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# Toronto's Hippie Disease: End Days in the Yorkville Scene, August 1968

Stuart Henderson

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Résumé de l'article

Au milieu de l'été 1968, l'idée que le district branché de Yorkville représente un bouton au milieu du visage de Toronto devient réalité: l'hépatite semble occuper le devant de la scène. Au cours des années 1960, les nombreux détracteurs de Yorkville qualifient l'endroit de quartier à risque, une "communauté symboliquement malade". Les édiles urbains en parlent entre autres comme d'une "plaie purulente" et d'une "maison de fous". Mais, avec l'apparente épidémie d'hépatite, se présente l'occasion d'implanter l'idée que Yorkville est un nouveau genre de maladie. Yorkville n'est plus malade au sens figuré, il est maintenant littéralement infecté. Au cours du mois d'août 1968, les jeunes branchés de Yorkville deviennent les lépreux de Toronto. Au mois de septembre, il semble évident que le taux d'hépatite à Yorkville n'indique aucunement qu'il y a épidémie – toute la population est contrôlée et on ne découvre que deux utilisateurs de drogues injectables parmi elle. Ce résultat signifie que la maladie est transmise par des aiguilles usagées, et non par les aliments ou l'eau, mais le dommage est déjà fait, et Yorkville ne s'en remettra jamais. Interrogation sur cette période charnière de l'histoire de Yorkville, l'article examine le rôle des médias locaux quant à l'accélération et à la propagation des peurs associée au commencement d'une épidémie d'hépatite qui, en réalité, n'a jamais eu lieu.

# Toronto's Hippie Disease: End Days in the Yorkville Scene, August 1968

**STUART HENDERSON**


## *Abstract*

*In mid-summer, 1968, the idea that the hip Yorkville district represented a pox on the face of Toronto became a kind of reality: Hepatitis appeared to be taking over the scene. Throughout the 1960s, Yorkville had been framed as a neighborhood at risk, a symbolically "sick community" by its many detractors. It had been variously described as a "festering sore" and a "madhouse" by city fathers. But with an apparent Hepatitis epidemic came the opportunity to establish Yorkville as a new variety of illness. Yorkville was no longer figuratively sick, it was now quite literally* infected. *Throughout the month of August, 1968, Yorkville's hip youth culture became the lepers of Toronto. Even though when by September all evidence showed that the Hepatitis rate in Yorkville was in no way indicative of an epidemic – all but two of the Villagers tested turned out to be intravenous drug users, signifying that the disease was being spread through dirty needles, not food or water – the damage was done, and Yorkville's hip scene would never recover. Interrogating this pivotal episode in the Yorkville narrative, this paper explores the role of local media in the acceleration and dissemination of fears associated with a Hepatitis outbreak that, really, never was.*

## *Résumé*

*Au milieu de l'été 1968, l'idée que le district branché de Yorkville représente un bouton au milieu du visage de Toronto devient réalité: l'hépatite semble occuper le devant de la scène. Au cours des années 1960, les nombreux détracteurs de Yorkville qualifient l'endroit de quartier à risque, une "communauté symboliquement malade". Les édiles urbains en parlent entre autres comme d'une "plaie purulente" et d'une "maison de fous". Mais, avec l'apparente épidémie d'hépatite, se présente l'occasion d'implanter l'idée que Yorkville est un nouveau genre de maladie. Yorkville n'est plus malade au sens figuré, il est maintenant littéralement infecté. Au cours du mois d'août 1968, les jeunes branchés de Yorkville deviennent les lépreux de Toronto. Au mois de septembre, il semble évident que le taux d'hépatite à Yorkville n'indique*

*aucunement qu'il y a épidémie – toute la population est contrôlée et on ne découvre que deux utilisateurs de drogues injectables parmi elle. Ce résultat signifie que la maladie est transmise par des aiguilles usagées, et non par les aliments ou l'eau, mais le dommage est déjà fait, et Yorkville ne s'en remettra jamais. Interrogation sur cette période charnière de l'histoire de Yorkville, l'article examine le rôle des médias locaux quant à l'accélération et à la propagation des peurs associée au commencement d'une épidémie d'hépatite qui, en réalité, n'a jamais eu lieu.*

> In theory, any visitor to Yorkville who ate in a café, bought any object or contacted *any person*, may have been exposed to the disease … which can eventually lead to death. (emphasis added)
>
> *Toronto Star*, 7 August 1968

> All sorts of guys are swearing at you if you come near them … One lady screamed at me, 'Don't *breathe* near me, you ——!' (emphasis added)
>
> "Luke the Drifter," *Toronto Star*, 13 August 1968

It's a bellybutton, a natural point of intersection. Yorkville, a tiny district consisting of two main arteries sandwiched between Avenue Road to the west, Yonge Street to the east, Bloor Street to the south and Davenport Road to the north, sits in the geographic centre of Metropolitan Toronto.[1]

And, during the 1960s this one-half square kilometre of boutiques, cafés, and art galleries also found itself at the centre of Toronto's youthful counterculture — its students, hippies, artists, greasers, bikers, and others who congregated in and around the district, enjoyed the live music and theatre in its many coffee houses, its low-rent housing in overcrowded Victorian walk-ups, and its perceived saturation with anti-establishment energy.[2] For a period of roughly 10 years, and to the distress and consternation of local merchants and their well-heeled patrons, Yorkville served as a crossroads for Toronto's youth

The author wishes to express his thanks to Karen Dubinsky and Ian McKay for their commitment to this project. This article was prepared with support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

1 Portions of this article appeared, in another form, in the *Toronto Star*, 28 May, 2006.

2 For a problematic, but comprehensive anthropological study of such identity categories, see Reginald G. Smart, et al., *The Yorkville Subculture: A Study of the Life Styles and Interactions of Hippies and Non-Hippies*, prepared from the field notes of Gopala Alampur, (Toronto: Addiction Research Foundation, 1969). For our purposes below, I shall employ such identity categories with care, recognizing their mutability while appreciating their centrality and relevance to the scene at the time. Virtually every one of my interview subjects painted Villagers inside of these four frames; only when pressed did they admit the instability of the categories.

culture, as a venue for experimentation with hip lifestyles and beliefs, and as an apparent refuge from hegemonic ideology and the stifling common-sense it constructs.[3]

The early Yorkville scene is often remembered (by both its observers and its participants) as a largely happy, even idyllic neighborhood peopled by bohemian artists, poets, and musicians, whose calm was eventually shattered by relentless police incursions, "weekend hippies," under-age girls (derisively termed "teenyboppers"), injectable amphetamines, and unabated coercive municipal pressure.[4] Indeed, as the early 1960s became the late Sixties — a paradigm shift frequently characterized (both then and now) as a swing from innocence to cynicism, idealism to nihilism — Yorkville moved beyond its role as a mere popular nuisance in the public imagination.

When Syl Apps, Chair of Parliament's Select Committee on Youth (and former captain of the Toronto Maple Leafs), famously decried Yorkville as "a festering sore in the middle of the city" in the spring of 1967, a new era was beginning in earnest.[5] By the end of that year, Yorkville was increasingly linked to violence, drug abuse, addiction, homelessness, and disease; for many of the

3 Hip and hipness are difficult, ephemeral categories. However, they are used below with a deliberate hand, and should be defined before we continue. The word 'hip' is, like the word 'cool', ancient black American argot which was, through a complicated process of cultural appropriation, brought into urban white North America in the early twentieth century. Hip, from the Wolof *hepi* (to see, to have one's eyes open), is a rare surviving slave term, and clearly retained significance among slaves living through the persistent physical threat that was the 'peculiar institution'. Thus 'hipness' refers, in its original and purest definition, to an ability to understand, to be aware, to be enlightened. Hip youth, then, in the Yorkville context, were those who sought out new ways of understanding, awareness, and enlightenment (often through drug use, alternative sexual relations and experience, and a rejection of material wealth and culture). See Clarence Major, *Juba to Jive: a Dictionary of African American Slang* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994). See also John Leland, *Hip: The History* (New York: Echo, 2004) for a fun, wide-ranging and informative account of the complicated process of hipness and American culture. It should be noted that Leland's book rather unapologetically glosses over the 1960s youth movements for no apparent reason.

