they're in better condition, and the lots are bigger. That means they'll always be more expensive so they've attracted people who have more money, more professional people and that determines to some extent the character of Algonquin... I'd certainly like to have all that space, I'd certainly like that. I don't really feel very comfortable on Algonquin. Partly, of course, because it's a separate island and I don't know people there so well.... But people are much less close physically; their lots are bigger and they're not as close socially. Perhaps they are; but I know people who've moved from Ward's to Algonquin and find it very difficult. I think people are much more aware of private property over there, personal property. People always say that about Algonquin. I have that impression, though it's hard to define.... I've never spent a night on Algonquin. I don't like the houses. They're built mostly after the war and to my mind they're quite ugly. Well, the angle of the roofs. They're not steep enough. At about the time when people began to build much shallower roofs and to my mind it's an ugly feature. A lot of them are rather square, boxy little houses. The interesting thing about ours is the things that have been added on, dormer windows.... I suppose people over there have fewer difficulties [because the houses are newer] and stay in their houses. It's always seemed slightly suburban to me.

Although some people (both Ward's and Algonquin Islanders) find Ward's architecture marvellously "creative", others (including some Ward's Islanders) are not so enchanted by it. One Ward's Islander comments, "There are some really lovely homes on Algonquin. There are not that many lovely cottages on Ward's Island, if you want to make that kind of comparison. You'd have to be an idiot not to see that."

Just as many Ward's Islanders prefer Ward's Island, so many Algonquin Islanders prefer Algonquin (although perhaps in a more understated fashion):

[Why did you move to Algonquin?] Well, if you had the choice, where would you go?.... We're not crowded together like on Ward's Island. These houses, for instance, this one, is constructed for all year round dwelling.

c. Urban Proximity - Pastoral Retreat:

As noted before, contrast between places serves to highlight the
distinctive features of each. In the case of the Toronto Island, the contrast between Island and City is especially strong, as the visible, physical presence of downtown Toronto across the Bay makes abundantly clear. Islanders are both attracted and repulsed by the City. Islanders generally conceive of the City as being big, noisy, dirty, hectic, artificial, commercial, confined, unsafe, unhealthy and unfriendly. They also conceive it as being exciting, interesting, sophisticated and the focus of economic opportunity. The proximity of the City, many feel, prevents life on the Island from becoming dull, or too imbred or too narrow. So, the fact that the City is so near, yet so far, is an important part of Island life and Islanders' sense of environment. Many Islanders commented on this feature. For example, Al Schoenborn says:

[I like] the nearness of the City when you want to have it, the distance from the City when you don't. The Islanders used to say, "We're a hundred miles from the City; but the City is only two miles from us."

Some Islanders mentioned that they had moved to the Island deliberately to retreat from the City (but not too far from the City). They regard the Island as a kind of "pastoral retreat", a place to

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1Tuvin, Topophilia, op. cit., p. 102, writes that "an environmental value requires its antithesis for definition...the virtues of the countryside require their anti-image, the city, for the sharpening of focus and vice versa." See also Sense of Identity, "Boundaries, Visibility and Contrast," pp. 169-171 and Sense of Community: "Big City - Small Town: Social Images," pp. 215-218.
become spiritually, as well as physically, rejuvenated. For example,

Terry Tyers comments:

[I moved to the Island] because I was very busy both at work and
outside activities and wanted a place to withdraw and I viewed
the Island as some of providing requiem as soon as you got off
the boat.... It was mainly, it would hopefully be quiet, without
the activity of the City.

Finally, some Islanders commented on the fact that because they live
on the Island, where they can retreat, they can and do enjoy City life
more than they would if they lived elsewhere. Bill Metcalfe comments
on this attraction of Island living:

It's kind of interesting, because I think being on the Island
and being close to downtown has made me appreciate the City
a hell of a lot more than I ever did before. If I moved off
here, and didn't move away [from Toronto], which is what I
probably would do, I would probably try and live in the City.
No way I'm going back to the suburbs. I think I like the
City. It's changed my view of the City quite a bit. [I like]
the variety, I guess. The people. I think I can go to the
City and be a part of the City without having to stay in the
City. I think that may be one of the things that enables me
to enjoy it more. I can sort of look at it as a visitor almost.
You know, when you're visiting a place, you're most perceptive to
things that are going on around you.

p. Suburbiar Physical Images:

The other environmental contrast which casts light on Islanders'
own sense of environment is the contrast between the Island and

Leo Marx discusses the idea of pastoral retreat, especially as
seen in literature, and emphasizes this rejuvenation aspect as well as
the idea that the pastoral retreat is a middle ground between city and
wilderness. It is not a complete return to nature. The Toronto Island
fits into this scheme. See Leo Marx, "Pastoral Ideals and City Troubles",
in Fitness of Man's Environment, Smithsonian II, 1968, pp. 120-144.
An "island" may in itself be regarded as an ideal place of retreat and
some Islanders may well have been attracted by this popular (but
perhaps subconsciously known) image of "island". Yi-Fu Tuan, Topo-
philia, op. cit., pp. 119-120 discusses the island as place of retreat-
of "temporary escapism" or "withdrawal from high-pressured living on
the continent".
suburbia. While Islanders' image of the City is somewhat ambivalent, their image of suburbia is virtually unremittingly negative. Interestingly, when asked where they would ideally move if they were forced to move, no one chose the suburbs. Islanders chose either downtown or outside Toronto altogether, such as small towns or rural areas. Islanders see suburbia as car-dominated, unfriendly, status-conscious, and dull (both architecturally and socially). Some of their comments on suburbia (which remains a fairly undifferentiated entity) follow:

Simply there is no way I would move to suburbia. I can't even... I dislike quite intensely even visiting suburbia. It really upsets me almost physically to be among them.

Strangely enough, [I'd move] probably downtown, because I'm used to downtown, because that's the most successful part of the City for me... I don't think I want a car, so that means I definitely would not want to live in the suburbs. I find them depressing, especially apartment living in the suburbs. It seems to be a horrible way to exist.

No way I'm going to go back to the suburbs.

I could be perfectly happy within the City, I think. I'd enjoy the Beaches. I'd probably enjoy the Kensington Market area. I'd enjoy Rosedale. I'd enjoy North Yonge. I don't think there's any place in the City that's as good to live as the Island... I think the Lake is kind of important to me. I'd probably rather stick to the coast if I could possibly... I don't want to live in the suburbs. I like old houses. I like old streets and trees, so probably one of the older areas... I don't want a car, so that limits me to some extent.

q. Naming:

Giving names to the environment is a way of putting a human stamp on it. Naming environmental features not only humanizes, personalizes and makes secure or less threatening new environments by

1Sense of Community: "Suburbia: Social Images", pp. 218 ff. discusses primarily the social aspect of this image.
bringing them out of the realm of the unknown into the realm of the known (e.g., explorers and settlers in new lands deliberately named new places for old, familiar ones—Perth, New Amsterdam, London and so on), but it also conditions our way of seeing the environment. We are more likely to notice and remember environmental features which are named than ones which are not. Naming also clearly distinguishes insiders from outsiders, because insiders have a more fine-grained knowledge of their surroundings. Islanders, for example, can identify not only Ward's, Algonquin, Centre, and Hanlan's Point (like a large number of outsiders), but they can also identify Snake Island, Mugg's Island, Donut Island, "the park" (not the Island Park, but the area on Ward's which contains the baseball diamond), the Gap, Sunfish Island and so on. Such more exotic Island names are scattered throughout Islanders' comments on the Island.

x. "Hidden Landscapes":

Present sense of environment, like present sense of place, is related not only to current experience of the environment, but also to memories of earlier environmental experiences. For people who have lived on the Island for a long time and remember, for example, when there were houses stretching from Hanlan's to Ward's, the Island is a very different place than it is for more recent Islanders or visitors. It is full of "hidden landscapes"—remembered landscapes. And, as shown elsewhere, reactions based upon these "hidden landscapes" may be the strongest and most poignant of all. Small, individual environmental features, like a tree, can act as a reminder and a trigger to set off memories of earlier experiences. Jimmy Jones recalls a recent
visit to Hanlan's Point, where he grew up:

My mind is constantly going back to Hanlan's Point and that's my favourite place....I feel very strange about [walking around there]. I've taken a walk over to Hanlan's. It was just last year...when I [was] walking from the wall up to where we used to live at Hanlan's and I stood by a tree that was only maybe six inches in diameter that is now, oh, maybe ten inches and I remember when my brother tried to tap that tree and I stood leaning against that, which would be the fence line between our property and the man next door...I could just visualize. I could see the house and the house next to us, which was 602 and ______'s, which was down the street, 612. Ya, I feel very...it gets me emotionally....And there was a tree on the beach that I watched Vern Thompson, Gordon's younger brother - it was a very small sapling to begin with and he would go out and take the small branches off the bottom of it. It was a poplar tree. And now that tree is in full bloom and as big as the tree in the backyard and the branches are quite high because he pruned the trunk so that it would grow bushy at the top.

s. Children:

Sense of environment develops from the cradle on, as Memory

Shearing indicated:

My daughter's first word was not daddy or mummy, but quack, quack every time she saw a duck. That was really something. That says something for the Island. How many kids that age have ever seen a duck?

And early memories can be very powerful, if somewhat disjointed. For example, Donna Semore recalls:

I first visited the Toronto Island 35 years ago in the arms of my mother. As a child I returned many times to share its wonders. The most outstanding features were the smell of the water, the unidentified treasures I would take home. And the houses - those funny houses with all their bright colours. The images were so stimulating that they remain clearly with me today.¹

1. Memories of Growing Up:

Childhood memories probably exert a powerful influence on later environmental values and attitudes. Clare Cooper-Marcus has observed, "All of us carry the memory seeds of childhood landscapes-- those

environments we encountered, smelled, dug in, climbed, and explored when our senses seemed most tantalizingly alive.¹ A number of adults interviewed for this study recalled growing up on the Island and exploring the natural environment, which plays a prominent part in many of their memories. It is interesting, if not surprising, that there is a similarity over time and place to these memories.

2. Children's Sense of Environment:

Island children's sense of their environment is evident from their pictures and stories about Island life.²

The Island pictures drawn by children in Grades 1 and 2 (6 and 7 year olds) were full of trees, grass, water, beach, wildlife (6 of the 17 had geese, ducks or birds). Island houses, the school bus and the Algonquin Bridge were also prominently displayed. The City pictures drawn by this group, while far from dull or lifeless, were less varied and had far fewer natural elements. There were no trees, no flowers and no wildlife. They were full of tall buildings (notably the CN Tower which looks across the Bay), cars, trucks, and airplanes. In short, these pictures revealed a keen sense of the contrast between the natural, car-free Island environment and the built-up City environment. (See Illustration 31.)

The essays of the middle group (8-10 years old) revealed that

¹Clare Cooper Marcus, "Remembrance of Landscapes Past," Landscape 22 (Summer 1978), p. 35.

²At my request, Island school teachers asked the school children to do a variety of tasks: the youngest ones (kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2) drew pictures of "the Island" and "the City"; the middle ones (Grades 3-5) wrote very short pieces comparing "the Island" and "the City"; and the oldest ones (Grades 6-8) wrote longer pieces comparing "the Island" and "the City" and drew maps from memory of "the Island" and "the City".
they too were very impressed by environmental features (the grass, trees, wildlife, water, open air, and especially the lack of cars on the Island versus the cars, noise, pollution and crowding of the City). For example, Mary (Grade 3) wrote poetically, "I like the Island because there are no cars. When you wake up in the morning instead of hearing cars you hear birds."

The older group (11-13 years), in addition to mentioning the same environmental features, also spent more time discussing other features of Island and City life (e.g., sense of community, friendliness, safety of the Island versus the lack of community, unfriendliness and danger of the City). The essays of the older children were more political in tone; the children were obviously aware of the uncertain political situation and had spent time listening to their parents' conversations and worries. One of the older group, Guy, wrote:

I don't know what the city would be like. I don't like the dirt, the cars, the noise and all the roads - I don't like the air, it's horrible. The Island isn't a smelly dirty place full of cars. There are lots of places to play. [T]here aren't any cars to watch for. In the city where there is grass it is usually trimmed short and the trees are ugly. Nothing is natural. On the island you can do all sorts of things. You can play tennis, go swimming, skate and there's enough space for everyone to play. I think the people who want to tear down our houses are mean. They don't care about us. They figure we can all get a house just like that, right out of thin air. I'm not scared about living on the Island because I know people, in the city your too scared of robbers to make friends with your neighbours. I'm afraid of cars in the city. I think I'm just afraid of living in the city.

In conclusion, the first part of this chapter has described and discussed the various physical environmental features that have contributed to (young and old) Islanders' strong and distinctive sense of environment.
ii. Sense of Environment - Defense of Place:

The political history of the Island has been punctuated by numerous clashes of environmental values and images, several of which are discussed here.¹

a. Impact of Islanders' Sense of Environment On Their Defense of Place:

It is already clear from this chapter that Islanders have a strong sense of environment. This, in turn, has had a marked impact

¹In the last fifteen to twenty years, sparked mainly by such seminal works as Kenneth Boulding's *The Image*, Anselm Strauss's *Images of the American City* and, perhaps most influential of all, Kevin Lynch's *The Image of the City*, geographers, psychologists, sociologists and others have done a great deal of research on environmental images (as well as other related topics that fall under the various rubrics of environmental perception, environmental psychology, environmental cognition, cognitive maps, mental maps and so on). Environmental images may be defined, very generally, as the mental pictures, or conceptions, that people hold about physical environments. The extremely diverse research into this subject (most of which has centered on urban imagery) ranges from analysis of the physical and geometric aspects of images to analysis of the meaning and symbolic content of images. The images of the Toronto Island discussed in this study fall more toward the symbolic than the physical end of the spectrum. Research into environmental images has been based on two fundamental ideas. First, that different people (and different groups of people) hold different images or conceptions of their environments. And second that these various environmental images influence behaviour. It is evident from this study that, over the years, different groups of people (e.g., Island residents and businessmen; political supporters and opponents; journalistic supporters and opponents, and so on) have held different, and in some cases conflicting, images of the Island (e.g., the Island as summer resort versus the Island as permanent home; the Island as place of business versus the Island as place of residence; the Island as a well-established community versus the Island as parkland manqué, and so on) and that these clashes have had a marked impact on the behaviour of these groups and individuals.

on their political behaviour. At the most fundamental level, as was the case with sense of identity and sense of community, when the Island environment (as they know it) has been threatened, Islanders have been strongly motivated to try to defend it. This was evident, for example, in the later 1940's and early 1950's when Islanders strongly opposed a series of plans which would have radically altered the Island's physical environment (by building tunnels or bridges and roads, straightening and filling in lagoons, building highrise apartments and hotels, demolishing existing housing, creating major amusement parks, and even additional warehousing and dockyards).  

1. "Protectors" Of the Island Environment:

Not only were Islanders defenders of their own interests (of saving their Island houses and Island environment), but they also saw themselves as being protectors and defenders of the virtues of the Island as it was. They therefore made direct appeals to politicians and others which were based on the need for and desirability of protecting an existing environment. For example, in 1948, a hundred Islanders trooped down to City Hall to successfully protest against the City Planning Board's Official Plan recommendations for the Island (i.e., that the land level be raised; that existing residential leases be eliminated and a new residential district composed principally of apartments and hotels be created; and that a motor highway and parking lots be constructed).  

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1Such as the 1947 City Planning Board Proposal (Map 21), 1949 City Planning Board Official Plan recommendations, 1951 Joint City Planning Board–Toronto Harbour Commission Plan (Map 23) and 1953 Lamport Plan (Map 24). At each stage, through the IIC, Islanders made counter-proposals which would have maintained essentially the status quo by improving existing park and residential areas and not allowing motor vehicles. (Map 22).
They came as a delegation to tell the city parks Committee they did not like the changes the Planning Board proposed to make on the Island - now "a little gem set in downtown Toronto". To effect these changes, they said, would be "the biggest mistake Toronto could make".1

The City Planning proposal was temporarily withdrawn.

Similarly, on May 12, 1953, Alan Howard of the IIIC presented Islanders' own plan,2 which advocated keeping and improving existing residential areas and improving park areas (including the picturesque, winding lagoon system), and opposed providing automobile access (discussed below, pp. 287 ff.).

[Mr. Howard] said there was no condition which could not be rectified without changing the face and function of the Islands. "Our plan is based on the policy adopted by the Inter-Island Council [in 1948]: 'To make major improvements on its existing state, at comparatively moderate cost, using the present assets'."

The result is that the Islanders' plan doesn't call for motor vehicle access, either by tunnel or bridge; it does not envision apartments, motels, docks, or stadia; it does not demand immediate raising of the level of the Islands - all items incorporated in other plans.

It does retain the present residential community. It does recommend the gradual improvement of the existing 220 acres of parkland and of the 152 acres of undeveloped land. It does make suggestions for the improvement of beaches.

"Above all," added Mr. Howard, "we do not propose the destruction of that which gives the Islands their enchantment - the lagoons".3

In more recent defenses of the Island, Islanders have continued to make direct appeals to save the existing physical environment, with

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1"Islanders Win Fight To Save 'Little Gem'," Telegram, October 12, 1949.

2This was similar to their 1948 and 1949 proposals (Map 22). It was issued again in 1953 largely as a response to Mayor Lampert's April 1953 industrial scheme (Map 24), but also to the 1951 Joint Plan (Map 23).

its "car-free" streets and "small village" atmosphere. For example, the Save Island Homes pamphlet produced during the 1974 Spring Campaign argued that the existing residential community contributed to the quality of the park and generally reflected Islanders' own environmental and social values:

[Many park visitors go to Ward's and Algonquin Islands precisely because there are People living there. They enjoy strolling through the narrow car-less streets and watching the residents working in their gardens or playing with their children. For the majority of park users who find their way to that part of the Island, the community, with its atmosphere of an old-fashioned country village, is just as much one of the attractions of the Island as the amusement park and formal gardens of Centre Island. Islanders, like their political supporters, have promoted a mixed-use approach to park planning: i.e., the idea that the existence of the residential area, for a variety of social and physical reasons, is a positive feature of the Island park. (See below pp. 296 ff.)

2. The Car Controversy:

Ever since 1912, tunnels, bridges and roads have been proposed for the Island (Map 14) and in 1935, the Dominion government even began constructing a tunnel under the Western Gap, which was abruptly halted, apparently for "political reasons". In any event, from the late 1940's (with the issuance of the City of Toronto Planning Board proposal to build a tunnel and an Island Boulevard) through the mid-1960's,  

1 For example, the 1971 TIRA Brief, quoted on p. 228.

2 For example, Maureen Smith's comments, November 1973, quoted on p. 226.

3 Toronto Island Residents Association, Save Island Homes (Toronto Coach House Press, 1974), p. 16.

4 See for example, Stanley Westall, "He Wouldn't Wait For $100,000," Globe and Mail, January 15, 1960.
debate periodically raged over whether or not (and how) to provide motor vehicle access to the Island. This long debate represented a fundamental conflict of environmental values between the pro and anti-car forces.

Advocates of providing automobile access argued that it was necessary in order "to serve 'the many', not 'the few'", as the 1951 Joint Plan of the City Planning Board and the Toronto Harbour Commission stated.¹ Not providing a tunnel, Metro Parks Commissioner Tommy Thompson argued in his 1956 Island plan, would be "to purposely restrict the use of any park area",² Park users expected to be able to drive up and park near the picnic areas or beaches. The need for an Island tunnel (or bridge) was a refrain taken up by the major political figures of the day (notably Mayor Allan Lamport and Metro Chairmen Fred Gardiner and William Allen) and was abandoned (by politically pragmatic Gardiner and Allen) only when the Federal government failed to provide funds for the project.

¹This slogan was used during the 1950's and 1960's to promote automobile access. Then, after the tunnel idea was put to rest, it was taken up by pro-park forces to mean simply that all Island residents should be removed.

Opponents of automobile access, notably the Island residents, argued that automobiles and other motor vehicles would ruin the natural character of the Island. Repeatedly, Islanders rejected such plans and reinforced the long-standing image of the Island as a place of retreat from and contrast to the City. In October 1949, for example, Islanders argued that the City Planning Official Plan proposal for a tunnel and roadway would "spoil the charm of the Island as a quiet retreat from the noise, smoke and traffic of the City". Shortly thereafter, in the IIIC plan of November 1949, the tunnel project was fiercely opposed by "island enthusiasts who regard the tunnel planners as despoilers of their little paradise". In 1951, IIIC spokesman Alan Howard rejected the Joint Proposal of the Toronto City Planning Board and the Toronto Harbour Commission to build a 4-lane tunnel, an Island Boulevard, and parking areas for 1,100 cars. Rather than making the Island

1. The tunnel controversy provides an example of a case where different social groups within the Island community adopted different political positions. While Island residents represented by the IIIC were busy opposing the 1951 tunnel proposal, Island businessmen, like Manitou Hotel proprietor (and Island resident) Bill Sutherland favoured the idea as being good for business. The tunnel controversy also made manifest differences between Island "users" generally (as represented by the Association of Women Electors, labour groups, and other City groups) and City business groups. The "users" opposed the tunnel and cars; whereas the "business" groups tended to favour it (and increased commercial development). Minutes City Parks and Exhibitions Committee, May 14, 1953 provides examples.

2. See, for example, Sense of History, p. 124 and Sense of Environment, pp. 276 ff.

3. Minutes City Parks and Exhibitions Committee, 1949, October 11, 1949, Item #458A.

"part of the city"\(^1\) (by a tunnel link), he declared, planners should enhance its present assets. The "charm of Toronto Islands is that for the price of a street car ticket people can get away from the traffic and tension of the city to completely different surroundings".\(^2\) And in 1953, when introducing another IIC plan, Mr. Howard reiterated these sentiments, "We see no reasons why this small oasis in the desert of smog and traffic congestion should not be retained."\(^3\)

The long-standing fascination with building a bridge or tunnel to the Island stemmed perhaps from more than an assessment of the facts about getting more people to and from the Island.\(^4\) It is curious, for example, that some politicians (like Allan Lamport) were willing to spend hundreds of thousands (and probably millions) of dollars to provide vehicular access, but were reluctant in the extreme to spend money on improving the park itself. The debate, in part, came down to a conflict in values and images of just what sort of place the Island should be, what sort of symbol it was. Proponents of bridges and tunnels saw automobile access as a symbol of progress and modernization. It would take the Island out of the "horse and buggy era" and into the "motor age"—both positive advances according to proponents. For example, supporting the TCPB/THC Joint Plan of 1951, Toronto Harbour

\(^{1}\)Quoted in "Women Electors Study Varied Civic Questions," Globe and Mail, November 15, 1951.

\(^{2}\)Ibid.


\(^{4}\)Islanders repeatedly argued that, in fact, the ferry service was a more efficient method of transporting large numbers of Island visitors than either cars or buses would be. See for example, Letter from Inter-Island Council to Mayor, Board of Control and Members of City Council, November 11, 1949.
Commission Chairman Bosley declared grandly, "Broadly, the island is now a century behind. It's in the Victorian stage. We want to bring it up to 1952." And a disappointed Alderman William Dennison lamented in 1956 when the Federal government refused to subsidize a tunnel, "This means the Island will remain in the horse and buggy stage of development forever." Islanders, however, seeing themselves as the protectors and defenders of the Island, had no desire to bring it into the Automobile Age. In fact, their feelings were quite the reverse. For example, in 1953, Mr. Howard rejected the tunnel in the IIC plan:

There is nothing selfish about our plan....We are speaking for the thousands of people, families with children and without motor cars, who find relaxation and rest away from the vicissitudes of the motor age, at the Island.

Opponents of the bridges and tunnels saw the Island as a place of retreat, a pastoral contrast to the noise and fumes of the City. Bringing cars to the Island, in their view, would be the worst fate that could befall it. To them, cars symbolized all the negative, rather than the positive, aspects of modern society as mechanized, motorized, and dehumanized. Such conflicting notions of progress have coloured the debate to the present. (See, for example, the section on "Island Tours", below, pp. 300 - 305.)

3. "Islandness": Islanders are aware that there is something special about living

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1 Quoted in "Island For All, Not Few/1,001-Acre Playground/10 mile Beach Is Plan," Star, September 12, 1951, p.1.


on an island. They have, therefore, been motivated to preserve this special characteristic when it has been threatened (notably, by the building of a bridge or tunnel-link to the City). In 1949, the IIC wrote:

It is said that a tunnel is imperative to make the Island accessible to all — but a tunnel completely eradicates the Island! It then becomes a peninsula — a spur of the mainland, everything that made it attractively beautiful as an Island is cancelled. Its complete character is changed. Toronto's unique and priceless heritage is sacrificed. You haven't an Island left to be accessible to a single person.

And, reacting against the Joint TCPB/THC Plan of 1951, IIC spokesman Alf Whiskin commented, "They call the island one of the finest assets nature has given the city....But if they built a road to it, it won't be an island any more. They'll be killing the best feature of it."³

4. Insularity: Physical and Political:

Not only have Islanders been physically removed from the mainland, but they have also, according to some observers, been politically removed. One criticism that some "reform" aldermen and their supporters expressed during the mid-1970's about Islanders was that they had been too "insular" or too isolated from other City causes. For example, Alderman Michael Goldrick commented on this (in March 1975), "That is another impression of mine, that they are quite removed and that they rose up when they were in danger, but you didn't hear about them being a strong lobby any other times." Alderman John Sewell (also in March 1975) commented somewhat scornfully on their insular frame of mind and its pragmatic political consequences:

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⁴ See for example Peter Cridland's comments on p.259.

² Letter from Inter-Island Council, November 11, 1949, op. cit.

³ Quoted in Marilyn Bell, "Fear No Place For Tots On 'Incubator Island' In Transformation Plan," Telegram, September 13, 1951.
Well, they're the ones who decided that they were going to go out live on a farm or something. And that's part of that whole mentality that causes trouble. I mean, one of the staggering things one person told me, "We don't understand anything about politics", this fellow said. "We live on an island." I mean, that describes it very well.

Alderman Karl Jaffary agreed (in June 1975) that Islanders as a group (as opposed to as individuals) had been somewhat insular politically, but qualified it by saying:

Maybe it was a problem. Certainly, Islanders tended to be involved in City and Metro political issues that touched the Island and not a great number of them were involved in very many other issues. Now, that may be unfair in view of the numbers. How many staunch community activists do you want out of that number of people?... But you didn't really find anybody on the Island who was a real City Hall wheeler-dealer who just understood how it all worked very well.

A number of Islanders themselves agreed that they probably had been too uninvolved in wider City issues and politics generally. Some pleaded political expediency (which Alderman Goldrick rejected as "sophistry"): "Well, certainly before December 11th [1973] we never did [join in other City fights], because we couldn't afford to offend anyone....[It was] probably [a wise policy]. But I didn't like it." And some pleaded lack of numbers and insufficient energy, given the dire nature of their own cause:

"Ya, I think it's fair enough [to criticize us for being politically insular]. There's certainly other causes that are going on in the City that are worth fighting for, but it's a fair enough argument, sure. But, you know, hell we've got a fairly basic cause here to fight ourselves. And you only have so much energy...It just happens that we are totally absorbed by our own survival."

As noted later (in *Sense of Change*, pp. 388 ff.) of necessity, this political insularity, especially since 1974, has been greatly reduced and Islanders have become heavily involved in Mainland politics and political issues.
b. Politicians' Responses:

Islanders' political supporters and opponents have held conflicting environmental values and images of the Island which have, over the years, informed their political behaviour.

1. Conflicting Images: Parkland Manqué vs. Well-Established Community:

Study of the Island's political history reveals that Islanders' opponents and supporters have tended to have fundamentally different and conflicting images of the remaining Island residential areas.

Islanders' opponents have tended to regard the residential areas as parkland manqué (because it was designated as Metro parkland in 1956) and the houses (and their occupants) as merely an obstacle in the way of achieving that desirable end result. For example, during the May 1973 Metro Council debate, Controller John Williams of North York gave a succinct pro-park statement, which reflected his image of the Island as "pure park" (see below) and of Ward's and Algonquin Islands as parkland manqué.

The lands in question are Metropolitan Toronto parklands. The Metropolitan Toronto parks are for the enjoyment and use of all the people of Metropolitan Toronto. They are not to be lived in.

On December 11, 1973, Etobicoke Controller Bill Stockwell, for pragmatic financial reasons, favoured granting Islanders a temporary extension. He rejected the notion of a permanent community, however, because, he concluded, "I see the Island as a Metro park." And, more recently, Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, in June 1980, reflected a similar parkland manqué vision when he said, "The Island is a park and it should become a park."1

Islanders' supporters, however, have regarded the existing residential areas as a remnant of a well-established, historic community, which predates the park (and is located adjacent to, rather than in the park). For example, at City Council on November 21, 1973, Alderman Ann Johnston commented, "I wish people would stop talking about houses in a park. Why don't we talk about houses adjacent to a park?" At Metro Council on December 11, 1973, City Alderman Art Eggleton responded to the old argument that letting residents live on Ward's and Algonquin would be comparable to building houses in High Park:

There has been a lot of comment about the "privileged few" who are allowed to live on parkland. Mayor White [and Alderman Beavis] suggested, "Well, you wouldn't want people to live in High Park. Why are you allowing them to live down there?" Well, I think that's a silly comparison. Of course we are not going to allow houses in High Park. But I think that the main difference that we have to bear in mind here is that the houses were there long before the land was actually declared to be parkland. The houses had been there for a great many years.

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Islanders themselves certainly hold this image and have promoted this view during the political battles. For example, at the November 20, 1973 public meeting organized by the City (prior to the December 11, 1973 Metro Council decision), TIRA spokesperson Tony Gooch said:

It's not a question of putting houses in a park; they are there and have been longer than the park has been.

It's not in any way similar to putting houses in High Park - the similarity, if there is one - would be to demolish houses on the edge of High Park to make it bigger.


And the Save Island Homes pamphlet, in answer to the question, "Is it right for people to be living in a park?", suggested:

The land on which the Island residents live has never been parkland.

It would be more to the point to ask: Is it right for a government to destroy a happy well-established community in order to create a park?

Save Island Homes, op. cit., p. 5.
And on March 20, 1974, at a public forum at the St. Lawrence Centre, Islanders' long-time supporter, David Rotenberg dismissed the parkland marquee view by emphasizing, "This is not part of a park and never has been. This has been a residential area. Always has been ...This is not parkland."

It is not surprising that the two sides have clashed frequently, especially since 1973 when the community and historic preservation arguments came to the fore.

2. Conflicting Park Philosophies: "Pure Park" vs. Mixed Use:

Not only have the two groups held conflicting images of the remaining residential areas, but they have also tended to hold conflicting park philosophies. This split was evident as early as November 1955, when the Metro Planning Board met to discuss the future of the Island. At that time planner Hans Blumenfeld recommended that "the island should contain both park and residential uses", because the existing residential areas enhanced the rest of the park:

There is no need to enlarge the park area at the expense of the existing housing. Far from being incompatible residential use enhances the attractiveness of the island for recreation. The houses, generally pleasant but architecturally undistinguished, and the gardens form an agreeable varied backdrop to the beaches, playgrounds and parks. The life of the residents, people puttering in their gardens, children playing, etc., add a human touch. Without the residences, the island would be a less interesting place.1

But Metro Parks Commissioner Tommy Thompson argued against this approach:

1Hans Blumenfeld, "The Role of Toronto Island in the Metropolitan Toronto Recreation System," November 1951, p. 4, which was before the Metro Planning Board on November 3, 1955.
Mr. T.W. Thompson, Metropolitan Commissioner of Parks, felt that Toronto Island should be developed as a park and if facilities were improved its use would increase. He was of the opinion that existing housing on the Island is of little value and should be removed. The Island should be developed simply, with plenty of open space.1

Mr. Thompson's "pure park" philosophy, of course, triumphed at this time and Metro proceeded to develop the Island in this manner.

The conflict, once again, erupted in the late 1960's and early 1970's, after much of the Island had been redeveloped as Metro parkland. While to some, like Scarborough Controller (later Mayor) Gus Harris, the Island Park, as developed by Metro, represents the "jewel of the whole system of parklands in Metro Toronto", to others, like Alderman William Kilbourn (who spent happy summers on Centre Island as a child), it is sterile, "inauthentic" and, as he put it, simply "prophylactic greensward", which attracts fewer people now than it did in its healthier, more colourful past.2

Beyond this, for opponents of the Islanders, like Mayor Willis Blair, who remarked, "I don't think you can have both [residences and parkland]. It's either going to be a Metro park or it isn't" and Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, who commented, "I'm in favour of making the whole thing a park and you can't have a residential community being in there", parks and residents do not mix. Park means

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1Minutes of Special Meeting of the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, November 3, 1955.

2Many Islanders share this view of the park (e.g., of the formal flower beds set along a concrete promenade which replaced the rag tag, jumbled, crowded Manitou Road, or, as it was known, "the Main Drag"). A number of political supporters, like Barbara Greene, however, do praise the Metro park, but feel, as indicated below, that the whole Island need not - indeed should not - be the same.
"pure park"\(^1\) and the whole Island should be "pure park".\(^2\)

For Islanders' supporters, however, parks and residents (at least in this case) do mix and are mutually beneficial—the residents add to the charm, diversity, and safety of the park. For example,

\(^1\)Alderman Karl Jaffary comments (in 1975), "Yes [to most suburban politicians] I think that a park is an empty space with grass and trees in it. I think that's the general view of most people, because that's what parks tend to be around Metro Toronto and if you want to get any other view of a park, it requires some exposure to other kinds of parks." As for himself, he noted, "The fact that my house [in the City] is built on [the edge of a park with no street between my house and the park] may perhaps influence my views on the Island a little bit as well....I've been able to observe [how people who live on a park relate to that park] a bit myself, as well as read about it."

\(^2\)There is an air of Gestalt simplicity about the idea of making the whole Island a park. Because it is a small island, there seems to be an inherent compulsion to make it all the same. There seems to be something about islands that leads people to believe that they should be all one thing, that they should be a single unit. (A similar principle seems to be operating, at a more tragic level, in such places as Ireland and Cyprus.)
Controller Barbara Greene of North York, a renegade from the Metro suburban majority, comments on the value of residents to the park:

The community is an asset to the Island. I think that if people go for a walk around the Islands, it's nice to have a variety of things for them to see. And I think that the houses and the atmosphere, the trees and the houses and so on, are interesting. There is also aspects of it that have a certain "older" kind of flavour - the old tennis courts and volleyball and that kind of thing that make it a very interesting place just to see. You have one sort of experience at the other end of the Island, which is fine. A lot of people who walk. It's a promenade kind of thing. And they walk down there, and they walk through those streets and on back to Centre Island or bicycle around. I personally find it an enjoyable experience and I think a lot of other people do. I don't see any harm in maintaining a small community. I wouldn't like to see it expanded...It's never been a park, eh. It's park in name only. But the community has been there longer. And I think that in the central waterfront area there is an awful lot of parkland etc. That is really good. And I think that the recreational experiences of having the homes, as far as promenading and that sort of thing, is an asset.

City representatives, of course, have been adamant on the value of Islanders to the park. For example, Mayor Crombie commented on their contribution to safety, saying, "The existence of the Islanders in the park means that after 10 o'clock the park isn't left to the muggers and the cops." Alderman Colin Vaughan commented on the need for diversity on the Island:

[I have supported Islanders] because I feel that the Island community adds to the life of the park. Without the Island community, the park, the Island park, would be a dead place, from all points of view. I basically support not only the community, but the fact that there are yacht clubs or marinas on the Island as well, that there's a mix of use, rather than a single, bland use across the whole Island. I think it would be a really bad decision to have just a park on the Islands, because I think it would become a sterile sort of place. But I think the fact that there's a living community there, which adds a certain dimension of mixture of uses of the space, plus the fact that there are yacht clubs and other things, enliven the place...The other thing is that the community makes it a year-round place, which I think is important.

And Alderman Michael Goldrick, at the March 1974 public forum took Scarborough Controller Karl Mallette to task for having "a limited conception of parks", as simply "grass and trees" and concluded that "the life that is given to parks is given to it by the users and the people who are living around about it and using it every day."
that far outweighs having a few more acres of green space... I think you get down to a fundamental difference about — which is a straight matter of opinion on the matter — as to what kinds of parks does one want. And Tommy Thompson's parks are very nice for the large part, but they need a little diversity. If you happen to have something unique that is doing well, that people seem to enjoy, I think it’s an asset.

3. Island Tours:

Throughout the more recent political history (particularly since the late 1960’s), Islanders' supporters and opponents have been engaged in a war of environmental images, which also reflect the above discussed conflicting environmental values (as well as political tactics). 1 As journalist Alexander Ross wrote in 1973, Islands’ "houses ... are either charming or squalid depending on your value-system". 2 Metro Parks Commissioner Thompson's periodic tours of the Island prior to major debates and decisions, for example, were certainly designed to present the Island houses in the worst possible light, to reinforce negative images of Islanders and to support the idea that the houses simply were not worth preserving. David Rotenberg commented on this ploy (in June 1975):

Well, yes, in a way he did [lobby people]. We used to have a lot of fun. We used to go on a tour of the Island. The Parks Committee, with the Women Electors trailing along and the press and so on, to visit the houses to see how viable it all was. And Tommy always used to lead us down one street where the houses were all bad and I used to try to lead them down another where the houses were good. "Well, you've got to see this one" type of thing. And there were always people who wanted to serve us coffee to the Committee and so on. And I used to try to get them over to Algonquin. It was a lot of fun. But that way Tommy did try and sell his case by showing the bad houses they had.

