

**Dreams of Slaughter**

by

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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JESSICA CRAIG



## ABSTRACT

A descent into the ravine is a step through a tear in urbanity. The *terrain vague* is a foil to the capitalist city; against a demand for order, specificity, and integration, it is disorienting, banal, erratic. Operating outside the constraints of dominant social structures, it harbours the unconscious of the city, not only an inevitable, but also a necessary rupture in the urban fabric. In this subterranean realm, the striated and measured plots of land are sporadically smoothed over by persistent nature, reclaiming its territory.

These perceived voids invite projections of desire, both at a civic scale and on an individual level, that consequently shape the space. These are grounds of negotiation, a political realm often driven more by visceral impulses than economics. They aggravate tensions typically suppressed in the city, including those wrought by violence and melancholy.

This is a portrait of the Don Valley in Toronto. Fragments of representation reveal the role of this space in the collective memory of the public. Beyond the infrastructure that binds them, the city and the valley are integrated through their opposition: one fuels the experience of the other.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>author's declaration</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>abstract</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>acknowledgements</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>dedication</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>list of figures</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>list of plates</i>	<i>xii</i>

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>001</b>	003 childhood
		004 to the reader
		006 prologue

### PART I: COLLECTION

<b>SCARS</b>	<b>013</b>	014 record
		016 settlement
		022 savage
		040 artifacts
		048 camp
		056 cabbages and kings
		064 hot property
		068 semi-manicured
		074 river banks
		092 ruins
<b>VEINS</b>	<b>101</b>	102 flood
		112 artesian river
		118 facsimile
		124 corridor
		136 sculpture in motion
		150 [untitled]
		156 bridges
		170 playground
<b>SHADOWS</b>	<b>189</b>	190 jungle
		196 reservoir
		206 ophelia
		208 field guide
		214 silhouettes
		224 winter city
		244 outlet
		252 paradox
		254 paths
		286 eternity
		290 in my ravines

### PART II: INDICES

<b>WORDS</b>	<b>294</b>	295 threads
		297 frequency
<b>MAPS</b>	<b>299</b>	300 1 - lower don
		302 2 - belt line trail
		304 3 - forks of the don
		306 4 - east + west don
		308 5 - mid west don
		310 6 - mid east don
<b>TIME</b>	<b>313</b>	314 water
		316 history
<b>METHOD</b>	<b>327</b>	328 presence
		330 strategy
		332 tone
<b>END NOTES</b>	<b>337</b>	338 threshold
		342 postscript
		351 notes
		353 type
		354 bibliography

## LIST OF FIGURES

PAGE	FIGURE
020.	1.0 <i>Map of the Township of York in the County of York Upper Canada 1851.</i> J.O. Browne and J. Ellis, 1851; Toronto Public Library 912.71354 B68. Derek Hayes, <i>Historical Atlas of Toronto</i> . (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008)
028.	1.1 <i>River Don Improvement.</i> City Engineer's report, 1890; City of Toronto Archives Series 725, File 7. Hayes, <i>Historical Atlas of Toronto</i> .
032.	1.2 <i>City of Toronto [showing change of shoreline, 1780-1920]</i> Pub. City of Toronto Planning Board 1957; University of Toronto Libraries G3524.T61C2 24 9196. Jennifer Bonnell, <i>Don Valley Historical Mapping Project</i> ( <a href="http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/maps.html">http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/maps.html</a> )
032.	1.3 <i>City of Toronto [showing change of shoreline, 1780-1920]</i> Pub. City of Toronto Planning Board 1957; University of Toronto Libraries G3524.T61C2 24 9196. Bonnell, <i>Don Valley Historical Mapping Project</i>
033.	1.4 <i>City of Toronto [showing change of shoreline, 1780-1920]</i> Pub. City of Toronto Planning Board 1957; University of Toronto Libraries G3524.T61C2 24 9196. Bonnell, <i>Don Valley Historical Mapping Project</i>
033.	1.5 <i>City of Toronto [showing change of shoreline, 1780-1920]</i> Pub. City of Toronto Planning Board 1957; University of Toronto Libraries G3524.T61C2 24 9196. Bonnell, <i>Don Valley Historical Mapping Project</i>
062.	1.6 <i>Café Belong Menu.</i> Apr 2012. <i>Café Belong</i> . ( <a href="http://www.cafebelong.ca/menu.html">http://www.cafebelong.ca/menu.html</a> )
069.	1.7 <i>Royal Route.</i> <i>The Toronto Daily Star</i> (5 Oct. 1951), 8. Accessed in <i>Toronto Star; Pages of the Past</i> . ( <a href="http://micromedia.pagesofthepast.ca">http://micromedia.pagesofthepast.ca</a> )
104.	2.0 <i>Don Valley Playground.</i> <i>The Toronto Daily Star</i> (7 Feb. 1951), 8. Accessed in <i>Toronto Star; Pages of the Past</i> . ( <a href="http://micromedia.pagesofthepast.ca">http://micromedia.pagesofthepast.ca</a> )



PAGE	FIGURE
117.	2.1 <i>Don River Funeral Poster, 1969</i> Accessed in <i>Don Watcher Blog</i> , “Celebrating a Dubious Anniversary,” (16 Nov. 2009) ( <a href="http://donwatcher.blogspot.ca/2009/11/celebrating-dubious-anniversary.html">http://donwatcher.blogspot.ca/2009/11/celebrating-dubious-anniversary.html</a> )
140.	2.2 <i>Don Valley Traffic Artery and Clifton Road Subway.</i> City election brochure, Hiram McCallum, 1945. Hayes, <i>Historical Atlas of Toronto.</i>
300.	3.0 <i>Lower Don, Map 1</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )
302.	3.1 <i>Belt Line Trail, Map 2</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )
304.	3.2 <i>Forks of the Don, Map 3</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )
306.	3.3 <i>East + West Don, Map 4</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )
308.	3.4 <i>Mid West Don, Map 5</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )
310.	3.5 <i>Mid East Don, Map 6</i> (Don Valley, Toronto, Ontario 2013) Terrain View, <i>Google Maps</i> . Accessed 17 Mar. 2013. ( <a href="https://maps.google.com">https://maps.google.com</a> )

## LIST OF PLATES

All photographs by Author.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
009.	6-H17	001. <i>Don Valley 086</i> . East Don Parkland. 20 February 2012.
015.	2-I6	002. <i>Don Valley 147</i> . North Slope, Brick Works. 11 April 2012.
017.	4-L10	003. <i>Don Valley 068</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
019.	1-J2	004. <i>Don Valley 037</i> . Hydro Bridge, Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
023.	4-L11	005. <i>Don Valley 016</i> . Milne House, Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
025.	1-J2	006. <i>Don Valley 038</i> . Lever factory, Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
027.	4-L10	007. <i>Don Valley 062</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
029.	1-J3	008. <i>Don Valley 051</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
031.	4-J9	009. <i>Don Valley 196</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
034.	1-K2	010. <i>Don Valley 058</i> . Port Lands. 18 February 2012.
035.	1-K2	011. <i>Don Valley 057</i> . Port Lands. 18 February 2012.
037.	1-J1	012. <i>Don Valley 055</i> . Keating Channel. 18 February 2012.
038.	4-J8	013. <i>Don Valley 190</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
042.	1-J1	014. <i>Artefact 1; Don Valley 056</i> . Port Lands. 18 February 2012.
	4-J9	015. <i>Artefact 2; Don Valley 197</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
	1-I4	016. <i>Artefact 3; Don Valley 164</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	3-K7	017. <i>Artefact 4; Don Valley 127</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
	1-I4	018. <i>Artefact 5; Don Valley 168</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	6-H17	019. <i>Artefact 6; Don Valley 088</i> . East Don Parkland. 20 February 2012.
043.	3-L7	020. <i>Artefact 7; Don Valley 153</i> . Taylor Creek Park. 22 April 2012.
	3-J8	021. <i>Artefact 8; Don Valley 111</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 22 February 2012.
	3-K8	022. <i>Artefact 9; Don Valley 113</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 22 February 2012.
	3-K7	023. <i>Artefact 10; Don Valley 121</i> . Elevated Wetlands, Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
	2-I6	024. <i>Artefact 11; Don Valley 135</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
	2-I6	025. <i>Artefact 12; Don Valley 181</i> . Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
046.	1-J2	026. <i>Artefact 13; Don Valley 155</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	1-J2	027. <i>Artefact 14; Don Valley 157</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	5-C14	028. <i>Artefact 15; Don Valley 225</i> . West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
	3-J7	029. <i>Artefact 16; Don Valley 131</i> . Millwood Bridge. 22 February 2012.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
	1-I4	030. <i>Artefact 17; Don Valley 173</i> . Prince Edward Viaduct. 28 April 2012.
	4-J10	031. <i>Artefact 18; Don Valley 098</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
047.	3-K7	032. <i>Artefact 19; Don Valley 126</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
	1-I4	033. <i>Artefact 20; Don Valley 169</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	1-I4	034. <i>Artefact 21; Don Valley 026</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
	3-K7	035. <i>Artefact 22; Don Valley 041</i> . Forks of the Don. 20 January 2012.
	4-I9	036. <i>Artefact 23; Don Valley 104</i> . Serena Gundy Park. 22 February 2012.
	1-I4	037. <i>Artefact 24; Don Valley 176</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
048.	4-L10	038. <i>Don Valley 093</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 22 February 2012.
050.	1-J2	039. <i>Don Valley 006</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
053.	1-J1	040. <i>Don Valley 053</i> . Keating Channel. 18 February 2012.
054.	2-I5	041. <i>Don Valley 018</i> . Todmorden. 5 November 2011.
057.	2-I5	042. <i>Don Valley 183</i> . Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
059.	2-I5	043. <i>Don Valley 182</i> . Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
	2-I5	044. <i>Don Valley 146</i> . Brick Works. 11 April 2012.
061.	3-J7	045. <i>Don Valley 133</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
065.	1-I4	046. <i>Don Valley 034</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
067.	1-J2	047. <i>Don Valley 156</i> . West Don Lands. 28 April 2012.
071.	1-I3	048. <i>Don Valley 046</i> . Riverdale Park. 18 February 2012.
073.	2-I5	049. <i>Don Valley 019</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
076.	4-H9	050. <i>River Bank 1; Don Valley 201</i> . Sherwood Park. 13 August 2012.
077.	4-G9	051. <i>River Bank 2; Don Valley 204</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
078.	4-I10	052. <i>River Bank 3; Don Valley 094</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
079.	2-H6	053. <i>River Bank 4; Don Valley 142</i> . Moore Park. 11 April 2012.
080.	-	054. <i>River Bank 5; Don Valley 210</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
081.	6-H16	055. <i>River Bank 6; Don Valley 089</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
082.	3-K8	056. <i>River Bank 7; Don Valley 112</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 22 February 2012.
083.	4-J10	057. <i>River Bank 8; Don Valley 099</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
084.	4-L10	058. <i>River Bank 9; Don Valley 063</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
085.	1-I3	059. <i>River Bank 10; Don Valley 031</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
086.	3-J7	060. <i>River Bank 11; Don Valley 134</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
087.	4-K11	061. <i>River Bank 12; Don Valley 061</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
088.	1-J3	062. <i>River Bank 13; Don Valley 030</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
089.	1-J2	063. <i>River Bank 14; Don Valley 035</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
090.	1-J3	064. <i>Don Valley 032</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
091.	1-J3	065. <i>Don Valley 033</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
093.	5-C14	066. <i>Don Valley 222</i> . Prosserman Jewish Community Centre. 13 August 2012.
095.	3-J8	067. <i>Don Valley 191</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
096.	5-D12	068. <i>Don Valley 213</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2012.
097.	4-G9	069. <i>Don Valley 213</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
099.	1-J2	070. <i>Don Valley 007</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
103.	5-C14	071. <i>Don Valley 223</i> . West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
106.	5-A14	072. <i>Don Valley 231</i> . G. Ross Lord Reservoir. 13 August 2012.
107.	5-A14	073. <i>Don Valley 232</i> . G. Ross Lord Reservoir. 13 August 2012.
109.	6-H17	074. <i>Don Valley 083</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
110.	1-I4	075. <i>Don Valley 025</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
111.	4-J10	076. <i>Don Valley 095</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
112.	2-H6	077. <i>Don Valley 140</i> . Moore Park. 11 April 2012.
114.	5-C14	078. <i>Don Valley 221</i> . West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
118.	1-J1	079. <i>Don Valley 054</i> . Keating Channel. 18 February 2012.
120.	1-I4	080. <i>Don Valley 029</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
122.	4-G9	081. <i>Don Valley 212</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
125.	6-H18	082. <i>Don Valley 077</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
127.	4-L10	083. <i>Don Valley 091</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 22 February 2012.
129.	1-J3	084. <i>Don Valley 043</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
131.	1-I4	085. <i>Don Valley 167</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
133.	3-K7	086. <i>Don Valley 117</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
134.	4-L10	087. <i>Don Valley 065</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 22 February 2012.
137.	1-J1	088. <i>Don Valley 002</i> . Keating Channel. 16 August 2011.
138.	1-J3	089. <i>Don Valley 045</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
141.	1-I3	090. <i>Don Valley 047</i> . Riverdale Park. 18 February 2012.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
145.	3-K7	091. <i>Don Valley 128</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
151.	3-J7	092. <i>Don Valley 130</i> . Millwood Bridge. 22 February 2012.
152.	1-I4	093. <i>Don Valley 013</i> . Prince Edward Viaduct. 16 August 2011.
155.	4-L9	094. <i>Don Valley 092</i> . Flemington Park Golf Club. 22 February 2012.
158.	4-J9	095. <i>Bridge 1; Don Valley 107</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 22 February 2012.
	4-J8	096. <i>Bridge 2; Don Valley 187</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
	3-K7	097. <i>Bridge 3; Don Valley 115</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
	5-B14	098. <i>Bridge 4; Don Valley 227</i> . West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
159.	1-J1	099. <i>Bridge 5; Don Valley 233</i> . Keating Channel. 16 August 2012.
	3-K7	100. <i>Bridge 6; Don Valley 154</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 April 2012.
	1-I3	101. <i>Bridge 7; Don Valley 162</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	3-J8	102. <i>Bridge 8; Don Valley 110</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 22 February 2012.
160.	4-J9	103. <i>Bridge 9; Don Valley 106</i> . Serena Gundy Park. 16 August 2012.
	4-I9	104. <i>Bridge 10; Don Valley 103</i> . Serena Gundy Park. 22 February 2012.
	1-J2	105. <i>Bridge 11; Don Valley 235</i> . Bailey Bridge, Lower Don River. 16 August 2012.
	3-K7	106. <i>Bridge 12; Don Valley 119</i> . Bailey Bridge, Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
161.	2-G5	107. <i>Bridge 13; Don Valley 151</i> . David Balfour Park. 11 April 2012.
	4-I9	108. <i>Bridge 14; Don Valley 198</i> . Serena Gundy Park. 13 August 2012.
	2-I5	109. <i>Bridge 15; Don Valley 177</i> . Half-mile Bridge. 28 April 2012.
	1-J1	110. <i>Bridge 16; Don Valley 234</i> . Keating Channel. 16 August 2012.
162.	2-I6	111. <i>Bridge 17; Don Valley 016</i> . CN Railway Bridge. 16 August 2011.
163.	1-I4	112. <i>Bridge 18; Don Valley 165</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
164.	2-I6	113. <i>Bridge 18; Don Valley 145</i> . Governors Road. 11 April 2012.
	6-H18	114. <i>Bridge 19; Don Valley 078</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
	3-J7	115. <i>Bridge 20; Don Valley 132</i> . Millwood Road. 22 February 2012.
	2-G5	116. <i>Bridge 21; Don Valley 149</i> . David Balfour Park. 11 August 2012.
165.	6-H18	117. <i>Bridge 22; Don Valley 076</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
	4-J9	118. <i>Bridge 23; Don Valley 184</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
	3-K8	119. <i>Bridge 24; Don Valley 114</i> . Overlea Boulevard. 22 February 2012.
	2-H6	120. <i>Bridge 25; Don Valley 141</i> . Heath Street East. 11 April 2012.
166.	2-I5	121. <i>Bridge 26; Don Valley 014</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
	4-J9	122. <i>Bridge 27; Don Valley 195</i> . Eglinton Avenue East. 13 August 2012.
	1-I4	123. <i>Bridge 28; Don Valley 174</i> . Prince Edward Viaduct. 28 April 2012.
	1-J3	124. <i>Bridge 29; Don Valley 011</i> . Dundas Street. 16 August 2011.
167.	1-J2	125. <i>Bridge 30; Don Valley 236</i> . Eastern Avenue. 16 August 2012.
	5-D13	126. <i>Bridge 31; Don Valley 219</i> . Sheppard Avenue West. 13 August 2012.
	2-H5	127. <i>Bridge 32; Don Valley 148</i> . Glen Road. 11 April 2012.
	3-M7	128. <i>Bridge 33; Don Valley 042</i> . Taylor Creek Park. 20 January 2012.
168.	2-I6	129. <i>Bridge 34; Don Valley 240</i> . True Davidson Drive. 17 November 2012.
	4-G9	130. <i>Bridge 35; Don Valley 205</i> . Mount Pleasant Road. 13 August 2012.
	1-J2	131. <i>Bridge 36; Don Valley 238</i> . Queen Street. 16 August 2012.
169.	1-I4	132. <i>Bridge 37; Don Valley 163</i> . CP Railway Bridge. 28 April 2012.
	1-J2	133. <i>Bridge 38; Don Valley 237</i> . Don Valley Parkway. 16 April 2012.
171.	3-K7	134. <i>Bridge 39; Don Valley 118</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
172.	4-H9	135. <i>Don Valley 202</i> . Sherwood Park. 13 August 2012.
173.	2-I5	136. <i>Don Valley 239</i> . Brick Works. 17 November 2012.
175.	4-J9	137. <i>Don Valley 100</i> . Sunnybrook Park. 22 February 2012.
177.	4-J10	138. <i>Don Valley 096</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
179.	4-I9	139. <i>Don Valley 101</i> . Sunnybrook Park. 22 February 2012.
181.	6-H18	140. <i>Don Valley 079</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
182.	4-J9	141. <i>Don Valley 194</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
183.	2-I7	142. <i>Don Valley 243</i> . Crothers Woods. 17 November 2012.
185.	2-I5	143. <i>Don Valley 179</i> . Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
186.	5-D12	144. <i>Don Valley 215</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2012.
187.	5-D12	145. <i>Don Valley 216</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2012.
191.	4-L10	146. <i>Don Valley 070</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
192.	4-G9	147. <i>Don Valley 203</i> . Sherwood Park. 13 August 2012.
193.	1-I3	148. <i>Don Valley 050</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
194.	6-H18	149. <i>Don Valley 074</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
195.	2-H6	150. <i>Don Valley 143</i> . Moore Park. 11 April 2012.
197.	1-J2	151. <i>Don Valley 052</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
198.	-	152. <i>Don Valley 050</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
199.	4-J9	153. <i>Don Valley 185</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.

PAGE	MAP	PLATE
201.	-	154. <i>Don Valley 209</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
202.	5-B14	155. <i>Don Valley 228</i> . West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
204.	2-I6	156. <i>Don Valley 017</i> . Crothers Woods. 16 August 2011.
207.	6-H17	157. <i>Don Valley 087</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
208.	4-L10	158. <i>Don Valley 072</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
	3-J7	159. <i>Don Valley 129</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
	6-H16	160. <i>Don Valley 090</i> . East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
	1-I3	161. <i>Don Valley 159</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	3-K8	162. <i>Don Valley 028</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 5 November 2011.
	2-I5	163. <i>Don Valley 023</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
209.	2-I5	164. <i>Don Valley 020</i> . Todmorden. 5 November 2011.
	3-J8	165. <i>Don Valley 192</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
	2-I5	166. <i>Don Valley 021</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
	3-J8	167. <i>Don Valley 189</i> . E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
	2-I5	168. <i>Don Valley 024</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
	2-I5	169. <i>Don Valley 170</i> . Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
212.	3-K7	170. <i>Don Valley 120</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
213.	2-I7	171. <i>Don Valley 244</i> . Crothers Woods. 17 November 2012.
215.	2-G5	172. <i>Don Valley 150</i> . Vale of Avoca. 11 April 2012.
219.	1-J3	173. <i>Don Valley 044</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
221.	1-I3	174. <i>Don Valley 048</i> . Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
222.	1-J2	175. <i>Don Valley 004</i> . West Don Lands. 16 August 2011.
225.	1-J2	176. <i>Don Valley 036</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
227.	4-H9	177. <i>Don Valley 200</i> . Sunnybrook Park. 13 August 2012.
229.	2-I6	178. <i>Don Valley 242</i> . Bayview Avenue. 17 November 2012.
230.	2-H6	179. <i>Don Valley 144</i> . Moore Park. 11 April 2012.
232.	1-J2	180. <i>Don Valley 144</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
234.	4-J9	181. <i>Don Valley 105</i> . Serena Gundy Park. 22 February 2012.
237.	4-K10	182. <i>Don Valley 073</i> . Moccasin Trail Park. 19 February 2012.
239.	5-D12	183. <i>Don Valley 217</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2012.
240.	4-L10	184. <i>Don Valley 071</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.



PAGE	MAP	PLATE
243.	4-J10	185. <i>Don Valley 097</i> . Wilket Creek Park. 22 February 2012.
245.	5-D12	186. <i>Don Valley 214</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2011.
246.	2-I6	187. <i>Don Valley 241</i> . Bayview Avenue. 17 November 2012.
248.	1-I4	188. <i>Don Valley 175</i> . Prince Edward Viaduct. 28 April 2012.
249.	2-D7	189. <i>Don Valley 137</i> . Kay Gardner Beltline Trail. 11 August 2012.
251.	2-F6	190. <i>Don Valley 139</i> . Kay Gardner Beltline Trail. 11 April 2012.
253.	4-G9	191. <i>Don Valley 207</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
256.	-	192. <i>Path 1; Don Valley 208</i> . Blythwood Ravine. 13 August 2012.
	4-I9	193. <i>Path 2; Don Valley 102</i> . Sunnybrook Park. 13 August 2012.
257.	1-J1	194. <i>Path 3; Don Valley 001</i> . Keating Channel. 16 August 2011.
	1-I4	195. <i>Path 4; Don Valley 171</i> . Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
258.	3-K8	196. <i>Path 5; Don Valley 040</i> . Thornccliffe Park. 20 January 2012.
	3-K7	197. <i>Path 6; Don Valley 125</i> . Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
259.	1-I4	198. <i>Path 7; Don Valley 010</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
	2-F7	199. <i>Path 8; Don Valley 138</i> . Avenue Road. 11 April 2012.
262.	1-J2	200. <i>Path 9; Don Valley 005</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
	5-D12	201. <i>Path 10; Don Valley 218</i> . Earl Bales Park. 13 August 2012.
263.	1-I4	202. <i>Path 11; Don Valley 012</i> . Lower Don River. 16 August 2011.
	2-I5	203. <i>Path 12; Don Valley 218</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
264.	1-I4	204. <i>Path 13; Don Valley 027</i> . Lower Don River. 5 November 2011.
265.	1-I3	205. <i>Path 14; Don Valley 008</i> . Riverdale Park. 16 August 2011.
266.	3-K7	206. <i>Path 15; Don Valley 123</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
	3-K7	207. <i>Path 16; Don Valley 122</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
267.	3-K7	208. <i>Path 17; Don Valley 116</i> . Forks of the Don. 22 February 2012.
	2-G6	209. <i>Path 18; Don Valley 152</i> . Vale of Avoca. 11 April 2012.
270.	4-L10	210. <i>Path 19; Don Valley 064</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
	4-L10	211. <i>Path 20; Don Valley 067</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
271.	4-L10	212. <i>Path 21; Don Valley 066</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.
	4-L10	213. <i>Path 22; Don Valley 069</i> . Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve. 19 February 2012.



PAGE	MAP	PLATE
272.	2-I5	214. <i>Path 23; Don Valley 015.</i> Lower Don River. 11 August 2011.
	2-I5	215. <i>Path 24; Don Valley 124.</i> Lower Don River. 22 February 2012.
273.	2-I6	216. <i>Path 25; Don Valley 180.</i> Brick Works. 28 April 2012.
	6-H18	217. <i>Path 26; Don Valley 081.</i> East Don River Parklands. 20 February 2012.
276.	6-H18	218. <i>Path 27; Don Valley 084.</i> East Don River Parklands. 20 February 2012.
	1-J1	219. <i>Path 28; Don Valley 039.</i> Keating Channel. 5 November 2011.
277.	5-C14	220. <i>Path 29; Don Valley 224.</i> West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
	5-C14	221. <i>Path 30; Don Valley 226.</i> West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
278.	1-I3	222. <i>Path 31; Don Valley 049.</i> Lower Don River. 18 February 2012.
	1-I3	223. <i>Path 32; Don Valley 158.</i> Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
279.	1-I3	224. <i>Path 33; Don Valley 161.</i> Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
	3-J8	225. <i>Path 34; Don Valley 193.</i> E.T. Seton Park. 13 August 2012.
282.	1-I4	226. <i>Don Valley 166.</i> Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
283.	1-I4	227. <i>Don Valley 172.</i> Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
284.	2-I5	228. <i>Don Valley 178.</i> Lower Don River. 28 April 2012.
287.	6-H17	229. <i>Don Valley 082.</i> East Don Parklands. 20 February 2012.
288.	5-B14	230. <i>Don Valley 229.</i> West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
289.	5-B14	231. <i>Don Valley 230.</i> West Don Parklands. 13 August 2012.
316.	-	232. <i>Water 1; Don Valley 085.</i> 20 February 2012.
	-	233. <i>Water 2; Don Valley 136.</i> 20 February 2012.
	-	234. <i>Water 3; Don Valley 188.</i> 13 August 2012.
	-	235. <i>Water 4; Don Valley 220.</i> 13 August 2012.
	-	236. <i>Water 5; Don Valley 199.</i> 13 August 2012.
	-	237. <i>Water 6; Don Valley 186.</i> 13 August 2012.
317.	-	238. <i>Water 7; Don Valley 160.</i> 28 April 2012.
	-	239. <i>Water 8; Don Valley 075.</i> 20 February 2012.
	-	240. <i>Water 9; Don Valley 109.</i> 22 February 2012.
	-	241. <i>Water 10; Don Valley 060.</i> 19 February 2012.
	-	242. <i>Water 11; Don Valley 080.</i> 20 February 2012.
	-	243. <i>Water 12; Don Valley 108.</i> 22 February 2012.





# PREFACE

My dear friend, I send you here a little work of which no one could say that it has neither head nor tail, because, on the contrary, everything in it is both head and tail, alternately and reciprocally. Please consider what fine advantages this combination offers to all of us, to you, to me, and to the reader. We can cut whatever we like—me, my reverie, you, the manuscript, and the reader, his reading; for I don't tie the impatient reader up in the endless thread of a superfluous plot. Pull out one of the vertebrae, and the two halves of this tortuous fantasy will rejoin themselves painlessly. Chop it up into numerous fragments, and you'll find that each one can live on its own. In the hopes that some of these stumps will be lively enough to please and amuse you, I dedicate the entire serpent to you.

'TO ARSÈNE HOUSSAYE'; CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, *PARIS SPLEEN*, 1869







*I remember in my early adolescence, before coming to Canada, a friend and I would climb out our bedroom windows to walk at midnight.*

*At times we were barefoot and could feel the sunlight hoarded in the ground. As we neared the main road, I could smell the heat still rising off the concrete. During typhoon season, we would emerge after a torrent of warm rain, the mud between our toes, sometimes with the mucus of a slug drawn to the surface. The storms brought little relief to the heavy humid air, but the darkness was cooler.*

*In the stillness of this time, even the cicadas finally fell silent. The night belonged to us. In empty playgrounds we found swings and pushed ourselves with abandon into the sky, adolescents sensing ourselves at the verge of loss, lamenting our childhood slipping away.*

*Some nights, we walked on the nearby breakwater to watch the drifting lights of fishing boats. If we were lucky, pebbles thrown into the black water would shatter it in a burst of phosphorescence.*

*When we felt more ambitious, we would head up to the rock pools, a popular swimming hole on the hillside that caught a stream heading to the ocean. Once over the roadside barrier, we weave through dense overgrowth. We had been told that before the Japanese withdrew from the city, they released poisonous snakes onto this island. Singing softly, our voices cocoon us as we fend off the darkness with the meagre light of our flashlights. Repeat the adage: step on the rock, never over it. Vigilant for the quick movement of a cobra, or possibly some more exotic serpent, we reach the pool and remove our shoes to dip our feet into the cold freshwater. We never drop our guard. Highrises glow like lanterns in the distance; above us, we take a rare glimpse of stars. In this mute shelter of trees, we spill our secrets carelessly. Before dawn, the pale indigo signalled our return home. As we drifted into sleep, the city gently roused.*

## TO THE READER:

This is the record of a search. I have been poring over reports, scouring newspaper articles, songs, novels, guide books, all in the hope of explaining the allure of the *terrain vague*. I sought out experts and passionate amateurs alike. I listened, I walked, and I recorded. Through the clamour of these collected voices, I struggled to hear my own.

My interest in the Don Valley was almost accidental. On my arrival in Toronto years ago, the flat and unfaltering grid of the city and its suburbs was completely foreign to me and spurred a hunt to find a familiar space. I indulged in the anonymity of the crowd, but eventually found greater refuge in the landscapes in transition, the deteriorating or abandoned, without idyllic cleanliness and order. No longer particular, these landscapes became open to interpretation. As I explored, the softened edges of decay transported me to the overgrown playspaces of my childhood; I entertained fictions from these traces.

Like many people before me, I came to the Don. The first time I entered the Valley was from the river mouth; after navigating the unanticipated maze of dead-end sidewalks, highways, and construction, I arrived suddenly where the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardiner met overhead, in awe of the unexpected mass. In my numerous trips to Toronto by car, travelling down the DVP, I had never noticed this secluded path running quietly alongside; now that I was on it, I revelled in this invisibility. As I ventured further, clambering through trees and down steep river banks, I realized how long I had been dormant. So often cosseted in our daily lives, we forget how to play, to be alive.

The orderly and polite people we are taught to become is paralleled in the austere urban fabric we construct around us. What happens when we relinquish control and allow a place to evolve on its own? With every new development in the Don Valley, the pockets of *terrain vague* recede. When we presume that change promises improvement, we disregard the imposition we make on an already rich landscape. So fragile is this environment, a single tidy edging could fracture it.

The ravines are carved into the mythology of Toronto, not only as its historical origins but as the grounds for metamorphosis. Beneath the carapace of the city's self-projected image, it reveals itself as archaic,

bestial. Fragments of failed utopias remain, evidence of its vulnerability. Perhaps we are drawn to these spaces out of compassion. They repulse us, they frighten us, but they also intrigue us. Perhaps their allure is borne of the suspicion that we see ourselves reflected in their darkness, a part of us we don't recognize but long for the courage to remember. The Valley strengthens the identity of the city, accepting its exiles and excrement. The paradoxes of modern life, organic and mechanic, nomadic and domestic, violent and civil, are tested in this liminal territory, itself shifting between reputations of romance and corruption.

In the face of encroaching urban development, we cannot preserve these spaces; I grasp at documenting them in this temporary state. The collection grew to a mad assortment of fragments. I was reluctant to leave any one out, to condemn any to silence. Each piece influenced another. Countless organization systems only seemed to reduce the Valley into a form that contradicted the experience.

Ultimately, I can't escape the fact that this place must be visited to be felt. The space is hinted at in the fragments themselves, but more so in their inadequacy and the gaps between them. These are selected pieces of the stoic beauty and controversy found in the mundane. With no intention of guiding you blindly through, I invite you to partake in the judgement of this *terrain vague*, to play, explore. I put my trust in you as I ask that you do the same; there is a truth in naiveté. Juhani Pallasmaa wrote in *The Embodied Image*, "architecture frames, structures, re-oriens, scales, refocuses and slows down our experience of the world and makes it an ingredient of the embodied sense of our own being; it always has a mediating role instead of being the end itself."<sup>1</sup> In this belief, I designed this book as an experience of the Valley, using lenses through which it is perceived. It is a tribute to the thin boundary of threshold and the shift in vantage point when it is breached. The work is incomplete by necessity. I compose the field of minutiae that constitute a place.

## PROLOGUE

### *terrain vague*

#### **alias**

blank space  
border land  
brown fields  
dead zone  
derelict area  
edge  
ellipsis space  
emerging landscape  
free space  
interscape  
interstitial space  
liminal space  
marginal space  
no man's land  
space of indeterminacy  
space of uncertainty  
temporary autonomous zone  
third landscape  
urban desert  
urban void  
vacant land  
wasteland  
white area  
(nameless)

The multiplicity of names and some of their meanings, show the difficulty in defining those spaces.

Yael Allweil & Rachel Kallus, "Public Space Heterotopias,"  
*Heterotopia and the City*, 2008: 202



It is impossible to capture in a single English word or phrase the meaning of the French *terrain vague*... But we have an even greater interest in the two Latin roots which come together in the French term *vague*. First of all we have *vague* as a descendant of *vacuus*, giving us *vacant*, *vacuum* in English, which is to say *empty*, *unoccupied*. And yet also *free*, *available*, *unengaged*. The relationship between the absence of use, of activity, and the sense of freedom, of expectancy, is fundamental to understanding all the evocative potential that the city's *terrains vagues* have accrued as part of the very perception of the city in recent years. Void, then, as absence, and yet also as promise, as encounter, as the space of the possible, expectation.

There is a second meaning superimposed on the French *vague* as *vacant*. This attaches to the term as deriving from the Latin *vagus*, giving *vague* in English, too, in the sense *indeterminate*, *imprecise*, *blurred*, *uncertain*. Once again the paradox that is produced in the message we receive from the indefinite and uncertain spaces is not necessarily a purely negative one. It certainly appears that the analogous terms we have remarked are generally preceded by a negative particle – *in-determinate*, *imprecise*, *un-certain* – but it is no less the case that this absence of limit, the almost oceanic sentiment, to use Freud's expression, is precisely the message which contains the expectations of mobility, vagrant roving, free time, liberty.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 36-41

The "uncanny" is that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar. ...[E]verything is uncanny that ought to have remained hidden and secret, and yet comes to light.

SIGMUND FREUD, "THE 'UNCANNY,'" 1919

The Don is one of 60 rivers and major streams flowing south from the Oak Ridges Moraine into Lake Ontario, and has a drainage area of about 360 km<sup>2</sup>. The two main branches of the Don, the East Don and the West Don, flowed as distinct and separate rivers south into Lake Iroquois until about 9000 years ago. At that time, the level of water in Lake Iroquois fell to become the present Lake Ontario, and the two rivers joined to become one. During that period, the Don Watershed included a large number of branching tributaries and wetlands connecting the Oak Ridges Moraine with Lake Ontario (Metropolitan Toronto Remedial Action Plan, 1993, p. 6).

GENE DESFOR & ROGER KEIL, "EVERY RIVER TELLS A STORY,"  
*JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & PLANNING*, 2000

*I dreamt not then that, ere the rolling year  
Had filled its circle, I should wander here  
In musing awe; should tread this wondrous world,  
See all its store of inland waters hurled  
In one vast volume down Niagara's steep,  
Or calm behold them, in transparent sleep,  
Where the blue hills of old Toronto shed  
Their evening shadows o'er Ontario's bed*

THOMAS MOORE, *TO THE LADY CHARLOTTE RAWDON;*  
*FROM THE BANKS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE*, 1804

The world is blue at its edges and in its depths. This blue is the light that got lost. Light at the blue end of the spectrum does not travel the whole distance from the sun to us. It disperses among the molecules of the air, its scatters in water. ...Blue is the color of longing for the distances you never arrive in, for the blue world...For something of this longing will, like the blue of distance, only be relocated, not assuaged, by acquisition and arrival, just as the mountains cease to be blue when you arrive among them and the blue instead tints the next beyond. Somewhere in this is the mystery of why tragedies are more beautiful than comedies and why we take a huge pleasure in the sadness of certain songs and stories. Something is always far away.

REBECCA SOLNIT, *A FIELD GUIDE TO GETTING LOST*, 2006: 29-30



[PLATE 001]







# PART I: COLLECTION

*AS I ponder'd in silence,  
Returning upon my poems, considering, lingering long,  
A Phantom arose before me, with distrustful aspect,  
Terrible in beauty, age, and power,  
The genius of poets of old lands,  
As to me directing like flame its eyes,  
With finger pointing to many immortal songs,  
And menacing voice, What singest thou? it said;  
Know'st thou not, there is but one theme for ever-enduring bards?  
And that is the theme of War, the fortune of battles,  
The making of perfect soldiers?*

*Be it so, then I answer'd,  
I too, haughty Shade, also sing war – and a longer and greater one than any,  
Waged in my book with varying fortune – with flight, advance, and retreat –  
Victory deferr'd and wavering,  
(Yet, methinks, certain, or as good as certain, at the last,) – The field the world;  
For life and death – for the Body, and for the eternal Soul,  
Lo! too am come, chanting the chant of battles,  
I, above all, promote brave soldiers.*

WALT WHITMAN, *LEAVES OF GRASS*, 1900: 2.1-18







# SCARS

In this situation, the role of the architect is inevitably problematic. It seems that the entire destiny of architecture has always been colonization, the imposing of limits, order, form, the introduction into strange space of the elements of identity necessary to make it recognizable, identical, universal. Pertaining to the very essence of architecture is its condition as instrument of organization, of rationalisation, of productive efficiency capable of transforming the uncivilized into the cultivated, the fallow into the productive, the void into the built.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 36-41

## RECORD

[Phone rings. Recording starts]

HELLO! WELCOME TO 416 39-BRICK, THE GEOLOGICAL AUDIO TOUR OF THE DON VALLEY BRICK WORKS. YOUR OPTIONS ARE: INTRODUCTION, PRESS 1; BEDROCK, PRESS 2; YORK TILL, PRESS 3; DON FORMATION, PRESS 4; SCARBOROUGH FORMATION, PRESS 5; POTTERY ROAD FORMATION, PRESS 6; SUNNYBROOK DRIFT, PRESS 7; THORNCLIFFE FORMATION, PRESS 8; IROQUOIS TERRACE, PRESS 9. TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE, PRESS STAR.

[Beep]

Nick Eyles: Well, if you look around, obviously it's the Don Valley BrickYards and it was used from the late 19th century onwards as a brick pit. The shale would be ground up, made into bricks, and there are numerous buildings that you see in Toronto that are built from brick yard bricks.

Ed Freeman: During the excavation of the raw materials from this site for making and manufacturing bricks, they excavated not only into the bedrock of Toronto but also the materials that have been dumped and deposited on top of the bedrock, which has it's own series of climatic stories to tell us.

Nick Eyles: And of course while people were digging out the shale, a lot of it was done by hand those days, so they were looking at the material as they were digging it, and they noticed a lot of fossils. And the workers there built up quite an extensive collection of these fossil materials and it came to the attention of students at the University of Toronto, and like all good students, they passed that information on to their professor, who in this case was Professor Arthur Coleman. And Coleman was a geologist who'd had a lot of experience with glaciers out in Alberta, and he came into the brick yard and recognised glacial deposits, similar to what he'd seen in front of glaciers in the rocky mountains. But, the major discovery was that underneath the glacial deposits were warm climate beds with fossils like giant teeth of beavers! And this was a major breakthrough in the late 19th century and the 1880s, and Coleman realised that here we have evidence of what is called an interglacial, which is a warm period between two glaciations.

TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE, PRESS STAR.

[Beep]

Nick Eyles: ...Because of repeated ice ages in Canada, the record of previous climates has largely been destroyed and this is why the Don Valley brick yard is so important, because it preserves a window into these ancient climates. And in the Don Valley, we have preserved the last glaciation, and the glaciation before that, and sandwiched between the two glacial deposits is the last interglacial. And this is very unusual in North America, and this is why this site is so significant.

GEOLOGICAL AUDIO TOUR OF THE DON VALLEY BRICK WORKS, *EVERGREEN*, 2012





[PLATE 002]

## SETTLEMENT

Late in September of 1793, Governor Simcoe set out from the mouth of the Humber river, and over the Toronto Carrying Place with a party, to explore the possibilities of a communication between Toronto and Lake Huron. Dr. Robertson's brochure *Simcoe's Yonge Street* tells us why.

"In 1793 war seemed imminent and Toronto the most strategic spot in North America.' Its harbour could be made into an impregnable navel arsenal, and if an easy communication could be discovered with Lake Huron, warships on Lake Ontario and Lake Huron could be manned by the same crews, transported overland as occasion required. This suggestion came originally from the Chevalier de Rochblave."

Returning after an absence of two weeks, Simcoe "discovered a trail from the Holland Landing to the mouth of the Don which answered all expectations." Thus the Don came into early prominence...

CHARLES SAURIOL, *PIONEERS OF THE DON*, 1995: 11

[T]he Don River would be compatible with a British landscape scene; indeed, it provided the feel of a 'home away from home' for the early Anglo settlers of Toronto.

GENE DESFOR & ROGER KEIL, "EVERY RIVER TELLS A STORY,"  
*JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & PLANNING*, 2000

The river itself [John Simcoe] named for a river in South Yorkshire, presumably for its likeness in size and character.

\*

Two aboriginal names were recorded for the Don, Algonquian words written by early surveyors as *Nechenquakekonk* and *Wonscoteonach*. A translation for the latter appears in the letters of surveyor Augustus Jones as "back burnt grounds," which historian Henry Scadding interpreted as "the river coming down from the back [or possibly black] burnt country, meaning probably the so-called Poplar Plains to the north, liable to be swept by casual fires." ...Interestingly, the native name places more emphasis on the lands at the river's origin than on the river itself.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PH.D. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009



[PLATE 003]

*York 14th of Jan. 1784* – There is a great deal of Snow on the River Don which is so well frozen that we walked some miles upon it today, but in returning I found it so cold near the Lake that I was benumbed & almost despaired of ever reaching my own house & when I came near it the Hill was frightfully slippery. Near the river we saw the track of Wolves & the head & Hoofs of a Deer. The workmen who reside in a small Hut near the place, heard the Wolves during the night & in the Morning found the remains of the Deer. The Indians do not kill Wolves, they seldom take trouble that does not answer to them, & the Wolves are not good to eat & their skins are of little value.

*Sunday 19th* – The weather so pleasant we rode to the bottom of the Bay crossed the Don which is frozen & ride on the Peninsula, returned across the Marsh which is covered with ice & went as far as the Settlements which are near 7 miles from the Camp. There appeared some comfortable Log Houses inhabited by Germans & some by Pennsylvanians. Some of the creeks were not frozen enough to bear the Gov.'s horse but mine passed very well. He excels in getting over difficult places, & in leaping over Logs which I like very much.

*26th* – We went to the Donn to see Mr. Talbot skait. Capt. Shaw's Children set the Marshy ground below the Bay on fire the long grass on it burns with great rapidity this dry weather. It was a fine sight & a study for flame & smoke from our House. At night the flames diminished & appeared like lamps in a dark night in the Crescent at Bath.

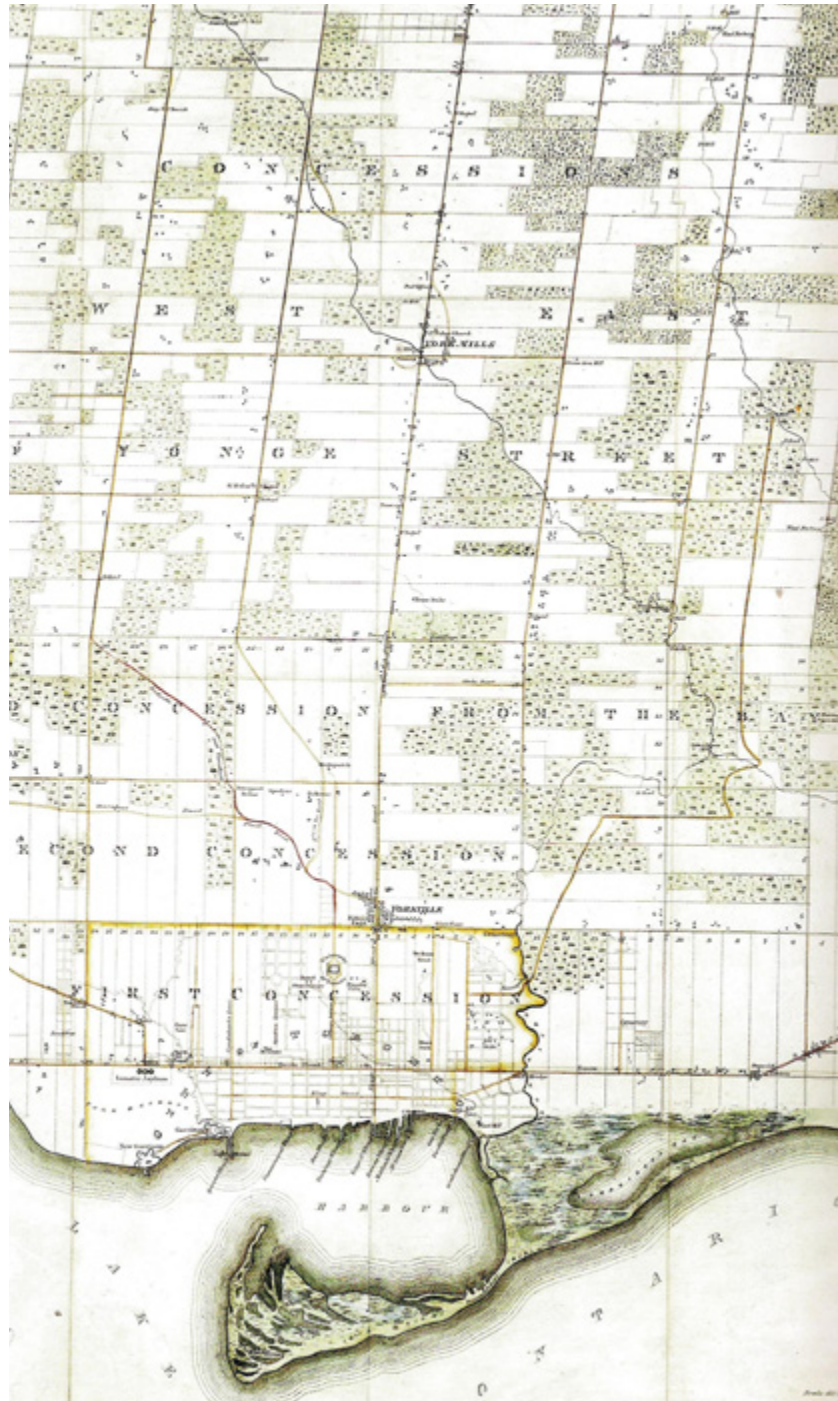
*27th* – I walked below the Bay and Set the other side of the Marsh on fire for amusement. The Indians have cut holes in the Ice over which they spread a Blanket on poles & they sit under the shed moving a wooden Fish hung to a line in the water by way of attracting the living fish, which they spear with great dexterity when they approach. The Gov. wished me to see the process, we had to walk half a mile to the place. There was no snow on the ice & we were without cloth Shoes. The Gov. pushed a large limb of a tree before him which kept him steady & with the assistance of Mr. Talbot I reached the spot where they were catching Maskalonge (a superior kind of Pike) and Pickerell. I was almost frozen from looking on, though the apprehension of falling kept me warm while I walked.