4 This frame can be observed in at least three retrospective treatments of the district. See, for example, Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 210-15; Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Co., 1980), 107-44; Pierre Berton, *1967: Canada's Turning Point* (Toronto: Seal Books, 1997), 163-92. This article is part of a continuing project, a Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Making the Scene: Yorkville and the Toronto Counterculture, 1960-1970." Through my research, I have uncovered a variety of episodes and other evidence that counterbalances this romantic memory of pre-1967 Yorkville.

5 *Globe and Mail* (April 7, 1967), 1. While a player, Apps was famously pure and chaste in his lifestyle and manner. "Maple Leafs owner Conn Smythe would often introduce him at banquets as 'Syl Apps, my captain, who doesn't drink, smoke, or swear.'" Salvatore Ianni, *Syl Apps: A Maple Leafs Legend*, <www.penaltybox.com/legends/syl_apps.html, 3/15/2001>, (viewed 22 April 2006).

Villagers who had been a part of the scene prior to the summer of 1967, the Village no longer offered what they were looking for. One year later most of the earlier waves of hip youth had turned away from their former haunts — all of "the true hippies" [6] had left, according to Yorkville activist and media darling David DePoe.[7]

What remained in their stead as Yorkville entered the summer of '68 was a sizeable, diffusive assortment of young people. While many of them were committed in the same ways as their predecessors to what they took to be the hippie ideals of authenticity and peacefulness, continuing to get high on LSD, marijuana, and the psychedelic music scene, a small but crucial minority of them were experimenting with newly available, and highly addictive, injectable amphetamines. Moreover, many of these new Villagers, having traveled across great distances to make the scene, were homeless, and were perpetually suffering from the effects of privation. To make matters worse, the availability of casual sex had increased the spread of various venereal diseases, while overcrowding in Village crashpads was promoting poor sanitation and hygiene practices. Many of the issues so loudly harped upon by Apps and his ilk the previous year were now indisputably apparent.

Finally, in mid-summer 1968, the notion that Yorkville's hippie ghetto represented a pox on the face of Toronto became a kind of reality. Throughout July, Women's College Hospital (which supervised a Yorkville-based "hippie clinic" under the charmingly literal name "Trailer") admitted an unusual number of patients suffering from hepatitis.[8] Aware of rumours that this social disease was

6 This category is problematic, and prone to the vicissitudes of opinion. However, David DePoe's own romantic definition of what comprised the "true hippie" (altruism, individualism, and activism) harmonizes with most others from the period: "A true hippy [*sic*] is somebody who has dropped out of normal society because he doesn't like the de-humanization and de-personalization that goes on. Having dropped out of all that jazz he is actively engaged in trying to create a new society with more meaning. You never find a true hippy [*sic*] just sitting around. He's talking or organizing or working. He's got something going for himself …," *Voice of the Annex* (Autumn 1967): 1. In many ways, this paper (and my dissertation) aims to unpack this notion of "authentic" Village identity.

7 DePoe was profiled on the cover of the *Toronto Star*-produced *Star Weekly Magazine* in September 1967. He was given the moniker "Super Hippie" in a move he now refers to as a betrayal. David DePoe, interview by author, 20 December 2004.

8 Trailer was housed in a *trailer*, parked in an empty lot on Avenue Road, at the corner of Yorkville Ave. Run under the auspices of the Jewish Family and Child Service, Trailer was among the first street clinics in Toronto. According to Suzanne DePoe, who ran Trailer in 1968 (until she was felled by hepatitis): "My job was to basically be a referral point. So, it just required some basic organizational skills and smarts. Like, what we were there to do was to get underage kids off the streets, get bad trips treated, get them down to Queen Street [Mental Hospital] to get treated. Get people with medical problems into the hospital, and into the clinic at Women's College [Hospital]. There was a lot of V-D in the Village. Like that. So, that's what I was doing. People would, you know, stagger into the Trailer and I would deal with them." Suzanne DePoe, interview by author, 14 March 2006.

an issue in the *über*-hip Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, the clinic became concerned about the prospect of a similar outbreak.[9] Although Trailer and Women's College tried to keep their findings quiet while awaiting the results of further tests, local media were surreptitiously alerted to the possibility of a "hippie disease" at work right in the heart of English Canada's biggest city. Rather predictably for media that had become collectively obsessed with covering the tiny enclave of Toronto youth culture, they over-reacted.[10]

The next morning, front page headlines warning of the spread of a contagious, mutable form of a fatal disease likely terrified local readers. Dire admonitions to keep out of Yorkville came from all directions. Within days, "hippies," and anyone who might be associated with them, were denied service at restaurants and shops outside of the Village. Throughout the month of August 1968, Yorkville's hip youth became the lepers of Toronto. Even after all available evidence showed that the hepatitis rate in Yorkville was in no way indicative of an epidemic — all but two of the Villagers turned out to be intravenous drug users, suggesting that the disease was being spread through dirty needles, not food or water — the damage was done.[11] As fears over the degenerating character of Yorkville reached their apotheosis, the scene was delivered a killing stroke by this specious, media-exaggerated hepatitis "epidemic."

This article outlines the process whereby Yorkville became the expected stage for the performance of "counterculture," a process which saw the "Village" re-cast as a foreign territory and, eventually, a "cancer." Its main purpose is to demonstrate that with the exaggerated hepatitis "epidemic" came a long-awaited opportunity for conservative authorities (and others unhappy with the development of a hip youth centre in the heart of Toronto) to officially declare Yorkville to be a "sick community," and to initiate its "break-up." As conservative discourse over Yorkville moved from the figurative (speculation about hip irrationality, madness, and foreignness) to the literal (Yorkville as the

9 For a good, tight overview and history of the relationship between a counterculture ghetto and health crises, see David E. Smith, et al., "The Health of Haight-Ashbury" in Howard S. Becker, ed., *Culture and Civility in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Transaction Inc, 1971), 77-100.

10 The three Toronto newspapers (the *Star*, the *Telegram*, and the *Globe and Mail*) had their own particular takes on the Village scene throughout the 1960s, and it is dangerous to lump them together. If, in general, the *Star* was cautiously liberal, the *Globe* centrist, and the *Telegram* conservative, each of them offered at least one staff writer or editorialist who frustrated these general expectations. For instance, the *Star* had Ron Haggart, unrelenting champion of the scene throughout the 1960s; the *Globe* had Michael Valpy, himself a Villager and friend to the Diggers; and the *Telegram* had Sheila Gormley, who would openly criticize her paper's anti-hip stance in a 1970 book on youth and drug use. See Marcel Martel, *Not This Time: Canadians, Public Policy and the Marijuana Question, 1961-1975* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 15-16. However, in the case of the hepatitis epidemic, all three outlets reacted with a similarly exaggerated response.

11 E.W.R. Best, "Introduction," *Hepatitis in Yorkville, 1968: Report of the Co-ordinating Committee* (Ontario Department of Health, 15 September 1969), 4.

manifestation of the infectious potential of hip hedonism), the Village faced its final confrontation with a Toronto establishment bent on its destruction.