1 Journalists and editorial writers (like Alexander Ross, Michael Best and John Downing) have been eager combatants in this war of images.

And Alexander Ross described the April 1973 high water tour, which immediately preceded the May 1973 Metro Council decision, as a "puddle jumping tour"\(^1\), designed to "present the Island in as unfavourable a light as possible"\(^2\) in order to finally "rid the Toronto Islands of its houses and their inhabitants."\(^3\) "With unerring instinct," Mr. Ross wrote, "Thompson led the committee straight to the worst-hit house on the island... But he steered them briskly past other well-kept homes and declined one woman's invitation to step inside for a visit."\(^4\)

The tours certainly made an impression on the politicians, especially on Islanders' opponents, who eagerly and repeatedly referred to the poor housing conditions. At the Metro Council debate in May 1973, for example, City Alderman Fred Beavis indicated that he had been deeply impressed by this tour. He simply could not understand how people could live in these conditions and the thought that people might actually prefer to live in such "primitive conditions" (as Islander Freya Godard phrased it) or in an area of tightly-packed, little houses set along narrow, ill-kept, carless streets, etc., simply did not occur to him. He had, in short, a totally negative image of the Island and displayed a paternalistic attitude toward Islanders (i.e.,

\(^1\) Ibid.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid.

"Ibid. In Mr. Ross's view, "The place fairly sparkled," But journalistic opponents, like Michael Best and John Downing supported the Commissioner's view that Island houses were little more than "squatters' shacks."
that Metro should, in effect, save Islanders from themselves). During the debate he said:

[We] made a tour of the Island and what we saw, Ward’s Island certainly was a disgrace that people have to live in those kind of conditions. It looked like you’d turned the clock back forty years.... The idea of what’s going on at Ward’s Island — I think it’s disgraceful the way people have to live over there and the septic tanks and the conditions of the living.

Alderman William Kilbourn, who was sympathetic to the Islanders’ sense of environment (and had in fact spent summers on the Island when he was a boy), responded sarcastically to this sort of argument:

I don’t go on tours to view disgraceful living conditions, watching people live like “pigs”, or with a view to getting some ammunition in order to destroy a community. But I do visit the Island regularly. I suppose I’m in some sense a product of it.

In his view, many Metro politicians are threatened by a community which is so different from the environments they know and live in. He expanded on this idea in an interview:

Basically, I think the reason it threatens Metro Council so much is that it’s a community without shopping plazas and liquor stores, without crime [and cars] and traffic problems. And, you know, that sort of community is very different and it is not supposed to survive so easily and well.

Islanders, for their part, have been indignant about the tours and depressed by the apparent effect they have had on the politicians. For example, Maureen Smith spoke at some length about the 1970 tour. She charged the Parks Commissioner with deliberately trying to create a bad image of the Island in the politicians’ minds and expanded on the idea that the Island community was so foreign to the politicians’ image of a proper and decent place to live that they were at best puzzled (like North York Controller Paul Hunt) and at worst appalled and determined to eradicate the incomprehensible eye-sore (like Mayor William Dennison). She said:
They [the Parks Committee] came over, of course, on a tour, which was an absolutely disgusting thing. We knew they were coming.... They did a tour around Algonquin that was done at rapid fire pace. ...They arrived here [on Ward's] and Mr. Thompson - they came by bus - they got off at the foot of Channel. Mr. Thompson walked down Channel, up Third Street and across the Lakeshore, across the field and in behind the houses on the other side of the parkland [along Willow], in between rows, so that they were literally walking through people's backyards....

The only time they met anybody was when they got on the boat. And they were just astounded. I mean, these were "old guard" politicians. People from North York. I remember Paul Hunt was there and he was just astounded. He said, "How could they live there like that?" I mean, they were just astounded at the type of houses. They didn't go in any of them, of course. They said the houses are dreadful. You see, that was a very paternalistic attitude that those guys had: "We should try and save these people from this mess they're living in. People don't have to live like this in a city like Toronto." Dennison was the Mayor. It was the "We're going to beat Montreal" syndrome that was going the rounds. "This place is a disgrace to Toronto. That we expect our people to live in these kinds of conditions." And we kept saying, "Go in the houses. Go in the houses and you'll find out." But they wouldn't go in. Mr. Thompson never gave them any time.... You know, the whole smear thing was going on in the background, that they were "shacks"....

But that was the extent of their tour and I know Paul Hunt met up with ___ and ___ who've both got really nice houses and he says, "I really can't understand it." He looks at these people and they are very well-dressed women from middle class families... very intelligent. Why are they living in these crazy little houses? He couldn't understand. And this whole thing of community and it being strange.... Like, it being a place where people wanted to live because it was different never entered into it. They just saw it as bad housing stock and why should people be forced to live in it.

4. The Subsidy Argument:

That Islanders' supporters and opponents have tended to have different environmental values—very different views of what constitutes a "proper" place to live—is well illustrated by another argument that has been made repeatedly by Islanders' opponents: that it would simply cost too much to provide adequate municipal services (like street lighting, sidewalks, street signs, sewers, and so on), and that
doing so would be too great a burden to impose on the Metro taxpayer.

For example, at a public forum on the Island issue in March 1974, 
Scarborough Controller Karl Mallette made this financial argument. 
City Alderman Michael Goldrick replied that Controller Mallette be-
trayed a fundamental lack of understanding of the Island community 
and how it differed from suburban communities:

When Mr. Mallette speaks about...[the large investment that 
would be required for] sidewalks and lights and curbs and 
rails [if the community were to be preserved], it's beyond my 
comprehension how he can sort of count that in...Doesn't he 
understand...that that's not what this community is about? 
...We're not trying to replicate a suburban community on the 
Island. We're not about that. We want to preserve something 
that's there.

Alderman Goldrick's statement reflects Islanders' own feeling 
(which was discussed earlier) that one of their major problems was 
the fact that they were up against suburban politicians, like 
Controller Mallette, whose environmental values and sense of environ-
ment were fundamentally different from their own. In early May 1974, 
Bill Metcalfe replied to a similar argument that Metro taxpayers were 
unfairly subsidizing Island residents and revealed his own environ-
mental values:

"Metcalfe doesn't think the $260 in taxes he pays is too low consid-
ering that his father, who has a home in North York, 
pays only $300.

"And he has paved streets and bright lights. I don't even 
want paved streets and bright lights. That's why I'm 
living on the Island."

And six years later, the same argument was being made and the same re-
response inspired. At Metro Council on February 26, 1980, Alderman Fred 
Beavis listed all the expenses that would be involved in turning the

\[^{1}\text{Daniel Stoffman, "Islanders, Critics Can't Agree On Cost of 
'Paradise'," \textit{Star}, May 3, 1974.}\]
Island into a proper "subdivision". Maureen Smith, who was listening to the debate, muttered, "Fancy being a subdivision. I don't want to be a subdivision."

5. Separateness:

Over the years, several politicians have made the provocative point that Islanders have been treated differently from other City (or Metro) residents by politicians because they were Islanders and were physically separated from the rest of the City. For example, in 1952 in the midst of a hot debate over whether or not to improve the seawall on the Island, Islanders' staunch supporter and ward alderman, Allan Grossman, forcefully put their case and noted, in passing, "The people of the Island...would probably have received quicker action if they weren't separated from the rest of the city by a stretch of water."

More recently, Alderman John Sewell opened the City Council debate on November 21, 1973 by unrolling a large map of Toronto, pointing to the Island and observing that politicians (as well as other people) have tended to have an image of the Island as "separate" and "different" from the City and have therefore tended to treat it differently from other parts of the City:

People have somehow perceived of the [the Islands] as somehow totally different from the City. When they look at a map of Toronto, they somehow never seem to include anything that's jutting out into the water and the result has been that people have been looking at the Island as something that's totally "other" than the City. And that's not the case. It's different [from] other parts of the City, just as Trefann Court is different [from] Lawrence Park, or Swansea is different [from] Ward 5. They're different parts. But the result of treating the Island

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as something totally "other" has meant that people have [tended] to understand it in purist terms. They've looked at it particularly in terms of being a "park"...That has meant that...this is probably the only place in the City where [when]...some government is threatening to tear down 250 houses, they say, "Well, that's not important, because it's really a park."

Similarly, at Metro Council on December 11, 1973, Alderman Karl Jaffary began his defense of the Island community by echoing his Ward 7 colleague's sentiment—i.e., that politicians have treated the Island differently from other parts of Metro simply because it is an island:

I also suggest that if this were not a unique situation, we would be able to deal with it far more easily. If we had 700 people living on land owned by Metropolitan Toronto that adjoined a large park owned by Metro Toronto and that was off some place in Metro Toronto that was not out on the water the way the Islands are and somebody said at this point in time, "Let's tear down the houses and make the park bigger", you would not get two votes on this Council for that proposition...If we are talking about the present need for parks, or the present need for housing, if these houses were not on an island, no one on this Council would support tearing them down right now...But the problem is that this is land that is off on the other side of the water somewhere.

From a political perspective, therefore, the traditional image of the Island, as separate from and different from the Mainland seems to have worked to the disadvantage of Islanders.

In contrast, Aldermen Sewell and Jaffary—like other Island supporters—have had an image of Ward 6 and Algonquin as a worthy, established residential community, which is a "very important part of downtown Toronto" (as Alderman Ying Hope said at Metro Council on December 11, 1973) and is one, of many, distinctive communities which ought to be preserved.

c. Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place on Their Sense of Environment:

Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had a distinct impact on their sense of environment.
1. Deliberately Reinforcing A Sense of Environment:

Deliberate attempts have been made in the course of the political defense of the Island to sensitize Islanders to different, special aspects of Island life (including the Island environment). David Amer, one of the founders of the now defunct Goose and Duck newspaper, said that one of the reasons the Goose and Duck was started in 1971 (before the 1971 lease extension was obtained) was to make people aware of their environment (as well as their neighbors, their history and so on) so that they would be more strongly motivated to defend the Island as they knew it when it was threatened. (See Illustration 32.) He elaborates on this theme:

That's one of the things we tried to do with the Goose and Duck - make people more aware of their environment. If you're aware of your environment and can cope with it, you're more comfortable in it and have a feeling of security and when the thing is threatened, you're going to fight for it...That Bill George photograph that I told you about [of trees reflected in a puddle on the boardwalk] - that's home. That's warmth. That's all the things that home can be. That's private, personal pleasure that grabs everybody. If you can remind people of those things, then you've got their hearts and then if you've got their minds, then, tomorrow the world...

Particularly for new people on the Island, for young people on the Island, we tried to supply those little things so that while they were in the City talking to non-Islanders they could say, "look at us, aren't we quaint?" - make them feel somehow a little bit special and give them a little ammunition and make them feel they're somebody and want to defend the place. A lot of this is theory. In practice we didn't do it as often as we liked, but given those ideals to work from, I think it was a pretty good thread to keep running through. Good propaganda is cardboard and blatant and that's what we were trying to do...We identified things that were there, but at the same time we exaggerated them, given the opportunity.

2. Suburban Contrast:

During their 1974 Spring Campaign, Islanders made over two hundred trips to suburban parts of Metro to meet suburban politicians,
SCAUNTS AND CANVASCWORKS

Watching the Harbour from Waterfront Hall was a lively scene of people and activity. A musician played his guitar, while another sang a song. The crowd was engaged, with some dancing and others taking photos. It was a beautiful day, and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

MARCH GARDENING NOTES

APPLY "LAW FROG"

The use of "Law Frog" is becoming increasingly popular among gardeners. It is known for its effectiveness in preventing pests and improving plant health. By applying it regularly, you can ensure that your plants are protected against harmful insects.

TINNIS RIVERS

Tennis, played in the park, was a popular activity among the crowd. With the sun shining and the weather warm, it was a perfect day for outdoor sports. The sound of the ball bouncing against the court echoed through the park, adding to the lively atmosphere.

FLOWER SEEDS

Flower seeds are a great way to add color to your garden. They come in a variety of colors and can be planted in different parts of the park. With proper care, you can enjoy a beautiful flower garden.

HOMES

A group of homeless people gathered on the grass, seeking shelter from the sun. They were having a conversation, discussing their daily struggles. The park provided them with a temporary refuge.

THE GOOSE AND DUCK

CREATING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

In an effort to raise awareness about environmental issues, a group of volunteers distributed brochures and flyers. They encouraged visitors to be mindful of their actions and to take steps to protect the park and its surroundings.
residents' groups and individuals. By exposing Islanders to environments and environmental lifestyles that contrasted so markedly with their own, these experiences reinforced both their negative images of suburbia and their positive images of the Island. For example, one politically active Islander (whose other comments showed him to be committed to the Island environment and lifestyle), commented on one borough:

People in____ to me were so dull and dulled by their environment ...It seems to me from the few streets that I went up - three or four different routes - that it's all factories and housing from the forties. What I saw of it was detached and semi-detached or small housing. It's really very unattractive....It's a very depressing kind of place. And it seems to me that the whole thing looks like there's a lot of industrial pollution of all kinds around....The people have made that choice of living there....I think a lot of them like it. It's close to shopping. You can get in your car and go wherever you want and they like getting in their car and going wherever they want.

Although they were generally well received by suburban groups, Islanders, nevertheless, sometimes had the feeling that they were entering foreign territory when they ventured out into the boroughs. They also came away with the deep-seated feeling that people who lived in environments like these, that were so different from their own (with its narrow carless streets, archaic but picturesque street lights, sometimes "primitive" living conditions, occasionally wildly individualistic little houses, lack of stores and other conveniences, and so on) simply could not understand what it was like to be an Islander and could not be expected to give support to the Island cause. For example, Freya Godard discussed why most suburban politicians on Metro Council in 1973-1974 opposed retaining the Island community.

And I think our way of life is a threat to them....Well, I think it must somehow disturb them that people choose to be so unlike themselves, choose to be living in what they consider
Mary Anderson, observing that "where you live very often expresses how you think the world ought to be", recalled her reactions when she went with a group of Island women (in May 1974) to a North York politician's house in affluent suburban Don Mills:

Some people just think the way ____ does. He has a sort of suburban mind set, for one thing....I remember when we went out to his house and I thought, "Well, of course. How can anybody who lives here understand what it's like to live on the Island? He would never say it. [Former Mayor William] Dennison would be the one to say, "Those elite people living in that dump". A real contradiction. But I'm sure that is the way ____ feels; how can people live out there?...Some people just can't conceive of that sort of existence. I think of it as a "meatness mentality". You see, [the Metro plan] is a 1950-plan and this was a decision that was made a long time back to make all this park and I do think a lot of these people are stuck in the 1950's. They're not imaginative or forward looking. In fact, I think the reverse is often very true. They are the most conservative types and this idea of clearing an area and making it this "wonderful" park is much easier to do than to conceive of it as being all sorts of things at once. I think you have to have a slightly artistic mind to handle that sort of concept....Development looks good to them. I am sure a shopping plaza looks nice to them and new buildings look nice and that's what they live with. Certainly that's where they live, and where you live very often expresses how you think the world ought to be.

Bill Metcalfe recalled a similar reaction when he was driving through the borough of York on his way to lobby Mayor Phil White, who was one of the politicians Islanders had hoped to convert in the spring of 1974:

I can recall going to visit Phil White and driving out through his area and all I knew about Philip White was...that he was a bit "soft" about the Island issue, that he believed eventually it should be done away with, but that he wasn't really rigid about it as to timing. And as I'm driving out there, through his area, I said, "This meeting isn't going to work. Anybody who works in an...environment where he works, in no way could comprehend what this place is"; so that it will always be as abstract for him as where he lives is for me. We live in a totally different world...The guy lives in a place that's as strange to the Island.

1 See above (pp. 296 - 300) for a more extended discussion of a mixed use approach to park planning and development.
and downtown Toronto as if he lived in Regina. It's really remote... in psychological terms.

In conclusion, over the years, Islanders' defense of place has clarified and reinforced their sense of environment.
CHAPTER 7

SENSE OF CONTROL

1. Analysis of Sense of Control:

a. Introduction:

Another fundamental component of sense of place is sense of control: that is, the feeling that one's relationship with the particular place contributes to one's sense of independence, competence and self-sufficiency. In this situation, people are engaged in an active, creative relationship with their environment, rather than a passive, dependent, or even negative relationship, which, far from contributing to their sense of control, may detract from it.¹

This definition is not meant to imply that life is necessarily easy in situations where people experience a sense of control. As Boyce Richardson makes clear throughout Strangers Devour the Land, the Cree hunter who survives in the bush does not lead an easy life; but his intimate knowledge of the environment, the development of the skills necessary for survival and his ability to overcome hardships

¹For example, in cases where people do not share in making decisions about how the environment is designed or used (e.g., rental housing) or where they are unable to do things that they would like to do (e.g., they would like to paint their apartment, but management prohibits it; they would like to make noise, but the walls between neighbours are too thin; they would like some privacy, but there is no place to find it). The extensive environment and behaviour literature is full of such examples.
and dangers, all contribute to his sense of self-esteem, competence, and freedom—feelings which are frequently absent when he is in the white man's world, where his bush skills are neither appropriate nor valued. Why do the trappers go out each winter to face the rigours of the wilderness? Richardson writes:

But there is more to it than just getting beaver fur. "They go trapping," said Speers [the manager of the Mistassini reserve's Hudson Bay store, who had spent 25 years in the James Bay area and knew virtually every trapper] in his clipped, understated way, "because they live better in the bush. They are free."

Overcoming difficulties, therefore, may be a major source of pride and satisfaction and may contribute, as it also does in the case of the Toronto Islanders, to a sense of control.

The definition of sense of control is also not meant to imply that

Boyce Richardson, Strangers Devour The Land: The Cree Hunters of the James Bay Area versus Premier Bourassa and the James Bay Development Corporation (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975) p. 66. Richardson contrasts the trapping families in the bush, "commanding the wilderness and confident and proud in their skills" (p. 195) with the "somewhat harassed" Cree families who remain in the towns and are tied into the wage economy and the white man's way of doing things. He comments with evident admiration on the trappers' skills and competence in the bush and with irony on the fact that their accomplishments are not recognized by white society (pp. 216-127):

Though the autumn is a quiet and unspectacular time in a hunting camp, we had seen enough of the men to appreciate their supreme competence, the high intelligence of everything they did. Whether in setting and checking their nets, manipulating their canoes, using their axes, designing and building their lodge, whether in catching game for their families to eat or carefully preparing for the winter that lay ahead, these men were all masters of several crafts who had adapted their talents and needs to the environment they knew so well.

We understood that we would never be able to see the forest as they see it. We were blind, and would remain blind, to the many signs of life that lay around them as they walked among the trees. The irony and tragedy of their situation was that the outside world remained ignorant of their enormous capacities: however masterful the men might be in this environment, it was obvious to us that if they were to end up in a small Canadian town or village as government policy would have them do, they would be qualified for nothing except perhaps to collect garbage.
people who experience a sense of control have complete or even excessive freedom to act. Obviously, they do not. But it does mean that within limited areas of action (such as freedom from dependence on tradesmen or on cars or municipal officials to provide recreation programmes and freedom to decorate a house or to make decisions about how certain facilities should be designed and used, and so on) people sense that they have a measure of control over their lives. One of the ironies of the Toronto Island situation, in fact, is that although Islanders place a high value on self-reliance and independence and seem to have a strong sense of control, they actually have very little control over their ultimate fate. Because they live on publicly-owned land, they have less control over whether their houses and community will continue to exist than the average urban homeowner who owns both house and land.

Islanders talk less about sense of control than they do about sense of community or sense of environment. This may, of course, be because, like sense of identity, it is a more difficult concept to recognize and articulate. Several Islanders, in any event, did discuss aspects of sense of control.

In their responses to the 1973 City survey of Island residents, some Islanders touched on the idea of sense of control:

I like the absence of cars, oppressive buildings, the feeling that you are not hemmed in by houses, i.e., the space between the houses that you don't seem to get in the city. The total independence from tradesmen.

Best part: being cut-off from the city and having to arrange and do things yourself.

1See for example, *Sense of Community: "Some Community Values: Self-Reliance"*, p. 205.
Discussing where she would ideally like to move if she were forced to move from the Island, Mary Anderson chooses "the country" and describes very well the idea of a sense of control and how living on the Island contributes to that feeling:

[The attraction of living in the country would be] partially the same as living on the Island now. You take care of your own destiny. You work at survival and I think working at surviving gives people a purpose in life and you have to do that a little bit on the Island. You've got to keep things together. You've got to fix things, paint things. People are happier when they can see the fruits of their labours. That's why it's rough working in a factory when you only put on a little cog in a wheel and you don't ever see the product. And I think part of what the Island does is let people see the fruits of their labours having your own house to work on and having to struggle to get your food - even over in the boat. There's a certain sense of satisfaction in that.1

Other expressions of Islanders' sense of control are included in later sections of this chapter.

It is intriguing to speculate that one of the reasons why Toronto Islanders are particularly concerned about self-reliance and independence and why they perhaps feel a stronger sense of control than

Some Islanders characterize Island life as having a "pioneer" quality about it. Certainly, pioneers worked at survival and gained a measure of satisfaction and self-esteem from surviving and from seeing, as Ms. Anderson puts it, the fruits of their labour. One old pioneer interviewed by Barry Broadfoot describes the back-breaking process of clearing the Alberta bush for a homestead. He concludes by saying:

You had to be a strong man to beat the bush. I think my father found out something and it was that he was a lot stronger and tougher and a better man than he ever thought he would be. At home he was always kind of a dreamer and not much at holding a job. In Canada he found he could clear the bush and when you stood in the doorway at evening and saw what you had done, the pasture and the cow and horses and the oats, then you saw that you had done something. You knew you had done something.

non-Islanders is because they live on an island. The type of person who is attracted to living on an island may be the type of person who places a high value on independence and self-reliance and who believes that she or he can give fuller expression to these qualities on an island than on the mainland. After all, among the main images of islands (found for example in fiction and utopian literature) are images of the island as a place beyond the law (of the mainland) and of the island as a place where new laws are created—of a new, self-contained society. In both cases, the focus of control is on the island, not in the outside world. Toronto Islanders' reactions may be influenced by these popular images. It is also intriguing—but equally difficult to prove—that Toronto Islanders resent the imposition of outside authority more than would non-Islanders in a similar political situation. It is certainly true that Toronto Islanders have for many years resented the control exercised by politicians over their fate. One Islander who was active in the political campaign of the 1950's remarks:

Unfortunately, we're in that ridiculous position between City and Metro, where the City wants to take us back and Metro doesn't want to. Though frankly what business of theirs it is, I don't know. We always have been approached by the City. And I resent very much the suburban politicians trying to dictate our future. A lot of them don't know what they're talking about.

In more recent years, Islanders have continued to resent the fact that they have so little control over their political future.\(^1\)

Sense of control is related to other components of sense of place. Being aware of a tradition (or history) of people's exercising control in a particular place may enhance sense of control. Having a sense of personal autonomy, of control over certain aspects of one's life, may

\(^1\)See also "Gaining Control: Successes and Failures", pp. 344-349 and "Paradox of Control", pp. 349-350.
contribute to a sense of identity. A community's exercising control over certain aspects of its environment (like design and use of community recreation facilities) can contribute to an over-all sense of community. Intimate knowledge of a particular environment (as in the case of the Cree hunter)—i.e., a sense of environment—may contribute to one's ability to operate effectively in that environment and, therefore, to one's sense of control. And, finally, a sense of forced change may erode, rather than enhance, a sense of control.

The following sections discuss various aspects of Islanders' sense of control:

b. Island Houses:

Island houses are flexible, owned (for the most part) by Island residents, and in need of constant repair and attention. Each of these aspects of Island houses contributes to Islanders' sense of control.

Island houses, which are small one-storey wooden structures, are very flexible and Islanders, as already indicated, can and do rearrange them to suit their needs and wishes. In contrast to people who live in less flexible environments (because the physical nature of the dwelling unit is less easily changed or because the management of the environment is not under the residents' control or because changing the environment would be very difficult and therefore very costly or because the resident is afraid to do something unusual for fear of lowering the potential resale value), Islanders are able to change

their home environments relatively easily and cheaply. Elizabeth Amer discussed the flexibility and individuality of Island houses—which Islanders can "mould" to their individual needs and tastes—and goes on to describe the sense of personal "power" that is derived from this process:

You don't go into very many houses that don't tell you anything about the people...I think you go into an Island house and you can really get a feel for the person that's living there and I think that's really important and it gives people something which a lot of people are missing and they don't know they're missing and that's a sense of power. And I don't mean that in an aggressive sense. I just mean a sense of their own power as a being, you know, that who they are is important and that it needs to be expressed. That sort of thing seems to be happening here and I'm sure it's happening in other places. But I get a great sense of that here, where people do have a chance to express themselves through the way they can fix the house and the way they can live in it.

This ability to shape the immediate environment undoubtedly contributes to a sense of control, whereas inability to do so (as in the cases cited earlier), undoubtedly contributes to a sense of dependence, powerlessness, and even alienation, depending on how inflexible the

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1 See Ms. Amer's comments in Sense of Identity: "Island Houses", p. 174-175.
environment is.¹

Most Island residents own their own houses and home ownership, which gives the owner certain rights to shape the building, also contributes to a sense of control. Freya Godard, musing about how her life would change if she were forced to move to the City, comments on this point:

¹Psychologist Robert Sommer discusses what he calls a "hardening of the landscape" in Tight Spaces: Hard Architecture and How to Humanize It (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 2. He sees a trend toward "hard architecture"—i.e., architecture that is "designed to be strong and resistant to human imprint", which, he writes, "To the inhabitants it seems impervious, impersonal and inorganic". (p.2). The furniture cannot be moved or changed; the walls cannot be decorated; the windows (if there are any) cannot be opened; the temperature and lighting cannot be individually adjusted; the dwellings all look alike, and so on. The aim, he argues, is to create an easily maintained, economic, vandal-proof environment (but, as Sommer points out, no environment is vandal-proof if people wish to destroy it: "Challenge people to destroy something and they will find a way to do it". p. 10). Sommer advocates the replacement of "hard architecture" by "soft architecture": "If experience has shown that hard architecture is not working from the standpoint of economics, aesthetics or human dignity, what is the answer? The solution, I believe, is to reverse the course and make buildings more responsive rather than less responsive to their users."(p. 12); "Personalization, the ability to put one's imprint on one's surroundings is a prime ingredient of soft architecture"; and "Defensible space [as discussed by Oscar Newman in Defensible Space] is defined by real and symbolic barriers that combine to bring an environment under the control of its occupants. This is basically the goal of the soft architecture approach. Hard buildings, however, are designed by professionals at the behest of one group of people (clients) to provide shelter for another group of people (occupants). In the process of design as well as in form, hard architecture denies occupants control over their surroundings. The space is alien, bureaucratic and seemingly unowned by anyone except the custodians or some impersonal remote authority. It is devoid of personalization and responsiveness to human imprint." (p. 22) Sommer concludes the introductory chapter with the ringing statement: "If there is truth to Churchill's dictum that the buildings we shape will eventually shape us, then the inevitable result of hard architecture will be withdrawn, callous, and indifferent people. A security emphasis is being poured into concrete that will harden our children's children fifty years from now." (p. 26) Island houses, and the Island environment generally, are excellent examples of "soft architecture", which is flexible, personalized and, to a large extent, under the control of its users.
I wouldn't own the house, so I wouldn't be able to do things to the house and I wouldn't have control over my immediate environment to the extent that I have now.

And Jenny DeTolly, discussing her reactions to proposals for a housing cooperative on the Island, also discusses the importance to her of homeownership:

There's absolutely no way I want to cede ownership of my house [to a coop]. I've had a fundamental change of attitude ever since I've bought a house. Leasing a house and buying a house are two totally different experiences for me. Now that I own the house I do things to the house that I didn't do to the other place. It wasn't mine. This occurs in any rental and ownership situation...My reaction wasn't in terms of getting money back, it's just that the house is mine. It's a very personal thing.

It is interesting to note in passing that Islanders' sense of homeownership and control over their immediate environment is apparently not negated by the fact that they do not own the land on which their houses sit. In fact, far from being bothered by living on public land, some Islanders prefer living on it. Terry Tyers comments on this:

I think that in many ways it's an avant-garde approach. There's no doubt it makes the accommodation much cheaper and therefore easier for lower income people to achieve.

Island houses, as Elizabeth Amer puts it, "take a lot of care". Most Islanders, of necessity, take home repairing and constant maintenance in their stride, developing a degree of skill and even pride in doing this:

[Did you see yourself as a handywoman before moving to the Island?] Certainly not. I don't think I ever owned a tool in my life. I may have had a screwdriver, and I possibly had a hammer. I don't think I had that much. I'd never sawed a piece of wood until I moved to the Island. Now, I've built a whole wall by myself. I had absolutely no desire to learn these things. It was the

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Note also Mary Anderson's comments on homeownership below in "Reactions To A Housing Cooperative", p. 331.
furthest thing from my mind. And now I find it intensely interesting...It just began as necessities. I had to do this or that and one thing led to another.  

(Freya Godard)

My father was a do-it-yourselfer, so I inherited that and I quite enjoy it. It tends to be never-ending. That's the problem.

(Ron Mazza)

That's one thing about being in this house, you know, taking care of this house, you don't call out for somebody, a professional, to come in and fix some part of your house. If the pipes burst, then you have to leave whatever you're doing; you have to change whatever plans you were making and go and do that.  

(Michael Albrecht)

We put up walls and we painted the whole house front and back twice. With an Island house, things are constantly breaking and if you don't fix them constantly, you end up with one hell of a big job. If you fix them one thing now—one step—you don't have to replace the whole set of stairs in six months. We became handymen. Oh my God! In South Africa we never even painted our place. We had a contractor in to paint it. But when we came to Canada, we realized we couldn't afford this kind of thing. But it didn't strike us when we lived in the City [in an apartment]. There was really nothing to do. But when we came to the Island, there was not just the expense of the materials, but getting someone to come here to do it. It's amazing how much my husband has learned. When we work together, I'm his handmate. He's put new foundations on the house...Everybody knows a little and they pool information...No, I can honestly say we had no difficulties. We loved the idea that once you got on that ferry after a hard day's work, the City was behind you. All other problems could be solved...You learn all kinds of ways to solve the problem. And we actually enjoyed doing things like boardwalls and breaking down walls. It was a new thing to us.

(Memory Shearing)

For a number of Islanders, repairing the houses themselves and keeping them going are not simply inconveniences to be coped with because they enjoy other aspects of Island life, but are positive attractions: they contribute significantly to their sense of personal independence and competence and self-sufficiency—to their overall sense of
control. For those who have moved to the Island (as opposed to those who have grown up there and have known no other situation), it has perhaps been a particular joy to be weaned from dependence on repairmen, construction workers and other outside experts. (There may be frustrations involved with doing one's own repairs; but there are also frustrations and feelings of impotence associated with waiting for the plumber or electrician or TV repair person to come to fix something.) David Harris and Jenny DeTolly discuss this aspect of Island life:

I think it's really important for the male ego or whatever it is, to know all about your house. Like, I know where every wire in this house is and every bit of plumbing, every bit of gas plumbing. I understand how it all works. And I couldn't even drive a nail before I moved in here. And yet I put in the furnace myself. I put in the wiring myself. I've done all the carpentry work and the whole thing. And really, really enjoyed it. It's not that difficult, really, you know, if you have any aptitude at all. I learned just from watching and asking questions and (getting) help from friends from here on the Island, who know about it. A lot of people [have done their own renovations]. I think that one thing living on the Island teaches you is a degree of self-sufficiency. It just astounds me in Toronto, in the City, that many people have to call somebody to fix their front door buzzer or, you know, just the simplest of things.

(David Harris)

I had come from a situation where we had a house of our own and I had a maid who came in three mornings a week. Whenever she came, I would just get in the car and go off and I never ever felt trapped by kids. We had two cars and we had a garden boy who came in once a week. We could have been fifty, which was one of the reasons why we moved. That was all just too bloody secure. But [here] I've enjoyed the feeling that my future, in fact, my everyday life was entirely in my own hands. And I like the fact that I've had to learn to be utterly self-reliant, about physical things, anyway. I like the fact that I understand exactly how the plumbing in my house works, and exactly how the electricity works and exactly how to fix it...It's partly the fact that I have a terribly practical father who always used to have a tool carrier. So that I'd always had that background of helping him repair things. So

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1See also Elizabeth Amer's and Maureen Smith's comments in the next section, "Inconveniences", pp. 323 and 326.
that the bent was that way; though it wasn't a major effort for me. And I don't say that everyone that has moved onto the Island knows how their plumbing and electricity works. It's just that those were things that I learned to do and that I was pleased that I'd learned to do them, because in a similar situation in South Africa I would never have had to do them. In fact, even in a similar situation in Canada, I wouldn't have necessarily had to do that....You were just so reliant on other people carrying out your tasks there.

(Jenny DeTolly)

c. Inconveniences:

I found the idea of going into a modern house very boring. Modern houses are sterile. The caravan [I live in] needs ingenuity all the time. I can never understand people who pay all this money for convenience. Convenience has become a drug to them. Easy this, easy that. If I could afford it, I would buy a boat and live on that. It would need even more ingenuity to do than this.¹

Most Islanders would probably agree with these sentiments expressed by a young Suffolk school teacher in "Akenfield". There are undoubtedly many inconveniences associated with living on the Island: constantly repairing and working on the houses; lugging bags of groceries and other items home from the stores in the City; organizing life around a ferry schedule; walking relatively long distances not only in good weather, but also in the wind, the rain, and the cold; battling occasionally against high water and flooding; dealing with various sewage problems, and so on. But convenience per se does not have a very high priority for Islanders. Elizabeth Amer, for example, discussing the problems of running her house, says that convenience is simply not very important to her—other things are more important—and that coping with various problems adds to her life rather than detracts from it:

The cottage has always appealed to me as being kind of romantic, I guess, and kind of connected with pleasure and holiday and that sort of thing and I think I hang onto that. I have very little desire to get ahead. In terms of houses there's nothing more that I want. I'm really more interested in the romantic aspect. I mean, many people would find it very unromantic to cope with an Island house, with all the drainage problems and one thing and another, but I really find that...right now, where I am, we're heating with coal and wood and it's kind of a constant struggle to keep that going. But I find that all that really adds to the enjoyment of everyday life, rather than taking away from it. And maybe that's based on the fact that I'm not trying to get ahead at all. What I want to do is enjoy every day and it adds to the daily enjoyment. And I don't want everything to be...I'm not into convenience in a big way, you know. I'd rather get off on the idea of making my own bread and kind of doing things for myself and to eat plastic bread because it's faster than making your own has never struck me as a hell of a great idea, you know. And the same with the house, I think. I'm quite happy with the fact that you have to work a little bit at it and so on.

Doing things for herself has a higher priority than doing things conveniently.

Islanders acknowledge, sometimes scornfully, that anyone who valued convenience would not be happy living on the Island. For example:

Anyone who's not prepared to put up with the hassles of transportation and lack of it. Anyone who's lazy. I don't see how they could survive over there [on the Island]. [If convenience is your aim] you can just forget it.

(Nina Kilpatrick)

It's funny. I have people over for dinner and when they hear you have to carry your own groceries over and you have no car and you have to keep to a schedule and that kind of thing, they say, "oh, I wouldn't want to live here." And, funny enough, the people who have said they don't want to live here have been the people I've felt glad don't live here!

(David Harris)

1 This sentiment is parallel to that expressed by Terry Tyers and Nina Kilpatrick, who liked "roughing it" on the Island, because that added to their enjoyment of life. See Sense of Environment: "Introduction", p. 255.
I had this reaction twenty times or more. Somebody would say, "Where do you live?" "On Toronto Islands." "Not in the winter! In the houses there?" And I'd say, "Why not? In winter, it's beautiful on the Island." "Oh, it must be so cold. How do you get across the ice? Oh, oh." Of course, you can't drive your own car from your back door to the front door of the office. But what's so hard about that? So many people are just spoiled in that respect.

(Al Schoenborn)

Generally speaking, Islanders take the inconveniences in stride. They feel that the benefits of Island life outweigh the bad things—for example, that the benefits of having no cars (such as less noise, pollution and danger, more walking and closer contact with people and nature) outweigh the convenience of having cars. In most cases, the inconveniences are relegated to a relatively unimportant position in their view of things. Several Islanders comment on this:

They're hassles, but they're not terribly big ones. They're inconveniences. Again, it's something I've had to do for the last ten years, so it becomes a part of your life and just, you're constantly aware of it, but... It's something you can't really fight against, because there's not a solution. If you fight against it, you'd become very frustrated and I guess leave.

(Ron Mazza)

I think it's like anything, once you've made the mental adjustment to them, you just don't think about it again... There are always things you cater for. Once you've got used to the idea, you just shop in a different way... There's a lot of borrowing. There's much more borrowing than there ever would be in a situation where the store is around the corner. And also one tends to keep a much larger larder. I think quite a few people buy in bulk once a month.

(Jenny DeTolly)

I suppose if [the lack of stores] was amazingly important to me, I wouldn't have moved to the Island. It's funny. Where I lived in the City it was amazingly convenient. I was within walking distance of two subways and a number of theatres and around the corner from a good restaurant and close to Bloor Street also, and I enjoyed that very much. Strangely enough, I didn't find it very difficult to give that up. I feel it more now than I did. I suppose the constant aggravation of having to decide when to go to the City and if that's going to give me enough time to do what I want to do... On the other hand, almost anything you need suddenly on the Island, you can borrow from someone. Almost
anything you can borrow.  

(Freya Godard)

The odd time it [shopping] is a problem, but not very often.  