THE DIARY OF ELIZABETH SIMCOE, PUB. 1934





[PLATE 004]



[FIGURE 1.0]

Civilization in Canada, as elsewhere, has advanced geometrically across the country, throwing down the long parallel lines of railways, dividing up the farm lands into chessboards of square-mile sections and concession-line roads. There is little adaptation to nature: in both architecture and arrangement, Canadian cities and villages express rather an arrogant abstraction, the conquest of nature by an intelligence that does not love it. The word conquest suggests something military, as it should – one thinks of General Braddock, preferring to have his army annihilated rather than fight the natural man on his own asymmetrical ground.

NORTHRUP FRYE, *THE BUSH GARDEN*, 1971: 224

After the peace of 1783, discharged soldiers and United Empire Loyalists coming into Upper Canada were rewarded in lands; the grant usually consisting of 200 acres.

\*

The settlers who were in earnest about their business soon set about clearing their acres... Getting the land cleared up often implied a wholesale burning of a settler's holdings. According to one description [Canadian Illustrated News, December 20th, 1879], the chopping was done in winter, and the debris fired in the spring... Next followed the logging bee, wherein all the neighbours were called in to pile the logs for burning in heaps for monster bonfires. ...

People wondered how they would ever get rid of all the wood, just as we wonder today how we will ever put back into trees all of the land that is useless for any other purpose.

\*

“Some of the finest oak that ever grew was split into rails to make snake fences and the timber was still sound fifty years later. Other equally good oak was rolled into log heaps and burned. Those logs today would be worth more than the cleared farms on which they were burned.” [The Pioneers of Old Ontario]

CHARLES SAURIOL, *PIONEERS OF THE DON*, 1995: 16-17.

Much of the new urban development within the Urbanizing Area is occurring on former agricultural lands, thereby diminishing the availability of large contiguous parcels of land for large scale crop production. In the Rural Area, many farmers were under pressure to sell their land to speculators.

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: LAND USE,” *REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*, TRCA, 2009

#### CITY LOOKS DIFFERENT WHEN SERVED COUNTRY STYLE

Well within the heart of Toronto, in the Don Valley north of Prince Edward Viaduct, market gardening is a profitable occupation for N. Catalano who supplies his own fruit and vegetable store. Helping him are two grandsons, Joe Argier, 12 (small stripes), and Nicky Argier, 10.

\*

William McArthur is just down the hill from Rosedale, but to look at his beehives and farm-style house, you'd think you were at least 50 miles from Toronto. He harvests honey and also supplies queen bees to other apiarists.

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, OCT 24 1951

## SAVAGE

When James Onyschuk worked at a riverside warehouse in the 1960s, he'd occasionally check to see what colour the river was: pink, maybe, or bright blue, courtesy of the dyes from an upstream paper mill. Today, former factories have become trendy lofts and upscale car dealerships.

"DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON RIVER," *CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC*, JUN 2011

At the peak of water-powered milling in 1860, the watershed supported over fifty mills producing paper, lumber, flour and wool. ...Dependent as these industries were on consistent and predictable river flow, they were also vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations in water levels. Annual spring freshets and ice jams frequently washed out mill dams, destroyed equipment, and flooded buildings... Berczy's "German Mills," for example, located on German Mills Creek near its confluence with the East Don River, struggled to survive due to insufficient flows. On Taylor-Massey Creek, where flows were even lighter, three saw mills established in the 1810s failed due to lack of water.

\*

Relatively poor soils—with the exception of the river flats south of Pottery Road, reduced the potential for successful farming initiatives. The steep ravine lands of the valley between Bloor and Gerrard further limited agricultural potential and complicated access to valley holdings. Unpredictable riparian conditions brought more headaches for landowners. Seasonal floods washed out bridges and roads and occasionally threatened livestock and outbuildings, and unexpected droughts reduced water flow, threatening mill and agricultural operations alike. For property owners east of the river, the limited number of bridge crossings over the Don, and the poor quality of those that did exist, made access to their holdings especially challenging. These factors added further disincentives to an area already blighted by perceptions of unhealthiness and distance from the growing commercial and residential core of York.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PH.D. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009: 69, 100





[PLATE 005]

STILL STANDING,  
BUT LEFT IN LIMBO

To developers, they're costly eyesores  
that stand in the way of new projects.  
To heritage experts, they're priceless  
monuments left to die of neglect.

\*

5. Milne House

\*

Built: 1862

Significance: This gothic revival farmhouse is the last remaining structure from a milling community that thrived for a century. It housed members of the Milne family during a time when the resident sheep that supplied the four-storey woollen mill were driven into the Don River to be washed before shearing. The mill itself - complete with 60-foot pine beams cut from the valley hills - was torn down in 1946, eight years before the floods of Hurricane Hazel would convince city officials the Don Valley was no place for people, ending an era of river valley activity.

Status: Being on Conservation Authority land, this house is listed as a heritage property and in no danger of being squashed by condos, but it is proving difficult to secure it against less ambitious vandals. A restoration report completed in 2000 has gone nowhere for lack of funds, but a Milne House Committee formed last year will explore ways to rehabilitate the modest house and incorporate it into the surrounding parkland.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, JAN 8 2011

EASTERN SMELLS.  
(To the Editor of the Globe.)

We think the first question for the city of Toronto to decide is, shall we do away with all these industries and make Toronto the nice little watering place that would suit Mr. Baldwin, or shall we allow Toronto to make her way up to a first-class city, and let Mr. Baldwin seek for some place more congenial to his sense of smell!...

GOODERHAM & WORTS

*THE DAILY GLOBE, JUN 10 1874*

...I would desire through your paper, Sir, to call the attention of the public and the city authorities to the fact that, unfortunately, there are a very large class of "sufferers" from these delectable odours ...who certainly have a right to be protected from the injurious effects of poisoned air and water, no matter whether caused by such establishments as Messrs. Gooderham & Worts, or by the slaughterhouses, lard-rendering establishments, etc., alluded to by those gentlemen as furnishing their quote to the East end smells.

As to the assertion about the healthy adults and children in those favoured localities, I would merely say that it is a well known fact that among many savage tribes you never see any but strong and vigorous children, because all the weak and sickly ones are killed off.

...[T]he really important question for our health authorities to satisfy themselves about is, whether the state of things which existed last year, and was supposed to have been put a stop to, still continues, viz, that the water and marsh on the east side of the Don continues to be filled with a foul combination of refuse swill and semi-liquid measures; so that whenever the wind sets to a particular quarter, and agitates the water, the result is the abominable smell which ...[was] declared to be not only injurious to the comfort but the health of all within its reach.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
And Another "Sufferer" who cannot  
go to a quiet Watering-Place.

*THE DAILY GLOBE, JUN 16 1874*

"But the Don, the poor unconscious object of all this invective, is in reality no more to blame than is the savage because he is a savage, not having had a chance to be anything else. In proceeding to lay the foundation of a delta of solid land at its mouth, the Don followed the precedent of other streams, in conformity with the physical conditions of its situation. When at length the proper hour arrived, and the right men appeared, possessed of the intelligence, the vigour and the wealth equal to the task of bettering nature by art on a considerable scale, then at once the true value and capabilities of the Don were brought out into view. Speedily then were its channel and outlet put to their proper and foreordained use, being transformed by means of cribwork and embankments into a convenient interior harbour for Toronto, an arrangement of high importance to the interests of a now populous quarter, where some of the most striking developments of business activity and manufacturing enterprise that the capital of Ontario can boast of, have been witnessed."

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF THE GAZETTE, CHARLES FOTHERGILL ON THE DON  
BREAKWATER, 1826; IN *TORONTO OF OLD* BY HENRY SCADDING, 1873: 560



[PLATE 006]

Lever Brothers of Britain opened a factory in 1890 on the bank of the Don River in Toronto. For more than a century workers made soap here, including Sunlight and Dove products. In 2002 Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch conglomerate, sold the factory (but not the land) to Pensler Capital Corp. of Princeton, N. J., owned by Sanford Pensler. Mr. Pensler renamed the company “Korex.” He froze workers’ wages. They lost their Unilever pensions. In 2008, Mr. Pensler offered a contract which workers said stripped seniority and benefits. About 160 workers walked out.

In August, 2009, Korex Don Valley declared bankruptcy. The workers, after striking 14 months, packed up their shantytown and went off to an uncertain future.

...After Korex declared bankruptcy, Unilever bought the factory out of the bankruptcy court, said the man, who did not give a name. He said a skeleton crew is attempting to maintain the building, and prevent its pipes from freezing, on behalf of Unilever, which explains the steam rising from the windows. The only revenue the plant generates today is from a big billboard on its roof, advertising right now Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows.

Councillor Paula Fletcher (Toronto-Danforth) said, “I know at one point it was looked at for the TTC yards, but it was too late in the game. I believe the land is significantly contaminated. The building itself is perfect for reuse for something. It is a lovely old building. It should be of interest to Waterfront Toronto.”

“INFORMATION BOOTH,”

*THE NATIONAL POST*, JAN 3 2012

In 1950 people were more casual about fecal coliform and a count of 2,400 was considered okay for swimming. Even by those relaxed standards, the waters of the Don River in 1950 were 25,000 times more foul than the minimum. The fecal coliform count was 61 million, and the Don became celebrated as the most polluted stream in Ontario.

“POOR OLD DON RIVER’S ABOUT TO BE  
SAVED AGAIN,” *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
APR 4 1989

How bad is the Don River? It’s the filthiest thing that Toronto sends into Lake Ontario, the source of the city’s drinking water. Posted signs forbid swimming and wading because of pollution. You can’t even splash in the stream on a hot summer’s day. If you do, your skin will probably itch, or - as happened to one member of the Toronto Field Naturalists - it might even peel off.

“TORONTO: REBIRTH OF A RIVER,”  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, MAR 24 1989

Between 2003 and 2005, Environment Canada surveyed water quality at 10 Canadian lakes and 349 rivers. The Don placed in the bottom five percent, among only 16 sites to earn a “poor” rating. Key problems included phosphorus, an algae-boosting component of fertilizers and human and animal waste. Phosphorus levels in the Don have fallen by 66 percent over the past 30 years, but they’re still five times higher than Ontario’s target of 0.03 milligrams per litre.

The same is true of bacteria from pet waste, leaky sewers and sewage overflows. Levels vary with weather and location (as the water flows south through the watershed, it gathers more pollutants), but measurements on the lower Don are typically 30 times greater than the 100 *E. coli* per 100 millilitres that Ontario deems safe for swimming.

Another indicator of urban growth around the Don is chloride, mostly from road salt, which is up 68 percent over the past 20 years.

“DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON  
RIVER,” *CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC*,  
JUN 2011

### 5.7.7 IRON

Iron is the heavy metal with the greatest percentage of samples exceeding water quality guidelines (TRCA, 2009b). Iron is known to precipitate on the gills of fish and on fish eggs which most likely interferes with oxygen uptake however, there are few studies that quantify iron-induced gill damage (Peuranen et al., 1994). A source of iron in the Don is landfill leachate which can migrate to the stream via shallow groundwater and appear as orange coloured seepage (iron oxide) along stream banks.

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: AQUATIC SYSTEM,”  
*REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*, TRCA, 2009



1833, Colonel Freeman: "It is well known that when a hot summer sun acts upon such low wet soil it will crack open to a considerable depth, and who can say but pestilence and death may be exhaled from such chinks."

RON FLETCHER, *OVER THE DON*, 2002: III

[PLATE 007]



THE DON RIVER  
Its Conversion Into a Navigable  
River Discussed.  
THE SCHEME HIGHLY  
FAVOURED.

... If the proposed improvements were carried out so that schooners and propellers could sail up the Don they could have industries, coal yards, and so forth established on the banks of that river.

THE GLOBE, OCT 10 1881

...Many who have heard about the "straightening of the Don," but have not seen it, will have an idea that perhaps the object is to dig away the sides of the stream at some points, fill them up at others, and thus make a

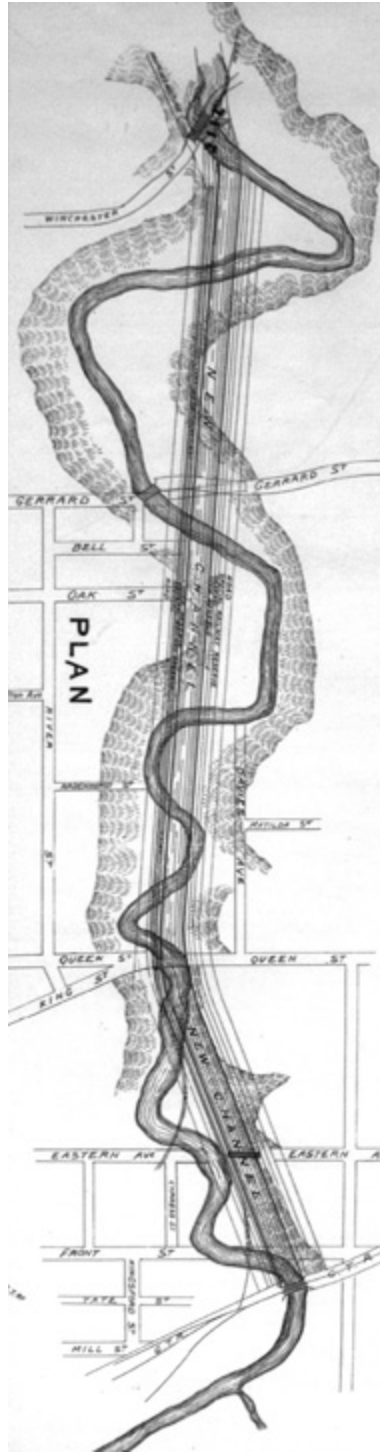
CROOKED STREAM LESS CROOKED.

This is a mistake. Imagine a winding river bed, the curves of which are for the most part short but numerous, lying in a valley which contains very few curves and preserves an almost uniform direction to the north, as far at least as St. James' Cemetery. The plan pursued by the engineers of the work has been a radical one, and consists in running two lines of piles straight up the valley, regardless of whether they run through water or earth, cutting across curves, lopping off corners, channelling through dry beds of sand or gravel, and in one instance running slap through some frame buildings which an old resident long ago built in the valley, no prophetic instinct at the time warning him of the canal which would in the future cut through the spot, for the Don, when the work is completed, will really be nothing more or less than a canal.

"A SCENE AT THE DON," THE GLOBE,  
JUL 14 1887

The Don Improvement was one of those mysterious infatuations to which all men are subject when acting in corporate or Governmental affairs. There are few who cannot look back and puzzle over the past advocacy of some absurd public undertaking.

"NOTES AND COMMENTS," THE GLOBE,  
FEB 4 1897



[FIGURE 1.1]



[PLATE 008]

He could not understand why surveyors had any more right on his property than anyone else, and on occasion he sat for hours at a time with a loaded shotgun in his hand, holding the surveyors at bay. In answer to this spirited opposition, the chief surveyor would station sentries to keep him informed of John Smith's absences from "duty." As soon as the old gentleman left for a visit to town, the surveyors would come down the river in boats from wherever they were working, and complete the measurements. Some vigorous rowing upstream took place on the first signal of Mr. Smith's return.

CHARLES SAURIOL, *PIONEERS OF THE DON*, 1995: 51

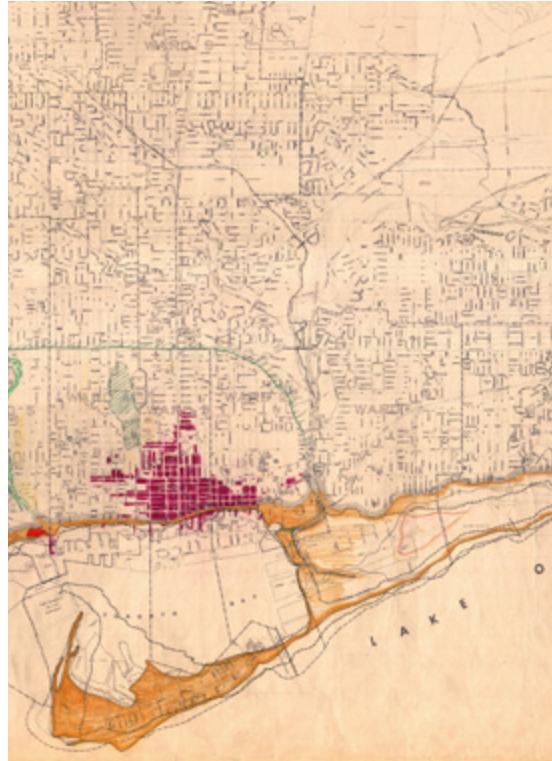




[PLATE 009]



[FIGURE 1.2]



[FIGURE 1.3]



[FIGURE I.4]



[FIGURE I.5]



[PLATE 010]



[PLATE 011]



The level of industrialization that did occur along the river south of Gerrard Street brought jobs for the area's growing working class population. But the major problems it set out to address—flooding, poor sanitary conditions, and the lack of navigability of the lower river—persisted for years after the dredges had retired and the money had been spent.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PHD. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009: 274

In these apparently forgotten places, the memory of the past seems to predominate over the present. These are obsolete places in which only a few residual values seem to manage to survive, despite their total disaffection from the activity of the city. They are, in short, external places, strange place left outside the city's effective circuits and productive structures. From the economic point of view, industrial areas, railway stations, ports, unsafe residential neighbourhoods, contaminated places, have become the areas where it can be said that the city is no longer.

They are its margins, lacking any effective incorporation; they are interior islands voided of activity; they are forgotten, oversights and leftovers which have remained outside the urban dynamic. Converted into areas that are simply *un-inhabited, un-safe, un-productive*. In short, these are places that are foreign to the urban system, mentally exterior in the physical interior of the city, appearing as its negative image as much as in the sense of criticism as in that of possible alternative.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 39



[PLATE 012]

[PLATE 013: 038-039]









WHERE  
AM I



## ARTIFACTS

The fella with the plastic shopping bags. Meandering along, head down. That's John.

Okay, let's follow him, but not too close. He's sharp. Doesn't miss a thing. Now, while we're walking, let us tell you about John Graves, The Great Treasure Hunter of Toronto ...

He was born right near here, you know. Upstairs from a Tamblyn's drug store over in Cabbagetown on Williamson Pl., a street that no longer exists.

Geez, it was tough. His old man, he never had much. And his mother, Hilda Mae? Well, she was Irish, and not too happy when ol' Bob up and joined the army in '40, leaving her with the five kids. Things got messy when he was overseas and she took up with someone else.

Well, you know how that is. The Children's Aid Society stepped in, and the little ones wound up in all different foster homes. Lost touch with one another for a long time.

Was John's destiny as a hunter-gatherer set in those years? It would seem so. See, he wasn't big on school, leaving Jesse Ketchum Public School in Grade 7. And after the old man got him back from children's aid at age 16, he started hanging around the scrapyards. Places like Cooper's, and Benny's on Eastern Ave.

Sure, he was a scrounger, even then. Trundling around with his little wagon, picking up discarded copper and brass to peddle to the junkers. Still talks about that 1830s hammerlock percussion pistol he found in someone's garbage.

Polished it up, sold it to a dealer for 20 sweet bucks. Oh, he was hooked then. From that day onward, John had that gleam in his eye. And this song in his heart: "Money found is twice as sweet as money earned."

Ain't that the truth?

...Now you take his digging. That man is a demon with a shovel and sifter. Panning for gold out west. Excavating for century-old ceramic bottles in the Don Valley. Sweeping his metal detector along the beaches. Haunting construction sites all over the GTA. Our John has done it all and, believe you me, he's found plenty.

...You know where he grabs some of his best stuff? The Villiers St. dump site down near the mouth of the Don River. That's where the city's snow removal trucks drop their loads in winter - and where John found a bundle of 32 \$20 bills.

Oowee! \$640! You can bet that bought a few extra rounds at the ol' Duke of York pub last winter.

..."John, you're getting on for 67 now. How will your story end? And what will happen to all your stuff?"

"Haw! Don't you worry about that. It's all catalogued in my ledgers, and every piece is earmarked. As for me, I figure to be out there, long as I'm able. Just looking. And, if I keel over one day, I hope it happens when I see a glint on the ground there and bend over to pick it up. That's the way I'd like to go."

"JOHN DIGS A GOOD TREASURE HUNT," *THE TORONTO STAR*, JUL 28 2002

Plunging into the system of voids and starting to explore its capillary inlets, we can see that what we have been accustomed to called 'empty' isn't really so empty after all; instead, it contains a range of different identities.

FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 183



[PLATE 014]



[PLATE 015]



[PLATE 016]



[PLATE 017]



[PLATE 018]



[PLATE 019]





[PLATE 020]



[PLATE 021]



[PLATE 022]



[PLATE 023]



[PLATE 024]



[PLATE 025]

046 [IDENTITY] 016

266 [PUBLIC] 148

240 [TIME] 212

I imagined this to be a complex, densely nuanced, highly valued object which would cast light on the obscure tracts – the wastelands – of our consciousness...a kind of ethological index to evidence of human presence on the site, objects that speak of certain behaviours and practises.

GILLES CLÉMENT, *ENVIRON(NE)MENT : MANIÈRES D'AGIR POUR DEMAIN*, 2006: 99



[PLATE 026]



[PLATE 027]



[PLATE 028]



[PLATE 029]



[PLATE 030]



[PLATE 031]





[PLATE 032]



[PLATE 033]



[PLATE 034]



[PLATE 035]



[PLATE 036]



[PLATE 037]



## CAMP

A Band of Wanderers Have Made  
Themselves Comfortable In a Bush There.

### WILL STAY FOR THE WINTER

\*

Tucked away in the bushes around the last bend of a long road to the north of the city, miles from a railroad and a good walk from any other human habitation, are four little white tents, the dwelling place of the remnants of a gypsy tribe. They have prepared for the winter only by building leaf shelters over the doorways of the tents and there they will stay through the storm and sunshine until the wanderlust seizes their gypsy fancies and they must move on to other lands.

...Where they came from or where they are going when they feel that they have rested too long are two things that will never be known. They are gypsies and it is the curse, or as they consider it, the blessing of their race, that one place cannot hold them too long. Always moving from one end of the earth to the other, that is the gypsy characteristic and these are true gypsies.

...As children see it, the gypsy camp is a most romantic spot. To the older eye it seems to be a little on the dirty and untidy side. But the children of North Toronto are never tired of looking at the camp and weaving weird tales of kidnapped and immature heiresses to be returned some day.

...In fact, the children of North Toronto know a great deal more about these gypsies than do their parents. On warm days they play around the outskirts of the camp, running away in childish terror when a swarthy face appears from the doorway of a tent. The bolder approach quite close, not a bit afraid, but always with a good running space at their backs. They love the mystery and glamour of the strange but they take no chance of being mistaken for heiresses.

"GYPSY'S CAMP IN NORTH TORONTO,"  
*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, NOV 5 1910

People living in the vicinity of the Gypsy Camp at York Mills have been complaining to the police, but as they are outside the city limits the complaints have been referred to the County police.

"LIVE NEWS OF GREATER TORONTO:  
NORTH TORONTO,"  
*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, AUG 21 1920



[PLATE 038]

## TOP FIVE LIST: THREATS TO THE DON

Everybody produces these lists so why not a list for the Don? The Don is threatened by a wide range of factors so I thought that a list of threats would be particularly relevant. Here is my list:

1. Stormwater runoff
2. Non-native invasive species
3. Infrastructure
4. Inappropriate human use
5. Government bureaucracy

You may want to reorder these or add to them and I would be interested in hearing your opinion. ...Today's article is #4.

### 4. Inappropriate Human Use

**LIVING IN THE VALLEY:** As if the city doesn't provide enough space for humans to reside, some of us insist on setting up shop in the valley. Grouped under the eponymous term 'homeless', people reside in the valley for a number of reasons. Some people really are homeless and the valley seems a welcome respite to the hardships of street life. Others have jobs to go to but are trying to save money by living off the land rather than paying rent. Still others just want to get away from it all. Regardless of their circumstances, the ravine lands often lack the resources necessary to support human lifestyle. For example, there is no sanitation so they use a hole in the ground or use the river. There is no heating so they collect deadwood or chop down trees for a fire. There is no garbage collection so they just leave it scattered on the ground. As well when they finally do leave they abandon many possessions in their campground leaving a toxic mess for the rest of us to cleanup.

*THE DON WATCHER BLOG, [HTTP://DONWATCHER.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://donwatcher.blogspot.com), NOV 6 2005*

**The construction of entirely democratic parks open to the general public is a 19th century phenomenon, with Frederick Law Olmsted as its most famous American proponent... It was only by the early 20th century that parks in cities on both sides of the Atlantic could generally be equated with public oases accessible to every urbanite in need of quiet, relaxation, green, and some fresh air. Today, at the end of the century, however, the situation seems to have again become more complex. During the past two decades, many parks have undergone momentous transformations. This has happened mostly in response to the growing presence of "unwanted" or "undesirable" visitors**

*GHEENT URBAN STUDIES TEAM. THE URBAN CONDITION; SPACE, COMMUNITY, AND SELF IN THE CONTEMPORARY METROPOLIS, 1997: 90*

These days the homesteads are in the wooded offshoots closest to the downtown's outreach services. Within sight of Rosedale's southernmost mansions near Rosedale Valley Road, one encampment features a camping tent under a grey tarpaulin, a Stella Artois patio umbrella, a Big Mac promotional poster for a welcome mat and a stuffed bear that stands guard. The facilities include a toilet seat set up over a lidded garbage can, with privacy provided on three sides by a cardboard dishwasher box.

Down the valley across from St. James Cemetery, Richard Phile assesses an area he's been digging in for old bottles. (Apparently this ravine used to be a dump in the 1930s.) He won't disclose where his camp is, just that it's off Mt. Pleasant Avenue and he can tolerate temperatures down to minus 15 in his low-slung tarp set-up. "Shelters have too many rules, too many people. I can take care of myself as long as people - people who drink - don't know where I am."

*"SECRETS OF THE RAVINE," THE GLOBE AND MAIL, MAY 9 2010*

Its secrets, as tallied in the middle of February, were 15 campsites; ...It was strange to pick through them and sense that in gentler seasons, before their occupants were driven to find some less vulnerable shelter, there existed here, night by night and hidden from view, what amounted to a community ...that straggled and crept below the horizon of the city's awareness, and that somehow kept itself going in difficult times.

Some of the camps were, or had been, no more than scrapes to the leeward of fallen trees, solo and lonely. Some had been as tickety-boo as pictures in the Mountain Equipment Co-op catalogue, with as many as a dozen discreetly separated sleeping areas, often under lean-tos now fallen in - symptoms of order and crude civility.

This time, solitary footprints we had hardly been aware of snagged our attention when they veered off and upward under the bridge that Mount Pleasant crosses... And away up there, from what you might imagine were the arches supporting a cathedral's ceiling, two bicycles hung in the girders. Tied alongside was a shovel, and a canvas bucket on a rope that could be lowered to the ground.

...Further east, past St. James Cemetery, something even more astonishing than suspended bicycles. A fence of woven sticks, almost a stockade. And behind it, three bird feeders. With feed in them. And a noisy gang of chickadees going to town on it. No footprints at all, but beside the feeders, almost invisible until you realized it wasn't a haphazard pile of deadfall but intricately crafted of branches and stumps, an almost perfectly weathertight hut with a burrow entrance.

Inside, it was tidy and snug. Even stranger, though: apart from the considerable labour and enterprise that went into its construction, there was no hint of an occupant. ...Except for this: hanging from what amounted to the entrance lintel was an ivy, still alive in a green pot, and, in a rectangular Fridge-O-Seal container, three of those little white instructional signs you find stuck in plants you buy at a nursery. Sundial White Portulaca. Jackpot Tansy. Herb Borage.

“WHOSE WOODS THESE ARE  
THE HOMELESS KNOW,”

*THE TORONTO STAR, MAR 30 2002*



[PLATE 039]

No one was there. To prevent discovery, the occupant had stashed his or her belongings up under the ramp, on a narrow steel ledge. From the looks of the stuff, its owner had been sleeping in this place for some time and was no travelling rich kid, playing poor. The rolled sleeping bag was filthy and ripped, the cooking gear dented, the cans full of the cheapest noodles and stew you can buy. In a nook rendered invisible from the busy roadway nearby by concrete pylons, there were signs of a cooking fire and a scatter of empty cans, plastic bags, booze bottles.

It was, of course, the digs of a homeless person, and merely one among many such sites in downtown Toronto's empty buildings, ravines and dead zones. Nevertheless, it gave me the sense of being an inadvertent trespasser in someone's house – embarrassed, curious, nervous. The feeling of trespass has haunted me since then. How very little it took – just a sleeping bag, a smudge of burnt wood and paper, a couple of battered aluminum pans – to mark that spot as a dwelling place, and to mark me out as an intruder!

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 307

**[T]he poorer residents ...wish to keep the gentrifiers out as much as the residents of the suburbs and luxury housing of these cities want to keep the poor out; yet ...One represents the desire of those poorer to insulate themselves from losses to the more powerful; the other represents the ability of the more powerful to insulate themselves from the necessity of sharing with, or having exposure to, those poorer. One wall defends survival, the other protects privilege.**

PETER MARCUSE, "WALLS OF FEAR AND WALLS OF SUPPORT,"  
*ARCHITECTURE OF FEAR*, 1997: 109

He is a little old man in the woods, a fairy-tale leprechaun with a magical wee abode tucked behind the trees, a beard of red flecked with grey, hands gnarled, blue eyes ablaze.

He speaks in rhyme, scattering bits of wisdom in the lines of poetry that pour from his mouth.

When he stops talking, as he only reluctantly does, he runs. He runs like religion, sprinting up hills with an 80-pound timber hoisted onto a shoulder, peeling off dirty wool socks and rolling up his trousers in sub-zero temperatures to gallop barefoot in the snow.

\*

From Toronto's northern limits down to where the Don River spills into Lake Ontario, and in ravines spreading to the east and west, all these people have staked a claim to public land, living under an uneasy, unspoken truce with the authorities.

Their tents, their precarious perches under bridges are undisturbed by works crews and parks employees who tend to turn a blind eye when crossing their paths. Still, they seldom light campfires, mindful that a skein of smoke above the treetops would give police an excuse to evict them.

MARGARET PHILIP, "SPECIAL: THE OUTSIDERS," *THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, 2005

## DESOLATION ROW

It was home to the Kress Krew, the Kids, the Recluses, the Workers, the Mayor, the Pervert, the Pathological Liars, the Gardener and the "dirty, drug-dealing" Pimps.

There was the thief who was a truly honest man, the shack with marble floors, and the squatters who sold their shanties in binding real estate deals.

Karl Schmidt saw no reason to leave.

His shanty was equipped with running water, diverted by hose from a city water tap. He had tapped into the city's electrical grid to power his television, computer and microwave. When the streetlights came on at night, his electricity turned on too. He planned to eventually have a satellite internet link-up.

"Why," asked Schmidt, "would I want to spend \$500 a month on one little room that is smaller than my shed, when I can have so much more down here?"

"Community?" shouts Hawk. "This ain't no community. This is sex, drugs and rock 'n roll."

Hawk worries that Tent City is in serious decline. He despises the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee (TDRC), which spends \$1,200 a month to clean six portable toilets, and other agencies that give away free food to Tent City residents.

"Those groups exist only because Tent City exists," Hawk says. "The TDRC arranged for all of the outhouses to be sent down here. I guarantee you that half of these people wouldn't be moving down here if it weren't for those outhouses."

"And look at everyone lining up for free food from those vans. This was supposed to be the pure hobo life down here. But those people don't want freedom. If they need society to take care of them, then they should leave and go back up to society."

"Hey Dave," Eddie shouted, "Your place is on fire."

He saw Dave's shoulders shrug. "Who gives a f--," Dave said as he and Donna walk away.

Dave's shanty exploded with such force that it blew the door off the shack behind it. Propane tanks, Eddie thought.

What began as a handful of squatters, in the winter of 1998, grew to a full-fledged community numbering more than 100. It produced its first baby on May 6, with another born at the end of June. As tensions mounted, and rumours heated up about an impending mass eviction, residents maintained they were entitled to the land. But Home Depot, legal owner of the site, disagreed. The hardware chain reclaimed its turf yesterday with an army of security guards - backed by city police, bulldozers, handcuffs and trespassing warrants.

...In the winter of '98, a collection of youths was found living in the Rooster Squat, a derelict building on the old Canada Malting site, at Lake Shore and Queens Quay, beside the port lands.

The city wanted to tear it down but the squatters wouldn't leave. In January, Councillor Jack Layton convinced some of them to move to the lot next door. Two insulated trailers were donated by the Canadian Foundation for World Development. Independently of Layton, several street men showed up, building the first permanent structures - little lean-to shanties.

A few months later, Layton delivered some donated tents. By summer, drivers on the Cherry St. bridge could look down and see a cluster of campers. The name Tent City was born.

THE TORONTO STAR, SEP 25 2002

A shantytown that had become an civic embarrassment for Toronto was cleared yesterday in an operation Mayor Mel Lastman praised and poverty activists condemned.

About 100 people looked dishevelled, dazed and angry as security officials hired by the landowners, Home Depot Canada, roused them from the camp in a rubble-strewn field near the harbour.

Some wept and others yelled in contempt as a police cordon kept them from retrieving their belongings from the makeshift shanties that had been home to some for as long as two years.

... "They told me if I left peacefully they would arrange food and shelter. But now there's nobody doing anything for us," said Mr. Rosen, who moved into a wooden shack in Tent City this summer after eight years of using city shelters.

...Those evicted were handed pink notices that resembled traffic tickets. A box checked on each said they were charged with trespassing and faced a fine of up to \$2,000.

... "Home Depot had a liability there, and they had to do something about it. Somebody was going to get sick, or hurt, or worse," he said.

But the operation also removes an awkward symbol of Toronto's urban problems. In June, The New York Times ran a story on Tent City, saying it showed signs of "fraying" in what had long been thought a model city.

"TORONTO'S TENT CITY SEALED OFF,  
SQUATTERS EJECTED,"  
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SEP 25 2002

## RE EVICTION: JUSTIFIED OR HEARTLESS? SEPT. 25.

The eviction of the residents of Tent City should come as no surprise. The manner in which they were evicted, however, should be unacceptable in a civil society.

While the residents of Tent City were there as squatters, it is not as if they had not been there, and, indeed, appeared to have been allowed to remain there, for some time.

The eviction of the squatters had been planned for several months. So the raucous, noisy eviction served no social purpose other than for the sensationalism and headlines that it would garner.

THE TORONTO STAR, SEP 26 2002





[PLATE 040]







[PLATE 041]

## CABBAGES AND KINGS

### THE DON VALLEY BRICK WORKS, LIMITED

## The Skyline of Toronto *spells* Don Valley Products

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1-AB - Osgoode Hall (addition)   | 33- B - Massey Hall  |
| 2- B - Highway Building, Ontario Government  | 34-AB - Robert Simpson Co.'s Mail Order Bldg.                          |
| 3- B - Mt. Carmel Church (formerly St. Patrick's)  | 35- B - Nordheimer Building  |
| 4-AB - Ontario Hydro-Electric Administration Building  | 36-AB - Comedy Theatre (formerly Gayety)                               |
| 5-ABC - Central Technical School   | 37- B - Arena  |
| 6- B - Oakwood Collegiate  | 38-AB - St. Michael's Hospital<br>B - St. Michael's School             |
| 7- B - Forestry Building, Toronto University   | 39-AB - Heintzman & Co.'s Building                                     |
| 8-AB - Hillcrest Shops, TTC  | 40-AB - Loew's Theatre   |
| 9-AB - Administration Bldg., Board of Education  | 41- B - T. Eaton Co.'s Departmental Store                              |
| 10- B - Orde St. School  | 42- B - House of Providence  |
| 11- B - University of Toronto:<br>- Engineering Building<br>- Dental College<br>- Physics Builgind<br>- Thermo-Dynamics Building<br>- Convocation Hall | 43- B - Victor Mission   |
| 12-AB - "Casa Loma"<br>(Sir Henry Pellatt's Residence)<br>- Sir Henry's Pellatt's Stables  | 44-AB - Confederation Life Building<br>(Queen Street Annex)            |
| 13-AB - Hart House, University of Toronto<br>- Trinity College   | 45- B - London & Lancashire Insurance Co.<br>(formerly World Bldg.)    |
| 14-AB - Armouries  | 46-A - Robert Simpson Departmental Store                               |
| 15-AB - Parliament Buildings   | 47- C - Orr Bros.' Building  |
| 16- B - Toronto Reception Hospital   | 48-AB - McLaughlin Motor Co.'s Building<br>(Church & Richmond Sts.)    |
| 17-AB - Toronto General Hospital   | 49-AB - Shea's Theatre   |
| 18-AB - Whitney Block<br>(Ontario Government Office Building)  | 50-AB - Kent Building  |
| 19-AB - Registry Building  | 51- B - Continental Life Building                                      |
| 20-AB - Sick Children's Hospital   | 52-AB - St. James Parish House   |
| 21-AB - Willys Knight Overland Co.   | 53- B - Christie Brown Co.'s Building                                  |
| 22- B - T. Eaton Co.'s Garage  | 54-AB - Excelsior Life Building  |
| 23-AB - Bank of Commerce, Bloor and Yonge  | 55-AB - Lumsden Building   |
| 24- B - T. Eaton Co.'s Stables   | 56-AB - Canadian Mortgage Building                                     |
| 25-AB - Traders' Bank Apartments   | 57-AB - Toronto Hydro-Electric<br>(Adelaide St. Buildings)             |
| 26-ABC - Hippodrome Theatre  | 58- B - Holt Renfrew Building  |
| 27- B - Manning Chambers   | 59- B - Empire Theatre   |
| 28- B - T. Eaton Factory   | 60-AB - Bell Telephone Bldg., Temperance St.                           |
| 29-AB - Lieutenant-Governor's Residence  | 61-AB - Imperial Oil Co.'s Building (addition)                         |
| 30- B - T. Eaton Co.'s Furniture Building  | 62-AB - Royal Bank Building  |
| 31-AB - Pantages Theatre   | 63- B - Stair Building   |
| 32- B - City Hall  | 64- BC - C.P.R. Building   |
|  | 65-AB - Bank of Hamilton Building<br>(formerly Traders' Bank Building) |
|  | 66- B - Dominion Bank Building   |
|  | 67-AB - Standard Bank Building   |
|  | 68-AB - Bell Telephone Building, Adelaide St.                          |

A-TERRA COTTA FIREPROOFING (HOLLOW TILE)  
B-BRICK  
C-ENAMELLED BRICK

The sky-soaring pen of building construction dips its trowel-like nib into the bottomless well of Don Valley products and records in enduring masonry their claim to the ever-changing skyline of this Canadian Manhattan

REPRODUCED ADVERTISEMENT, EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS



[PLATE 042]



I think cities can't help but have places like these. I think if the Don is developed into something more gentrified, for lack of a better word, if the plans go ahead for the naturalization of the Don, etc., and it becomes more of a condo-dwellers landscape, another place will pick up the slack in becoming a Don-like landscape. They tend to be derelict landscapes, places in transition, and I think all cities have these kinds of spaces. Cities are in flux and there's always some space that provides that kind of function.

I think with the nature of the Don, much of it is preserved as floodplain, so even if the Lower Don is developed in a different way, there will be other spaces in the valley that will provide that function.

...You can look to the Brick Works as another example: that's a really fantastic space that is celebrated by so many people now that would never have gone to the Brick Works before. And yet, it's also a loss for people who enjoyed it as a derelict space in the city where you could gather for raves, for example - you can't do that anymore! So whether there are other spaces that will fill that gap, I think they're important to the life of the city, but they're difficult to protect in that kind of status as derelict and potentially dangerous spaces. But it's important to acknowledge what is lost in making these spaces more acceptable, certainly.

...Perceptions of the river have been really important in shaping how it was used in the past, and to me, that's kind of a circular effect, in that uses shape perceptions and perceptions shape uses. I think there are very strong perceptions of what the river is today and any kind of designers or planners for that space should be aware of how those perceptions have changed over time and what kinds of interventions shaped those uses.

I mean, looking at the history of homelessness in the valley, for example, people should know that it's not just a current phenomenon, that the valley's long provided this role.

FORTY-TWO HOMELESS MEN  
SNOOZED ON HEATED BRICKS  
Glad to Get a “Hot-Flop” on Zero Night  
in the Don Valley Yards  
ARE INVITED GUESTS

A bed of bricks mightn't be the most comfortable thing in the world, but last night, during bitter winds and near-zero weather, forty-two homeless, jobless, and penniless wandering men slept on “hot-flops” in the Don Valley yards of the Toronto Brick Co.

At least a “hot-flop” is warm. At least there are no midnight creeping visitors!

...These men are not bums. They are not tramps. Nor are they hoboes. They are mostly just as decent and respectable as any to be found in the half dozen establishments which offer free beds for the price of attending a religious service.

Nor are these men trespassers. They are residents of the Don Valley yards of the Toronto Brick Co. as the invited guests of Frank E. Waterman, general manager of that company, who has not only issued instructions to his staff that the men are to be allowed the privileges of his brick yard, but he has on several occasions stoutly resented the intrusion of policemen and plainclothesmen.

...“We've still got a little pride left... I've never been like this before. I've always been able to save enough during the summer to get through the winter. It was different this year. I've been sleeping here for four month. I'd rather die than sleep in one of those missions...”

They told me how two plainclothesmen had intruded upon their privacy a few weeks ago and, in a test to determine their willingness to work, had wakened every sleeping man and told him there was a job shovelling coal awaiting them. Not a single man had refused. They quickly pulled on their boots and left their brick beds. But it was only a ruse.

...We talked together for hours. They wondered if the throngs who filled the churches on Sunday knew that fifty or so of their brethren were sleeping on “hot-flops” every night of the week. They couldn't understand why every restaurant in Toronto didn't let them eat the waste food. They criticised and condemned every charitable institution in Toronto. They whole-heartedly doubted that the new Central Bureau of Registration for homeless men would make any difference to their plight. They talked of cabbages and kings!



[PLATE 043]



[PLATE 044]

THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, DEC 2 1930

**As nature conservation is increasingly absorbed into the rhetoric and practice of sustainable urban design, it is often assumed to be an honourable endeavour ... However, conservation practices often conceal, produce and reinforce hegemonic social relations.**

JENNIFER FOSTER, "RESTORATION OF THE DON VALLEY BRICK WORKS: WHOSE RESTORATION? WHOSE SPACE?,"  
*JOURNAL OF URBAN DESIGN*, OCT 2005

Named a top-10 geo-tourism destination by National Geographic even before it opened in September, Evergreen Brick Works is a model of historical preservation and ecological sustainability. Derelict buildings have been transformed into a climbing centre, classrooms and a Saturday farmers' market. There's ice skating in the winter and bicycle rentals in the summer.

"THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE,  
IN THE HEART OF THE CITY,"  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, APR 2 2011

## A LANDMARK IN THE LANDSCAPE

Unlike the mighty Rocky Mountains accenting Calgary or the majestic ocean lapping Victoria, one of Toronto's greatest natural assets lies largely hidden from view. Toronto is home to the biggest network of ravines of any city in the world. They carve through much of the metropolis, providing 10,500 hectares of wilderness escape and stunning backdrops for coveted homes.

The extent of Toronto's ravine network is unusual, but it doesn't define the city in the way the mountains define Calgary or the ocean does Victoria. Philanthropist and green entrepreneur Geoff Cape thinks it's time to change that. He wants Toronto to celebrate its ravines and promote them as a destination for residents and tourists, like New York's Central Park.

"This could be the thing that Toronto really becomes known for internationally," says Mr. Cape, who conceived and championed the Evergreen Brick Works restoration project in the Don Valley Ravine. "Every smart city in the world is trying to figure out how to develop a green strategy and a sustainability strategy. Ours is embedded in our landscape. It's here. We just need to pay attention to it."

Why should Toronto focus on its ravines?

The ravines of Toronto are unique in the world. No other city has such an elaborate, such an extensive network of natural spaces. It's the defining aspect of Toronto. ...It's an asset for everyone. It doesn't distinguish between rich and poor and cultural diversity. It's available to all of us and it connects us all.

Aside from the size of the network, what else makes Toronto's ravines special?

It reminds us we're Canadian. It's such a rugged landscape in the middle of the city. It ties us back to who we are as a country and where we come from as a country. It's full of quiet areas of peace and solitude at one end of the spectrum and bustling areas with kids and farmers' markets and recreational activities at the other end of the spectrum. It has something for everyone.

You grew up with a ravine as your playground. Did it surprise you to learn many Torontonians have never visited a ravine?

Not really. It's an asset that's been under-recognized by our community. It's out of sight and out of mind. For those who know about it, it's incredibly special. And the opportunity, the big idea, is to shine a light on it, to celebrate the ravines in the coming decade and turn them into the massive asset that they really are. Ravines should be developed as our keystone asset in our marketing, drawing tourists and giving the citizens of Toronto something to be proud about.

*THE TORONTO STAR*, JAN 13 2012

When architecture and urban design project their desire onto a vacant space, a *terrain vague*, it seems that they are incapable of doing anything other than introducing violent transformations, changing estrangements into citizenship, and striving at all costs to dissolve away the uncontaminated magic of the obsolete in the realism of efficacy.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 36-41



[PLATE 045]

To the Editor of the Star.

Sir: I am a returned veteran of the 1st Canadian contingent, at present unemployed. I was discharged at physical condition, am of a husky build, suited to manual labor, and am 36 years old. Yesterday I lost my room through inability to pay rent. To-day I find myself homeless in a city that I enlisted from in 1914.

Is there a reader of your worthy paper in need of a man. Before I will accept charity or line up in a bread line I offer my services for room or board.

Trusting you will find room to publish this letter in an early edition.

DON VALLEY

*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, JUL 9 1931

The East York Police Force was mobilized yesterday afternoon at the Don Valley "jungle," and, under orders, proceeded to demolish all the peculiar and varied habitations of the populace within that portion which lies in East York. Brick huts were pushed over and those of a more frail construction were set afire...

In the meantime, all East York's jungle dwellers had left, most being en route to the trans-Canada highway camps, while a few were taken into temporary quarters for the time being. One of the last to leave was a returned soldier who served overseas with the Fourteenth Battalion. He was known to his comrades as "Tarzan," and at one time attended university. His destination was Christie Street Hospital.

"EAST YORK POLICEMEN HOUSECLEAN 'JUNGLE,'" *THE GLOBE*, OCT 7 1931





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[FIGURE 1.6]

300 JOBLESS SLEEP NIGHTLY  
ALONG DON RIVER'S BANKS  
Are Sheltered in Brick Kilns Transformed  
in Alcoves Resembling Suites  
FASHION CRUDE COTS

Three hundred jobless men... respectable citizens mingled with tramps, hoboes and wanderers... slept last night in the Don Valley "jungle," following recent closing of all city missions and shelter, with the exception of the House of Industry.

Two hundred of them slept on the banks of the muggy Don river with the sky as a blanket and the earth as a mattress. The others slept in brick kilns.

Yes, they're sleeping on the bricks again. Nice, hard, warm bricks! They're burrowed away like rabbits in a hole...