## "Making the Scene" in Yorkville, 1960-1968

By the end of the 1950s, Toronto's diminutive bohemian community began to descend upon Yorkville after having been driven out of the area around Gerrard Street, a few blocks south, when it was torn down to make room for an expanding Toronto General Hospital. At the time, Yorkville played host to a very few clothing stores and restaurants, and the flats above these establishments were often occupied by their proprietors, many of whom were recent immigrants from war-scarred Eastern Europe. Following years of post-war suburbanization projects, which had drawn many Torontonians from the core of the city further North, East, and West, Toronto's newly empty inner-city Victorian and Edwardian houses had become home to European transplants.[12] As such, 1950s Torontonians knew of Yorkville (and generally lamented its status) as an ethnic ghetto.[13]

Throughout the 1950s, Yorkville's new immigrant population established distinctly European enterprises. Among these, the coffee house was among the freshest innovations, and certainly the most significant for the future of Yorkville. For many bored students and artists, perhaps equally enamored of Baudelaire, Sartre, and Kerouac, the coffee house suggested a hip hangout unlike any previously known to the city. According to Clifford Collier, part of the first wave of Village hipsters, such tastes of Euro-flavour were a revelation: "I mean there were *never* coffee houses in Toronto," he explained. "The closest thing we had to anything fancy was Diana Sweets [a tea room]! [And] because of the Europeans coming into Toronto after the war, here were coffee houses."[14]

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12 The related processes of suburbanization and immigration verily defined Toronto's demographic shifts in the post-war period. For a detailed discussion of the distribution of immigrants in Toronto following World War II (and of the variety of challenges they were made to meet), see Franca Iacovetta, *Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). On suburbanization, see Richard Harris' excellent *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1900-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) for an account of the development of "corporate" suburbs in the post-war period. For a synthetic examination of these key processes, see Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-1960," *Canadian Historical Review* 72, 4 (1991): 471-504.

13 Mary Millichamp, daughter of a prominent Toronto family, opened a pioneering restaurant in Yorkville in the late 1940s, only to be admonished by her high society friends. As she told a journalist in the early 1960s, her friends swore up and down that they would "never patronize anything 'on that street!'" Quoted in Barbara Elizabeth Key, "The Growth of Yorkville" (B.A. thesis, York University, 1967), 32.

14 Clifford Collier, interview by author, 15 June 2006.

Toronto's City Council was generally supportive of such developments, at least at first. Yorkville, as part of a much-lauded gentrification project at work in the Bay-Bloor area, was, at least by day, becoming known as a centre for Euro-chic fashion and design, and for what was still being referred to as the "carriage trade."[15] But, after dark, European residents, shopowners, and some of their clientele took to mixing with curious youth from around the city in local coffee houses. It was through this fruitful intermingling of European émigrés, middle-class Torontonians, and Beat youth (a short-lived and vague movement comprised of aspiring poets, musicians, artists, and students from the nearby University of Toronto), that the Yorkville scene began its development into Toronto's dominant hip centre.[16]

If *hip* is forged through the alchemy of intermingled Others, a position suggested by journalist John Leland in his entertaining study of the vicissitudes of hipness in American culture, then Yorkville offered Toronto a veritable crucible.[17] Within the ranks of artists, poets, and musicians flocking to the Village by 1963 were middle-class WASPS, Jews, homosexuals, Southern Italians and Eastern Europeans, all breathing the same smoke-dry coffee house air.[18]

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15 The "carriage trade" was really a euphemism for upper-class female shopping and consumption. The predominance of expensive gown shops and artisans' boutiques in the Village throughout the 1960s suggests that many of the people frequenting the district would have been counted among the wealthier women in the city and beyond. For example, Yorkville, by 1967, was home to Helmar of London (a dress designing salon boasting a selection of imported fabrics and nine in-house seamstresses, offering gowns for between $100 and $1000); Pot Pourri (a similar, but somewhat less dear, dress designing salon); the Recamier Boutique (the owner of which traveled to Europe twice each year to buy new gowns); along with a number of "sportswear, hats, furs, and wig boutiques as well as several *haute couture* salons for styling hair, [all of which] cater[ed] to the female customer." Moreover, bath boutiques, candle shops, and stores devoted to imported merchandise and curios from India, Persia, and Japan helped fill out the short blocks. Key, "Growth of Yorkville," 41.

16 Beat identity, knotty and defiant of simple definition, must be understood as the dominant influence on what would come to be known as the Hippie identity. However, any over-emphasis on the sway Beat Toronto had in their immediate time period (say, 1957-1962) would be foolish. At their height, the Toronto Beats were but a tiny manifestation of youth identity; they were among the most fascinating to the established order, perhaps, but were by no means the vanguard of some immediate groundswell. Their greatest contemporary contribution, and the contribution with which this study is most concerned, was the Beat propensity for new, exciting, and otherwise under-appreciated innovations in the world of art, film, music, and literature. Their experimentalism contributed to an atmosphere, in those few establishments that catered to their ilk, of spontaneity and cacophonous energy. For an investigative report on Toronto's Beat scene, see *Toronto Star* (3 March 1959). For a detailed and important study of the Beats (in America), see Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), especially Chapter Six.

17 See Leland, *Hip*.

18 For example, a gay coffee house (The Mousehole), run by Clifford Collier, was a popular Yorkville haunt, and Collier recalls there being generally positive gay-straight relations in the early 1960s. Clifford Collier, interview by author, 5 June 2006. The "Greasers" (working-class

Opening their eyes to the others around them, sharing misgivings and frustrations with liberal capitalist hegemony, and aiming to devise new and perhaps less formalized social conventions, Yorkville's coffee house scenesters promoted open-eyed awareness and escape from the *mauvaise foi* they believed to have enslaved their contemporaries in the suburbs.[19]

Into the 1960s, Yorkville would emerge as Canada's expected stage for the twinned performances of youth and hip. Set apart, circumscribed by boundaries both arbitrary and ultimately significant, Yorkville became known to all as "the Village"; it was a zone of difference, a kind of unhinged space in which participants could play at alternative identity performance. Outside of the confines of the district, such apparently countercultural activities as drug use or liberated sexuality, or such countercultural aesthetics as long hair and thrift shop fashions, were read by Torontonians as performances of *Yorkville*.[20] As such, Yorkville played out for many Canadians (as thousands of young people crossed the country to take part in the scene) and for most Torontonian baby boomers curious enough to check it out, as a means to approach social rebellion merely by *being* someplace.

People, in the idiom of 1960s hip culture, used the expression "making the scene" to refer to this *being someplace*, as though it was the people, not the structures, which constituted the scenery in any given location. (*We made the scene last night around 10 o'clock; Sally made the scene a few hours later*, and so on.) There is a connotation here, perhaps hidden after decades of disuse, which suggests that these hip folks recognized the power of *presence* in creating meaning in any particular locus. The same way that an actor on a sparse, even empty stage can make the scene around her seem to respond to *her*, and not the other way around; the phrase "making the scene" can refer to the way that we, as human actors, do something of the same thing to our own surroundings.

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youth, usually of southern or eastern European extraction), for example, had begun to drift through the scene at the same time as had their Beat counterparts. Throughout the 1960s, in fact, Greasers comprised a key identity group in the Yorkville scene, despite persistent reports emphasising the exclusively hippie identity of the Village. For a subjective, but instructive insider's history of the Greaser scene, see James E. Smith, "I Wish I Was A Fish: A Search For Live Options in Yorkville" (unpublished memoir, 1972). Throughout the 1960s, Smith ran a Drop-In Centre at St-Paul's-Avenue Road United Church, on the periphery of the Village.

19 Dave DePoe recalls the early, Beat-influenced scene: "When I first started to go there in '63 it was very Beat, basically. Sort of like: you go there and you listen to poetry, music, and y'know. That year I had a friend who was a poet in residence at U of T and together we started going to Yorkville, to this coffee house where a poet could just get up and read something and then somebody would sing a couple of songs." David DePoe, interview by author, 29 December 2004.