(Wendy Hanger)

Shopping is a little more of a hurdle now than it was [when we lived in the city], but I can't say that it was ever really a problem....I never liked carrying groceries back, so we developed an organizational pattern so that it is unnecessary to buy all our groceries on Saturday.  

(Terry Tyers)

I find it remarkably convenient in some ways. How do you look at the half empty bowl, glass of water situation? I think it's quite convenient over here, considering where we live. It could be a hell of a lot more inconvenient before I wouldn't want to live here. So that's not a problem for us, but I know it's a problem for some people. My twin girls, for example, because they didn't grow up here and grew up in Don Mills, that would bother them, because they're used to being near Mac's Milk or whatever and they can get a package of cigarettes. Having done a lot of camping and liking that sort of thing, this is sort of like camping in style, if you will, so it's a hell of a lot more convenient than that. No, we don't find it inconvenient.  

(Bill Metcalf)

Well, there's other people that live in the City, people who you work with and they'll say, "I don't know how the hell you can stand living over there on that bloody Island." You know, having the hassles with the boats. But it's a way of life and a way that you're into. So everybody says, "Well, you live your life by a schedule." Well, you do. But you take it in stride.  

(Jimmy Jones)

Some, like Maxine Wilson, even find Island life convenient:

Oh [shopping]'s really convenient for us, because we're so close to the [St.Lawrence] Market, so we go to the Market every Saturday and we're a lot closer than the people coming in from Scarborough.

And others find that coping with these various inconveniences (like coping with Island houses) contributes positively to Island life by contributing to Islanders' self-sufficiency and resourcefulness.
Maureen Smith, for example, positively welcomes inconveniences.\(^1\) She even goes so far as to hope that the inconveniences are not lessened, for example, by improving the ferry service or providing shops. She comments:

No, no [the lack of stores doesn't bother me], not at all. When we first moved here [1958] there was a store, but we never used it that much. We've always been fairly well-organized....I'm the sort of person that doesn't run out of things too much and tend to be fairly self-sufficient. It's never bothered me. Actually, Michael puts that down as one of the things he really likes about the Island, that he's forced to be self-sufficient. He has to cope with things that are out of the ordinary. You have to be able to cope with plumbing that's broken. You have to do things for yourself. And he feels that's good for everybody. It's not for everybody to disintegrate into sitting around watching the idiot box. You know, you've got to do things and it makes you self-reliant so that you could cope in lots of different situations.

In short, according to this view, coping with inconveniences contributes to Islanders' resourcefulness and ability to cope generally—i.e., to their sense of control.

d. Reactions to a Housing Cooperative:

Since about 1973, Islanders have been looking into the idea of forming a non-profit housing cooperative\(^2\) as a way to prevent "windfall

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\(^1\) See also Elizabeth Amer quoted on p. 323, Mary Anderson quoted on p. 314, and Freya Godard, p. 181.

\(^2\) Under the usual non-profit housing coop scheme, the coop—not the individual residents—owns each dwelling unit. In addition, there are various income restrictions (at both ends of the scale) set by government regulation in order to qualify for government financial assistance. Islanders have developed various schemes for a non-profit housing association which would allow residents to own their own homes, but would require them to sell their house through the association at a price set by the association, and which would allow them to maintain the present socio-economic mix in the community.
profits' and to maintain the present character of the community (e.g., its socio-economic mix and its year-round nature), if Islanders are granted either a long-term extension or permanent status. There has been pressure from both inside and outside the community. As some of the following comments indicate, many Islanders are genuinely concerned about maintaining the present nature of the community and are worried that if the ground leases are extended for a long period, the house prices will rise and the community will become a summer enclave for the rich. From outside the community, some "reform" politicians at the City level have wanted to prevent windfall profits and to ensure that a significant number of the houses remained available to people with low incomes. The 1973 City report, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods, listed the creation of a non-profit housing cooperative as one method of controlling windfall profits and attaining the objectives of the report. Undoubtedly (as some of the following comments indicate), without the outside political pressure, many Islanders who are willing to join a coop if it would save their homes and community, would not otherwise join a coop or non-profit housing association. Nevertheless, in April 1974 (as part of their political campaign to reopen and reverse the Metro decision to evict them), Islanders voted

1Unless some form of control is devised, house prices would undoubtedly skyrocket if tenure were more secure and present owners, therefore, could make considerable profits if and when they sold their houses.

2Among the "Community Aims" developed at block meetings in early 1973 were: keeping the Island basically a year-round community (allowing present summer Islanders to remain, but encouraging any new Islanders to be year-round residents); providing low-cost housing; and preventing speculation in Island houses "which would tend to destroy the community". Reprinted in City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods (September 1973), Appendix C.
overwhelmingly in favour of an Island position which would include creating an Island Non-Profit Housing Association (INPHA). There was, however, a small, but vocal, minority who opposed any such arrangement. Since the Island leases have not been extended by Metro, this Island-wide housing association idea has lapsed, although a smaller group dedicated to the principles (not just the political pragmatism) of such a non-profit housing scheme, has laid the groundwork for a voluntary non-profit association.

Islanders’ reactions to the idea of forming a non-profit housing coop (or a modified non-profit housing association) cast an interesting light on their sense of control—or their desire for a sense of control. In most cases, their objections seemed to be not to the idea that they would not be able to reap profits from the sale of their houses (although this was important to some people), but to the idea that they would (or might) lose control over various aspects of their housing situation: namely, homeownership, the right to choose to whom to sell and the day-to-day freedom of decision-making.

Some Islanders (apparently a minority) object to the idea of a housing coop (or non-profit housing association) on principle. Jack Bradley expresses this point of view:

I was deathly against it [INPHA]. Well, for one thing, I'm all

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1 INPHA would have held a master lease from the City or Metro (whichever owned the land) and granted individual leases on the 250+ lots. Residents would have owned their houses, but would have had to sell them through INPHA at a price fixed by INPHA to a person meeting the qualifications set by INPHA. The INPHA board would have had representatives from the Island, from the City (or Metro) and perhaps outside interest groups (such as church or labour).
for free enterprise, having been in business myself a few times. I dislike anybody saying to me that I can only sell my house to a certain party and that they would put the appraisal price on it... I would never, ever vote for anything like that.

Others are equally strongly in favour of it. Ron Mazza expresses his support:

I think it's the only salvation for the Island. Not from a political point of view, but from a political-social point of view. Because I think if we do get an extension without some sort of [price] control on the Island, the Island will not stay as it is. You may argue that staying as it is is not the best thing. But what I don't want to see is the houses going on the general market and escalat[ing] tremendously in value and so it becomes a Michael Best type of situation where it is an elitist community. And the only way to stop that that I can see is some sort of coop, to keep the prices down, to keep [the houses] off the local market to the highest bidder.

And many are not especially keen, but are willing to join.

For example:

We could have gone along with it, you know... We'd have to have a reason, I think. I mean, if it's going to be good for us politically, then we'd consider it. (Wendy Hanger)

I think it's probably necessary, but I don't like it, let's put it that way. I think it is necessary to control the profits here and the only way [to do that] is to separate the buyer and the seller by one method or another. And, if you do that, and if you start saying we're going to try to maintain a mix and choose people of certain incomes, then you destroy the spontaneity and I don't see how the scheme could avoid it. We have people here who are free spirits who probably wouldn't be here if they had to go through some sort of selection committee, not because they wouldn't be selected, just because they wouldn't want the hassle. People just don't like that regimented approach, but I don't know how it can be avoided. (Freya Godard)

I didn't care one way or another so long as we got to stay. But I didn't want it to be a thing where you weeded out people, either. If part got to stay, I think we all should have got to stay. (Maxine Wilson)
It was straw-grasping. That's all it was. If there had been a right-wing government in and they felt that if you put a fence around your house it would save you, suddenly you'd see all kinds of fences around here....I think it's got some points, ya. I don't think there should be windfall profits. That's as far as I go. I think the rest of it is all window-dressing to try to attract things [political support].

(David Harris)

How can one form a cooperative of non-cooperators?... Most of the Islanders would only have bought the, become part of the non-profit cooperative because that was the only route to survival. They would not have sought to have gone and formed a cooperative with their neighbours had there not been that motivation. I would say that still stands [in July 1975].

(Jenny DeTolly)

Some of the strongest opposition has been to the idea of having to give up ownership of the house, which, these people felt, would erode people's ability to be independent, to exercise personal initiat-ive and to have a degree of control over their lives.\(^1\) Mary Anderson,

\(^1\)It is important to bear in mind that although advocates of co-operative housing often argue that cooperative tenure would tend to increase (not decrease) occupants' control over their immediate living environment, they are usually comparing cooperative tenure to rental tenure, not homeownership. If a cooperative were formed on the Island, Toronto Islanders who own their own homes would change from individual ownership to cooperative tenure, which they would perceive as an (unwanted) reduction of control. Islanders are not alone in their preference for homeownership over cooperative tenure. Andrews’ and Breslauer’s case study of a housing cooperative revealed that although a large percentage of the coop residents interviewed preferred coop to rental accommodations (62%), only a relatively small percent preferred a coop to a single family home (23%). 44% indicated a preference for a single family home. Howard F. Andrews and Helen J. Breslauer, Cooperative Housing Project: An Overview of a Case Study, Methods and Findings (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, Research Paper #73, January 1976), pp. 45-46.

As indicated earlier, Islanders, in response to this view, have developed a structure which would allow members to continue owning their individual houses, but which would require them to sell them through the association at a price fixed by the association (which would cover any improvement made, but would not allow any large profits to be made).
who supports the non-profit housing association idea, comments on this:

I think those people should own their own houses. I don't think they should be able to sell for any sort of profit, but I think there's a great deal to be said for people taking care of themselves...I think it does something for people to have something of their own that they have to tackle with rather than saying, you go to the coop and we'll decide what you need fixed and when and who's going to do it. I think that takes away a lot of the personal initiative that exists on the Island and I think when it comes down to deciding what kind of coop we're going to have with the City, I think we're going to have to scream for community control. I think it's our right, just as it's Trefann's right. We do have a unique situation where people are used to being independent and I don't think you should stamp upon that.

Related to this has been the opposition to the idea that the seller could not choose to whom he or she sold the house. The concern was not just (or even primarily) about losing the ability to set the selling price, but about losing the ability to choose a person who would care for the house, care for the Island; and enjoy the Island and, generally, about suffering an additional loss of freedom. Several Islanders comment on this objection:

And that became the major issue at all the block meetings, the not giving up [rights]. It wasn't totally the non-profit [aspect], it was the fact of giving up your rights, you know. There was concern that you couldn't decide who was going to buy your house from you. It had to go back through somebody. And that bothered people, you know. Why shouldn't they be able to choose who they wanted to live in their house? It wasn't totally the money, although that was a good deal of it. It was some sort of [loss of] free feeling.

(Sheila Du Toit)

My reaction wasn't in terms of getting money back. It's just the house is mine. It's a very personal thing. I feel very personal...for instance, the cooperative housing would remove the right from you to sell to whomever you wanted. They would sell the house for you. I would like somebody that I like to have my house, if I'm going to sell it to anyone. And I won't necessarily sell it for any enormous amount, because I certainly was one of those people who believed it should be sold at a lesser price. I certainly believe in keeping control....Well, as I said before, this business of summer residences. I would hate to see this
community become summer residences for the RCYC [Royal Canadian Yacht Club], or such like. [It] would be a very attractive place for just that. I believe in those two controls [price and year-round residence], ya, but I don't believe in ceding ownership.

(Jenny DeTolly)

I think I can understand that view very well [of caring who you sell to]. I mean, people don't have that many areas nowadays where they do what they want to do. The options are pretty limited for people. If you have that option taken away from you, it's just one more whack at your autonomy. So I can understand it perfectly. The reason I found the attitude a little difficult to understand was: what were the options in the situation? The option was that you either adjusted to that whole coop future, or you had to get out. It was a question of either that or nothing. It seemed a necessary route to take to survival.

(Elizabeth Amer)

Finally, as several of the above comments indicate, there was a generalized fear that forming a coop or a non-profit housing association might erode Islanders' sense of independence and control by impinging on their freedom to make day-to-day decisions about their housing environment. Bill Metcalfe touches on this point:

I had real problems with it. I still have real problems with it. I subscribe to the business of there being some kind of control that had to do with windfall profits on the Island. The housing, therefore, has to be somehow controlled, because if it isn't then people will come over and buy the places like this and use them as summer residence and stow their sailing bags. So I believe that it should be a year-round community. But the idea of a coop is just so totally foreign to my experience that I have real concerns about it....I believe that most of the people who live here are people who are independent thinkers, even though we work together when it's appropriate to work together, and the idea of non-profit housing, I think, made sense to me, but the mechanisms which would pull it together, which were to become a coop—which I perceive as being "My God, damned roof is leaking, so come over and fix it." That's ultimately what would happen, I think in a coop situation. Now, you can plan a coop to get around that. But I felt that that sort of structure wasn't really necessary. I didn't strongly oppose it, if the majority of the community were in favour of it:

In short, much of the opposition to and reservations about forming some kind of non-profit housing association on the Island have
stemmed not from opposition to the control over profits, but from concern over a perceived loss of freedom of action and sense of control.  

1 The political aspects of the housing coop debate are discussed further below, pp. 337 ff.

2 Robert Sommer advocates increased user-generated designs (of parks and other facilities) followed by community control over the use of the facilities. He writes the following opening introduction to Design Awareness (San Francisco: Rinehart Press, 1972), p. vii:

People want a voice in the design and use of their buildings, streets, parks, and cities. They want to be more than spectators and consumers in a world designed and managed by remote professionals. They want to be more than passengers on a spaceship; they want to help design and personalize their cabins and passageways and to have a go at the controls.

As another example, advocates of cooperative housing argue that individuals may increase their control over their living environments by joining a housing cooperative and making decisions as a group, "cooperatively". These views are summarized by Howard F. Andrews and Helen J. Breslauer, Reflections on the Housing Process: Implications From a Case Study of Cooperative Housing (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, Research Paper #74, February 1976). They conclude (pp. 56-57):

And thus we are led to the conclusion that not only does coop housing (as shelter) provide choice, an alternative to other kinds of housing on the market, but in addition coop housing (as process) provides another kind of alternative - one in which people have the opportunity to participate in some of the decisions that most directly affect their day-to-day lives. The words of a coop member in his farewell speech provide an illustration:

...something that I hope will continue and continue and grow here, and that has been the development within [the coop] of an approach to solving problems...I guess what I'm saying is there's no 'them' in [the coop], you can't sit back and say 'when are they going to do it', there's only us.
Toronto citizen participation movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's, "save the neighbourhoods", nevertheless finds some definite value in neighbourhoods:

.....the neighbourhood is a social unit with which its members can easily identify and over which they feel they can have some control. Such a unit, well organized, can do much to make government responsive to local needs as well as serve the important function of giving urbanites a sense of control over their own individual and group destinies.1

The Toronto Island is an excellent example of just this. Islanders, as a group, have not only waged a long and effective political campaign to prolong the existence of their houses—and their community (which is discussed below), but they have also exercised a fair degree of control over what happens on the Island. Over the years, Islanders have identified various needs in the community and organized to deal

1 Barry Wellman, "Who Needs Neighbourhoods?" revised version, mimeo dated March 1972, p. 7. (Originally published in Citizen Participation — A Book of Readings, ed. James A. Draper (Toronto: New Press, 1971), pp. 282-287.). The citizen movement of the last 15 years or so was generated in part by a feeling of powerlessness among urban residents in the face of decisions made by both government and the private sector—most notably, in Toronto, decisions about urban renewal (either government initiated or private developer initiated schemes—to replace low-rise, often low-income housing with high-rise, often middle or upper income, apartments) and transportation planning (e.g., the Spadina Expressway debate)—and a growing ideal, as Wilson Head noted, "that the ordinary citizen possess the right to participate in decisions that affect his life". See Wilson Head, "The Ideology and Practice of Citizen Participation" in Draper, op. cit., pp. 14-29 for a general discussion of citizen participation in Canada; and Bureau of Municipal Research, Neighbourhood Participation in Local Government — A Study of Toronto (Toronto, January 1970), Bureau of Municipal Research, Citizen Participation In Metro Toronto: Climate For Cooperation? (Toronto, January 1975) and James T. Lemon, "The Urban Community Movement: Moving Toward Public Households," in Humanistic Geography, eds. David Ley and Marvyn Samuels (Chicago: Maaroufa Press, Inc., 1978), pp. 319-337, for discussions of citizen participation in Toronto.
with them. For example, they organized the WIA and AIA to provide a wide-range of social and recreational activities and to compensate for the relative inaccessibility of many City activities. They founded the Ward’s Island Weekly, the Goose and Duck and other community newspapers to communicate with one another. They organized an active Home and School Association to finance and staff a wide variety of activities that would have been unavailable in a school as small as the Island Public School. They organized a Montessori nursery school to provide daycare and a stimulating environment for pre-school Islanders. They organized a building and a food coop to overcome some of the problems of Island living (like the lack of stores and the difficulty of transporting heavy goods). All of this may contribute to individuals’ sense of control. Elizabeth Amer, one of the community leaders on the Island, comments on this aspect of Island life and how individuals, through their communities, can combat feelings of dependence or powerlessness, both in general community activities (like starting a community newspaper) and in political action (which is discussed below):

I don’t really know what’s stopping anybody else from doing the kinds of things that are being done here, except, you know, straight down the middle Canadian society encourages a kind of dependence which I don’t think is necessary. In other words, any community that wants to start a community newspaper can do it. On the Island the great advantage is that we all tend to know a lot of people. We know what they do. If you need something, you can put out a call for it. There’s just in this community incredible resources which you can always tap if you just have the idea of doing it and any community, I think, would probably have this kind of resources if people could just be put in touch with each other. You’ve got to have the idea of taking action before these things can happen. You can’t just throw up your hands and say, “Well, how the hell would you do that?” If we had been totally realistic about the Goose and Duck when we started it, we wouldn’t have started it, because
it was just too expensive. There was no way you could raise the money. But we put out some 35 issues of the thing before we stopped doing it and by all logical, rational standards, this was impossible.\footnote{Some years after making this comment, Ms. Amer expanded on how communities could organize to take action. Elizabeth Amer, \textit{Yes We Can! How To Organize Citizen Action} (Ottawa: Synergistics Consulting Limited, 1980).}

In conclusion, Islanders have adopted an active approach to community life, which, in turn, has undoubtedly contributed to their overall sense of control.

Other links between Islanders' sense of control and their political experience are discussed in the final sections of this chapter.

\textbf{ii. Sense of Control - Defense of Place:}

This chapter has already discussed some aspects of Islanders' political history (notably their attitudes toward the formation of a housing association or coop). These and other links between Islanders' sense of control and defense of place are amplified here.

\textbf{a. Impact of Islanders' Sense of Control On Their Defense of Place:}

\textbf{1. General Approach:}

Study of the political history of the Island reveals, at the most general level, that Islanders have taken an active approach to defending their special place from outside threats. Since the mid-1930's (when the City decided to build the Island airport at the western end of the Island, thus necessitating the removal of over fifty houses along West Island Drive), Islanders, rather than quietly accepting the decisions of outside authorities, have actively and repeatedly sought to influence them. They have tried to exercise a measure of control over the future of the Island. Since that time, they have presented dozens of detailed briefs to City and Metro Committees (as
well as other official groups); they have appeared en masse at numerous meetings (even in the mid 1930's, Island spokesmen were backed by audiences of over a hundred spectators); and they have lobbied politicians at all levels. They have been especially active, vocal and uncompromising in their goals since 1974, but, even in the earlier years, they sought to exercise a measure of control over their destiny.

2. Homeownership: INPHA and the Crombie Motion:

As this chapter has indicated, Islanders' sense of control is attained in part by the fact that most Islanders own their own homes. The desire to maintain homeownership has had a strong impact on Islanders' political behaviour since 1973 (when longer leases seemed possible and a number of "reform" aldermen were elected to City Council). For example, during the Spring Campaign in 1974 to reverse the December 11, 1973 decision of Metro Council, Islanders rejected the idea of forming a housing cooperative (which, among other things, would have removed homeownership from Islanders), but opted instead for the idea of forming a non-profit housing association which would have left homeownership with Islanders (but would have controlled the price of the houses). Islander Peter Atkinson, for example, commenting on housing cooperatives, wrote, "Islanders are such individuals and the feeling of ownership is so great, that I doubt that many would join" a housing cooperative voluntarily.¹ Beyond this, proposals for a non-profit housing association have tried to limit the functions of the association so that Islanders would retain maximum possible control over their homes. The Island Position Committee assured Islanders of this in its March 1974 report:

¹Peter Atkinson, Proposed Co-op, March 8, 1974, p. 3.
The essential purpose of the housing corporation would be to effect the non-profit sale and purchase of homes. However, a serious concern of many islanders is that this incorporated body not interfere with their individual control, enjoyment and maintenance of the properties they occupy. It is the intention that the corporation would not have the power to set standards, impose maintenance requirements, etc. Building and health standards would continue to be a responsibility of city administration, as is the practice now. Its charter would simply limit its function to that of buying and selling individual houses, or an actual "bill of rights" could be set into the charter prohibiting the corporation from interfering in the individual's enjoyment and maintenance of his home.

Islanders' refusal to willingly give up homeownership, however, led to strained relations with some "reform" City aldermen during that spring. For example, at a fiery meeting with City politicians on April 23, 1974, Alderman Dorothy Thomas indicated that, in her opinion, islanders had not gone far enough in their proposal and that they should be willing to give up homeownership:

You want Metro to back down, lose face....But you're not prepared to give up anything in return. You want to retain ownership of the houses. You want to maintain essentially the status quo, only better. What are you prepared to give up?

In the end, of course, Metro-politicians were relatively uninterested in the housing association idea anyway and turned down Mayor Paul Cosgrove's May 31, 1974 bid to reopen the matter (which was based on granting a six year master lease to INPHA).

Islanders' desire to maintain homeownership also made islanders less than enthusiastic about Mayor Crombie's June 18, 1974 motion to save Island houses by having them become part of a City non-profit

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1 Island Position Committee Report, March 14, 1974, pp. 14-15. The most important step toward achieving this individual control, of course, was maintaining individual ownership of Island houses.

2 Video tape of the April 23, 1974 meeting.
coop and be rented to Island residents after August 31, 1974. In fact, some Islanders wanted to reject the Crombie motion for this reason. One Islander delivered a letter to his neighbors, which said:

"I wonder how much rent I'll have to pay for my house, what colour it will have to be painted, or what partition I can rip down... when the mood happens to strike me. These questions are a little more than academic. Damn it, I want to retain title to my own house; I want to raise the floor and repair the foundation. I'll repair the leaks in the roof and put in a new [toilet]."

Islanders did not in fact reject the Crombie motion (but Metro Council did).

3. Spring Campaign Organization:

The 1974 Spring Campaign, which marked a new phase in Islanders' political history, appealed to and relied on Islanders' strong sense of control and high level of resentment—even outrage—when that control was threatened. Although in the political sphere Islanders had a history of relying on politicians (notably David Rotenberg from 1961-1972) to develop and implement political strategy (see below, pp. 344-349) on the Island itself, they were used to organizing activities for themselves. There was, therefore, already a relatively large group of seasoned community leaders who could be called upon in the course of the Campaign. In addition (as noted below), in the political context, there was a growing sense of frustration and dissatisfaction with relying so heavily on politicians.\(^{1}\)

\(^{1}\)For example, Islanders had a meeting with the City Executive Committee and several other City Hall insiders on January 7, 1974 to discuss strategy for the Spring Campaign. Islanders were disappointed, coming away with the "general impression...that this was the first time the city executive had thought about it [the Island and future strategy] since the Metro meeting [on December 11, 1973]." Bill Metcalfe, reflecting this frustration and dissatisfaction with the politicians, concluded, "We will have to be masters of our fate." TIRA Executive Minutes, January 7, 1974, p. 1.
of Islanders, therefore, was ready, willing and able to organize and carry out a large political campaign.

b. Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of Control:

Islanders' defense of place experiences have had a very marked impact on their sense of control. Sometimes the effects have been positive; sometimes the effects have been negative; and sometimes the effects apparently have been paradoxical.

1. Attitudes Toward Authority, Politics and Politicians:

Islanders' attitudes toward politics and politicians have evolved over the years from respectful deference to cynical distrust.

In the mid-1930's, when the airport was being discussed, Islanders did not try to overturn the basic decision. They accepted the decision to construct an airport as a fait accompli. They had more modest aims: to find a new site for their homes and to gain financial compensation and/or assistance for moving their homes. Because the political climate was different and accepted standards of political behaviour were different from more recent times, they did not consider "fighting City Hall", in the way that many present day Islanders do, but they certainly did try "influencing City Hall". They used many of the traditional means. They lobbied; they negotiated (with a fair degree of success, since they persuaded the City to open up Sunfish Island for cottage development and to give them three years' free rent as compensation); and they appeared in "large deputations" to state their case before City committees in as reasonable and respectful a manner as possible. Occasionally they became piqued, but
they did not "confront" or "demand".¹ Perhaps their acceptance of authority and generally (but not always) deferential attitude toward City officials is best summed up in the phrase "we waited upon" the Board of Control, or whatever committee—a phrase that is sprinkled throughout the West Island Drive Association minutes.

They also tried to present themselves in the most reasonable light possible—as citizens who were helpful and deferential toward those in authority. For example, on July 28, 1937, a deputation from the Hanlan's Point Association appeared before the Board of Control to ask that new sites for the affected houses be opened up on Hanlan's Point itself. In the course of their presentation, they said:

We as a community, especially for the last twelve years, have gone ahead improving and constructing and we do not think you will find that our requests of your body at any time have been unreasonable and at all times they have been presented with due respect to the members of council and with the spirit of friendship.²

They were, on occasion, even reluctant to appear before a City Committee, for fear of giving offense to City politicians or bureaucrats:

The general opinion of the [West Island Drive] Committee was that any such action [as appearing before the Board of Control to alter the City Parks Committee decision to open up Sunfish rather than Mugg's Island] might antagonize the Parks Committee in general and Mr. Chambers [the Parks Commissioner] in particular and thus jeopardize [sic] any chance we may have of a satisfactory settlement.³

¹The idea of appearing before the City Executive, as a group of Islanders did in April 1974 during the Spring Campaign, to ask its members what they had been doing to preserve the Island community and to raze its members over the coals for not having done enough, was unthinkable.

²Hanlan's Point Association; "Brief to the Mayor and Board of Control," Minutes - City Board of Control, 1937, vol. 2 (July 28, 1937), Item #321, p. 1.

³West Island Drive Association, Minutes, September 25, 1937.
In the late 1960's, after two-thirds of the houses on the Island had been demolished to make way for the developing Metro park (and only those residential areas which still remain on Ward's and Algonquin Islands were left), Islanders still accepted the basic decision to build a Metro park as a fait accompli. They only argued about the timing of the park development and only asked for temporary extensions until such time as the parkland was needed. In addition, many (though not all) Islanders still had a respectful, relatively positive, view of politics and clung to the view that if they presented their case in a reasonable, well-argued manner, they would succeed. For example, in their introductory letter announcing the formation of TIRA in July 1969, WIA President Peter Gzowski and AIA President Mark Harrison wrote:

Our opponents, if that's a fair word, are not unreasonable people. They're politicians and civil servants acting in the best of their faith with the public interest at heart. Well, we can operate in good faith too. And with the public interest at heart. We believe our case is a valid one, and we believe that if we begin now to talk and to act as a community, we can win our arguments.¹

By the mid-1970's, however, after several years of unsuccessful (frequently bitter)² political activity, which had actively involved most members of the Island community in one way or another, Islanders were no longer inclined to regard politicians or politics as "reasonable". They were no longer inclined to be overly deferential (usually


²There has been a great deal of bitterness on both sides--among politicians and bureaucrats as well as Island residents.
polite, but not differential). And they were no longer willing to accept the Metro decision to build the park as a fait accompli (since 1975 they have pressed the Province for a transfer of the land from Metro to the City in order to preserve a permanent community).

Islanders, for example, came away from their 1974 Spring Campaign with a deeply cynical and jaundiced view of politics and politicians. They developed, as one Islander put it, "extreme bitterness that such twerps are making decisions that affect the lives of so many people, based on misinformation, based on political consideration and it's

1 They have not always been polite, either. For example, at a public forum during the 1974 Spring Campaign, several Islanders accused their ward alderman, William Archer (who had voted to terminate their leases) of having lied to them during the 1972 election campaign and afterward. On August 31, 1974, Islanders held a "New Year's Eve" celebration (on the day when their leases would have terminated if they had not initiated a court action) and, leading the parade were four Islanders dressed up with grotesque, over-sized heads of three politicians and the Metro Parks Commissioner, labeled: Paul Godless, Bull Archer, Snarl Mallette and Tummy Thompson. (See Illustration 28.) And at a July 1, 1980 rally to show public and political support, Islanders booed their M.P.P., Larry Grossman, when he stated that he (unlike Mayor Sewell, Aldermen Eggleton and Heap and others) was unwilling to "break the law" to help protect the houses—to stand up against the bulldozers. These, and other instances, are representative of a vastly different approach to politics and politicians.

2 This evolution has been both a collective and an individual phenomenon. Bill Metcalfe, for example commented (in November 1975) on his initial reaction in the fall of 1973 to the City report which recommended that the community be preserved:

Well, elation. Somebody wants us and is willing to do something about it and I [didn't] know how in the face of this sort of document that anybody could be in a position to proceed against us.

He goes on to indicate that he became more cynical about politics as he followed the fortunes of this report (which, for example, was rejected virtually without discussion by the Metro Parks Committee that November):

I was at that stage of the game thinking politics was a logical process. It took me quite a long time to learn that that was a wrong perception.
really criminal." As a result, as David Amer said (in November 1975), they were even less likely to adopt a trusting view of politicians in the future:

Yes, [Islanders' general view of politicians has changed]. I think that nobody puts any stock in a politician's promises any more. I find the instant response these days [1975] is not, "Oh, wow. We've got somebody to support us", which is what would have happened three or four years ago. People say, "Come on. I've heard that a million times." They've really come to distrust politicians and want to know specifically what he has in mind and how he is going to do it. This is good, because it really cuts a lot of the crap out and the politicians are not going to get away with a public appearance.

There is no reason to believe that these views have changed in recent years. Part of this cynicism results from Islanders' sense of frustration over their lack of control in the political arena (see below).

2. Gaining Control: Successes and Failures:

The political history of the last decade or so has been characterized by Islanders' struggle to exercise more control over their political destiny.

During the 1960's, Alderman David Rotenberg emerged as the Islanders' major supporter and political strategist. He orchestrated the Lakeshore battles (which only ended in 1968 with the demolition of the last Lakeshore houses) and, in the course of this decade, Islanders generally came to rely heavily on his political advice and action. It was only in 1967, when the remaining 700+ residents on Ward's and Algonquin Islands (i.e., the 250+ holders of non-compensation leases) were faced with the termination of their leases in 1968,
that these residents became politically involved and some began to ques-
tion the wisdom of relying so heavily on David Rotenberg, or any politi-
cian. A split emerged over whether or not to hire N.D.P., M.P. and lawyer
Andrew Brewin to present their case to the Metro Parks Committee. Some
Islanders believed strongly that they should take Alderman Rotenberg's
advice not to hire Mr. Brewin and that they should rely entirely on Ald-
erman Rotenberg to manoeuvre something of his own devising through Metro
Parks and Metro Council. Others, like Peter Cridland, were opposed to
relying solely on Alderman Rotenberg. He explained (in November 1975)
why he adopted this position on this and other occasions:

I'm prejudiced. There's no question about it. I'm not Conservat-
ive and he [Rotenberg] is. I had to face him virtually single-
headed on occasions when I disagreed with his tactics on the
Island cause and that was damned difficult to do, because a lot
of people on the Island trusted him very thoroughly....They were
typically occasions immediately before an important debate which
he would suggest that basically that we either don't appear or
certainly don't appear in any numbers, never raise a fuss or do
anything untoward, possibly don't make an appearance or make a
presentation [as in this case], but to leave it entirely to him
to do quietly behind the scenes and for him to sort of stage
manage exactly when a specific issue should be brought up and how
it should be handled. And [my opposition wasn't] from any politi-
cal differences: I, from observing countless debates at one level
or another, I came to the conclusion that nobody at all, however
strongly they supported us, could be trusted to do the homework
thoroughly enough and shouldn't be left to make all the tactical
decisions and decide just when the time was right, what we should
be asking for and so on, that we had to come to those conclusions
ourselves and win or lose, develop our own tactics. And I guess
this was, too, at a time when ratepayers' groups as a whole were
tending to become more vocal....I just felt that no matter what
the risks and how strongly some members of the community felt, we
simply had to do our own homework and make our own decisions. And
we did, in fact, begin to take the initiative away from the poli-
ticians that supported us at the time.

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1This group of Islanders had not been active in the earlier pol-
itical battles, partly because they were not immediately threatened;
partly because many did not think they could successfully "fight City
Hall"; and partly because many did not believe that the park plan would
ever be completed. See also Sense of Change: "Coping With Stress:
Attitudes", pp. 380 ff.
Islanders decided to hire Andrew Brewin. From this time forward, there was a growing desire among a growing number of Islanders to exercise more control over their political future.

During the early 1970's, when Islanders still relied heavily on Alderman Rotenberg, a good deal of tension arose between those who wished to rely on a chosen political champion (like Alderman Rotenberg) and those who wished to rely more on their own political judgement. In 1970, a debate almost identical to the 1967 debate arose within the newly-formed TIRA Executive. Again, Islanders decided to hire Andrew Brewin to present their Brief. In the fall of 1971, the TIRA Executive was again split by a debate over how much to rely on Alderman Rotenberg, which indicates the extent—and the limitations—of their reliance. One Executive member proposed a motion that "it be TIRA policy to cooperate with Alderman Rotenberg, follow his advice and keep him informed of what we are doing on the political scene, etc.". After lengthy debate, the Executive passed the following, significantly revised, version of that motion:

that it be TIRA policy to co-operate with Alderman Rotenberg, consider his advice and where possible and feasible follow that advice and keep him informed of our plans and actions. It is also TIRA policy to seek out the advice of other interested politicians who might be favourably disposed toward our community, it being remembered that Alderman Rotenberg is given first consultation rights.3

1 In the spring, the TIRA Executive, as Maureen Smith put it succinctly, decided "to leave everything to Rotenberg", who successfully manoeuvered another lease extension (with an automatic renewal clause) through Metro Council. A new TIRA Executive was elected during the summer.

2 Mary McLaughlin, (Statement On) Motions for TIRA Executive Committee Meeting October 12th, October 7, 1971.

3 TIRA Executive, Minutes, October 12, 1971, p. 2.
Islanders, therefore, would continue to rely heavily, but not exclusively, on Alderman Rotenberg. They would "cooperate with", "consider" his advice, but not necessarily "follow" him.

In December 1972, David Crombie was elected mayor of Toronto defeating Alderman David Rotenberg and Tony O'Donohue in the process. Elizabeth Amer (in November 1974) summarized Islanders' expectations of the new mayor and reflected the growing desire to exercise more control:

I don't think we wanted that [Crombie to take over Rotenberg's role]. I think we wanted to have more say about what went on. We didn't want anybody telling us to shut up and go home and not bother him. So I don't think we wanted—people who were on the Executive at that time really didn't want that kind of patronage. We wanted him to be as powerful and as manipulative of Council as Rotenberg had been, but we wanted him to implement what we wanted and that would be the difference. You see, Rotenberg would always implement what he could get through easily, whether we wanted it or not. What we wanted never had anything to do with it, other than the fact that we wanted a lease extension. But the conditions of it or the time period or when it was to happen and so on and so forth was always his decision. So our expectations of Crombie were, I think that he would find out what we wanted and then he would get it for us in any way he could.

Nevertheless, Islanders certainly did expect Mayor Crombie to be "kingspinning" the 1973 effort to obtain an extension,¹ as Ron Mazza phrased it, and did rely heavily on him and Alderman Karl Jaffary to organize the City and pro-Islander forces.

After these efforts failed at Metro Council on December 11, 1973, Islanders organized their major 1974 Spring Campaign to re-open and reverse the decision at Metro Council. In the course of this Campaign, Islanders took far greater responsibility for developing and executing a political strategy than they ever had before. They still

¹Or even permanent status, as the September 1973 City report recommended.
sought political advice from all quarters and, some would argue, were still looking for a white knight to champion their cause in the political arena at Metro Council. But a number of Islanders had been badly burnt by what they viewed as the City politicians' failure to win the day at Metro Council on December 11, 1973. From this time forward, Islanders have placed a high priority on exercising as much control as possible over their political future. To the extent that they have been successful in accomplishing this, their sense of control has been increased.1

Nevertheless, the political history also shows how political events have frequently threatened Islanders' sense of control. Obviously, Metro Council's decision to evict Islanders and demolish the houses in order to extend the park is the prime example, but there are numerous other ones. Naturally, moves by their opponents have often changed the political context and forced Islanders to respond to outside forces, rather than allowing them to take the initiative. Beyond this, Islanders, over the years, have had to rely on friendly politicians to argue, negotiate and strategize on their behalf. Even in more recent years, since about 1973 (when David Rotenberg was no longer on Council), when Islanders have tried to overcome what organizer Dale Perkins has described as a "Saviour-King syndrome"2 and "develop [in 1974] a strong

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1The fact that Islanders have discussed the matter of control so frequently and even passionately (in interviews, at public and Executive meetings, and so on) is another indication, in itself that a sense of control is especially important to them. Whether having a sense of control is more important to Islanders than to other people faced with similar political threats is impossible to determine from the data collected here. But, having a sense of control is undoubtedly important to Islanders.