*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, JUN 19 1931*

Smack dab in the heart of Evergreen Brick Works, Café Belong is a little out of the way. But a huge shelf of booze, a funkified list of cocktails, courtesy of general manager Renata Clingen and a commitment to local and sustainable food sources may just make chef Brad Long's eatery (better known for his work on HGTV show *Restaurant Makeover*) worth the extra few minutes of travel time. Since its August opening, Café Belong has certainly become the choice for on-site office dwellers and Don Valley walkers and cyclists.

Picture a café in the middle of a small-town weekend farmers' market with a dash of urban sophistication and you've got the idea. The understated decor and atmosphere belies the ambition of the drinks list and the menu. Café Belong relies on natural light and sweeping views of the Brick Works and the surrounding valley through the tall windows that line the restaurant. Kitchen-side, find large red wooden shelves that house countrified knick-knacks and a wide selection of wine and liqueurs.

"BAR OF THE WEEK," *THE TORONTO STAR*, NOV 24 2011

old (history) into a specific spectacle, as it does with all exoticism and local particularity.

MARC AUGÉ, *NON-PLACES; AN INTRODUCTION TO SUPERMODERNITY*, 2008: 89

I would feel better if there had also been an effort to create social housing and relocate the displaced people who had been living here. As it is, the homeless are used to not getting help from the city, or anyone really, with the exception of StreetHealth nurses, so they withdrew themselves. But, I mean, we keep pushing them further and further out, and it gets to a point - where are they supposed to go?

PARTICIPANT, "READING THE RAVINES," LOST RIVERS WALKING TOUR, APR 29 2012

## HOT PROPERTY

But the lake belongs to everyone. ...It's all about encouraging a neighbourhood's public life, Mr. Campbell says. And down there at the waterfront, he wants to make sure that public life will create a "kind of Yorkville on the water."

"PLAN HAS GOOD FLOW,"  
*THE NATIONAL POST*, NOV 19 2011

A former Dundas St. E. tannery is about to be reborn as a 36-unit loft project.

"It's a beautiful old building, almost 100 years old," says Edwin Brdlik, of Toronto Lofts Realty Corp., who is handling marketing and sales for The Tannery Lofts.

... One interesting touch in the lofts is the unusual patina on the wooden posts and beams, the result of an earlier fire in the factory.

Designers will also retain the large, original service elevator with gate-like doors. It will be restored as the elevator for the building.

"FORMER TANNERY TO BECOME LOFTS,"  
*THE TORONTO STAR*, FEB 7 2004

**With the trend for loft-living and an industrial minimalist aesthetic entering the mainstream – often now only affordable for the wealthy middle classes – once marginal inner-city areas of old warehouses and docklands in both Europe and North America are undergoing a transformation into bijoux versions of their former selves.**

**So very much attention is today being placed on THE EDGE of cities. ...And above all, living on the edge as part of the homeness experience. No longer a place to be avoided ('stay away from the edge') or to be viewed with guarded caution ('watch out for the edge'), the edge is suddenly acceptable. More than that, the edge is fashionable, desirable and even attainable. The edge is the place to be.**

IAIN BORDEN, "BIJOUX BORDERLANDS," *ARCHITECTURE OF THE BORDERLANDS*, 1999:95

The resident community is designated the primary, if not the only, client group for architects. The rest, namely the urban nomads, are excluded. As a result, public space, which should maintain a diffuse identity and open programs, is being eroded, becoming the equivalent of a suburbanite's backyard.

GIL DORON, "DEAD ZONES, OUTDOOR ROOMS AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF TRANSGRESSION," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 222



[PLATE 046]

Near the banks of the Don River, at the traffic lights where the steep wooded sides of the Rosedale Valley ravine blend into the wide expanse of the Don Valley, Kurt Hendry is sitting on an upturned milk crate, a white cardboard sign with "Homeless, Please Spare Change" scrawled in black marker leaning against his thigh.

...This corner is hot property, a panhandler's gold mine claimed by an elite few at the top of a Darwinist pecking order of ravine dwellers.

The unwritten law is that only the people who live in the woods nearby have a right to work the spot. Even then, Kurt is routinely muscled aside by Boomer, a brawny man in army fatigues with a Maritime lilt who calls himself the mayor of the Rosedale Valley ravine.

Kurt is just a few months out of jail, sprung after serving eight years for what he loftily claims to be the biggest bank heist in Scarborough history. At least until the story changes.

Later, he acknowledges that the sentence was handed down for breaking into an elderly woman's home, stuffing rags down her throat as his buddies ransacked the house.

MARGARET PHILIP, "SPECIAL: THE OUTSIDERS," *THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, 2005



Underpass Park isn't just a welcome new recreation space, it's an act of reclamation. It brings forgotten, derelict space back into public use.

"DERELICT TO DELIGHTFUL,"  
*THE TORONTO STAR*, JUL 30 2012

It's a bold re-imagining for a town where underpasses are generally regarded as nothing more than graffiti galleries and pigeon coops. Linger too long under most Toronto roadways and you get the distinct feeling that something disgusting is going to drip onto your head, and it won't be sliding off a piece of art.

But some urban thinkers are beginning to see the spaces as the downtown's untapped natural assets, and say that beautifying them could completely change the way people move around the city.

"Toronto's got all sorts of overpasses and roadways, and I think there are places that could be really interesting if enough imagination was brought to bear," said Greg Smallenberg, the Vancouver-based landscape architect who designed Underpass Park.

...But the spaces also come with inherent challenges. Because the Gardiner underpass has long been a place of refuge for the homeless population, Mr. Poussin was encouraged to incorporate light into his work so that the condo's security guard could easily see who was hanging out there.

...[T]here are also psychological hurdles at play when it comes to enticing people to rethink such unappealing space. Mr. Smallenberg insists that the air around Underpass Park will be no more polluted than any other Toronto street corner, but said that drastic landscaping and lighting measures will have to be taken before people will accept it as a place to walk at night.

The park is scheduled for completion by this fall, and its designer insists that people will be happily surprised by the result.

"It's a space that does have a lot of promise," said Mr. Smallenberg. "There's a lot of spaces that don't have any promise at all."

"WELCOME TO YOUR NEXT HANGOUT,"  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, MAR 26 2011

**The strategies employed by an aesthetics of order are seductive in that they are perceived as improvements, as positive interventions in public space. It is hard to argue against beauty, cleanliness and safety.**

JULIA NEVÁREZ, "CENTRAL PARK, THE AESTHETICS OF ORDER AND THE APPEARANCE OF LOOSENESS," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 165

David Wex has been so impressed with what's happening at Underpass Park that the developer recently threw a party there to show it off to his colleagues and associates.

"It's a really interesting, quirky space" says Wex, a partner with Urban Capital, builder of River City, the 900-unit, four-phase residential project that's taking root near the foot of the Don River just south of King Street.

...And Wex thinks it has succeeded admirably. "Now it's an asset as opposed to being a liability," he says.

"LIVING DOWN BY THE RIVER"  
*THE TORONTO STAR*, JAN 26 2012

[T]he big ‘modern’ business concern ...usurps the role of the city and takes over functions that are the city’s by right and that should, in the future, be those of an urban society: housing, education, promotion, leisure, etc.; furthermore it constricts and alienates privacy by housing its dependants in hierarchized dwellings.

HENRI LEFEBVRE, *EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD*, 1971: 66



[PLATE 047]

Meanwhile Urban Capital has launched the second phase of River City, the first residential development in Waterfront Toronto’s West Don Lands master plan and the first residential development in Canada to be built to LEED Gold standards.

...“The concept is that these light, shiny jewel boxes will be surrounded by the edgy dark exteriors of phases one and three,” Wex says. The intention is to evoke the area’s industrial past and “juxtapose” it with the rejuvenation that River City will bring to the area.

River City 2’s 249 units range in size from 400-square-foot studios to 2,000-square-foot penthouses. Prices go from \$239,900 to \$1.15 million.

...In terms of amenities, River City 2 will have a 15,000-square-foot landscaped courtyard with heated outdoor pool; a party room, exercise room, billiards room, guest suite, and a screening room and Wi-Fi-equipped business centre.

Sales have been splendid so far for River City’s first phase, Wex says. He reckons buyers understand the importance of getting in while the real estate is relatively affordable. “It’s still an area people don’t know, so there’s a discount for it,” he says.

“But very soon, when all the streets are in and people start driving through it — you drive down Bayview as opposed to having to turn at the bottom — they’ll see this whole area become a big part of the city.”

“LIVING DOWN BY THE RIVER,”  
*THE TORONTO STAR*, JAN 26 2012

## SEMI-MANICURED

Residential development in the area worked to discourage further industrial development; with the creation of Riverdale Park in 1890, development was halted entirely on the west bank of the Don north of Gerrard.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PHD. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009: 115

### OVER 1,500,000 UNITE IN THRILLING SCENE OF TORONTO'S ROYAL DAY

Gregory Clark, feature writer of *The Star*, last night, in quiet, measured, impressive tones, told all Canada of the magnificent welcome 2,000,000 subjects gave the King and Queen in Toronto

...The mere size of the demonstration in Toronto today cannot help you to appreciate what happened here in relation to their majesties' triumphal tour but some figures must be stated as a sort of working basis. In Riverdale park, a great natural amphitheatre in the older part of the city, 250,000, mostly school children, were assembled, tens of thousands of them, of course, from cities and towns around Toronto. In Exhibition park, where their majesties saw the first of the Great Lakes for a background, another 100,000, mostly children, were assembled.

...There were moments yesterday that no one who followed the King and Queen will ever forget. The scores of thousands of school children in Riverdale Park, cheering themselves hoarse – perhaps the biggest moment of them all.

*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, MAY 23 1939

### OUR PERFUMED DON

The mayor and other officials of Toronto have good cause to be ashamed of the filthy condition of that section of the Don river along which Princess Margaret will be driven to Riverdale Park. With belated zeal they have rushed a crew of laborers armed with rakes and pikes and disinfectants to tidy the ground and sweeten the atmosphere that Her Highness may not learn how Toronto has befouled one of its beauty spots.

It reminds one of the stories told of courtiers waving handkerchiefs dipped in perfume before the nostrils of the king of France as he drove through the tenements of Paris, that his majesty's nostrils might not be offended by the odor from the open drains. One would have thought the need for such expedients went out with the Middle Ages. But here in Toronto we have turned a river into an open sewer that was complacently accepted until the prospect of a royal visit called attention to its offensiveness.

Let us hope the sense of shame does not end with the departure of the Princess, and that it will result in permanent good. This filthy and stinking river should be given a thorough and lasting cleansing not merely a two-minute purification while the royal chariot passes.

*TORONTO DAILY STAR*, JUL 30 1958

### DOWNTOWN STREETS JAMMED TO SEE MARGARET

Princess' Second Home;  
Mayor Offers 'Castle'  
"OH MOMMY! SHE'S SO PRETTY"

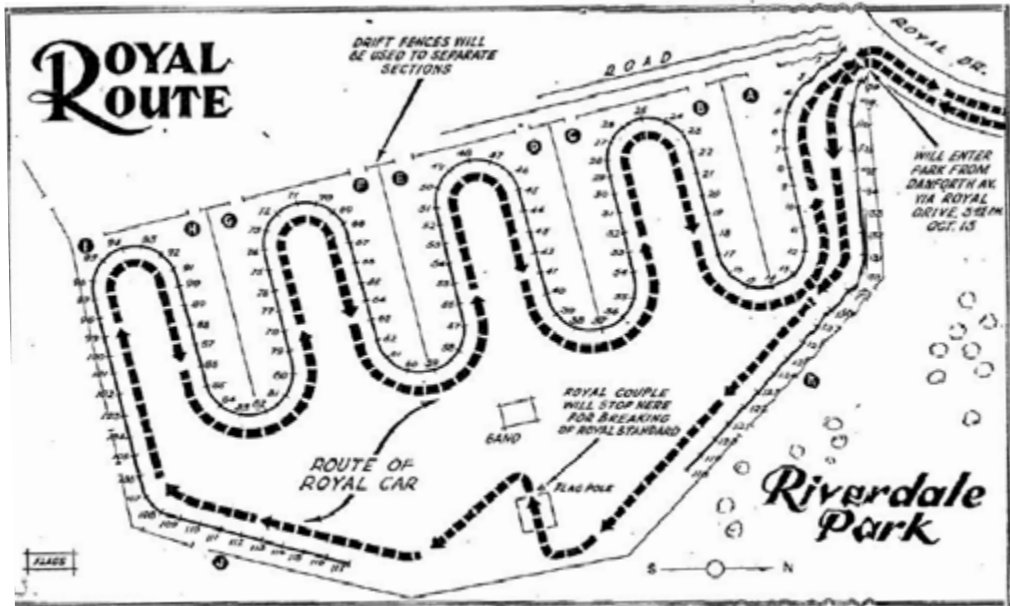
Only about 2,000 persons were in the great Riverdale amphitheatre. Long stretches of the park route were bare of crowds.

...The Princess' train pulled into Riverdale park sidings just before noon and she got off immediately. She paused for a moment to shake hands with Lieutenant Governor Keiller Mackay. Then she walked slowly across the bridge, waving and smiling at children.

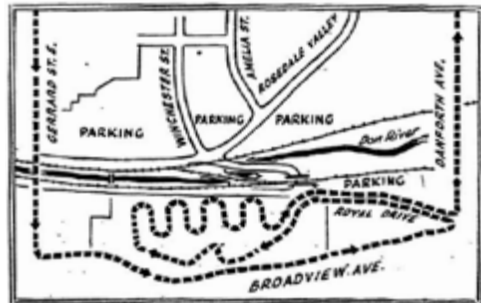
*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, JUL 31 1958

PANORAMIC VIEW OF RIVERDALE PARK SHOWS ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WILL BE ADOPTED AGAIN

THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, OCT 5 1951



SCHOOL SECTIONS ARE NUMBERED AND DOTTED LINE INDICATES ROUTE OF PRINCESS AND DUKE



ROYAL PARADE ROUTE IN THE EAST END

[FIGURE 1.7]



178 [ LEISURE ] 142  
176 [ SENSORY ] 272  
274 [ TIME ] 172

The pleasant game of life ceases to be just a game. It is not that the sufferings with which life threatens us render it displeasing; rather it is because the ground of suffering consists of the impossibility of interrupting it, and of an acute feeling of being held fast [*rivé*]. The impossibility of getting out of the game and of giving back to things their toy-like uselessness heralds the precise instant at which infancy comes to an end, and defines the very notion of seriousness.

EMMANUEL LEVINAS, *ON ESCAPE*, 1982: 52



[PLATE 048]

To feel “Canadian” was to feel part of a no-man’s-land with huge rivers, lakes, and islands that very few Canadians had ever seen. ...One wonders if any other national consciousness has had so large an amount of the unknown, the unrealized, the humanly undigested, so built into it.

NORTHRUP FRYE, *THE BUSH GARDEN*, 1971: 220

Approximately 80 % of the watershed is in urban land use, with 4 % in rural use and about 16 % under natural cover.

Medium density residential is the most widespread land use in the watershed (41.2%), which includes single detached homes, semi-detached homes, and townhouse complexes with manicured lots. High density residential lands cover another 5.6% of the watershed, which include townhouse complexes with small manicured lots, and apartment and condominium complexes.

At 15.7%, the next most prevalent type of land use in the watershed is natural heritage, consisting of forests (8.2%), meadows (6.8%), successional lands (0.5%), and wetlands (0.2%)

Industrial is the next most prevalent type of land use in the watershed, accounting for 11.4% of land cover. Industrial areas are characterized by large warehouses, combined industrial commercial buildings with flat roofs, storage yards and transfer stations, and large parking and circulation areas.

Institutional and commercial land uses, together, cover another 9.4% of the watershed.

There is little undeveloped land left in the Don River watershed. Agricultural lands covered just 4.6% of the watershed in 2002; vacant lands accounted for 3.1%. ... Urban open space covers 2.9% of the watershed, encompassing manicured, semi-manicured, and maintained urban areas, including some treed areas, open park areas, and large boulevards. An additional 1.5% of the watershed is devoted to recreational land uses, which include recreation centres, sports play complexes, and their grounds. Golf courses cover 1.1% of the watershed’s land area, and are all located adjacent to watercourses.

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: LAND USE,” *REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*,  
TRCA, 2009

In many ways, the failing of the twentieth-century planning can be attributed to the absolute impoverishment of the imagination with regard to the optimized rationalisation of development practices and capital accumulation. Public space in the city must surely be more than mere token compensation or vessels for this generic activity called ‘recreation.’ Public spaces are firstly the containers of collective memory and desire, and secondly they are the places for geographic and social imagination to extend new relationships and sets of possibility.

JAMES CORNER, “TERRA FLUXUS,” *THE LANDSCAPE URBANISM READER*, 2006: 32



[PLATE 049]



094 [ IDENTITY ] 260  
192 [ NATURE ] 200  
200 [ TIME ] 222

## **RIVER BANKS**

To seek an oasis where time could be ignored; to let the rivers shift their banks; to let the seeds germinate as they please; to let vegetation break the walls built by humans; and to regard it all as something positive, thus initiating a new road towards a re-encounter with natural processes.

We should be able to choose between these two situations: that of humankind as part of a temporal process and that of humankind as a mere observer of an infinite process, in a free-willed and conscious fashion.

To make room for new landscapes for the 21st century. Free landscapes. Necessary landscapes. Landscapes that will enable us to forget that time exists, and - even if for just a few minutes - to believe that time does not matter to us.

TERESA GALÍ-IZARD, "TIME," *LANDSCAPE +100 WORDS TO INHABIT IT*, 2007: 176



[PLATE 050]



[PLATE 051]





[PLATE 052]



[PLATE 053]



[PLATE 054]





[PLATE 055]



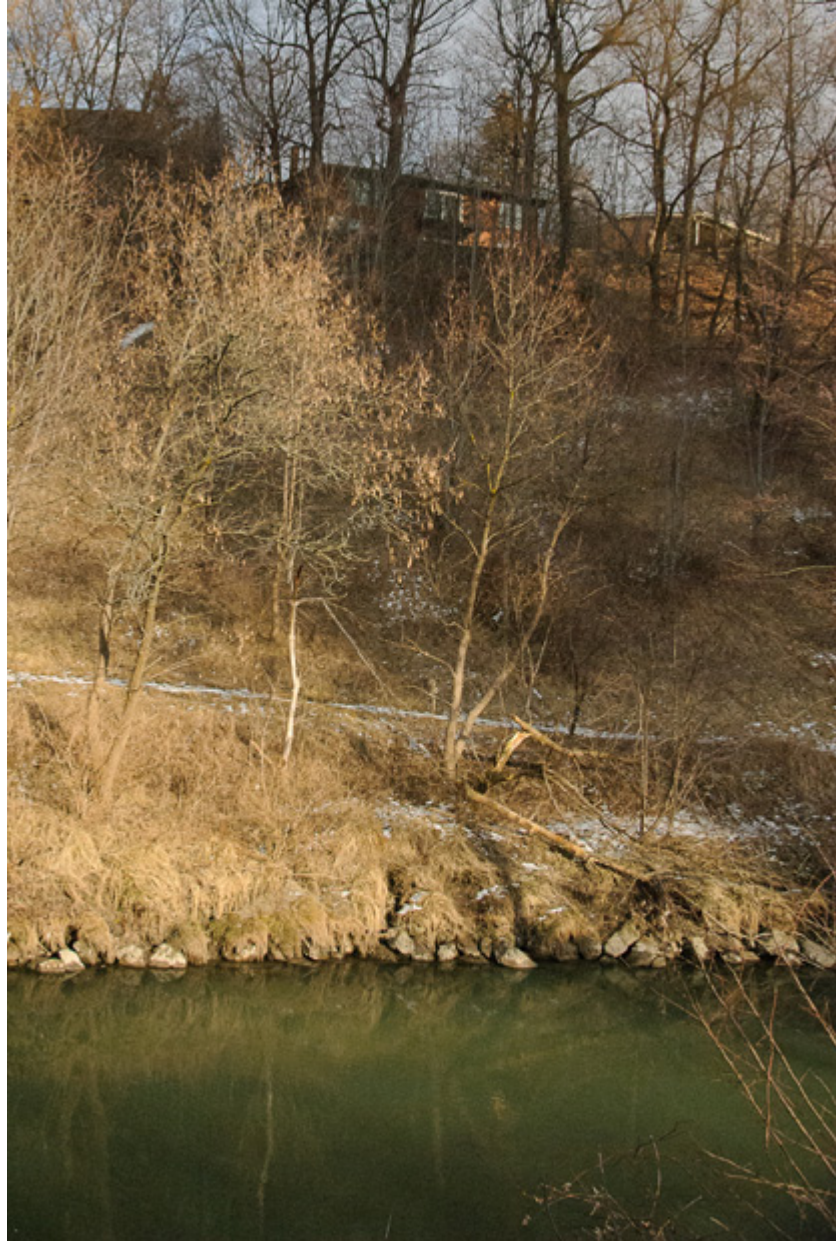


[PLATE 056]



[PLATE 057]





[PLATE 058]



[PLATE 059]





[PLATE 060]



[PLATE 061]



[PLATE 062]





[PLATE 063]





[PLATE 064]



[PLATE 065]

## RUINS

**A city is built to resemble a conscious mind, a network that can calculate, administrate, manufacture. Ruins become the unconscious of a city, its memory, unknown, darkness, lost lands, and in this truly bring it to life. ...[W]ith ruin a city comes to death, but a generative death like the corpse that feeds the flowers.**

REBECCA SOLNIT, *A FIELD GUIDE TO GETTING LOST*, 2006: 90

**Buildings and their remains suggest stories of human fate, both real and imaginary. Ruins stimulate us to think of lives that have already disappeared and to imagine the fate of their deceased occupants. Ruins and eroded settings have an especially evocative and emotional power; they force us to reminisce and imagine. Incompleteness and fragmentation possess a special evocative power.**

JUHANI PALLASMAA, "SPACE, PLACE, MEMORY, AND IMAGINATION,"  
*SPATIAL RECALL*, 2009: 21

The district is not appealing aesthetically, nor should it be. Urban thinking places shouldn't be tourist attractions, lest the sightseers make you forget the reason for being there. Or, much worse, lest some earnest, environmentally and historically conscious government – municipal, provincial, federal – decides to turn it into a park. Which decision, of course, would bring in its train the baleful works of "improvement": paved walkways, good lighting throughout, well-maintained toilets, and lots of finger-wagging laws about proper human and pet behaviour. As matters stand now, it's not a park; and within this wilderness of trees and rust are many places to be alone and think, into which one can disappear completely from the crush and rattle of urban existence into a shady nook and consider life, fate, some specific decision or the world – all within a ten-minute drive of the hectic middle of Toronto's financial district. If not picturesque, this industrial district is graced with a subtle melancholy that is particularly right for thinking things through.

...Barring an unending depression of real-estate values in Toronto, it's probably only a matter of time before the suburban-biased Metro politicians and the land developers do indeed strike a deal to arrest the decay, purify the soil and put up bright new office blocks and condominiums and public housing on this site, so temptingly near downtown, and so blessed with uninterrupted, breathtaking views of the skyscrapers.

When I think that, the perverse Jamesian resident in my ruin-seeking soul returns. I think of the loss of my refuge – which is a need, not a diversion – and of the sites of thought to be lost

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 5



[PLATE 066]



We do not live in an objective world of matter and fact, as commonplace naïve realism tends to assume. The characteristically human mode of existence takes place in the worlds of possibilities, molded by the human capacity of remembrance, fantasy, and imagination. We live in mental worlds in which the material and the spiritual, as well as the experienced, the remembered, and the imagined, constantly fuse into each other.

JUHANI PALLASMAA, "SPACE, PLACE, MEMORY, AND IMAGINATION," *SPATIAL RECALL*, 2009: 25

[A] journey through the reconstituted and fluid aesthetics can re-enchant the world outside, making it look peculiar and arbitrary; ordinary things become recharged with strangeness, the mundane is haunted by sculptural attributes and the normative order of things appears most peculiar.

TIM EDENSOR, "SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 249



[PLATE 067]



[PLATE 068]



[PLATE 069]



*It's a city of ravines. Remnants of wilderness have been left behind. Through these great sunken gardens you can traverse the city beneath the streets, look up to the floating neighbourhoods, houses built in the treetops.*

*It's a city of valleys spanned by bridges. A railway runs through back yards. A city of hidden lanes, of clapboard garages with corrugated tin roofs, of wooden fences sagging where children have made shortcuts. In April, the thickly treed streets are flooded with samara, a green tide. Forgotten rivers, abandoned quarries, the remains of an Iroquois fortress. Public parks hazy with subtropical memory, a city built in the bowl of a prehistoric lake.*

ANNE MICHAELS, *FUGITIVE PIECES*, 1996: 89



[PLATE 070]





# VEINS

It's not possible to write a novel about Toronto without the ravines. They are a part of our psyche, our social environment, including a place where people live - there are some people who end up there because they are not allowed anywhere else.

...They are the constant, subterranean force that flows beneath the city, the level where we play out our problems. I don't think they really embody anything. [Laughs] Nothing is ever all good or bad. They are more like the network, the blood, the veins, the system of the city. We tend to follow the rivers and other subterranean things, while up on the surface, it seems like nothing's going on.

MAGGIE HELWIG, "READING THE RAVINES," LOST RIVERS WALKING TOUR, APR 29 2012



## FLOOD

### THE GREAT RAIN STORM

The Don River, from its mouth upwards for miles, presented one continued scene of desolation yesterday. Now that the water has sunk to its normal level, a better estimate of the damage has been formed. The amount is put down at from \$200,000 to \$400,000. The bridge at Thornhill appears to have been the first to give way, and in its downward course carried with it about thirty dams and twenty bridges. From early morning yesterday till sunset there was a continual stream of sight-seers wending their way towards the river by the four principal avenues of approach, namely: – King, South Park, Gerrard, and Winchester streets. It was estimated that there were forty thousand persons on the banks of the Don during the day. Most of them were of course assembled at the bridges, and the policemen stationed there had considerable difficulty in keeping the crowd back. Parties were by permission of the Mayor allowed to cross the South Park-street bridge both on Saturday night and yesterday. Pontoon bridges will, it is expected, be thrown across the river at all the principal avenues mentioned above, and traffic again resumed on Tuesday.

\*

### THE LOSS TO LIFE

is not so large as was at first supposed.

...The body of Charlotte Fitch, the young girl who was drowned on Friday afternoon when the flood was at its highest through accidentally falling off the bank, was buried yesterday from her father's residence on Don Mount. Seldom of late has a funeral created greater interest than did this poor girl's. At three o'clock the body was carried to the bank of the river at the Gerrard-street bridge by four of the mourners. It was then ferried across in a boat and carried up to the corner of River street, where there was a hearse in waiting to carry the remains to St. James' Cemetery, where they were interred. Thousands of persons gathered to gaze on the coffin as it was borne past, and many were the exclamations of pity and sorrow which dropped from their lips.

*THE GLOBE, SEP 16 1878*



[PLATE 071]

## PICNIC SITE FOR MILLION, NEW MUSKOKA IS PROPOSED ONLY 30 MINUTES' DRIVE FROM CENTRE OF TORONTO

A plan to bring most of the recreational advantage of northern playgrounds such as Muskoka and Haliburton to within less than 30 minutes of city hall is contained in the Don Valley conservation report, released today by the Ontario department of planning and development. The plan is briefly to cover: 50 miles or more of Don Valley forest and grasslands into a colossal playground for more than 1,000,000 people and give to the masses such advantages as at present are enjoyed in the valley by only a privileged few.

Proposed are two new lakes where boating would thrive, a network of swimming and wading pools strategically placed and park and picnic sites with full facilities in an atmosphere of virgin splendour. Unspoiled forests are earmarked for hiking and bridle trails. New ski chalets are blueprinted and a suggested site for Toronto's long-overdue zoological gardens has been chosen. All these facilities would take advantage of valley land at present neglected and inaccessible to the public. But, the report warns, quick action is needed if the public is to acquire these lands for recreation before they are lost to private ownership or despoilation.

\*

### Recreation Facilities

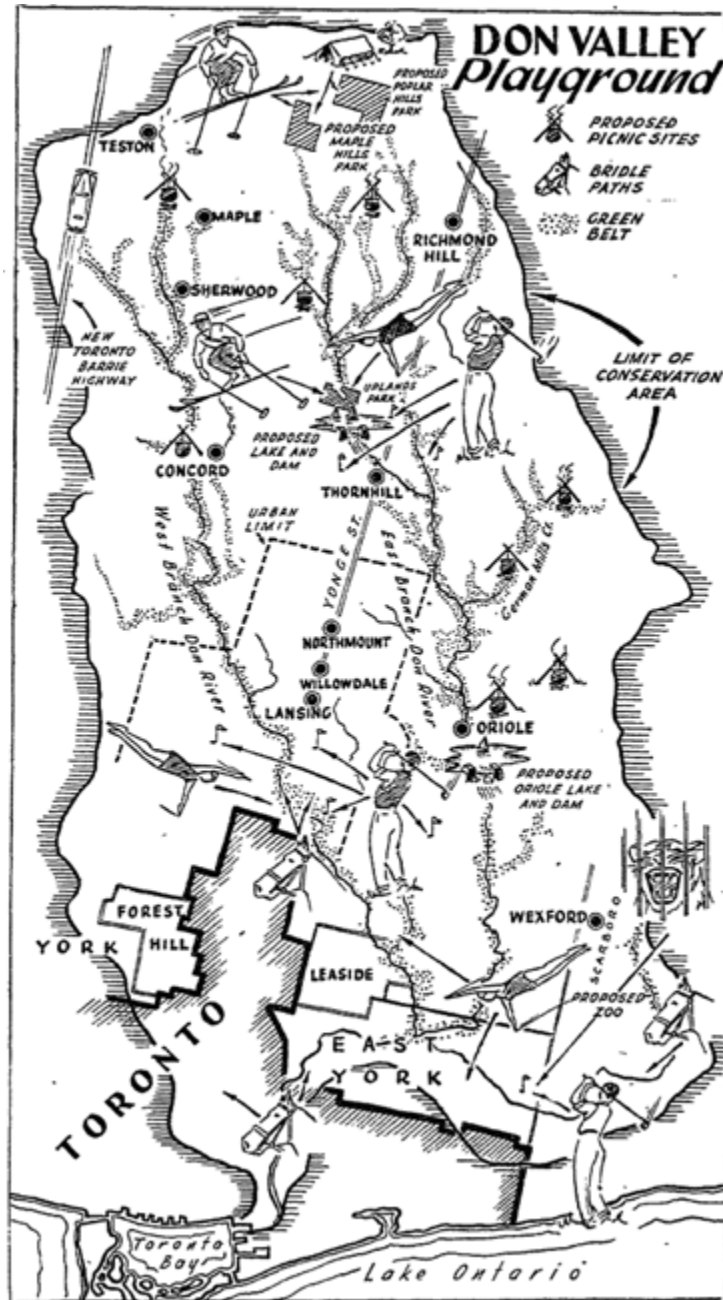
...Fulfilment of its plan, the authority believes, would provide the following facilities for the people of the 10 municipalities; beaches and pools for swimming, children's beaches, boating and fishing areas, individual picnic sites and group picnic grounds in parks, roadside picnic sites, scenic drives, individual and group camping areas, trails for riding, hiking, and nature study, public hunting areas, winter sports areas, youth hostels, swimming holes, historic sites, and public golf courses.

\*

### Floods Not Widespread

Flooding, the authority finds, is not a very serious problem in the Don and does not warrant costly measures of control.

"It is now chiefly a nuisance in some areas" the Authority states.



[FIGURE 2.0]

THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, FEB 7 1951

Death and destruction rode the crest of Ontario flood waters in the nightmare hours of Saturday morning, leaving 54 known dead, 69 missing and presumed drowned and a chaotic condition never before experienced in Southern Ontario.

“SEND SPECIAL POLICE AS GHOULS REPORTED,” *THE GLOBE AND MAIL*,  
OCT 18 1954

## HAZEL’S LEGACY: A CITY OF GREEN

When the floodwaters receded,  
our enviable system of ravine parks  
emerged

It’s rare that you can point to a single event on a particular night and say: This is where a city found its identity. But that is exactly what happened to Toronto.

The city we know and often celebrate, the urban experiment that adventurous visitors instinctively admire, is a place where deep ravines and majestic valleys edge their way right into the core. They are such an indelible part of modern Toronto, the metropolis at peace with its very own wilderness, that we’re inclined to take them for granted — just as Rome is ancient monuments and New York is skyscrapers, Toronto at heart is, and always has been, its green space.

But if it weren’t for the windy and rain-filled night of Oct. 15, 1954, a time that might as well be ancient history to many Torontonians, the city we cherish could have taken a completely different turn.

“I thought when I first discovered the paths along the Humber River,” says 34-year-old Jim Gifford, a book editor at HarperCollins, “that Toronto must have had a mandate to build a lot of nice parks, the way that New York constructed Central Park. But no, that’s not the case. It was Hurricane Hazel that built Toronto — a terrible event forced us to create this beautiful city.”

...“In the aftermath,” says Madeleine McDowell, an artist and local historian who was an awestruck 13-year-old at the time of the storm, “there was a tremendous will to protect people from the flood. But people also felt a desire to create something green and beautiful as a legacy in the wake of this terrible loss and destruction.”

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, OCT 9 2004

Some of the “Urban Growth Centres” designated under the Growth Plan, and centres already slated for redevelopment and intensification in municipal OPs, are also areas within TRCA’s Regulatory Flood Plain (ie. areas prone to flooding under the Regional Storm (Hurricane Hazel)). Notably, sub-section 14(4) of the Places to Grow Act states that, “if there is a conflict between a direction in the Plan and a direction in a plan or policy (issued under Section 3 of the Provincial Policy Statement – Natural Hazards) with respect to a matter relating to the natural environment or human health, the direction that provides more protection to the natural environment or human health, prevails.”

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: LAND USE,” *REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*,  
TRCA, 2009





[PLATE 072]



[PLATE 073]

The plan was simple: Rent a canoe, buy a jug of mosquito repellent, check closely for open sores and launch myself down one of the most neglected and polluted stretches of river in Southern Ontario. It would be a quick voyage, dipping the canoe in the Don River at Steeles Avenue just north of the 401, and ending where the foul mouth of the river meets Lake Ontario.

The Toronto Regional Conservation Authority frowns on freelance boating activities on the Don. Something about whitewater rapids, mean undertows and the “combined sewage overflow,” one of the main sources of pollution of the river most Torontonians know, but rarely take the trouble to witness up close. Every time it rains, the sewers back up and their contents end up in the drink. It stinks.

So why canoe it? Because it stinks. Because it is canoe-free for 364 days a year. Because I catch fleeting glimpses of it when stuck in Don Valley Parkway traffic and feel a pang of guilt for whatever has to live down there.

...After five hours, roughly 10 kilometres, 21 portages, one submerged Toronto Sun newspaper box, one car, two beavers, three oil drums, 12 tires, 22 shopping carts, one great blue heron and one deer dancing away from us under Highway 404, we yank the canoe out of the water at Eglinton. The bottom of the canoe looks as though it's been dragged along the Don Valley Parkway, not the Don River. Apart from waterlogged clothes and exhaustion, it's the only thing we have to show for ourselves.

At least we have bragging rights, of a sort. Adventure paddlers often tell tales of how they were overwhelmed by the volume and strength of a river. In our case the opposite is true: It wasn't the water that did us in, it was the utter lack of it.

“THE MIGHTY DON,” *THE NATIONAL POST*,  
JUL 24 2004

When an August 2005 storm dumped more than 150 millimetres of rain in Toronto, the Don rose more than three metres in 4 1/2 hours, flooding a portion of the parkway and stranding commuters. Usually a lazy two to three cubic metres per second, the river's flow topped out at more than 200 cubic metres per second.

“DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON RIVER,” *CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC*, JUN 2011

WHEN: Sunday, May 6, 2012

8:00 a.m. Kick off program

8:30 a.m. First launch of the day at the Launch Site, includes launch of special guests

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Paddlers launch from E.T. Seton Park

10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Paddlers begin arriving at Take-Out Site

10:30 a.m. Start of Manulife Take-Out Party. A barbeque will be held and food and refreshments will be available for a nominal cost. Entertainment by musical group The Don Valley Boyz.

“MEDIA/PHOTO OP ADVISORY - TORONTO PADDLERS TAKE ON THE DON RIVER,”  
*BLOOMBERG*, [HTTP:WWW.BLOOMBERG.COM](http://www.bloomberg.com), MAY 4 2012

Sometimes during Paddle the Don, the Don River needs just a little help, and since the very beginning of the event, TRCA Hydrologist Don Haley was the guy to provide it. ...For the past 18 years, Don has been up early checking the weather reports and talking to dam operator Bill Kerr at TRCA's G. Ross Lord Dam (located at Finch and Dufferin). All of this to ensure that the 600 paddlers heading down the Don River get to the take-out at the Keating Channel without “leaving too much paint on the rocks.” You see, for 18 years it was Don's job to supervise the release of sufficient water from the reservoir at G. Ross Lord to raise the Don River enough to float all those boats.

Silt has built up over the years, and if the river wasn't raised by partially emptying the reservoir, the Don River would be much too shallow for canoes. ...Too little flow and it would leave paddlers tottering on a sand bar at Gerrard Street, while too much flow would make some of the rapids “too hot” for novice paddlers, resulting in an unwelcome swim on a chilly morning.

...With so many people wanting to take part in the Manulife Paddle the Don (there's always a waiting list), a perennial question for Don was: Why not leave the flood gates open longer to accommodate more paddlers? The simple reason lies with the limited size of G. Ross Lord Dam. Leaving the gates open longer would drain the reservoir and risk exposing sanitary sewers and foul-smelling sludge in the bottom, which would not please the reservoir's immediate neighbours. “I was usually the bad guy on this,” smiles Don. “I always had to say no.”

“THE DON BEHIND PADDLE THE DON,” *ON THE DON*, APR 26 2012



[PLATE 074]





[PLATE 075]



[PLATE 076]

## ARTESIAN RIVER

The City of Toronto moved with deliberate speed to begin repairing a giant crack in a huge sewer line buried beneath the Don Valley. It serves an area affecting 750,000 people. But a job originally estimated to cost \$15 million to \$25 million and scheduled to be finished in eight to 10 months is now nearing \$40 million and has taken 30 months - and there is no completion date in site.

The sewer line is the most important in the city. If it bursts, raw sewage will start pouring into the Don River. The repair plan calls for a boring machine to tunnel a second sewer line 500 metres long through which sewage would be bypassed while the crack in the main line is being repaired.

The job was going fine until the boring machine reached the point where the new pipe is to join the old at the northwest corner of Coxwell Ave. and O'Connor Dr. That's when groundwater stopped efforts to seal the two pipes at the bottom of an access shaft that sinks 42 metres below the surface.

...Mary Walsh lives across the street from ground zero, enclosed by blue wooden hoarding. On a recent morning, piles of sand were being stored on her street and diesel-powered equipment thrummed non-stop. "I'm just tired of looking at that blue fence," said Walsh, who has lived there since 1980.

"CAN CITY REPAIR GIANT SEWER PIPE IN TIME?" *THE TORONTO STAR*, AUG 1 2012



[PLATE 077]

In the boom years before the First World War, Toronto did its best to erase the streams from the cityscape, for two reasons. The first, and more commendable, had to do with the stinking hazard so many of them had become. The second reason, and (from a modern perspective) less noble one, was the dogged tendency of these wandering waters to obstruct the Toronto's historic insistent drive to remain what had been at the very beginning, a city laid out on a Euclidian grid, every angle not a snitch less than ninety degrees, and topography be damned.

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 42

A dry discussion about the challenges and delays posed by mechanical dewatering is apparently of greater interest to the newspaper than the magical fact that there is water beneath the intersection of Avenue Road and St. Clair, right around the former confluence of the headwaters of Mashquoteh Creek, a tributary of Rosedale Creek.

Take this revelation, this discovery of the in-situ watershed that we pretend disappeared with the installation of a sewer system, and then add to it the equally magical fact that we're in the act of running our own artesian river back up through this area. The new main isn't just a tiresome pipe, it's another link to water in a neighbourhood with precious few since we buried the Yellow Creek and Rosedale Creek (the latter into sewers that the Star reports will pose challenges for the watermain diggers).

... It's a failure of the imagination of Toronto Water that they're not putting the story of this water and its destinations front-and-centre in their communications about the project, and an equal failure of the Toronto Star that they're choosing to make the story about the vaguely interesting but ultimately forgettable engineering of the project, rather than its contributions and renegotiation of the lasting ecology of the community and landscape this pipe is being run through.

MICHAEL COOK, "CITY OF PRESSURES I: WATER DISTRIBUTION"  
*THE VANISHING POINT*, 00:22 JAN 25 2011

When two men were arrested for taking a stroll in the sewers on Sunday, police were flummoxed. "That's not normal, people going down into the sewers," said Det. Dan Murphy at 14 Division.

...Michael Cook, 27, of Toronto, and Emond, 35, of Montreal, were arrested after a perplexed citizen saw them enter the sewer near Ossington Ave. and Dundas St. W. Both face charges of mischief to interfere with property.

..."It's illegal what we do, unfortunately," said a Toronto photographer acquaintance of Cook and Emond, "...We don't do this to break the law," said the fellow explorer, who did not want his name used. "It's about urban cartography, viewing the city that isn't visualized through streets and other landmarks."

...Cook and Emond's acquaintance said he felt obliged to speak about urban exploration to dispel myths. "A city like Toronto desperately needs more urban mythology. Instead of having crap like the CN Tower, the SkyDome represent the city, we present things that have been around much longer that most people aren't even aware of."

"IN SEARCH OF OUR URBAN MYTHOLOGY,"  
*THE TORONTO STAR*, APR 6 2010



While the storm sewers are supposed to carry rainwater, the sanitary sewers carry waste from houses and factories - raw human sewage (and other effluvia such as used condoms, tampons and the odd goldfish), diluted by water from showers, washing machines, dishwashers, factory drains and industrial coolants.

...As sewage treatment plants go, the North Toronto plant just west of the Leaside Bridge is a backwater. ...Plants like this one were never designed to treat modern industrial waste - metals like zinc, copper or chromium, poisons like cyanide and arsenic, toxic chemicals like PCBs, PCPs, solvents - that local industries send to the plant's intake.

The plant works mainly by gravity and natural biological action. Dirty water and solid wastes cascade in odoriferously from the trunk sewer up on the hill. The sewage moves through a series of screens, canals, settling tanks, aeration and disinfection chambers, digesters and dewaterers. Some heavier solids - organic and industrial - settle out in the tanks; waste-eating bacteria remove more. Finally, at the plant's south side, water 90 per cent free of solid waste, but still laced with chemicals, races into the Don and out into the source of Toronto's drinking water.

"TORONTO: REBIRTH OF A RIVER,"  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, MAR 24 1989

By almost every standard you can use to judge water quality, the quality of the stuff that gets pumped out of that sewage treatment plant is better than the river water it gets pumped into. It is even beneficial to a degree: chlorine in the outflow kills bacteria coming from further upstream, although this chlorine is a bit hard on fish.

...However, and here is the paradox, if you take away the plant, you are withdrawing 8 million gallons of water from the river every day; you are reducing the river's flow from there on south by 25 per cent. Already the river is whipsawed between extremes of misery; flash flooding when it rains, nearly parched when it doesn't. Without the sewage plant's contribution, the pale life that still stubbornly exists in the river's final descent to the lake could be truly on the skids.

"POOR OLD DON RIVER'S ABOUT TO BE  
SAVED AGAIN," *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
APR 4 1989



[PLATE 078]

*Oh where, tell me, where did the Yorkville Old Boys swim?  
 Oh where, tell me, where did the Yorkville Old Boys swim?  
 In River Don at Sandy Point beneath Old Sugar Loaf Hill,  
 Near Helliwell's Bush and Castle Frank, across from Taylor's Mill.*

CHARLES SAURIOL, *PIONEERS OF THE DON*, 1995: 97.

The lower Don has 27 combined-sewer overflows and 19 storm sewers. Taylor Massey Creek, despite its smaller size, has 13 combined-sewer overflows and six storm sewers. The modest waterway contributes only five percent of the Don's flow but can account for up to 80 percent of its pollution.

To prevent storms from mainlining a load of salt, fertilizers and dog feces into Toronto's rivers, the city has drawn up the Wet Weather Flow Master Plan, possibly the least interesting title ever devised for a way to spend an estimated \$1 billion over 25 years. The idea is to get raindrops off the express lane, diverting them into the ground and the undergrowth, where they'll be cooled and cleaned before slowly recharging the city's rivers. The plan includes disconnecting eavestroughs from storm sewers on 350,000 homes, and instead directing their downspouts into rain barrels, lawns and gardens. Other aspects include flanking streets with gardened roadside swales or using "permeable pavement" such as wood chips and stone on paths.

Then there are the big-ticket items: storm-water settling ponds and a buried system of tunnels and tanks to intercept and treat storm water, so cleaner water can be released into the rivers. A similar system already in use, the Western Beaches Storage Tunnel, features a four-kilometre-long pipe linking three cavernous underground tanks. The whole system holds up to 85 million litres of storm water.

Almost anything that tempers the surge of storm water and contaminants will help. "Green roofs" collect and use rain for rooftop gardens. Low-flow toilets reduce the load on the sewer system. New street sweepers cut pollution by vacuuming and trapping fine dust as well as garbage and debris. Trees and shrubs reduce erosion, filter runoff and shade the water, cooling it for fish.

But unlike the old industrial lower Don or the concrete ditch of the Taylor Massey, the impact of storm water remains tougher for people to get their heads around — or to dig into their pockets to fix. "The struggle for us has been to get people to think of storm water as being a pollution source in itself," says Michael D'Andrea, Toronto's director of water infrastructure management. "People say it's just road drainage. How dirty can it be?"

"DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON RIVER," *CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC*, JUN 2011

# DEAD FLOWS THE DON!

POLLUTION PROBE regrets to announce the untimely passing of the DON RIVER and invites all grief-stricken parties to WEEP and GNASH THEIR TEETH at a

## FUNERAL!!

SUNDAY NOV. 16

LAMENTATIONS & EULOGIES

WILL BEGIN ON THE BANKS

OF THE DECEASED AT 2 P.M. A

CAR CAVALCADE WILL FORM AT

CONVOCATION HALL, UNIVERSITY

OF TORONTO, AT 1 P.M. AND WILL PROCEED EAST ON

COLLEGE, SOUTH ON YONGE, EAST ON ADELAIDE, NORTH

ON JARVIS AND EAST ON QUEEN TO THE QUAIN'T AND

LOVELY BROOKSIDE SITE SHOWN ABOVE. IF YOU CAN'T JOIN

THE PROCESSION, MEET US AT THE RIVER!

MONDAY NOV. 17

A MEMORIAL WILL BE

UNVEILED AT THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE, QUEEN'S PARK,

AT 1 P.M.

POSTER, 1969

About 200 Torontonians yesterday paid their last respects to the Don River. The mourners gathered on the east bank of the former salmon stream, a few yards north of the Prince Edward Viaduct, for a 40-minute funeral conducted by the University of Toronto's Pollution Probe.

"Dearly beloved," organizer Martin Daly intoned into the microphone, "we are gathered here to mourn the passing of our late dear friend, the Don River."