20 Throughout the 1960s, and especially after 1966, the words "hippie" and "Yorkville" were used interchangeably in the local media: "Yorkville youth" was shorthand for hippie.

"Making the scene" in Yorkville, then, was what everyone was up to, and all the time, as the place was up for grabs, as it became a battleground over identity, meaning, and truth. In effect, the politicians, hippies, bikers, speed freaks, shop owners, and teenyboppers alike were all active participants, all performers, in the continuous making and re-making of *Yorkville* throughout the 1960s, as each tried to imbue the stage with his own meaning.[21] The competing heuristics variously endorsed and propagated by each interest and identity group all shared the same central point of reference: Yorkville was a cultural theatre, the central stage on which this pageant would play out.[22]

Into the mid-1960s, the coffee house scene exploded in Yorkville. Offering outdoor patios and cramped stages for the suddenly cool folk musicians and poets who claimed the neighborhood, the coffee houses were, very early on, a kind of hip theatre.[23] As local artists hung their neo-Dadaist work on the walls, as poets stood spontaneously upon their benches and shouted impulsively concocted verse, as folksingers sat scribbling their thoughts at tables littered with crumpled papers and cigarette ash, any visitor to the scene could see that at least part of the allure of the coffee house was its spectacle of difference.[24] Indeed, many commentators on the scene emphasized this very point

21 In making this claim, I am following gender theorist Judith Butler, and in particular her assertion that "there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender ..., identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results." In her view, gender is not a stable, foundational feature of one's identity, but rather the expected manner in which one might act. Gender (like other apparently immutable aspects of identity) is a role to be performed. The common-sense performances of gender, race, and class correspond to hegemonic ideology which suggests (or, in some cases, decrees) the manner in which to act within the boundaries of normalcy. See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990), 25. See also Butler's elaboration on these themes in *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

22 As Joel Lobenthal has suggested (echoing arguments made by Judith Butler, among other identity theorists), in contrast to the more staid fashions of the 1950s, in the 1960s "the individual remade himself daily, trying out new stances of dress and behavior, internalizing some, [while] keeping others at arm's length as theatrical alter egos." Joel Lobenthal, *Radical Rags* (New York: Abbeville Books, 2003), 217.

23 For a lively history of the Yorkville coffee house and music scene, see Nicholas Jennings, *Before the Goldrush: Flashbacks to the Dawn of the Canadian Sound* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1997).

24 A cousin to Beat experiments in uniting disparate forms of art into messy harmony, neo-theatre events called "Happenings" were increasingly popular in the Yorkville of the early 1960s. Often held in local galleries such as the Isaacs' or the Sobot, but just as habitually held at apartments, lofts, and coffee houses such as the Gaslight or the 71 Club in the budding scene, "Happenings" were designed around neo-Dadaist preoccupations with juxtaposition, surrealism, and disorder. A transparent attempt to refigure the expected manner (grave and conventional as it is) of viewing art in silent, empty, cold galleries and museums, "Happenings" were designed to err on the side of chaos. Denise Leclerc and Pierre Dessurealt, *The Sixties in Canada* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2005), 167.

— Yorkville was a symbiosis of Beat artistry and foreign energy, an exciting, theatrical, and ultimately participatory experience for the tourist.

As a geographic location, Yorkville was figuratively cut off, re-cast as a strange land, an unstable and subversive zone of decadent self-absorption and vice. As a business district it was teetering on the precipice, apparently about to fall, its impending economic doom always blamed on the young, rowdy Villagers. As a metaphor for a Canadian failure to control an increasingly inscrutable and volatile youth culture, it was potent, vivid, and fearsome. In an era when so many of Canada's institutions were forced to grapple with the huge influx of young people brought on by the Baby Boom — no fewer than seven major Canadian universities were established in this period[25] — here was another, more impromptu institution: a pseudo-college for the disenchanted, the thrill-seeking, the alienated, the stoned.[26]

To the horror of many Depression-raised parents, no one group took to the scene more readily than middle-class, suburban youth — at least at first. As a consequence, hip Yorkville, after a few years of rather quiet, below-the-radar expansion, grew into a *bona fide* cultural concern by 1964. As Beatlemania swept across North America, media were paying more attention to middle-class youth culture than ever before; the public was curious, and the City was getting nervous. By the following spring, as huge street parties began to characterize weekend nights on Yorkville Avenue, Toronto's City Council turned activist in an effort to curb the development of the scene.[27]

In perhaps the most telling example, the Council tried to curtail Yorkville's popularity by instituting a moratorium on licenses for coffee houses in the spring of 1965, an act which served as a rather effective bit of accidental propaganda for young people, who found it to be incontrovertible evidence that Yorkville was, indeed, cool. Meanwhile, after yet another street party had been characterized by local media as a "riot," undercover and beat cops were dispatched to fill the streets in impressive numbers, charged with rooting out the "rowdys" and the "toughs," along with the drug-takers, the drug dealers, and the prostitutes whom many feared had set up shop in the area.[28] City Council

25 Doug Owram establishes this point at every turn in his study of the effect of the Baby Boom on Canadian society. Owram, *Born at the Right Time*.

26 A similar phenomenon occurred in late nineteenth-century London. See Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 20.

27 In May 1964, a Village of Yorkville Association sponsored Festival was brought to an embarrassing conclusion as police and young people sparred in the streets when the milling crowds refused to disperse; see *Toronto Star* (16 May 1964). Six months later, a massive sing-along in the street became another bloated fracas as police tried to clear Yorkville of revellers; see *Toronto Star* (19 October 1964), and *Globe and Mail* (19 October 1964).

28 Even City Councillors took to patrolling the streets, both to prove that the police presence was maintaining order, and as part of a fact-finding project designed to "curb rowdyism," the misleading term widely used by local media to describe hip youth in 1964 and 1965; see *Globe and Mail* (31 May 1965).

even tried to institute a by-law prohibiting motorcycles — a move which demonstrated its fundamental misunderstanding of the hip scene — hoping that this would help return Yorkville to its predestined path toward boutiques, upscale galleries, sophistication, and affluence.[29]

Such attempts to coerce hipsters to forego Yorkville for fields less fair met with virtually no success — every summer fresh hordes of young people flocked to this supposed hippie wonderland, the centre of all things counterculture in Eastern Canada. The local media played a key role in all of this, shining their often blinding light on the tiny area, illuminating all aspects from the tawdry to the fascinating, from the raucous to the sublime. Indeed, their role was crucial, and did not go unnoticed by local merchants: one boutique owner complained to the *Globe and Mail* in the spring of 1965 that "every newspaper that re-counts trouble on Yorkville 'is like an ad for every punk in town to come down here.'"[30]

In Yorkville, political identity (including performances of racial, sexual, and class identity) and what I shall refer to as the phenomenon of *local-foreignness* operated in interwoven, indivisible ways.[31] Widespread sexual promiscuity (including whispers of prostitution and homosexuality) and pervasive drug use were generally cited as the two worst results of allowing Yorkville's "character" to be shaped by the hands of an unchecked and morally bankrupt culture.[32] While there was no "Jack the Ripper" to terrorize the Yorkville denizens, no outright personification of the danger of social transgression, the ever-present threats of hippie sex fiends, speed-peddling greasers, and hulking bikers preying on poor, out-of-pocket girls emphasized an atmosphere of pervasive, or at least potential, sexual violence and moral depravity which was readily exploited by

29 See *Globe and Mail* (10 April 1965). Motorcycles were a weird choice. Although some biker gangs (especially the Satan's Choice and the Vagabonds) were beginning to hang around the area in the spring of 1965, they hardly constituted a major thrust in the burgeoning hip scene.