2Mr. Perkins refers especially to Islanders' great reliance on David Rotenberg who, between 1962 and 1972 was, as Mr. Rotenberg put it, "running the Island issue".
campaign where [they] could assume a certain degree of control over their lives", Islanders have still encountered frequent instances of lack of control not only over their opponents (as expected), but also over their supporters. For example, Mayor Paul Cosgrove in May 1974 filed a motion to reopen the issue at Metro Council without even telling Islanders he had done so. They learned of his action on the radio only two days before the meeting and had to cram two weeks of lobbying into less than two days. More recently, Mayor John Sewell virtually single-handedly organized an unsuccessful attempt at Metro Council in February 1980—drafting the motion, lobbying politicians, and choosing the date to go before Metro Council—with only a minimum of discussion with Islanders.

Maureen Smith summed up Islanders' frustration over their ultimate lack of control in the political arena when she said in the summer of 1974:

What has happened with just about every TIRA Executive is that they have realized that you have reached a point beyond which we have absolutely no control over what's happening...Bill Ward, the night of the first defeat, the first reopening defeat [of Cosgrove's motion on May 31, 1974], he said to me, "My God, I don't think I've ever seen those City guys so mad," he said. "The top nearly blew off City Hall after that Metro debate, meeting." And they were so angry and they then decided they were going to try and do something. Find time to do something. But at that point it had gone beyond their control. There was nothing we could do about it [Crombie's motion]. And that's the hardest thing to tell the community, that we thereupon have no control and it was just back to the old days when Rotenberg used to carry the ball. Once it got into his court, there was nothing more we could do. We were just victims then of the deals and we were stuck with whatever came out.

Many Islanders share her sense of frustration.

3. Paradox of Control:

Islanders' defense of place, therefore, has both strengthened and weakened their sense of control. Paradoxically, however, even their
unsuccessful political experiences have perhaps strengthened their sense of control. They may have lost on various occasions, but they have not given up without a struggle (and they have sometimes come away from the defeat with a sense that they were making progress and becoming more skilled in the political arena). Elizabeth Amer's comments in November 1974 (after the failure of the Spring Campaign to win a victory at Metro Council) reflect this apparent paradox:

One thing I would like to communicate to other people in this kind of a [political] situation, and God knows there are people faced with these problems all across the country...the thing that I think is worth while learning is that they shouldn't be afraid to tackle it, however impossibly powerful the government is or the body that's trying to take it away from you, not to be afraid to tackle them, because there's a lot to be said for just simply sitting in your room and saying, "I would prefer not". Even that's a very radical thing to do, to simply sit in your house and say no. And if you don't do any more than that, you're doing something. From that point you can get everybody else to do the same thing and then you can get them to do something a little bit more aggressive about it and you can really get something going...So I think that although it's a pretty hard struggle, it's hard to live with yourself if you really believe that it's wrong and you don't do anything. I think people should really take a hold of these things and fight them wherever they can and find out how to organize themselves so that they can do it. I don't know how effective we were. I think we could have been more effective. But I think that that was a function of our lack of experience. And the next time we go through it, we'll be better at it.

She (like Maureen Smith earlier) may not have a great sense of control over political events; but she displays a great reluctance to accept an unpalatable decision or to be completely controlled by outside events and decisions. Just making the decision to fight something is an exercise of will and an expression of personal independence, which in turn may increase one's sense of control.¹

¹See also Amer, Yes We Can!, op. cit., as a reflection of this desire for control.
CHAPTER 8

SENSE OF CHANGE

i. Analysis of Sense of Change:

a. Introduction:

One's view of the present is affected both by one's view of the past and by one's view of the future. Similarly, present sense of place is affected both by one's view of the past and by one's view of the future. The sixth fundamental component of sense of place, sense of change, may involve either awareness of actual past loss (as in a place that has been physically changed or destroyed or a childhood place that exists only in memory) or fear of future change or loss. Both the actual or potential change may heighten attachment to and appreciation of a particular place.

The change involved may range from modification of the physical environment (e.g., building a bridge or a new store or an apartment building) or of the social environment (e.g., increasing the population or seeing the middle class replace the working class or

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1Kevin Lynch, What Time Is This Place? (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1972), p. 124, writes: "Past, present, and future, then are created together and influence one another... The perception of the present is strongly affected by both past and future and in turn influences what is remembered or foreseen."

2This may be collective (as in Sense of History) or individual (as in Sense of Identity or Sense of Change).
one ethnic group replace another), through to a total destruction or loss of place (e.g., demolishing an entire neighbourhood for urban renewal or paving farmland for an airport or flooding "the wilderness" for a hydro-electric scheme). Sense of place may perhaps exist in the absence of extreme changes, but, where it exists, a strong sense of change may sharpen and make self-conscious feelings of sense of place which were formerly less consciously or less strongly felt.

Some Islanders, of course, have witnessed major changes on the Island. These actual losses (as opposed to threatened losses) have certainly contributed to their sense of change and, in turn, to their sense of place. (As indicated in Introduction: "Toronto's Islanders' Sense of Place", such actual losses may give rise to the most poignant expressions of sense of place.) During the last decade or so (since the last major demolitions in 1968), all Islanders have been under the threat of destruction. This sense of future change or loss is the primary focus of discussion in this chapter.

Rolph comments on how stress induced by fear of loss (or experience of actual loss) may sharpen and make evident people's sense of place:

That there has been a relative desacralizing and desymbolizing of the environment seems undeniable, particularly for everyday life. But for many people there may still exist deep psychological links with place, links that only become apparent under conditions of stress. Harvey Cox...suggests that there are many people "who never fully recover" from the loss of "continuity of relationships with places" that results from urban renewal projects; and the not infrequent dramatic attempts by residents and homeowners to resist developers, even though they may have been offered better physical

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1"Place" is fragile and no place remains either in fact or in mind unchanged. There is therefore an element of sense of change in every experience of sense of place.
accommodation elsewhere, are indicative of these deep relationships with place.\footnote{E. Relph, \textit{Place and Placelessness} (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 65.}

Suzannah Lessard describes her reactions to the suburbanization of the Oyster Bay, Long Island countryside, which represents a threat to and an increasing loss of both her childhood landscape and an adult place that she cherishes:

One of the results of this habit [of selective perception] is that the bits of landscape I choose to perceive become almost unnaturally sharpened to my eye— are given a vividness that grows in direct ratio to the difficulty of blotting out the new landscape steadily encroaching on my vision. Suburbia, therefore, is, in this context, an ever-tightening frame around the borders of consciousness—not an object of focus in itself but something to look away from, a force that serves mainly to heighten concentration on the landscape it threatens, lending, with

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David Lowenthal reflects a similar sentiment when he writes, "People are seldom aware how much place means to them until development threatens to alter or extinguish it, or they are forced to leave it....The virtues of locales become patent when we have to fight to keep them." David Lowenthal, "Finding Valued Landscapes," \textit{Progress in Human Geography} 2 (1978), pp. 406-407.

And Yi-Fu Tuan, \textit{Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977), p. 171 describes how sense of (future) change may enhance sense of place at the neighborhood level:

Emotion begins to tinge the whole neighborhood—drawing on, and extrapolating from, the direct experience of its particular parts when the neighborhood is perceived to have rivals and to be threatened in some way, real or imagined. Then the warm sentiment one has for a street corner broadens to include the larger area.
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that threat, an added meaning and poignancy to the rapidly shrinking world of which I choose to be aware.\footnote{Suzannah Lessard, "The Suburban Landscape: Oyster Bay, Long Island," The New Yorker (October 11, 1976), p. 51. She describes the defensive reaction that she has adopted to cope with the progressive loss of this landscape as a kind of perceptual synecdoche: My compound antagonism toward the suburban incursion has a curious effect on my vision. Today, I can drive through old haunts that have been built up for almost two decades and not see what's there. When I am going past what used to be a favourite bit of countryside, my eye spontaneously practices synecdoche - that figure of speech in which a part represents the whole. I will select an old familiar tree that happens to have been left standing, or a little swatch of abandoned field in the distance, and with it re-create the old landscape, blanking out the rows of houses, the highways, and the shopping centres everywhere in the foreground. Or when a walk in the woods entails awkwardly sneaking through brush around somebody's back yard, my perceptions automatically go into a state of suspension until I pick up the old track.}

Toronto Islanders, of course, have been under the threat of destruction for many years and this sense of extreme change has undoubtedly contributed to their sense of place. Journalist Ron Haggart, writing shortly after Metro Council decided (in 1963) not to delay for a further year the demolition of 21 houses which were scheduled to go in 1964, commented on how this threatened change sharpened Islanders' sensitivity to the special qualities of Island life:

The Islanders, as they like to call themselves, as if there was some ethnic significance to living in the harbor of Toronto, were enjoying themselves [at the wedding], but they performed every quirk of island life like a defiant ritual. All the peculiarities of island life had a special meaning for them on this Saturday because, just a few days before, they had lost what was, in all probability, their last battle.\footnote{Ron Haggart, "For Them Toronto Islands Are No More," Star (September 16, 1963).}

This, of course, was not the "last battle" and the remaining Toronto Islanders are still under threat and still locked in combat with Metro...
Council. Islander Michael Albrecht comments on how this threat of destruction has increased his own love of the Island:

I think that the fact that some people are trying to destroy it probably makes it more agreeable to me, too. The rationale behind that [desire to destroy it] is just so difficult for me to comprehend. It just makes me love this place that much more, the idea that I may not be able to enjoy it forever.

A sense of change may affect each of the other components of sense of place. People's sense of history may be heightened both because they are searching for an anchor in times of stress or uncertainty and because they fear that something they value—their place—might change or even disappear without a trace. They wish to record its history and its existence before it is too late. In the case of the Toronto Island, as discussed in Sense of History, Islanders, inspired in part by the ever-present threat of destruction, have become avid local historians. They have collected stories, maps, pictures, and assorted memorabilia concerning the Island. And in the summer of 1974, a group of Islanders banded together, obtained a government grant, and compiled an Island archive (mostly of photographs and items collected and squirreled away by Islanders themselves). The motivation for forming this group was the imminent destruction of the

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1 David Lowenthal, "Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory," Geographical Review, LXV (January 1975), p. 9, comments on this: "Buffered by change, we retain traces of our past to be sure of our enduring identity." And Kevin Lynch, What Time Is This Place?, op. cit., p. 30 remarks: "Relying on history to maintain coherence and common purpose in moments of stress is a familiar human tendency. The militant interest in black history is its most recent manifestation in America."
...community. Jenny DeTolly (who was not a member of the Archive group) comments on how the threat of destruction has strengthened Islanders' sense of history:

Well, I'm sure [there are so many local historians] because the community is under threat and, even though some people feel fairly sure it's going to remain, I suppose they feel it [Island history] is something they should record before it does disappear.

Sense of change may strengthen sense of identity—both individual and group identity. Yi-Fu Tuan comments on this (and on the feeling of sense of place generally):

The sense of place is perhaps never more acute than when one is homesick, and one can only be homesick when one is no longer at home...However, the loss of place need not be literal. The threat of loss is sufficient. Residents not only sense but know that their world has an identity and a boundary when they feel threatened, as when people of another race want to move in, or when the area is the target of highway construction or urban renewal....Identity is defined in competition and conflict with others: this seems true of both individuals and communities. We owe our sense of being not only to supportive forces but also to those that pose a threat. Being has a centre and an edge: supportive forces nurture the centre while threatening forces strengthen the edge. 2

As noted earlier, both Freya Godard and Elizabeth Amer realized how important the Island was to their sense of identity when they were faced with the threatened or actual (but temporary) loss of the Island. Ms. Godard was distressed by the fact that because of the December 11, 1973 Metro Council vote to continue demolishing Island houses, she

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1 Metro Council had voted on December 11, 1973 to terminate Islanders' leases on August 31, 1974 and to proceed with the demolition of the houses in order to expand the park. Although this policy has not been carried out, as far as Islanders knew at this time, the summer of 1974 might have been their last one on the Island before their houses were destroyed and the community dispersed.

would no longer be an Islander; and Ms. Amer realized how important her identity as an Islander was when she was no longer an Islander but living away from the Island for a year. (See Sense of Identity, pp. 166-167.)

Sense of change resulting from an outside threat may draw people together and strengthen their sense of community. This is true from the national scale down to the local scale. Kenneth Boulding comments on the national scale:

It is perhaps the shared experience of danger which more than anything else creates the national spirit. Nations are the creation not of their historians, but of their enemies. France is a creation of Germany, and Germany of France. In the twentieth century the "perishing republic hardening into empire" of the United States is partly the creation of Russia, and the neurotic, aggressive Russia is partly the creation of the United States. We still await the larger symbolic image which will unite us all. ¹

On a smaller scale, Barry Conn Hughes describes the effect that the proposed airport and new town had on the residents of rural Pickering,

Ontario, who banded together to fight the schemes:¹

We were all caught up in it [the People or Planes group]. Business-suited commuters who worked in the city and farmers just back from doing chores formed close friendships in common cause. Respectable matrons found themselves waving placards. Quiet folk who'd never protested about anything wrote strong letters to the editor. Ordinary people who could never relate to wild-eyed hippies who wrecked computers, could rise up to fight for ordinary things like home, family, community and the good earth. We were determined to participate in decisions that affected those things.²

In the case of the Toronto Island, the sense of threatened change has built upon an already existing and strong sense of community. Nina Kilpatrick discusses this point:

Well, I think having the political situation the way it is ties people more together than certainly they would be otherwise. I

¹The effect of urban renewal (both public and private schemes) on strengthening local communities and drawing residents together in common cause is well-known. Herbert J. Gans, The Urban Villagers (New York: The Free Press, 1962), argues that Boston's West End was not a single neighbourhood or entity to those who lived there (although it might have seemed that way to 'outsiders', like urban planners), until the urban renewal scheme was proposed in the late 1950's. Gans demonstrates that, for a variety of reasons, West End residents never did mobilize to fight the scheme effectively (e.g., the-leadership of the group opposing the scheme was never accepted by the majority of residents; many residents refused to believe that the scheme would be implemented and therefore did not act, and so on). Although West Enders never became a cohesive group, the outside threat did draw them more closely together (p. 11):

[T]he concept of the West End as a single neighborhood was foreign to the West Enders themselves....Until the coming of redevelopment, only outsiders were likely to think of the West End as a single neighborhood. After the redevelopment was announced, the residents were drawn together by common danger, but, even so, the West End never became a cohesive neighborhood.

Graham Fraser, Fighting Back (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert, 1972), provides a good Toronto example of a community being drawn together—virtually being created—by the outside threat of urban renewal and, compared to the West End and many other cases, being relatively successful in its fight.

really believe that probably there wouldn't be the spirit there that there is now. Certainly it would still be a community and people would be helping each other and so on, but just that sort of tenuous feeling in the air really does tie people together a lot more.1

Sense of change may also heighten sense of environment. People may savour the sights, sounds, smells and other special features of their place all the more because they may lose them. Boyce Richardson illustrates this point in his study of the James Bay area, which was slated to be flooded for a massive hydro-electric scheme:

I awoke at 5:30 the next morning. It was already daylight, and Job and Mary had the fire burning low and were moving methodically as they rolled up their bedrolls, washed, prepared the tea and got the crowded tent in order for the day. When everyone was up, we went off in Job's canoe to check his nets. The day was glorious. The river was unlike any river I had ever seen before, smooth like glass, the clouds and the surrounding trees reflected as if in a mirror. Its beauty on this morning was truly transcendent; everyone was moved by it, perhaps the more so because we knew that a decision had been made in the south to destroy it.2

As noted before, the Goose and Duck newspaper was created (in 1971) in response to the Metro threat to demolish the remaining Island houses and to rally Island opposition to this threat. As David Amer noted earlier (p. 307), one of the functions of the Goose and Duck was to make other Islanders more aware of their environment so that they would fight to preserve it.

Finally, sense of (enforced) change may reduce people's sense of control. It may limit their freedom of action (e.g., by forcing them to leave a place that they would prefer to stay in; or, alternatively,

1 See below "Community Under Siege" pp. 361 ff. for an expanded discussion of this point.

by forcing them to spend enormous amounts of time and energy on defending a place that is threatened) and may emphasize their relative powerlessness to make major decisions affecting their lives. One Islander discusses this limitation, citing one, perhaps surprising, example of how some Islanders' freedom of action might be limited by the outside threat:

I think it [the political threat and uncertainty] also limits the freedom of decision which they [Islanders] could make about their own lives. The idea of pulling out now and moving into the City would almost be a betrayal to the Island cause and so we don't give it any serious thought, even if we wanted to, and I know of certain people who would probably move to Toronto, but they don't want to leave the Island because of the political struggle... Perhaps one's optimism about life and society in general is reduced through this on-going political struggle where you really can't get optimistic when you see all those yahoos making decisions.

Another major area where Islanders' freedom of action and sense of control have been limited by the outside threat, and the attendant uncertainty about their future, is house repairs and renovations. People are, naturally, reluctant to make major changes to and spend a lot of money on their houses if they are likely to be forced to leave shortly. Many, however, find this state of affairs frustrating and discouraging.1

In sum, sense of change may generally enhance a sense of place and may significantly influence each of the other major components. The next sections of this chapter discuss, first, the positive effect that the sense of change has had on Islanders' sense of community, and then some of the often negative, effects the outside threat of destruction has had on Islanders and some strategies Islanders have adopted to cope with the stress and uncertainty.

1See below, "Housing Conditions", pp. 366-369 for examples.
b. Community Under Siege:

The Toronto Island has been a "community under siege" for many years. While this has undoubtedly had many negative effects, which are discussed below, it has had some effects which Islanders, at least, would regard as positive. The political stress and uncertainty have undoubtedly kept house prices low which has enabled people from all types of backgrounds and economic situations to afford to buy houses, thus contributing to the social mix that Islanders value so highly, and probably preventing the community from becoming a predominantly summer cottage enclave for the well-to-do.

As noted earlier, the political campaigns, which have called upon Islanders to present their case to politicians and the public at large and to generally work together and use all the resources at their command, have also enabled Islanders to, as one person put it, "pull their muscles"—to exert themselves and discover personal strengths and abilities that they might not otherwise have found in themselves (such as the ability to write or speak in public or argue and cajole decision-makers or meet new people and cope with unfamiliar situations, and so on). Some Islanders have derived a degree of personal satisfaction from that.

By far the most frequently mentioned positive effect of the sense of (threatened) change and attendant political uncertainty has been the strengthening of Islanders' sense of community. Although Islanders experienced a strong sense of community before the Metro threat came upon them, there is little doubt in Islanders' minds that they are a stronger

1 See Sense of Community: "Some Community Values—Social Mix", pp. 208 ff.
more closely-knit community because of the outside threat of destruction and their consequent fight to prevent this than they would have been otherwise. They have gone to numerous highly emotional City and Metro Council meetings together. They have demonstrated together, cried together, argued together, planned together and organized together to fight the various adverse political decisions. They have agonized together, quaked nervously together, shaken their fists in rage together and celebrated victories together. Many Islanders have commented on the positive side of the "community under siege". For example:

I think it [the political uncertainty] has helped to create a sense of community, even more so, an interdependence on people for their own survival. How it would be without it, it's hard to say, I guess. I think it has helped to more closely knit the community, because there are a lot more people I know that I wouldn't know except through the political thing, especially on Ward's Island [because I live on Algonquin].

(Ron Mazza)

But of course it [knowing everyone in the community] is due in part to the fact that we're under siege permanently and we need to know what's going on day by day.

(Peter Cridland)

[Former Alderman Karl] Jaffary said it and I agree with him, that it's the "reign of terror" that's made us what we are. I'm almost sure it is, really. They just made us mix, which we perhaps wouldn't do. We wouldn't perhaps be the mixing type of community that we are if we weren't under pressure. I wasn't aware of mixing as much when I first came here [in 1958] as it does now.

(Maureen Smith)

1See Illustration 28.

2Various related comments have been quoted earlier. See, for example, Sense of Community: "Inconveniences", p. 199 and "Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of Community", pp. 246 ff.
In a community like this, especially when it's being threatened, everybody has to know everybody to know where there may be weaknesses in the community and where there aren't.

(Peter Holt)

With this whole campaign that we had [in the spring of 1974], I got to know a lot of people that I'd seen for years, but never really talked to, never really known about. I got to go into their houses, which is another thing that I just hadn't done before. It's just a build-up. Well, it's the most fantastic thing about that campaign. I don't think it would have mattered whether we'd achieved anything political at all. But I think we got to know one another and we got to talk to one another, and that's the most important thing of all.

(Jenny DeTolly)

I guess we found out just what a lot of people were made of. There are a lot of very courageous people, in terms of standing up and being counted in City Hall Square or up at Queen's Park. . . . People really showed phenomenal courage in dealing with the situation. And we got to be friends with a lot of people that we normally wouldn't have really gotten to be friends with. This business of going right outside your social circle and getting mixed up with a lot of different people--older people, younger people, people who had a little different style of life--working with them all and getting to know them and really getting to care about them was really important.

(Elizabeth Amer)

Elizabeth Amer expands on this idea of getting to know people who are not in your normal social group and on how the Goose and Duck was used to promote this sort of mixing in order to build community solidarity in the face of threatened change:

One of the things we tried to do with the Goose and Duck was to get different people in different groups dealing with each other, maybe not over the teacups or anything, but on some basis, in order to facilitate solidarity in the community and somehow integrate people so that they could all work together better on the political front and keep the morale up. . . . You know, you'd get a "freak" who wanted to grow something or other and would find that Mr. ______ happened to be the greatest living expert on how to grow it and he would contact Mr. ______ and find out how the hell you grow it. Now, he and Mr. ______ are never going to get together for a beer of an evening 'cause it's just not that sort of thing. But they deal with each other because Mr. ______ has some information that the young "freak" wants. And that's the way it goes. And I think lots of people dealt with a lot of people they wouldn't have
otherwise dealt with through the kinds of community things and through the kind of information the 'Goose and Duck put out.
And, then again, through the political campaign. People going out to political meetings who hadn't been—well, I talked to lots of people who hadn't been involved in political activity before in their lives. They'd go out to political meetings with people that were a lot younger, lived on Ward's, they maybe hadn't seen before or they'd just seen around but never met them. I think there are quite a few occasions to get together with people who aren't in your immediate social circle here.

Even if the present political threat were removed (i.e., if the ground leases were extended for a long term or permanently), some Islanders have felt that the sense of change and attendant stress would continue to exist and unite the community. For example:

I think it's inconceivable to most of us now that the pressure will be removed completely, I think. If we have a little more hope now that we do have a future as a community, the concern is becoming more—a case of how we can retain what are the good parts about it that we have in the face of what seem to be likely, very likely, to be some fairly drastic conditions under which we live. So, I'm assuming that a certain amount of stress will remain for a long while. I think it's inconceivable to most of us that there will be a nice, clear-cut, long-lease extension, or actually freedom to go on or stay as they always have. For any number of reasons that's not likely to happen. So, I think an awful lot of us are going to be apprehensive for a long while until it settles down to whatever it is that it's going to settle down to be.

(Peter Cridland)

[If the present political threat were removed], we'd have almost as much work to do as we have now. The pressure is never going to ease out. It's always going to be a difficult job to control. It really is.

(Maureen Smith)

I think that if we're going to have any permanent or on-going community here, it's going to be, I'm quite convinced, in some form of rather experimental form of housing....I would expect if we have an on-going community, I think it's going to have to be under the City and the City is likely to require that it be either under City coop housing or our own coop housing or under some kind of

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1These comments are all from interviews in 1974—early 1976.
controlled set-up. I don't think you're just going to get a lease extension and then be free to deal any way you want. I think that the proposition is going to be involving a lot of people and I think that it'll continue to be a lot of people mixing up together for community purposes, because there are a lot of things that are going to have to be done in terms of rebuilding and renovating and bringing houses up to standard and working out the administration of the coop and one thing or another, which will require a lot of working together. Whatever happens is going to constitute a crisis. No matter what happens. So that people are going to be dealing with a crisis in some form for the next ten years, I would imagine. A change. That's all I really mean. Like either you're going to have to get adjusted to the fact that the City owns your house and you're virtually sort of a tenant coop member, which is going to be very hard for some people. That's going to take some work and some dealing. And if everything goes rotten, then it's just going to be a case of "La Résistance".

(Elizabeth Amer)

Finally, as some of the above comments indicate, although Islanders obviously want to eliminate the present political threat to their continued existence as a community, some are nevertheless worried about how the community might change if that threat and some of the other physical stresses were lifted.¹ Maureen Smith commented on this:

[If the political stress were removed], no I don't think it could ever be [like other communities], unless it was joined to the Mainland and people started to bring their cars over. Then you would see the houses taken down and other houses built. There’d be pressure to own the land. And probably I wouldn’t want to live here anymore. But the fact that people have to leave their cars and their status symbols in the city and come---I mean, it doesn’t matter how well-dressed you are if you’re slithering over the ice to get home in the winter. It’s a great leveller, you know, winter on the Island. The thing that worries me is that if the reign of terror was ever ended, this place would go back to the summer community. And the trouble is that as it becomes more and more permanent, of course, as it becomes more and more secure, people will demand more and more. People will want better ferry services, people will want better delivery services. People will feel that they are justified in asking for them and in the past we felt we couldn’t ask for them because our position was so insecure. Sure better service would change the community, too, in that

¹See also the comments about welcoming inconveniences in Sense of Control: "Inconveniences", p. 322 and about the need for price controls in Sense of Control: "Reactions To A Housing Cooperative", pp. 326 ff.
it would encourage more and more people to come over to the
Island who are not prepared to cope with the difficulties of
living on the Island. One of the things is that most of the
people here are pretty resourceful types of people. And you'd
get the unresourceful types... that don't know one end of a
screwdriver from another.

**c. Other Effects of Threat and Uncertainty:**

From the perspective of Islanders, the extreme sense of threat-
ened change (and possible destruction) experienced by them over many
years has created many negative effects as well as the positive ones
just described.

1. **Housing Conditions:**

Islanders are the first to admit that housing conditions on the
Island are far from ideal. Although, as has been described elsewhere,
many Islanders have made major changes to their houses in spite of the
political uncertainty clouding their future, and most Islanders make
enough repairs to keep their houses going at a tolerable level, many
Islanders have refrained from making major changes or major repairs in
the face of an uncertain future.¹ They have been unable and/or unwilling
to invest large sums of money in houses which might be demolished
shortly. As is shown below, this is a great source of frustration
and annoyance to people who would like to make changes and improve their

¹ Some people have gone ahead and done major repairs in the face
of extreme uncertainty. For example, the Daniels family finally spent
$30,000 renovating their Lakeshore house (called "Camelot") during the
winter of 1979-1980 (after having spent 22 years on the Island). Jean
Daniels explained, "We realized that any day could be the last, but
there comes a point when you have to take a gamble." Quoted in "Faith
Still Strong That Island Home Will Not Be Lost," Globe and Mail,
July 2, 1980. According to Alderman Allan Sparrow at City Council on
May 14, 1980, over the previous two years Islanders had spent nearly
$300,000 on home repairs and improvements (including 36 new founda-
tions). See also Sense of Identity: "Island Houses", pp. 171 ff. and
Sense of Control: "Island Houses", pp. 316 ff. for examples of
renovations.
living conditions.

This is not a new situation, although it has been exaggerated in recent years. Alan Howard describes how the sense of change and feeling of uncertainty prevented people from improving their houses in an earlier era (late 1940's and early 1950's). He also condemns the attitudes of the civic administration which criticized people for allowing their houses to deteriorate while creating the very conditions which led to that deterioration. He comments:

Well, I think that during the long years that there was uncertainty about the future permanence of the Island community, it discouraged people from making plans. It discouraged people from refurbishing the houses and doing things that perhaps needed doing, because they knew they weren't going to be reimbursed for the extra things that they put into their houses and this was made more complicated by the fact that the civic administration frequently complained that the houses were not as well kept as they should be, but at the same time their sidewalks on the parks were appallingly kept and the argument was: well, that Island does nothing but cost us money; it's a sort of lodestone [sic] around our neck and we're not going to put any money into it. Well, how can you expect people to make their homes beautiful and insulate them and put on new roofs and do all the things that are necessary if first of all the civic administration, which should be setting an example, is not doing any of the things it should do and secondly, they are warning you at all times that you may be put off at any moment; they'd clear the place, you see? And you can't have it both ways. You can't really say to people: "Now, we'd like this to be a model community. Do up your houses and make it beautiful, but don't expect anything from us. We're not going to mend our public sidewalks or raise them if they're flooded during rainstorms." and so on. "Don't expect anything from us. And of course you realize that you do this on the understanding that you're not going to get a lot of repayment for this work when the house is eventually claimed for the City." Well, what would you think? You'd say, "Well, I'm going to live here as long as I can and I'm not going to do more than I have to." I think that the Island community could have been a really model place.

Many Islanders would probably make similar criticisms of more recent civic administration.

A number of Islanders commented, in the City's 1973 survey of
Island residents, on the deteriorating housing conditions and their
desire for a "permanent" or long-term lease so that they could improve
their houses. For example:

[I would like] extended leases so people would be willing to
spend money on major home improvements.

I do not like the uncertainty of a year to year lease because it
prevents me from making improvements on the house which I would
sincerely like to make but cannot afford to invest in either
time or money-wise for only one year. This is very frustrating
to people who care a good deal for the Island community.

And many Islanders voiced similar opinions in their interviews.
The sense of frustration comes through very clearly. For example:

From May '73 right through to now [summer 1974] we've been sort
of "something coming in a few months that might change the sit-
uation" and we kept waiting for a permanent solution to make
our permanent plans. But so far, we still don't know...I can't
make any decisions...They'd fix their places up if they knew
they were going to stay, but if we have to give our houses up
and not get one red cent for them, who's going to spend any money
on them? And that's whv they've been going downhill for years
and then they get criticized for having these messy places....
I would love to - I really enjoy fixing the place up...I'm very
undecided as to what to do....But I'm not going to put a lot of
money into the place or get myself into a lot of trouble.

(Mrs. Hopp)

[The political uncertainty] certainly had a lot to do with their
"slum housing". General maintenance is very important and that
gets to you after a while. I'm sure everyone has a game plan
of what they'll do to fix their place up. Some of us have got
to the place [in November 1975] where it's driving us crazy.

(David Amer)

The only thing I don't like about the Island is the fact that
we're so unstable right now [January 1976] that we're forced to
live in a way that we really don't want to live as far as our
house is concerned or buying new furniture or making our house
liveable for us...It's really inconvenient right now. Michael's
in high school and Chrissy's only in Grade 2, so Michael has a
lot more homework to do and she wants to watch television. With
the size of the house it's very difficult for both of them to
have their wants and so one has to sacrifice all the time for
somebody else in the house.

(Maxine Wilson)
I guess the major [dislike] when I think of it is the house is the biggest annoyance. I'd like to be able to do certain renovations on the house and don't feel free to do so [November 1975], because of the short duration of time here. This wears on us. There are lots of ways that this affects your life, your planning.

(Terry Tyers)

We don't really get too down about [the political uncertainty] or too depressed, but we do talk about it and in this way that if we had a long time, if we were going to stay here for any length of time, we could do so many things with the house. But I think that that's what's happening to a lot of people, that the maintenance on their homes, they're starting to run down. Nobody wants to put out a great deal of money [in January 1976], because they know they're not going to get it back. Like people's roofs are leaking and they don't want to pay five or six hundred dollars for a roofer to do a proper job. That sort of thing. Sidewalks are busted and walkways, wooden walkways, are needing repair. Nobody really wants to do anything until they find out exactly where they stand and so they just make do until that day when they say we're going to stay forever.

(Jimmy Jones)

2. Human Costs:

The years of uncertainty, the intensive political campaigns and the forced evictions have all taken their toll. The human cost, according to Islanders' accounts, has ranged from weariness and tension through to relatively serious illness and even death.1

Probably the most serious human costs have been associated with

1The information collected for this study cannot confirm or deny Islanders' statements on these points or assess the possible extent of the problems. Since many people who left the Island (or were forced to move from one part of the Island to another) were old, it could be argued that their subsequent problems resulted from old age rather than forced moving or evictions to years of uncertainty. There is no way of knowing for certain if, as Islanders maintain, their problems were in fact related to their evictions. It is reasonable to expect, however, that some people who were forced to move did suffer because of it. See William Michelson, Man and His Urban Environment (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 163 ff.; and Marc Fried, "Grieving For A Lost Home," in The Urban Condition, ed. Leonard Duhl (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 151-171 for discussions of medical and psychological consequences of forced relocation.
people who were forced to move, against their will, either from one house on the Island to another or off the Island altogether. Undoubtedly many people have been able to adapt without suffering serious consequences, but a number of Islanders mentioned instances of people who fell ill or suffered serious effects:

As the bulldozers went further and came to Centre, and there were some lovely homes they had to take down, even though the people got paid for their homes, there were some people who took it very, very hard and I know people who never recovered. I can't name names, but I definitely know them. One I have in mind, she just went speechless after the house was lost. They had made such a beautiful place out of their home and they'd worked so hard through all the trials and tribulations and she just never kind of gave up hope and found that it still was taken and she went to pieces and I don't think she's ever really been the same since. So, I don't know how many other people might have been badly affected. That's one case I know of.

I remember hearing a story once about somebody who had lived on Centre for ten or fifteen years and was really a part of it. All the houses on Centre were torn down and those people were going to get together every month and this guy said that by a year after, all sorts of emotional problems had arisen—all sorts of things—because these people were uprooted from their home and community, something that had been very important to them, and they were facing entirely different social and financial pressures.

[I think my neighbour has been affected.] He was in very poor health anyway and his only pleasure was to sit outside [his former house] and drink a glass of beer and watch the boats and that sort of thing. The very big human cost...And I've been through it from you see. And that was the sort of traumatic experience. I don't think this next one will affect us as much, because over there was a house we'd had for twenty years and the first place, house we bought when we were married, before we even had a place to live in the City....My husband and I would, since we moved over here, he's more or less, well he's one of the human casualties. He had a very, he had a stroke after he left the Island and I think the worry and so forth and the work that he'd done....

See also Introduction: "Islanders' Sense of Place" for other examples.
The scars that they [the evictions and demolitions] have inevitably left. I mean, the proof is 's mother, who was asked to go down to Hanlan's...just to talk about the history, and layout of the streets and where people were and what there was and that day they were tearing down Durnan's boathouse and she broke down and started crying and they just couldn't do it [the interview].

Other people, according to some Islanders, died as a result of the experience:

There's no question [that people's health was affected]. I could name some of the people whose life was shortened by the fact that they knew their homes were being taken and they had nowhere else to go. They were elderly. They lived 30, 40 years on the Island. I remember one time this was stated at Metro Council before the Chairman, Fred Gardiner, who absolutely pooh-poohed it and he said, "Next thing you'll be calling me a murderer." I was there and heard this; you see. Well, of course, he couldn't appreciate what it was doing. I don't think he ever really felt any compassion whatsoever.

_____ : What do you think about your mother? Is she a fair example?
_____ : She didn't adjust at all.
_____ : Like 's mother. She wasn't very well anyway. Just leaving her home. She moved in with her sister. She just deteriorated completely. And she went to a nursing home and she died in a couple of months. Just leaving her home and not having the routine of doing things. Having things done for her. It's very difficult for old people to make any kind of adjustment. Any kind of a move.

While the political campaign may have drawn people together and reinforced their sense of community, it has also taken its toll. Several Islanders comment on this aspect of the political threat:

I think [the political struggle and uncertainty] has made them tired in many respects. I know I sometimes just get weary of the whole thing. It never seems to end. It always seems so long, so enormous.

I must admit that I was so tired afterwards [after the Spring Campaign of 1974]. The strain and the physical work involved. Your time is not your own and you feel guilty if you're not doing anything. Not that anyone says anything to you, but you just feel guilty and I felt that that was getting a bit unhealthy. You can't have a bit of fun. That's a bad state of affairs.
I took the major role out of our family and made the conscious decision that was starting off on his own, self-employed, and we consciously made the decision that I would do the work on the Island political thing for us both and I would put in a lot of time to make up for what he wouldn't be putting in, and that was the conscious decision that we both came to. So I had the strain of the Island situation on a 24 hour basis and although I didn't think the strain would get to me, it did and our marriage suffered and our family life suffered and my health suffered and I lost an incredible amount of weight... It was the members of the Executive and the Borough Captains who were really carrying the strain from the responsibility point of view. And I'm sure from the stress point of view...a lot of people feel more strain than I do. I know they do. I know a lot of people who are taking pills and all sorts of things to get them through.

I suppose the sense of responsibility [drove me on]. I had agreed to do something and I had to see it through. I suppose really I could have quit or disappeared, but there was always something cropping up that had to be dealt with and people would phone and you couldn't just ignore the telephone. I was getting very tired. After December [1973], I think if I hadn't gone away for Christmas and been completely away from the Island for those few weeks, I probably wouldn't have survived. I would have had a nervous breakdown about February. I just couldn't cope. And I found that I was getting completely ineffectual. I just couldn't cope. I couldn't think. I couldn't make decisions. I was just losing my grip, through complete weariness and being burnt out. That whole bit of getting so crisp that everything was a major disaster and then I started to lose my memory. I couldn't remember had I done this or was I supposed to do that...and meetings would be coming up that I knew would be difficult. I just didn't want to do them. And I'd get into a fit of nerves before I went in. Because I'm basically a shy person and I couldn't run public meetings. I couldn't speak at public meetings at all and the idea of actually running a public meeting was just completely beyond my comprehension. I couldn't even imagine myself doing it, but I was forced into the situation and I wasn't very good at it.