\*

The only optimistic note of the day was struck by Rev. James Cunningham, chaplain of Hart House, who predicted that the concern about pollution being demonstrated by the younger generation will lead to a restoration of streams like the Don. The chaplain used a glass of pure spring water to drink a toast "to the future of the Don – and God bless us all."

The funeral was preceded by a 100-car cavalcade from Convocation Hall which included a hearse. Two girls rode a bicycle built for two, one wearing a placard inviting the public to attend the funeral.

At the site, mourners carried placards variously proclaiming: 'Pollution is Sinful – Think Clean, Effluent Is a Four-Letter Word', and 'The Don Is Well and Living – in Mrs. Simcoe's Memoirs'.

"POLLUTION PROBE MOURNS FOR BELOVED, DEAD DON,"  
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, NOV 17 1969

"And now, we await the resurrection," said funeral organizer Martin Daly.

\*

At the site of the ceremony a girl who was supposed to be Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, wife of Upper Canada's first lieutenant governor, fell to her knees and wept before the TV cameras.

"Weep with me," she cried, "we mourn the dead Don."

"Can you say that again," a radio man said adjusting his tape recorder. High above subway travellers looked down from the viaduct. Mrs. Simcoe (really Meredith Ware) then read from her "diary" telling thrilling stories of a Don Valley full of yellow butterflies and salmon fishermen.

\*

The mourners got their chance to throw their tomatoes and grapefruits at "Simon Greed" whose rented limousine and chauffeur was costing \$9 an hour and, finally, came the wreath-laying ceremony.

"HUNDREDS STAGE MOCK FUNERAL FOR THE POLLUTION-KILLED DON,"  
TORONTO DAILY STAR, NOV 17 1969



[FIGURE 2.1]

Today, 20 years after that funeral, there is nothing to indicate that the Don is even the least bit more alive. True, the fecal coliform count has been reduced quite a bit since 1950 - not nearly as much raw sewage goes straight in. But the standards of water acceptable for swimming have been tightened considerably, too; now the fecal coliform count can't exceed 100. Today, at its foulest, say after a heavy rainstorm, the Don is still 21,000 times worse than what is judged fit for jumping into.

"POOR OLD DON RIVER'S ABOUT TO BE SAVED AGAIN," THE TORONTO STAR,  
APR 4 1989



## FACSIMILE

A few kilometres west of Bluffer's Park, just below the Gardiner, two adult geese paddle around Keating Channel with their four fluffy goslings. That's where the Don River spills into Toronto Harbour, spewing sewage as it flows... A boom spreads just beneath the trees where the geese shelter, there to catch the "floatables," the used condoms, plastic tampon applicators and hypodermic needles that bob among the mini-explosions of methane bubbles.

...Mark Mattson, president of Lake Ontario Waterkeeper, a criminal lawyer turned, appropriately enough, environmental lawyer, surveys the scene and says, "I've been investigating the channel for 20 years, and this is as bad as it's ever been.

"These carp go all over the lake, the birds migrate," continues Mattson, as one of the geese elegantly dips its beak into the water. "They're still part of the diet of northern communities. I wouldn't want to be the hunter who shoots one of these geese and feeds it to his children."

...Pointing towards downtown, Mattson says: "Just imagine all those new condos and all that new sewage going into the harbour every time it rains. It makes the water untouchable."

"LAKE OF SHAME: ONTARIO'S POLLUTION PROBLEM," *THE TORONTO STAR*, JUL 8 2011



[PLATE 079]

The Upper East Don and German Mills Creek subwatersheds are the only areas in the watershed that support coldwater streams, though this habitat is limited. As noted above, the ‘flipping’ between stream temperatures of ‘cold-warm-cool’ along reaches in the Upper East Don (Figure 6) is of concern as fish would be required to move between entirely different thermal habitats... These temperatures are well above the preferred thresholds of native fish and are arguable lethal for many but the most tolerant of species.

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: AQUATIC SYSTEM,” *REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*,  
TRCA, 2009

## SUMMARY OF CRITICAL INFORMATION

- Young children and developing fetuses are affected by contaminants at lower levels than the general population (page 6).
- Consumption advice is based on the skinless, boneless dorsal fillet (page 10). Do not eat organs of any fish. Fish organs can be high in both heavy metals and pesticides (page 7).
- Consumption advice in the tables is based on an average meal size of 227 grams (eight ounces; approximately the length of a dinner plate) for an average size adult weighing 70 kilograms (154 pounds). It is assumed that smaller individuals will consume a smaller portion and larger individuals will consume a larger portion. If you are an average size adult and your average meal size is substantially less than 227 grams (eight ounces), you may consume more meals than recommended. Conversely, if your meal size is substantially more than 227 grams (eight ounces), you should consume fewer than the recommended number of meals. Contact the Sport Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program for more specific advice.
- Do not harvest dead or dying fish as they may contain harmful microorganisms or toxins (page 14).
- Always follow proper food handling and storage techniques, as you would with any fresh meat product, to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria (page 14).
- Great Lakes salmon and trout are more likely to have high levels of contaminants such as PCBs and dioxins/furans. Check the consumption tables and consume only the skinless, boneless dorsal fillet of these fish (page 7). The flesh on the lower portion of the fish (belly) has a higher fat content and therefore can have higher levels of some contaminants.

\*

Do not eat the eggs (roe) of fish, especially in spawning salmon species (e.g. chinook and coho salmon), as they may contain higher levels of PCBs and other organic contaminants (for more details refer to the “Fish Eggs” section on page 12).

*GUIDE TO EATING ONTARIO SPORT FISH 2011-2012*,  
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT, ONTARIO

1800: William Jarvis notes that four men could land ten barrels of salmon in two hours at the mouth of the Don. They were worth \$20 a barrel.

RON FLETCHER, *OVER THE DON*, 2002: 2

The last time salmon was in the river was the 1890s. The prisoners in the Don Jail complained about too much salmon in their diet.

“THE DON WATERSHED REPORT CARD,”  
TRCA, 1997

Fish thrive in these headwaters because the stream provides aquatic plants to nibble or lay eggs on, fallen tree trunks for underwater homes, and shade to keep the water cool. Here too, the water is rich with life-giving oxygen bubbled in by tiny waterfalls and eddies.

In these ripples, brook trout once flashed, and salmon spawned after their marathon from Lake Ontario. The pressures of agricultural settlement pushed out the salmon in the mid-19th century, and the brook trout in the 1940s. But today there are still sunfish and perch, sculpin and dace, and even a pair of adventurous trout that escaped from the ministry’s hatchery.

Contrary to popular belief, there are fish left in the lower Don, too - creek chub, white sucker, blacknosed dace and longnosed dace. Deborah Martin-Downs [Ministry of Natural Resources employee in Maple] calls them “the big four,” but the term is ironic. Because of silt and pollutants, most of those fish grow no bigger than a finger.

“TORONTO: REBIRTH OF A RIVER,”  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, MAR 24 1989



[PLATE 080]

Overall, the current fish community in the Lower West Don River is comprised of pollution-tolerant species. The community structure is not expected to change greatly over time but relative abundance may decline.

\*

A review of past and present fish data indicates that rainbow darter (*Etheostoma caeruleum*) and brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) have not been present in over 2 decades... and are likely extirpated from the system.

“DON RIVER WATERSHED PLAN: AQUATIC SYSTEM,” *REPORT ON CURRENT CONDITIONS*,  
TRCA, 2009

The salmon inspiring this fervour are chinooks, Pacific imports raised in local hatcheries and stocked by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for catch-and-release anglers. Native Atlantic salmon were driven from the river more than a century ago, largely by dam construction and pollution. ...Today, the chinook have assumed their role, or a facsimile of it. Every year, hundreds of big fish carve their way upstream, dark backs blending into the river's cobbles, silvery flanks flashing as they leap from the water.

...A torpedo shape, barely discernible from the moss-green cobbles of the riverbed, glides beneath the surface. “Hey, see that ripple there?” he asks. “There's something going on!” Goodwin climbs the concrete deck of an old bridge for a better view as the salmon circles beneath. “You see how its dorsal is worn white? That's because he's been making nests for the eggs.”

Walkers stroll up in twos and threes. Soon a small knot of onlookers is leaning over the railing, following the salmon's sinuous arcs from one side of the structure to the other. It's a moment of magic and wonder on a river they used to say was dead.

“DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON RIVER,” *CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC*, JUN 2011

I think we also have to be careful not to romanticise the Don too much too. There's a lot of talk about, 'well, the salmon are returning to the Don' but the salmon are stocked and they are swimming up the Don, they're not spawning in the Don. The river, even in it's existing hydrology right now, like changes to gravel in the stream bed and level of flow, conditions just aren't good enough for salmon spawning in most cases. The media and the public really grab on to things like salmon returning to the Don, that's what we really want to see, but we need the full story.

JENNIFER BONNELL, INTERVIEW, FEB 13 2012

[PLATE 081: 122-123]











## CORRIDOR

### TOP FIVE THREATS: INFRASTRUCTURE

This article is a continuation of the Top Five Threats story thread started last month.

The Don valley has the distinction of being the most central geographical feature in Toronto. Unfortunately this has produced a legacy of being the most frequent host for all the stuff the city doesn't want to move through its neighbourhoods, namely roads and railways. There are also pipelines, hydro-electric towers and sewers that lace the valley from the harbour up to Steeles. There is also 'soft' infrastructure in the form of two snow dump sites and city works yards. Let's not forget about the North Toronto Sewage Treatment Plant and the Police Dog Training Compound. Also some miscellaneous structures such as service roads, old landfill sites, weirs in the river, culverts and concrete lined channels, etc.

Here's a summary of what the valley faces:

- Don Valley Parkway: it enters the valley south of the 401 and except for a short respite at Eglinton it dominates the lower Don
- Bayview Extension: enters the valley at the south end of Leaside it occupies most of the west side of the valley.
- CN/CP railway lines: entering the valley near Eastern Ave, the railways don't exit until around Lawrence.
- Enbridge gas pipeline: enters the valley at Bayview and Gerrard and continues north through most of the valley.
- Transcontinental Oil Pipeline (TCPL): another pipeline runs underneath the valley but is currently decommissioned. They never removed the pipe so there's no guarantee that it won't be reused.
- Hydro-electric corridor: a line of towers snakes north from the waterfront then veers east through the Taylor Massey Creek ravine.
- Various sewers and city owned pipes: the valley is interlaced with a variety of storm and sanitary sewers, as well as some electrical conduits.

City infrastructure isn't so much a threat as it is an impediment. One of our priorities is to try and restore the valley to a more natural state. It becomes very difficult to do this if the available land is already occupied by roads and railways.

THE DON WATCHER BLOG, [HTTP://DONWATCHER.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://donwatcher.blogspot.com), NOV 12 2005



[PLATE 082]



*February 3rd, 1796* – We drove on the ice to Skinner’s Mill, a mile beyond Castle Frank, which looked beautiful from the river. The ice became bad from the rapidity of the river near the mill. At the mouth of the Don I fished from my carriole, but the fish were not to be caught, as they were last winter, several dozen in an hour. It is said that the noise occasioned by our driving constantly over this ice frightens away the fish, which seems probably for they are still in abundance in the Humber, where we do not drive.

THE DIARY OF ELIZABETH SIMCOE, PUB. 1934

Down the river, thus conveniently paved over, every day came a cavalcade of strong sleighs, heavily laden, some with cordwood, some with sawn lumber, some with hay, a whole stack of which at once, sometimes, would be seen to be on the move.

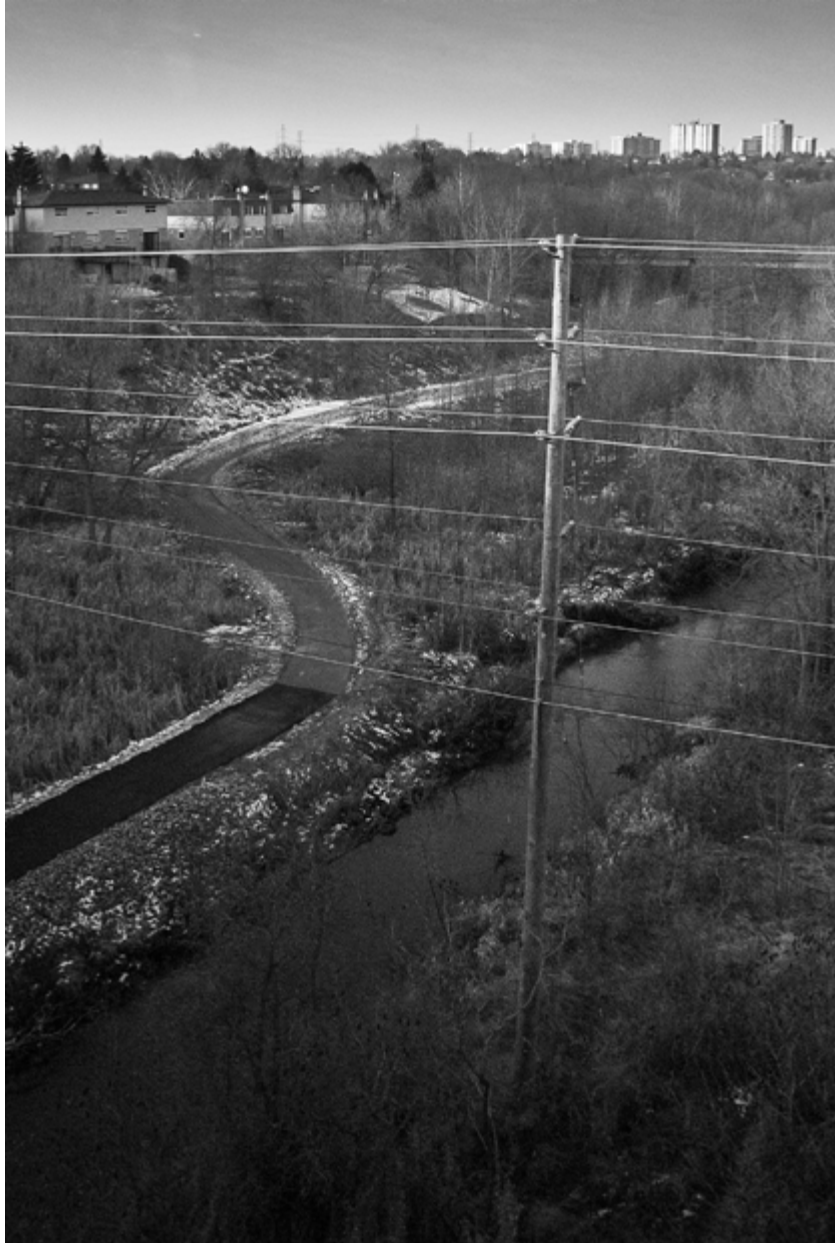
...Along the winding stream, where in the winter the sleighs were to be seen coming down, every summer at night would be observed a succession of moving lights, each repeated in the dark water below. These were the iron cressets, filled with with untuous pine knots all ablaze, suspended from short poles at the bows of the fishermen’s skiffs, out in quest of salmon and such other large fish as might be deemed worth a thrust of the long-handled, sharply-barbed trident used in such operations.

HENRY SCADDING, *TORONTO OF OLD*, 1873: 228

When the survivors of the Gay Nineties were children they could go aboard the Island Ferries *Jessie L. McEdwards*, *Minnie Kidd* and/or perhaps the *Ada Alice* at the Gerrard St. bridge crossing the Don, and steam down the straightened river and turn into the Bay at the cattle byres, pass the Gooderham Mill and distillery, call at Sylvester’s wharf at the foot of Church St. and disembark there, or go on across the Bay to Ward’s Island where ‘Little Eaton’s’, that the James Eaton Co. Had established the summer camp ‘Sans Souci.’

Church St. Was the principal ferry wharf in 1890-3 and for years afterwards an ornate ferry ticket booth stood on the west side of the Don in the premises of the Ontario Coal Co. Brock Street, Lower Spadina Avenue, was the next ferry wharf in importance. The original *Mayflower*, the double-ended ferry plied from the foot of York St.

C.H.J. SNIDER, “ISLAND FERRIES ONCE RIPPLED BRIDGE-BOUND DON,”  
*THE EVENING TELEGRAM*, JUN 19 1948



[PLATE 083]

With the extension of the Grand Trunk Railway along the eastern waterfront in 1856, new incentives for industry included access to convenient and affordable inter-continental transport, and new demands for heavy metal industries such as rail rolling and spin-off industries. In the 1860s and 70s, widespread adoption of steam power stimulated industrial expansion across the city; the existence of a growing industrial hub along the lower reaches of the river with its established benefits of affordable land and convenient rail and shipping access contributed to the expansion of industries around the Lower Don.

\*

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company, which had attempted since 1881 to connect their east-west lines with Toronto, succeeded in the spring of 1886 to win the support of then mayor William Howland to create an eastern entrance to the city along the west bank of the Don Improvement. The timing of the CPR's interest in the project is significant: the improvement would be completed within the context of larger municipal efforts to accommodate railway development in the city. A straightened river would facilitate the laying of tracks into the city; filled land in the former meandering river channel would create additional space for rail-side industry.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PHD. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009: 105, 209

The Mayor, Reeve Leslie and Acting Reeve Gray sent the following telegram to Sir Henry Thornton and Edward Beatty representing the C.N.R. and C.P.R.:

"City of Toronto and Townships of York and East York strongly protest action of your company in permitting unemployed men to travel in freight cars and detrain here without possibility of obtaining work, thereby swelling ranks of our own unemployed. Police have instructions to watch for trains to prevent this. Will your company co-operate by seeing that such practice is not facilitated? Please wire reply."

"POLICE WILL WATCH EVERY FREIGHT TRAIN FOR JOBLESS INFLUX," *THE GLOBE*,  
SEP 26 1931



[PLATE 084]



072 [ESCAPE] 050  
168 [PROGRESS] 148  
142 [TIME] 162

Always the corridor exemplified the triumph of engineering over topography, darkness, especially weather, for inside the two fences trains ran on time even in snowstorms and gales, or at least passengers expected them to do so. Time outside the corridor fences might be seasonal or cyclical or vague, but along the elevated rails it ticked away as standard time, zoned time, railroad time.

JOHN R STILGOE, *OUTSIDE LIES MAGIC*, 1999: 45



[PLATE 085]

**These landscapes are the expression of freedom; nothing and no one determines them. Humankind has no expectations of them; we leave them to be just as they are. Time does not pressure them. They are truly free landscapes, where the passage of time has ceased to have meaning. It has vanished.**

TERESA GALÍ-IZARD, "TIME," *LANDSCAPE +100 WORDS TO INHABIT IT*, 2007: 176



[PLATE 086]









[PLATE 087]

## SCULPTURE IN MOTION

[F]or most of our century, urban spaces have been systematically designed and organized to ensure that collisions and confrontations will not take place here. The distinctive sign of nineteenth-century urbanism was the boulevard, a medium for bringing explosive material and human forces together; the hallmark of twentieth-century urbanism has been the highway, a means for putting them asunder.

MARSHALL BERMAN, *ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR*, 1988: 165



[PLATE 088]



ON THE meandering Don River, that Indian hunters paddled peacefully for generations, the sound of traffic rides the air like distant thunder. Up from the murky water, through the stands of maple and ash and hemlock, a band of gray, flat asphalt hugs the steep valley slope and bears the weight of up to 200,000 roaring cars and trucks a day.

Through eight kilometres (five miles) of verdant canyon, cut by glaciers and 20,000 years of river passage, the Don Valley Parkway has carried more than 1 billion cars to and from the heart of Canada's largest urban centre over 25 years now.

"It's certainly one of the most scenic entries to any major city centre," says Murray Douglas, one of the highway's main designers.

...At once it can be a winding, starkly glorious trip through vibrant fall foliage or a dangerous, sometimes deadly race course. One hour, it can provide a clear and peaceful flash of green wilderness in the midst of Canada's largest urban jungle; the next it can be Metro's most congested, frustrating stretch of rush-hour roadway.

So where did this schizophrenic piece of engineering come from ... ?

... "The Parkway's location was picked mainly because there was a natural corridor there," Douglas says. "But there were obviously physical problems with valley construction that had to be overcome. There had to be major relocations of the Don River because it meandered all over down there so we had to straighten it out."

This subjugation of wandering nature to the surveyor's straight and narrow was accomplished by a series of dams to control the speed and direction of the river's flow.

Canadian National and Canadian Pacific tracks, which had lined the valley for decades, also had to be relocated in the vicinity of Bloor St. So, too, did hydro towers and three major fuel lines that brought heating oil downtown. Billions of cubic yards of earth also had to be moved. At the current location of the Don Mills Rd. interchange, for example, the road surface is 36 metres (120 feet) lower than the original ground.

"THE SCENIC HIGHWAY WE LOVE TO HATE TURNS 25," *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
MAR 7 1992



[PLATE 089]

The Don Valley Parkway (DVP) was given that name because it was meant to be part park and part highway. It was designed to give drivers a moment to be in nature each day as part of their commute. Instead, drivers spend hours a day stuck in gridlock on the DVP.

*THE PARKWAY OF LEAST RESISTANCE, HTTP://POLR.CA/PROJECT.HTML, 2011*

“We’d go into people’s back yards and crawl down the hills,” [Frederick Gardiner] recalled in a 1961 interview with the Toronto Star, ...[and] by 5 o’clock we’d begin to know what the engineers knew and what they didn’t know. The problem was that there were two big hills and a narrow-gutted valley. There were railways in it and a river. The engineers were saying you couldn’t put a six-lane highway in it. So we’d have a look at [it and] say: We’ll move the railway over a piece. We’ll tear down the hill. We’ll shift the river over a piece, then we can have the highway through there. That’s what was done years later.”

TIMOTHY COLTON, *BIG DADDY*, 1980: 111

### LOVE IT OR HATE IT, PARKWAY’S 25 YEARS OLD It was ‘great sense of relief’ when Don Valley opened

...Few people regretted the lost wilderness of the valley, although an anonymous Star writer mused, a little sadly, on the demise of Sugar Loaf Hill, which had given birth to the nature tales of Ernest Thompson Seton.

The hill, the writer said, contained exactly 1 1/4 million cubic yards of earth - “a statistic which never occurred to Ernest Thompson Seton.”

The fact had come to light, the writer said, because the hill had been ripped out and carted away, to be replaced by 137,000 tons of asphalt and 600 fluorescent-light standards.

#### NO FANFARE

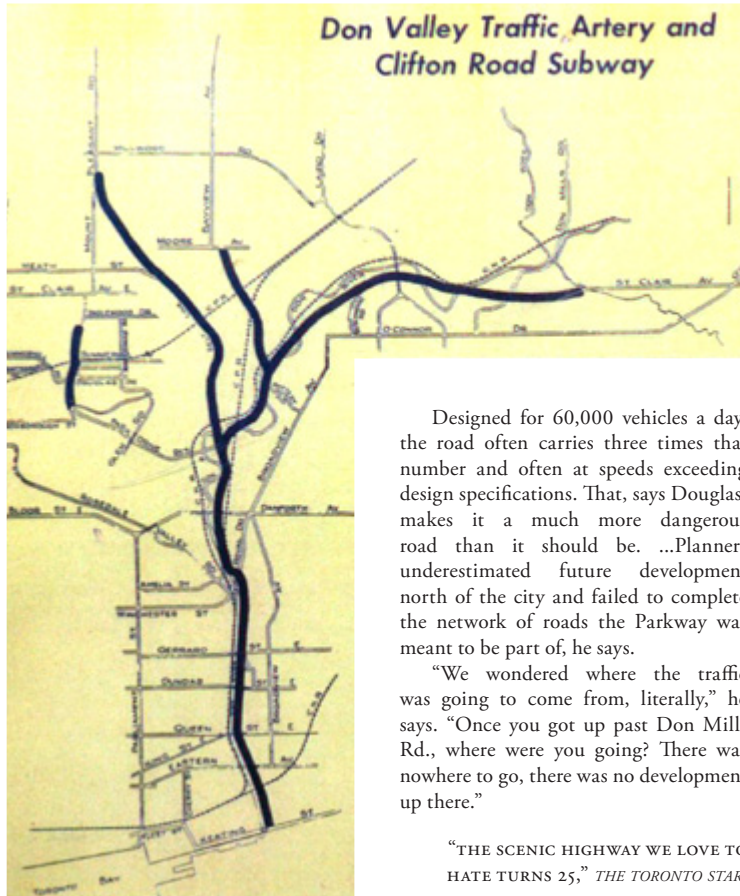
Frederick G. (Big Daddy) Gardiner, then chairman of Metro Council, curtly told one wilderness-lover: “I’ll tell you what the Don Valley was. The Don Valley was a place to murder little boys, that’s what it was.”

The parkway was opened by then-premier Leslie Frost, aided by Gardiner, at 2.30 p.m. - just in time for afternoon rush hour.

*THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, AUG 13 1986*

[T]he real places of supermodernity – the ones we inhabit when we are driving down the motorway... have the peculiarity that they are defined partly by the words and texts they offer us: their ‘instructions for use’, which may be prescriptive (‘Take right-hand lane’), prohibitive (‘No Smoking’) or informative... Motorway travel is thus doubly remarkable: it avoids, for functional reasons, all the principal places to which it takes us.

MARC AUGÉ, *NON-PLACES*, 1995: 77



[FIGURE 2.2]

Designed for 60,000 vehicles a day, the road often carries three times that number and often at speeds exceeding design specifications. That, says Douglas, makes it a much more dangerous road than it should be. ...Planners underestimated future development north of the city and failed to complete the network of roads the Parkway was meant to be part of, he says.

“We wondered where the traffic was going to come from, literally,” he says. “Once you got up past Don Mills Rd., where were you going? There was nowhere to go, there was no development up there.”

“THE SCENIC HIGHWAY WE LOVE TO HATE TURNS 25,” *THE TORONTO STAR*, MAR 7 1992

“Of course, the Parkway was supposed to be part of a network of roads,” notes [Sam] Cass, now 88. “But they never got built.”

It was a good plan, he insists: Build a network of roads connecting the 13 municipalities making up Toronto (this was before Metro became five jurisdictions; Toronto, East York, Scarborough, York and Etobicoke; and long before they all amalgamated into one city).

“In Europe and the U.S., they were building expressways in a radial system with hubs and spokes like a wheel,” says Cass. “We had a different system: a grid. We wanted to provide access to all 13 municipalities, in that motorists would use the express roads and not the local roads and take the pressure off residential neighbourhoods. The grid was spaced about four kilometres apart, so you would have been close to the grid wherever you were in the city.”

To complete the grid, the DVP and Gardiner were supposed to be joined by the Spadina, Allen, Scarborough and Crosstown expressways. However, by the mid-1970s the political climate changed.

“Jane Jacobs (instrumental in killing the Spadina Expressway and an anti-car campaigner) never gave it a chance,” says Cass, wistfully. “It would have taken the traffic off local roads and contained the harm.”

“DON VALLEY ‘PARKING LOT’ HITS MILESTONE,” *THE TORONTO DAILY STAR*, AUG 27 2011



[PLATE 090]



I recall a newspaper article written by Toronto sociologist Arnold Rockman in the mid-1960s – I read it some years later – in which the newly completed Don Valley Parkway is praised as “sculpture in motion.” In a 1991 interview, Rockman recalled his excitement upon driving on the Don Valley Parkway for the first time, the admiration he felt for “the way it conformed to the landscape.” The article was, in his words, “a futurist rhapsody” of a sort, he believed could not be written in the 1990s.

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 178

Enjoy is not a word most Torontonians associate with these highways. Fear, loathing and a sustained rage are more common sentiments.

At night, though, we can drive free - like in the 1950s before we reached “peak car” - circling the city, feeling the curves and bumps at speed, choosing a lane because it looks good, not because we think it moves faster.

...All cities have a lap and some, like London or Washington, have ring roads or beltways. Toronto’s is different. It meanders through the city and its topography, often in beautiful ways. It’s more Le Mans than Indy 500.

To drive the Lap, you can start anywhere, and go any direction. Begin downtown and there’s the opportunity to fly through the crystal skyscrapers twice.

Even as it sheds chunks of concrete, as if in solidarity with Quebec overpasses, the Gardiner is as close to The Jetsons’ sky-highways as we may ever get. Up the Don Valley, the Lap is at its most verdant and smooth, with long curves that hug ravine walls and dark masses of forest out of which sprout the incandescent towers of Flemington and Thorncliffe.

The interchange at Highways 401 and the Don Valley Parkway is one of the biggest in the city. Much of Toronto’s financial district could fit here.

...Cities are about speed and movement, and these highways are where we can see and feel it most intensely. ...It takes about 40 minutes to drive the 66 kilometre loop at or near the speed limit. But for nighthawks with a little extra gas to burn, the Lap is what a Sunday country drive is to everybody else: a last romantic gasp of car culture.

“DRIVING THE TORONTO LAP,” *THE TORONTO STAR*, MAY 25 2012

As with many of the creations born out of the spirit of this age, the meaning and beauty of the parkway cannot be grasped from a single point of observation, as was possible from a window of the chateau at Versailles. It can be revealed only by movement, by going along in a steady flow, as the rules of traffic prescribe. The space-time feeling of our period can seldom be felt so keenly as when driving.

SIEGFRIED GIEDION, *SPACE, TIME AND ARCHITECTURE*, 1941 : 823-32

**In heterotopias, time is either timeless (museum, library), or cyclical (celebrations). In dead zones, time is singular and particular, profane and everyday. Perceiving the dead zone from outside, it is regarded as to being devoid of time, waiting.**

Yael Allweil & Rachel Kallus, "PUBLIC SPACE HETEROTOPIAS,"  
*HETEROTOPIA AND THE CITY*, 2008: 210



[PLATE 091]



**10:50 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Hwy 401 ...collision blocks the bus and left lanes. Emergency crews are on scene.  
**10:55 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Hwy 401 ...collision has been cleared, but now NB Don Valley north of Lawrence..  
right lane blocked w/trouble  
**11:10 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway north of Lawrence...a collision has been cleared  
**12:03 pm** : Disabled vehicle Southbound DVP south of Lawrence.  
**12:13 pm** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP at Wynford.  
**4:44 pm** : Problems cleared, Eastbound 401 approaching the DVP in the collectors.  
**5:15 pm** : Northbound DVP north of Don Mills left lane blocked with a collision.  
**6:11 pm** : Northbound DVP approaching Bayview/bloor, the right lane remains closed with a collision.  
**11:25 pm** : SB DVP, south of Danforth, a crash blocking the 2 left lanes.  
**12:40 pm** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP south of Bloor.  
**1:03 pm** : Problems on the Southbound DVP approaching Bloor, in the right lane.  
**1:23 pm** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP approaching Bloor.  
**2:17 pm** : Problems Southbound DVP approaching Bloor, in the left lane.  
**2:38 pm** : Looks like troubles Southbound DVP approaching Bloor have cleared.  
**7:33 am** : NB DVP at the Bloor Viaduct, only the left lane is open due to a collision.  
**8:04 am** : Expect delays on the NB DVP approaching the Bloor viaduct. At the Bloor Viaduct only the left lane is open due to a serious crash.  
**8:30 am** : Problems on the NB DVP at the Bloor Viaduct have cleared.  
**7:58 am** : The NB DVP ramp to the EB 401 is CLOSED collision.  
**8:24 am** : NB DVP ramp to the EB 401 is now OPEN.  
**12:15 pm** : Problems cleared, Northbound DVP at Bloor.  
**12:41 pm** : Watch for debris on the Southbound DVP south of Eglinton, in the left lane.  
**12:48 pm** : Debris has been cleared from the Southbound DVP south of Eglinton.  
**8:34 pm** : NB Don Valley Parkway-404 slows from Don Mills to Finch...an earlier crash approaching Finch has been removed  
**12:33 pm** : Southbound SVP south of Lawrence, left lane blocked with a collision.  
**5:56 pm** : Southbound DVP approaching Bayview/bloor the right lane is blocked with a collision.  
**3:17 pm** : Full closure of the DVP in effect. Closed from Gardiner to 401 for weekend maintenance. Expected to reopen Monday at 5am.  
**11:19 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Eglinton....right lane blocked with maintenance  
**3:18 pm** : Northbound DVP jammed from Queen to approaching Eglinton where the left lane remains blocked  
**3:07 pm** : Northbound DVP approaching Bloor, the two right lanes are blocked with a collision.  
**5:15 pm** : Southbound DVP south of Bloor CLOSED for a collision. Northbound DVP north of Gerrard, two right lanes closed  
**5:17 pm** : Southbound DVP approaching Bloor now one lane open.  
**4:50 pm** : Collision Northbound DVP approaching Don Mills.  
**5:30 pm** : Problems cleared, Northbound DVP approaching Don Mills.  
**5:36 pm** : Problems Northbound DVP approaching Lawrence, in the centre lane.  
**6:16 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Eglinton...a multi car crash blocks 2 left lanes!!!  
**6:58 am** : Second problem SB Don Valley Pkwy at the Bloor viaduct....a car has flipped over....blocks 2 right lanes.  
**7:08 am** : SB Don Valley Pkwy south of Eglinton...a multi car crash has been cleared..however, further south @ the Bloor Viaduct, 2 right lanes blocked  
**7:37 am** : Back to good on the SB Don Valley Parkway....earlier collisions south of Eglinton and at the Bloor Viaduct....CLEAR!!  
**8:20 am** : New problem...now a car has rolled over on the EB Gardiner approaching the Don Valley Pkwy....blocks 2 left lanes  
**1:26 pm** : Problems Southbound DVP at Eglinton, blocking a piece of the right lane.  
**1:46 pm** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP at Eglinton.  
**12:10 pm** : Southbound DVP approaching Don Mills, the right lane is blocked with a collision.  
**1:03 pm** : Northbound DVP approaching Lawrence the right lane is blocked with a collision.  
**4:43 pm** : Lanes re-opened Northbound DVP at York Mills, but still slow from north of the Gardiner.  
**3:30 pm** : Northbound DVP north of the Gardiner, only the ramp lane is getting by because of a collision.  
**12:37 pm** : Collision has cleared, Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**12:34 pm** : SB DVP - Ramp to EB Lawrence now CLOSED because of a collision. Emergency crews on scene.  
**12:54 pm** : SB DVP - Ramp to EB Lawrence has reopened.  
**11:50 am** : Rain slowing things down on the major routes - NB DVP already heavy from the Gardiner to the 401.  
**1:23 pm** : Southbound DVP ramp to Lakeshore is blocked with a collision.  
**11:52 am** : Collision Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**10:19 am** : Ramp from Southbound DVP to Southbound Bayview extension is closed.  
**11:25 am** : Emergency crews on the Northbound DVP at Wynford Drive.  
**11:33 am** : Problems cleared, Northbound DVP at Wynford Drive.  
**6:45 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Lawrence...stalled van in the right lane...tow is on scene  
**7:03 am** : SB 427 approaching Dundas in the collectors...collision now clear!  
**7:03 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Lawrence...stalled van...CLEAR  
**7:37 am** : Vehicle fire on the SB Don Valley Parkway @ Wynford Dr...only the left lane gets past...fire crews on scene  
**7:57 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway @ Wynford Dr...earlier vehicle fire...off to the right shoulder. Fire out completely

**9:40 am** : Eastbound Gardiner ramp to the DVP is closed for a clean up - gravel was spilled.  
**9:54 am** : Northbound DVP approaching York Mills, the left lane is blocked with a stalled vehicle.  
**10:37 am** : Eastbound Gardiner ramp to the DVP is open!  
**7:46 am** : We're closing in on a long weekend, the roads will become more and more congested...pack your patience so we can all enjoy the long weekend  
**10:24 am** : Collision Southbound DVP at Lawrence, blocking the centre lane.  
**10:47 am** : Collision cleared from the Southbound DVP at Lawrence.  
**8:43 am** : NB DVP north of Lawrence 2 right lanes and the ramp lane blocked with a collision. Emergency crews on scene.  
**9:58 am** : Northbound DVP is heavy from Pottery to North of Lawrence where only the Left lane is open because of a collision.  
**3:34 pm** : Southbound DVP south of York Mills, the left lane is blocked with a collision.  
**12:40 pm** : Problems Northbound DVP at Eglinton, on the shoulder.  
**9:03 am** : Collision cleared, Westbound 401 approaching the DVP in the express.  
**7:29 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of York Mills...collision blocks the left lane  
**7:44 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of York Mills....collision has been removed  
**12:04 pm** : Collision on the Northbound DVP approaching Wynford.  
**1:04 pm** : Collision Southbound DVP south of Lawrence.  
**10:36 pm** : Scheduled for 2am: Full Closure of DVP, Gardiner closed from Humber to Carlaw - Ride for Heart event.  
**3:19 am** : The Gardiner CLOSED - Humber to Carlaw & DVP CLOSED - Gardiner to 401 - Ride For Heart  
**6:45 am** : The DVP and the Gardiner remain CLOSED for the RIDE FOR HEART.  
**9:59 am** : Northbound DVP re-opened from Don Mills to 401. Southbound lanes remain closed.  
**12:20 am** : Northbound DVP re-opened from the Lakeshore (at the Don Roadway) up to the 401.  
**10:39 am** : Northbound DVP fully open from the Gardiner to the 401. Southbound lanes closed.  
**10:54 am** : Eastbound Gardiner, Northbound Don Valley Parkway fully re-opened.  
**11:06 am** : Southbound DVP remains closed from the 401 to the Gardiner.  
**11:20 am** : Southbound DVP has re-opened from Don Mills to the Gardiner.  
**12:03 pm** : All lanes of the Gardiner and DVP fully re-opened, following the Ride for Heart.  
**2:44 pm** : Collision on the Northbound DVP north of Lawrence.  
**8:27 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of York Mills....right lane blocked..ambulance is on scene...may be a medical emergency  
**10:54 am** : Collision on the Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**11:07 am** : Southbound DVP south of York Mills....2 left lanes now blocked.  
**11:13 am** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**12:33 pm** : Watch for debris on the Southbound DVP beneath the Bloor Viaduct.  
**12:30 pm** : Northbound DVP north of Spanbridge, the two right lanes are blocked with a collision.  
**10:05 am** : Pothole repairs Northbound on Don Mills at Wynford, blocking 2 right lanes.  
**10:26 am** : All lanes re-opened, Northbound Don Mills at Wynford.  
**2:04 pm** : Collision cleared, Northbound DVP approaching Don Mills.  
**11:24 am** : Collision Southbound DVP south of the 401, blocking the left lane.  
**1:14 am** : NB DVP - All lanes are closed past Bloor because of a collision. Police forcing drivers off at the Bloor/Bayview exit.  
**3:08 am** : NB DVP remains closed just North of Bayview/Bloor police investigation. Motorists forced off at the Bayview/Bloor exit.  
**5:25 am** : NB DVP CLOSED at Bayview/Bloor for a police investigation. Forced off at the Bayview/Bloor ramp.  
**7:09 am** : The NB DVP remains closed at Bayview/Bloor.  
**8:36 am** : NB DVP @ Bayview/Bloor all lanes are now open.  
**9:45 am** : Stalled vehicle on the Northbound DVP ramp to Eglinton.  
**10:10 am** : Problems cleared from the Northbound DVP ramp to Eglinton.  
**11:24 am** : Report of a collision Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge, in the left lane.  
**11:35 am** : Problems Northbound DVP at Lawrence, on the shoulder.  
**9:10 am** : Maintenance crews on the Northbound DVP north of Don Mills.  
**9:33 am** : Maintenance crews have cleared from the Northbound DVP north of Don Mills.  
**5:58 am** : Toronto Police now block the middle lane on the NB Don Valley Parkway north of Lawrence....debris/stones dropped onto the road earlier  
**3:05 am** : Keep your cool on your morning commute! A bottle of water will help... :)  
**9:40 am** : Downed tree is blocking Westbound Rosedale Valley Rd west of Bayview.  
**11:00 am** : Collision on the ramp from Southbound DVP to Bayview/Bloor.  
**11:20 am** : Problems Northbound DVP at Lawrence, in the right lane.  
**11:23 am** : Problems cleared from the Southbound DVP ramp to Bayview/Bloor.  
**11:45 am** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP at Lawrence.  
**1:54 pm** : Collision cleared, Eastbound Gardiner approaching the DVP.  
**5:00 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway south of Hwy 401...a car vs tractor trailer collision blocks 2 middle lanes. Emerg. crews on scene  
**5:41 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway just south of Hwy 401...an earlier collision has been cleared  
**5:47 am** : Wherever...whenever you travel this long weekend..make sure you stay with 680 News...regular traffic reports on the ones!  
 We have your back  
**11:03 am** : Collision Southbound DVP approaching Lawrence, in the left lane.

- 11:43 am** : Collision has cleared, Southbound DVP approaching Lawrence.  
**5:00 am** : EB Gardiner approaching the Don Valley Pkwy....collision blocks the right lane. Emergency crews on scene  
**5:24 am** : All clear on the EB Gardiner approaching the Don Valley Parkway  
**9:12 am** : Maintenance crews travelling Southbound on the DVP through Eglinton.  
**9:25 am** : Maintenance crews moving Southbound DVP down to Bayview/Bloor.  
**10:25 am** : Watch for a cyclist on the Northbound DVP around Spanbridge.  
**6:15 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway approaching Lawrence...the bus lane is blocked with a crash...emergency crew on scene  
**6:24 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway approaching Lawrence...an earlier collision has been removed!  
**10:40 am** : Collision Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge, in the centre lane.  
**10:59 am** : Collision cleared, Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge.  
**11:37 am** : Ramps from Bayview/Bloor to NB/SB DVP have been re-opened.  
**1:45 pm** : Collision Northbound DVP north of Don Mills, blocking the right lane.  
**2:07 pm** : Collision cleared, Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge.  
**12:23 pm** : NB Don Valley - Approaching Don Mills, a disabled vehicle & police are blocking the 2 left lanes. Traffic backed up from Pottery Rd  
**1:08 pm** : Problems on the Southbound DVP ramp to Bayview/Bloor.  
**1:57 pm** : Problems cleared from the Southbound DVP ramp to Bayview/Bloor.  
**9:00 am** : Problems with a bus Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge, blocking the 2 right lanes.  
**11:00 am** : Problems Northbound DVP approaching Eglinton have cleared.  
**3:20 am** : A "pack your shades" morning! Brilliant sunshine start! Ahhhh summer...  
**5:34 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway approaching Wynford Dr...stalled car in the right lane  
**7:06 am** : Toronto Police has closed York Mills east of the Don Valley Parkway btwn Valley Woods and Clayland because of gas leak  
**7:19 am** : A gas leak has closed York Mills for 2 blocks east of the Don Valley Parkway. The ramps from the Don Valley to York Mills also closed  
**7:31 am** : Gas leak capped...all lanes open now on York Mills east of the DVP....the ramps from the DVP to York Mills open again as well  
**7:50 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway north of Dundas..a multi vehicle collision blocks 2 left lanes. Left lane is also blocks SB Don Valley w/ emerg assist  
**8:03 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway approaching Dundas...lanes open, but NB Don Valley north of Dundas, emerg crews on scene. Only the right lane open  
**8:47 am** : All clear now on the NB Don Valley Parkway north of Dundas...collision clear!  
**4:07 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway slows to south of Don Mills...an earlier collision is on the shoulder  
**6:34 am** : It's been an unusually SLOW moving drive especially for drivers coming in from the far north and east ends of the GTA.  
**8:10 am** : Unusually slow moving along the SB 404-Don Valley Parkway from Finch to Bayview/Bloor  
**8:26 am** : The reason for the heavy traffic on the SB 404-Don Valley Parkway? Construction Bloor-Castlfrank. Only one lane to make the right turn  
**2:25 pm** : Police and geese are blocking the ramp from the Gardiner to Northbound DVP.  
**2:29 pm** : The geese on the ramp from EB Gardiner to Northbound DVP aren't up for negotiations.  
**2:43 pm** : Ramp from Eastbound Gardiner to Northbound DVP re-opened.  
**2:48 pm** : Motorists on the Eastbound Gardiner are being force onto the Eastbound Lakeshore - ramp to DVP remains shut.  
**11:23 am** : Collision Southbound 404/DVP - Secon lane from the left blocked over the 401  
**11:46 am** : Southbound 404/DVP - Problems over the 401 have cleared  
**11:53 am** : No access from the Eastbound Gardiner to the Northbound DVP. Police are on scene  
**11:54 am** : RE-OPENED...The ramp from the Eastbound Gardiner to the Northbound DVP after a brief closure by police  
**11:10 am** : Cleared - NB DVP, a stalled car has been moved from the left lane  
**9:53 am** : Problems Southbound DVP at Lawrence, in the left lane.  
**10:23 am** : Problems have cleared, Southbound DVP at Lawrence.  
**1:07 pm** : Collision on the Southbound DVP ramp to Southbound Don Mills.  
**2:11 pm** : Collision on the ramp from Southbound DVP to Southbound Don Mills.  
**2:28 pm** : Problems on the Eastbound Gardiner approaching the DVP ramp.  
**4:59 pm** : SB DVP Ramp to Bayview/Bloor has been CLOSED due to flooding.  
**5:37 pm** : SB DVP Ramp to NB BAYVIEW/BLOOR remains CLOSED, Ramp to SB BAYVIEW/BLOOR HAS REOPENED  
**6:45 am** : WB Gardiner west of the Don Valley Pkwy....collision blocks the left lane  
**4:40 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway approaching Lawrence...collision blocks the right lane  
**5:09 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway approaching Lawrence...collision has been removed  
**9:29 am** : Hearing about a collision Southbound DVP approaching York Mills.  
**10:29 am** : Problems Southbound DVP at Eglinton, blocking the right lane.  
**10:39 am** : Stalled vehicle cleared, Southbound DVP at Eglinton.  
**10:46 am** : Collision has cleared, Southbound DVP approaching York Mills.  
**1:43 pm** : Collision Northbound DVP approaching Spanbridge, in the left lane.  
**6:33 am** : SB Don Valley Parkway at Don Mills....multi car crash blocks 2 right lanes. Emergency crews on scene  
**6:36 am** : All clear now SB Don Valley Parkway at Don Mills!! Big back up remains!  
**5:48 am** : WB 401 approaching the Don Valley Parkway...collision blocks the far right lane....emergency crews on scene

**6:18 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway approaching York Mills...collision blocks the right lane  
**6:36 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway approaching York Mills...collision has been removed  
**12:03 pm** : Problems Southbound DVP south of Bloor, in the right lane.  
**12:13 pm** : Disabled vehicle cleared from the Southbound DVP south of Bloor.  
**3:41 am** : Good Friday morning!! A fantastic beginning to the early morning commute!!  
**11:31 am** : Collision Northbound DVP approaching Eglinton, on the shoulder.  
**9:34 pm** : TONIGHT at 2am - 12pm: EB Gardiner at Humber Bridge to NB DVP at Eglinton CLOSED for #TorontoTriathlonFestival  
**11:48 pm** : EB Gardiner at Humber Bridge to NB DVP at Eglinton now CLOSED for #TorontoTriathlonFestival. Alt routes: EB Lakeshore Blvd / NB Bayview Ave  
**11:53 pm** : NB DVP - closed Gardiner up to Eglinton. WB Eglinton ramp onto NB DVP open!  
**8:34 am** : NB DVP reopened from the Gardiner to Eglinton.  
**7:04 am** : Southbound DVP at Don mills the left lane is blocked with a stalled vehicle.  
**12:55 pm** : Collision Northbound DVP at Wynford.  
**1:03 pm** : 2 left lanes now blocked on the Northbound DVP at Wynford.  
**1:16 pm** : Collision cleared, Northbound DVP at Wynford.  
**9:46 pm** : Lots of flooding happening in areas on the major routes tonight! Drive carefully & according to the road conditions  
**2:34 am** : SOUTHBOUND DVP APPROACHING LAWRENCE COLLISION IN THE LEFT LANE  
**12:35 pm** : NB DVP - Just North of Bayview/Bloor the right lane is blocked with a collision. Slowdowns from Gerrard.  
**12:58 pm** : Collision Southbound DVP at Lawrence, in the centre lane.  
**1:02 pm** : Collision on the Southbound DVP south of Eglinton.  
**1:32 pm** : Collision cleared, Southbound DVP south of Eglinton.  
**5:39 am** : SB Don Mills approaching Overlea Blvd....collision blocks the diamond lane. Emergency crews on scene  
**6:21 am** : Finally clear ....collision SB Don Mills approaching Overlea Blvd...back up remains but will improve  
**10:05 am** : NB DVP at Wynford - Right Lane partially blocked with a collision. Very slow from Don Mills.  
**10:44 am** : NB DVP at Wynford - Problems CLEARED. Still heavy from Don Mills.  
**12:39 pm** : NB DVP is jammed from Dundas all the way up to Lawrence.  
**9:23 am** : Problems cleared, Northbound DVP north of Don Mills.  
**11:21 am** : Problems Southbound DVP at Lawrence, off to the shoulder.  
**12:18 pm** : EB GARDINER - approaching the DVP, Right Lane is blocked with a collision, slow thru.  
**9:33 am** : Problems on the Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**9:45 am** : Report of a vehicle into the ditch, Southbound DVP at Spanbridge.  
**9:50 am** : Collision Southbound DVP at Spanbridge is blocking the 2 right lanes now.  
**9:57 am** : Collision cleared, Southbound DVP south of York Mills.  
**10:59 am** : Problems cleared, Southbound DVP south of Eglinton.  
**12:50 pm** : Problems on the Southbound DVP south of Lawrence, in the right lanes.  
**1:47 pm** : General slow volume on the major routes...and still a stalled truck Southbound DVP south of Lawrence.  
**2:30 pm** : Disabled truck finally cleared from the Southbound DVP south of Lawrence.  
**5:36 pm** : Sb Dvp ramp to York Mills blocked with a collision  
**6:08 pm** : Problems on the Sb Dvp ramp to York Mills have been cleared  
**4:28 am** : Stay alert and allow yourself extra travel time this morning because of road conditions. Not so favourable!  
**6:40 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway at the Wynford Twin Tunnels...collision blocks the left lane. Police on scene  
**6:48 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway at the Wynford Twin Tunnels...collision has been removed  
**9:34 am** : Collision on the Northbound DVP approaching Bayview/Bloor.  
**9:35 am** : Collision cleared, Northbound DVP approaching Bayview/Bloor.  
**6:36 pm** : Nb Dvp - approaching York Mills - 2 right lanes blocked with a rollover  
**6:49 pm** : Nb Dvp now closed from Lawrence to York Mills  
**6:58 pm** : Motorists being forced off the Nb Dvp at Eb Lawrence due to this collision approaching York Mills  
**7:15 pm** : Nb Dvp at Lawrence - all lanes have been reopened  
**10:50 am** : Slower than usual on the major/intown routes, because of the rain...drive carefully, and full headlight system on for safety  
**12:37 pm** : Problems on the Southbound DVP approaching Don Mills, in the left lane.  
**5:45 pm** : Problems on the Sb Dvp ramp to Wb Gardiner 3 left lanes blocked with a collision  
**6:05 pm** : Sb Dvp ramp to Wb Gardiner - just the left lane blocked with this collision  
**6:07 pm** : Problems on the Sb Dvp ramp to Wb Gardiner now cleared  
**8:39 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway north of the Bloor Viaduct...the right lane is blocked with a maintenance crew  
**6:36 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway north of Don Mills...maintenance crew is slowly creeping up...they're in the right lane  
**7:25 am** : SB 404-Don Valley Parkway slows from Finch to Lawrence...an earlier collision has been removed  
**7:26 am** : NB Don Valley Parkway slows approaching Eglinton now. Maintenance crew occupy the right lane. They're almost done  
**6:45 am** : WB Lawrence approaching DVP - only the left lane is open due to a collision, backed up from approaching Curlew.  
**10:19 am** : Problems on the Northbound DVP north of Don Mills, blocking the left lane.  
**4:30 pm** : Problems on the Nb Dvp north of Bayview/Bloor in the right lane  
**4:41 pm** : Problems on the Nb Dvp north of Bayview/Bloor cleared...can I hear a "yay?"  
**10:30 am** : EB Gardiner approaching DVP 2 left lanes blocked with a collision and emergency crews.