30 *Globe and Mail* (28 May 1965).

31 Walkowitz refers to a similar phenomenon as "urban spectatorship." I have chosen to redefine this category in order to emphasize the significance of *foreignness* in the case of Yorkville. See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delights*, 15-24.

32 The role of young women in Yorkville as victims of hip sexual depravity was assumed, expected, and underlined in most every study of the district after 1965. The truth behind this position is debatable, largely because it relies on a simplistic view of sexual power, and the conservative assumption that a young woman's sexual innocence was to be protected at all costs. As Alice Echols, Beth Bailey, and a growing number of other astute commentators on the hip 1960s have underlined, sex and gender in the context of the "sexual revolution" must be viewed through the prism of an expanding moral panic over female sexual agency. See Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000), especially Chapters Four and Five. See also Beth Bailey, "Sex as a Weapon," in Peter Braunstein, ed. *Imagine Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 305-24.

both local media and City Councilors.[33] In the view of Deputy Chief of Police Bernard Simmonds, Yorkville was little more than a roiling cauldron of class and sexual devastation. "They come to the Village as good kids," he lamented, "mixed up perhaps, many from fine homes, and these beatniks grab them and within two days they are *ruined*."[34] (emphasis added)

It was the very foreignness of Yorkville's culture that truly set it apart and established the district as a zone of difference. From the moment a place is set apart as separate, as somehow distinct, it becomes a *de facto* foreign territory.[35] At the most basic level, the casting of Yorkville as a *Village*, while tied to a historical reality (Yorkville *was* a Village until it was annexed by the city in 1883), served to establish the district as a zone of local-foreignness, at once present and removed from the local and the foreign contexts.

As semiologists have argued for decades, once a thing is named, is bounded through language and common-sense, it is only then rendered comprehensible.[36] This thing can now be characterized (as 'thing'), its meaning(s) debated, evaluated, (mis)understood.[37] In terms of geography, such a process is doubly important, because often we are speaking in the abstract when we discuss place — we may never have been there, and are never going to go; but because it is named, we are able to develop the sense that it *is*. And so we develop mental maps, onto which we can project our understandings of these places. Geographer

33 By the mid-1960s, white slavery narratives began to colour the discourse surrounding young women in the Yorkville scene. As ever more young women turned to Yorkville for fun and community, the assumption that they were being held powerless, under the sway of their hippie (male) oppressors, forced to take drugs and have "free" sex, cropped up with increasing frequency. This frame was particularly apparent in the autumn of 1967 — for a concise example of the association between Yorkville and sexual violence/depravity, see *Globe and Mail* (2 November 1967). For more on white slavery narratives, and a historical example of their use to frame illicit drug use in Canada, see Catherine Carstairs, *Jailed for Possession* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

34 *Globe and Mail* (2 November 1967).

35 George Chauncey, in his landmark work on gay culture in New York City, demonstrates the multiplicity (and the overlapping) of such *de facto* foreign zones inside the modern cityscape, a characteristic which enables Others to float in and out of local and foreign contexts, and which underlines the mutability of spacial meaning. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

36 See especially, Jacques Derrida, *The Ear of the Other*, Peggy Kamuf, et al., trans. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

37 Crucially, as Judith Butler has elaborated, "[The] name, as a convention, has a generality and a historicity that is in no sense radically singular, even though it is understood to exercise the power of conferring singularity." Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 29. In this way, appelation is a profoundly powerful act — it is both to endow a thing with a recognizable individuality and to establish its social and political (not to mention historical) context/meaning. It must be understood to have one and many meanings simultaneously, each politically and socially constructed, each bound to interpretations of common-sense in a particular context.

Peter Jackson has argued that such maps of meaning "are ideological instruments in the sense that they project a preferred reading of the material world, with prevailing social relations mirrored in the depiction of physical space."[38]

Because Yorkville was understood as a place in which flourished both subversion and dissent, the map of meaning through which the area was read by most observers was reflective of this common sense. In other words, hegemonic distrust and fear of cultural and social dissent fostered a treatment of Yorkville as a distinct, local-foreign land — a common-sense view which served both as a warning to some to stay away, and, importantly, as an invitation to the curious to come and partake.[39] This process, in turn, helped to inculcate the characterization of the Yorkville youth culture as somehow unfathomable, alien, and dangerous.

Sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll (the hip holy trinity in the 1960s) characterized the (foreign) activity that was "Yorkville" in newspaper editorials, magazine articles, and television exposés.[40] In most media treatments of the scene after 1965, "free love" (or, in the crudest sense, free *sex*) was an expected Yorkville pastime, drug use defined participation and conferred status in the Village scene, and rock'n'roll (having recently supplanted folk music) was the soundtrack to experiences both psychedelic and sexual. In fear, frustration, and palpable fury, City Council (and untold numbers of Torontonians) watched as their every attempt to legislate the young people out of the district seemed not only to backfire, but to actually incite *more interest* in the Yorkville scene. And, through it all, the numbers of shaggy-haired and peasant-skirted Villagers grew while their activities became ever more outlandish. To the more conservative Council members, Yorkville was being lost: lost to a swelling youth culture increasingly obsessed with the weird, the subversive, the irrational.

These were young men who refused to work, and young women who refused to be ladies; refusals of class privilege, cultural imperatives and norms, and even the most central tenets of the "civilized" society fairly defined the

38 Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 186.

39 For many, what they saw in Yorkville was precisely what they wanted to see: a hip wonderland, a subversive slum, fresh ground for business. The notion of tourism and of "the tourist's gaze" is, of course, appropriate here. As Karen Dubinsky has shown with regard to the tourist *über*-destination of Niagara Falls, the meaning of a particular destination is, at any given moment, as mutable and as shifting as sand or smoke. Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999). See also John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage, 1990).

40 Marcel Martel, in his recent study of marijuana legislation in the 1960s, focuses a great deal of his attention on Yorkville, as did most observers in the period. Yorkville acted as a crucible, a test tube for the study of marijuana and other drugs as young people devoured them. Martel's fascinating *Not This Time* offers an in-depth discussion of the meteoric rise of drug consumption among teens and young adults.

scene.[41] To many onlookers, having so recently lived through the calamity of a world at war, Yorkville and its Villagers were maddeningly incomprehensible. In 1965, Horace Brown, a prominent Toronto Alderman, actually referred to the neighborhood as "a foreign country," after touring it with media in tow, sparking wide media-driven debate over Yorkville exceptionalism and the apparent Generation Gap.[42] But, the Yorkville-as-a-foreign-land-taken-over-by-teenagers frame was not malevolent enough to dissuade the curious from stopping in. And so, City Council, their conservative wing represented by former Mayor and all-around hippie-hater Allan Lamport, turned away from the associations with foreignness in 1967, and began to emphasize the unclean, unshaven, and generally unkempt aesthetic of hip youth in their efforts to dispose of all of this hip magnetism.[43] Soon enough, in the bloated rhetoric of at least a handful of City Councilors, this inflamed population of hip youth was said to constitute a kind of social disease, "a cancer that is spreading through Metro as more teenagers crowd in from around the nation."[44] Yorkville, they began to argue, wasn't just a foreign, morally toxic zone of difference; it was an *infection*.