There was always something happened. And I used to say to my husband, "It's only another two weeks", and he'd say, "Ha, Ha. Tell me another one. Tell me another one!" He made it difficult sometimes. He would complain because I wasn't home or I had to go out and I'd be out sometimes three or four times a week. But when I'd say, "OK, I'll quit.", he'd say, "Well, no you can't.", and he would drive me back in again and he would say, "You took the job on. Now, you've got to do it." So we would carry on and keep going, but I think it was bad. I don't think the Islanders did themselves right in keeping me in that position for so long.

Anxiety and fatigue in the face of extreme threat and uncertainty have continued to plague Islanders—both those who are heavily involved in
the political defense and those who are not.

d. Coping With Uncertainty and Stress:

Islanders have adopted a variety of methods of coping with uncertainty and stress, which have ranged from voluntarily moving from the Island to refusing to believe anything untoward will happen. The next three subsections discuss some of these coping mechanisms.

1. Moving:

Undoubtedly, over the years some people have moved because they could no longer (or no longer wished to) cope with the political uncertainty. Several Islanders comment on this:

The only reason my father moved [from Ward's] was he applied for a Senior Citizen apartment and then this yearly stay [of execution] business sort of got under his skin after all these years. So we've been doing it now for about 20 some odd years. Year after year. So when these people come along and say, "Well, gee, let's begin the fight all over again," people such as myself are a bit tired. We've been through this for 20 years. So Dad had to make his mind up whether to risk losing being at the top of the list for senior citizens apartments or staying on the Island, so he took the apartment.

__: Well, I guess some have left because of [the political uncertainty].
__: My brother and your sister.
__: left because of the uncertainty, too. The longer they stayed, the higher the prices get in town, the more they panic.

After my husband died [1964], I couldn't have stayed alone over here winter and summer, not knowing whether there was going to be any future to the place. I accepted the fact that there wasn't, so I had to make plans to get myself settled down somewhere, so I wouldn't be a worry to my family and so I did....Because of the fact that we never had more than one year at a time to count on, anybody who could make other arrangements naturally would, unless they had a family of small children, they were young, healthy and able to stand the strain.

[In the early 1970's] lots of people left because they couldn't stand the insecurity. A lot of houses changed hands. A lot of the old people got off. 1971. Yes, I think there was more of
a move than now [August 1974]....I must say that our fortitude wavered somewhat about four or five years ago, in 1970 when it looked as though we weren't going to win. It really was pretty close.

I've never had anybody that I know of that said they left because of the political situation, but I felt that some of them left because of the situation that politics has created. I don't think people would express it that way. Uncertainty has got to be a problem for some people. I'm sure that's the reason for a number of them leaving.

I think that a reason why a lot of people have left and I'm relating this entirely to people that I know, who would be possibly different from other people—that there comes a certain stage in your life when something comes up—some kind of job offer, some kind of other pressure enters your life, some piece of property that you've been searching for all your life comes up, and it just becomes impractical to live on the Island any more. You're not only paying the price of inconvenience, but you're paying in uncertainty—a constant uncertainty. When we came here [1969] there was a year, then after that there was another year, and it's just been going like that ever since we've been here, so you're paying in that kind of uncertainty, because most people like their life pretty prescribed. They like to know where they're going in the next few years, and I think what has happened is that in all these cases, certain things have come up in these people's lives and they've had to go, they just can't put up with it anymore. Or not even put up with it. Other things have taken priority.

What is surprising, perhaps, is not that some people have moved because of the uncertainty and stress, but that more have not moved.

For example, there has been no mass exodus of Islanders since the 1973 Metro decision to reaffirm its policy of acquiring and demolishing the remaining houses (a policy that has been delayed but not changed). In fact, according to some Islanders, there was more movement immediately before that decision was made than after. Several Islanders, who have been active in the political fight, comment on the lack of large-scale movement in recent years:

I remember a year or two ago [1974] there was an Island Solidarity Committee which was put there because, boy, as soon as the final notice comes through [summer 1974], people are going to
start deserting the Island. Well, surprisingly few have. I don't know what their arrangements are. But everybody who jumped into the Solidarity Committee really thought that. Maybe there have been people who moved because of the uncertainty, but I can't think of them.

Very few. In the last two years [since 1973] very few people have moved.

But it seems to me that in the last two years [since 1972] that the Island has been a lot more stable. I think everybody then just decided 'Well, we might as well sit it out and see what happens. We've got nothing to lose by sitting here.' And a lot of people literally got trapped; they can't move out now because of the housing and they really don't want to go. They're onto a good thing. Most of them own the houses outright and they just don't want to go. They might as well hang on and see, because, gradually this idea that we might be here for longer began to start to get a few converts and there seemed to be a little more hope. I think people started to think 'we might as well sit it out. You know, we'd be fools to move now.'...I think [that idea] started with the arrival of people like Sewell and the whole citizen movement in the City started to come about and the fact that there were more and more younger people coming.... And I guess, too, a different feeling amongst the people who are living here, a younger group of people, a little more educated, a lot of architects and planners and that sort of thing, who were beginning to say, 'you shouldn't just say, 'well, we've got to go some day.' You've got to make the place worth saving....' And we had a lot more planners and social types who thought the place should be kept because it was so different, and you know, the whole bit about the social mix was becoming more and more stressed and this was something that planners and so on were trying to create and couldn't. Here it was existing without anybody doing anything about it. And I think people began to think they'd reached a point where, well, they were crazy to move off in case it sorted itself out. They decided they still wanted to stay. I think the people that didn't really like the Island had all moved off. Now you find that the people that move off are the people that have to go and change their jobs or drastically alter their plans.

One factor that must inevitably be weighed in the decision about whether to move or stay is an evaluation of how one's life might change if one moved. Those who have chosen to move before the final eviction is forced upon them have done so for a variety of reasons. Not surprisingly, it seems that their view of how life might change tends to be ambivalent or positive about the future. Two people who moved (but did
not sell their Island houses) in the summer of 1974 comment:

"[Life] won't be as relaxed. I don't think I'll mind it. I think
will. Hopefully, we'll make a lot of friends and hopefully
we'll get more fun. It's tough for teenagers around here, be-
cause they don't have the freedom to participate in the extra-
curricular school activities. I can do a lot of things that I
cannot do here [like take night classes], I'll miss seeing all
those people that I've known for years and years and years, watch-
ing their kids grow up and have their children coming for holidays
and seeing the third generation. I don't want to lose touch
with them, but it's hard to keep touch. Apart from that, I look
forward to the new situation. I'm ready for a change.

Oh, it's going to be a lot bigger house. We'll have a car which
we haven't had in [a long time]. I shall put my two children in
the car and drive to the shop and that will be, I think, a very
nice change. I'm kind of looking forward to that. I've for-
gotten what it's like. I'm hoping my son will start school
there. Now the negative part. I'm very sad that will
leave his [Island] school, because he was very happy there.

Some Islanders who still do not want to leave, believe that
although life would not be as nice as life on the Island, they would
probably be able to adapt well to a change. Two people who have been
very active in the campaign to save Island homes comment on their
expectations:

Well, firstly, I think we would adapt fairly well, I have no great,
no nightmarish fears about it. It would probably be quite differ-
ent, since I couldn't see us owning a house in the City, so we'd
probably be living in an apartment, an older apartment, preferably
not highrise, but there wouldn't be the sense of having your
friends near.

I'd be pretty pissed off if I was forced to leave here. You'd
have a really mad person on your hands, but that wouldn't prevent
me from being perfectly happy in some new place. I don't think
there's any place in the City that is as good to live as the
Island... But I'd get a great deal of pleasure in spending the
rest of my time [taking revenge on] the group that kicked me off.

But a number of Islanders have a bleaker view of how their lives
might change and how well they might adapt if they were forced to move

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1 This family returned to the Island three years later.
and live in the City:

Oh well, I think I'm the wrong guy to talk to about that, because my life would be totally different. I'd have to start another type of job, for one thing. And, I'm not trying to be funny, but I think I'd die. I really do. Not knowing anybody, not being able to go for a walk or a swim when I please, I think I'd become frustrated. I really do. Because, a lot of guys that move from the Island die within two or three years. Oh yeah. There's a guy lived down on Third Street and his wife no longer liked the Island, so they got an apartment uptown. A few years later he dropped dead. He was as healthy as a horse. He was old. He was retired from his job and he had lots of dough. He used to walk around here day after day. Now, I think my father won't last that much longer. He can't get out for his walks [from his Senior Citizen apartment]. He misses talking to Frank Ward and all his old cronies. They'll all be gone within a year, I'm afraid. 

Jesus, I'd have a hard time figuring out how it would in any way be the same. If I lived in the City, I'd have to find an entirely new way of living.

If we have to move, I might well stay here and camp out. So you could say that we'd be separated. He nearly goes daft in the City. He really gets quite impossible. We were staying at [City friends' house]. He would come and stay on the Island two nights a week. I could adapt a lot more easily than he could.

There's an incredible amount of pain involved in having to move and I guess I'd go out screaming. I think it would be horrendous.... It was horrible moving [temporarily from the Island] and it was horrible the day I had to move over to Algonquin [from Ward's]. That sort of change takes months to adjust to and I can adjust because I'm younger, but some people it's just going to kill. I don't think they recognize that at all. I think it's a human thing. I thought when [person] and I were moving, I felt if we ever came to the crunch when we all have to go, this pain is going to be multiplied by a thousand, when you think of all the people and animals, cats and dogs, that are going to have to shift. It's incredible and whether people can realize how horrible it's going to be and fight because of it, I don't know. People don't talk about it much. Maybe it's a taboo. It's like talking about death. You don't want to write up that will. But maybe that would be one thing we should get people to face.

1 This person made similar comments several years later to a newspaper reporter in June 1980, when Islanders were facing imminent eviction.
Oh, it would be awful. I would have to find another job, I guess [away from the Island school]. I wouldn't want to come back every day, past where I'd been and everything. The kids wouldn't have the freedom that they have; for sure I wouldn't allow it. And I guess it would be all the locked door thing....Just everything would change so completely, I couldn't stand the thought. I'd never leave the kids alone, ever.

The first thing I would say is that I wouldn't move to the City. In a sense, I know that if I were kicked off here, it would force me out of Toronto, because I wouldn't move back. But, if I were forced to move back [to the City], I would change in the sense that I might drift back into getting a nice house and fixing it up and having to work harder to keep up the payments...God, I have to think of it....[But] I'm actually afraid to move to the country.

I don't know how and I would survive if we were trying to build this boat from a City house, because I would never see him. He'd just be there all the time. And I don't know how our marriage would survive. The only reason I agreed he should do it was I knew that I would at least see him and I could participate and join in. And as the children get older on the Island, that's great. They can go off and do what they want to do and they can still establish contact with me. But if they're living in the City, they'll be wanting to do things in the City with their friends and I shall be over here and I shall have no contact with them. I think the family—that's looking on the bleak side, you know—could break up. We wouldn't have the sort of contact with each other that we have at the moment, because we touch base every now and again. We're either here or at the yacht club. I might not have seen them all day, but at least I know where they are; they're on the beach and if I want them I can find them. And they come back to me every now and again for something to eat, and that's the way the family functions. But I have a feeling that if we lived in the City, the only way it would work would be that the boat was in the back yard....I have the feeling that I wouldn't make out too well [socially in the City].

If I lived in the City I would like to continue working at the School. I don't know if it would be possible....I guess if that weren't possible, I'd look for another job....I think I'd try to duplicate as much as I could. Physical activity—you couldn't ski to school or ride to school; you couldn't jog....You wouldn't be as free as far as leaving the kids and going for a ski or for a job. I wouldn't feel as at home about that, leaving them alone for an hour. I guess there'd be a lot of times that you'd have to take them places, you couldn't send them. And I guess I'd be far more restricted until they got adjusted. I guess my working wouldn't be such an easy thing.
We'd have to work like dogs, because we don't want to live in an apartment. But, well, where else are you going to move, but to an apartment or a rented house. I'd have to become a 9 to 5'er, a career person. Both the children would have to be shipped out. We wouldn't see each other. Just become pretty humdrum. We'd probably end up splitting up.

I don't know. Pretty tough, I guess. The part of it that would be tough for me is that I'm so used to being out of doors. I go for a walk to Centre everyday. I'm getting older now. At one time I thought it wouldn't matter...but now I'm getting pretty old.

2. Buying a House:

In order to cope with the stress and uncertainty about the future, some Islanders have bought houses elsewhere in case they are eventually forced to move from the Island. These people do not want to move (otherwise they would have already done so); but they have found the uncertainty too hard to bear without having made alternative plans for the future. Several Islanders commented on this way of coping (in 1974-1976):

It's very difficult. feels that way [panic about rising house prices]. But, he's bought a place and we've rented it. Now he feels settled about that at least....I don't think there are very many [who have done this]. I think you could count about five or six that we know of.

There are some people that have places that could move. They don't want to, but they've covered their bets.

I must say that our fortitude wavered somewhat about four or five years ago, in 1979, when it looked as though we weren't going to win. It really was pretty close...We weren't sure. We really figured that the Island was going to come to an end and there was no hope of anything in those days. We wanted this other boat, but the biggest thing that was concerning me, because the children were smaller, was what would we do when we left the Island. So what we decided to do in the end was to take a certain percentage of the money that we have saved and buy a house, or put a down payment on the house, then rent that out until we needed it, and then the balance of the money, any
money from there on in that we saved, would go into the boat. And that's what we did. So that at the moment we own another house in Toronto, which is rented and which we have owned for the last four years. But we've no inclination to move into it; even when the going is tough, we'll live here and stick it out. . . .Well, because we don't want to go and live there. We'd much rather live here. We don't particularly want to live there. The only reason we bought it was it was cheap, it had three bedrooms, it was gas-heated, it was opposite a school, it's close to shops, it's five minutes from the Go-train station, five minutes from a street-car line into the City. It fulfilled all our requirements. It had a garden at the back and that was it. It was in bad condition; it needs a lot of work done on it; it was small; it was cheap; it just filled our requirements at that particular time, but we didn't really want to live in it. We weren't dying to go and live there. It was an option that we didn't want to take up.

3. Attitudes:

Over the long years of uncertainty, Islanders have adopted various attitudes ranging from fatalism to total optimism, to cope with the stress and political uncertainty. Some of these coping mechanisms are described here.

In earlier years especially, many Islanders simply did not believe that anything unpleasant could happen. For years they had heard about plans for the Island, which had never materialized; they thought (or hoped) Metro's plan would not be implemented either:

I can remember them talking about this as long as I've been here and I know when I was a kid, "Oh, ya. We've listened to this since 1900". . . .So, you know, when they came up with these plans every six months or every year, whenever there wasn't enough happening in the newspaper it seemed they'd bring up the Island issue again. So, you used to think, "Oh, ya, I've heard that a thousand times before".

I was down here [Algonquin] then [1956]. At that particular time, as I recall, I don't think we took it very seriously.

Even as Metro began demolishing houses and developing the park, many residents at the eastern end continued to think that nothing would happen:

"Well, I think for a long time we didn't believe... and I think
the people down here didn't believe, that it would ever happen. There was always this thought that Metro would run out of money. They were spending so much money. It was raising the land and installing the sprinkler system and... when they cleared Hanlan's we really thought this would give us a break, because there's, you know, a huge new area, which was new. Hanlan's was never really used.

Well, I don't think we took it too seriously in a way, because it seemed so far in the future and we were much too concerned with immediate things. Now I certainly was. We had small children; we had a business over here; and my husband wasn't well. So I just didn't believe in looking that far ahead.

As Islanders began to battle the demolition plans, some comforted themselves and kept themselves going with the thought that their cause was just and justice would triumph in the end:

I felt for years, you know, I sort of kept myself going with the feeling that if the cause was just, you gotta win out in the end. When we finally lost our house at the Island, after all those years of fighting, I realized that, well, it doesn't always happen that way. Even good causes can be lost if there are various circumstances.

And others were simply fatalistic: they assumed that Metro would implement their plans, that eventually the houses would go and that there was nothing anyone could do about it (except move or wait and enjoy the Island until the last possible moment). Presumably, there was no point in fighting or worrying about the ultimate outcome:

I'm not so sure it [the reason why people at this end were not involved in fighting Metro earlier] wasn't all part of a feeling that there was nothing that could be done about it. That was a long time before the days of the citizens' movement. I can remember the fellow next door to me saying, "Say what you like," he said, "They've done what they said they were going to do. They've taken the places they said they would. They said they would take this at this stage. They've done it!" And he never really believed that there was any real hope for us. It would just happen because it was just too large a thing to fight.

At that time [in the late 1950's when we bought a house] said, "Look, we could be out of here next year" and that was
pretty reasonable, I think. In that particular time there was still some houses on Hanlan's with people living in them. They all went that spring and I think it was quite reasonable then to suggest that Metro might come into some extra money and just go through with a stronger push and the place would go. Circumstances could turn it around so that they wouldn't have to wait until 1968 to get rid of Algonquin or maybe they'd do Ward's immediately if they found the money....

I can remember very clearly saying, "Oh, well, you can't fight City Hall" and I remember thinking, "Christ, if he has been around this long and he figures you can't fight City Hall, you probably can't fight City Hall." I just assumed he knew a lot more about it than I did.

In more recent years, some Islanders have coped with the insecurity by refusing to place a high priority on long-term security:

It's hard for people outside to realize how satisfied we were with another year, you know. Most people who have a house expect to be there for a period of time, before they decide to reinvest in another better house or whatever. We don't think too much in terms of security, so another year seems fantastic.

Some Islanders, even in the face of the past demolition of about 400 houses, have coped with the insecurity by simply ignoring the situation:

I'm really surprised at the number of people who have lived here long enough to think "Well, nothing's going to happen." who just ignore the question—put the question out of their mind and do not cope with it. [By contrast] I guess the Executive is made up of people who figure they'd better cope with that problem.

Others (like some of the people quoted earlier) are basically pessimistic about the final outcome; but they still continue to live on the Island, and in some cases, continue to spend great amounts of time and energy fighting to retain their homes. Pessimism has not always led to moving or giving up:

I think quite a few people feel that it's only a matter of time now, you know lost hope if you look at the process. just thinks we'll be here, we'll get another year maybe, maybe two, and then we'll be gone. I think he's pretty pessimistic. I'm
still pessimistic in twelve years after landing out here. I'm still very pessimistic about the long-term prospects for the community.

This pessimism is sometimes, but not always, combined with hope. In any event, hope that "something" will happen to prolong the life of the community enables some Islanders to cope with their situation:

I do tend to stick my head in the sand fairly thoroughly and hope that one way or another we can stay and even if we have to adapt to some very different conditions and perhaps an evolving community, that it'll all last long enough...until the kids are fairly independent and then...a fairly drastic change wouldn't be so traumatic anyway.

Hope, I suppose, that there will be some resolution to it [prevents people from moving]. They just don't want to give it up.

Just as in the old days, belief in the justice of their cause (and its ultimate success) continues to give comfort to some Islanders (and inspires them to keep fighting to prevent the destruction of their homes):

Islanders have become convinced that they actually do have a case, whereas before they didn't really believe they did. They've realized that, because they've had to go out to explain to people [in the Spring Campaign of 1974] why they think they have a case. In order to explain to someone else, they've had to think it out for themselves. The writing of the [1973 City] report brought to light a lot of the issues and, well, it's just made people think it over, I guess.

Some Islanders are fundamentally optimistic about the future either because they could not cope with the stress if they were not optimistic; or because they genuinely do not believe that Metro would really destroy their homes; or because they feel that Islanders are strong enough to resist the threat:

Oh, we'd always have these TIRA meetings, and we'd always get optimistic. __is a pessimist. He says, "Oh, it's not going to work. It's not going to work." I go into these meetings and get all optimistic. And then they go to vote [at Metro Council] and he turns out right and it's terrible. I'm always
optimistic. I'd die otherwise. I couldn't survive.

Oh, morale's incredible [summer of 1974]. It's incredible. You would never even dream that they were people who have suffered one defeat after another. There they are all ready to go in again. Nobody's negative. Everybody's talking about, "We'll do this to the house. We'll have to winterize the attic. We're gonna do this, that..." It's just as if life is going on as normal, no change, nothing. And they're all ready to get in there again, get on with the fight for survival.

Morale is fine [1975]. I think people are not down because I think, if they don't feel it consciously, subconsciously they must feel that nobody's going to come and get them.

I just do not believe that in 1975, with the economic situation the way it is, with inflation, with the government, with the political situation, where you've got housing as an issue, that's mentioned in the papers every single day, rent controls, I just think that any politician that even suggested coming over here, and ripping down houses and putting people out of their homes, especially when the Metro government is raising taxes in the City and they're crying poor and they need to spend money over here like a hole in the head. I just think they'd be committing political suicide. I have the greatest confidence that nothing is going to happen.

Finally, some Islanders have coped with the stress and uncertainty by becoming angry and defiant and by resisting the outside threat. The political battle itself is one way of coping with stress and uncertainty (although as noted earlier, the political battle itself creates its own forms of stress):

The way that we've coped with stress most recently is just to dig in our heels and say there's no stress to cope with because we're going to win. It is stressful, though. It's still very stressful. Somehow, though, it's been much easier since I personally realized that my greatest ally was myself and my own state of mind and my own sureness of wanting to remain. And own sort of sense that they are screwing us. The whole sort of cap-in-hand mentality, as far as I'm concerned, has disappeared, for myself. I think that, having gone through the various fancy dances that we have at Metro Council—each one of those Metro Council meetings has made me more angry, more determined—and convinced me even more that the kind of idiots who run politics, bar a few, are
not going to screw this community. They are stupid; they are, with a few exceptions, have very few scruples. It's all one great big power game and I don't see why a thing that I think is as viable and as precious as this community should be screwed by a bunch of stupid, power-hungry men. And I think it took each Metro Council meeting and the ludicrousness, the insanity of each of them, each one of them has convinced people more that they know what they're up against, that these little tin gods are for the birds. I think that's what, if one can use the word, "radicalized", I think that those meetings did more than anything else ever did. Because we went to them with a very fair case. The cards are stacked on our side, as far as I'm concerned. It's all just one great, big power game and I feel very defiant about that power game, because when I see the people who are in power, I don't see why they should do it to a place like this.

e. Children:

Island children have certainly not been unaffected by or unaware of the Island's uncertain future. Peter Cridland discusses some of the effects that he has noticed:

It definitely affects the kids. I think the kids are politicized to a far greater extent, I am sure, than the typical... well, the public school ones are untypical. I can still remember an incident at the school one year when we went to the, I guess, the annual open house and the kid's art work and so on was on display. We were surprised to see a recurrent theme among the kid's paintings and works was burning houses and similar dramatic sorts of scenes. And we thought about it for awhile, but then it was obvious after a little thought, that they'd seen houses being burnt down on their way to school, the last few houses along the Lakeshore, which were very, crudely wrecked and their remains burnt and they really made a very deep impression on the kids. In fact, kids were coming home and saying, I think our kids came home and said, rather anxiously, "We will get a warning, won't we, before they come and burn our house down?" and that sort of thing is, of course, moving. A strong impression. And the kids still constantly see items here, things on the television and so on. Whether they've got a very good grasp or not, they're very well aware of the facts of the situation, and it's a constant fact of life and it's stressful.

Peter Holt relates the following rather poignant anecdote about a little girl who moved to Vancouver because her mother could not stand the uncertainty of living on the Island any longer:

I'd like to show you a picture of Charlotte Parsons the day they were leaving for Vancouver. Charlotte was, I guess she was about nine. Ursula, who is a photographer, was walking by when Charlotte
was drawing a picture of the skyline and of the Bay and Ursula took a photograph of her and her picture and the skyline in the background and got to talking to Charlotte. Charlotte explained how they were going to Vancouver the next day and so Ursula asked her if she would write a little story about the way she felt about the Island... so, that she could put it with her picture. When Ursula went by [the house] at 10 o'clock they had already gone, but this little note was pinned to the door. It's just a perfect example of people leaving the Island and why, under what sort of pressure: "Sorry, we've left for Vancouver, but here is my story. I have lived on the Island for seven years and although I have travelled around the world, I think the Island is the best place in it. We have to move to Vancouver now, though. My mom says it was because we're never sure whether we're going to be on the Island for another ten years or another week. Your friend, Charlotte Parsons." Can you see this, in this little picture, that little picture is a social documentary that she's drawn. There's so much life. There's three birds in the water and there's all kinds of boats and motorboats, all sorts of sailboats and Campeau's buildings and a Canadian flag on the ferry boat... I think it's a big strain on a lot of people.

Maxine Wilson tells the following funny, but also moving, story about how her little seven year old daughter was well aware of the political situation (or its broad outlines) and was determined to do her part to help save her home:

I wasn't there for the meeting [at Metro Council on May 31, 1973], because Chris was sick. I'd taken her to the doctor's and she had scarlet fever. And she'd given the doctor a hard time. He told her to go back home and to bed and she said no, she couldn't; she had to go and picket City Hall to save her house! She had a temperature of 104, so he told her she could picket for half an hour.

Several years later, 11-year old Melissa Amer spoke on behalf of Island children at a July 1, 1980 rally when Islanders were facing imminent eviction and destruction:

I have lived on the Island for ten years and I want to live here for another ten and another and another. This community is about 150 years old. My great grandfather built our house, He passed it on to my grandmother and she passed it on to my dad. If we get evicted, God forbid, I will have no place to live. There are 200 kids on the Island who will have nowhere to go. Last year, ten babies were born here and there will be six more coming. Our school is on Hanlan's Point—grades 1–8. Most of the kids go there
... I have a message to Chairman Godfrey and the Metro Council from all the Island kids: Please let us stay. Thank you.

A few weeks later, on July 28, 1980, the Islanders were put on "Red Alert" in anticipation of the arrival of the York County Sheriff to deliver notices of eviction. Even eleven and twelve year-olds joined "squads" and stopped cars and strangers to see if the sheriff was trying to penetrate the community defenses without detection. Finally, at two o'clock in the afternoon, arrangements were made for TIRA representatives to meet with the Sheriff at the Algonquin Bridge at 3:30. This news was flashed quickly to all Islanders via the CB network and word of mouth. Even a little six-year old was well aware of the situation and alerted an adult passer-by, "The Sheriff's coming to the Bridge at 3:30." At the 3:30 meeting, where the TIRA representatives were backed by a crowd of Islanders of all ages and descriptions, linking arms and singing, "Just like a tree that's standing by the water, we shall not be moved", another small Islander of perhaps 2½ said nervously to her mother, "I don't want to move." Her mother reassured her calmly, "We're not moving, dear. That's why we're standing here." On this occasion, the Sheriff agreed not to deliver the eviction notices, pending Islanders' legal request to be granted the right to appeal the Ontario Supreme Court's recent decision that the writs were valid.

In conclusion, Islanders' strong sense of change—notably their fear of the destruction of the Island as they know and love it—has had both positive and negative results.
ii. Sense of Change - Defense of Place:

Since the major reason for Islanders' having a strong sense of change has been a long series of outside political threats to radically change and even destroy the Island as they know it, this chapter has already discussed at length some of the links between sense of change and defense of place. It has discussed, for example, the existence of a "community under siege" (i.e., the notion that the outside political threat of change and Islanders' collective response to that threat have over the years strengthened their sense of community). It has discussed various other (frequently negative) effects of facing such threatened change, with its attendant uncertainty (including the human costs not only of forced change in the form of losing houses and moving from the Island, but also the anxiety, tension and weariness associated with becoming politically active in the Island defense). And it has discussed various mechanisms Islanders have adopted for coping with the stress associated with forced change and/or fear of forced change (including the idea that for some Islanders, engaging in the political battle itself has been a way of coping with stress and uncertainty). Several other reciprocal links between sense of change and defense of place are discussed here.

a. General Motivation:

There is no reason to believe that Islanders are inherently more interested in municipal politics than Mainlanders. If anything, were they not under the threat of forced change and imminent destruction, they are both physically and psychologically distant from the Mainland.¹

¹For example, Sense of Environment: "Urban Proximity-Pastoral Retreat" (pp. 276-278) and "Insularity: Physical and Political" (pp. 292-293).
For example, Peter Atkinson commented at a TIRA public meeting during the 1974 Spring Campaign to reverse the Metro Council decision of December 11, 1973, "We're not much interested in expressways and they [Metro residents] are not much interested in us." and as noted earlier, Alderman John Sewell commented somewhat scornfully in 1975 that "one of the staggering things one person told me [is], 'We don't understand anything about politics....We live on an island'." But, as discussions of defense of place have already indicated, Islanders have been under extreme threat of enforced change and, of necessity, have become politically involved. "Islanders," the TIRA Newsletter commented wryly in April 1974, "are interested in politics in the same way that a man about to be stabbed is interested in knives."

Study of the long political history of the Island reveals that Islanders' strong sense of change—i.e., their fear of the radical alteration or even loss of the Island as they know and love it—has been the major stimulus for their political battles to save their homes, their community and their special place from destruction. Without that threat—that fear of change—there would, of course, have been no need to take action.

As earlier discussions of defense of place have indicated, Islanders have a long history of responding to threats to radically change their place. In the summer of 1937, for example, residents of West Island Drive received eviction notices (to make way for the Island Airport). Within a week, West Island Drive leaseholders had held a special meeting and appointed a Special Committee "to protect and

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1 Quoted in full on p. 293.

2 TIRA Newsletter, April 11, 1974.
further the interests of all leaseholders in so far as the airport site effects [sic] them." The West Island Drive Association was born. In 1947, the City Planning Board issued its proposal, which would have changed the Island radically by building a tunnel, an Island Boulevard, parking lots, highrise apartments and hotels, and demolishing existing houses (Map 21). Islanders responded by forming the Inter-Island Council in 1948, and in 1949 by opposing the City Planning Board's Official Plan recommendations and issuing their own plan, which would have preserved (and tried to improve on) the status quo. (Map 22) In 1951, the City Planning Board and the Harbour Commission issued their Joint Proposal (Map 23), which, again, would have radically changed the Island. The IIC, as discussed elsewhere, strongly opposed these changes and, after Mayor Allan Lamport made the most extreme proposal to change the Island (by not only allowing cars, but also dockyards and warehousing) in 1953 (Map 24), Islanders issued another plan similar to the 1949 one.

During the 1950's and early 1960's, Islanders (as discussed on pp. 287 ff.) continued to oppose proposals to allow motor vehicles on the Island. But, as is discussed below, they did not take much action to oppose the Metro park development itself. Then, during the mid- to late 1960's (with the support of Alderman David Rotenberg), Islanders fought the fierce, but ultimately unsuccessful, Lakeshore battle, which ended in 1968. Faced with the need to gain another lease extension (by August 1970), the residents on Ward's and Algonquin formed TIRA in 1969 to organize the defense of the eastern end of the Island. In the early 1970's, Islanders gained additional temporary extensions.

1Minutes, West Island Drive Association, June 27, 1937.

But, on December 11, 1973, when Metro Council finally refused to grant an extension beyond August 31, 1974, the nature of the political battle changed significantly. Since they were no longer covered by the protection of even a short lease extension, Islanders' sense of change and threat increased dramatically. In response, Islanders, as discussed elsewhere, organized and carried out their massive Spring Campaign to change the Metro decision. Although they failed to win their political goal, they succeeded in keeping Islanders on the Island and in laying the groundwork for future defense actions. The launching of their legal defense of place actions in the summer of 1974 lessened the immediate sense of change and threat until October 1978, when the possible legal actions had almost run their course and Islanders voted to reenter the political forum in order to try to pressure the Province to transfer the residential areas from the Metro level to the City or to otherwise preserve the community. Once again, Islanders' sense of change and threat was extreme. It has essentially remained extreme since that time, except perhaps for a minor reduction when the Province asked Metro not to execute the writs of possession while the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Thomas Wells, acted as a mediator between the City and Metro. When these negotiations failed,

1 They were still well aware, however, that ultimately they would have to win a political solution and that the legal defense was only a temporary measure.

2 Metro had won valid writs of possession for the Island houses. There was one last possibility of appeal, which, Island lawyers felt, would only have gained, at best, a very short extension. Island residents, therefore, decided that, with an upcoming municipal election and a minority Provincial government (in which both opposition parties favored retaining the Island community), the time was ripe to return to the political forum.
the Province introduced a Bill that would have allowed Islanders to remain, but not to sell or transfer their houses. As they moved or died, the houses would be transferred to Metro, which could proceed with its plans. Eventually, the Island houses and community would be gone. Islanders (as well as the City and both provincial opposition parties), rejected the Bill. The sense of change and threat reached new heights when Metro Council voted in February 1980 to proceed with evicting Islanders if the Province did not pass the aforementioned Bill by June 30, 1980. Throughout this period, Islanders' sense of change and threat remained high and TIRA based its appeals to the community to fight (and not to accept the "slow death" Bill, as it came to be known) on this feeling:

The defense of our community is everyone's responsibility. We will stand united and in one, strong voice yell, "WE WON'T GO!" Our strength and our power lies in our unity.1

YES, WE ALL ARE THE HOME GUARD! We will stand and defend our homes, our neighbor's homes and our community.2

TO WIN WE MUST STAND FIRM IN THE FACE OF THEIR THREATS.3

A large majority of Islanders continued to vote to reject the Province's Bill and, on the last day of the session (June 19, 1980), the Provincial government announced that it would not bring the Bill forward for second reading. It also announced the formation of a commission (under lawyer Barry Swadron) to look into the issue and asked both the City and Metro to appoint two representatives. The City obliged. But, on

June 24, Metro Council voted simply to "receive" Mr. Wells' request. It did not agree to appoint representatives and it did not agree to refrain from enforcing the writs until after the Commission reported in the fall. With Metro preparing to enforce the writs (after the June 30 deadline), Islanders organized a major rally of support on July 1, 1980, which attracted 2000+ supporters, continued to assert that they would "fight to the bitter end", as Elizabeth Amer put it,¹ and continued to pursue all political and legal lines of defense open to them.

b. Threat and Defense of Place:

As the above discussion indicates, Islanders' strong sense of change, based on the recognition of the existence of outside threats, has, over the years stimulated their defenses of place. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized again ² that the existence of a threat to change a place is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for defense of place. The threat must also be perceived as a severe threat. For example, it is notable that even as bulldozers were demolishing houses at Hanlan's Point, Centre Island and eastward along the Lakeshore Avenue, most residents at the eastern end of the Island—on Ward's and Algonquin—remained politically inactive and uninvolved. As discussed earlier (pp. 381-385), many of these Islanders simply did not believe that they were in danger, because they did not believe that the Metro

¹ "Although our policy is passive, non-violent resistance," she went on, "I think in the event of a confrontation some people could be hurt." Quoted in Patricia Hucy and Virginia Corner, "Island Plans Resistance 'People Could Be Hurt'," Star, June 25, 1980.

park plan would be completed. Mary McLaughlin, who was active during the Lakeshore battles of the 1960's (and who moved to Algonquin Island after the Lakeshore house was taken), commented on this lack of involvement:

At that time [of the Lakeshore battles] the Algonquin and Ward's people were really taking no part in the battle at all. I was telling people that we're your first line of defense; if the Lakeshore stays, you will automatically stay; if the Lakeshore goes, then you're threatened. But, you know, people don't realize these things until they really sort of come upon them and they didn't really get involved at all. I mean, we really fought our own battle.

Beyond this, even if the threat is perceived as a severe one, other conditions may still prevent people from taking action in defense of place. For example, as discussed elsewhere, after the decision to create a Metro park was made (in the mid-1950's) and even when houses were being torn down around them, Islanders in the late 1950's and early 1960's did not take strong, concerted group action to halt the demolitions or change the plan.¹ Even during the later 1960's and early 1970's when Islanders were objecting to demolitions and trying to gain extensions, they did not mount an all out attack on the principle of the park plan and did not argue for permanent status (as opposed to temporary extension until the land was needed for

¹Some individuals, like architect Ross Anderson, did try, unsuccessfully. He developed his own plan, asked Metro to restudy the matter, and even took the issue to the Ontario Municipal Board, which refused to hear it because of a technicality. See for example, "Island Housing Plan Described By Architect," Globe and Mail, May 4, 1962. Only once during the 1950's did Island residents object as a group to Metro about the demolitions. Forty families on Centre Island did obtain a short extension in 1958. See, for example, Minutes of Metro Planning and Parks Committee, 1958, June 19, 1958, Item #78; and Minutes Metro Planning and Parks Committee, 1959, February 12, 1959, Item #20.
parkland).\(^1\) The political environment was not supportive of strong challenges being made. For example, in the 1950's and 1960's Islanders faced strong political and bureaucratic opposition (notably the first Metro Chairman Fred "Big Daddy" Gardiner and Metro Parks Commissioner Tommy Thompson) and they were more deferential toward those in authority than they were a decade later.\(^2\) By contrast, in the late 1960's, as discussed earlier, the citizens' movement grew on the mainland, giving rise to a new political assertiveness and a new sense that residents could, in fact, "fight City Hall". This spirit certainly influenced Islanders' own decisions regarding the defense of the Island. In sum, therefore, the political context of the threat must be conducive to people's taking action.

c. Making Threatened Change Visible:

At various points in the defense of the Island, Island leaders have deliberately set about heightening Islanders' sense of change and making the Metro threat as clear as possible to both Islanders and Mainlanders in order to spur them to take action. For example, at the public forum in March 1974 during the Spring Campaign, TIRA spokes- person, Bill Metcalfe, introduced a powerful slide show of bulldozers destroying Island homes in the late 1960's by saying:

I would like you now to join with me in [seeing] the destruction of part of our community and listen to Ruth Putt describe what happened at Centre Island and what's going to happen to us unless this decision is reversed.