**2:02 pm** : DVP has reopened following a police investigation that had closed the SB lanes from Eglinton Ave to the Bayview/Bloor ramp for several hours

TRAFFIC ON TWITTER, *680 NEWS*, 2012

People in Toronto who used means other than jumping to complete suicide after the barrier were older than those who completed suicide by other means before the barrier (48.0 years v 45.8 years,  $P < 0.01$ ; table 2).

Overall in Toronto no other statistically significant differences in age or sex were evident between the periods before and after the barrier. People who completed suicide by jumping in Toronto tended to be younger than those who did so by other means both before and after the barrier. Furthermore, among people who completed suicide by jumping, those who used bridges tended to be younger and were more predominantly male than those who used buildings.

MARK SINYOR, "EFFECT OF A BARRIER AT BLOOR STREET VIADUCT ON SUICIDE RATES IN TORONTO: NATURAL EXPERIMENT," *BMJ*, 2010



[PLATE 092]



[PLATE 093]

The roar of the traffic and the biting winds make it difficult to think clearly on top of Toronto's notorious Bloor Street viaduct -- a lonely, empty place from which at least 450 people have chosen to jump to their deaths.

In the distance, to both the north and south, loom smokestacks and apartment buildings. About 40 metres below sprawl the highway, a snow-covered valley and the dark water of the Don River. A small rock takes a full six seconds to hit the ground.

Welcome to one of North America's worst so-called suicide magnets -- second only, it is thought, to San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

...In the 1930s, crowds would gather when rumours circulated that someone had jumped. On June 16, 1930, a "workless Englishman," distraught at his Depression-era unemployment, evaded police and jumped to his death, according to a report in *The Globe*.

And even now, as workers put the finishing touches on the new barrier -- a collection of steel rods and girders called the "Luminous Veil" -- as many as eight people have tried to jump, and some of them succeeded.

The five-year fight over Toronto's "suicide magnet" and what to do about it was fought by advocates for the mentally ill, and spearheaded by Al Birney, 72, a volunteer with the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario.

...Toronto Police Staff Sergeant Tom Lynch has worked the districts around the bridge for more than a decade -- and has helped talk several people out of jumping. ..."My analysis is, we have two types of people that we come across... types that go to the bridge but aren't going to jump in a million years... and then you have others who witnesses say walked out onto the bridge, and they were gone," Staff Sgt. Lynch said. "If they've made the decision, they're going to do it."

...Dr. Nathan Scharf, a psychiatrist at Toronto's Youthdale Treatment Centre, which treats suicidal young people, agrees. "Any barrier, physical or emotional, in the intense moment of deciding to commit suicide would be beneficial." He said that many contemplating suicide, especially young people, are drawn to particular places they think are romantic spots to die -- and the fewer of them there are, the better.

"HALTING THE GRIM PILGRIMAGE TO A CITY'S DEADLY BRIDGE"  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, FEB 1 2003

"We look at this bridge and know there are at least 480 souls at the bottom who spent the last moment of their life on the way down. This is where they spent their last day before they went to eternity."

Birney, who heads a local chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, has made it his crusade to have a barrier erected on the Bloor Street Viaduct to deter those who come here determined to end their lives.

"TORONTO BRIDGE LEGENDARY FOR SUICIDES GETS BARRIER"  
*BALTIMORE SUN*, JAN 26 2003

Birney grew embittered about the city's priorities. Toronto spent millions on a failed bid to host the 2008 Olympics and millions each year on fireworks. When it came to paying for a suicide barrier, he was told there was no money.

"When a space shuttle goes up in flames, a nation goes into mourning. When the mentally ill jump, it's 'Let the bastards die,'" he said.

"LETHAL BEAUTY," *THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE*, NOV 3 2005

Consider the sorrowful case of Toronto teenager Kenneth Au Yeung. At 12:20 p.m. on Dec. 11, 1997, motorist Chantelle Gobeil, then 25, was driving west on Danforth Ave. when she saw the 17-year-old student striding along the Bloor viaduct on his own, seeming to move with energy and purpose.

The boy was in a torment of remorse. A student at St. Michael's Choir School, he had only that morning been called in to the principal's office and castigated by an off-duty police officer for his role in a prank involving potentially libellous remarks that mistakenly found their way into print in the school's yearbook, which he had helped edit.

One moment on that bitter day, he was walking on the sidewalk, anguished but alive. The next moment, said Gobeil, the boy planted both hands on the concrete railing, vaulted over the side, and was gone.

"THE FATAL ATTRACTION OF SUICIDE MAGNETS" *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
JAN 10 2010



## REMAINS DISCOVERED UNDER A HIGHWAY 401 OFF-RAMP PROVE TO BE THOSE OF THE GIRL

In the final moments before her death, Mariam stood alone on the shoulder of a Toronto expressway, half a world removed from the life she had known for more than 17 years in the mountainous west Asian country of Georgia.

Then, she went over the concrete barrier and plunged five storeys into a wooded ravine below.

The slender teen with chestnut hair left behind no hint as to her fate, baffling investigators and prompting them to reach out in all directions – interviewing thousands of people, combing garbage dumps and scouring Toronto parks by helicopter – to no avail. She had been in Canada just three months when, after walking to school with her brother Giorgi on Sept. 14, 2009, she vanished.

She did leave behind a troubled family: a father, who had reportedly been acquitted of public indecency and would later go on to stab three people; a brother, who would briefly disappear himself, before returning unharmed within 24 hours.

For 2½ years, the mystery captivated the city, a fascination deepened by Ms. Makhniashvili's equally inscrutable personality. An introvert, she had few close friends, spending her time studying physics.

In the absence of concrete evidence, journalists and the public floated wild theories: Some speculated she had been kidnapped in broad daylight; others that she had joined a religious cult; some thought they spotted her among a group of travelling hippies in Alberta.

None of it was true.

Last week, two men found her skeleton in the ravine off the Don Valley Golf Course, underneath a Highway 401 offramp that leads to Yonge Street, some seven kilometres from her school. Using DNA, police positively identified her Thursday night. Searchers had not previously checked the spot where her remains were discovered. Her body could easily have lain there undetected since the day she vanished.

Investigators said she was alone when she died and that there was no sign of foul play. She left behind no note and there was nothing to say exactly what had brought her to the precipice. "In retrospect, you could see that, as an introvert, as a bookworm who kept to herself. One could assume it was a result of isolation and depression," said Detective Sergeant Dan Nealon, who led the probe into her disappearance. "But at this point, it's speculative."

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL, MAR 12 2012*



[PLATE 094]

042 [ IDENTITY ] 032  
160 [ PROGRESS ] 140  
126 [ SPECTACLE ] 056

## **BRIDGES**

*The bridge goes up in a dream. It will link the east end with the centre of the city. It will carry traffic, water and electricity across the Don Valley. It will carry trains that have not been invented yet.*

*Night and day. Fall light. Snow light. They are always working – horses and wagons and men arriving for work on the Danforth side at the far end of the valley.*

*There are over 4,000 photographs from various angles of the bridge in its time-lapse evolution. The piers sink into bedrock fifty feet below the surface through clay and shale and quicksand – 45,000 cubic yards of earth are excavated. The network of scaffolding stretches up.*

*Men in a maze of wooden planks climb deep into the shattered light of blond wood. A man is an extension of hammer, drill, flame.*

MICHAEL ONDAATJE, *IN THE SKIN OF A LION*, 1987: 26, 31





[PLATE 095]



[PLATE 096]



[PLATE 097]



[PLATE 098]



[PLATE 099]



[PLATE 100]



[PLATE 101]



[PLATE 102]



[PLATE 103]



[PLATE 104]



[PLATE 105]



[PLATE 106]





[PLATE 107]



[PLATE 108]



[PLATE 109]



[PLATE 110]



256 [ PROGRESS ] 168  
208 [ SENSORY ] 256  
130 [ TIME ] 204



[PLATE III]



[PLATE 112]



[PLATE 113]



[PLATE 114]



[PLATE 115]



[PLATE 116]





[PLATE 117]



[PLATE 118]



[PLATE 119]



[PLATE 120]





[PLATE I21]



[PLATE I22]



[PLATE I23]



[PLATE I24]



[PLATE 125]



[PLATE 126]



[PLATE 127]



[PLATE 128]



[PLATE 129]



[PLATE 130]



[PLATE 131]



[PLATE 132]



[PLATE 133]



## PLAYGROUND

This anti-structure contrasts with the partially supervised linearity which determines much movement through the city and opens up a host of spaces that normally may not be traversed and occupied. There are no temporal restrictions that legislate the length of time that is apparently spent in a location, no surveillance or social impediments to movement and no need to adhere to the self-conscious monitoring of one's own body in a city of onlookers.

TIM EDENSOR, "SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION  
IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 243



[PLATE 134]



[PLATE 135]



[PLATE 136]



TORONTO Municipal Code #608

Welcome to Wilket Creek Park, enjoy your visit.  
Please be respectful of others and  
Future users. For your safety, please abide by  
The following Municipal Codes:

Issues	Code #
No Unauthorized Fires.	608-10
Ball playing and frisbee by permit only.	608-17
Cyclists must dismount on hills.	608-29
Dogs must be leashed.	608-34
No temporary structures or tents.	608-14
No posting of signs.	608-48
Organized gatherings of more than 25 persons by permit only.	608-11
Kites or model aircraft prohibited.	608-19

Permit contact information:  
Special Events - 416-338-2614  
Sports Fields - 416-395-6055  
Fire Pits, Picnics, Weddings & Photos,  
Still Photography call 416-391-8188

Use of fire pits by permit only. Wood issued by  
Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation only  
Fire must be extinguished by 9:30 p.m.

WILKET CREEK PARK SIGN

Older public spaces have also been appropriated and controlled through increases in the signage designating who should be using the space and when... in curfews and police sweeps in transportation terminals and parks, in both public and private police forces, in gating, and in the antigrowth mentality. While certain parks, plazas, and commons remain places to escape from loci of production and consumption, their traditional social component invariably has been compromised, because the rising tide of fear has transformed them into controlled and guarded places.

NAN ELLIN, "SHELTER FROM THE STORM OR FORM FOLLOWS FEAR AND VICE VERSA,"  
*ARCHITECTURE OF FEAR*, 1997: 34



[PLATE 137]

The east side of the river, now the Riverdale District, was once known as “Riverside,” an old resident once told me. It was annexed to the city in 1884, but prior to that time the Don marked the line of demarcation between law and freedom of action.

“As industry crept into the valley the old swimming hole moved north and, in order to bathe in the river’s waters on the City side, it was necessary to wear the regulation bathing garment of that day which required that the bather be covered from the knee to the neck. Lacking such garment, or perhaps not desiring it, one had to resort to the simple alternative of crossing the river to the County side and follow his own fancy as to dress.”

CHARLES SAURIOL, *PIONEERS OF THE DON*, 1995: 62

[I]nstead of the self-contained bodily comportment through the city, through which a fixed stride, steady gait and minimal gestures delimit interaction with the environment and others, the body is inadvertently coerced into a more expressive, improvisatory performance, awakening performative possibilities which lie beyond that to which it has become habituated. ...Crawling through dense undergrowth, scrambling over walls and under fences, leaping over hurdles and across gaps ...generate a rekindled awareness of the *jouissance* of gymnastic, expressive movement. ...There is a return to a less self-conscious, embodied engagement with space and materials in conditions of immanence, without purposive planning or eye to efficiency or utility.

TIM EDENSOR, “SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS,” *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 243



[PLATE 138]



The contemporary desire for a city that is openly troubled but intensely alive is a desire to open up old but distinctively modern wounds once more. It is a desire to live openly with the split and unreconciled character of our lives, and to draw energy from our inner struggles, wherever they may lead us in the end. If we learned through one modernism to construct haloes around our spaces and ourselves, we can learn from another modernism – one of the oldest but also, we can see now, one of the newest – to lose our haloes and find ourselves anew.

MARSHALL BERMAN, *ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR*, 1988: 171



[PLATE 139]

Feats of balance, agility and bravery may be accomplished in these unsupervised playgrounds which, full of risk, clash with the regulated recreational spaces of the more ordered world outside, playgrounds that circumscribe the diversity of practices and contain a limited range of “appropriate,” largely risk-free activities. Free from the safety-first instincts of parents and other adults, children can devise their own rules and give full rein to their imaginations.

TIM EDENSOR, “SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS,” *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 235

Growing up on the edge of Taylor Creek Park in the 1970s, my friends and I spent our summers like Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. Down in the forested ravine, we built rope swings over the steep hillsides. Cobbled together forts out of discarded appliance boxes. Took off our shoes and rolled up our pants to hunt frogs in the marshes along the hiking trail. For a bunch of city kids without cottages, the otherness of the ravine was irresistible. It was paradise.

“FOLLOWING A RIBBON OF OTHERNESS,”  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, DEC 24 2010

Back then my friends and I simply referred to the area as the Don, and it was where we spent most of our out-of-school time, riding our mountain bikes throughout the many trails that lined the ravine walls. In those days, the woods northeast of Pottery Road were littered with things like abandoned cars, scattered bricks, rusted-out oil drums, and other detritus left over from the days when the area was used by Sun Valley Ltd. for brick manufacturing and then as a site for industrial landfill.

It was a forgotten place — miraculously located near the heart of the city, northeast of the Bayview Extension and Pottery Road.

Virtually unused despite its ample size, one could explore the trails for hours without running into anyone, save for one or two bikers doing the same thing. There were the occasional hikers and dog walkers, too — but throughout much of the 1990s the entire area was something of a secret.

“CROTHERS’ WOODS IS A HIDDEN GEM IN THE HEART OF THE CITY,”  
*BLOG TO*, NOV 3 2011

Located at the base of what was once Sugar Loaf Hill, immediately north of the Bloor Street Viaduct, Sandy Point swimming hole was a popular spot for Toronto boys to cool off in the summer months in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Known for its swift currents and “treacherous sands,” this area of the river was the scene of repeated drownings through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to conservationist and writer Charles Sauriol, boys reached the swimming hole from Yorkville via ‘stumpy field,’ “on the south side of South Drive, east of Sherbourne Street. The field was noted for its beech nuts and wild strawberries.”

JENNIFER BONNELL, “POINTS OF INTEREST,” *DON VALLEY HISTORICAL MAPPING PROJECT*,  
[HTTP://MAPS.LIBRARY.UTORONTO.CA/DVHMP/POI.HTML](http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/dvhmp/poi.html), 2009



[PLATE 140]





[PLATE 141]



[PLATE 142]

The helix movement involves something much more than a belated return to nature. I think it derives from a basic impulse to search for a fresh identity (or more accurately, to search for a way of changing the identity we have). To quote Caseneuve: “This kind of sport finally results in diverting our consciousness, in creating the illusion of abandoning our everyday personality by modifying the relationship between the individual being and his environment. ...It is not speed itself that we seek... but the intoxication it produces. ...There would be no helix sports if there were not a profound urge in all of us to escape from ourselves, and if there did not come to every living being a time to turn away from mundane existence.”

JB JACKSON, “PLACES FOR FUN AND GAMES,” *LANDSCAPE IN SIGHT*, 1997: 14-16

#### MOUNTAIN BIKERS, CITY AT ODDS OVER DIRT JUMPS IN CROTHERS' WOODS

Sixteen-year-old Quinn and his 13-year-old brother Daniel fly over the dirt jumps in Crothers' Woods without helmets and without supervision. They've been coming here to practise their off-roading skills for more than four years, since Daniel was just nine.

The woods are a beech-maple forest in the Don Valley, on the west side of the river just south of the Leaside Bridge. Mountain bikers have built their own jumps from packed dirt and brick, and added wooden planks. The jumps are built in a row, so mountain bikers can “hit a line” — ride over a sequence to practise their stunts.

...According to the City of Toronto, the jumps should not exist. In fact, no one should even be on the site, which has no formal access points. In order to get to the spot, bikers have to trespass, illegally crossing railway tracks belonging to CN.

In at least two locations, bikers have built skinny wooden bridges beneath where the railway bridge crosses the Don, so they can go under the tracks to get to the spot. City workers have repeatedly put up signs forbidding the crossing, but they don't last long.

Safety and liability are huge concerns for the city. The jumps are maintained informally by the mountain bikers who use them and no one is present to supervise the sometimes dangerous

activities; kids and adults alike practise difficult tricks in the secluded area alone.

No one is there to tell Quinn and Daniel to put on their helmets. Asked if they've ever seen someone get hurt, they answer: “Lots of times.”

...Although it's usually his own errors that cause his crashes, he says, sometimes it is because the jumps have eroded or fallen into disrepair.

The city and other groups are also worried about the environmental impact of the jumps. Crothers' Woods has been designated as an environmentally significant area by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and there is concern that bike traffic harms the habitat.

So why doesn't the city come in and destroy the jumps? Or help maintain and regulate them?

According to Garth Armour, supervisor of natural environment and community programs at the forestry branch of Toronto's parks, forestry and recreation department, it all comes down to the railway. “The difficulty with dismantling the skilled aspect of the park is that we are crossing a CN right-of-way and we are not able to cross without their permission,” he says...Once they get permission, city officials say, they will work with the conservation authority to dismantle everything.



[PLATE 143]

Under the new regime, IMBA [International Mountain Biking Association] flags out a new trail and the city approves it and hires a contractor to do the heavy lifting, using mini-excavators specially designed for foot or bike trails. Then the city enlists a local cycling club or reaches out to the public through the Toronto Off-Road Bicycling Association for up to eight days of volunteer maintenance a year.

“They work hard,” says Mr. [Scott] Laver of the volunteers, who do things like build bridges, improve drainage and embed protective rocks around tree roots (the rocks protect the roots, not bikers). City maintenance crews don’t enter the picture. ...It’s a system Mr. Patterson says is good for everyone.

Almost everyone.

Midway through The Ridge we come to a wide gully, called the Valley of the Log Rides. A collection of ramps, teeter-totters, bridges and various built stunts collectively called “skinnies” dot the landscape. “There is a crew of self-taught engineers in here almost every weekend,” says Mr. Patterson as he stops to scout an elevated and undulating ramp made from split logs the size of a forearm.

One thing the city doesn’t yet have standards for is wooden stunt structures. As such, the Valley of the Log Rides may be dismantled when the city moves in to manage The Ridge next year.

“PEACE IN THE VALLEY,”  
THE TORONTO STAR, OCT 8, 2011





[PLATE 144]



[PLATE 145]







# SHADOWS

[Space] is first of all *my body*, and then it is my body counterpart or 'other,' its mirror-image or shadow: it is the shifting intersection between that which touches, penetrates, threatens or benefits my body on the one hand, and all other bodies on the other.

HENRI LEFEBVRE, *THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE*, 1991: 184



## JUNGLE

**THE EDGE is nature... Today, when all but the most obstinate of site has been colonised into the second nature of the urban landscape, one must look elsewhere in the city for a sense of the sublime. The (post) industrial sector provides dark trails, hidden caves, poisonous creatures, strange diseases. It is the jungle of the city. The (post)industrial sector provides vertical canyons, rooftop views of distant skyscrapers, different coloured skies, strong winds and cold temperatures. It is the Alps of the city.**

IAIN BORDEN, "BIJOUX BORDERLANDS," *ARCHITECTURE OF THE BORDERLANDS*, 1999: 95



[PLATE 146]



[PLATE 147]





[PLATE 148]





[PLATE 149]



[PLATE 150]

## RESERVOIR

This sensual unfamiliarity contrasts with the frequently desensitized outside world, with its de-odorized environments and its constraints on noise, the unbroken smoothness of its pavements and floors, the prevailing textual sheen and the predictable design that effectively insulate the body against jarring sensations in its encounter with urban space.

\*

In contrast to the carefully polished sheen and restricted palette of tightly controlled space, ruinous surfaces offer a random display of colours and textures. ...These multiple and disorderly medleys of colour and texture are a rebuke to the singular color and textural schemes of smoother space. They possess an aesthetic charge of their own, which foregrounds both the materiality of substances and the deliciously variegated patterns that accidentally emerge, provoking both pleasure in confronting unfamiliar compositions and a heightened awareness of the contrastingly stringent control exercised elsewhere.

TIM EDENSOR, "SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 242-5

A territory in which one perceives the transient character of matter, time, and space, in which nature rediscovers a new 'wilderness', a wild, hybrid, ambiguous state, anthropically altered and then escaping man's control to be reabsorbed again by nature.

FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 172



[PLATE 151]





[PLATE 152]



[PLATE 153]

There are essentially three types of third landscape spaces ...In particular, the genre of urban space I call *delaissé*, which is literally inserted into the contemporary urban fabric, can be seen as something that belongs to the city which is not worthless, but rather, from a political point of view, something positive, even a great asset. It is not a garden, but a place that welcomes diversity, and when regarded from this perspective, it takes on another importance. It is no longer a place abandoned to rubbish and weeds, but becomes a sort of reservoir or 'biological time capsule' for the future.

GILLES CLÉMENT, *ENVIRON(NE)MENT : MANIÈRES D'AGIR POUR DEMAIN*, 2006: 92



[PLATE 154]





[PLATE 155]

Based on ecological restoration principles we only use species that are native to the Toronto region and wherever possible use stock grown from local seed sources. “Native” in this context refers to species that were known to exist in the Toronto region before the advent of European activity.

...The following is a summary of some of the species that were used on projects in the Don Valley area in 2001 and 2002.

TYPE	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Fern	<i>Dryopteris marginalis</i>	marginal wood fern
	<i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i>	ostrich fern
	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	sensitive fern
	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas fern
Grass	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	big bluestem
	<i>Bromus ciliatus</i>	fringed brome
	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>	Canada blue joint
	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye
Sedge	<i>Carex merritt-fernaldii</i>	Fernald's sedge
	<i>Carex plantaginea</i>	Plantain-leaved sedge
	<i>Carex vaginata</i>	smooth sheathed sedge
	<i>Carex bebbii</i>	Bebb's sedge
Shrub	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Saskatoon berry
	<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	Smooth serviceberry
	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush
	<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>	alternate leaved dogwood
	<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	grey dogwood
	<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	red osier dogwood
	<i>Diervilla lonicera</i>	bush honeysuckle
	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush
	<i>Rosa Carolina</i>	pasture rose
	<i>Rubus idaeus var. strigosus</i>	red raspberry
	<i>Rubus odoratus</i>	flowering raspberry
	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	common elderberry
	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	nannyberry
	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	highbush cranberry
Tree	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	silver maple
	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	sugar maple
	<i>Acer spicatum</i>	mountain maple
	<i>Alnus rugosa</i>	speckled alder
	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>	yellow birch
	<i>Crataegus mollis</i>	downy hawthorn
	<i>Fraxinus nigra</i>	black ash
	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	green ash
	<i>Pinus strobes</i>	white pine
	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	sycamore
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	cottonwood	
<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	trembling aspen	
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	black cherry	

First, it was the zebra mussels, then the purple loosestrife. Now, Toronto is faced with another case of an invasive species in our midst. Known as giant hogweed, the towering several-metre high plant from Central Asia can cause severe blistering and temporary blindness.

...The conservation authority, which classifies giant hogweed as a “severe toxic plant,” found around 20 plants, and will be heading out to the sites in the Don Valley later this week to determine how to deal with them.

“NOXIOUS HOGWEED GROWING IN TORONTO,” *THE TORONTO STAR*, JUL 13 2010

What a sight: two pristine white, majestic birds skimming atop the sewage and plastic bags and diesel runoff. I gasped. If you need a symbol of nature's purity, here it is.

The swans moved downstream this year to an even less hospitable spot: under the Lake Shore railway bridge, metres before the Don spits out into the lake. Cars screech overhead on three roadways. Add the trains and a natural gas pipeline and it is as industrial as this city gets. But there they are, and look, the pen (the female swan) is up on her nest!

...In my excitement, I called the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. Was someone there monitoring the pair and their clutch?

Yes. But not in the way I expected.

"Those are mute swans," said Ralph Toninger, the authority's habitat restoration manager. "They are an invasive species."

The last native trumpeter swan was shot by a hunter in 1886 and they have only started to return. Meanwhile, the imported "mute" swans went feral, filling their space.

...Mute swans are bullies. They attack other waterfowl and steal the best nesting spots. They are hogs, digging up almost four kilograms of wetland vegetation a day. They live a quarter-century, have no predators and reproduce wildly.

...While mute swans are protected from hunters, their population is managed in the Greater Toronto Area, he said.

By "managed," he meant their eggs are sprayed with vegetable oil so oxygen can't pass through the shell — smothering the embryo. This is better than smashing the shells, I was told, as the mothers don't catch on and therefore don't start laying anew.

Had one of his teams oiled my friend's three eggs?

"Yes. They have been oiled," he said. "Wildlife is wildlife. We have already screwed up this species by introducing it here."

"FOR MUTE SWANS, PARENTHOOD ENDS  
IN A LAKE OF TEARS," *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
MAY 20 2011



[PLATE 156]

Were we to harvest the clouds, we would be surprised to find unpredictable seeds mixed with loess, fertile silt. Unthinkable landscapes are already being designed in the sky. ...How can we maintain the landscape, what technocratic grid can we apply to the intemperance of nature, its violence? The project of total control finds unexpected allies: the radicals of ecology and those of nostalgia. Nothing must change, our past is at stake; or, nothing must change, biodiversity is at stake. Everyone against nomadism!

GILLES CLÉMENT, 'GUIDELINES', *PLANETARY GARDENS*, 2008: 17

As an unintended result of its danger and the unpopularity, the urban rail corridor, otherwise so eerily splendid a piece of modern calculation, is also the largest of the city's wild, raw places. In it every sort of garden flower and blooming shrub gone AWOL finds refuge among their feral cousins, the lovely weeds and wildflowers, untamed vines and fruit trees, all come from distant regions into the city's heart with little meddling by any people other than the railway folk.

...The railway officials, quite properly, do their best to keep this botanical invasion at bay, hacking the weeds and striplings and creeping vines back away from the tracks. But some things manage to survive, by luck or just because they're tough. In early spring, the first patches of pushy green can be seen coming up and shouldering aside the dead stalks and grasses along the Canadian Pacific track in my neighbourhood, while nearby lawns are still moribund. The gnarled vines sprawling crazily across the cinder-block backsides of factories are still grey, though scrubby clumps of trees, clumsy thickets and shrubs crowded against fences and walls are thick with plump buds. And before long, this unfussiest of Toronto landscapes is again graced with our brief spring's wildflowers, displaying their colours under a sky kept wide and open – not for them, of course, but for the trains that have unintentionally created Toronto's sunniest, most savage garden.

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 81-82



## OPHELIA

*There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.  
There with fantastic garlands did she come  
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.  
There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds  
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide  
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;  
Which time she chaunted snatches of old tunes,  
As one incapable of her own distress,  
Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element; but long it could not be  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *HAMLET*, 1599: ACT IV, SCENE VII: 162-180



[PLATE 157]

## FIELD GUIDE



[PLATE 158]



[PLATE 159]



[PLATE 160]



[PLATE 161]



[PLATE 162]



[PLATE 163]



[PLATE 164]



[PLATE 165]



[PLATE 166]



[PLATE 167]



[PLATE 168]



[PLATE 169]



Look along the far bank of the river and note the large number of trees that seem to have a major portion of their roots exposed. They did not grow that way. Those roots used to be covered with soil but rising water levels in the Don River and excessive slope runoff has eroded the soil away from the roots. With less soil to anchor their roots, these trees succumb to heavy winds and topple into the River.

“WALK THE DON: FORKS OF THE DON”  
GUIDE, TRCA, NOV 2010

It’s also known as Mexican bamboo, Glúineach bhirach, donkey rhubarb, or my favourite, and perhaps more accurately, Hancock’s curse. The most commonly used common name, though, is Japanese knotweed. ...It sends out runners up to seven metres laterally and as deep as three metres. The tiniest fragment of rhizome can sprout a new plant. Parts of the stem can produce shoots and roots within days when dropped into soil or even floated in water.

“THERE’S VERY GOOD REASON TO FEAR THE PRESENCE OF JAPANESE KNOTWEED,”  
*THE RECORD*, JUL 7 2007

Snags are dead trees that often remain standing for years. Snags are a valuable component of any natural ecosystem. They provide shelter and/or lookouts for a wide variety of critters. Many animals also find food in the cavities or under any remaining bark.

“WALK THE DON: FORKS OF THE DON”  
GUIDE, TRCA, NOV 2010

Later in the summer and fall, these pods may be beige and might be seen releasing seeds with fluffy attachments. This plant is Dog-strangling Vine (DSV) and is a very invasive perennial. During the winter and early spring, if you look among the trees’ branches, you will see very thin beige threads. These are last year’s dead vines. In the spring, new vines sprout from the soil and climb higher and higher using last year’s dead vines as ‘ladders’.

“WALK THE DON: FORKS OF THE DON”  
GUIDE, TRCA, NOV 2010

Look for a classic Canadian pine tree, looking like something from a Tom Thomson painting. It was because of trees such as this that much of the country north of here was first settled. ...White pines can grow up to 30 metres tall and about a metre in diameter.

MURRAY SEYMOUR,  
*TORONTO’S RAVINES*, 2000: 75

Look at the slope on the far side of the River, note an abundance of Phragmites, a tall plant with thin leaves and a brownish plume of flowers and/or seeds. These plants extend a considerable distance up the slope. The position of these plants indicates lots of available water. In the winter, you might be able to see a frozen ice-layer directly on the slope to confirm the presence of ground water discharge or seepage from the slope.

“WALK THE DON: FORKS OF THE DON”  
GUIDE, TRCA, NOV 2010

Here you can see evidence of the beaver that's cutting down all the newly planted pines. There's probably just the one and we'll keep him around in spite of him being a nuisance because relocated beavers often die.

DON WATERSHED REGENERATION  
COUNCIL WALK LEADER,  
"WATERSHED WALK," MAR 24 2012

[Gneiss] was found in the quarry during excavation. It is more typical of rocks found in the Muskokas region to the north, a fact that led geologists to theorize that it was dragged on the bottom of a glacier and deposited here.

"GEOLOGY TOUR" FLYER,  
EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS, 2012

The fruit of this *impatiens* species (*Impatiens capensis*), which ripen in late summer, are swollen capsules that explode at the slightest touch, expelling their seeds metres away. Aside from being excellent fun for easily amused kids, jewelweed has a practical use. Like many other native plants, *Impatiens capensis* has long been used as an herbal remedy to treat insect bites and stings and the rash of poison ivy.

"HIMALAYAN BALSAM," *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
AUG 24 2012

Notice the big stand of Teasel along the trail. In earlier days, its dried heads were used for teasing out wool before it was woven into skeins.

"WALK THE DON: LOWER DON"  
GUIDE, TRCA, NOV 2010

There are also a great many sumach shrubs by the river. I gathered the branches of flowers of the sumach last year and poured boiling water upon them, which tastes like lemonade; it has a very restraining, hard taste.

*THE DIARY OF ELIZABETH SIMCOE*,  
PUB. 1934, SEP 8 1866: 260

This is a sign that the gall fly has laid its eggs in the stem of this goldenrod - it's formed a bulbous 'scab' around the invasion. Chickadees have been known to break in and eat the larvae before they hatch - and you could do the same if you were out for a while and needed some protein!

DON WATERSHED REGENERATION  
COUNCIL WALK LEADER,  
"WATERSHED WALK," MAR 24 2012



[PLATE 170]



[PLATE 171]



## SILHOUETTES

**Contrary to other unclear sites in the dispersed city, the terrain vague continues to resist all straightforward definition, because its semantic emptiness turns out to have less to do with an absence of codes than with a multiple presence of codes that are superimposed, that clash, or even destroy each other.**

‘THE “VOID” AS A PRODUCTIVE CONCEPT FOR URBAN PUBLIC SPACE’; KRISTIAAN BORRET,  
*THE URBAN CONDITION; SPACE, COMMUNITY, AND SELF IN THE CONTEMPORARY METROPOLIS*, 1997: 240

### TOP FIVE LIST: THREATS TO THE DON Inappropriate Human Use

**DUMPING:** As the city tightens up on regulations for disposing of waste at landfills or starts charging more for removal, some people think that a convenient and cost effective method is to dump their refuse in the ravines. There are many remote and out of the way places in the ravine system that allow people to dump tires, appliances, building materials, or just plain household waste without being seen. There is little risk of being caught and charged and even then the fines are ridiculously low.

**DOG WALKING:** There seems to be more dogs than ever in the city. There are a number of reasons for this that I won't go into but there is a definite negative impact on our natural areas, especially the ravines and valleys. When people take their dogs for walks in parks they like to let them off leash for exercise. While it may not seem that one dog is a problem, hundreds of dogs every day going over the same area is a big problem. Dogs like to root things out, dig up things, chase small animals, etc. ...In some areas frequented by dog walkers, there is little left in the forest except trees and barren ground. When dogs run loose there is also less chance that the owner will dispose of dog feces that they leave wherever they feel like it. Since the ravines are often flooded all this crap gets washed away so we find that dog feces is a common pollutant found in our streams.

*THE DON WATCHER BLOG, [HTTP://DONWATCHER.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://donwatcher.blogspot.com), NOV 6 2005*

‘What was critical for the Don was that it's in an urban area, and that the great words in there are, about restoring the Don. It is about caring for water, caring for nature and caring for community. You are not excluding people from nature ... How do we have both a great natural place and a great place for people? And if we tried to have a pure preservationist movement, I think that that also would have been a failure. Not that preservationist movements are wrong, because in certain areas that's the right thing to do, but within the urban context, that's the wrong thing to do.’

(Interview with a leading representative of the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, March 28, 1996.)

GENE DESFOR & ROGER KEIL, “EVERY RIVER TELLS A STORY,”  
*JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & PLANNING*, 2000

That's one way to solve  
the dogs off-leash - let  
the coyotes at them!  
...You think I'm joking,  
don't you.

WALK PARTICIPANT, TRCA TAYLOR-MASSEY  
CREEK WALK, APR 22 2012



[PLATE 172]

Why, just last week I  
 saw a hawk eating a red  
 squirrel in all its  
 gore, tearing pieces  
 off whathaveyou. Once  
 he reached halfway, he  
 opened his mouth wide,  
 and - glug, glug, glug!  
 Ate the thing whole,  
 just like a snake!

WALK PARTICIPANT, THE TORONTO BRUCE  
 TRAIL CLUB, JAN 21 2012

Surrounded by a city of 2.6 million, the Don “will never be pristine,” says Mr. McIntyre, but “it’s come a long way.” On our trip, we saw bank swallows darting into their burrows and a kingfisher chattering from a tree.

Although railways run over the river and the Bloor-Danforth subway clatters overhead, “there are places in here where you can’t hear anything,” says Mr. McIntyre. “You are hearing wildlife, you are hearing the sound of the river.”

He is first to concede that the Don has a long way to go. ...Because so much of the land around the river is paved, water that used to be absorbed into the ground now runs into the river, which carries twice the volume it did 30 years ago. That means more erosion and muddier water, discouraging aquatic life. Still, the conservation authority, the city and their community partners have been busy for years planting trees, building trails and restoring eroded riverbanks.

“IT’S AN UPSTREAM BATTLE,  
 BUT THERE’S HOPE FOR THE DON,”  
 THE GLOBE AND MAIL, MAY 8 2012

The Don River's story is a discourse of social ecology. Born largely out of the ingenuity and activism of concerned middle-class citizens, the Task Force to Bring Back the Don has been able to articulate conservation and recreation, nature and the city in ways unknown to the traditional public works and conservation authorities in City Hall. Activists achieved this through a careful and tenacious strategy of small steps and tangible successes such as tree plantings, the building of marshes, countless walks and tours along the river, and constant but prudent use of the media and majority political support. Claiming and receiving status inside the local state, the Task Force has been able to sideline any attempts to revert to old-style water course and flood control planning along the Don.

\*  
'You can spend your life in public processes and liaising, and dealing with various types of bureaucrats and consultants of all stripes. Or you can go out and plant a few trees'

GENE DESFOR & ROGER KEIL, "EVERY RIVER TELLS A STORY,"  
*JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & PLANNING*, 2000



PARK SIGN

On a Sunday morning not long ago, for instance, I found them wiring up some two hundred black-painted plywood silhouettes to a rusty fence running along Bayview Avenue and the CP tracks, south from Rosedale Valley Road to just above Queen Street. Designed by artist, writer and task-force activist Marie Day, and fabricated with the help of a dozen or so kids recruited from the nearby Regent Park public-housing project, the cut-outs represent wild mammals, fish, fowl and assorted slinkers and creepers that once called the Don Valley home, and some of which, astonishingly still do keep a claw-hold on this wasteland of rotting concrete, scraggly trees and incessant din.

...The task force's reason for putting up the silhouettes, members told me, is to remind commuters, cyclists and others passing through the valley of its past richness as a natural habitat, and to summon up a vision of what the valley could be again if restored to even a shadow of its former wilderness and beauty.

Nobody wiring up pieces of plywood by the Don thought he or she was going to save the world, or even the river, by this action alone.

...But no one who witnessed the wiring-up of those fragile animal silhouettes would have come away unmoved by this small pledge to the waters, and to the renewal of our awareness of their healing powers.

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 44-46

To: <[REDACTED]>  
 From: <[REDACTED]>  
 Date: February 4 2012  
 Subject: Re: Don Valley thesis research

Hello Jessica,

Technically the Task Force still exists but in reality it is dead. Here is the timeline of events since 2010.

October 2010. We had our last official meeting. Our mandate ended with the end of term in November 30, 2010. Normally we would have to wait until we were re-established by the new administration which happened about February of the next year. This happened routinely in 1998, 2000, 2003, and 2006. However we waited in 2011 and nothing happened.

Apr 2011. At an executive committee meeting it was decided that the Task Force and other advisory bodies would not be re-established. The Task Force was listed in Table 2 as a body that would not be established pending study by staff for future requirements/actions. My contacts in the city have said that no one knows who is working on the Task Force's requirements.

May 2011. At the City Council meeting on May 17 this item was debated. Many councillors moved that one or more advisory bodies be kept for various reasons. Councillor John Parker spoke on behalf of Bring Back the Don. It turned out that the mayor did not have enough support to kill the advisory bodies outright so the matter was referred back to the mayor's office for further study. There was a reference that this would be brought back to council in June or July. This did not happen.

In August, Councillor Sarah Doucette inquired about the status of the advisory bodies. It wasn't until Oct 22 that Mayor Rob Ford replied. The letter indicated that the matter would be brought before council in February 2012. However the posted agenda for next week's council meeting does not mention this matter.

This is all the information I have on the status of the Task Force to Bring Back the Don. Let me know if you need any further information.

Cheers,  
 [REDACTED]

Biking down the Don River Trail, John Wilson rarely has two hands on the handlebars. The 16-year veteran and former chair of the Task Force to Bring Back the Don is pointing left and right at dozens of naturalization projects the group has spearheaded since 1989.

He seems routinely familiar with every bend in the trail, but just below the Bloor Street Viaduct he stops at the sight of a man, shovel in hand, scraping silt off the edge of the paved trail.

The man gives his name as Steve, and says he lives in the Taylor Creek area and rides the trail to work downtown. On days off from his job in the film industry he sometimes straps a shovel on his bike and does trail maintenance. Steve explains the trail gets gradually narrower when regular floods leave silt on it. He says it can get unsafe, considering the huge increase in bike and foot traffic he's seen in 10 years riding the trail.

"A Bobcat [tractor] would make a short job of this," says Steve, looking at 50 metres of scraped silt and uprooted grass. "But at least I won't have to go to the gym today."

Riding away, Mr. Wilson says he is of two minds about Steve's work. On one hand, he is thrilled. "It was always the goal of the task force to connect people to this river and valley," he says. On the other hand, he wonders why it's not a city worker wielding the shovel.

But Mr. Wilson is no longer in a good position to lobby city hall for trail improvements. He is the task force's former chair because the body no longer exists. Even though the volunteer members funded themselves through donations and only asked the city for some staff support and an occasional empty meeting room, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford declined to re-establish it this year.

...Looking back on 22 years of rehabilitating the Don, Mr. Wilson calls the task force a "wonderful success story."

"RESILIENT DON'S GRITTY PAST STANDS IT  
 IN GOOD STEAD," *THE TORONTO STAR*,  
 JUL 16 2011



*The ruff is to the partridge what the train is to the peacock – his chief beauty and his pride. A hen's ruff is black with a slight green gloss. A cock's is much larger and blacker and is glossed with more vivid bottle-green. Once in a while a partridge is born of unusual size and vigour, whose ruff is not only larger, but by a peculiar kind of intensification is of a deep coppery red, iridescent with violet, green, and gold. Such a bird is sure to be a wonder to all who know him, and the little one who had squatted on the chip, and had always done what he was told, developed before the Acorn Moon had changed, into all the glory of a gold and copper ruff – for this was Redruff, the famous partridge of the Don Valley.*

#### IV

*One day late in the Acorn Moon, that is, about mid-October, as the grouse family were basking with full crops near a great pine log on the sunlit edge of the beaver-meadow, they heard the far-away bang of a gun, and Red found him once more in the Mud Creek Glen, but absolutely alone.*

#### V

*Food grew scarce as winter wore on. Redruff clung to the old ravine and the piney sides of Taylor's Hill, but every month brought its food and its foes. The Mad Moon brought madness, solitude, and grapes; the Snow Moon came with rosehips; and the Stormy Moon brought browse of birch and silver storms that sheathed the woods in ice, and made it hard to keep one's perch while pulling off the frozen buds. Redruff's beak grew terribly worm with the work, so that even when closed there was still an opening through behind the hook. But nature had prepared him for the slippery footing; his toes, so slim and trim in September, had sprouted rows of sharp, horny points, and these grew with growing cold, till the first snow had found him fully equipped with snowshoes and ice-creepers. The cold weather had driven away most of the hawks and owls, and made it impossible for his four-footed enemies to approach unseen, so that things were nearly balanced.*

*His flight in search of food had daily led him farther on, till he had discovered and explored the Rosedale Creek, with its banks of silver-birch, and Castle Frank, with its grapes and rowan berries, as well as Chester woods, where amelanchier and Virginia-creeper swing their fruit-bunches, and checkerberries glowed beneath the snow.*

*He soon found out that for some strange reason men with guns did not go within the high fence of Castle Frank. So among these scenes he lived his life, learning new places, new foods, and grew wiser and more beautiful every day.*

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON, *WILD ANIMALS I HAVE KNOWN*, 1898



[PLATE 173]

238 [ IDENTITY ] 236  
202 [ NATURE ] 186  
146 [ SPECTACLE ] 190

**In wildness is the preservation of the world**

THOREAU, 'WALKING', 1850S



[PLATE 174]





[PLATE 175]

In the late spring of 1991, plans for the huge, troubled Ataratiri mixed-use project, slated to rise on thirty-two hectares of polluted, expropriated industrial land east of downtown Toronto, finally died on the drawing board. ...What had not been foreseen was the near-impossibility of keeping the river from soaking the soil each spring, flooding basements and underground parking garages, and standing above ground in puddles everywhere.