Many young people, invited to engage with what they had been taught was *their* place, *their* community, couldn't help but be swayed by the politicization of youth caught up in this discourse. If young people are localized, their activities characterized and categorized, their identity is then *politicized* as different, foreign, and deviant. As a result, a central ideological shift — part of a process which had begun with the Juvenile Delinquency preoccupations of the 1950s and which approached its apotheosis with the counterculture in the 1960s — saw youth culture re-cast as a political project.[45]

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41 One recalls Michel Foucault's argument that madness has traditionally been understood as (or, at least associated with) the inability (or lack of desire) to be productive. Michel Foucault, "The Birth of the Asylum," in *The Foucault Reader*, Paul Rabinow, ed. (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 141-67. Indeed, the refusal of work was a central concern for conservative responses to (and disdain for) the Village scene. In the most extreme example, City Controller Herbert Orliffe famously suggested in the Spring of 1967 that Yorkville's "undesirables" should be put into Work Camps: "If Work Camps were established … it would instill in them a sense of discipline." *Globe and Mail* (12 May 1967).

42 This saga played out in the local newspapers between 27 May and 10 June 1965.

43 Allan Lamport made no bones about his disgust with the hippie scene. Indeed, his very role as a member of Toronto Council in 1967 and into 1968 can be reduced to his efforts to eradicate the hippies from Toronto. See *Christopher's Movie Matinee* (Mort Ransen, National Film Board of Canada, 1968). See also its sister film, *Flowers on a One-Way Street* (Robin Spry, National Film Board of Canada, 1968).

44 *Toronto Telegram* (17 April 1967).

45 English professor Leerom Medovoi has recently published an important book on this topic, a survey of the juvenile delinquent in the immediate post-war era and his centrality to the development of the youth as political project. This fascinating study carefully lays out the inexorable trajectory between the Beat rebel of the early 1950s to long-haired hippie of the late 1960s. Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels*.

As cultural historian Peter Braunstein has underlined, by the late 1960s, youth was widely appreciated to be an ethic, even a *performance*, not so much about age as it was about spirit.[46] And youth, like Yorkville, was accessible to all — that is, if you were up to the performance. Considered in this way, the battle for Yorkville was both a battle for the physical space *Yorkville* and the meaning of that space. Could Yorkville be liberated from its overlords? As the popular Hollywood film *Wild in the Streets* cleverly exploited, by the mid-1960s the political dimensions of youth were — following black writers such as Eldridge Cleaver and Frantz Fanon – being expressed in terms of a Third World-ism, as if youth were an identity (even a race) in need of liberation from the repressive colonizing establishment.[47]

In the new conservative discourse, hip, foreign Yorkville was a community at risk, overwhelmed by a symbolically sick population. This apparent sickness was manifest in what appeared to be the Villagers' insane pride: a pride taken in their lack of interest in work, their austere lifestyles, their general disdain for social conventions, their propensity toward beards and other conspicuous body hair, and their embrace of psychedelic drug use as a radical avoidance of reality (that is, their refusals of hegemonic performances of gender, race, class, and religion).

In 1967's so-called Summer of Love — a season re-packaged as an advertising slogan — unprecedented numbers of young people flocked to the Village from all over the country, bumming rides in overcrowded vans from Shediac, Thompson, or Hay River, and arriving to find the greatest sustained party of their young lives. A Canadian parallel to the American obsession with San (be-sure-to-wear-some-flowers-in-your-hair) Francisco, the Yorkville scene had become a cultural firestorm, dividing many Torontonians (and Canadians) over the value of this urban youth centre.[48] August 1967 led to some very loud and public events, which seemed unlikely to stem the flow of interest in the Village, or the hip youth who claimed it as their own. First, charges of police brutality dogged the local force (after a non-violent protest over Yorkville's

46 "No longer simply an age category, youth became a metaphor, an attitude toward life, a state of mind that even adults could access." Peter Braunstein, "Forever Young: Insurgent Youth and the Sixties Culture of Rejuvenation," in Peter Braunstein, ed., *Imagine Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 243.

47 Black Panther guru and astute cultural commentator Eldridge Cleaver voiced this particular trend very early on, while still in prison: "The characteristics of the white rebels which most alarm their elders — the long hair, the new dances, their love for Negro music, their use of marijuana, their mystical attitude toward sex — are all tools of their rebellion. They have turned these tools against the totalitarian fabric of American society — and they mean to change it." Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (New York: Delta, 1968), 75.

48 San Francisco's Summer of Love is best explored in Alice Echols' essay, "Hope and Hype in Sixties Haight-Ashbury," in her book *Shaky Ground: The Sixties and its Aftershocks* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 17-50. See also Scott McKenzie's anticipatory anthem *San Francisco (Be Sure to Wear Some Flowers in Your Hair)* (Raven Records, 2004).

traffic problem turned into a paddy wagon free-for-all), prompting the public to face the issue of repressive anti-hippie coercion. Second, Allan Lamport's campaign of vitriol and insult culminated in a series of farcical face-offs between the Diggers (a group of political hippies led by a media-savvy Villager named David DePoe) and members of the City Council at which etiquette and hygiene were the hot button topics of discussion, suggesting to many liberal-minded Torontonians that the Council was badly out of touch on these issues.[49] Third, in a hotly reported national story, it was suggested in the House of Commons that while two National Film Board camera crews were at work documenting the whole wooly experience of hippiedom in mid-town Toronto, they (backed by government funding) had been complicit in illegal activities in the district.[50]

Amid this surge in public interest, Villagers began to perceive a change in the air — by the end of the year, it was not uncommon to hear Villagers declaring that Torontonians had witnessed the end of their scene. Citing media over-exposure, overcrowding, poverty, and the pernicious (and recent) influx of amphetamines and drug-addicted teenagers, many frustrated Villagers tolled the death knell amid the fallen autumn leaves.[51] In San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury, the hip old guard had already symbolically killed the Hippie, holding a mock funeral in early autumn as a statement on the co-optation and commercialization of the scene, and the saturation of the district by media, municipal, and other unwanted attention.[52] But what of Yorkville? Since winter was never a particularly hopping season in the Village — cold, rain and snow tended to

49 The transcript of the meeting reveals the centrality of this issue to Lamport: "But you refer to the word *dignity*. Now that's a very good word. A number of them there [as he points to the thirty-or-so hip onlookers] haven't been washed for weeks. Now, they aren't seeking dignity, are they?" See *Christopher's Movie Matinee*. One representative article explained the meeting very deliberately as a clashing of two distinct worldviews, effectively ridiculing them both, reducing the respective arguments to "Love and opting out vs. the need to wash." *Globe and Mail* (18 August 1967). See Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, and Berton, *1967* for overviews of this fractious two-month period.

50 In 1967, the National Film Board of Canada sent a film crew to Yorkville to study the district, its counterculture, and its nightlife. The plan was simple: observation of the Yorkville scene in an effort to explore the curious forms of social rebellion taking place in mid-town Toronto. However, while the crew was at work (filming what would become *Christopher's Movie Matinee*) it became clear to everyone that more was at stake here than just a collection of weird young people vying for freedom. As political tensions began to rise leading up to the protests of late August, another film crew was sent in (under the direction of the late Robin Spry) to chronicle the deepening conflict. When the late-August protests turned violent, there were allegations that the film crews had helped to incite the mêlée to enhance the entertainment value of their respective documentaries.

51 See, for example, *Globe and Mail* (4 November 1967); also see *Globe and Mail* (23 November 1967).

52 See Echols, *Shaky Ground*, 46.

frustrate the ascetic and frugal lifestyle of many indigent hippies accustomed to sleeping where they lay during the balmy summer months — all eyes were turned toward the following summer.