Islanders then showed a series of pictures of Island houses being

\(^1\)See discussion, Sense of Control: "Attitudes Toward Authority, Politics and Politicians", pp. 340 ff.

\(^2\)See Ibid.
demolished and played a tape recording of Ruth Putt describing the sights, sounds and emotions which accompanied this destruction. ¹

It was an extremely vivid depiction of the threat they were faced with and it was an extremely effective way to demonstrate to the politicians the general public and Islanders themselves what the real effect, in human terms, of the Metro decision to demolish the houses was, and would be again if the December 11, 1973 decision to raze the remaining houses was carried out. This presentation was greeted by thoughtful silence. (See Illustration 33.)

Later in that Spring Campaign, Islanders organized a Spring Festival (which was never held because of wet weather). It was supposed to have a very strong political impact (politicians from all levels of government were invited). Among the planned attractions was a "Bulldozerama" and a "Bulldozer Day" preview—"If it won't happen, but if it does, this is the way it will happen."² Both of these were designed to detail the political situation and graphically display to people on both sides of the issue what was likely to happen if the Spring Campaign failed (standing at the barricades and/or demolishing the houses). This was right in line with the advice given earlier in April by urbanologist Jane Jacobs:

[U]se the Festival to demonstrate your determination to stay. The politicians don't believe you are determined to stay. Make it absolutely clear to them that you are. Suppose you had a work party putting up barricades. Get city visitors to help you


ILLUSTRATION 33

MAKING THREATENED CHANGE VISIBLE

Source: Save Island Homes (April, 1974), p. 22
put them up at the Festival.¹

More recently, in October 1978, when they reentered the political forum after having been protected for several years by the legal actions, Islanders finally did do exactly the sort of thing Ms. Jacobs had recommended earlier. They held "war games". Actors pretending to be the Sheriff and his men staged a landing on the Island and the Island defense system was tested: a recently installed air raid siren atop the WIA Clubhouse screamed out its warning; the CB network beamed out a constant report of what was happening; and a somewhat frantic "Home Guard" chased after the intruders and practiced acts of passive resistance to prevent the Sheriff from gaining vacant possession of the houses. In addition to testing their defense systems and reinforcing their own solidarity and determination to stay, Islanders' "war games" received extensive publicity and firmly planted in the minds of politicians (as well as of the general public) a graphic image of just what unpleasantness would follow any decision to try to evict Islanders.² Islanders have continued to carefully nurture and reinforce this image.³

¹At the same meeting, organizer Dale Perkins observed that "dramatizing our position was for a dual purpose—to win here [on the Island] as well as out there." Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough Committees, April 28, 1974, pp. 1, 5.

²See for example, Barbara Keddy, "Defenders Triumph As 'Sheriff' Lands To Evict Islanders," Globe and Mail, October 30, 1978.

³For example, "Island Plans Resistance - 'People Could Be Hurt'," op. cit.; and Alden Baker, "Islanders Taking Lessons In Obstructing Sheriff," Globe and Mail, July 1, 1980.
In conclusion, this chapter has discussed the positive and negative aspects of Islanders' strong sense of change, the marked impact sense of change has exercised on each of the other components of sense of place and the strong interactive relationships between sense of change and defense of place.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This final chapter draws together and summarizes the major conclusions and contributions of this study, many of which have been discussed in the preceding eight chapters. These are discussed under four headings: methods and approach; sense of place; sense of place—defense of place; and approach to planning and development. In addition, since this is an exploratory study and raises many new questions, this final chapter also identifies some fruitful avenues for future research.

i. Methods and Approach:

In contemporary humanistic geography we profess concern with probing beyond the superficial, with revealing the meanings, values, and intentionalities permeating existence in space. Yet there is a regrettable paucity of empirical work in this realm. It is time for more of us to venture forth into the field. We can contemplate our navels only for so long.

All formal scientific geography that is concerned with the relative location and description of phenomena and regions presupposes a geography of immediate experiences of the lived world. Such an experiential geography is differentiated into places according to our experiences of particular physical settings and landscapes and our intentions towards them. This is an authentic geography, a geography of places which are felt and understood for what they are—that is, as symbolic or functional centres of life for both individuals and communities. It is a geography that is manifest in a diversity of

man-made forms and landscapes, forms which are in accord with their physical and cultural settings, which have humanness in their scale and their symbols. Above all it is a geography which is primarily the product of the efforts of insiders, those living in and committed to places, and a geography which declares itself only to those insiders or those willing and able to experience places 'empathetically'.

By investigating one phenomenon of the lived world, sense of place, this study seeks to make just such empirical contributions to experiential and humanistic geography.

Sense of place—i.e., the feeling of belonging in and having a deep emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning—is essentially an individual and subjective phenomenon, which can only be adequately investigated by studying particular individuals and how they relate to particular, personally-significant places. Although, by identifying the major components of sense of place and the dialectical links between sense of place and defense of place, this study seeks to generalize beyond the particular people and particular place under scrutiny, it also emphasizes that such generalizations must remain firmly grounded in individual experience of the lived world. Sense of place, like experience of place generally, is also a multi-faceted phenomenon, which is built-up from various modes of experience: it is formed not only by visual, but also by auditory, olfactory, tactile, kinaesthetic and even taste sensations; and it is fashioned not only by direct perception, but also by memory, fantasy, vicarious experience and so on. Any study of sense of place, therefore, must try to tap these various modes of experience. In addition, it takes time to know a place and to develop a sense of place, both

because the place changes and because the person in the place changes over time (over the course of the day, the year and the years). Any study of sense of place, therefore, must be sensitive to and take into consideration such changes over time. Finally, sense of place is a relatively unexplored phenomenon. Although writers on the subject have illustrated its importance and have drawn examples from many cultures, many periods of time, many parts of the world and many types of places, there has been a singular and regrettable lack of detailed studies of sense of place among people in one place. Because of the nature of sense of place, this study adopts, as much as possible, an experiential perspective—i.e., attempts to understand the phenomena of sense of place and defense of place from the perspective of the experiencing individuals, using their own words and actions as clues to how they relate to their particular place. In addition, in order to explore and understand the complex, holistic, multi-faceted nature of sense of place, this study presents a detailed case study of a particular group of individuals (Toronto Islanders) and how they relate to a particular place (Toronto Island).

In order to satisfy these conditions and to accomplish these ends, the posture of "empathetic insider" was adopted; individual Islanders were the focus of observation, interviewing and document analysis); and a research design which permitted the data itself to suggest new themes and original ideas was formulated and observed.

Notable among the methods employed was participant observation, a method that has been used extensively by anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and others, but only relatively infrequently by geographers. In order to approach understanding the Island from the
posture of an "empathetic insider", to study Islanders' sense of place and defense of place from an experiential point of view and generally to understand the full range of meaning that the Island holds for Islanders, it was deemed essential to experience intensely Island life at first-hand (under all conditions, at all times of day and at all times of year) and to come to know a variety of Islanders at a deeper, more personal level than would have been possible by other methods. In addition, in an exploratory study like the present one, a flexible, open approach was deemed essential—one that would encourage the discovery of new ideas and generate new hypotheses. Flexibility and ability to get close to the data (to get closer to the subjects' view of the world) are two frequently mentioned advantages of participant observation. The participant observation conducted for this study occurred in two phases: living on the Island for a period of several months one summer; and extensive visiting of the Island over a period of several years (at all times of year, under all kinds of conditions) to observe meetings, interview Islanders, attend special events and so on. The potential advantages (such as flexibility and intensity of experience), disadvantages (such as possibility of bias and length of time required), and problems (such as entry, data processing and stress) associated with this type of research were discussed at length earlier. For researchers interested in studying sense of place and other phenomena of the lived-world, participant observation should be seriously considered.

A second research method deemed essential to this project was extensive, relatively unstructured, formal, in-depth interviewing— a method more familiar to geographic researchers than participant.
observation. These interviews (with Islanders and politicians) were a vital complement to the participant observation activity, because they enabled countless leads to be followed up in more depth and with greater precision (since all interviews were tape-recorded); because they enabled various observations and various comments made by other members of the community to be corroborated; and because they enabled the research to proceed in areas that would have been impossible to research by participant observation alone (e.g., Island history or private behaviour or privately-held opinions about sensitive topics). The possible advantages, disadvantages (such as lack of representativeness, truthfulness or accuracy) and problems (such as data processing, effect on Islanders' morale and the "conduit problem") associated with this type of research were also discussed at length earlier.

In conclusion, this study attempts to contribute to geographic research not only by its substantive findings (summarized below), but also by its methods and approach.

ii. Sense of Place:

This study of sense of place among Toronto Islanders presents copious evidence (which supplements the evidence provided by other writers on the subject) that sense of place is a phenomenon of importance. Throughout this study, evidence is presented that Toronto Islanders do in fact feel a sense of place. Not only their words (which are quoted extensively), but their actions indicate this: their personal reactions to the destruction of former homes and parts of the Island that used to be inhabited (e.g., illness following upon being forced to move, refusal to return to the site of former homes, breaking down when revisiting the empty sites), their refusal to move in more recent
years, and their long fight to remain on the Island, all indicate that many Islanders do experience a strong attachment to the Island—a strong sense of place. It seems clear, therefore, that where it exists, sense of place describes not a superficial, but a deeply felt and deeply significant link between people and the places they live and or experience. To destroy callously that link (e.g., by eradicating the place as it is known and loved) risks creating serious emotional, social, psychological and even physical health problems. (See also "Approach To Planning and Development" below.)

Beyond this, this detailed study of sense of place among individuals in one particular place concludes that sense of place among these Toronto Islanders is composed of six major components: sense of history, sense of identity, sense of community, sense of environment, sense of control and sense of change. Devoting one chapter to each component, this study describes each component, provides evidence that Toronto Islanders do indeed experience each component, analyzes the Island and Islanders in terms of each component and analyzes the dialectical links between each component and defense of place. (See below "Sense of Place – Defense of Place" for discussion of this latter point.) This study, therefore, demonstrates (by constant reference to detailed observations and comments from individual Islanders) how each general component of sense of place may be applied and analyzed in a particular place and may serve as a guide to conducting future studies of sense of place.

Sense of history is defined as the awareness of and appreciation for the history of a particular place—the people, locations, events, legends and place names significant for that particular location.
Every place, it is argued, has its own history, and knowledge of that history provides a strong link between people and places. In the case of the Toronto Island, that place history is very colourful and distinctive and the Islanders of today are remarkably aware of at least the major facts and events in Island history. That history is outlined from the time of the Indians and Mrs. Simcoe (1793) through to the time of the last major physical destruction (of the Lakeshore houses in 1968). Since that time, the physical character of the Island has remained relatively unchanged. Whether, because their history is so colourful, Islanders' sense of history is, in fact, stronger than that felt by people in other places (and/or by people who manifestly feel a sense of place about other places) could only be determined by future comparative research. Similarly, whether sense of place could be fostered by making place history known, cannot be determined by this study alone.

Sense of identity is defined as the ability of a place to contribute to a person's sense of who he or she is. The sense of identity derived from intimately known places, it is argued, may be the most fundamental, least consciously known, component of sense of place and loss of a particular place to which a person has developed a strong attachment may deal a strong blow to his or her sense of identity, happiness and ability to function. In the case of the Toronto Island, Islanders know that they are "Islanders" and some have come to appreciate the importance of this to them only when they have been faced with losing that Island status. On the Island, the sense of identity has been fostered by such things as the clear boundaries (created by the water), the physical contrast between the Island and the City, the
nature of Island houses (which can be and are decorated and moulded to reflect the personalities of the occupants), numerous personal associations, and participating in a strong group identity (created, for example, by sharing experiences with other Islanders that are unique, or at least highly characteristic of Island life).

Sense of community is defined as the feeling that one belongs to and is a part of a group whose members share some common ties, interact to accomplish certain goals and occupy a particular area which is significant and meaningful to them. It is not argued that all communities must have a territorial base, but only that, in the case of a sense of place, the group is grounded in physical space. The place acts not only as a location, but also as a significant and meaningful focus for the sense of community. Islanders, the evidence indicates, have a very strong sense of community, which has been created not only by the outside threat of destruction and the battle to defend the Island (which have indeed drawn Islanders together into a "community under siege"); but also by having a more widespread need for mutual aid (not only in political affairs, but also in more prosaic aspects of day-to-day living) and by sharing a distinctive environmental lifestyle (i.e., patterns of behaviour that are influenced by environmental conditions like the near-by park, the ferry, the weather, the floods, the carless streets, the lack of stores and so on). Islanders have a rich formal and informal community life, which was briefly described. Such specific factors as clear boundaries, relative social and physical isolation, inconveniences (like lack of entertainment and shopping facilities and organizing around a ferry schedule), the boat and other public meeting places, seasonal rhythms
(notably the formative influence of winter), the carless environment, community values (such as self-reliance, out-of-the-mainstream, conservator society, lifestyle over workstyle and social mix), images of the city, suburbia, and small town are all analyzed to show how they contribute to Islanders' sense of community. Many ideas for future research could be culled from these sections (e.g., whether and in what ways isolation or neutral meeting places or carless environments or seasonal rhythms or contrasting social and physical images contribute to the creation of a sense of community among people in other places). Finally, the analysis of sense of community on the Island also identifies various social sub-groups.

Every place has a special combination of environmental features, such as sights, sounds, smells, kinaesthetics, patterns and rhythms; but, it is argued, not every place elicits a strong sense of environment. Sense of environment is defined as a deep awareness of and strong positive attachment to these distinctive physical features. The Toronto Island has a particularly rich and distinctive physical environment and Islanders are highly sensitive to their surroundings—not only to the large features (like water or sky or weather), but also to the more subtle nuances (like the pitch of roofs or the curve of streets or the feel of the boardwalk). Many people seem to have moved there specifically because of the environmental attractions and, while other aspects of Island life may become equally important over time (e.g., sense of community), the physical environment always remains important. Several reasons why Islanders are so peculiarly attuned to their environment are identified: for example, the simple fact that it is an island, the distinctiveness of the individual features, the
marked physical contrast with the City, the closeness to the natural environment and the lack of cars (the lack of cars—with their fumes, noise and physical presence—and the need to walk or bicycle both foster more intimate contact with and awareness of surrounding environmental features) are all important. A wide range of environmental features and experiences are identified and described—both natural (such as water, sky, storm's, seasons, wildlife, etc.) and artificial (such as houses, streets, scale, general lay-out, etc.). In addition, Islanders' images of the City and suburbia are analyzed in such a way as to clarify their own sense of environment. Finally, the importance of place names, "hidden landscapes" (i.e., memories of places which have been radically changed or destroyed but which still contribute to present sense of environment) and childhood experiences to the formation of sense of environment are also discussed. As with sense of community, many ideas for future research can be discovered in these sections (e.g., the degree of importance of physical contrast or carless environments or proximity to nature for the development of a sense of environment; the nature of "islandness"; the relation of childhood experience to later environmental values and sense of environment, and so on).

**Sense of control** is defined as the feeling that one's relationship with a particular place contributes to one's sense of independence, competence and self-sufficiency. Where sense of control exists, it is argued, people are engaged in an active, creative relationship with their environment, rather than a passive, dependent, even negative relationship, which, far from contributing to their sense of control, may actually detract from it. It is not argued that life is
necessarily easy in situations where sense of control exists. In fact, life (as in the bush or on the frontier or at sea) may be manifestly difficult. But, the ability to survive under harsh circumstances may itself contribute to a sense of control. Nor is it argued that people who experience a sense of control have complete or even extensive freedom to act. But it is argued that within limited areas of action (such as freedom to decorate or change their living environment, freedom to make decisions about the use of various community facilities), people sense that they have a measure of control over their lives. In the case of the Toronto Island, Islanders place a high value on independence and self-reliance and have expressed a strong desire for a sense of control. This desire for, and attainment of, a sense of control is illustrated by their attitudes toward use of their houses. (Island houses are flexible, owned for the most part by Island residents, and in constant need of repair; Islanders can and do change their home environments to suit their needs and desires and many take pride in being competent to do their own repairs and in exercising control over this aspect of their lives); their attitudes toward inconveniences (some Islanders positively relish the inconveniences of Island life, take pride in overcoming them and see them as powerful inducements to being self-sufficient, independent people); their attitudes toward forming a non-profit housing association (Islanders place such a high priority on homeownership, which many regard as the cornerstone of their sense of control, that they have consistently opposed any housing proposal which would eliminate their homeownership); and their attitudes toward community control (Islanders, over the years, have had a history of identifying various social,
political, educational, recreational, and other needs within the community and of organizing themselves to deal collectively with them). Although a number of aspects of Island life contribute to Islanders' sense of control, some obvious aspects of Island life drastically reduce it, notably the political situation—the fact that Metro, not the Islanders, owns the land and has a policy to clear it to expand the Métro park. Nevertheless, in spite of this political situation, many Islanders continue to prefer not to own the land, but to leave it in public ownership (so long as the policy of clearing the land is changed). Land ownership, therefore, does not appear to be a prerequisite for sense of control. Further investigation of this point could well prove fruitful, especially because of its implications for public policy.

Present sense of place is affected both by one's view of the past and by one's view of the future. Sense of change is defined as awareness of actual past loss of place or fear of future change or loss. Both the actual and the potential change, it is argued, may heighten attachment to and appreciation of a particular place and may affect each of the other components of sense of place. The change involved may range from modification of the physical or social environment through to total destruction or loss of place. In the case of the Toronto Island, many Islanders have witnessed major changes on the Island, including the actual loss of homes and former communities. These losses have given rise to some of the most moving expressions of sense of place. Since the last major demolitions in 1968, all remaining Islanders have been under the threat of destruction. This acute sense of future change or loss, therefore, is the major focus of
discussion. The Toronto Island, it is emphasized, has been a "community under siege" for many years because of the outside threat of destruction. The most frequently mentioned positive aspect of the threatened change and Islanders' consequent resistance to the threat has been the fact that Islanders have become a stronger, more closely-knit community than they might have been otherwise. Other effects of the uncertainty associated with the threatened change have been less positive: housing conditions have deteriorated (because many Islanders have been reluctant to make major investments in houses they might lose shortly); and the human costs associated with both actual loss (i.e., being forced to move) and threatened loss (including the general uncertainty as well as actual involvement in the political campaigns) have been very real (ranging from weariness and tension through to emotional distress, serious illness and perhaps even death, according to reports from Islanders). Islanders have adopted a variety of methods of coping with the uncertainty and stress associated with the threatened change, which range from moving (although there has been no wholesale exodus) and buying a house elsewhere (although these people do not want to live elsewhere) through to adopting a variety of attitudes (e.g., refusing to believe that Metro would carry out its plan; ignoring the situation; being optimistic, pessimistic or fatalistic; being angry and defiant and resisting the change). Finally, Island children have also been affected by, and well aware of, the uncertain future and their reactions are also discussed briefly.

These six, interrelated components, then, appear to describe fairly comprehensively Toronto Islanders' sense of place and help to clarify the multitudinous important links between people and places.
Beyond this, the literature cited indicates that these six components also seem to apply to other people and other places. The examples presented here are drawn from different scales, different environmental types, different cultures and different eras. There is good reason to suggest, therefore, that they apply not only to the experience of sense of place on the Toronto Island, but to sense of place more generally. Whether these six components do describe sense of place elsewhere, however, (whether, for example, there are major omissions) can only be ascertained by additional research (as discussed below).

Furthermore, although these six components are evident and strongly felt by Toronto Islanders as a group, not every Islander who experiences sense of place necessarily feels equally strongly about each component (e.g., some Islanders might have a stronger sense of environment than sense of community and others might have a stronger sense of community than environment). As emphasized throughout, the individual's sense of place is simply and fundamentally, individual. But identifying the six components does facilitate describing and understanding these individual sentiments. Similarly, although examples of each of these components may be identified in other places, this does not necessarily mean that all six apply equally well to every other, non-Toronto Island situation. Lighthouse keepers, mountain shepherds or frontier pioneers may have little sense of community, but a strong sense of environment; residents of an urban neighbourhood under threat of redevelopment or of a small village on the urban fringe of a growing metropolis may have little sense of control but a strong sense of community, and so on.

Whether and in what way these six major components of sense of
place are applicable to other situations can only be determined by additional, comparative case studies. But, using these six components as a general scheme to guide the research might well facilitate the description and comparison of different people and their special places (studying, for example, in what ways the sense of place of residents in village A compares with the sense of place of residents in village B or urban neighbourhood C; or comparing the sense of place of residents in small town D over time, at times X, Y and Z, and so on). Would it be possible to identify a small number of model types of sense of place? Are there clusters of components which frequently appear together and interact to create such prototypes? Another broad area of research would involve identifying and investigating situations where people do not appear to have a strong sense of place (e.g., do residents of downtown highrise apartments or of modern suburban subdivisions experience a strong sense of place?) and comparing them to situations where people do have a strong sense of place (e.g., are there any consistent differences?). Only additional research on sense of place can begin to address these questions.

Throughout the body of this thesis, it has been emphasized that the six major components of sense of place which have been identified in this case study of the Toronto Islanders are interrelated. Although the basic objective of this thesis, of course, has been to identify and analyze individual components (and, in turn, to analyze how they are related to defense of place), the analysis of the components also leads to the general conclusion that the individual components identified are distinct, but not separate. They are distinct to the extent that no one component may be subsumed under any other component; but
they are not separate, to the extent that they are interrelated in a complex web of interconnected influences.

Although examples of interrelationships are cited in each of the chapters on individual components, the bulk of each of these chapters is devoted to defining the particular component, demonstrating how the Island and Islanders may be analyzed in terms of the component and discussing the dialectical relationships between the particular component under scrutiny and defense of place. A logical, but unfortunate, result of discussing each component separately, is creating the impression that the components operate in isolation from one another. A sense of fragmentation is almost inevitably created as various events or situations are analyzed in terms of one or other of the individual components. It is useful, therefore, to try to draw the fragments back together here by briefly analyzing several specific events or situations drawn from the Island case study in terms of how they influence and/or are influenced by the several components. While it is impossible at this early stage of research into the sense of place to answer many fundamental questions about how these components interact, it is possible to identify some important aspects of the relationships and to illustrate a variety of ways that various components—under various conditions—may interact.

Interrelations among the various components may be analyzed in terms of: the specific component(s) involved (under different conditions, naturally, different components may be involved); the number of components involved (in some cases, only one or two may be vitally involved; in others, as many as six may be involved); the relative importance of the components involved (in some cases, all components
identified may be equally important; in other cases, some component(s) may be more important than others); the simultaneity or sequentiality of component influence (in cases where more than one component is involved, the influence may be direct and simultaneous; or the influence may be indirect and sequential, forming a chain of influence containing two or more links); and the positive or negative nature of the association (in some cases, as one component increases in strength, the other increases; in other cases, as one increases, the other decreases).

The following six specific, concrete examples drawn from the Island data may be used to illustrate these general relationships. Here, as elsewhere in the thesis, the emphasis is on analyzing real people and real life events, rather than on speculating on hypothetical relationships, for it is only by analyzing specific events or situations grounded in real life data that genuine relationships can be adequately identified and given meaning. (See Illustration 34, "Examples of Interrelationships Among the Components of Sense of Place").

Case One:

As the body of this study makes clear, people have moved to the Island for different reasons and, while there, have had different experiences and reactions. For some, the prime attraction has been the environment, for others the community; for some, sense of history has been of great importance, for others it has been of relatively peripheral interest, and so on. As a result, the pattern of component interaction would vary significantly from person to person. The first case illustrates the reactions of one particular Islander who decided
ILLUSTRATION 34

EXAMPLES OF INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE COMPONENTS OF SENSE OF PLACE
to move to and subsequently to remain on the Island during a period of great uncertainty.

For this person, the main attraction of the Island was its environment—especially the water and the cottage architecture, which reminded her of her childhood home. A secondary attraction was the apparent existence of a community (but this, and other less important interrelationships are not diagrammed, because the diagram would become so complex as to be virtually unintelligible). As a result of living on the Island, not only was her sense of environment elaborated and reinforced, but each of the other components was, according to her statements and actions, directly and indirectly influenced. For example, living on the Island, working with other Islanders and sharing a variety of hardships with them created a strong sense of community. Having to repair and renovate her house directly increased her sense of control. Working on community projects (including serving on the TIRA Executive) indirectly increased her sense of control; but experiencing the vagaries of political developments indirectly decreased her sense of control. Living during a period of acute uncertainty undoubtedly increased her sense of change (which in turn increased her sense of community by creating a feeling of being in a community under siege). Living on the Island and, more specifically, writing a variety of briefs and pamphlets which described (among other things) the Island's history, directly increased her sense of history; and knowledge of the history of the community itself, indirectly increased her sense of community. Finally, her sense of identity was directly affected by living on the Island (she gradually became an "Islander") and, indirectly, this sense of identity was reinforced and shaped by
being part of a "community" of Islanders and sharing, as she noted, a variety of hardships.

This example illustrates not only a number of complex inter-relationships, but also emphasizes the importance of time. While some components may come into prominence rather quickly (e.g., sense of change may be created virtually overnight by the appearance of a threat); other components may take longer to develop (for example, in this case, sense of community and identity). In addition, components may change over time. The importance of time is evident in a number of other cases discussed below.

**Case Two:**

The second case illustrates reaction to a dramatic, precipitating event, like the December 11, 1973 Metro Council vote to terminate Island leases. (Since this sort of event is discussed at length in Chapter Eight, there is no need to give the details here). The Metro vote led to a swift, direct increase in Islanders' sense of change and, indirectly, to an increase in senses of history, identity, community and environment, and to a decrease in sense of control. Here, as in other cases discussed below, sense of change initiates a sequential chain of influences.

**Case Three:**

The third case illustrates a less dramatic political event and involves fewer components (cases one and two, of course, involved all six components). In June 1974, just prior to the date set by Metro Council for the termination of Island leases, City of Toronto Mayor David Crombie developed a motion which, if accepted, would have saved Island houses, but would have required some residents to leave and all
remaining residents to relinquish homeownership in order to come under a City-Cooperative housing scheme. As discussed in earlier chapters, Islanders decided neither to support nor oppose this motion. This political decision heightened Islanders' already high sense of change. In addition, it both increased and decreased their sense of community. By meeting together, discussing the proposal, and making a communal decision on this (and other occasions) Islanders' sense of community was increased; but, to the extent that heated debates erupted and splits arose within the community about appropriate strategy, their sense of community was also probably decreased. Their individual and communal frustration over their inability to "control" politicians (in this case, they had not been very involved in developing the motion) also, indirectly, decreased their sense of control.

Case Four:

Case four traces a situation where sense of history achieves special prominence and sense of change again initiates a sequence of influence. Islanders' strong sense of change in the spring of 1974 heightened Islanders' sense of history which, in turn, inspired a group of Islanders to establish the Island Archives in order to document the Island's history before the Island community disappeared. These people collected a great amount of historical material (old maps, photographs, newspapers, and so on) and mounted a number of public exhibits on the Island and Mainland. Their researching and documenting of the Island's past, directly increased their own sense of history; while their exhibits directly increased the sense of history among a wider audience. In addition, by contributing to Islanders' shared knowledge of a common history, their sense of history indirectly increased their sense of
community. Finally, by collecting old photographs, taking a great number of contemporary photographs of Islanders and the Island under a wide variety of circumstances (e.g., at different seasons), and exhibiting these photographs, their efforts also probably indirectly increased their own and other Islanders' sense of environment.

Case Five:

Islanders decorate and renovate their houses in very personal ways. Chapter four discusses the theme of "house as symbol of self" and illustrates how Island houses reflect and reinforce Islanders' sense of identity and Chapter seven discusses how Islanders' house care and renovating contribute to and reflect their sense of control. Case five, therefore, illustrates this situation where sense of identity and sense of control achieve special prominence and where the interrelations appear to be more simultaneous than sequential. Naturally, the decorations and renovations also reflect Islanders' environmental values (the scale, materials and so on of the changes) and some of their community values (such as "individuality", "scavenger society" and general ethos of expression), so both sense of environment and sense of community are also directly involved.

Case Six:

As the body of this study indicates, the future of the Island is still in doubt: the present situation of uncertainty might be perpetuated; Islanders might finally be ejected (although the present political climate makes this seem less likely than it has seemed at other times); or a permanent (or long-term) community might be established, with a variety of possible conditions attached to its continued existence (e.g., stringently applied building standards; greatly increased
ground rent; year-round residence only; price controls on house sales). The final case illustrates what might well happen on the Island if a permanent community were established under the auspices of the City of Toronto, which required Islanders to form a non-profit housing association as a condition of continued residence.

Let us assume for the purposes of this discussion that the City accepts Islanders' proposal that they be allowed to retain homeownership and form a non-profit housing association to control house prices (rather than forming a housing cooperative). As earlier discussions indicate, if Islanders were forced to give up ownership of their houses, the likely result would be widespread opposition: their sense of change would be very high; their sense of control very low (both because of the loss of ownership and because of the imposition of unpalatable change from the outside); and their sense of community probably reinforced (a perpetuation of the community under siege condition).

If, however, Islanders were required to form a non-profit housing association, the pattern would be significantly different. Certainly, at the outset, as a number of Islanders suggested, sense of change would be increased, because Islanders would be entering a new phase and would have to become used to a new situation. Over time, however, this feeling would probably diminish. In this scenario, sense of control and sense of community would achieve special prominence and the effects would be somewhat ambivalent. With respect to sense of control, to the extent that the association is imposed by an outside agent (the City), rather than being a voluntary coming together of willing participants, Islanders' sense of control would decrease. (Some Islanders, however, have already developed and set up a non-profit
association; for them, this process has probably increased rather than decreased their sense of control, because they chose to do it and then did it themselves—the locus of change was internal, not external.)

On the other hand, the actual operating of the association—making decisions about a whole range of items—might well increase (or continue) Islanders' sense of control. With respect to the direct effect on Islanders' sense of community, by enabling (indeed, forcing) Islanders as a group to continue to work together and make communal decisions about a variety of matters and by creating the conditions necessary to enable a "mixed community" to continue living on the Island, the forming of a non-profit housing association should contribute positively to Islanders' sense of community. But, to the extent that highly contentious issues arise, splits might appear within the community (along the lines discussed earlier in the thesis) and Islanders' sense of community might be weakened. Whether or not the community is seriously weakened would depend on how these differences are resolved. (As indicated earlier, Islanders, under conditions of outside threat, have demonstrated a great ability to tolerate, absorb and overcome even acrimonious splits.) Finally, since some of the decisions are likely to affect the physical fabric of the Island, Islanders' sense of environment would also affect and be affected by the operation of a housing association.

In conclusion, these brief case studies illustrate the great variety of ways that the components of sense of place may interact even in the context of a single place. They also indicate that, at this particular, exploratory stage of research, no simple hierarchy or overriding model of interaction can be developed. Perhaps future
research (involving further study not only of the Island, but also of
other people, places and events) might lead to the development of a
more refined and more comprehensive model—might identify, for ex-
ample, a relatively small number of patterns of interrelationships—
that suggests that under these sets of circumstances, this type of
pattern is likely to occur. Additional research, therefore is re-
quired to address not only questions dealing with individual compon-
ents, but also questions relating to the interactions among the
components.

iii. Sense of Place - Defense of Place:

A central theme of this study is that there is a dialectical
relationship between sense of place (i.e., strong emotional attach-
ment to a place of personal significance and meaning) and defense of
place (i.e., specific political, legal and other actions taken to
protect a place that is threatened). When a place to which a person
or a group of people is strongly attached is threatened in some way,
it is argued, sense of place may lead to and condition the nature of
the defense of place; and when a place is threatened and defended,
that defense of place, in turn, conditions and influences the nature
of sense of place. Actions taken to defend a significant place cannot
be fully understood without appreciating the nature of the defenders' 
sense of place; and, similarly, the very actions and experiences in-
volved in defending the place may, in turn, heighten and/or otherwise
influence the participants' sense of place. In a situation (like the
Toronto Island) where defense of place has occurred, therefore, it is
essential to study both the nature of the sense of place (as discussed
in the previous section), as well as the nature of the defense of place
and the interactive links between the two phenomena. In addition, it is also argued that in a dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place, the concept of threat occupies a position of importance as the catalyst to action, and as a continuing influence. The perceived severity of the threat, as well as its specific nature and general context are all key influences on defense of place. Sense of place, it is emphasized, is not the only influence on defense of place; but it is an important, frequently overlooked influence. In the case of the Toronto Island, this study has presented copious evidence that Toronto Island residents, since the mid-1930's, have responded to outside threats to radically change and/or destroy their special place—the Island as they have known and loved it. It has also presented extensive evidence both that Islanders' attitudes and feelings about the Island (their sense of place) have influenced the nature of their response to various threats (their defense of place) and also that the nature of their defense of place has, over the years, in turn heightened and in many ways influenced the nature of their sense of place. (Specific examples are cited below.)

At a more specific level, this study has presented evidence that each major component of sense of place (defined and discussed in the previous section) has been engaged in a dialectical relationship with defense of place. Drawing examples from the complex political history of the Toronto Island since the 1930's, each chapter dealing with a particular component of sense of place has presented illustrations of these dialectical relationships.

The chapter on sense of history indicates that Islanders' sense of history has had a distinct impact on their defense of place.
Islanders have argued, especially since 1973, that Metro should not destroy a well-established, historic community. They have, therefore, frequently emphasized the historic nature of the Island community in their public statements before various Council and other committees, in their publicity booklets, ads and public events, and so on. This emphasis has been a reflection of both their own sense of history and their assessment of the political climate. Political opponents, it is noted, have tended to play down or deny the historical importance of the Island community, while political supporters, not surprisingly, have been sensitive to it. This chapter also indicates that the Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has sharpened and expanded their sense of history: deliberate attempts have been made to make Islanders aware of their history; doing research for various publications and events has increased their knowledge; and fear of losing the last physical traces of Island history has heightened their desire to document and record that history.

The chapter on sense of identity indicates that Islanders' sense of identity may provide the general motivation for defense of place. Because a threat to change or eradicate a special and personally significant place is also a threat to a person's identity, that person may be strongly motivated to protect and defend that place. On the negative side (from a political point of view) is the fact that Islanders' strong sense of identity—of being "Islanders" and feeling that this is important, even an enviable mark of distinction—has perhaps made Islanders appear to some people (including some politicians) as "arrogant" or "sanctimonious". Some politicians, however, seem to have understood the importance of the link between people and personal
identity and its significance for helping to create a healthy urban environment. They have supported the retention of the Island community (as well as other distinctive communities) partly because the sense of identity is so strongly fostered there. Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had a marked influence on their sense of identity. Simply experiencing the long years of uncertainty and attending long, emotional Council meetings has contributed to individuals feeling like "Islanders". The Island defense has expanded the notion of house-as-symbol-of-self—of using the house as a means of self-expression, for many Islanders have used their houses as personal billboards to advertise their defiance of Metro and their determination to remain on the Island. Finally, actually participating in the defense of the Island may not only have deepened their sense of what it means to be an "Islander", but also may have significantly changed some Islanders' perceptions of who they are: e.g., they are not only "Islanders", but they are also "Island defenders" and even "political activists".

The chapter on sense of community indicates that there are many strong links between Islanders' sense of community and defense of place. Islanders' strong sense of community, it is argued, has provided the general foundation on which they could build a defense of the island. For many years, Islanders have made direct appeals based on community arguments. This was true even in the early years (in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's), when Islanders alluded to the strength and value of their community when responding to a variety of threats to radically change or destroy the Island as it then existed. Community preservation arguments, like historic preservation arguments, however, only came to the fore after the 1972 municipal elections when a large number of City
Council members (but not of Metro or Borough Council members) was elected on neighbourhood preservation platforms. Since that time, Islanders and their political supporters have relied heavily on the argument that the Toronto Island community is a strong and distinctive community which deserves to be preserved for that reason alone. This argument reflects both Islanders' strong sense of community, as well as their perception of the prevailing political climate. Islanders' sense of community, it is noted, has influenced their political behaviour in other ways. It has enabled them (since at least 1971) to fend off several attempts to divide and conquer the community and to reject a variety of proposals which might have saved part, but not all, of the community. The high value Islanders place on living in a community with a "social mix" has also had a marked influence on their political behaviour: they have emphasized the social diversity of the community in their public statements (both because they believe it is an accurate description and a laudable condition and because they want to counter political opponents' charges that they are a "rich elite" or some other less flattering entity); they have accepted the need for price controls on housing if security of tenure is granted in order to provide the conditions necessary to maintain the social mix; and they have been reluctant to accept any housing proposals that might eliminate certain groups of Island residents (notably summer residents and wealthier residents), including Mayor Crombie's last-ditch proposal in June 1974 (which was rejected by Metro Council anyway). This same social mix, it is suggested, has also had some negative effects on Islanders' political behaviour: e.g., the various splits within the community led to some internal friction and made it difficult on
occasion to develop a united approach in the 1974 Spring Campaign.
Islanders' image of suburbia (as more conservative, less socially
diverse, less socially involving, less tolerant of unconventional
behaviour and less community-oriented than the Island) also influen-
ced their political activity: e.g., during the 1974 Spring Campaign
they dressed and spoke in ways that they felt would be acceptable in
suburbia as they perceived it. They also concluded from this Campaign
that their own sense of community was greater than, or at least sig-
nificantly different from, suburbanites'. Finally, Islanders' strong
sense of community exercised a critical influence on the organization
and conduct of their 1974 Spring Campaign: it provided the solid
foundation on which that campaign was built. (See also pp. 434 ff.)