...As I walked the rubble-strewn vacant lots and demolition sites of this district on a blustery cold spring day shortly after the end of Ataratiri, pacing its long straight and nearly deserted streets, the term “flood plain” took on a new faintly menacing meaning for me. There was no sign here of the rises and ravines and the gulleys of ancient streams that give the old lakeshore topography of Toronto much of its character. The marshy, muddy ground is nearly flat, remorselessly smoothed and scoured...

Humans certainly played a role in this desolation – but it is easy to dream ...that the wreckers had really been the secret agents of the river, which once owned the land and now was taking back its own. Nor was it hard to imagine what the Ataratiri would look and be like, were both province and local idealists to surrender, and let the Don get it all. ...[W]e would have a deep, damp forest just touching the eastern edge of downtown. It would be flooded in the spring, and city folk would be driven from its paths. But the little stands of poplars, sycamores and other lowland trees would be annually renewed and invigorated, and begin to spread, gradually embracing the ruined buildings, while healing the wounds inflicted on the ground by the factories. As we were reminded by the Ataratiri cancellation, the river will let us use its ancient flood plain, but on its own terms.

JOHN BENTLEY MAYS, *EMERALD CITY*, 1994: 51

[W]here MVVA’s scheme for the Port Lands dramatically differs is in its efforts to intensify urbanization, rather than cling to the Don River as a precious (and highly aestheticized) bit of wilderness in the city. As Bruce Braun puts, for Hough, “the presence of the ‘wild’ is given most value, while ‘rational’ and ‘planned’ spaces are valued far less, mirroring the instinctive romanticism of North Americans.”

...This is not an ecological restoration. Instead, it uses ecology as the foundation of a specific design intent. “Our shapes are related to the hydrological cycles of the river,” MVVA’s Matthew Urbanski said to me, “but we didn’t just let nature take its course. The river didn’t *design* the scheme, it *informed* the scheme.”

...By restoring the mouth of the Don, the scheme doesn’t merely minimize the environmental impact of the neighbourhood but improves the ecological health of the site. And, as Steve Apfelbaum points out, those impacts are verifiable through soil samples and hydrographs. Ecology, unlike experience and aesthetics, is quantifiable.

ANDREW BLUM, “METAPHOR REMEDIATION: A NEW ECOLOGY FOR THE CITY,”  
*RECONSTRUCTING URBAN LANDSCAPES*, 2009: 270

## HILL NOT THE ONLY THING RISING ON TORONTO WATERFRONT

Toronto has a new hill. It’s between the Distillery District and the start of the Don Valley Parkway, and is the central feature of Don River Park, the new nine-hectare expanse of greenery speckled with 700 new trees and connected by a network of pathways and staircases, at the eastern edge of the West Don Lands.

...Ms. Stork [of Waterfront Toronto] showed us the new park pavilion - mostly a soaring roof on tall stainless-steel posts that resembles a bird in flight. The pavilion boasts washrooms, a built-in outdoor fireplace and large charcoal briquet barbecue, suitable to cook souvlaki for 50 guests. Swing-sets and slides are in, along with rubberized mounds for kids to roll down and not get hurt.

The city 25 years ago expropriated industry from here to build a housing development called Ataratiri - “an old Indian word,” my colleague Terence Corcoran has written, “that roughly translates to ‘Swamp of the Taxpayer.’”

In any event, from this man-made hill one now looks down, when facing west, on a man-made marsh, complete with a boardwalk made of recycled plastic. Wires with pink ribbons tied to them hang across the swamp, to discourage ducks and geese from eating the reeds and rushes while they take root.

*THE NATIONAL POST*, JAN 28 2012

## WINTER CITY

*The city is a winter city, at its heart. Though the ozone layer is thinning above it, and the summers grow long and fierce, still the city always anticipates winter. Anticipates hardship. In the winter, when it is raw and grey and dim, it is itself most truly.*

*...It is a city that burrows, tunnels, turns underground. It has built strata of malls and pathways and inhabited spaces like the layer in an archeological dig, a body below the earth, flowing with light. People turn to buried places, to successive levels of basements, lowered courtyards, gardens under glass. There are beauties to winter that are unexpected, the silence of snow, the intimacy with which we curl around places of warmth. Even the homeless and the outcasts travel downwards when they can, into ravines that slice around and under the streets, where the rivers, the Don and the Humber and their tributaries, carve into the heart of the city; they build homes out of tents and slabs of metal siding, decorate them with bicycles wheels and dolls on strings and boxes of discarded books, with ribbons and mittens, and huddle in the cold beside the thin water.*

*It is hard to imagine this city being damaged by something from the sky. The dangers to this city enter the bloodstream, move through interior channels.*

MAGGIE HELWIG, *GIRLS FALL DOWN*, 2008: 7



[PLATE 176]



**If tragedy still exists it is out of sight; the 'cool' prevails. Everything is ostensibly de-dramatized; instead of tragedy there are objects, certainties, 'values', roles, satisfactions, jobs, situations and functions.**

HENRI LEFEBVRE, *EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD*, 1971: 65

CBC: Are we a 'winter city' at heart, which is the first line of this book?

MH: I think we are... Summer's getting longer, summer's getting hotter, and shaping the city more, but there's something about the way we think about ourselves and define our identities which is about winter and cold and isolation, and it's an interesting city that way; it's interesting to play out a story which, in a lot of other cities would have been played out in a lot more dramatic, louder ways than in the slightly chilly, slightly polite, slightly suppressed way that Toronto does things.

MAGGIE HELWIG, *CBC INTERVIEW*, FEB 21 2012

**Maybe Persephone thought Hades was the infinitely cool older man who held the knowledge she sought, maybe she loved the darkness, the six months of winter, the sharp taste of pomegranates, the freedom from her mother, maybe she knows that to be truly alive death had to be part of the picture just as winter must. It was as the queen of hell that she became an adult and came into power. Hades realm is called the underworld, and so are the urban realms of everything outside the law.**

REBECCA SOLNIT, *A FIELD GUIDE TO GETTING LOST*, 2006: 91



[PLATE 177]

150 [ ESCAPE ] 178  
136 [ IDENTITY ] 046  
212 [ PUBLIC ] 248

**The space in between things is the space in which things are undone,  
the space of subversion and fraying, the edges of any identity's limits.  
In short, it is the space of the bounding and undoing of the identities  
which constitute it.**

ELIZABETH GROSZ, *ARCHITECTURE FROM THE OUTSIDE*, 2001: 93



[PLATE 178]



1873-75: Churches began to open on the grounds near the Don, perhaps in an effort to convert the nearby heathen.

RON FLETCHER, *OVER THE DON*, 2002: 26



[PLATE 179]

1862, Mar 10: James Brown of the Brook's Bush Gang is hung at the old Berkely St. jail yard for the murder of Hogan. His final words protested his innocence.

When Ellen McGillich was arrested for prostitution she suggested to Detective Colgan an explanation, and her man, Malone, backed her story up. "It was the Brook's Bush gang. Hogan was intoxicated. He was struck on the head with a stone tied in a handkerchief causing blood to flow freely. His legs were then tied together and he was thrown over the parapet into the river."

By way of proof McGillick said that there had been blood on the railing but that the wood had been chipped off to conceal it. Sure enough, human blood stains corroborated her story. Jane Ward, Brown, Sherrick and McEntamery of the Brook's Bush Gang were accused. Only Brown had no alibi.

Before he died Brown was interviewed by the press. Laid off by the Grand Trunk Railway he had taken to tramping and drinking in Brook's bush with a rough crowd. He was first arrested for telling Mr. Sparkhall to go to the devil when the landowner objected to their trespass in his barn off Logan's Lane.

Soon every petty crime in the Don Mount area was being blamed on them and more arrests followed.

RON FLETCHER, *OVER THE DON*, 2002: 16

BELIEVE NAZI PRISONER  
WALKED FROM HOSPITAL  
BETWEEN 1 AND 6 A.M.  
Carl Rabe, 30, Was to Have Been  
Returned to Northern Camp  
HAD RECOVERED  
Search Turns to Don Valley, After  
Fugitive Report Sighted

A German warrant officer, Carl Rabe, 30, taken prisoner when his submarine was captured in the North Sea, escaped early today from Christie Street hospital, where he had been undergoing treatment.

Search for Rabe switched to the Don Valley at noon. East York as city police are going through every foot of deep underbrush in formation.

THE TORONTO DAILY STAR, OCT 25 1940

THE EDGE is colonial fear. The edge is the Other of other people, other cultures, other spaces, other experiences... You can visit, as urban tourist, your wallet as your camera, providing snapshot samples (fear is transcended by distance). Or you can colonise, move in, take over (fear is erased through domination).

THE EDGE is postcolonial danger... It is the necessary danger that brings us out of ourselves, which provides the antidote to the pre-packaged hegemony of shopping malls, multiples cinemas, Sky television and chain-upon-chain of All Bar One-style entertainment.

IAIN BORDEN, "BIJOUX BORDERLANDS," *ARCHITECTURE OF THE BORDERLANDS*, 1999: 95

## WANTED, DEAD OR ALIVE \$26,000 IN REWARDS

ARMED-TO-TEETH POLICE  
SEARCH FOR BOYD GANG

The hunt for four gangsters who broke out of the Don Jail yesterday was intensified last night and this morning.

Discovered missing at 6:56 a.m. when a day guard made his first check of prisoners were Leonard Jackson, Steve Suchan, Edwin Alonzo Boyd and William Russell Jackson. They were thought to be locked up under maximum security regulations in the second floor of the main building in a separate cell block known as Death Row.

While jail guards were being questioned in an effort to learn whether the gang received inside help, squads of police, armed-to-the-teeth, began to exert pressure which they believe will eventually result in the capture of the wanted men...

Leonard Jackson and Steve Suchan were awaiting trial on charges that they murdered Sgt. of Deis. Edmund Tong last March 13 in a gun battle in Toronto in which Det.-Sgt. Roy Perry was wounded. Like Boyd, they were also charged with several bank robberies...With his left foot amputated at the ankle, Tough Lennie's false foot was taken from him when he was first admitted to the jail in March and is still in the jail's safe. He made his escape hobbling on the stump of his leg.

WHAT FOOL PUT THEM IN THE SAME BLOCK WITH CLUB CAR PRIVILEGES? MAYOR ASKS

...“I would like to know also how they got the key to unlock their cell doors and let them out into the corridor where there was a window from which they escaped,” he declared. “I am told these doors are locked at night yet there was no evidence to show they had been jimmied or tampered with in any form. Who handed them the keys?”

“I would like to know also how these men got all the blankets and pillows which they had in their cells. Suchan had six blankets and three pillows in his cell. The others had anywhere from five to seven. Other prisoners are only allowed one.

“These blankets undoubtedly were used to deaden the sound of sawing the bars and could very well have been used to build dummies in their cots before they left.

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SEP 9 1952*



[PLATE 180]

Perched high above the river banks and surrounded by sloping hillsides and the cultivated fields of the Industrial Farm, the House of Refuge and the Toronto Jail occupied what they considered a restorative landscape. From this vantage, the city with its corrupting influences of overcrowding, poor sanitation, and moral laxity was distant enough to be incapable of harm, but close enough to act as a reminder for inmates in the process of their moral education. And yet, in their remove, these institutions also isolated undesirability—criminals, vagrants, the impoverished elderly, prostitutes, and the mentally ill—from contact with the supposedly uncorrupted residents of the centre.

JENNIFER BONNELL, "IMAGINED FUTURES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES,"  
PHD. DISS. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, 2009: 168

## POLICE SCOUR DON VALLEY FOR ESCAPER

A stepped-up hunt for escaped rapist Frederick Merrill was mounted in Toronto's Don Valley yesterday, after a sighting by an off-duty police officer.

About 20 police officers, using tracker dogs and horses, scoured the ravine in the area of Pottery Road, about three kilometres northeast of the Toronto (Don) Jail, from which Mr. Merrill, 42, broke out two weeks ago in a daring escape.

...There have been hundreds of reported sightings of the escaper, who had previously broken out of four maximum-security prisons in the United States. Calls have been fielded from locations as far away as British Columbia, but police believe he probably is still in Toronto.

During a major search of the ravine last week, abandoned clothing from the Don Jail was found, but police have been unable to determine whether it belonged to Mr. Merrill.

...Mr. Merrill, who is regarded as dangerous, was awaiting sentencing in July for sexually assaulting a 15-year-old and beating another woman while he lived under an alias in east-end Toronto's Beaches area. He also faces deportation to the United States.

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL, JUL 15 1989*

A man whose remains were discovered earlier this week in an industrial-sized recycling bin near Lakeshore Blvd. and Cherry St. has been identified as 42-year-old Andre Pellicone.

Pellicone was known to police, as he played a part in one of the biggest armoured car robberies in Toronto's history. He was convicted of posing as a police officer and ordering a Loomis driver out of his vehicle in the three-million-dollar heist in 1995. He died from what police described as "massive trauma," after a beating by five drifters and drug addicts. An autopsy was performed on Pellicone's body yesterday, results have not yet been released.

"BODY FOUND IN DUMPSTER HAD  
ROBBERY CONNECTIONS," *CP24*,  
AUG 30 2008



## HELP SOUGHT IN MURDER OF TEEN-AGER

Metro Toronto Police have asked joggers, bird watchers and lovers who frequent the densely shrubbed banks of the Don Valley to help them solve the “most brutal” murder in Metro in the past 10 years.

The battered, partly clad body of Kathy Alma Brosseau, 17, was found in a thicket south of the Bloor Street Viaduct at 7:45 a.m. Saturday by a man walking his dog on the dirt road that skirts the Don River.

An investigator who didn't want to be named described the killing of the unemployed teen-ager as the “most brutal attack” in Metro Toronto in the past decade. She was strangled by hand, severely beaten and had cuts all over her body.

An autopsy showed that Miss Brosseau, of St. Patrick Street, died of a brain hemorrhage caused by the beating. Her neck muscles were also badly damaged.

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL, OCT 11 1982*



[PLATE 181]

This is a fear for all that my existing – despite its intentional and conscious innocence – can accomplish of violence and murder. ...This is the uprightness of exposition to death, without defences; and, before any language and any mimicry, a demand addressed to me from the depths of an absolute solitude; ...it is a putting in question of my presence and my responsibility.

EMMANUEL LEVINAS, “BAD CONSCIENCE AND THE INEXORABLE,” *OF GOD WHO COMES TO MIND*, 1982: 174-5

Toronto’s ravines are our sacred places, where we’re reminded that we’re attached to the rest of Ontario and where words like ‘topography’ and ‘watershed’ mean something; they possess all the stuff we can’t get a feel for when riding the Spadina streetcar. The ravines are rightly celebrated as such, but what is remarkable about them is that they do not discriminate between rich and poor, downtown, uptown or suburb – they spread freely through the city, created long before there was such a thing as Toronto.

In the older, denser urban core, the ravines are lined with low-rise homes with privileged backyards overlooking these wild places. Not so in the suburbs, where Toronto’s postwar modern project saw the construction of apartment towers around the edges of the ravines, giving many, rather than few, proximity to these wonders... That these are often Toronto’s troubled suburban towers – troubled by crime, overcrowding and the needs of newcomers, so many of whom know the towers as their first Canadian homes – points to the need for appropriate social and civic services... People dream of a place of their own in the country, and, theoretically at least, Toronto’s ravines deliver.

SHAWN MICALLEF, “JANE AND EGLINTON,” *TORONTO*, 2003

Now instead of fending off bears, Outward Bound Canada explorers will stare down stray dogs and raccoons with attitude. Rather than paddling pristine lakes, they’ll canoe the sluggish Don. And forget rock climbing. They will learn to scale an 18-metre tower that now soars above the historic Evergreen Brick Works.

The urban wilderness isn’t exactly roughing it in the bush, but Outward Bound believes it is the future. That’s why the not-for-profit educational group has moved its headquarters to Toronto from Huntsville. Over the past few months, it has set up an “urban base camp” on the lower Don River.

...One of the first groups to visit the base camp last fall learned that the urban wild does have its surprises. Ten Grade 8 students from Toronto French School were on a half-day hike on trails along Mud Creek in the Moore Park Ravine. They learned to tie bowline knots and taut-line hitches, set up nylon tarp shelters and make hot chocolate on a camping stove.

Suddenly, nine off-leash dogs sprinted through the pastoral scene, followed by the dog-walker. One child was terrified.

“That’s the city,” says urban programs coordinator Richella Hyde, who accompanied the group. “There’s always stuff happening you can’t control and you just have to go with it and deal with it and learn to manage.”

“INWARD BOUND,”

*THE TORONTO STAR*, MAR 26 2011

He thought the boys of Flemingdon Park were his friends. But one summer afternoon, the gang turned on him. They beat him, stripped him to his boxers, repeatedly stabbed him and left him to die. Nearly a hundred people witnessed the six-hour ordeal, but no one came forward. They either didn’t dare or didn’t care.

...The following day, at about 6 p.m., Omar was found. A man walking his dog through the field discovered him face-up, arms outstretched, in a little gully in front of a storm sewer. It was a gruesome sight. His bloodied, mostly naked body was covered in slash wounds and knife marks, particularly around his neck.

“CODE OF SILENCE,” *TORONTO LIFE*, JUL 2007

Having become a woman, having internalized a somewhat normative femininity, I fear it now more than ever. I fear rape. I fear assault and robbery. I fear bodily harm – from the rough grabbing of my wrist to the gunshot wound to my head. I fear mental and emotional harm – from the racial epithet to the trauma of bodily victimization. I fear violation – of my materiality, of my un/conscious, of my self.

DORA EPSTEIN, "ABJECT TERROR; A STORY OF FEAR, SEX, AND ARCHITECTURE,"  
*ARCHITECTURE OF FEAR*, 1997: 133



[PLATE 182]



Season 4, Episode 9, "The War Within"  
Aired September 27, 2011 (1.349 million viewers)

Team One responds to a panicked 911 call: a masked gunman is threatening a group of teenagers in the Don Valley ravine and has abducted Joe Stanlick (Luke Bilyk). But it turns out this gunman was no stranger to the youths.

"FLASHPOINT, TV SERIES," WIKIPEDIA

**To liberate fear, we realize that identities are psychic, not social, leaving space for the subversive of binaries, concretes, and absolutes. ... To liberate ourselves from fear, we realize the fearing outweighs the actual victimization, the actual crime.**

DORA EPSTEIN, "ABJECT TERROR; A STORY OF FEAR, SEX, AND ARCHITECTURE,"  
*ARCHITECTURE OF FEAR*, 1997: 142



[PLATE 183]

108 [LEISURE] 066  
108 [SPECTACLE] 238  
286 [TIME] 044



[PLATE 184]

The Don Valley Boyz are Bob Cutler (Banjo, Mandolin, Ukelele, Vocals), Peter Lawson (Bass, Guitar, Vocals), Eric Jonasson (Guitar, Keyboards, Vocals), Jeff Cohen (Guitar, Bass, Vocals) and Wayne Orgill (Drums, Percussion, Vocals)

THE DON VALLEY BOYZ, [HTTP://WWW.DONVALLEYBOYZ.COM](http://www.donvalleyboyz.com), 2012

'TEACH YOUR CHILDREN,' PERFORMED BY THE DON VALLEY BOYZ,  
MUSIC BY GRAHAM NASH

You, who are on the road  
Must have a code that you can live by  
And so, become yourself  
Because the past is just a good bye.

Teach your children well,  
Their father's hell  
did slowly go by,  
And feed them on your dreams  
The one they picked,  
the one you'll know by.

Don't you ever ask them why,  
if they told you, you would cry,  
So just look at them and sigh  
and know they love you.

And you (can you hear)  
of tender years (do you care)  
Can't know the fears (and can't you see)  
that your elders grew by (we must be free)  
And so please help them with your youth,  
(To teach our children what you believe in)  
They seek the truth before they can die.  
(Make a world that we can live in.)

Teach your parents well,  
Their children's hell  
will slowly go by,  
And feed them on your dreams  
The one they picked,  
the one you'll know by.

Don't you ever ask them why,  
if they told you, you would cry,  
So just look at them and sigh  
and know they love you.

Timothy Ferriman, 18, the habitual school truant who tried to impress girls by claiming to suck blood from victims in the Don Valley, was sentenced to two years in a youth jail followed by three years of probation. A third accused had been acquitted.

"TEEN SENTENCED TO LIFE; STABBED  
LITTLE BROTHER 71 TIMES," *THE  
TORONTO STAR*, SEP 30 2006



## I. THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

*April is the cruellest month, breeding  
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing  
Memory and Desire, stirring  
Dull roots with spring rain.  
Winter kept us warm, covering  
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding  
A little life with dried tubers.*

...

*What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only  
There is shadow under this red rock  
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  
And I will show you something different from either  
Your shadow at morning striding behind you  
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you  
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.*

...

*Unreal City,  
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,  
I had not thought death had undone so many.  
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,  
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.*

...

T.S. ELIOT, *THE WASTE LAND*\*, 1971

\*FORMERLY TITLED "HE DO THE POLICE IN DIFFERENT VOICES"



[PLATE 185]

## OUTLET

As the centre of Canadian life moves from the fortress to the metropolis, the garrison mentality changes correspondingly. It begins as an expression of the moral values generally accepted in the group as a whole, and then, as society gets more complicated and more in control of its environment, it becomes more of a revolutionary garrison within a metropolitan society.

NORTHRUP FRYE, *THE BUSH GARDEN*, 1971: 231

Not just for country kids, bush parties continue to be an easy outlet for teens slipping away from adult supervision. With a cell phone in every jean pocket it is even harder for the police to keep ahead of the cat-and-mouse game, since communication is key when setting up semi-impromptu, somewhat-organized happenings. Bonfires remain dead giveaways, but irresistible nonetheless. Any dark hollow will do, but old standbys Sherwood and Blythwood parks continue to draw from nearby Northern, North Toronto and Lawrence Park high schools. Cigarette butts and beer caps prove to be more reliable than breadcrumbs in marking the trails back to bus stops.

“SECRETS OF THE RAVINE,”  
*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, MAY 9 2010

[T]he open spaces turned their back on the city to organize their own autonomous, parallel life, but they were inhabited. ...They are different from those open spaces traditionally thought of as public spaces – squares, boulevards, gardens, parks – and they form an enormous portion of undeveloped territory that is utilized and experienced in an infinite number of ways, and in some cases turns out to be absolutely impenetrable. The voids are a fundamental part of the urban system, spaces that inhabit the city in a nomadic way, moving on every time the powers that be try to impose a new order. They are realities that have grown up outside and against the project of modernity, which is still incapable of recognizing their value and, therefore, of entering them.

FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 181

A summary analysis suffices to show that there are two distinct types of leisure ‘structurally’ opposed: a) leisure integrated with everyday life (the perusal of daily papers, television, etc.) and conducive to profound discontent... b) the prospect of departure, the demand for evasion, the will to escape through worldliness, holidays, LSD, debauchery or madness.

HENRI LEFEBVRE, *EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD*, 1971: 85



[PLATE 186]

[PLATE 187: 246-247]











The transgressive desire manifest in these acts of destruction speaks of the restricted interaction with things and space and concomitant bodily control that is required to maintain this state. ...These typically carnivalesque, yet often affective, acts of collective endeavour re-inscribe the disorderly in an increasingly smoothed over urban environment made fit for consumption and organized tourism.

TIM EDENSOR, "SOCIAL PRACTICES, SENSUAL EXCESS AND AESTHETIC TRANSGRESSION IN INDUSTRIAL RUINS," *LOOSE SPACE*, 2006: 239

Mayor Rob Ford's promised campaign to aggressively clean up the sort of graffiti that angers merchants and homeowners appears to have bagged its first cultural quarry - the artfully defaced walls of the Brick Works, a complex of heritage industrial buildings in the Don Valley.

...The wrinkle in this case is that the accumulation of graffiti on the Brick Works buildings is betwixt and between - neither generic tagging nor artistic murals. Much of it dates to the 1980s, when young people used the abandoned barn-like structures for parties and photography.

"Kids would get in and explore," Mr. Stonehouse says. "Graffiti was part of that."

"YES... BUT IS IT GRAFFITI?"

*THE GLOBE AND MAIL*, FEB 4 2011



[PLATE 188]

When educated Americans began to...reject the very thought of eternal damnation, they won freedom from fear but lost possibilities for ecstasy....The escape from physical pain paralleled the escape from hell: both resulted from the desire to maximise human happiness; both generated an unforeseen vexation of spirit. The unprecedented insulation from danger and discomfort reinforced the sense of educated Americans that life had become too soft, too civilized.

TJ JACKSON LEARS, *NO PLACE OF GRACE*, 1981: 44



[PLATE 189]

"[It's a] teenagers point of view for how a community should look," says Scare Me of his work. "Because really, graffiti is the only way a teen can change his [or] her environment."

"...I dream about somehow getting onto the ledge on either the north or south side [of the viaduct]." There are some doorway-shaped features there, where he would like to paint "something nice." They're right near the top of the bridge's support columns. Attempting to reach them would be suicidal.

"...On the way out of the valley, we ask Scare Me what he considers to be the most difficult part of writing graffiti. "Walking away," he replies.

"OFF THE WALL: SCARE ME,"  
*TORONTOIST*, FEB 1 2012



I NOW FEEL POWERFULLY ATTRACTED  
TO CREATE NEW FORMS OF EXPRESSION

BUT I DO NOT PRETEND  
TO KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT

Ich fühle mich  
jetzt mächtig angezogen,  
neue Ausdrucksformen  
zu Kreieren

Aber bilde mir nicht ein  
was rechts zu wissen



[PLATE 190]

## PARADOX

A subject who lives permanently in the paradox of constructing her or his experience out of negativity. The presence of power invites one to escape from its totalizing presence; safety summons up the life of risk; sedentary comfort calls up shelterless nomadism; the urban order calls to the indefiniteness of the *terrain vague*. The individual of our time is characterised by anxiety regarding all that protects him from anxiety, the need to assimilate the negativity whose eradication would seem to constitute the social objective of political activity.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 36-41

The real terror comes when the individual feels himself becoming an individual, pulling away from the group, losing the sense of driving power that the group gives him, aware of a conflict within himself far subtler than the struggle of morality against evil.

NORTHROP FRYE, *THE BUSH GARDEN*, 1971: 226



[PLATE 191]



142 [ESCAPE] 172  
186 [NATURE] 190  
034 [TIME] 132

## **PATHS**

**TRANSURBANCE** from the Latin *trans*, “across”, and *urbis*, “city”.  
1. (gèog.), meadows that develop within city walls. The *t.* mountain pasture; *to go in t.*, *sin.* of *wander, roam, rove*. 2. (aesthet.) search for new places, extrapolation of concepts from urban territories but outside the city. *To carry out a t.* *sin.* of *visit-excursion, ambulation, urban drift, errantry*. 3. (scient.) action searching for pedestrian viability and for its possible implications in the general system of urban mobility.

FRANCESCO CARERI, ‘TRANSURBANCE’, *LANDSCAPE +100 WORDS TO INHABIT IT*, 2007: 182



[PLATE 192]



[PLATE 193]



[PLATE 194]

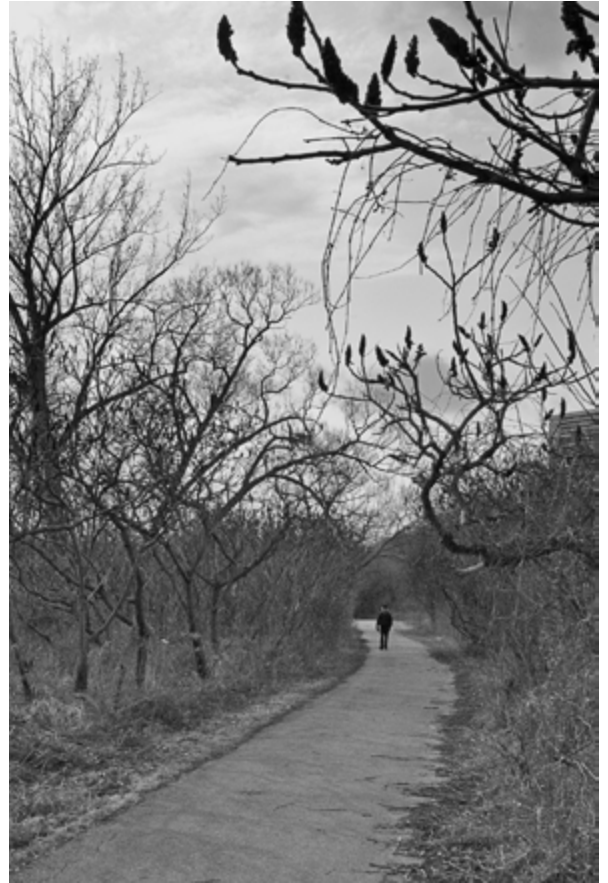


[PLATE 195]





[PLATE 196]



[PLATE 197]



[PLATE 198]



[PLATE 199]

178 [ESCAPE] 092  
074 [IDENTITY] 280  
288 [TIME] 186

There is a virgin forest in each; a snowfield where even the print of birds' feet is unknown. Here we go alone, and like it better so. Always to have sympathy, always to be accompanied, always to be understood would be intolerable. But in health the genial pretence must be kept up and the effort renewed – to communicate, to civilize, to share, to cultivate the desert, educate the native, to work together by day and by night to sport. In illness this make-believe ceases. ...We become deserters. They march on to battle. We float with the sticks on the stream; helter-skelter with the dead leaves on the lawn, irresponsible and disinterested and able, perhaps for the first time for years, to look around, to look up – to look, for example, at the sky.

VIRGINIA WOOLF, "ON BEING ILL," *THE CROWDED DANCE OF MODERN LIFE*, (1926): 46

Deambulation is the achievement of a state of hypnosis by walking, a disorienting loss of control. It is a medium through which to enter into contact with the unconscious part of the territory.

FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 82





[PLATE 200]



[PLATE 201]



[PLATE 202]



[PLATE 203]



[PLATE 204]





[PLATE 205]





[PLATE 206]



[PLATE 207]



[PLATE 208]



[PLATE 209]

234 [ IDENTITY ] 252  
078 [ NATURE ] 120  
132 [ PROGRESS ] 152

The Romantic imagination which still survives in our contemporary sensibility feeds on memories and expectations. Strangers in our own land, strangers in our city, we inhabitants of the metropolis feel the spaces not dominated by architecture as reflections of our own insecurity, of our vague wanderings through limitless spaces which, in our position external to the urban system, to power, to activity, constitute at one and the same time a physical expression of our fear and insecurity and yet also expectancy of the other, the alternative, the Utopian, the future.

IGNASI DE SOLÁ-MORALES, "TERRAIN VAGUE," *ANYPLACE*, 1995: 36-41

It is no wonder that the ancients thought that melancholy, their word for depression, was the earth mood. In the language of humor theory, melancholy is black, earthy, and cold.

Environmental rhetoric is too often strongly affirmative, extraverted, and masculine; it privileges speech over writing... It's sunny, straightforward, ableist, holistic, hearty, and 'healthy'. Where does this leave negativity, introversion, femininity, writing, meditation, ambiguity, darkness, irony, fragmentation, and sickness?

TIMOTHY MORTON. *THE ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT*, 2012: 16





[PLATE 210]



[PLATE 211]



[PLATE 2I2]



[PLATE 2I3]



[PLATE 214]



[PLATE 215]





[PLATE 216]



[PLATE 217]



096 [ESCAPE] 150  
244 [IDENTITY] 184  
186 [TIME] 070

The abandonment of the 'project'; the refusal to erase one reality in the conceited pursuit of another; the recognition that the ground context is far richer than any imagined imposition might ever achieve; the gradual realization that any form of engagement or intervention in the local would be artificially deterministic if not outright threatening to the actual environment as it exists in the present, and its state of isolation; the incalculable encounter with the non-quantifiable: these are the spaces in transformation that offer new opportunities for understanding.

FLAMINA GENARI, "INTERVIEW WITH STALKER OCTOBER 1995,"  
ROME: UNPUBLISHED AUDIO TAPE," *HETEROPTOPIA AND THE CITY*, 2008: 223

This is a movement that does not tend toward a goal, for it has no end. It exists wholly in the enlargement of its own amplitude, which is like the rarefaction of our existence [*être*], or its swooning. In the very depths of incipient pleasure there opens something like abysses, ever deeper, into which our existence, no longer resisting, hurls itself.

...We therefore note in pleasure an abandonment, a loss of oneself, a getting out of oneself, an ecstasy: so many traits that describe the promise of escape contained in pleasure's essence. Far from appearing like a passive state, pleasure opens a dimension in the satisfaction of need in which malaise glimpses an escape. Therefore, need is not a nostalgia for being; it is the liberation from being, since the movement of pleasure is precisely the loosening of the malaise.

EMMANUEL LEVINAS, *ON ESCAPE*, 1982: 61-62



[PLATE 218]



[PLATE 219]



[PLATE 220]



[PLATE 221]





[PLATE 222]



[PLATE 223]



[PLATE 224]



[PLATE 225]

260 [IDENTITY] 136  
148 [PROGRESS] 078  
250 [SPECTACLE] 146

For many, individual identities began to seem fragmented, diffuse, perhaps even unreal. A weightless culture of material comfort and spiritual blandness was breeding weightless persons who longed for intense experience to give some definition, some distinct outline and substance to their vaporous lives.

This sense of unreality has become part of the hidden agenda of modernization. Throughout the twentieth century, a recoil from the artificial, overcivilized qualities of modern existence has sparked a wide variety of quests for more intense experience... Antimodern impulses, too, were rooted in longings to recapture an elusive “real life” in a culture evaporating into unreality.

TJ JACKSON LEARS, *NO PLACE OF GRACE*, 1981: 32

[T]he myth that binds the industrial, and hence postindustrial, society was that we no longer live the real life in the real place. This unending search for the real and authentic makes us all tourists. We travel and we seek and we look.

MARC TREIB, “REMEMBERING RUINS, RUINS REMEMBERING,” *SPATIAL RECALL*, 2009: 205





[PLATE 226]



[PLATE 227]

[PLATE 228: 284-285]











## ETERNITY

*For now she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of - to think; well, not even to think. To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunken, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others. Although she continued to knit, and sat upright, it was thus that she felt herself; and this self having shed its attachments was free for the strangest adventures. When life sank down for a moment, the range of experience seemed limitless... Beneath it is all dark, it is all spreading, it is unfathomably deep; but now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by. Her horizon seemed to her limitless... Losing personality, one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity.*

VIRGINIA WOOLF; *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*, 1927: 62



[PLATE 229]



[PLATE 230]





[PLATE 231]



**IN MY RAVINES**

*This year in my ravines  
 it was warm for a long time  
 although the leaves fell early  
 and my old men, remembering themselves  
 walked waist-high through the  
 yellow grass  
 in my ravines, through  
 alders and purple  
 fireweed, with burrs  
 catching on their sleeves,*

*watching the small boys climbing  
 in the leafless trees  
 or throwing pebbles  
 at tin cans floating  
 in the valley creek, or following  
 the hard paths worn by former  
 walkers or the hooves  
 of riding-stable horses*

*and at night  
 they slept under the bridges  
 of the city in my (still)  
 ravines*

*old men, ravelled as thistles  
 their clothing gone to seed  
 their beards cut stubble*

*while the young boys  
 climbed and swung  
 above them wildly  
 in the leafless eyelid  
 veins and branches  
 of a bloodred night  
 falling, bursting purple  
 as ancient rage, in*

*old men's  
 dreams of slaughter  
 dreams of  
 (impossible)  
 flight.*



# PART II: INDICES

Written matter has a further peculiarity: mental operations, coding and decoding are an intrinsic part of it, but they are not included in the message. Such are the rules of the game and that is how forms operate; their clarity does not exclude risks and obscurities that are inherent in their very exactness and limpidity. Moreover – and this is serious – the encoders and the real network through which the message passes are also concealed in such a way that their existence is ignored. The written word is before us – apparently given in its totality by ‘being before us’ as the philosophers say – and its innocent appearance exploits our innocence.

HENRI LEFEBVRE, *EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD*, 1971: 158





## THREADS

Characteristics of the *terrain vague* contrast with the dominant city, as evident through these topics.

### ESCAPE

Temporary relief found in the act of abandoning reality in search of the fantastic and foreign.

36, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 72, 92, 94, 96, 98, 128, 130, 132, 134, 142, 150, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 178, 180, 182, 184, 190, 196, 206, 218, 226, 228, 230, 232, 244, 252, 254, 260, 262, 264, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 282, 286.

### IDENTITY

The evolving self-perception of a subject, as defined by difference.

14, 16, 20, 32, 36, 40, 42, 44, 46, 58, 60, 74, 92, 94, 98, 104, 112, 136, 152, 154, 156, 176, 178, 184, 200, 206, 220, 224, 226, 228, 234, 236, 238, 244, 248, 252, 260, 268, 274, 280, 286.

### LEISURE

The pursuit of enjoyment outside the demands of work and profit, often accompanied by its own sets of rules.

18, 40, 42, 48, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 84, 104, 108, 114, 118, 126, 134, 142, 144, 158, 160, 164, 166, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 210, 212, 214, 216, 222, 234, 236, 238, 240, 258, 264, 266, 272, 278, 288.

### NATURE

An unbridled opposition to civilisation, culture, and artifice, untouched wilderness, or original state of being.

14, 16, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 48, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 86, 88, 90, 98, 102, 104, 106, 110, 114, 116, 118, 120, 124, 132, 138, 160, 186, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 208, 210, 214, 218, 220, 254, 262, 268, 270, 288.

### PROGRESS

A transition promising improvement, turning fallow land productive and submitting space and time to rational order.

16, 20, 22, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 52, 56, 58, 64, 66, 76, 78, 80, 86, 88, 96, 102, 106, 112, 120, 124, 128, 130, 134, 136, 138, 140, 146, 148, 152, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 174, 202, 216, 222, 232, 242, 256, 258, 266, 268, 276, 280.

### PUBLIC

The democratic population of a city, determining common good, regardless of economic authority.

24, 30, 42, 44, 50, 54, 56, 58, 66, 68, 72, 74, 112, 116, 124, 126, 136, 138, 140, 148, 150, 152, 154, 158, 174, 202, 212, 214, 216, 224, 228, 230, 232, 234, 242, 244, 248, 250, 252, 256, 258, 264, 266, 276, 278, 282.

### SENSORY

A bodily engagement with material and space, generating an unconscious memory.

18, 24, 26, 46, 54, 62, 70, 76, 78, 82, 84, 90, 94, 96, 102, 108, 114, 118, 144, 162, 168, 170, 172, 176, 180, 182, 186, 192, 194, 196, 198, 204, 208, 210, 226, 236, 242, 250, 256, 262, 270, 272, 282.

### SPECTACLE

A public gathering or fictional framing of history and culture with the intention to amaze and exoticise.

18, 34, 40, 50, 52, 56, 60, 62, 64, 68, 108, 116, 120, 126, 146, 154, 156, 190, 218, 220, 230, 238, 240, 248, 250, 280.

### TIME

The measurement of diurnal and seasonal cycles that became increasingly mechanised with the advent of schedules during industrialisation and the extension of railroad.

14, 20, 22, 28, 32, 34, 44, 70, 74, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 106, 110, 128, 130, 132, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 162, 170, 172, 186, 192, 194, 198, 200, 204, 206, 208, 212, 222, 224, 240, 254, 260, 274, 286, 288.



## 199 MOST FREQUENTLY USED WORDS

Looking at how often certain words occur in the excerpts, the study reflects the prevalent topics and associations made with the Don Valley.

valley (198)	past (22)	summer (13)	warm (10)
DVP (192)	end (21)	camp (12)	wild (10)
city, cities (181)	good (21)	conservation (12)	black (9)
Toronto (158)	house, houses (20)	desire (12)	fact (9)
river, rivers (146)	nature (20)	environment (12)	believe (9)
collision (98)	site (20)	escape (12)	bikers (9)
space, spaces (75)	world (20)	help (12)	cut (9)
year, years (70)	body (19)	ice (12)	discovered (9)
water (68)	car (19)	jail (12)	earth (9)
people (65)	creek (19)	living (12)	hard (9)
parkway (60)	hour, hours (19)	mountain (12)	housing (9)
place, places (63)	community (18)	network (12)	kind (9)
area, areas (57)	edge (18)	poor (12)	power (9)
problems (52)	fear (18)	social (12)	rain (9)
building, buildings (59)	salmon (18)	swimming (12)	residents (9)
land, lands (55)	storm (18)	wooden (12)	sky (9)
park, parks (54)	system (18)	authority (11)	short (9)
ravine, ravines (54)	blue (17)	cold (11)	soil (9)
urban (51)	children (17)	food (11)	travel (9)
police (50)	flood, flooding (17)	highway (11)	wall, walls (9)
old (45)	free (17)	homeless (11)	waste (9)
new (45)	human (17)	live (11)	wide (9)
brick, bricks (40)	light (17)	lost (11)	workers (9)
day, days (40)	remains (17)	mouth (11)	alone (8)
long (40)	Canadian (16)	order (11)	boys (8)
street, streets (39)	flow (16)	room (11)	change (8)
road, roads (38)	morning (16)	roots (11)	darkness (8)
bridge, bridges (35)	sewage (16)	species (11)	designed (8)
dog, dogs (32)	stream (16)	society (11)	difficult (8)
life (32)	vehicle (16)	small (11)	distance (8)
little (32)	watershed (16)	white (11)	district (8)
public (32)	work (16)	wilderness (11)	empty (8)
tree, trees (32)	big (15)	woods (11)	experience (8)
man (30)	Canada (15)	barrier (10)	
bank, banks (28)	centre (15)	brown (10)	
fish (27)	death (15)	bush (10)	
found (27)	force (15)	concrete (10)	
natural (27)	line (15)	control (10)	
sewer, sewers (27)	green (15)	country (10)	
landscape, landscapes (26)	large (15)	dark (10)	
Ontario (26)	plan (15)	hot (10)	
night (26)	railway (15)	jumps (10)	
walk, walks, walking, walked (26)	traffic (15)	kids (10)	
trail, trails (25)	development (14)	late (10)	
winter (25)	group (14)	movement (10)	
dead (24)	heart (14)	name (10)	
drive, driving (24)	snow (14)	native (10)	
men (24)	story (14)	nothing (10)	
plant, plants (24)	emergency (13)	real (10)	
between (23)	fire (13)	red (10)	
industrial (23)	hill (13)	residential (10)	
ground (22)	project (13)	search (10)	
home, homes (22)	pollution (13)	suicide (10)	
lake (22)	school (13)	tent (10)	
	spring (13)	towers (10)	

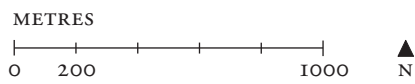




# MAPS

# LOWER DON

MAP I  
[FIGURE 3.0]