**Hepatitis Attacks!: Yorkville, the Hippie Quarantine**

In mid-summer 1968, Yorkville became the very "cancer area" that Allan Lamport and other conservative City Councilors had claimed it to be.[53] Throughout July, Dr. Anne Keyl of Women's College Hospital (through her role as supervisor of Trailer, the "hippie clinic" in Yorkville) admitted an "unusual number" of patients suffering from hepatitis, most of whom, "both in-patient and out-patient, were associated with the Yorkville district."[54] June Callwood, persistent hip ally and landlady at hippie shelter Digger House, explained Keyl's role in fostering the appearance of an epidemic:

> Dr Anne Keyl … she was sympathetic …. And she wanted to know what was going on in Yorkville. She was worried about their health and [for me, it was:] *finally, here was the establishment starting to worry about them*. She was in her fifties, a short stout woman, plain spoken. And when I told her about the conditions, the health condition of these kids, she was appalled. Then somebody came in [and was] diagnosed with Hep B. And she took off on it, huge. Everybody had to get immunized.[55]

Keyl (and her staff) met with the Medical Officer of Health for the City of Toronto and the Provincial Epidemiologist on 30 July, and then again on 2 August, where it was concluded that, although "the number of cases of infectious Hepatitis reported in Toronto in July 1968 … was still less than half the number reported in July 1966," the right move would be to undertake a survey to try to determine the extent of hepatitis in Yorkville.[56]

According to the final Report of the hastily assembled Hepatitis Co-ordinating Committee, published in September 1969, "Subsequently, two unforeseen events took place, either of which would have been sufficient to transform the 'quiet' survey into a Front Page news story":[57]

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53 In late August 1967, Lamport made this important comparison: "I took it upon myself to talk to these people called hippies. Now, they're not all bad, not all the kids are bad. But, sometimes you get a cancer area … and we're trying to ferret that out." *Christopher's Movie Matinee*.

54 Best, "Introduction," *Hepatitis in Yorkville,* 1.

55 June Callwood, interview by author, 11 March 2005.

56 Best, "Introduction," *Hepatitis in Yorkville*, 1

57 Ibid.

> On the afternoon of the first survey clinic (August 2), at least two newspapers received telephone messages advising that the clinic would begin work that day and suggesting that this would be a good opportunity for a news story. The second incident was the wide distribution in Yorkville, on August 5, of a typewritten single-sheet flier headed, "Danger! Danger! Danger! Hepatitis." [See Figure A] The source is unidentified but the news media were in possession of copies in time for the daily papers of August 6.[58]

This well-timed invitation was actually the brainchild of Wilfred (Bill) Clement, chief pharmacologist at Queen Street Mental Health Centre, and popular Yorkville character. Following a particularly unproductive meeting with local health officials, Clement took matters into his own hands:

> I recall being in a meeting [on Yorkville and hepatitis] with the people from Toronto General and Women's College Hospital ... The nice ladies from Women's College Hospital were asking the Province to put up the money for needles to score the blood. The Province doesn't want to pay for it. This goes on for half an hour — they're arguing about the fucking spikes![59]

Clement, infuriated by this apparent lack of interest in helping the Villagers — Toronto's hospitals were notorious for their indignant response to hip youth and their health issues — was also dumbfounded that the Province wouldn't pay for the needles necessary to measure the spread of the illness.[60] "We're talking about maybe 1000 dollars," he explained recently. "We were also talking about an epidemic that we were trying to nip in the bud. That's the whole purpose — we're going to nip this fucking thing in the bud. [Hepatitis] is a drag!"[61] In the end, Women's College Hospital found the money to buy the needles, but not before Clement, enraged by the apathy he had witnessed in the meeting, had alerted the local press to the situation.[62]

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58 Ibid., 2.

59 W.R. Clement, interview by author, 5 March 2006.

60 A full-blown study of the "Health of Yorkville," while allowing that some doctors and nurses (and hospitals in general) had begun to grapple with effective ways to approach the "complex task" of treating Yorkville youth, lamented that "others appear to have no motivation to adapt to the problems created by widespread drug use and have virtually atrophied to the point of consistent irrelevance." This project was born of the confusion and interest surrounding the 1968 Hepatitis fracas. Merrijoy Kelner, et al., "The Health of Yorkville" (unpublished report for the Department of Behavioural Science, University of Toronto, 1970), 72.

61 W.R. Clement, interview by author, 5 March 2006.

62 Ibid. Clement, it should be stressed, still maintains that the exaggerated approach taken up by the medical authorities in their effort to contain the possible spread of Hepatitis was the right move.

DANGER! DANGER! DANGER!

HEPATITIS

INFECTIOUS HEPATITIS IS AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS DISEASE. WHEN THERE IS NO TREATMENT FOR IT 50% OF THOSE CONTRACTING IT WILL DIE. 20% OF TREATED [*sic*] FOR IT DIE, MAINLY BECAUSE TREATMENT IS BEGUN TOO LATE. IF TREATMENT IS BEGUN IMMEDIATELY, AN ALMOST TOTAL RECOVERY RATE COULD BE OBTAINED. THE EASIEST WAY OF FINDING OUT WHETHER YOU HAVE HEPATITIS IS BY TAKING A BLOOD TEST. THE TEST IS FREE, PAINLESS AND FAST.

DOCTORS WILL BE TESTING IN THE TRAILER AND IN FRONT OF THE GRAB BAG TONIGHT (AUGUST THE 5TH) FROM 9 P.M. TILL 2 P.M. [sic]

HELP STOP AN EPIDEMIC.

_____THE TRAILER[63]

*Figure A*

63 Author's reproduction of original flyer; in Best, "Introduction," *Hepatitis in Yorkville*, 2.

Trailer played a central role in the effort to contain the hepatitis outbreak, being (with The Grab Bag, a popular convenience store catering to local hippies) among the first spots in the district to offer free testing for the disease.[64] The incendiary leaflet, it must be assumed, was designed to coax certain otherwise indolent Villagers into action on this potentially devastating issue. Yet, in constructing the possibility of a hepatitis epidemic as a kind of foregone conclusion, the flyer acted as the first successful *anti*-advertisement to the district. And, Clement's alerting of the media both to the flyer and to the hepatitis testing stations helped to re-establish boundaries around Yorkville, and to re-enforce the perception that it was a community in crisis. With this abrupt hepatitis epidemic came the opportunity to establish Yorkville as a new variety of sick community: Yorkville was no longer figuratively ill, it was now quite literally *infected*.

Almost immediately following the initial newspaper articles of 3 August, the Villagers began to evacuate. Although the first report in the *Toronto Star* made it plain that the suspected cause of the outbreak was needle-sharing, it also explicitly claimed (incorrectly) that intravenous drug use was a typical hippie behavior: "Ten doctors from two Toronto hospitals spent last night in Yorkville looking for cases of a form of Hepatitis *often found among hippies*. The disease is believed to be transmitted by hippies using contaminated hypodermic needles."[65] (emphasis added) The *Globe and Mail* went a step further, referring to an apparent epidemic of "a little known variety [of the disease] that has come to be known as *hippie Hepatitis*."[66] (emphasis added)

Meanwhile, many members of the Toronto Police, hugely overrepresented in the Yorkville district in their efforts to curb illegal drug activity, vandalism, and underage vagrancy, became concerned that their beat was hazardous to their health. When the Yorkville detail lined up to get their prophylaxes against infection, photographers from local newspapers caught the images that would define the episode: a throng of uniformed police (read: the establishment) queuing up to get the shots needed to protect them from infection (read: the counterculture).[67] To the casual observer, there was no question: Yorkville was indeed infected with a hazardous and unpredictable social disease. The only way to safely visit the Village was by getting immunized against its pernicious effects.

As the Trailer and the Grab Bag established their testing stations, reporters and observers from various media took up their vantage points in the Village.[68]

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64 For more on the role of Trailer in the daily lives of Villagers, see: John Kileeg, *Village Service Unit for Alienated Youth: The 'Trailer' in Yorkville* (Report to the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1968).

65 *Toronto Star* (3 August 1968).

66 *Globe and Mail* (3 August 1968).