Most of the Islanders' political supporters, for their part,
have believed in and stressed similar community preservation arguments.
Beyond this, Islanders' political supporters and opponents over the
years have tended to hold very different images of Islanders and their
community. Evidence is presented that while Islanders' supporters
have tended to give great weight to community arguments and to have a
positive image of the Island community (e.g., mostly year-round, soc-
ially-mixed, egalitarian, well-established, etc.), their opponents
have tended to ignore community arguments altogether and/or discuss
Island residents in negative terms (e.g., as a rich elite, squatters,
transients, summer-cottagers, etc.). As is noted, it is sometimes
difficult to believe that the two groups are discussing the same people
and the same place.

Finally, Islanders' defense of place has exercised a strong
influence on their sense of community. As noted in the last section,
Islanders have been a community under siege for many years. The outside threats, combined with the actual process of defending the Island against the threats, has had a strong, largely positive effect on Islanders' sense of community. This has been especially evident since 1974 (the 1974 Spring Campaign is discussed in more detail below): according to Islanders' accounts, as a result of living under the severe threat, working together and sharing a very important common goal, Islanders' sense of community has become stronger. On the negative side, however, is the fact that under such extreme stress, deep-seated differences between groups and individuals may become sharper, more acrimonious and potentially explosive. Under these conditions, unless care is taken, defense of place could reduce, not increase, the sense of community. So far, this has not happened on the Island. In sum, this chapter argues that over the years, Islanders' defense of place has significantly strengthened their sense of community.

The chapter on sense of environment indicates that Islanders' sense of environment has also had a marked influence on their defense of place. At the most fundamental level, when the Island environment as they know it has been threatened, Islanders have been strongly motivated to try to defend it. For example, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, Islanders strongly opposed a series of plans which would have radically altered the Island environment. Not only were they defending their own interests, but they also saw themselves as being protectors of the virtues of the Island as it was in order to defend the interests of non-Islanders. They therefore frequently made direct appeals to politicians which were based on the desirability of protecting an existing environment. This approach has continued to the present, when
they have continued to make appeals to protect the Island environment with its carless streets and village atmosphere. Islanders, from the late 1940's to the mid-1960's, also fiercely defended the Island against proposals to provide access for motor vehicles. This long debate represented a fundamental conflict of values between pro-car forces (who saw the car as a sign of progress and wished to bring the Island into the motor age) and anti-car forces (who wished to preserve the Island as a natural refuge away from the ravages of a motor society). Another aspect of the car debate is that Islanders, who have been sensitive to the fact that there is something special about living on an island, wished to preserve this "islandness" and prevent any tunnel or bridge link from being constructed. Finally, Islanders' physical insularity, some have argued, has bred a certain degree of political insularity, although this insularity has been greatly reduced since about 1974.

Islanders' political supporters and opponents, it is argued, have held conflicting environmental values and images of the Island, which have, over the years, influenced their political behaviour. For example, a study of the Island's political history reveals that the two groups have had very different images of the remaining residential areas. Opponents have tended to regard the residential areas as parkland manqué (because it was designated as Metro parkland in 1956) and the remaining houses and occupants as merely an obstacle to be removed in order to achieve parkland in fact. Islanders' supporters, however, have tended to regard the existing residential areas as a remnant of a well-established, historic community which predates the park, is located next to (not in) parkland, and deserves to be
preserved. These two groups of politicians have also held conflicting park philosophies: for Islanders' opponents, park means "pure park" (residents and parkland do not mix) and the whole island should be pure park; but for Islanders' supporters, parks and residents do mix (at least in this case) and are mutually beneficial. It is not surprising that the two groups have clashed. In addition, Islanders' opponents and supporters have been engaged in a war of environmental images, which reflect these conflicting environmental images, as well as political tactics. The Metro Parks Commissioner's Island tours of the early 1970's, according to some accounts, were designed to reinforce negative images and to support the idea that the houses were simply not worth preserving. Some politicians, it is suggested, were impressed by these tours and, more generally, seemed to be unable to understand how people could live (let alone prefer to live) in a place where the environment was so different from what they regarded as a proper place to live. This conclusion is supported by the subsidy argument: opponents have frequently argued that it would impose too great a burden on the Metro taxpayer to improve the Island environment to an acceptable level; supporters, however, have emphasized that no such expenditures would be required—that they were not trying to recreate a suburban community, but to preserve a very different type of place. Finally, several politicians have made the provocative point that Islanders have been treated differently from other City and Metro residents by politicians simply because they are Islanders and are physically separated from the rest of the City. Nowhere else, they argue, would politicians seriously consider demolishing 250 homes to extend a park.

For their part, Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had
a distinct impact on their sense of environment. Deliberate attempts have been made in the course of the political defense of the Island to sensitize Islanders to different, special aspects of the Island environment. The 1974 Spring Campaign exposed Islanders to environments and environmental lifestyles in the boroughs that contrasted markedly with their own and these experiences both reinforced their negative images of suburbia and their positive images of the Island. In conclusion, Islanders' defense of place has clarified and strengthened their sense of environment.

The chapter on sense of control indicates that, at the most general level, Islanders, throughout their political history (since the 1930's) have adopted an active approach to defending their special place from outside threats: they have tried to exercise a measure of control over their future. The impact of Islanders' sense of control on their defense of place has been demonstrated in other areas. It has been emphasized that Islanders' sense of control has been attained in part by the fact that most Islanders own their own homes. The desire to retain homeownership has had a strong impact on Islanders' political behaviour since 1971. For example, they rejected the idea of forming a housing coop which would have removed homeownership and developed instead a proposal for a non-profit housing association which would have left ownership with individual Islanders (but would have controlled house prices). Islanders' desire to maintain homeownership also made Islanders less than enthusiastic about Mayor Crombie's June 1974 proposal to save Island houses by placing them in a City non-profit coop. The 1974 Spring Campaign appealed to and relied on Islanders' strong sense of control and high level of resentment when
that control has been threatened. (See also below, pp. 434 ff.) Islanders' defense of place experiences, in turn, have exercised a strong impact on Islanders' sense of control: sometimes the effects have been positive, sometimes negative, and sometimes paradoxical. Evidence is presented that Islanders' attitudes toward politics and politicians have evolved over the years from respectful deference in the 1930's to cynical distrust in more recent years. In addition, the political history of the last decade or so, it is argued, has been characterized by Islanders' struggle to exercise more control over their political destiny. Both successes and failures are identified: e.g., in the 1974 Spring Campaign, Islanders exercised more control over developing and implementing political strategy than ever before, but political events themselves frequently wrested control from their hands. Islanders' defense of place, therefore, has both strengthened and weakened their sense of control. It is worth emphasizing, however, that, paradoxically, even their unsuccessful political experiences may have strengthened their sense of control. They may have lost on various occasions, but they have not given up without a struggle. Just making the decision to fight, it is suggested, is an exercise of will and an expression of personal independence which, in turn, may increase a sense of control.

The chapter on sense of change indicates that there are a variety of reciprocal links between sense of change and defense of place. The main reason Islanders have a strong sense of change itself is because they have been subjected to a long series of threats to radically change or destroy the Island as they know it. Some of the links between sense of change and defense of place, of necessity,
have, therefore, already been discussed—e.g., "community under siege"; various effects of threat and uncertainty, including the human costs of forced relocation; mechanisms adopted to cope with stress, including engaging in the political battle as an antidote. (See above pp. 410 ff.) Study of the long political history reveals that Islanders' strong sense of change—i.e., their fear of the radical alteration or loss of their Island—has been the major stimulus for their battles to save their homes, their community and their special place from destruction. Without that threat—that fear of change—there would, of course, have been no need to take action. A number of examples of Islanders' responding to threats to radically change their place are provided. It is emphasized, however, that the existence of a threat to change a place is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for defense of place. The threat must be perceived as a severe one and the political context of the threat must be conducive to people's taking action. (Neither of these additional conditions seemed to be in effect during a period in the late 1950's and early 1960's when Islanders did not take strong, concerted group action to try to halt demolitions or change the Metro plan.) Finally, Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has increased their sense of change. For example, at various points in the defense of the Island, Island leaders have deliberately tried to heighten Islanders' sense of change and to make the Metro threat as clear as possible to both Islanders and Mainlanders in order to spur them to take action (e.g., a slide presentation of Centre Island demolitions which was shown at a public forum in March 1974; and "war games" in October 1978 to prepare for a possible invasion by the sheriff to evict Islanders).
In summary, there is a great deal of evidence to support the proposition that there are dialectical relationships between sense of place (and its six major components) and defense of place.

The numerous examples of interactive links between sense of place and defense of place which are discussed in these separate chapters are taken from various parts of the modern political history of the Island since the mid-1930's. In order to draw these links together to form a more integrated whole, it is useful to illustrate how the generalized model described in Chapter One (Illustration 1, "Dialectical Relationships of Sense of Place and Defense of Place") may be applied to a single case. The Islanders' major 1974 Spring Campaign, therefore, is outlined here. (See Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign").

First, it is important to look at the threat, which, as noted before, is both a catalyst to action and a continuing influence. The specific nature of the threat was the fact that on December 11, 1973, Metro Council had reaffirmed its policy to evict Islanders in order to demolish their houses and extend the Metro park. The termination date set for Island leases was August 31, 1974. Islanders were no longer protected by even a short lease extension (as they had been in the past) and in order to remain on the Island, they would have to either persuade or force Metro Council to change its policy by the summer (the main focus of the Campaign) or find a way around the policy (e.g., by taking legal action and/or persuading the Provincial government to intervene on their behalf). The perceived severity of the threat was very high. Islanders were well aware that unless they acted, and acted quickly, their years on the Island would soon be over. They were,
therefore, strongly motivated to act. Finally, the context of the threat, of course, played a key role in influencing both the nature and the degree of success of Islanders' actions taken in defense of place. Only the major elements can be briefly sketched here.

On the negative side, there were a number of factors which, experience proved, militated against success. There was a newly-elected, strong Metro Chairman, Paul Godfrey, who was eager to prove himself to be a decisive leader. Although he did not initially seem to have strong feelings about the merits of the case, he cast his lot in December 1973 with the Metro majority and the established Metro policy to evict Islanders and thereafter used his considerable influence to promote this position. There was a strong Metro bureaucracy (Metro Councillors tended to defer to the Metro Commissioners) and an especially strong Metro Parks Commissioner, Tommy Thompson, who was also determined to promote the eviction of Islanders. Metro, of course, had a long-established policy to evict Islanders, so the sheer force of political inertia was against them. There was a long history of bitterness between Metro (politicians and bureaucrats) and Islanders—a bitterness which helped to harden anti-Islander attitudes. Metro Council members were indirectly elected—i.e., they were one-step removed from their constituents—which meant that they would not readily be influenced by ratepayer or other residents' groups. During this period, the City and suburban members of Metro Council were warring over a variety of issues and the Island issue was caught in and exacerbated this cross-fire. A majority of Metro Councillors seemed to have environmental values and images of the Island which clashed markedly with both Islanders' and their supporters' and made them
unsympathetic to proposals to retain the community. Islanders' own senior ward alderman and Metro representative, William Archer, was against their position. The Province had the power, but not the desire, to intervene in the matter at this time. And, as noted above, the time constraints on the Campaign were severe.

Several factors had both positive and negative aspects. For example, while two major daily newspapers (Star and Globe and Mail) had long-established anti-Islander editorial policies, the other major daily (Sun) had a moderately pro-Islander policy and most of the broadcast media was positive. A sizeable majority of Metro-wide public opinion was pro-retention of Island homes, but the interest and commitment in the suburbs was relatively low. Finally, resident and ratepayer groups were active and influential at the City level, but not at the Borough or Metro Council levels.

On the positive side was the fact that City Council had adopted a strong, pro-Islander position in November 1973. A minority of Metro Council (which consisted of most City representatives, including the mayor, and a few borough representatives) was strongly committed to the desirability of retaining the Island community. The citizens' movement and the related neighbourhood preservation movement were near their peak in the City (a major factor which inspired Islanders to act). The Island yacht club leases were up for renewal (and were renegotiated), which created some (but not overwhelming) public outrage and public sympathy. Similarly, the fact that Islanders would receive no compensation not only provided extra incentive for Islanders to fight, but also created a measure of public sympathy. More important, however, were the facts that there was a severe housing crisis in
Toronto, that there would be municipal elections in December (and a Federal election in July was announced during the Campaign), and that a few Metro representatives who had voted against Islanders on December 11 indicated shortly after the vote that they might change their minds. Finally, the Island community itself possessed a number of resources which were useful to the conduct of the Campaign: e.g., extensive political experience and contacts (from previous defense of place actions); numbers (700+ is not a huge group, but, if motivated, it is large enough to provide personnel for a wide variety of tasks and even to mount a relatively large demonstration); organizing ability (as a result of long years of organizing Island activities as well as previous political campaigns); wide variety of personal and professional skills (legal, financial, planning, public speaking, writing, printing, graphics, etc.) and so on.

It was in the face of this threat and within this political context that Islanders organized their massive campaign to defend their place. The objective, as noted above, was to change the Metro Council policy by the summer of 1974 (and, failing that, to devise alternative defense strategies) and, not insignificantly, to prevent people from moving away. The major political strategy adopted was to mobilize public support and to build alliances with groups across Metro which could, in turn, put pressure on Metro Councillors to re-open the issue and change the policy. In order to carry out this strategy, a variety of committees were created (public support, media, finance, solidarity, legal, etc.), a steady stream of publicity was issued, over 200 trips to the boroughs were organized, numerous meetings with politicians at all levels were arranged, major public events were planned and staged,
and an extraordinarily large number of Islanders were motivated to participate in some way. Ultimately, Islanders failed to reach their primary political goal, but they devised alternate strategies, laid the groundwork for continuing the battle, and prevented any mass exodus from the Island. This Campaign provides numerous specific examples of the interactive relationship between sense of place and defense of place. Many of these have been discussed at various points in earlier chapters and are, therefore, only briefly summarized here.

First, consider how Islanders' sense of place and its components have influenced Islanders' defense of place. Throughout this Campaign (e.g., in publications, advertisements, public statements and public events), Islanders' strong sense of history and assessment of the political climate led them to create an image of the Island community as an historic, well-established community with deep roots and to argue that it should be preserved, not destroyed.

Throughout this Campaign, Islanders' strong sense of community was especially important to the conduct of the Campaign. First of all, it inspired them to espouse community arguments—to project an image of the Island as a distinctive, socially-mixed community which deserved to be protected. Beyond this, their already strong sense of community provided a solid foundation on which to build their massive political campaign. Leaders could appeal to the community spirit and sense of responsibility for the community of residents in order to motivate them to participate (in remarkably large numbers) in the Campaign. Islanders felt that they had to participate. Organizers could use and elaborate on the existing communications system (e.g., the interperson-
system and the ferry) to transmit information quickly and to mobilize people (in a matter of hours if necessary) to attend meetings or make community decisions or participate in demonstrations. Organizers could tap the diverse talents of the community, because they began the Campaign with a good idea of what resources existed within the community. In short, Islanders were able to mobilize their forces and mount a much larger campaign in the short time available to them than would have been possible if they had not had a strong, existing community base on which to build. Sense of community influenced their political behaviour in other ways. Island leaders could generally appeal to the community as a whole not to let itself be divided and conquered by various Metro actions. The high priority they placed on social mix (as well as political pragmatism) led them to accept price controls as a way of continuing the conditions necessary to maintain that social mix if secure tenure were achieved. And their image of suburbia influenced the way they dressed and presented themselves before suburban audiences. On the other hand, because of their strong sense of community, resistance to being split and rejection of reducing the existing social mix, they nearly opposed Mayor Crombie's last minute effort to save the houses—his June motion that the Island houses become part of a City housing coop. In addition, because of the very social diversity of the community, periodic conflicts over political strategy and style periodically erupted and reflected some of the social divisions within the community.

Islanders' strong sense of environment also motivated them to participate in this Campaign to protect something that they cherished. As in previous years, they painted a positive image of their
environment and made direct appeals to save it because of its distinctive features—notably the carless streets and small village atmosphere. Islanders' sense of environment also contributed to their arguing that the residential areas enhanced (rather than detracted from) the quality of the park by adding to its charm, diversity and safety. Finally, Islanders' particular sense of environment (such as their appreciation for their narrow, carless streets, their archaic lamp posts, their occasionally wildly individualistic little houses, their sometimes "primitive" living conditions, their lack of stores and other "conveniences", and so on) clashed markedly with that of their suburban political opponents and coloured debates during this period (as at other times).

Islanders' sense of control has led them over the years to take an active approach to defending the Island from outside threats. In 1974; (faced with a particularly severe threat and a political climate generally favourable to residents' groups becoming active), Islanders once again were strongly motivated to try to exercise some control over their future by conducting their Campaign. Beyond this, their long experience with organizing their own Island activities (social, recreational, self-help, etc.) meant that they already had a ready pool of seasoned community leaders to call on to organize and lead the Campaign. In addition, because many Islanders have tended to regard homeownership as the cornerstone of their sense of control, they have opposed proposed solutions that would eliminate it. During this Campaign, they developed a proposal for a non-profit housing association (INPHA) which would have left homeownership with individual Islanders and they nearly rejected Mayor Crombie's motion (to make them part of
a City coop).

Finally, Islanders' strong sense of threatened change (the most severe threat prior to 1980) provided the strongest motivation for Islanders to design and conduct a Campaign to defend their place. (These relationships are summarized in Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign").

Second, consider how Islanders' defense of place (during this Campaign), in turn, influenced each of the major components of sense of place. The Campaign sharpened and expanded Islanders' sense of history. Simply doing the research for the various publications and public events directly associated with this Campaign (like the Island portage, which was to have been the theme of the washed-out Spring Festival, or the "Bulldozerama" which was to have illustrated the history of earlier demolitions) led a number of Islanders to investigate Island history more extensively than they would have otherwise. At least one historical documentary was created (on video tape) during this Campaign. This involved interviewing older Islanders who recalled earlier Island history and was shown on the Island as well as elsewhere. Finally, tangentially related to the Campaign was the creation of the Island Archives. A group of Islanders banded together to collect and record Island history. As a result of their efforts, exhibitions of photographs and Island memorabilia were mounted both on the Island and on the Mainland. The fruits of these various research efforts, in short, were spread across the Island and served to heighten Islanders' sense of history.

The Campaign, with its aura of anxiety and multitude of emotional experiences deepened some Islanders' sense of identity as
"Islanders". Participating in the Campaign may also have changed some Islanders' sense of who they were: they became not only "Islanders", but also "Island defenders". Finally, participating in the Campaign enabled some Islanders to give new meaning to the concept of house-as-symbol-of-self, by motivating many to post signs (including the eviction notices distributed by Metro in January and May 1974) and to use their houses as a means of political (as well as self) expression.

The 1974 Campaign had a profound effect on Islanders' sense of community. The sense of being a community under siege was at a fever pitch. In addition, during the Campaign, nearly every Islander became involved. There were frequent public and committee meetings. On-Island communications were improved. Frequent appeals were made to Islanders to defend the community, to act like a community and to present themselves as a solid community. And many highly emotional group events were held (ranging from appearing as deputations before other groups to demonstrating outside City Hall and attending disastrous Metro Council meetings). As a result of this, there was a heightened sense of common purpose, common experience, and common action—in short, a heightened sense of community. This Campaign had both positive and negative effects on the social splits within the community. On the positive side, during the Campaign, Islanders extended the range of their acquaintances and became a more cohesive social unit (e.g., Ward's Islanders came to know more Algonquin Islanders; "old Islanders" worked with and came to know "new Islanders", etc.) But, on the negative side, under conditions of such extreme stress, deep-seated differences between individuals and groups occasionally became sharper, more acrimonious and, unless carefully dealt with, potentially damaging to
community solidarity. Finally, as a result of their experiences in the suburbs (where some Islanders felt that their audiences did not understand or respond well to "community arguments"), some Islanders concluded from this Campaign that Islanders' sense of community was stronger than that found elsewhere.

The 1974 Campaign clarified and reinforced Islanders' sense of environment. During that Campaign, Islanders made over 200 forays into the suburban parts of Toronto in order to meet politicians, residential groups, and individuals. By exposing Islanders to environments and environmental lifestyles so markedly different from their own, these experiences tended to reinforce their negative images of suburbia and to make them even more sensitive to the distinctive features of the Island environment. Their statements reveal that some Islanders were profoundly impressed by these experiences.

The 1974 Campaign had both positive and negative effects on Islanders' sense of control. During the Campaign, Islanders took far greater responsibility for developing and executing a political strategy than they ever had before. To this extent, their sense of control was increased. But many incidents that occurred during the Campaign revealed a frustrating lack of control. Naturally, moves by the opposition change the nature of the battle and force defenders to respond to, rather than exercise control over, events. But, during this Campaign, Islanders encountered frequent instances of their lack of control, not only over their opponents (as expected), but also over their supporters (e.g., Alderman John Sewell proceeded with a motion at North York Council and lost, in spite of having been asked not to proceed; Mayor Paul Cosgrove filed a motion to reopen the issue at Metro Council.
without bothering to inform Islanders). Nevertheless, the Spring Campaign also reveals the occasionally paradoxical nature of sense of control: even unsuccessful political experiences may increase sense of control. Although they did not attain their primary political goal during this Campaign, Islanders did demonstrate to themselves and others their capacity to resist. They did make a fundamental decision to fight and to try to exercise a measure of control over their future. In this way, even unsuccessful political experiences may increase sense of control.

Finally, the 1974 Campaign also heightened Islanders' sense of change. During the Campaign, Island leaders deliberately tried to increase Islanders' sense of change and to make the Metro threat as clear as possible to both Islanders and Mainlanders in order to inspire them to take action. They tried to make the threat palpably real. For example, the Save Island Homes pamphlet produced for the Campaign concluded with a picture of a pile of rubble that once was an Island home. (See Illustration 33.) And, at the major public forum held during the Campaign (in March), a powerful slide show depicting the demolition of houses at Centre Island was presented. The message was clear: unless they took quick action to defend their place, this fate awaited them, too.

In summary, Islanders' action taken in defense of place during their 1974 Spring Campaign both heightened and otherwise influenced their sense of place and each of its major components. (These relationships are summarized in Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign").

As for future research, there is a great need for additional case studies of the relationship between sense of place and defense of
place in order to compare and generalize about reactions under different conditions of threat (under what conditions will what kind of threat lead to what kind of action?), different conditions of sense of place (what kinds of sense of place will lead to what kinds of defense of place? e.g., will the "frontier pioneer" described earlier react differently to a threat to destroy his place than a "villager on the urban fringe" or a "working class resident of an urban renewal area"?), and different conditions of defense of place (e.g., are certain kinds of defensive actions—like mass actions as opposed to legal actions—more likely to increase sense of place than others?). Such additional studies are necessary in order to refine the understanding not only of the links between each major component and defense of place (are some components more essential prerequisites for defense of place than others: e.g., to what extent and in what ways might sense of change or sense of control or sense of community be a necessary prerequisite to action?), but also of the possible links among the major components and defense of place (are there any consistent links among components—e.g., does high sense of change resulting from an outside threat tend to reduce sense of control?; do high sense of change, control and community tend to operate together to lead to defense of place?). Certainly, in the case of the Toronto Island, a strong sense of change (resulting from an outside threat that was perceived as severe) combined with a strong sense of community and a strong sense of (and desire for) control have been crucial to Islanders' taking action to defend their place. A second broad area of research would be into the question of what happens to sense of place when defense of place ceases and no future defense of place action is
taken or required? For example, is a sense of community which has been created and/or reinforced by the threat and consequent defense of place deeply-felt and long-lasting, or is it relatively superficial and ephemeral and does it disappear when the threat is removed and the defensive action ceases? Only additional research can begin to answer these types of questions.

iv. Approach To Planning And Development:

It is not possible to design rootedness nor to guarantee that things will be right in places, but it is perhaps possible to provide conditions that will allow roots and care for places to develop.\(^1\)

Sense of place, as this and other studies have indicated, describes a link between people and places that is far from superficial, but is deeply-felt and deeply-significant. The first step toward creating the conditions "that will allow roots and care for places to develop" is to understand the importance of sense of place and to recognize and respect it where possible when it is encountered in the real world. Often the strongest evidence that sense of place exists among particular people in a particular place is their resistance to a plan to alter or eradicate their place. Rather than regarding such resistance as a sign of selfish obstinacy, planners and decision-makers should begin to recognize it as a sign that something more than originally met their eyes is involved. They should re-evaluate their policies, in light of the reactions, to see if there is indeed an over-riding public need to proceed as originally planned (sometimes there is, but often there is not) or if there is, in fact,

\(^{1}\) Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 146.
some way to accommodate both the general interest and the particular interest. In this re-evaluation, the possibility of maintaining the sense of place among this group should itself be given a high priority. Callously destroying this highly important link between people and places not only risks creating serious emotional, psychological, social and even physical health problems for the particular group of individuals involved, but also risks reducing the very conditions which contribute to creating a healthy wider urban (or non-urban) environment. For, maintaining (and, where possible, helping to create) sense of place among groups of people, it can be argued, is a fundamental building block for creating a viable larger city.

Second, this study underlines the importance of analyzing the special nature of particular places. In addition to seeking general solutions to general problems, planners and decision-makers should also be conscious of the need to seek particular solutions to particular problems and to create the conditions under which differences and the resulting variety can emerge and flourish. In the case of the Toronto Island, for example, rather than automatically adopting the general view that parks and residents do not mix, planners and decision-makers should look more carefully at the particular case and what attractions (and detractions) residents might provide. (The Island is not like a mainland park. Every park on the mainland has residents and/or other potential users close to it. Because of this, even regional parks function as neighbourhood parks as well as regional parks and may benefit from the daily use and informal policing provided by near-by residents. But, because it is an island, if the remaining houses were removed, the Island park would no longer have any residents
or other potential users close by.)

Third, this study has also emphasized the importance of being sensitive to and as much as possible trying to adopt the perspective of an "insider" when seeking to understand sense of place. With respect to planning and development, it is also important for planners and decision-makers to try to understand places from the perspective of "insiders" so that their plans to change particular places can build on (rather than destroy) sense of place. Too often (as indicated here and throughout the planning literature) planners and decision-makers have held environmental images and values far different from those held by "insiders"—and have acted in ignorance of or even in open conflict with these alternate views. In the case of the Toronto Island, for example some politicians have been surprised and even appalled by the Islanders' physical environment (e.g., the "primitive" conditions; small, badly-paved or unpaved streets; little houses and their occasionally scruffy appearance; and so on) and, for this reason as much as any other, have voted to demolish it. (Similar actions were taken in many urban renewal areas across North America and elsewhere, which policy-makers regarded as "slums" and as an affront to civic pride and proper administration, as they understood them.) But simply disliking the appearance of some place is insufficient reason for destroying previous links between people and their places. Understanding the perspective of the "insider" may help to avoid wholesale destruction of this kind. It may also alter and improve plans for development in a whole host of less radical, but still important ways (e.g., retaining; rather than modernizing, old streetlights; retaining, rather than straightening, the curve of streets; retaining rather than
blocking or altering significant views, and so on).

Finally, this study emphasizes that there are six major components of sense of place, and illustrates how they can be used to analyze a particular place. With respect to planning and development, it is useful to keep these six components in mind and see how conditions to promote them might be created in a specific place. For example, since every place has a particular history, residents of a new development or town might be encouraged to develop a sense of history either directly by informing them about that history (in a variety of ways—like exhibitions, publications, local history courses, etc.) or indirectly (by using place names relevant to the place's history or by retaining physical remnants of the past rather than demolishing everything and starting over, etc.). Literally dozens of ideas like these can be culled from the chapters dealing with individual components (e.g., emphasizing distinctive environmental features—like a view, a mountain, a waterfront, an old tree—to foster a sense of environment; creating a carless environment to encourage social contact and sensitivity to the natural environment; encouraging sense of identity and control by authorizing and encouraging people to decorate and alter their house or living environment as they see fit, rather than discouraging or prohibiting them from taking such action; and so on.).

If the Toronto Island community, for example, were to be retained and expanded, this study provides some ideas about how to minimize physical or social disruption. It would be unfortunate, for example, if the existing physical environment were radically altered (e.g., by allowing cars or widening streets or building highrise apartments) or if social splits between "new" and "old" Islanders were to
emerge because a totally different type of community developed. Two suggestions come to mind. First, some of the new housing could take the form of solar housing (of a scale, material and design which would fit in with the existing environment). Beyond this, perhaps a "conservation coop" could be formed of residents in this new housing and residents in some of the existing housing. The coop might provide space for (or even run) a food coop, as one way to draw people together and to provide some needed grocery facilities for a permanent expanded community. This solar housing and conserver coop would probably appeal to the "conserver ethic" shared by so many Islanders and might well attract people who would fit in well with the existing community. The new solar housing itself would perhaps reinforce the image of the residential areas as a distinctive and special place and might even act as a positive tourist attraction to draw visitors to the "park". Second, some of the new housing perhaps could take the form of "shell housing", which the City (or Metro or other level of government) could build and sell to people willing and able to complete the "shell" (according to guidelines ensuring that the existing physical environment was not radically altered). Islanders, it is evident from this study, see themselves as independent, resourceful people (who, for example, own their own homes and can care for them without relying on professionals). Similarly independent, resourceful types of people might well be attracted by this approach to expanding the community. In addition, the price of the shells would be low relative to the cost of finished houses, and therefore could attract residents from a broader spectrum, who would reinforce the existing social mix. (Restrictions on ground leases, residency requirements and resale conditions could
be developed in order to prevent speculators from buying the shells, completing the houses and reselling them at a profit.)

In conclusion, these, and other, ideas can be generated for the Island, and for other places, by planners, developers and policy-makers who open themselves up to places as "insiders" see them and who seek, not to impose outside solutions, but to work cooperatively and creatively with the people who know the place best.
APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF SENSE OF PLACE

Expressions of sense of place may range from simple statements like "we love it here" or warm nostalgia for childhood places through to dramatic reactions to the loss or destruction of significant places. Some examples follow.

Dewey Nickerson, an old fisherman from Sable Island off the coast of Nova Scotia, who crawled around the deck of his father's Cape Island boat before he could walk, tells broadcaster Bill McNeil about his affection for Sable Island, in a simple, unadorned way:

My people were always fishermen as far back as anyone can remember, on and around Sable and Seal Islands, off the shore of Nova Scotia....A lot of people wonder why we stay here on Sable Island. I suppose it's not much of a place for anybody looking at it from the outside. It's really just a long strip of sand—twenty-two miles long—no trees or anything like that, and the weather can be gosh awful—gale winds, storms and that—but we love it!

Another man of the sea, Otto-Kellerman, tells the story of a young sailor trying to get home from the Boston docks in the 1920's—a story which echoes his own feelings about his native Newfoundland:

"Why don't you stay here. A lot of Newfoundlanders are making good money up here." [said the Captain who refused to let the young man on board his ship]. "No," said the young man, "I'd rather be back on my western boat, fishing off Cape St. Mary's, on one meal a day, than five meals up here."

I thought about that young man many times over the years, because that's the way I feel about Newfoundland myself. I'd rather be poor here than rich anywhere else in the world.

John McPhee has written about the New Jersey Pine Barrens, an enormous stretch of near wilderness located incongruously in the most

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2Quoted in Ibid., p. 180.
densely populated state of the United States. He comments on the "piney" affection for their forests and hills and bogs:

I have met Pine Barrens people who have, at one time or another moved to other parts of the country. Most of them tried other lives for a while, only to return reluctantly to the pines. One of them explained to me, "It's a privilege to live in these woods."  

He describes one resident, a quiet loner called Bill Wasovich, who has grown up in the Pine Barrens and who has been engaged in the back-breaking job of clearing out a four acre bog (given to him by his employer) in order to grow cranberries:

I asked him if the land was actually his. He said that his employer had given it to him, but that he had no deed. "It's as good as my bog," he went on. "They can't take it away from me. They could, legally. But they'd have to get the state troopers. They take this bog, they take me with it. I'll get up here with my rifle. I took out stumps in here the size of chairs."

Boyd Gibbons has written about the clash between the residents of the Eastern Shore of Maryland and developer James Rouse over the proposed residential development of Wye Island, which is almost uninhabited. He describes some of the natives of the Eastern Shore who used to live on the Island:

Like people anywhere who have lived in one place their entire lives, the natives of the Eastern shore have an intimate sense of their surroundings....Although it has been forty years or more for some, since they left Wye Island, they remember the island as if their departure had only been yesterday. Howard Melvin says he can draw a map of every field on Wye Island. Sam Whitby says that if you took him blindfolded to any place along its river banks he could tell instantly where he was. "I know this island", he says.

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2 Ibid., p. 67.

Boyce Richardson has described the clash between the Cree Indians of the James Bay area of Quebec, many of whom still hunted and fished in the wilderness of "the bush", and the provincial government of Premier Robert Bourassa, which wanted to flood much of the area for the massive James Bay hydro-electric scheme. He discusses the plight of one young Indian, Charlie Bossum, who, like many of his contemporaries, seems to be caught between two worlds, the white man's world (he works part-time in the mines and has two houses, one in Chibougamau and one on the Mistassini reserve) and the Indians' world (he hunts part-time on his "territory"):

"When I first started hunting, there was an abundant supply of fur-bearing animals and fish and fowl, but you can feel the white man is coming closer and closer. Even if there are hardly any animals left on my territory, I would still feel much better to be there than where I am right now. I think everybody who loves and respects the land would feel the same way."

He admits to a great confusion about his two houses, one in Mistassini and one in Chibougamau. For neither of them is really home to him. "I do not have that true feeling about them. Home is when I'm in the bush."¹

Throughout the book, Richardson gives evidence of the Indians' profound attachment to their land. He describes one gathering of Cree hunters (who had been flown out of the bush specially to discuss a government offer of settlement):

I went to the meeting in Mistassini. Weather-beaten and ragged from their months of hard work in the bush, the hunters gathered in the school auditorium, and when they got to their feet they spoke of only one thing, their land. They spoke with the passion, feeling and perception of poets. They talked about the purpose that the Creator had when he created the earth and put the animals on it and gave them to the Indians to survive on. They talked of how they had worked and suffered for the land, and of how the animals and the land had helped them to survive. They talked about the white man; and his thoughtless ways, his failure to ask

¹Boyce Richardson, Strangers Devour the Land (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1975), p. 99.
their permission before he invaded their lands, the things they had silently observed him do over the last two decades. Over and over again they declared their affection for the land and their knowledge that its destruction meant their destruction.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 307-308.}

This theme of attachment to the land is emphasized by Robert Coles in his study of children of migrant farm workers, Southern sharecroppers, and Appalachian mountain people. He writes:

Yet, for all three [despite the differences] the land means everything, the land and what grows on it, what can be found under it, what the seasons do to it, and what man does to it, and indeed what long ago was done to it by a mysterious Nature, or an equally baffling chronicle of events called History, or what it was made by God.\footnote{Robert Coles, Migrants, Sharecroppers and Mountaineers — Volume II of Children of Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), pp. 5, 23.}

For all the distinctions to be made, the classifications and comparisons, the "cross-cultural" similarities or the psychological and sociological differences, what is shared among these people might be called something of the spirit: a closeness to the land, a familiarity with it, and despite the suffering and the sacrifice and rage and hurt and pain, a constant regard for that land, an attachment to that land, a kind of love.\footnote{Ibid., p. 203.}

In one of many examples of this profound attachment, Coles describes how Appalachian children he has observed "are almost symbolically or ritualistically given over to the land"\footnote{Ibid., p. 203.} and tells of a newborn baby being taken outside to see his "daddy's land" in Deep Hollow:

Danny's first encounter with the Appalachian land took place minutes after he was taken, breathing and screaming, from his mother. Laura describes what happened "....When Danny was born Dorothy took him over and showed him the blackberries and said it won't be long before he'll be eating them....Then he was still crying and she asked me if I didn't think he ought to go outside and see his daddy's corn growing up there good and tall....Ken held him high over his head and pointed him around like he was one of the guns being aimed. I heard him telling the baby that here was the corn, there was the beets, there was the cucumbers....He [came in to see
me and said did I mind the little fellow lying out there near his
daddy's farm, getting to know Deep Hollow, and I said no, why
should I, and he's better off there than in here with me...."¹

Attachment to place is not only a rural or wilderness phenomenon.
Michael Young and Peter Willmott, for example, studied the East London
working class district of Bethnal Green. Some of the residents gave
rather simple statements of belonging in one spot, and of not belonging
in another:

"It's all right on this side of the canal," said Mrs. Gould, who
lives in Bow. "I wouldn't like to live on the other side of the
canal. It's different there."²

More dramatic evidence of attachment to the area was provided during
the Blitz of World War II:

Other researchers have reported how difficult it was to get
people to move even in the war:

Many stories were told of families who would rather camp in
the kitchens of their uninhabitable blitzed houses or sleep
in public shelters than accept accommodation in another area
of the borough.³

Sense of place may be felt for a currently known place or for
a remembered place. Robert Thomas Allen writes warmly and vividly
about growing up on the Danforth in Toronto during the 1920's. He
describes a summertime visit "up the bush" (as he and his friends
called it) to their camp in the Don Valley (which now contains an ex-
pressway and is over-looked by highrise apartment buildings):

¹Ibid., pp. 212-213.

²Michael Young and Peter Willmott, Family and Kinship In East
London (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962; originally published 1957),
pp. 111.