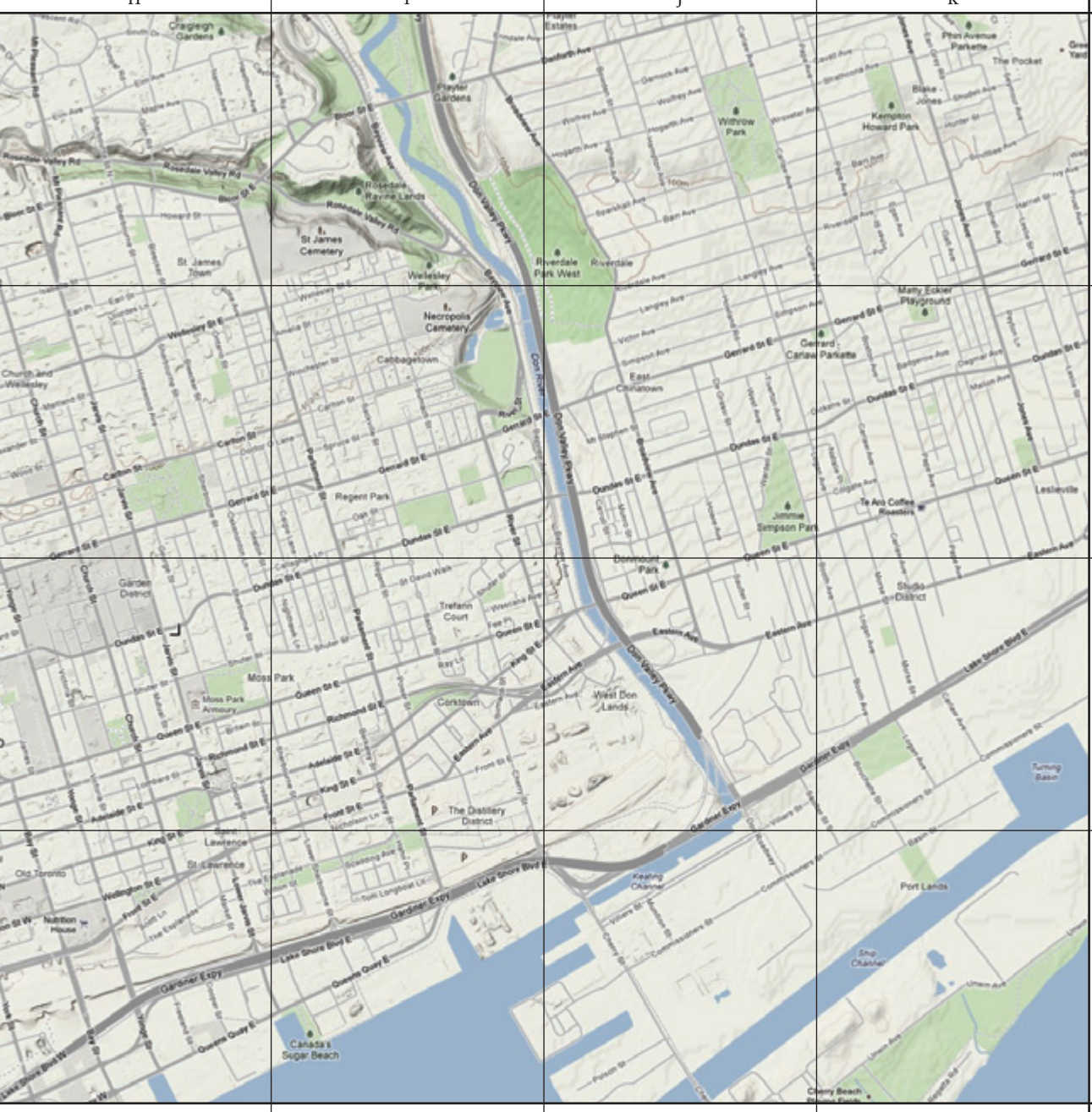


H

I

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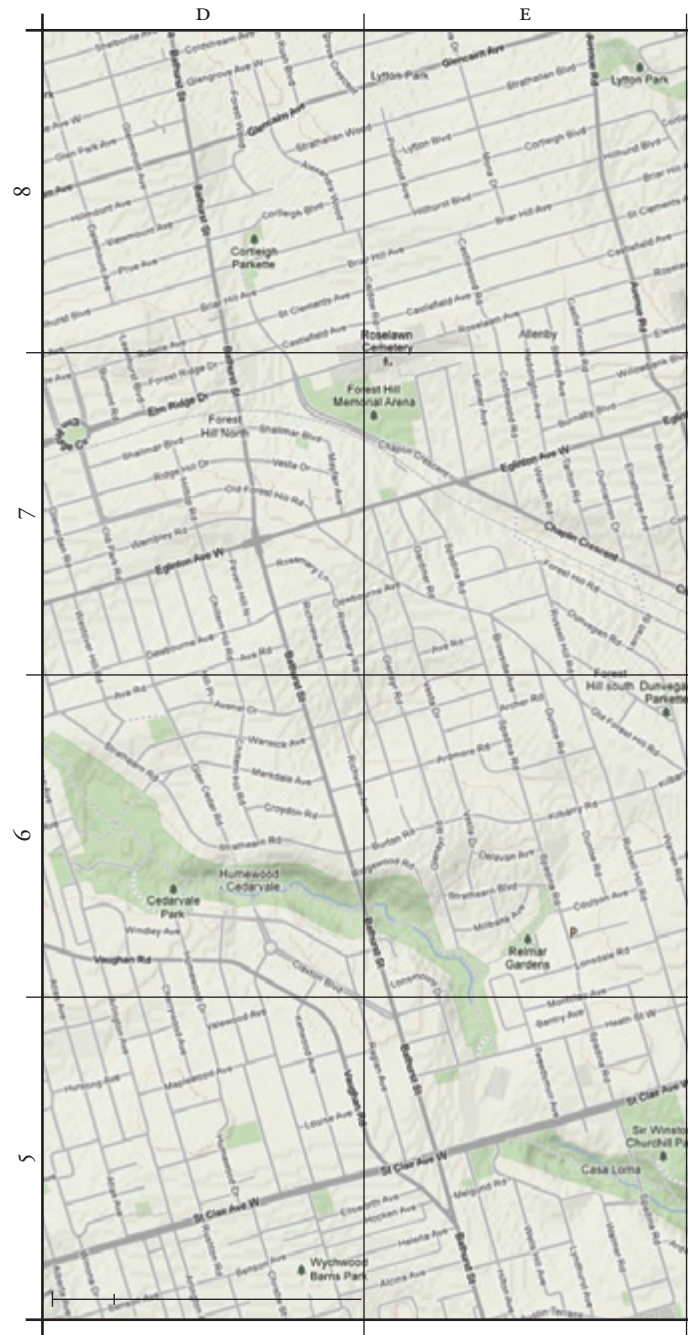
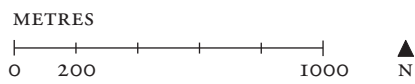
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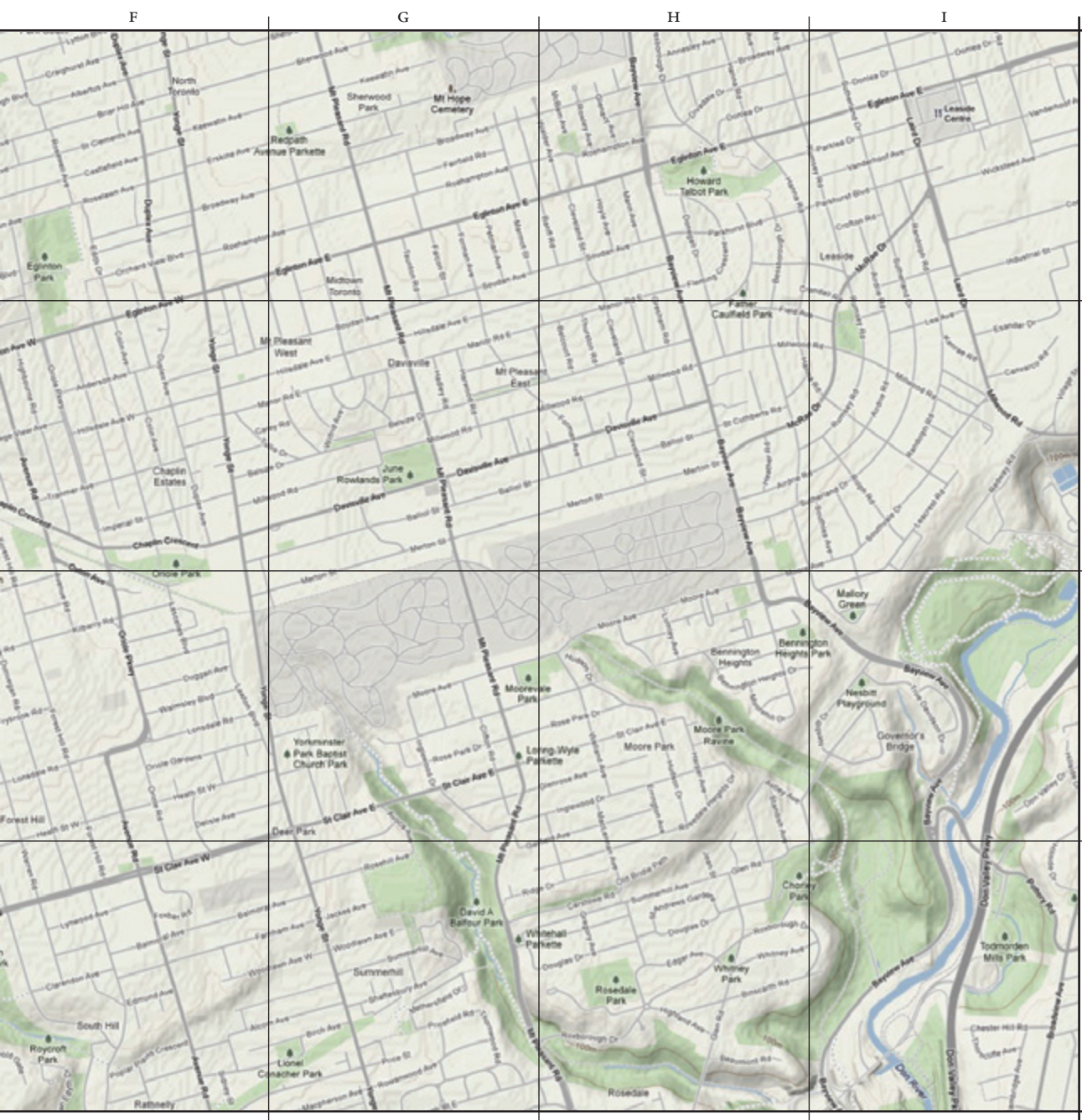




# BELT LINE TRAIL

MAP 2  
[FIGURE 3.1]

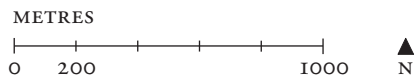


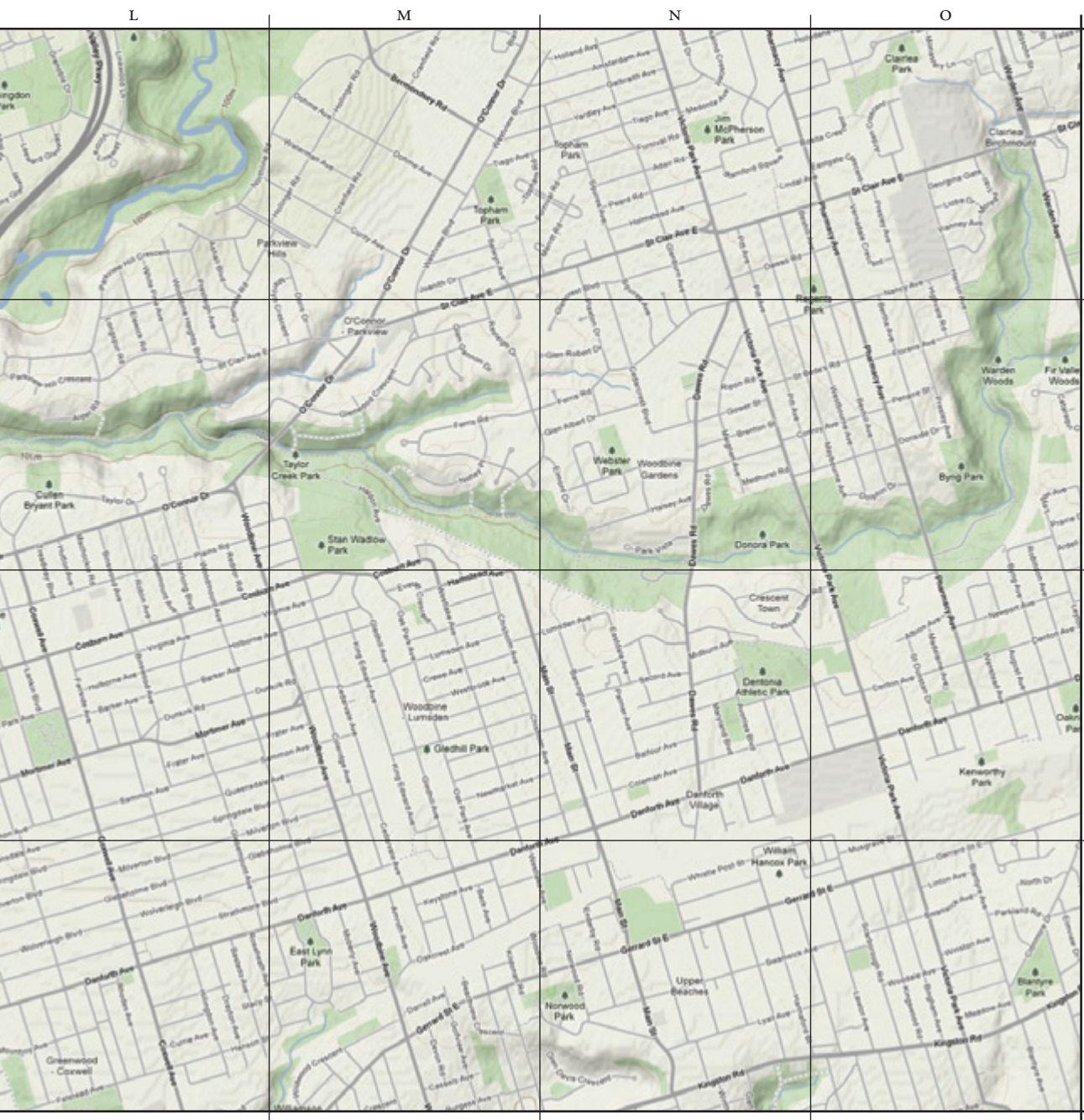




# FORKS OF THE DON

MAP 3  
[FIGURE 3.2]

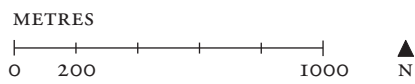


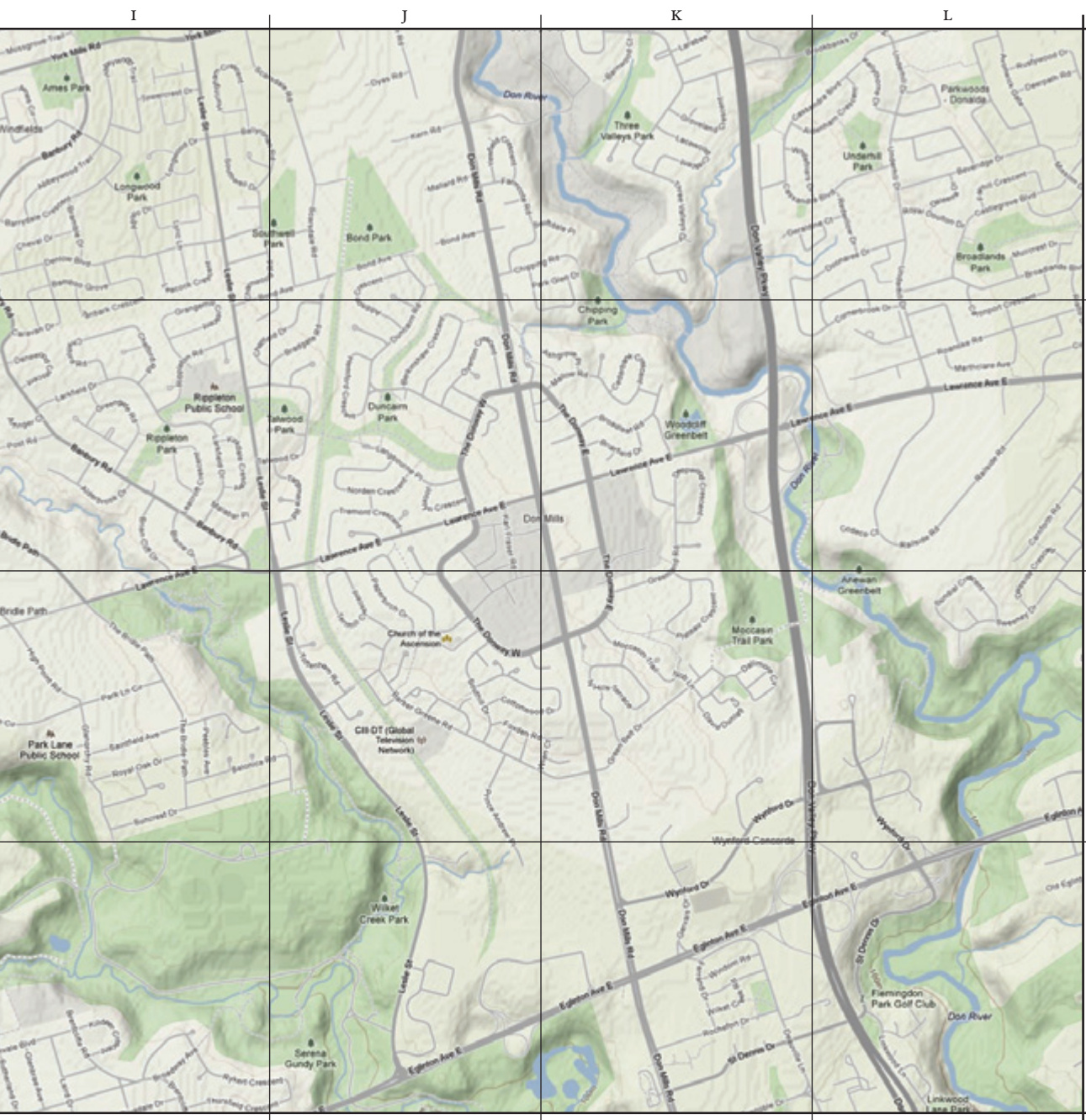




# EAST + WEST DON

MAP 4  
[FIGURE 3.3]

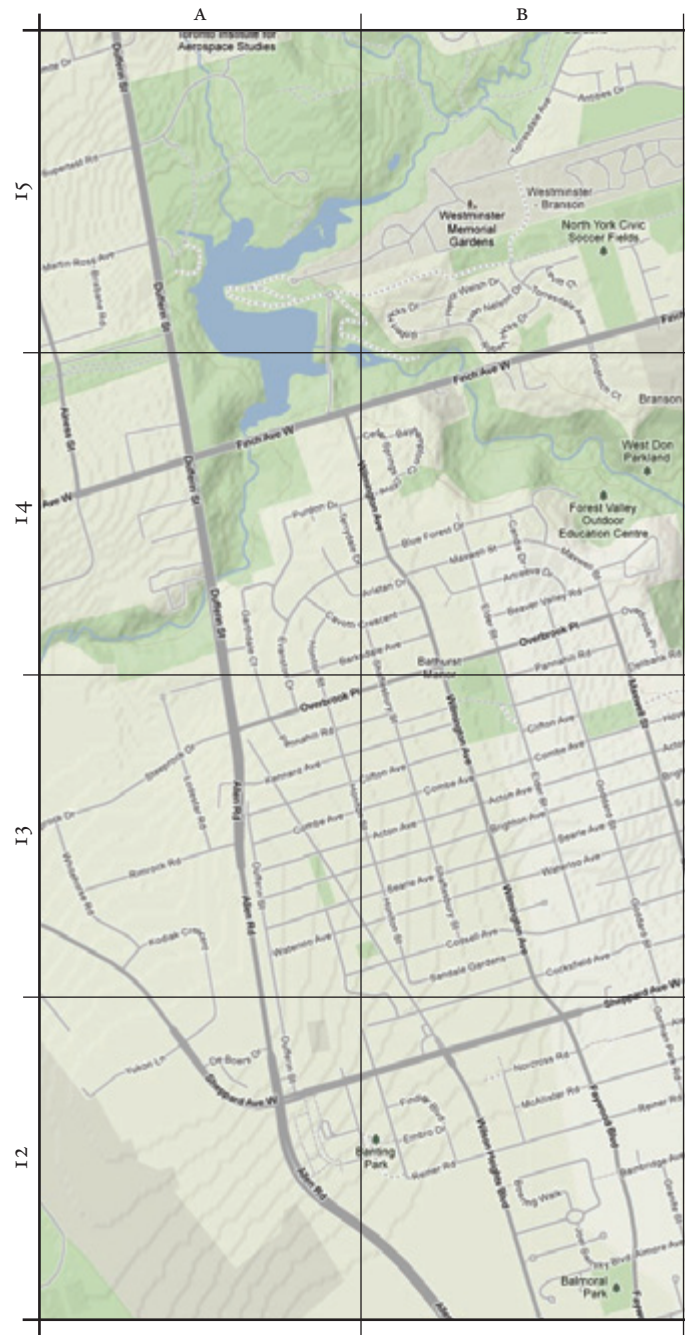
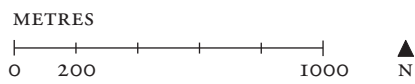


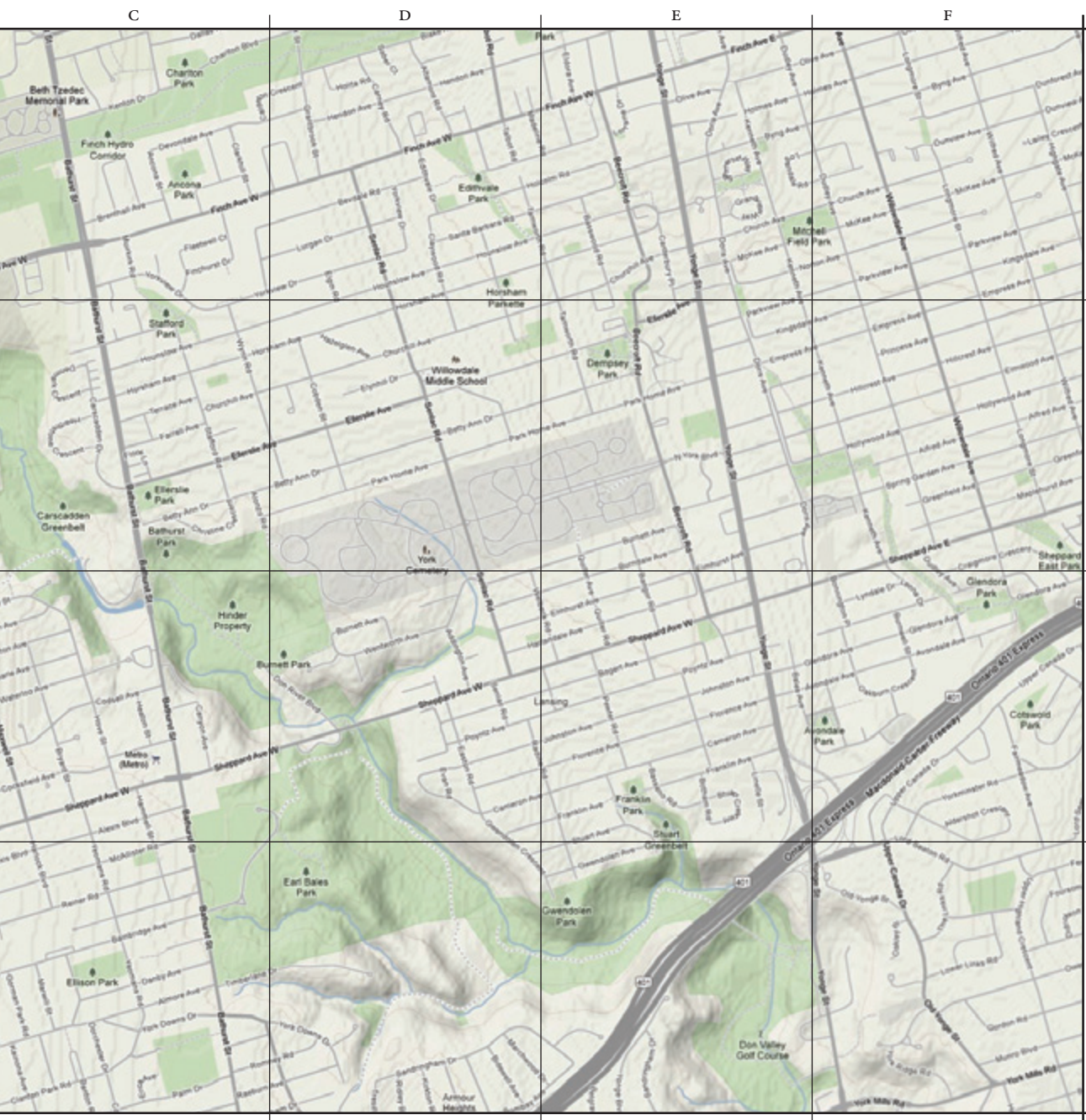




# MID WEST DON

MAP 5  
[FIGURE 3.4]

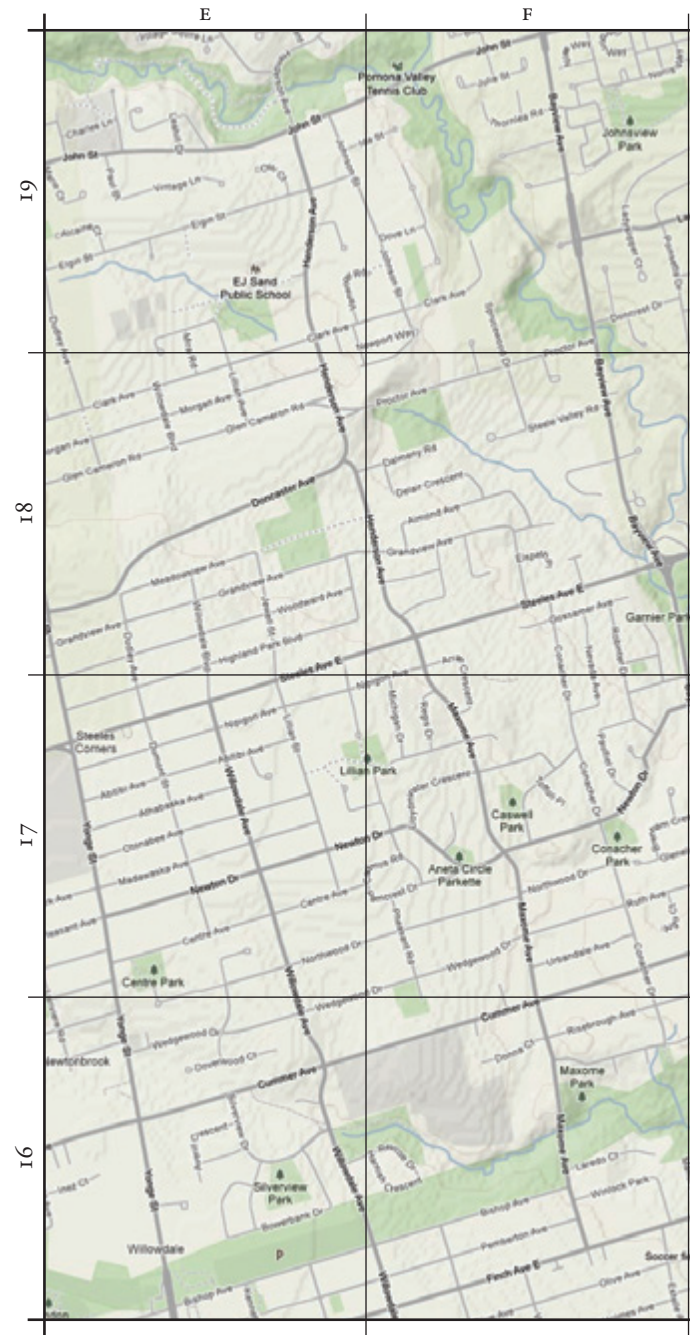
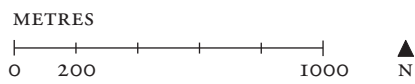


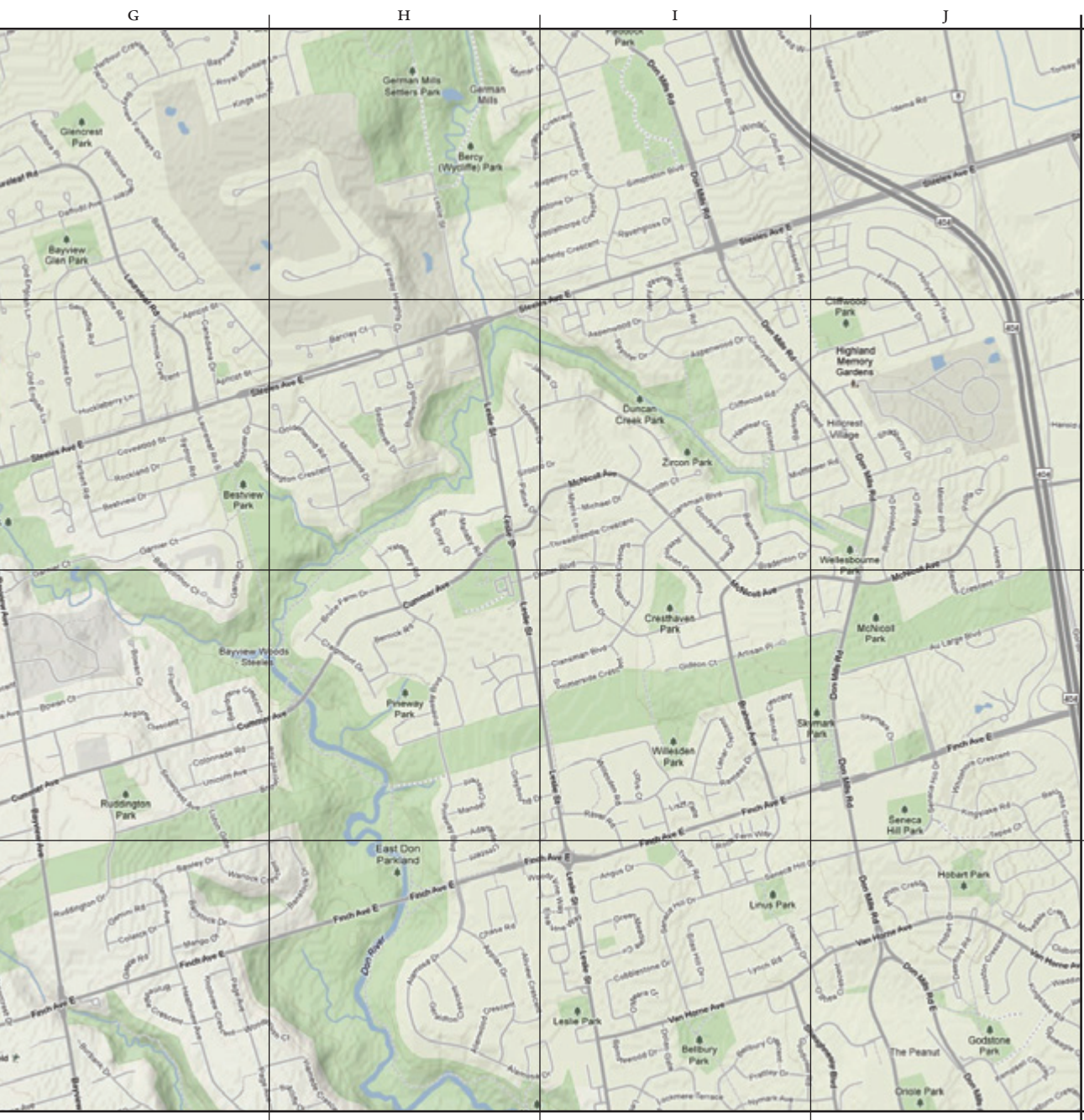




# MID EAST DON

MAP 6  
[FIGURE 3.5]







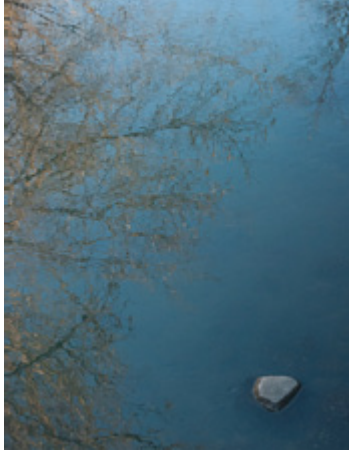




**TIME**



# WATER



[PLATE 232]



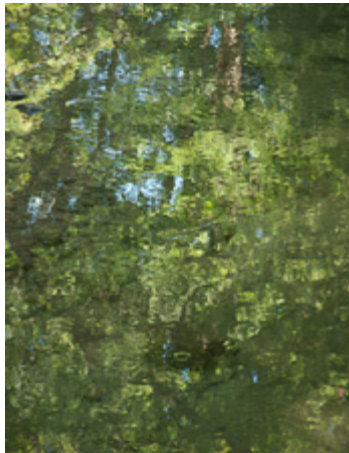
[PLATE 233]



[PLATE 234]



[PLATE 235]



[PLATE 236]



[PLATE 237]



[PLATE 238]



[PLATE 239]



[PLATE 240]



[PLATE 241]



[PLATE 242]



[PLATE 243]

# HISTORY

CONFLICT  
+ FEAR

DEVELOPMENT  
+ INDUSTRY

NATURE  
+ CULTURE

DON VALLEY

WORLD

1790	1793	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aug 11: John Graves Simcoe and his wife Elizabeth boat up the Don. 018</b></li> </ul>
	1794	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Scadding, the Simcoes' estate manager in England, is granted 250 acres on east side of the river across from the Simcoes (the future site of the Don Jail). Scadding introduces rhubarb and tobacco to the valley.</li> <li>• Scadding constructs a log cabin cottage and Scadding bridge. The bridge is the first 'structure' to span the Don river – a fallen butternut tree (located at the present junction of King and Queen streets).</li> <li>• Castle Frank is built as a 'rustic' summer home for the Simcoes (located south of the old boundary line of St. James Cemetery), named after their son Francis.</li> <li>• <b>William Smith constructs a log cabin. (Later defended by his grandson John from the Don Improvement in 1888). 030</b></li> </ul>
	1795	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Elizabeth Simcoe records a description of native people ice fishing near the mouth of the Don. 018</b></li> <li>• Isaiah and Aaron Skinner, sons of a Loyalist miller in Niagara, build a saw mill at Todmorden, possibly the first saw mill on the Don.</li> <li>• William Berczy and a group of German immigrants from New York State construct a saw mill on the east Don in the upper region (now referred to as German Mills).</li> </ul>
	1798	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apr 27: The Council Office of York passes a motion to mandating that a mill cannot obstruct the passage of fish up and downstream; the motion is largely ignored.</li> <li>• <b>William Jarvis notes that four men could catch ten barrels of salmon in two hours at the mouth of the Don and sell them for \$20 a barrel. 121</b></li> </ul>
1800	1802	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sir Isaac Brock reports in a letter to military secretary James Green that the soldiers in the blockhouse constructed at the Don marshes at the mouth of the river "are falling ill of the Ague and Fever in great numbers" believed to be the result of the 'miasmatic' air from the Don. (The marsh likely provided a breeding ground for mosquitoes which then transmitted disease such as malaria.)</li> <li>• John Horton, a baker and grocer with 'signs of insanity' commits suicide by drowning in the river.</li> </ul>
	1804	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The poet Thomas Moore includes Toronto's ravines in a line of his prose. 008</b></li> <li>• Sep: A rainstorm causes extreme flooding, destroying bridges and damaging mills and farmlands.</li> <li>• A floating bridge is built at the mouth of the Don to allow townsfolk to walk and ride along the peninsula (now Toronto Island).</li> </ul>
	1806	
	1808	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jul: While crossing the river on horseback (near the present Queen St. bridge) Parshall Terry is swept away by the current and drowns. His body is recovered at the mouth of the river.</li> </ul>
1810		

Industrial  
Revolution

- 1812
- The War of 1812 begins: bridges at the mouth of the Don are removed for protection against invaders.
- 1813
- American troops destroy the Don blockhouse at the marsh.

- 1819
- Scadding sells most of his property but maintains his farm on the east bank north of Gerrard, consisting of a house, barn, and stables of cattle and horses.

## 1820

- Concern spreads about the harmful 'miasmatic atmosphere' thought to be produced by off-gases of industrial plants in the valley.

- Thomas Helliwell opens a second grist mill, a small brewery, a malt house, and a distillery to produce rye whiskey, on the site of Todmorden. The area becomes known as the Don Mills.

- 1824
- A fire destroys the Parliament buildings at Front and Parliament St. Over concern with 'miasmas' and the shift of city development to the west, Parliament is relocated to Front St. west of Simcoe.

- 1827
- Colin Skinner partners with John Eastwood to construct the York Paper Mill at Todmorden, the second paper mill in Upper Canada.

- 1829
- York General Hospital, (renamed Toronto General Hospital after 1834) Toronto's first civilian hospital, opens at John and King St.

## 1830

- 1833
- Joseph Bloor opens a brewery on Castle Frank Brook, damming the creek for water power and creating a pond that became popular for swimming, rafting, and skating. The creek was later bricked over and turned into a sewer.

- 1834
- Land clearing and erosion along the banks of the Don clog the harbour with silt. Ship captain Hugh Richardson calls the river a "monster of ingratitude" and "the destroying cancer of the Port."

- 1837
- The Don Bridge that replaced Scadding Bridge is set on fire and partially destroyed in rebel conflict.

- A blockhouse for 50 men is built at Bloor and Sherbourne streets to protect the city from the north.

- William Gooderham and his nephew James Worts add a distillery to their grist mill for producing whiskey to take advantage of a year of surplus grain harvest.

- 1839
- The Yorkville brick yards are established by the Pears, the Townsleys, and the Nighthingales. The products are notably used in the Queen West asylum, University College, St. Michael's Cathedral, and St. James Cathedral. (The brick yards are now Ramsden Park.)

## 1840

- The Don Vale House is constructed on the west bank of the river at Winchester St, first as a residence, then as a popular public house. Resident George Rust-D'Eye recalls in 1984 that the house was a "frequent resort of the sporting fraternity" known to host boxing matches, cockfights, and gambling." (The buildings were demolished in 1876 after remaining empty for several years.)

- 1841
- The waste run-off from cattle sheds on the property of Gooderham & Worts contribute heavily to the contamination of the Don producing an estimated 80,000 liquid gallons of manure daily.



DON VALLEY

NATURE  
+ CULTURE

DEVELOPMENT  
+ INDUSTRY

CONFLICT  
+ FEAR

1844  
1845

- William and Robert Parks open the Don Brewery on River street.
- The Taylors open a paper mill at the Forks of the Don with a machine shipped from Edinburgh to meet the demand for newsprint. The mill is located near their saw and grist mills and becomes known as the Upper Mill. By the 1880s it produces 1500 lbs of paper daily. (No trace exists today)

1847

- Jun: The City passes a sanitary regulation to construct quarantine 'Fever Sheds' for newly arrived immigrants. The cholera sheds were located adjacent to York General Hospital.

1850

Railway boom.

- Apr: Spring surge flooding lasts 20 hours and destroys two bridges.

1853

- The Toronto General Hospital relocates from Parliament St. to the west bank of the Don (opposite the Don Jail) to generate funds for ongoing operation. The move proceeds against objections from the public who felt the new site was too far away and too close to the miasmic Don.

1854

- Thirty-nine grist, paper, and saw mills are recorded in operation on the two main branches of the Don.

1856

- **The Grand Trunk Railway is extended along the waterfront from the city, instigating industrial development around the mouth of the Don.**

024

- Dec 30: The City purchases 119 acres of farm land from the Scadding family for the purpose of an "Industrial Farm, House of Refuge, and Jail for City and County."

- The Toronto Magdalen Asylum leases five acres north of the Don Jail for the House of Refuge.

1857

- The 'Keefer Report', published by Thos C. Keefer, Esq. investigates the Don as a source of drinking water for the city, noting that hundreds of springs of clean water contribute to the Don. The report is denied.

1858

- Apr 13: Heavy rains overflow the narrow isthmus at the mouth of the Don, permanently converting the peninsula into the Toronto islands.

1859

- The Taylors build a third paper mill for making newsprint, known as the Middle mill, located on the west side, north of Pottery Rd. The Upper mill now produced manilla and the Lower Mill, felt, for carpets.

- Dec 1: MP John Sheridan Hogan drowns near the Queen St bridge. The Brook's Bush Gang are held accountable as murderers in spite of no evidence. His body is found near mouth of the river on March 30, 1861.

1860

- The House of Industry and Refuge "for the less criminal portion of the disorderly population" (for the poor, homeless, and mentally ill), is opened on the east bank of the Don, just north of the jail. Used as an isolation hospital in the 1870s, the building was demolished in 1894. The institution was renamed Riverdale Hospital in 1957.

1862

- **Mar 10: James Brown of the Brook's Bush Gang is hung at the old Berkely St jail yard for the murder of Hogan. His final words protested his innocence. 231**

Competition for Central Park, won by Olmsted and Vaux, with eclectic gardens that romanticised Nature as a retreat from the City.

- 1864
  - Following a series of delays, including a fire in October 1862 which required rebuilding a large portion, the Don Jail opens as the largest prison in North America. Among the first prisoners are participants in the Fenian Raids of the 1860s.

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- 1870
  - E.T. Seton at the age of 14 constructs his cabin near Cudmoore's Creek.
  - The Yorkville Waterworks are established on Castle Frank Brook (at the current site of the High Level Pumping Station). Water was pumped to the Yorkville Reservoir (currently Brown School) then to local businesses and residences.
  - **Sep 14: 'The Great Rainstorm.' The Don River rises eight feet and destroys four of the six bridges over the river. 102**
  - Davies Co. Pork Packing Plant moves to a new location on Front Street at the Don River. The property includes a large 'refrigeration' house to store ice from the river and becomes the first continuous hog-slaughtering facility in Canada.
  - John Smith relocates Seadding cabin to the Canadian National Exhibition grounds. The cabin is the oldest known surviving building in Toronto.
  - **The last recorded salmon is caught under the dam at Taylor's Mill. 120**
  - **Aug 11: The City opens Riverdale Park to the public as part of a plan to discourage further industrial development in the area. 068**
  - **The Yorkville Boys frequent Helliwell's Bush, near Sandy Point swimming hole and Sugar Loaf Hill (north of the Bloor Viaduct). 115**
  - **Toronto Mayor William McMurrich, influenced by Cleveland's Cuyahoga River, initiates a proposal to straighten and 'improve' the lower Don. 028**
  - The 'half-mile' bridge is constructed by the Canadian Pacific Railway as part of a plan to carry eastern rail traffic into Toronto along the Don Valley and relieve traffic at the Junction in the west.
  - Excavation for road construction near Broadview Ave and Gerrard Street uncovers an aboriginal burial ground, titled the Withrow site. Archaeologist David Boyle oversees the investigation which dates the bones and artefacts to both pre-3000 BC and a former Iroquois village 500-600 yrs old.
  - **Nov: The Don 'improvement' eliminates the bends between Winchester bridge to Broadview ave. In the winter, the Don becomes a popular transit and recreational route via ice skating. The GTR and CPR rail companies debate over right-of-way along the river and settle on having the CPR along east bank, and the GTR along the west. 128**
  - The City dredges a narrow channel known as Coatsworth's Cut in the eastern end of Ashbridge's Bay to increase circulation in the Bay. The channel is blocked by silt again within three years.
  - William Taylor and his brothers, John and George, establish the Don Valley Pressed Brick Works, noting the unique colour of the local clay. In the following years they produce ten shades of red bricks from blue shale and seven shades of buff from glacial clay, among other tones.

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- 1880
  - The Toronto Belt Line Railway is constructed under the direction of James David Edgar and open to public in July the following year for commuters.

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- 1890

CONFLICT  
+ FEAR

DEVELOPMENT  
+ INDUSTRY

NATURE  
+ CULTURE

DON VALLEY

- 1892 • The City approves an emergency relief plan by City Engineer E.H. Keating to alleviate concerns of a cholera outbreak. The plan is to dredge a 300' wide channel from the harbour along the north of Ashbridge's Bay and divert the Don to meet the channel. Upon completion the following year, the channel is 90' wide, does not divert the Don, nor improves the sewage problem.
- 1894 • Riverdale Zoo is established. Within 10 years the zoo has 16 pheasants, 2 ocelots, a male camel, a female dromedary, a buffalo bull, 6 pens of monkeys, a Siberian bear, a young female crane, lions, and a hippopotamus which uses the oxbow pond left by the Don Improvement. The grounds are maintained by inmates at the Don Jail.
  - Nov 17: After only 27 months, passenger service ends on the Toronto Belt Line railway, likely owing to the Depression. The Don Station is purchased by the CPR three months later.
- 1898 • Ernest Thompson Seton publishes the book, *Wild Animals I Have Known*.
- 1899 • William and James Lever purchase 22 acres near the mouth of the Don and open a factory for the Canadian branch of their soap company. The nearby Toronto Baseball Grounds were often referred to as Sunlight Park after one of their brands.
  - The Don Brewery closes operations after 67 years. Parts of the building are leased to Toronto Liquid Carbonate Company.
  - The second Great Fire destroys much of the downtown core. New by-laws require masonry construction, increasing demand for brick yards.
- 1909 • Joseph Kilgour purchases the 200 acre Pabst farm on Bayview and renames it Sunnybrook Farms.
  - A Roma camp settles in the Upper Don Valley near Eglinton Ave.
- 1912 • **The Toronto Harbour Commission proposes converting Ashbridge's Bay into industrial lands, requiring the existing marsh to be drained and filled. The plan also proposed diverting the river to meet with a widened and reinforced Keating Channel but was met with objection by British American Oil Company as it would interfere with their property. The resulting amendment lead to the current right angle at the Channel. 033**
- 1913 • A group of Roma are deported by Toronto Health Officer Charles Hastings for "sleeping and living like animals"<sup>9</sup>
- 1914 • The tracks on the old Belt Line in the Moore Park ravine are pulled out to make use of their iron for the War.
  - Jun 14: The North Toronto Station is opened by the CNR in Rosedale and operates as the main passenger station until the construction of Union Station in 1927.
  - Jul 17: An incinerator named the 'Don Destructor' is built on the east bank at Dundas St East and in use for 52 years, burning approximately 50,000 tonnes per year.

WWI

Arget begins documenting the Zone in Paris, an area inhabited by the marginalized 'ragpickers' of the city.

1918	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oct 18: The Bloor Street Viaduct is open to traffic and renamed the Prince Edward Viaduct the following year in honour of Edward, Prince of Wales.</li> <li>• May 31: Mathilda Bryan and James O'Hara from Baltimore open a racetrack with a clubhouse, stables for 610 horses, and bleachers to seat 4000 people at Thorncliffe. The popularity of the track facilitated the construction of Leaside bridge so the grounds could be more easily reached.</li> <li>• <b>Eight 'Serbian gypsy' families set up camp 100 yards from Yonge St at York Mills Rd. In August, they relocate to their 'winter quarters'. 048</b></li> </ul>
1926	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Geologist A.P. Coleman publishes 'Pleistocene of the Toronto Region' demonstrating that ice had shaped the geography beneath the city. In the quarry of the Brick Works, Coleman found evidence of two ice ages and several unknown periods in between. 014</b></li> </ul>
1927	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charles Sauriol purchases a 40 hectare property at the Forks of the Don. He harvests vegetables, produces honey from his own apiary, and maple syrup from trees he had planted.</li> </ul>
1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aug 1: The North Toronto Sewage Treatment plant, west of Leaside bridge, begins operations. Wastewater exceeding plant capacity is diverted to the Ashbridges Bay plant.</li> </ul>
1931	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Kilns at the Brick Works are used as a refuge by homeless men. A shanty town known as the Jungle develops in the surrounding flats. 063</b></li> <li>• Feb 2: Oil slicked ice on the Don ignites, destroying the Eastern Avenue footbridge at Keating Street. Less than 2 weeks later a second fire breaks out.</li> <li>• Aug: The number of homeless in the Jungle grows to 400 owing to the closure of all city shelters.</li> <li>• <b>Sep: The province announces that 2500 men will be recruited to work on the Trans-Canada highway project in Northern Ontario. 061</b></li> <li>• <b>Oct: The hobo camp is demolished and the remaining residents are transferred to northern camps or temporary shelters. 061</b></li> </ul>
1932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant begins construction to intake water for the City further east, avoiding the surge of wastewater from the Don.</li> </ul>
1938	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Medical Officer of Health of East York Township bans all swimming in the Don River, though children continue to enjoy its waters, brick red from the run-off of local brickyards.</li> </ul>
1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>May 22: Queen Elizabeth and King George VI visit Toronto and make a scheduled stop in Riverdale Park to greet the awaiting 250,000 children. 068</b></li> </ul>
1943	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Oct: Carl Rabe, a German POW and former Nazi warrant officer, escapes from hospital and takes refuge in the Don Valley. 231</b></li> <li>• May: 20 huts are constructed at Todmorden Mills for German POWs. Inmates worked at the Toronto Brick Company and were sometimes taken to the nearby Todmorden Hotel bar until local residents complained. (The camp is the current site of the parking lot at Todmorden)</li> <li>• Mar 26: The abandoned POW camp buildings are destroyed by a pyromanic who set fire to every house over the course of a month, unable to be stopped by Police. Houses had already been ransacked for fixtures or anything that could be carried away.</li> </ul>
1946	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William Carlos Williams publishes <i>Paterson</i>.</li> </ul>

Great Depression

WWII



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ontario passes the Conservation Authorities Act which enables residents to request a committee funded by the local and provincial government to manage and conserve local resources. The Don Valley Conservation Authority (DVCA) is established 2 years later as a result.</li> </ul>
1950	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A report by DVCA indicates the river as the most polluted in Ontario. The report proposes a comprehensive clean-up and creation of a green belt along the river to create a refuge for wildlife and urbanites. 104</b></li> <li>Charles Sauriol and the DVCA organise annual steam locomotive trips called 'The Conservation Special.' The route travels through the valley towards Niagara Falls, attracting over 1000 people.</li> <li><b>Oct 21: The Globe &amp; Mail run an editorial on farming in the Don Valley including beekeeping in the Lower Don, with apiaries located at the base of the Rosedale ravine. 021</b></li> </ul>
1951	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nov 4: Edwin Boyd, "Tough Lennie" Jackson, Willie "the Clown" Jackson, and Steve Suchan escape from the Don Jail by sawing a nine inch opening in the soft metal bars. Using bedsheets, they lower 40' from their cells and scale the 16' perimeter wall. The group becomes known as the Boyd Gang.</li> </ul>
1952	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sep 8: The Boyd Gang escape again from the Don Jail and hide in a barn near Yonge and Sheppard. They are caught within several days. 232</b></li> </ul>
1953	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mar 11: Don Mills, Toronto's 'first modern suburb,' based on Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, is announced under the direction of wealthy entrepreneur Edward Plunket Taylor.</li> </ul>
1954	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Oct 16: Hurricane Hazel hits Toronto with winds at over 110 km/h. The TRCA is formed as a result and begins purchasing 2000 acres of flood plains around the river. 105</b></li> </ul>
1955	<p>Photographer Michel Lambeth begins documenting the Toronto public.</p>
1956	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metro removes 5 aging and ineffective sewage-treatment plants from the Don watershed and installs a new trunk sewer system to reduce the stench of the river and improve public appeal for newly created valley parks.</li> </ul>
1957	<p>The Situationist International are established from surrealist radical art collectives.</p>
1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Jul 30: Princess Margaret visits Toronto and delivers her first public address from the Riverdale Park footbridge over the Don. Days before, the City launches a hasty disinfection effort of the river, distributing chloride of lime along the banks attempting to mask the smell. 068</b></li> </ul>
1959	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flemingdon Park opens as Canada's first 'apartment city' for immigrants.</li> </ul>
1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Aug 31: The first section of the Don Valley Parkway opens; fences are erected along the highway for public safety, preventing access to the lower Don. 138</b></li> <li>The Bloor-Danforth subway line opens, using the lower deck of the viaduct.</li> </ul>
1961	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Todmorden Mills is expropriated by the municipality of East York and opens as a museum. The site contains: the Paper Mill Gallery and Theatre; the Brewery Gallery; the William Helliwell house, restored to 1867; the Parshall Terry house, restored to 1837; and later the Don Train station, relocated in 1969.</li> </ul>
1966	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Smithson publishes "The Monuments of Passic" in <i>Artforum</i>.</li> </ul>
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guy Debord publishes <i>Society of Spectacle</i>, a critique of capitalist control on everyday life.</li> </ul>

Ian McHarg publishes *Design with Nature* promoting ecologically driven landscapes with function over form.