³Ibid., p. 111. They quote R. Glass and M. Frenkel, "How They
Live At Bethnal Green," Contact: Britain Between East and West
Nobody today can get farther away from the city in a hard day's drive (or even flight) than we used to get when we disappeared into that small curve of valley. Each section had a character and mood of its own: a dry, breezy ridge of oak trees; a dark swampy grove where we once saw an owl, a fierce and watchful visitor from another world; a muddy stretch of the bank of the river where the water gurgled and rolled around a big smooth granite boulder with underwater weeds streaming downstream like pennants; a patch of sandy beach about twenty-five feet long that had the feeling of a tropical island; and an eroded clay-and-sand bank, known as The Cliffs. The immediate surroundings of the camp became intimate parts of our lives—every stump, log, weed, and stone; a patch of jewelweed that sent up a spray of dew and popped seeds when we walked through it; a fat smooth, barkless log that felt warm and friendly beneath our pants.1

He describes a more recent visit to this much loved, but much changed place and his ability to project himself back to the earlier era:

But for me everything is still there, just the way it was when we left it years ago. So are the other places I knew when I was a kid, although most of them have disappeared physically. 2

Wallace Stegner, on a visit to his prairie boyhood home of "Whitemud" forty years after leaving it, describes his reluctance (and refusal) to revisit the site of his family's former homestead, some forty miles out of town. For him (unlike Robert Thomas Allen), the visit would be too painful. He would be all too aware of the changes:

It would be no more than thirty or forty miles out of my way, now, and yet I do not turn south to try to find it, and I know very well why. I am afraid to... I don't want to find, as I know I will if I go down there, that we have vanished without a trace like a boat sunk in mid-ocean. I don't want our shack to be gone, as I know it is; I would not enjoy hunting the ground for broken crockery and rusty nails and bits of glass. I don't want to know that our protective pasture fence has been pulled down to let the prairie in, or that our field, which stopped at the Line [U.S. - Canadian

1 Robert Thomas Allen, My Childhood and Yours (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1978), pp. 19-20. This is a marvellously evocative reminiscence which is redolent of the sights, sounds, smells, feelings and moods of childhood and of well-remembered childhood places.

2 Ibid., p. 164.
border] and so defined a sort of identity and difference, now flows southward into Montana without a break as restored grass and burn-outs. Once, standing alone under the bell-jar sky gave me the strongest feeling of personal singularity I shall ever have. That was because it was all new, we were taking hold of it to make it ours. But to return hunting relics, to go down there armed with memory and find every trace of our passage wiped away—that would be to reduce my family, myself, and the hard effort of years, to solipsism, to make us as fictive as a dream.¹

The loss or destruction of places frequently provides the most poignant and dramatic examples of a sense of place. Tuan recounts the well-known (reported) reaction of a citizen of Carthage to the Romans' proposed punishment of banishing the Carthaginians and destroying their city. He writes, in part:

From the historic period of the ancient Mediterranean world we can find many expressions of love for place. One of the most eloquent was attributed to a citizen of Carthage. When the Romans were about to destroy Carthage at the end of the Third Punic War, a citizen pleaded with them thus:

...We propose an alternative more desirable for us and more glorious for you. Spare the city which has done you no harm, but, if you please, kill us, whom you have ordered to move away. In this way you will seem to vent your wrath upon men, not upon temples, gods, tombs, and an innocent city.²

War, unfortunately, all too often provides examples of places that have been destroyed. Harvey Cox describes two more recent incidents which occurred as a result of World War II. First, the village of Lidice. The occupying German forces shot all the men over twelve,

¹Wallace Stegner, Wolf Willow (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, Laurentian Library edition, 1977), p. 8. Stegner also describes the importance to him of the paths they made, 'because they were part of taking possession of the prairie; of humanizing it and making it a distinctive "place".

²Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977), p. 151. Whether this really happened, we cannot know. But, as Tuan rightly points out, even though the account was written several hundred years after the event, "the pleas at least made good sense to the Roman readers for whom it was written, whereas to us it verges on the incredible." (p. 152)
shipped all the women and children to separate concentration camps, 
burned the entire village, destroyed all the trees and foliage, 
ploughed up all the ground, and even ordered that the name be erased 
from all maps of Czechoslovakia. Cox goes on to describe the reactions 
of one survivor:

I can recall quite vividly a conversation I had two years ago with 
one of the women who had survived the Nazi destruction of Lidice 
in Czechoslovakia....The woman survivor confessed to me that 
despite the loss of her husband and the extended separation from 
her children, the most striking blow of all was to return to the 
crest of the hill overlooking Lidice at the end of the war—and 
find nothing there, not even ruins.1

And, second, he describes the rebuilding of the Old City of Warsaw:

Warsaw provides an incomparable example of the symbolic role a 
place with a name plays for people. When the Poles began to re-
build Warsaw, ninety percent destroyed by the Germans, they began 
with the ancient Stare Mastro, the "Old City", a tiny core of 
buildings, monuments and churches at the centre of the city. 
Although the Stare Mastro was not terribly useful in any practi-
cical sense, it provided an indispensable symbolic focus. The 
rebuiders, using detailed paintings by Canelletto and referring 
to yellowing floor plans and drawings, reconstructed the Stare 
Mastro brick by brick as it had originally stood. The Germans 
believed they had wiped Warsaw from the map, and so did many 
Poles. "But once the Stare Mastro was reconstituted, the rest 
of the enormous task of reconstruction seemed worthwhile. "Warsaw" 
was once again something, some place. Life could go on."2

Finally, Relph cites an example provided by R.J. Lifton in his study 
of the survivors of Hiroshima:

a history professor described his reaction to the destruction 
thus:

"I climbed Hioyama Hill and looked down. I saw that Hiroshima 
had disappeared....I was shocked by the sight....What I felt 
then and still feel now I just can't explain with words. Of

1Harvey Cox, "The Restoration of a Sense of Place: A Theolog-
ical Reflection On The Visual Environment," Ekistics 25 (June 1968), 
pp. 422-423.

2Ibid., p. 423.
course, I saw many dreadful scenes after that—but that experience, looking down and finding nothing left of Hiroshima—was so shocking that I simply can't express what I felt.¹

Governments of all sorts, with professed good intentions and expressions of the social value of various policies, have been responsible for the loss or destruction of significant places and the consequent unhappy results. Marc Fried studied the displaced former residents of Boston's West End, who had been forced to move because the West End was demolished in the course of an urban renewal scheme. He reports:

At their most extreme, these reactions of grief are intense, deeply felt, and, at times, overwhelming. In response to a series of questions concerning the feelings of sadness and depression which people experienced after moving, many replies were unambiguous: "I felt like my heart was taken out of me," "I felt like taking the gas pipe," "I lost all the friends I knew," "I always felt I had to go home to the West End and even now I feel like crying when I pass by," "Something of me went with the West End," "I felt cheated," "What's the use of thinking about it," "I threw up a lot," "I had a nervous breakdown."²

Fried reported that although some people were overjoyed with the change and felt no sense of loss, "at least 46% gave evidence of a fairly severe grief reaction or worse."³

In Newfoundland, under the government policies of Premier "Joey" Smallwood, many of the small out-ports (isolated fishing villages strung out along the extensive coastline) were closed up and residents moved to larger centres (where, the government felt, they


³Ibid., p. 152.
could benefit from the facilities available only in larger centres—
better schools, recreation facilities, hospitals and so on). The
human cost, however, must also have been high. In researching his
book, *Salt Water, Fresh Water*, Allan Anderson encountered a Newfoundland broadcaster, Les Stoodley, who told the following story about an old "Skipper" who reacted to the closing of the outports with quiet,
even dignified, resentment:

"Old Skipper" I called him, and this was a sign, a word of respect.
I said, "Skipper, what are you doing now?" "Not very much at all.
We're living in Red Harbour with our daughter." "Where are you
from?" "From Flat Islands. They called it Port Elizabeth after
Confederation [1949] to dress it up a bit, but it was still Flat
Islands." And I said, "What do you think of the centralization
that Joey has brought in?" "Ach...a pack of foolishness that is.
God damn nonsense." He said, "I'm telling you something, sir,
we lives in Red Island, but my home is on Flat Islands, and I'm
going to tell you something else. Joey Smallwood and that bunch
in St. John's can do all they wants to, but every spring I'm
going back to Flat Islands 'til the day I dies, and I'm going to
be buried there." "Why is that, sir?" "Well, my son, I'm going to
tell you something. You can't take people away from where they
come from. My mother and father is buried over there and my
children was buried over there, and they was born over there,
what's alive, and my 'ouse is over there—I built myself before
we was married." He said, "you can take people off the place
where they lived, but you can't take them away from home."

Finally, nature itself may destroy places and give rise to em-
otional expressions of loss and sense of place. Betty Kennedy, writing
about the major natural disaster to affect Toronto in recent years,
Hurricane Hazel, which struck on the night of October 15, 1954, des-
cribes one woman's reaction to the destruction of an entire street,

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Raymore Drive, where all the houses were swept away and over thirty people perished:

As the rising waters drove people out of their houses, emergency shelters had to be provided for them; supplies to fight the storm were badly needed. One of the gallant people who helped at the height of the hurricane was William Solomon, a druggist. He was called upon by the Red Cross to help, and his panel truck was soon at work delivering things like rubber boots and ropes where they were needed. He took them to a church on the outskirts of the flooded area: "I'll never forget the sight. Hundreds of people, babies crying, everyone huddled together, people looking for friends and relatives, a woman in shock, saying over and over again, 'The whole street disappeared.'"  

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1 Betty Kennedy, Hurricane Hazel (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), p. 60.
APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY

1937-'38: Island Airport
Moving of West Island Drive Houses to Algonquin
(formerly Sunfish) Island

1943: High Water

1947: High Water
City of Toronto Planning Board Proposal

1948: Inter-Island Council Formed (IIC)
IIC Briefs re: Future of the Island (April and August)

1949: Inter-Island Council Plan (November)

1951: Joint Plan of the Toronto City Planning Board and the Toronto
Harbour Commissioners (September)

1952: High Water
Mayor Lamport's Health Menace Threat (spring)

1953: Mayor Lamport's Plan (January and April)
Inter-Island Council Plan (May)
Creation of Metropolitan Toronto (April 15, 1953 Ceremonial
Inaugural Meeting: Frederick G. Gardiner Metro Chairman)

1954: City Council Votes to Transfer Island to Metro (February 22)
Metro Council Votes Approval in Principle of Transfer (March 16)

1955: Tugboat Mutiny (January 7)
Metro Council Votes to Accept Island Transfer (March 22)
T.W. Thompson hired as first Metro Parks Commissioner (summer)
Blumenfeld Plan For Mixed Uses Rejected by Metro Planning Board
(November)

1956: Toronto Island Transferred From City to Metro (January 1)
Thompson Plan: auto access, raised level, lease terminations
(February)
Federal Government Rejects Paying For Tunnel (March)
Metro Approves Clearing and Raising Level of Centre Island
(November)

1957: Clearing and Raising Level of Centre Begins (spring)
Island Businessmen Ask For Earlier Termination of Leases
(October)

1958: Inter-Island Council Objects to Some Centre Island Lease Terminations and Gains Extension to March 31, 1959 (May)
1959: Inter-Island Council Gains Minor Extension for Some Centre Islanders

1961: Park Development Continues

1962: Ferry Service Transferred from T.T.C. to Metro (January 1) William Allen Elected Metro Chairman

1963: Thompson: $12 million Toronto Island Master Plan Unveiled (March) Inter-Island Council Briefs Against Master Plan (April 11; June 6) Metro Council Rejects Lease Extensions (June 18) Metro Council Rejects Lease Extensions (September 11)

1964: Metro Council Votes One-Year Delay in Expropriation of 18 Houses (May 21) Thompson: Master Plan for the Development of Toronto Island Park (October 8) Master Plan Deferred to 1965 (October 18)

1965: Metro Council Endorses Part of Master Plan: i.e., children's camp and property acquisition schedule (March 23) Metro Council Votes to Ask Federal Government For Funds For Tunnel (April 6) Expropriation Bill For 11 Properties on Proposed Children's Camp-site Fails to be Read For Third Time At Metro Council (August 5) Thompson's 25-Year Development Concept For Regional Metropolitan Parks Adopted in Principle But Deferred to 1966 (November 18)

1966: Metro Gives Up Tunnel As Too Expensive (July) 1965 Expropriation Bill Deferred to 1967 (November 3) 25-Year Development Concept For Regional Metropolitan Parks Adopted by Metro Council (November 3) Municipal Elections: Island Residents Action Committee Slate (November 18)


1968: Metro Council Votes Against Any Further Extensions For Lakeshore Residents—End of the "Lakeshore Battle" (June 11)

1969: Formation of Toronto Island Residents Association--TIRA (July) Ab Campbell Elected Metro Chairman (September 2) Municipal Elections (December)
1970:  Metro Parks Committee Tour of the Island (April 9)
Brewin Brief For TIRAt At Metro Parks Committee (April 9)
Metro Council Votes For One Year Extension to August 31, 1971,
With Attrition Clause—i.e., no transfers of property (April 21)

1971:  Metro Parks Committee Votes For a One-Month Extension For Ward's
and a One-Year Extension For Algonquin (June 25)
Island Residents Reject Proposal to Split Community (June)
Metro Council Votes For An Extension With An Automatic Renewal
Clause (i.e., each year leases automatically renewed for another
year unless 90 days notice given) (June 29)

1972:  Municipal Elections (Crombie defeats Rotenberg and O'Donohue to
become Toronto's Mayor; "Reform" City Council) (December 4)

1973:  High Water and Flooding (spring)
Thompson Report: Recommends Transfer to City or Proceed With Park
(April 13)
Metro Parks Committee Tour of the Island (April 19)
Metro Parks Committee: TIRAt Brief; Vote to Terminate Island
Leases as of August 1973 (April 19)
City Council Votes To Ask Metro Council To Grant 5-Year Lease
Extension (April 27)
Metro Executive Votes To Offer To Transfer Ward's and Algonquin
To the City; But if the City Fails To Accept The Offer By
May 23, To Terminate Island Leases As Of August 31, 1974.
(April 27)
Metro Council Votes To Extend Leases For One Year (Until August
31, 1974) and To Ask the City and the Metro Parks Commissioner
to Report On Their Proposals for the Area (May 1)
Paul Godfrey Elected Metro Chairman (summer)
City of Toronto, Toronto's Island Park Neighbourhoods (September)
Thompson's Reports (October 11)
Public Meetings About the Future of the Island (November 14, 19, 20)
Central Waterfront Planning Committee Endorses City Report
(November 15)
City of Toronto Planning Board Endorses City Report (November 20)
City Executive and City Council Endorse City Report (November 21)
Metro Parks Committee Votes To Terminate Leases August 31, 1974
(November 29)
Metro Executive Committee Sends No Recommendation To Council
(December 4)
Metro Council Votes To Terminate Leases August 31, 1974
(December 11)

1974: Islander's Spring Campaign To Reopen and Reverse the Metro
Decision (January–June)
Public Forum (March 20)
Islanders Meet With Chairman Godfrey (April 16)
Islanders Meet With City Politicians (April 23 and April 26)
York Council Supports Metro Decision (May 13)
1974:  Metro Social Services Committee Rules Cosgrove Motion Out-of-Order (May 23)
       North York Council Supports Metro Decision (May 27)
       Metro Council Votes Against Cosgrove Motion to Reopen (May 31)
       Metro Council Rules Crambie Motion Out-of-Order (June 18)
       City Council Votes To Redesignate Ward's and Algonquin As Residential (Rather Than Open Space) In City Official Plan (June 27)
       Islanders Initiate Legal Battle (July)
       City Council Rejects Islanders' Referendum Request (October 30)
       Municipal Elections (December)

1975:  Metro Council Votes Against Eggleton Motion (April 8)
       Supreme Court of Ontario Upholds Evictions But Grants One Year Extension To August 31, 1975 (April 25)
       Provincial Election—Liberal and N.D.P. Parties Support Retention of Island Community; Conservative minority (September)
       M.P.P. Larry Grossman Introduces Private Member's Bill To Transfer Ward's and Algonquin From Metro to City (December 4)
       City Council Reconfirms Its November 1973 Position In Favour of Transferring Ward's and Algonquin From Metro to the City (December 10)

1976:  Ontario Court of Appeal Rules Eviction Notices Null and Void (March 17)
       Metro Council Votes to Seek Leave To Appeal (April 6)
       Municipal Elections (December)

1977:  Supreme Court of Canada Reverses Ontario Court of Appeal Decision and Supports Earlier Ruling of Ontario Supreme Court—i.e., leases end August 31, 1975 (June 23); Provincial Election—Conservative minority (May)

1978:  Metro Wins Writs of Possession in York County Court (October 19 & 24)
       Supreme Court of Ontario Rejects Islanders' Appeal of County Court Decision: Writs of Possession Are Valid (October 20)
       Islanders Decide Not To Appeal: The First Legal Battle Ends (October 24)
       Ontario Legislature Endorses Liberal M.P.P. Sean Conway's Resolution That Ward's and Algonquin Islands Should be Transferred From Metro To the City (November 16)
       Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells Announces Not A Transfer But Mediation and a 6-month Reprieve (December 4)
       Municipal Elections (November)

1979:  Unsuccessful Negotiations Between Mayor John Sewell and Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey
       Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells Introduces Bill 153 to enable present residents to stay on the Island until they move or die, whereupon their properties would be transferred to Metro (October 19)
       Bill 153 Rejected by Islanders, City, and Both Provincial Opposition Parties
1979: Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells withdraws Bill 153, but promises to reintroduce a similar bill in the spring (December)

1980: Mayor John Sewell's initiative to transfer Ward's and Algonquin from Metro to the city and to compensate Metro is rejected by Metro Council; Metro Council votes that if the province does not pass a bill similar to Bill 153 by June 30, 1980, the writs of possession should be enforced (February 26/27)
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells reintroduces Island Bill—now Bill 5—into the provincial legislature (March 13)
City Council endorses a plan for the city to buy Ward's and Algonquin Islands from Metro in order to preserve and expand the island residential community (May 14)
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells does not bring Bill 5 forward to provincial legislature for second reading; announces formation of 5-person commission to be headed by Barry Swadron; asks Metro and city to each appoint 2 representatives; asks Metro not to enforce writs until commission reports in fall (June 19)
Metro Council receives Wells' letter, does not appoint representatives and does not vote not to enforce writs (June 24)
Toronto Island Public Rally attended by 2,000+ supporters (July 1)
City Council appoints 2 representatives to Swadron Commission (July 21)
Metro Executive approves 25-year leases for yacht clubs; rules any discussion of residential areas "out-of-order" (July 23)
Ontario Supreme Court rules Metro's writs of possession invalid (July 24)
Sheriff goes to Island; agrees not to proceed until Islanders' request for leave to appeal is heard (July 28)
Ontario Court of Appeal grants Islanders leave to appeal Ontario Supreme Court decision (July 31)
One-Man Swadron Commission commences inquiry (August)
Ontario Court of Appeal rules Metro writs of possession valid (October 27)
Sheriff delivers (by mail) writs of possession and notice to vacate by November 17, 1980 (November 4)
Municipal elections: Arthur Eggleton defeats John Sewell to become mayor of the city of Toronto (November 10)
Provincial bill to stay execution of the Metro writs until July 1, 1981 introduced and passed (November 13)

1981: Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Wells releases Swadron report which recommends retention of Island community and announces provincial government support; Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey denounces provincial stand (March 9)
Metro Council votes to spend $250,000 to fight the province and the Swadron report and to promote the policy of turning Ward's and Algonquin Islands into parkland (March 17)
Provincial election—Conservatives win majority (March 19)
**APPENDIX C**

**ISLAND VISITS**

I have visited the Island dozens of times since spending the summer there in 1974 and have gone for a variety of reasons: to enjoy the surroundings with my family, to visit Island friends, to attend meetings and special events, to interview residents, to sort through files and photographs and so on. I have not recorded the dates and purposes of all my visits, but to give some indication of the time and depth of involvement required in order to conduct this type of research, I have listed my "official" visits. It is clear from scanning even these that I have visited the Island at all times of year and, although I do not have the days of the week or the times recorded, I can add that these visits have taken place at all times of day and on every day of the week as well.

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APPENDIX D

ISLANDERS’ INTERVIEWS

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

(The precise questions varied according to the background of the Respondent and the flow of the interview.)

When did you first move to the Island?

Where did you live before? (place; type of house; where grew up)

Why did you move to the Island?
- What did you expect Island life to be like?
- How much did you know about the political situation when you first came here?
- Were you attracted by the political situation?
- How did you meet people?
- Did anything surprise you about Island life?

Where was your first Island house and how did you find it?
- Did you know anyone on the Island?
- Where else have you lived on the Island? (personal Island residential history)
- Why did you move to this particular house?

Do you remember your first Island winter? What was it like?

Do you have a favourite season? Characterize the seasons on the Island.

Do you have any favourite "places" that you like to visit?

Do you think there's anything special about living on an "island"?

Have you personally changed as a result of living on the Island? (life style, career goals, attitudes, political attitudes etc.)
- Someone once suggested that Islanders are less career-oriented than other people and care more about their non-work activities. Comment?

What do you like/dislike about Island life?

What sort of people do you think would be happy living here?
- Would not be happy living here?

Outsiders tend to lump all Islanders together, but that may not be accurate.
- Do you think there are differences between Ward's and Algonquin?
- Within the Ward's (Algonquin) community, can you identify different groups?
ISLANDERS' INTERVIEWS (cont.)

-Can you identify any differences/conflicts between summer and year-round residents? Between "old" and "new" Islanders?

What effect(s) do you think the long political struggle and uncertainty has had on the Island? (morale, condition of houses, health of residents, population etc.).

If the political and some of the physical stresses were removed, would the Island community be pretty much like any other Toronto community?

When did you first become involved in the Island political life? Why?

What was the reaction to the 1956 plan?

When did people at this end of the Island begin to become active in their opposition to the park plan?

Let's look briefly at recent political history:

-What were your reactions to the City report (September 1973)?
-Prior to December 11, 1973, did you expect to win at Metro Council?
-Did you go to that meeting? What were your reactions?
-How did you feel after the meeting?
-What role did: Godfrey/Archer/Crombie play?

Let's look at the 1974 Campaign to Reopen and Change Votes:
-Was the Campaign well-organized? (were any functions left out?)
-Were you in favour of hiring an organizer?
-Did you agree with the basic strategy (alliance building; public support)?
-What activities were you involved in?
-You were in charge of the Committee:
  -What were its aims?
  -What was its structure?
  -How successful were you?

-Some animosity seemed to develop with City politicians. Is that true and why did it happen?
-Some people have said that Islanders have been too "isolated" from other City issues. Do you agree?
-What did you learn from this Spring Campaign? Do you have any retrospective suggestions about what should have been done?
-What did you think about the Island Non-Profit Housing Association (INPHA) idea?

Reopenings:
-Cosgrove (May 31): Did you expect to win?
  Did you lobby?
  Did you attend the meeting? What was your reaction?

-Crombie (June 18): Did you support his motion? (Were you covered by it?)
ISLANDERS' INTERVIEWS (cont.)

Municipal Election 1974:
-What role did Islanders take? Evaluate that role.

Reopening April 8, 1975--Egleton motion:
-Why do you think Egleton became involved?
-Did you expect to win at Metro Council?

Why do you think most suburban politicians have been so opposed to Islanders?

In general, have your views about municipal politics changed as a result of your experience?
-What lessons have you learned from your experience in municipal politics?
-Have you noticed any evolution in Islanders' political attitudes?

Let's assume that you lose on all fronts (OMB, courts, etc.) and also that a large number of Islanders refuse to leave. What do you think Metro would do?

From a political standpoint, what do you think Islanders should do now? (with the Province; with the general public; with yourselves?)

Have you ever seriously considered moving? When? Why?

If you had to move, ideally (money and other constraints aside), where would you move to? Why?

If you had to move to the City, where in the City would you ideally move?
-How do you think your life would be different?

If you had to move, what would you miss about the Island?
APPENDIX E

POLITICIANS' INTERVIEWS

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

(The precise questions varied according to the background of the Respondent and the flow of the interview.)

When did you first start serving on Metro Council?

What did you know about the Island/ers before you became politically involved in the issue?

Now that you have been politically involved, what is your general impression of the Islanders (what type of people) and the Island community? (reactions to the social and physical aspects)

When did you last visit the Island? Have you ever been in an Island house?

Why have you (not) supported Islanders?
   - Are there any limits to your support? (i.e., are there any conditions under which you would no longer support them?)
   - When did you make your decision (not) to support them? Was it a hard decision?
   - What in your view would be an "ideal" solution?

I'd like to run through the political history of the issue:

(pre-1973 period varied very much according to respondent; all respondents, however, had been involved in the 1973-1975 period at least)

Are you familiar with the City report on the issue (September 1973)? How did you react to it? Did it influence your decision? How did you react to each of the following elements:
   - the idea of a permanent (as opposed to a temporary) community?
   - the idea of returning the land to the City?
   - the idea of "mixed use"?
   - the idea of a coop?
   - the idea of possibly expanding the residential area?

What did you think of Thompson's reports? Did they influence your decision?

Let's look briefly at the period leading up to the December 11th Metro vote:
   - Were you lobbied by Islanders? (Who? What pitch? How did you react?)
   - Were you lobbied by any pro-Island City politicians? (Crombie, Jaffary, etc.)
   - Were you lobbied by any anti-Island Metro Councillors? (Godfrey? Harris? etc.)
POLITICIANS' INTERVIEWS (cont.)

- Did you lobby for/against Islanders?
- Were any trade-offs being discussed?
- Who, if anyone, was orchestrating the pro (anti)-Island side?
- What role has Godfrey played? Why is he anti-Islander?
- How important was the fact that Islanders didn't have their own alderman's support? What role did Archer play?
- What role has Crombie played?
- City never presented its position as a "City" position. Would that have made any difference?
- What, if anything, has Thompson done to influence politicians?
- Has he ever approached you?

Islanders had a vigorous Campaign to change votes in the Spring of 1974:
- If you had been an Islander, how would you have gone about trying to influence members of Metro Council?
- Some people have suggested that Islanders could and should have gotten the various local councils to pass motions favouring the retention of the Island community. Do you think this would have been possible in ____ (name borough)? How would you have reacted if such a motion had been passed? Would you have felt bound by such a motion?
- Some people have suggested that Islanders have been too "nice" and too "passive" and that they should be more "aggressive". Do you agree?
- During this period (last Spring) were you lobbied by Islanders? (Who? What pitch? How did you react?) or During this period did you lobby for Islanders? (Who? What pitch did you use? How did they react?)
- Some groups in ______ supported the retention of Island homes. Why and Has their support of Islanders influenced you?
- Were you aware of the Toronto Life poll? Did it influence you?

Cosgrove made a motion to re-open the issue on May 31, 1974:
- How did you react to the May 31st demonstration?
- What affect did it have on other Metro representatives?

Islanders worked in various campaigns during the 1974 municipal election.
- Did they work in yours? Were you ever concerned that they might have an effect on your own election? Did they?

You voted for/against having a referendum in the City on the 1974 municipal election ballot. Why? If there had been a referendum in the City and Islanders had won it, do you think that would have made any difference at Metro?

Eggleton made a motion regarding the Island on April 8, 1975 and you opposed/supported it.
- Eggleton discussed this and other motions with a variety of politicians. Did he discuss it with you?
- Why do you think Eggleton took up the Island cause?
- Is the City-Suburban split on the present (1975) Metro Council a reality? What effect has it had on the Island issue?
POLITICIANS' INTERVIEWS (cont.)

- What do you think of the Reform Caucus? What effect has it had on Metro Council?

Some people say that the bureaucracy "runs" Metro. Do you agree? How much of your time do you spend on Metro matters?

Do City and suburban politicians tend to have different approaches to government and different political styles?

What role has Godfrey/Crombie/Thompson/Archer/Harris played?

Let's assume that Islanders lose on all fronts: OMB, courts, etc. Let's also assume that a large number of Islanders refuse to leave. What do you think Metro would do?

Why do you think most suburban politicians have opposed Islanders? Why do you think most City politicians have supported Islanders?

Why do you live in _____?
APPENDIX F

FERRY STATISTICS

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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>483,000</td>
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</table>


$^2$The Metro Planning Board report noted on p.6: "The ferry service came under T.T.C. jurisdiction in 1927 and records indicate that for a number of years it carried in excess of 1 million passengers per year."

$^3$The record carried on one day was 50,000 in 1931. Ibid., p.6.

$^4$The record carried on one day in the 1945-1964 period was 43,000 on one day in July, 1945. Ibid., p.6.
### FERRY STATISTICS (cont.)

<table>
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<th>YEAR</th>
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<th>APRIL-SEPTEMBER</th>
<th>OCTOBER-MARCH</th>
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<td>490,700</td>
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<td>1959</td>
<td>617,000</td>
<td>577,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>510,200</td>
<td>471,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>1962</td>
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<td>796,697</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>856,612</td>
<td>802,139</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>857,261</td>
<td>803,280</td>
<td>53,981</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>855,673</td>
<td>802,586</td>
<td>53,087</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>1,114,743</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>1,177,270</td>
<td>1,121,055</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>1,304,332</td>
<td>1,251,139</td>
<td>53,193</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>1,426,713</td>
<td>1,371,312</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>1,408,392</td>
<td>1,353,018</td>
<td>55,374</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>1,254,580</td>
<td>1,199,158</td>
<td>55,422</td>
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<td>1,241,042</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>1,265,915(^1)</td>
<td>1,203,511</td>
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<td>1976</td>
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<td>1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1,273,553</td>
<td>1,229,857</td>
<td>43,696</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1,289,872</td>
<td>1,250,145</td>
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</table>

\(^1\)The record carried on one day in the 1965-1979 period was 43,494 on July 1, 1974.
The Sydron report, *Pressure Island*, was released in March 1981 and contained the following table, which was compiled by the Toronto Transit Commission for the years 1927-1981 when it operated the Island ferry service. Note that the table is based on one-way trips, so all totals must be halved in order to compare them with the data contained in the previous table. There are some unexplained differences in totals, but the general pattern is similar: over a million passengers were transported to and from the Island during most of the 1940's (with 1944 being the peak year); usage began to fall again in the 1950's (first because of high water and then because of demolitions, dwindling population and park construction).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PASSENGERS CARRIED</th>
<th>TOTAL REVENUE (PASSENGER AND FREIGHT)</th>
<th>TOTAL COST TO OPERATIONS INCLUDING FIXED CHARGES</th>
<th>DEFICIT</th>
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<td>144,976</td>
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<td>74,190</td>
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<td>1,479,892</td>
<td>163,871</td>
<td>309,726</td>
<td>45,855</td>
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<td>186,116</td>
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<td>1,938,549</td>
<td>160,279</td>
<td>216,910</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1,953,651</td>
<td>168,739</td>
<td>205,385</td>
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<tr>
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<td>38,197</td>
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<td>204,319</td>
<td>46,671</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,832,775</td>
<td>161,671</td>
<td>202,197</td>
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<td>189,954</td>
<td>30,547</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,730,529</td>
<td>145,946</td>
<td>186,428</td>
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<td>213,672</td>
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<td>237,302</td>
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<td>222,839</td>
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<td>152,141</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX G

PROBLEMS IN ESTIMATING ISLAND POPULATION

In a small area, with both summer and winter residents and a rapidly changing population, it is virtually impossible to determine an accurate figure. The Assessment Rolls are incomplete and do not distinguish between summer and winter residents. The Census figures are too infrequent and do not distinguish between summer and winter people. The Municipal and Provincial Voters Lists are irregular, include only eligible voters, do not distinguish between summer and winter people and are not always available. Newspaper estimates are erratic, but sometimes the only available source. Ferry statistics (Appendix F) and School enrolment figures (Appendix H) are relatively accurate guides to the pattern of population growth and decline, but, of course, do not reveal the actual population figures themselves.
APPENDIX H

TORONTO ISLAND SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>DECEMBER</th>
<th>JUNE</th>
</tr>
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<td>1924-1925</td>
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<td>1931-1932</td>
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<td>1937-1938</td>
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<td>1942-1943</td>
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1These figures are culled from the monthly enrolment figures at the Toronto Board of Education Archive.

2Minutes, Toronto Board of Education.

* November figure because December was missing.
** October figure because September was missing.
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<tr>
<th>SCHOOL YEAR</th>
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<th>JUNE</th>
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</thead>
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<td>1958-1959</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>This marks the peak enrollment.

** October figure because September was missing.
APPENDIX I

DEMOLITION OF ISLAND PROPERTIES

After the City voted to transfer the Island to Metro, but before Metro actually took over the Island in 1956, the City began acquiring and demolishing Island houses, 73 properties in total. When Metro took over the Island, there were 652 properties. Metro continued the demolition programme. By 1960, only 390 properties remained. During the 1960's, another 123 properties had been demolished. Metro began its demolition programme with part of Centre Island, then moved from Hanlan's, through the rest of Centre and along Lakeshore Avenue on Ward's Island, finally halting at Lenore Avenue. Since the late 1960's, the large-scale demolitions have stopped, although scattered individual houses have been torn down. At a public forum to discuss the Island issue on March 20, 1974, Scarborough Controller Karl Mallette (an opponent of retaining Island houses) read out the following information about Island demolitions. His figures are corroborated by scattered Metro Parks Department reports, notably a report dated April 14, 1967 and another report dated June 18, 1971.

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APPENDIX J

PRESS RELEASE*
FROM THE METRO CITIZENS FOR THE ISLAND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

PUBLIC OPINION DEMANDS ISLAND COMMUNITY RETENTION

Confirming the results of an independent public opinion poll taken by the Elliott Research Co., which found that 62% of Metro citizens support retention of the Island homes, 23% oppose it, and 15% are undecided, public support for the Island Community continues to grow.

OVER 30,000 INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS OF METRO TORONTO HAVE SIGNED PETITIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE ISLANDERS.

Motions of support have been passed by dozens of ratepayers organizations, labour unions, churches, and professional organizations. Here are the names of some of them:

GROUPS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE TORONTO ISLAND RESIDENTS’ ASSOC. IN ITS CAMPAIGN TO MAINTAIN THE ISLAND HOMES AND RETAIN THE ISLAND COMMUNITY:

UNION GROUPS:
United Auto Workers, Local 112 (representing 1,800 members) International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 796 International Chemical Workers Union, Local 32 Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport & General Workers, Local 76 The Toronto Newspaper Guild (representing 1/900 members)
The District Labour Council, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Toronto Civic Employees Union (CUPE) Local 43

SCHOOL AND TEACHER GROUPS:
Ontario Teachers Federation (representing 3,000 members)Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers Federation, District 15University of Toronto, Faculty of Architecture (A. Waterhouse, Chairman)Etobicoke Teachers AssociationToronto Council of Home and School AssociationsToronto Board of Education (the Island School will operate in 1974/5)Metropolitan Toronto School Board

RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS:
Bishop Lewis Garnsworthy, Anglican Diocese of TorontoBishop Allan C. Read, Roman Bishop, Diocese of Toronto (Anglican)Executive Committee, Anglican Church, Diocese of TorontoArchbishop Philip Pocock, Diocese of Toronto (Roman Catholic)Monsignor M. Pearce Lacy, Rector, St. Michael's Cathedral (Roman Catholic)Father Brad Massman, Director of Social Action, Diocese of Toronto (Roman Catholic)Toronto Area Presbytery of the United Church of Canada (Executive)Rabbi Gunther Plaut, Holy Blossom Temple

*Released in May 1974 by MCIC.
Groups supporting the Toronto Island Residents Assoc., cont'd.

BOROUGH OF SCARBOROUGH:
Birchcliff Community Association
Bernhaven Community Association
Brock Towers Tenants
Highland Heights Community Association
John A. Leslie Community Association
Pringle Grove Ratepayers Association
Hillside Community Association
Horton Park Ratepayers Association
Sevenoaks Community Association
Scarborough Center Property Owners Association
Wardenwoods Residents Association
Bridlewood Ratepayers Association
Glenbrook's Ratepayers Association
Cromwell and Dale Residents Association

BOROUGH OF ETOBICOKE:
Thistletown Regional Residents Association
Centennial Community Association
Federation of Etobicoke Residents and Ratepayers Association

BOROUGH OF EAST YORK:
Leaside Property Owners Association (Board of Directors)
Thorncliffe Park Community Association
Second District Residents and Ratepayers Association (Executive)
East York Federation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations
(nine member groups)

BOROUGH OF YORK:
Oak Vaughan Ratepayers Association
South Eglinton Ratepayers Association
Mount Dennis Community Association
Cedarvale Ratepayers Association
Warren Park Ratepayers Association
George Syme Ratepayers Association
Mount Dennis Businessmen's Association

CITY OF TORONTO:
Ward Six:
Grange Community Storefront
North Jarvis Residents Association
Huron Sussex Ratepayers Association
Alexandra Park Residents Association
Moore Park Ratepayers Association
Bedford Park Homeowners Association
Avenue Day Cottingham Ratepayers Association
Groups supporting re-opening of the Toronto Island Dam... cont’d.

City of Toronto, cont’d
Other groups:
Confederation of Residents and Ratepayers Association (CORRA)
for Ward Nine
Regent Park Community Improvement Association
The City of Toronto Council
The Toronto Planning Board
The Central Waterfront Planning Commission

Borough of North York:
Fairdale Ratepayers Association
Victoria Village Community Association
Belmar Park Ratepayers Association
Bayview Woods Residents Association
Pelmo Park Community Association
Caddall Acres Ratepayers Association
Pineway Parents Organization
Muirhead Area Residents Association
Don Mills Ratepayers Association
Flemington Community Council
Don Mills Residents Association
West Leaside Ratepayers Association
York Mills Heights Ratepayers Association
Cherokee Citizen’s Group
Learington Home and School Association
O’Connor Heights Association
North York Federation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations
(26 member groups)
Victoria Park Community Association

OTHERS:
Ontario Association of Architects
Polish Home Army Ex-Servicemen’s Association
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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