Greenpeace and other environmental guerrilla-style activist groups are established.

American land art movement: notable works by Walter de Maria, Christo, Robert Smithson.

The *New Topographies* exhibition draws attention to photographers documenting the changing American landscape, including post-industrial sites and sub-urban sprawl.

Gas Works Park in Seattle, designed by Richard Haag opens to public, built from the remains of a coal gasification plant.

Bernd Becher starts teaching photography at Kunstrakademie Düsseldorf and influences a detached photography style.

The competition for Parc de la Villette runs in Paris, involving reappropriating the 125-acre site of a former slaughterhouse, and setting a precedent for deconstructionist urban park strategies.

Edward Burtynsky begins photographing industrial sites, starting with "Mines" and "Homesteads."

1969

• **Nov: An ad hoc group of U of T professors and students form an activist group named Pollution Probe and organize a demonstration against the polluted state of the Don River. 116**

- The Don Destructor is shut down for failing to meet newly implicated air quality standards.

1973

- Industry begins moving out of the Portlands, abandoning machinery for oil refining and coal storage, waste disposal and incineration, and heavy manufacturing.

- The Yellow Creek ravine and the bridge that crosses it at St. Clair Ave. East are both renamed the Vale of Avoca, likely after the poem by Thomas Moore.

- **G. Ross Lord dam is built under the direction of the TRCA for flood protection. 106**

- Jun 30: Riverdale zoo closes and the animals are relocated to the new Metropolitan Toronto Zoo. The site is replaced by Riverdale Farm, an education centre.

1974

1975

1976

- The original Don Jail closes for safety reasons related to the building's decay.

1977

- **Oct 9: The body of Kathy Alma Brousseau is found in the thicket near the Bloor Street Viaduct. 234**

1982

- Apr: The Don Valley Brick Works factory closes.

1984

- The Don Valley Brick Works is expropriated by the City and the TRCA.

1986

- Michael Ondaatje publishes the novel *In the Skin of a Lion*.

1987

- Discussions to close the old Belt Line Railway right-of-way and cede property to adjacent owners is met with alarm and dissuaded by the public.

- **Jun 14: Frederick Merrill escapes from the Don Jail and is suspected to be taking refuge in the valley. 233**

1989

1990

Landschaftspark in Duisberg Nord is designed by Peter Latz, becoming an icon for parks replacing post-industrial grounds.

Art and architecture group *Stalker-Lab* explores abandoned and peripheral spaces in Rome.

Ignasi de Solà-Morales publishes the article, 'Terrain Vague.'

Charles Waldheim coordinates a symposium coining the term 'Landscape Urbanism.'

• Jun 28: Erroll Davis is chased by Police into the ravine and found dead by natural causes.

• Sep: The East Don Valley becomes a designated nature reserve named after Charles Sauriol.

• **The plans for the *Ataratri* mixed-use housing development on the West Don Lands near the river mouth are abandoned owing to the high cost of pollution remediation and necessary flood protection. 223**

• 100,000 new trees are planted by non-profit groups over the next ten years.

1993 • The Gooderham & Worts distillery closes and becomes the premier filming location in Canada.

1995 • The abandoned Brick Works becomes a playground for urban explorers, raves, and photographers.

1996 • The Queen Street Viaduct is renovated to include a design by artist Eldon Garnet: a clock and the phrase, "This river I step in is not the river I stand in"

• Anne Michaels publishes the novel *Fugitive Pieces*.

1997 • **Chinook salmon are stocked by the Ministry of Natural Resources, annually placed in the East Don River at the Donald Golf Course. 121**

• Sep: Noel Harding's Elevated Wetlands water filtration sculptures are installed at the Forks.

• Oct 30: Martin Kruze, sexual abuse victim of the Maple Leaf Gardens scandal, commits suicide from the viaduct.

• **After over 400 recorded suicide deaths, a competition is held for a suicide barrier on the Bloor Street Viaduct and won by Dereck Revington with a design titled, the Luminous Veil. 152**

2000

• The Toronto Beekeeper's Co-op establishes hives at the convergence of the Gardiner and the DVP, to take advantage of the plant diversity in the Valley and along the waterfront for the bees to forage.

• Margaret Atwood publishes *The Blind Assassin*, her third novel set partly in the ravine.

2001 • Cityscape Development Corporation and Wallace Studios purchase the 13 acre Gooderham & Worts property and begin an extensive renovation.

2002 • Feb: The Lever Brothers soap factory at Lakeshore Blvd East announces close after 103 years of business. The factory building is bought by Korex in August.

• **Sep 25: Tent City residents are evicted by police under authority of Home Depot, legal owner of the site. 052**

2003

• The Don Destructor is demolished. The site is replanted with Manitoba Maple.

2004

• The TRCA relocate 35,000 m<sup>3</sup> of built-up silt and debris from the mouth of Keating Channel.

2005

• Aug 19: A storm hits Toronto causing mass flooding of the Don river.

• The Evergreen Brick Works farmers market and summer programming opens to the public.

2006

• Jul 14: Omar Wellington is murdered by a gang near Flemingdon Park. 235

2007

• Environment Canada reports the Don as the among the most polluted waterways in Canada and the most polluted in Ontario. 026

• May 8: The Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation selects Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates design as the winning entry of the Lower Don Lands competition, part of the plan to naturalise the mouth of the river. 223

• Dec: The CP Holiday train is the last official train to use the Don Branch. Metrolinx purchases the branch intending to run GO trains at a future date.

2008

• Aug: The remains of a body found in a dumpster at Lakeshore Blvd and Cherry St are identified as Andre Pellicone, accomplice in one of the largest armoured car robberies in Toronto in 1995. 233

2009

• Aug: Korex files for bankruptcy; the soap factory is vacated. 025

2010

• Apr 4: Michael Cook and Andrew Emond are arrested on charges of mischief upon being seen entering the sewers. 113

• Jul: Giant Hogweed, a noxious weed, is found in the Don Valley. 203

• Sep 25: Evergreen Brick Works grand opening. 060

• Apr: The Task Force to Bring Back the Don is disbanded by Mayor Ford. 217

2011

• Sep 27: The television series *Flashpoint* airs an episode featuring a group of teenagers held hostage by a gunman in the Don Valley. 238

• Oct: Toronto Parks and Recreation work with IMBA and TRCA to improve environmental bike trail use and maintenance. 185

2012

• Jan: Construction begins on the Pan Am athletes' villages on the former marshes of the Don.

• Jan: Construction begins on the River City Condo development. 067

• Feb 28: The body of missing girl Mariam Makhniashvili is found in the Don Valley Golf Course with indications of suicide. 154

• Apr: Mayor Ford's strict anti-graffiti campaign conflicts with the 'heritage' graffiti at the Brick Works. 248

• Aug 2: Underpass Park opens beneath Cherry Street and Eastern Ave. 066







# METHOD

*This is a story a young girl gathers in car during the early hours of the morning. She listens and asks questions as the vehicle travels through darkness. Outside, the countryside is unbetrayered. The man who is driving could say, "In that field is a castle," and it would be possible for her to believe him.*

*She listens to the man as he picks up and brings together various corners of the story, attempting to carry it all in his arms. And he is tired, sometimes as elliptical as his concentration on the road, at times overexcited – "Do you see?"*

MICHAEL ONDAATJE, *IN THE SKIN OF A LION*, 1987: 1

## PRESENCE

The aim is to indicate walking as an aesthetic tool capable of describing and modifying those metropolitan spaces that often have a nature still demanding comprehension, to be filled with meanings rather than designed and filled with things. Walking then turns out to be a tool which, precisely due to the simultaneous reading and writing of space intrinsic to it, lends itself to attending to and interacting with the mutability of those spaces, so as to intervene in their continuous becoming by acting in the field, in the here and now of their transformation, sharing from the inside in the mutations of these spaces that defy the conventional tools of contemporary design.

FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 26

Frequenting this place does not mean being there, avid to capture it, but living a few moments thanks to, and with it: in its areas of shade and light, reading there, prattling on there. Then, to seek out the preferential viewpoints, to detect the micro-landscapes and the perspectives that link them, to pinpoint and then test the 'visual and tactile scales' while consulting its 'memoirs', place names, local tales and legends, stories, history. To analyze that which exists is also to discover in the very use of places that which has been hidden by the wear and tear of everyday life and is on the way to disappearing...We have equally to bring to light the traces of new, as yet unidentified practices: thus the non-visible aspect of the manifestly visible.

BERNARD LASSUS, 'INVENTIVE ANALYSIS',  
*LANDSCAPE +100 WORDS TO INHABIT IT*, 2007: 107

Our sense of belonging, our language and the myths we carry in us remain, but no longer as 'origins' or signs of 'authenticity' capable of guaranteeing the sense of our lives. They now linger on as traces, voices, memories and murmurs that are mixed in with other histories, episodes, encounters.

IAIN CHAMBERS, *MIGRANCY, CULTURE, IDENTITY*, 1994: 19

If you listened to the voices of people on the street, what could you learn about a place?

SUSAN SCHWARTZENBERG, 'RE-CREATING THE PAST', *SPATIAL RECALL*, 2009: 56

GENARI: That is this thing of perceiving space as a heterotopia, and to put oneself in its midst like immersing oneself in the sense of loss that it might give you. To find places by looking at them from the inside...I see a very precarious equilibrium, and maybe for this reason very fertile between cognitive experience, from the geography of abandoned forms, mapping these voids, and the creative experience. That which I can't properly visualise is the type of objects and actions that you want to produce. In short it seems to me that the nodes that you pull from this are fundamental, but I don't understand how you are thinking of communicating these or you are thinking of defining them, given that the public and visibility are things that interest you so much.

INNOCENZI: Well, we don't want to produce anything, its enough that we have found these unconsciously produced landscapes. We have perceived them, crossed them, testified about them and we prefer that they remain as they are. The theme of production we haven't yet confronted in these terms, because we don't know what we want to produce. Our production is the event, the discovery of new territories.

\*

Besides coming to recognise these emergent territories, by what means can one operate within them? Or, more succinctly, how have these spaces contributed to the rearticulation of the contemporary landscape that increasingly stretches across the hyper-local and the meta-global?

FLAMINA GENARI, "INTERVIEW WITH STALKER OCTOBER 1995";  
ROME: UNPUBLISHED AUDIO TAPE". *HETEROTOPIA AND THE CITY*, 2008: 221

Far from gradually easing strangeness, intimacy heightens it.

TIMOTHY MORTON. *THE ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT*, 2012: 41



## STRATEGY

Method of this project: literary montage. I needn't say anything. Merely show. I shall appropriate no ingenious formulations, purloin no valuables. But in the rags, the refuse – these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them. [N1a,8]

\*

That is, to assemble large-scale constructions out of the smallest and most precisely cut components. Indeed, to discover in the analysis of the small individual moment the crystal of the total event. ... [N2,6]

WALTER BENJAMIN, *THE ARCADES PROJECT*, (1982): 460, 461

Montage presupposes the programming of the individual elements - in this case cells that in theory can be moved about, dismantled, and set up elsewhere - within a fixed structure conceived on a territorial scale. Each cell can be replaced without altering the nature of the program, without contradicting the overall form. ... Active participation is expected of the public using it: the maximum freedom made possible by the *terrains artificiels* - freestanding platforms that, within the serpentine-shaped structure, would provide ample space to be filled eventually with residential cells – would enable the public to become protagonists in the construction of the city and in its consumption.

MANFREDO TAFURI & FRANCESCO DAL CO, *MODERN ARCHITECTURE*, 1979: 143

From *Mnemosyne*, Introduction, p1:

“The conscious creation of distance between the self and the external world may be called the fundamental act of civilization. Where this gap conditions artistic creativity, this awareness of distance can achieve a lasting social function.”

The fate of civilization, therefore, rests on man's capacity to oscillate between the concrete imagination belonging to art and the abstractions of rational scientific thought. It is here that the individual no less than society is assisted by memory. Not that memory can create 'distance', but it can widen the interval between the two poles of calm contemplation or orgiastic surrender to emotion, by providing models for either attitude.

E.H. GOMBRICH, *ABY WARBURG*, 1970: 288

There are no facts, only interpretations.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *NOTEBOOKS*, SUMMER 1886 - FALL 1887

A wooden jigsaw puzzle ... is not a sum of elements to be distinguished from each other and analysed discretely, but a pattern, that is to say a form, a structure: the element's existence does not precede the existence of the whole, it comes neither before or after it, for the parts do not determine the pattern, but the pattern determines the parts: knowledge of the pattern and of its law, of the set and its structure, could not possibly be derived from discrete knowledge of the elements that compose it. This means that you can look at a piece of puzzle for three whole days, you can believe you know all there is to know about its colouring and shape, and be no further on than when you started. The only thing that counts is the ability to link this piece to other pieces.

GEORGES PEREC, *LIFE: A USER'S MANUAL*, 1978: 1

[T]he map doesn't indicate the action of the journey, and anyone who visits the site will not find a landscape altered by the artist, but the landscape just as it is, in its 'natural' state. So does the work consist in having made the journey? Or in having brought other people to the banks ...? Is the work in the photos shown at the gallery or in those taken by the visitors? The answer is that the work is all these things combined. A series of elements (the place, the journey, the invitation, the article, the photos, the map, the earlier and subsequent writings) combine to constitute its meaning...

(ON ROBERT SMITHSON'S *MONUMENTS OF PASSAIC*)  
FRANCESCO CARERI, *WALKSCAPES*, 2002: 156

*Le cercle des fragments ~ The circle of fragments*

To write by fragments: the fragments are then so many stones on the perimeter of a circle: I spread myself around: my whole little universe in crumbs; at the center, what?

... Then if you put the fragments one after the next, is no organization possible? Yes: the fragment is like the musical idea of a song cycle... each piece is self-sufficient, and yet it is never anything but the interstice of its neighbours: the work consists of no more than an inset, an *hors-texte*.

ROLAND BARTHES, *ROLAND BARTHES*, 1977: 92-93

Photographs, like musical notes, sing a better song when in the company of others. A single photograph is a notoriously slippery vehicle for narrative, so any photographer seriously concerned with venturing beyond a simple formalistic approach makes photobooks.

GERRY BADGER, 'THE POND BY JOHN GOSSAGE', *THE PHOTOBOOK – VOL II*, 2004: 36

## TONE

[Eclectic atlases] are heterogeneous texts (reports, photographic surveys, geographic and literary descriptions, classifications, research reports, qualitative investigations, essays and articles, anthologies and monographs, collections of plans or projects...) but similar to the visual approach. They tend to be 'atlases' because they seek new logical relationships between special elements, the words we use to identify them, and the mental images we project upon them. They tend to be 'eclectic' because these correspondances are based on criteria that are often multidimensional, spurious and experimental.

This variegated family of studies and inquiries does not believe that chaos could be a reflection of external phenomena, but rather the effect of fatigue in the conceptions of territory. For this reason the eclectic atlases attempt to construct representations with multiple entrances and they provide a counter-point to the dominant paradigm. They attack it laterally, moving simultaneously towards both physical and mental space because they believe in the existence of profound connections between forms of vision and the forms of things we see. They look on the inhabited territories [of Europe] in search of individual local and multiple codes which link the observer in each single case to the phenomena observed: the physical city, its inhabitants and the internal city of the observer.

...In the scepticism of an impersonal and synoptic view, these atlases more often use several angles simultaneously to look at the territory. They look not only from above, but also through the eyes of those who live in the space or experimenting with unprejudiced perspectives. The utmost concern is placed on not confusing the subjectivity of the real observer (we who look at the landscape or observe its representations) with the mere pretence of subjectivity incorporated in the technologies of representation.

STEFANO BOERI, 'ECLECTIC ATLASES'; *USE: UNCERTAIN STATES OF EUROPE*, 2004: 119-120

The tone is enigmatic, uncertain, hovering between a celebration of what we can gain even from such disregarded territories, and what they prove we have lost. The view is a forensic one, and we snuffle through the undergrowth like a dog following a scent. ...Whether this may be regarded as heaven or hell is left to the viewer, like much in this disturbing, poetic and deeply ambiguous book, which seems all about transgressions, aspirations and barriers.

TOBY JUROVICS, *THE POND* [BY JOHN GOSSAGE], 1985: PREFACE

[T]oday so many people seem to believe in uniqueness and individuality, and I don't understand how those could mean anything exclusively positive in architecture or art. I think we need a certain anonymity and universality in things. Otherwise they won't speak to us.

JUHANI PALLASMAA 'CONVERSATION BETWEEN JUHANI PALLASMAA AND PETER ZUMTHOR'; *NEW NORDIC*, 2012: 73

The argument of this book is that, in fact, the modernism of the past can give us back a sense of our own modern roots, roots that go back two hundred years. They can help us connect our lives with the lives of millions of people who are living through the trauma of modernization thousands of miles away, in societies radically different from our own – and with millions of people who lives through it a century or more ago. They can illuminate the contradictory forces and needs that inspire and torment us: our desire to be rooted in a stable and coherent personal and social past, and our insatiable desire for growth – not merely for economic growth but for growth in experience, in pleasure, in knowledge, in sensibility – growth that destroys both the physical and social landscapes of our past, and our emotional links with those lost worlds; our desperate allegiances to ethnic, national, class and sexual groups which we hope will give us a firm 'identity', and the internationalization of everyday life – of our clothes and household goods, our books and music, our ideas and fantasies – that spreads all our identities all over the map; our desire for clear and solid values to live by, and our desire to embrace the limitless possibilities of modern life and experience that obliterate all values; the social and political forces that propel us into explosive conflicts with other people and other peoples, even as we develop a deeper sensitivity and empathy toward our ordained enemies and come to realize, sometimes too late, that they are not so different from us after all.

MARSHALL BERMAN, *ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR*, 1988: 35





The gaze is a machine that can invent belief and can destroy what is tender. In this way it is like an animal or a season or a politics, or like the dark bosco of the park. Our scopic researches aligned us, we liked to think, with the great tradition of the natural philosophers, for whom seeing was indeed and irrevocably inexperienced, and wherein the admission of such inexperience served as an emblem or badge of belonging. What can we claim about the park, about the sorrows that are and were not our own? Nothing. We simply sign ourselves against silence. But the gaze and our researches upon it might yield a medium for a passionate historiography, building with their interpenetrations a latticework for civic thought.

...Admittedly it was a relief when we found the explanation lacking. For to continue with our research was our strongest wish. The inevitability of failure became our most dependable incentive. And as we strolled through the park to accomplish our speculation always we wondered – were we inside or outside the diorama?

LISA ROBERTSON, 'SECOND WALK', *OFFICE FOR SOFT ARCHITECTURE*, 2006: 238-9



# END NOTES



## THRESHOLD

A descent into the ravine is a step through a tear in urbanity. The *terrain vague* is a foil to the capitalist city; against a demand for order, specificity, and integration, it is disorienting, banal, erratic. Operating outside the constraints of dominant social structures, it harbours the unconscious of the postmodern city, not only an inevitable, but also a necessary rupture in the urban fabric. In this subterranean realm, the striated and measured plots of land are sporadically smoothed over by persistent nature, reclaiming its territory.

These perceived voids invite projections of desire, both at a civic scale and on an individual level, that consequently shape the space. These are grounds of negotiation, a political realm often driven more by visceral impulses than economics. They aggravate tensions typically suppressed in the city, including those wrought by violence and melancholy. Beyond the infrastructure that binds them, the city and the valley are integrated through their opposition; one fuels the experience of the other. To enter the dialogue between them is to allow a shift of identity open to confrontation. The threshold functions as a gradual filter between the two worlds, a blurring of the boundary between urbanity and wilderness. Breach this threshold patiently, vigilantly.

—

Walking along the top of the ravine, cool drafts lick at my ankles: the first seduction. Points of entry into the valley are limited, often concealed. The trees open onto a dirt path leading away from the sidewalk. The steep slope may have a long, narrow stair, the descent gradual but rhythmic. More often, the path itself begins to curve, navigating the slope. The body feels the transition and prepares the mind. My pace slows to adjust to the grade and the uneven ground. In winter, the single winding route conducts a languid choreography of strangers, converging, visible through the barren forest. Off the worn path, I pause to look for a foothold in the roots, or a branch to guide my arm. My feet struggle to take hold in the loose dirt, at times giving way to an abrupt slide down the hill. Body movement is no longer automatic.

You do not linger in these thresholds. On well-travelled routes, people are like phantoms, glimpsed as they pass, or overheard murmurs in the overgrowth. A runner darts a sidelong look at me (at this point in the ditch of the river bed) but she pretends not to see me (it's better to mind your own business here). A dishevelled couple with a tent rolled

tightly under one arm walk past several times, searching the landscape. Paths diverge, carefully segregated planes of travel: the dirt path, the asphalt walkway, the CNR, the CPR, and the Parkway become distinct in elevation and orientation. I begin to weave through the opened spaces between them, widening as the valley deepens. Sounds become disembodied: car doors slam in an unseen parking lot; a bus screeches to a halt; the train clatters deafeningly overhead. I am isolated beneath this canopy of green light under the metal trusses. Elsewhere, the noise of the city is drowned out by the drone of insects and the grated chattering of squirrels. There is a damp smell of earth in early morning dew.

The stalks of a yellow-flowered plant grow wildly over my head, straining for sun. Later I would read that they are known as 'sunchokes' and that their tubers are edible, a substitute for potatoes, but for now I am simply struck by their felicity. Surrounding objects mark an environment of contrasts. At the Beltline trail, a new wooden fence (complete with explanatory plaque) fends off a disarray of winter debris: the fallen trees shedding years of thick bark, and the young fence freshly cut. The space sheds the domination of icons. No longer distracted by cloying advertisements, my eyes adjust to take in the subtlety of vegetation: the deep folds in the bark of a crack willow, buds of skunk cabbage emerging through snow, the ashen decay of the sumac. In the river bed, I see the valley paused in collapse. Slopes with slanted trees and eroded roots are clutching at the earth, waiting to fall. The bank like a mouth of rotting teeth; slabs of concrete form crooked walls gradually loosening their hold. This is the city coming undone. (At the heart of the wreckage: a football, condom wrappers, rusted cans, and muddy bottles.)

Below the horizon, the landmarks of the city are out of sight. Even the ubiquitous CN tower is no longer visible. Wanderers become disoriented, able to lose themselves, to gradually collapse into the delirium of individual desire. Within the false safety of dense foliage, encounters are abrupt. Wanderers collide, creating a charged threshold between the figures. What had once felt like limitless space becomes segregated and defined.

In Leaside, the threshold is the thin line of a wooden fence: I cross the supermarket parking lot and duck through a gap in broken boards. Instantly, the suburban scene of cars and signage is replaced by efficient rows of train tracks. I stand on the disconnected Don Branch railway where it sidles along a CP yard still in service. Falling in step with the awkward spacing of the boards, I stop to avoid an aggressive shoulder-

height weed or to climb over a fallen tree. The thrill of quick escape! South of the Viaduct, the ridge of the Don Branch conceals a homeless camp from the paved walkway. In spite of its proximity, the general public are oblivious to this zone. Standing on the track, I occupy the liminal space between, raising suspicions on either side. Several metres north, the track is separated from the walkway by the river. My gaze locks safely with another across the divide; the river dissipates the threat of confrontation.

Scale toys with the landscape: the cramped narrow path curls beneath the bridge supports and forges intimate enclosures in the shadows of these giants. Elsewhere I am released into a wide gulf where the houses gradually step back from the path as the valley splays apart. Imposing fences with surveillance signs give way to gardens and back walls dressed with two, three, four, five decks. In the ruins of infrastructure, decay distorts the monumental and the miniscule.

Time furthers this sense of uncanny. Here, away from the arbitrary impositions of hyperreality, time is slower; space is governed by daylight and darkness, the shifting of seasons, and the silent becoming of entropy. Names carved into the bark of a tree become permanent scars. Over the years the calloused initials bloom larger than the original scratches. The trees carry their memory, lives embedded in one another.

The ebb and flow of appropriation is made evident in the resurrected and disassembled dwellings along the river bank, or in the palimpsest of graffiti still visible in the cracks of the concrete. Winter transforms the valley into a purgatory waiting for spring: the elusive grey sky divulges no time, nor the dead, damp ground. (Footprints in patches of snow are unexpectedly comforting.) Year round, the days are shorter; the sun sets almost an hour earlier than in the city, followed by a prolonged twilight. Night turns this no-man's land into forbidden territory. The learned fear I try to ignore makes me uneasy as I note the growing shadows but can't find a way out.

Continuing the walk north along the Don Branch from the viaduct brings me to the so-called half-mile bridge. There is an absurd comfort in the six-inch height of the metal rail, and the first steps are confident, hasty. I catch a glimpse through the large gaps between the beams: twenty-three metres above a shallow river and eight lanes of highway. My senses jump into sharp definition. Globes of yellow paint leap out in iridescent vitality. I feel the texture of the beams with startling clarity

through my shoes: the smooth, the barnacled, the gouged, and (to my horror) the split. Unexpectedly, it is the mundanity of the sounds of rushing cars and blithe chatter of birds that soothes my pulse. On this thread, suspended over the tide of commuter traffic, I am exposed but unseen. No one breaks from their direct gaze ahead. Safely across, I collapse with nervous relief on a mound concealing the track from the wetland. Once my breath calms, I slide down the slope to the Brick Works, and within minutes, return to the crowd, browsing fruit at the farmer's market. At night I dream of falling.



## POSTSCRIPT

This book is designed to be explored by readers, to be picked up, opened at random, and leafed through, following a thread where it catches their interest, then another. Titles and dates offer clues to narratives and themes, but the interpretation of the message is left to the reader. Though the book can be read cover-to-cover, it works best as terrain explored in pieces, small forays into the site. Repeated readings bring new connections, new experiences of the material. It is not necessary to understand how I made the book in order to unravel the content, but helps explain the format and the photographs.

—

My investigation into the *terrain vague* began by walking in Toronto, not knowing what I was looking for, or whether I would recognise it when I found it. The unexpected comfort I found in the Don Valley only provoked more questions. I signed up for every walking tour that took place in the Valley to find out why other people were here, what they knew that I didn't. In the preface to *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, Joan Didion wrote that she had the benefit of being “so temperamentally unobtrusive, and so neurotically inarticulate”<sup>2</sup> that people tended to overlook her presence. Sharing those characteristics, I intended to use them to my advantage. In between tours, I would pick an area in the valley and start walking, allowing instinct to guide me. Every time I felt a pull of familiarity, or wonder, or strangeness, I raised my camera. I thought, if I could capture the essence of this place, perhaps I could understand how somewhere so decrepit became so desirable.

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The contemporary conventions of documenting through photography can be traced from its origins through to the Dusseldorf School of photography in the mid-seventies, focused around Bernd and Hilla Becher. Heavily influenced by 1920s German New Objectivity, the Bechers systematically photographed the everyday buildings of modern society. Not since Eugène Atget's documentation of Paris over the turn of the 20th century did such banal, overlooked material demand observation. Both Atget and the Bechers avoid authorship and sentiment in search of a pure record, but their work differs by intention. Atget meticulously numbered his photographs with a code derived from library card catalogues.<sup>3</sup> He regretted his work came to recognition

through a surrealist publication, saying his photographs were not art but documents that aspired to greater things.<sup>4</sup> The Bechers pursued an aesthetic typology. Their photographs of industrial buildings create a grammar of forms with unexpected physical beauty. Freed from context and association, the forms become sculpture. They refused requests to use their work as historic illustrations.<sup>5</sup>

I learned consistency from both these approaches, acting as surveyor rather than protagonist: picturing this world straight on, with flattened perspective. I applied rules and developed sets to document the features that sculpt the valley: bridges, river banks, artifacts (as evidence of users), paths, and water.

Rule #1: Photographs must be black and white, unless colour is a key element of the study. Though I didn't have the flexibility to photograph only on cloudy days as mandated by New Objectivity, monochrome focuses attention on the forms, their texture, and how they receive light.

Rule #2: Since horizontal images more closely resemble how the eye sees, photographs must be portrait oriented. Even without manipulation in post-processing, photography is not without bias; the subject changes through the vantage point of the photographer. The unnatural frame is a reminder that this image was selected with a particular intention. Cropping a photograph, like taking a quotation, is not necessarily a lie (as Douglas Coupland infamously said) but a partial truth.

Recognising the uncanny as the instinct that drew me to take a particular picture, I turned to Sigmund Freud's essay on the subject, *The Uncanny*, written in 1919. Freud describes the uncanny as the sensation of dread or horror from "something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression. ...The uncanny [is] something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light"<sup>6</sup> or the appearance of something believed to be imaginary or secret. The term, uncanny, is translated into English from Freud's original word, *unheimlich*, opposing the feeling of "belonging to the home."<sup>7</sup> In this increasingly mobile society, we carry our homes more than ever only in our minds, which we project onto our surroundings in the hope of catching a glimpse of a familiar face. Seeking safety in what we know, we are horrified when we find it perverted or debased, as if inflicted by a personal violation. Ambiguity, an openness to interpretation, is prone to triggering the uncanny.

Rule #3: People must be indistinguishable figures in the landscape.

Unsatisfied with the sets on their own, I began to diverge from the rules. I could not remove myself from the photograph, partly because of the difficulty of that task, but also because the allure of the *terrain vague* depends on its subjective appeal.

John Gossage's photobook, *The Pond*, documents an abandoned lot and its surroundings in generic suburbia, banal on first impression. Instinctively, readers identify with the camera eye as if it were their own, provoking the sense that they are looking through the eyes of a wanderer in the landscape. Moving through his photographs, I feel I walk alone on the dirt path. I kneel to examine the ground. Curiosity shifts to voyeurism as I watch the fairground through the foliage. I'm stirred with a sense of unease by the eerie images of a town with no people. I approach a house. Every turn of the page further implicates me in this intrusion of space. In the final image, I stand in the threshold of an opened door.

More recently, I came across the *Forest* series of photographer Jitka Hanzlová. The images are of a place she knew as a child; this is her forest. She is intimate with its hallows and glades, but for us, it could be anywhere. She lends us a fantasy, somewhere we had been in a dream, but forgotten. The trees in these photographs are weightless ghosts, indifferent to our presence. The preface by John Berger notes that, true to their title, the images capture the forest: a space that can only exist between the trees. These are not testaments of past events, but "what remains unnameable... after we have made an inventory of everything that is recognizable."<sup>8</sup> Instead of freezing a moment in time, Hanzlová's images exist between time, simultaneously absent and eternal.

Both sets of photographs linger between ambivalence and anxiety, capturing Susan Sontag's observation that "we live under continual threat of two equally fearful, but seemingly opposed, destinies: unremitting banality and inconceivable terror"<sup>9</sup> wrought by a fear of violation or collapse, and perpetuated by media hype into everyday life. Jacques Lacan links this prevalent sense of anxiety to the uncanny. In Seminar X, he describes anxiety as the moment between the tap of the conductor's baton and the rise of the curtain, "a moment collapsed into waiting, preparation, 'a state of alert. ...It is this rising up of the *heimlich* in the frame that is the phenomenon of anxiety."<sup>10</sup> Hanzlová spoke of an unnameable fear as she stood safely in the forest. Perhaps it is this stillness, this waiting between moments, that draws the fear we read. It is the tension of bracing for an unknowable event – what is beyond control is most terrifying – and yet, that moment never comes. The

persistence of the uncanny indicates something of importance has been repressed, remaining in our psyche until we address this denial.

—

In my search for evidence of perceptions, I turned to excerpts: newspapers, interviews, posters, signs. I wanted to be impartial, democratically giving voice to both sides of the argument, to the silent and to the crowd. I wanted to understand its reputation, and see if it was true. The study of fragments developed into an almost paranoid attention to detail; everything became significant.

The tradition of montage inevitably includes the influential work of *The Arcades Project* by Walter Benjamin written between 1927 and 1940. Though unfinished, we can speculate on Benjamin's analysis of the emergence of modernity. Benjamin believed that society is so embedded in official culture, it would be impossible to escape its influence enough to be critical. Rather than deny this, he appropriated representations of modernity to draw attention to them.<sup>11</sup> The discontinuous editing, this montage, allowed Benjamin to make specific associations between excerpts and demanded active participation from the reader to interpret them. In this sense, the disjointed breaks are wilful gaps between reality and semblance, a pause for reaction that prevents the reader from following passively instead of questioning the work. Benjamin was critical of the closed authority of research, work presented as conclusive, rather than inviting further thought. To dissolve this barrier from the author, he involved the reader in the process: using cross-references throughout the text, the reader draws their own conclusions and bears responsibility for the critique.

During the 1950s, the radical art collective, the Situationist International, championed this disruption of passive consumption in everyday life. Their strategy of *détournement* deconstructed the tools of capitalism and the media by taking an image or article out of context, giving it new meaning. This recomposition, often devised intuitively, stripped the element of its commercial value and weakened its power. The Situationists, Guy Debord in particular, collaborated closely with Henri Lefebvre for several years. A mutual interest in the affect of urban space is evident in the Situationist emphasis on psychogeography and Lefebvre's concept of *lived* space; the individual experience of a place, as influenced by memory and representations of that space, is crucial to its perception. In the collage maps produced by the Situationists, the



city is reorganised according to how it is experienced: neighbourhoods are relocated or removed, separated by ambiguous voids with infinite possibilities for reconfiguration; the urban fabric is fragmented into a discontinuous subjective reality. The aim: break pre-conceived ideas of place, opening it up to exploration and play.

Educating the public on the subliminal influences of commercialism, in his book, *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger improves our understanding of the language of images, making us active agents in the meaning given to our lives. The book is a collection of seven essays, three of which consist only of images. Berger emphasises the influence of visual information, noting that,

Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. ...Yet this seeing which comes before words, and can never be quite covered by them, is not a question of mechanically reacting to stimuli. ...We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are.<sup>12</sup>

Unlike the Situationist maps, or the compositions of Debord's *Mémoires*, which allow text and images to drift in various orientations, in and out of clusters and dripping paint,<sup>13</sup> Berger applies a rational syntax to organise the essays. Essays featuring both text and images integrate them with equal weight. The images are not made precious, distinct from the writing, but read under the same continuous order. Throughout the book, groups in layout construct parallels and influence interpretation. Instinctively, we search for similarities, whether and how the images support the text and each other. The book is self-aware of its format, telling readers to turn the page and measure their reaction as they do. Rather than simply describe, Berger *demonstrates* the effect of images *through* the reader. With the addition of a caption, the image changes: words tend to dominate the picture, manipulating it to illustrate the sentence even if the message has nothing to do with the original image. Berger advocates that once we understand how we attribute meaning to images, we can use this knowledge to convey experience when words do not suffice.

The inadequacy of words is addressed in Lacan's theory that we are divided between three psychic realms. A child must learn a language to communicate, but to use language is to enter into an existing structure

in which the child has no control, susceptible to rules made by others. As the child moves from seeing – the realm of the *imaginary* – to speaking – the *symbolic* realm – part of their meaning is lost in translation. This is the third realm, the *real*: what is left behind.<sup>14</sup> We sense this loss though we cannot describe it, struggling with graphic or structural forms of expression, but never able to say all that we feel.

Rosalind Krauss observes a similar transition occurring through photography. The way language changes desire when we communicate, the camera lens replaces the eye in the photograph, distorting reality in the process. Unlike a drawing or map, which use social conventions to represent their subject, Krauss notes that a photograph is an index, directing the observer not only to the subject, but to something unrelated to the forms within the frame. The frame makes the photograph an innate sign, permanently severing the subject from ‘reality-at-large.’<sup>15</sup> Krauss is referring to a physical distortion of reality, the ability of a lens to magnify and sharpen perception, not Lacan’s *real*, the elusive essence of a thing, however, the chain of associations triggered by a photograph implies the presence of the *real*. Thoughts evoked by a photograph circle the *real*, touching on facets of it. Like Berger, Krauss argues that photomontage, even one as simple as an image with a caption, follows a syntax much like writing. She furthers this belief, stating that the play between elements does not have to remain chronological like words; even a spatial layout can still be reduced to the effect of one exterior on another with a gap, a fissure, between.<sup>16</sup> True representation is impossible because the *real* remains outside the grasp of language and depiction. But it can be hinted at in this space between fragments of writing and images, between the *symbolic* and the *imaginary*. In the article, ‘Eclectic Atlases’ in *USE: Uncertain States of Europe*, architect Stefano Boeri combines questions of representation with documentation of place in what Boeri terms an eclectic atlas: mixed media studies consisting of text, photos, interviews, maps. Boeri argues that even with the wealth of information available through satellite technology, maps alone cannot capture how space is perceived in reality. Relying on one type of representation does not allow for a flexible, subjective expression of *lived* space. An eclectic atlas attempts to narrow the distance between the observer and representation, “in search of individual, local, and multiple codes which link the observer in each single case to the phenomena observed: the physical city, its inhabitants and the internal city of the observer.”<sup>17</sup> The privileged Modernist viewpoint, imposing a plan from above, is replaced by a conversation about how space is perceived –

and subsequently used – accepting that space is not fixed, but fluid. The abstract form of maps, dependent entirely on social conventions, show no trace of the *real*. Through this flattened perspective, a reader may overlook qualities of a site beyond its measurable features. Boeri stresses that, as an architect, understanding how we see a place is vital to aligning our idea of what the city is with its lived reality. Anthony Vidler echoes Boeri's thought in *The Architectural Uncanny*, arguing that "architecture and lived experience share the same sources. In this conflation, the traditional opposition between an ideal project and its real application is overcome by the essential *complicity* of the architect's project and the collective memory from which it derives."<sup>18</sup> The craft of the architect is not limited to form, it must address underlying forces that inform the identity of a place in order to successfully enrich a city.

Lacan describes forming an identity as casting off what we believe no longer defines us. Although removed from conscious thought, these parts remain in the unconscious. It is our unconscious memory that is triggered by the uncanny; with the return of a long suppressed desire, comes the realisation it was never forgotten. The unconscious is constantly recording information, reconnecting words and experiences to make new associations. Literally shaped by the cultural and linguistic environments that surround us, the unconscious is not a loose field of desire, but a structured network of signs. Lacan terms this internalizing of the external world, *extimacy*. Subsequently, the reverse is also true: the unconscious only becomes visible outside us, in our response to imagery and how we speak.<sup>19</sup> Deciphering the system of the unconscious reveals truth, not motive, behind desire.<sup>20</sup> The identity of a city amplifies this cyclical process. At the core of the city is the foreign ground of the *terrain vague*, swathed in covers of self-constructed identity. Within its territory, we face the discards of a productive society: what the city expels in order to exist. Events of the city impress on the public in the form of art, media, and dialogue encountered daily. A collective unconscious, shaped by these perceptions, accrues in the minds of its citizens, influencing the decisions and policies that mold the urban fabric in turn. In the forgotten crevices of the *terrain vague*, the structures that uphold the city and the disconnect between representation and reality become particularly evident. When we lose ourselves in wandering, we depart from preconceived patterns of thought, opening our minds to new connections. We traverse this tenuous threshold between the urban conscious and unconscious, quotidian and strange.

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From this study of precedents, I set myself the challenge of how to represent the *terrain vague*. How to convince a reader of its qualities: slow, erratic, ambiguous, corrupt, yet beautiful, inexplicably compelling. Following Lacan's theory of the unconscious as language, the strategy relies on a selection of fragments that depict the site, their framing and contrast.

Composition was key. I started with rational organisation: the result was disappointing. The next attempt succumbed to a simultaneous clamour of opinions and aesthetics, schizophrenic in assembly, altogether overwhelming. With every rendition, the cycle repeated; a constant negotiation between logic and instinct ensued. The act of construction furthered the process of discovery. In its refined stages, I compiled the book as if it were a film, with thoughts of pace, tone, motif. I considered the different speeds of exploring its pages: stoically, page by page, or quickly flipping through, pausing only to look at photos and read the shortest quotes. While the text describes specific anecdotes of people and events, the photographs are intentionally vague, following their own narrative, and occasionally colliding with an article. Sometimes a photograph drove an investigation for a history, small epiphanies as I piece together the story of a place. The thesis collects perceptions of the valley; my own becomes evident in their curation and my photographs.

The work plays between the logical order of the index and the subjective interpretation of the individual. Like the unconscious, the book is highly structured, though not to standard conventions; these places are not loose in the sense of being entirely free, but they are malleable. Rearranging existing words with images attributes them new meaning. The open framework of the book demands patience to navigate, attention often lacking in a society of efficiency and ease. Movement through these fragments is complex, layered. Further to Krauss' theory, I orchestrate words and images in a spatial syntax that extends throughout the book. Neither text nor images dominate, instead acting as *symbolic* and *imaginary* counterparts. The reader fluctuates between consciously learned interpretations and the instinctive memory of an experience. The signifying chain of the unconscious, where one object references another, is simulated in the trails of thought through which the book is explored. An object's meaning in this case does not depend on its definition, but on its place in the chain.<sup>21</sup> Attempting to overcome the limits of representation, I depend on both the book and the reader. Beyond how the Don Valley is shown on these pages, an



understanding of the space extends to the pieces that come together in the reader's mind; using learned conventions, we compose mental images from written descriptions and maps, finding, questioning discrepancy. A reader cannot hold all the intricacies of this place at once, but revisits them in the book. The chapters speak to the roles of the *terrain vague*, a reading of the suppressed memories and desires of the city: evidence of failure in hidden scars; movement, the veins that run the city and when they break; the shadow of self, the abyss beneath composure.

Protected by floodwaters and topography, the ravines defied construction and therefore profit: a fracture in the expanse of unified urban territory. This exemption (and subsequent neglect by the public majority) allowed the ravine to become a site for resisting the homogenising demands of capitalism. Away from commercial pressures and acquired for preservation, the ravines are dismissed from typical expectations of public space. A public square serves to generate visible, collective movements while upholding the touristic self-perception of the city; the ravines are the unadorned alternative, introverted, concealed, and isolated. Dominant ideology releases its grip. Beneath the iconic face of the city, lines of infrastructure thicken space into layers. One surface retains its designated function, crucial to city operation, but the remaining layers are freed. The public inhabits this territory, the spaces beneath and around raised highways, disconnected sewers and railways. Playing in these unofficial spaces, not only passes time unproductively, but in leisure that refutes commercially fed desires. As we trace the inscriptions of city remnants in the Don Valley, we become accountable to consequences of environmental and social actions, the counter-face to development. Though we go to the valley in search of escape, we encounter reality, we focus on the unembellished present. Attention shifts to negotiation and we struggle with conflict, even if only within ourselves. In *The Uses of Disorder*, Richard Sennett advocates urban spaces that increase tension to confront the fractured modern identity:

The actual, immediate experience of man, in all its possible freedom and diversity, is taken to be less important than the creation of a community that is conflict free; the sense of living in the present is violated for an ideal society...

If we increase the complexity of confrontation and conflict in the city, not polarize it, the aggression, still there, would channel itself into paths that allow at least mutual survival.<sup>22</sup>

Encountering difference opens a dialogue and returns a political, rather than economic, emphasis to these public spaces. Whether the *terrain vague* is seen as a vacant lot awaiting development, or as a romanticised

opportunity for freedom, both are projections of idealism; the interest lies in the tension between these polarities, paradoxes that challenge the fragility of representation. The unconscious retains these suppressed desires to remind us of their value, desires that resurface more violently if ignored. Instead of retreating into comfort or nostalgia, we can face the wounds of memory, the flaws of our city, ourselves. The *terrain vague* relieves us of our constricting sanguine masks, even if only temporarily. We are raw, soft, alive. The book asks the reader to dwell on conflict, to embrace the depth of human emotion. The exact meaning the reader draws from the book matters less than taking an active, open position. When we recognise forbidden dimensions of ourselves and our city we choose to address reality for what it is, and by doing so, assert our place in the city.

I have been documenting the Don Valley for over a year and I confess, as I did in the opening letter, the Valley must be visited to be felt. This comes close to its representation, but still falls short. In the end, I want the book to convince the reader to go, to experience the ravine firsthand. The book is its own space, a frame that shapes perception, even if the subject is already familiar. It is safe to ascribe a place to a set narrative, mollifying discussion into a pre-conceived polemic; the challenge is to break from these assumptions by rendering the familiar, strange, to re-imagine the urban landscape and our reading of city identity and the urban unconscious. Though we cannot protect these places, we can allow them to surface, recognising their role in balancing urbanisation. The site has changed because I see it differently. With every visit to the Valley, I reconstruct my memory: imagined news and fictions rise from the empty fields, discrete but overlapping histories that accumulate into the idea of place.

## NOTES

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## TYPE

This book is set in Adobe Garamond Pro with the following variations and exceptions:

News	But the lake belongs to everyone. ...It's all about encouraging a neighbourhood's public life, Mr. Campbell says. And down there at the waterfront, he wants to make sure that public life will create a "kind of Yorkville on the water."
Theory	<b>A territory in which one perceives the transient character of matter, time, and space, in which nature rediscovers a new 'wilderness', a wild, hybrid, ambiguous state, anthropically altered and then escaping man's control to be reabsorbed again by nature.</b>
Narrative	<i>Oh where, tell me, where did the Yorkville Old Boys swim? Oh where, tell me, where did the Yorkville Old Boys swim? In River Don at Sandy Point beneath Old Sugar Loaf Hill, Near Helliwell's Bush and Castle Frank, across from Taylor's Mill.</i>
Audio Transcript	That's one way to solve the dogs off-leash - let the coyotes at them! ...You think I'm joking, don't you.
Reference	"DEATH AND REBIRTH ON THE DON RIVER," <i>CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC</i> , JUN 2011



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