67 See, *Toronto Telegram* (8 August 1968); and *Toronto Star* (8 August 1968).

68 The shopkeepers at the Grab Bag had taken to wearing surgical masks, a point that the *Toronto Star* was quick to document. *Toronto Star* (8 August 1968).

And, because frenzied reports of a probable epidemic were floated by doctors and police even before the results of blood testing came back, reporters were left with a very easy front page headline for the following Tuesday morning: "Hepatitis among Villagers now an Epidemic, Doctors Fear."[69]

Toronto was about to get a crash course in epidemiology. A combination of Serum Hepatitis (today known as Hepatitis B) and the more communicable Infectious Hepatitis (Hepatitis A) was apparently found in up to 20 Villagers on that first weekend.[70] While the Serum form of the liver disease had been expected (as it was well-known to be communicated through needle-sharing and sexual contact), the second form was not. The evident presence of Infectious Hepatitis, which could be spread through contaminated food, water, human contact, and a variety of other media, threatened to move the epidemic beyond the boundaries of hippiedom.[71]

A.R.J. Boyd, the Medical Officer of Health for the City of Toronto, was quick to make it clear in press statements that Infectious Hepatitis had yet to be conclusively found in Yorkville, and he emphasized that until it was found, the word *epidemic* was being misused. "And," he cautioned, "the word epidemic is itself sometimes misleading. All the word means is that a great many more cases of a certain disease are showing up than is usual. So far, that is not the case with Hepatitis. After all, there have been some years we've had 500 reported cases of the disease."[72]

Rather than heeding his words, reportage of the apparent epidemic continued unabated — and Dr. Boyd, along with those City Councilors who took up his line, was castigated for dragging his feet.[73] Even on 8 August, when Boyd was forced to admit that two cases of Infectious Hepatitis had been conclusively found among the Villagers, he still refused to bend to pressure from the press (and, increasingly, the community at large) to dub the situation an epidemic. He also attempted to clarify the muddied results of the initial rounds of testing in Yorkville, which had come back variously reporting up to 500 possible cases of the disease: "[These] blood tests are inconclusive," he stressed. "The same test could be positive if someone were beaten up and badly bruised. It just shows tissue damage. I want more than that. The picture is still not at all clear."[74]

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69 *Toronto Star* (6 August 1968).

70 *Globe and Mail* (5 August 1968).

71 According to June Callwood, "Everybody had to get immunized. And, it was a nasty shot — my son Casey who was 6 or 7 years old at the time had to be immunized because he was with me all the time at Digger House." June Callwood, interview by author, 11 March 2005.

72 Best, "Introduction," *Hepatitis in Yorkville*, 1

73 *Globe and Mail* (7 August 1968).

74 Ibid. (8 August 1968). This story appeared on the front page.

Suzanne DePoe (sister of David DePoe) had a unique perspective on the "epidemic." As one of a very few full-time volunteers at Trailer, DePoe was alerted to the prospect of a hepatitis predicament very early on. She recalls:

> What happened is that they were getting some sick kids in [Keyl's] clinic with liver functions off, and they figured out it was Hepatitis, and they knew that because of the way [hippies] lived in communal houses and probably the hygiene wasn't that great and Hep A spread so easily that they had to get them [tested]. So, that was my next job: pinching sick kids off the street and getting them into the clinic for blood tests.[75]

But, her proximity to the disease — she had, for weeks prior to August 1968, been working with the Villagers who came to Trailer seeking help and advice — proved to be a problem when, very early on in the development of the outbreak in August, she was counted among the two initial cases of Infectious Hepatitis:

> And then *I* got Hepatitis. I got taken out just as it got big. You see, I was getting a blood test once a week because I was dealing with them [sick Villagers]. And the minute my liver function went off the tiniest bit they whacked me into isolation in Women's College [Hospital]. And there was a picture of me in the *Globe and Mail* in bed in the hospital.[76]

And so, the young woman became a *cause celèbre* for a media and public who were, by now, very familiar with the name DePoe, and its close association with the Yorkville scene. Clement is quick to remind us, "needless to say [their father, CBC newsman] Norman DePoe was decidedly pissed off!"[77]

Meanwhile, the nefarious tourist activity that was *Yorkville* was being explicitly re-constructed in media reports, and likely in the minds of many frightened Torontonians, as potentially lethal. Just *going* to Yorkville could kill you. The *Toronto Star*, on 7 August, underlined this characterization with a dire front page pronouncement: "In theory, any visitor to Yorkville who ate in a café, bought any object or contacted *any person*, may have been exposed to the disease, a liver infection which can eventually lead to death."[78] (emphasis added)

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75 Suzanne DePoe, interview by author, 14 March 2006.

76 Ibid.

77 W.R. Clement, interview by author, 5 March 2006. The DePoes are the children of Norman DePoe, then among the best-known journalists in the country, having been chief parliamentary correspondent since 1952, among other highly visible assignments. At this time, both children were estranged from their father. Still, his shadow was cast over them at every turn, hugely influencing the press' interest in following any story related to their name. See Allan Levine, *Scrum Wars: The Prime Ministers and the Media* (Toronto: Dundurn Books, 1993).

78 *Toronto Star* (7 August 1968).

The three local newspapers (the *Toronto Star*, the *Toronto Telegram*, and the *Globe and Mail*), not often in agreement on the Village scene, now united in painting a grim portrait of a community in peril. As the apparent numbers of victims escalated — almost 150 people, including as many as 6 policemen, were reportedly felled by the disease by 9 August — editorials appeared, critical of the City for its slow response to such an obvious catastrophe.[79] Before the end of the week, the Province had taken over the investigation "because people in Yorkville may have spread the disease outside the city of Toronto."[80] While Dr. Boyd attempted to quell the fears of a frightened public by blaming the press for overzealous and inflammatory reportage,[81] downtown hospitals were overrun by spooked kids, "desperate" for a test.[82] Fear, knowing no boundaries, was hardly confined to Toronto: it was reported that three days after the initial accounts of the Yorkville outbreak, a public swimming pool in London, Ontario (some 200 kilometres away), was being drained as a "precautionary measure."[83]

By the following Monday, the Province of Ontario was formally asking the public to "stay out of Yorkville," and appealing to them to "satisfy their curiosity at a later date."[84] Businesses began to suffer. Coffee houses and rock'n'roll clubs sat empty. There were reports that, even in 30-degree heat, cars passing through Yorkville were rolling up their windows.[85] One Villager, who provided the pseudonym Luke the Drifter, explained to the *Star* that hippies were being treated as pariahs, more then ever before, on the streets surrounding the Yorkville district: "All sorts of guys are swearing at you if you come near them. They all think you're going to give them Hepatitis. One lady screamed at me, 'Don't breathe near me, you ——!'"[86] On 12 August, York Council voted five to four to ask the Province to close off Yorkville to the general public — establishing a makeshift quarantine — and to order all of the restaurants and coffee houses in the district to close down.[87]

Fears of diseased hippies spreading their infection throughout Metropolitan Toronto, along with an apparent desire to keep countercultural youth in one place, culminated in the scuppering of a project to build a badly-needed youth shelter at the corner of Queen and Bathurst Streets, about four kilometres from Yorkville. Originally *for* the project, if only grudgingly and apprehensively, the

79 Ibid. (10 August 1968).
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid. (8 August 1968).
82 Ibid. (9 August 1968).
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid. (12 August 1968).
85 Ibid. (13 August 1968).
86 Ibid.
87 *Globe and Mail* (13 August 1968).

Queen-Bathurst Merchant Association had now turned vehement in its attempts to quash the venture. Armed with the profoundly effective (apparent) evidence that hippies carried an infectious and lethal disease, the Association petitioned Mayor Dennison and Controller Margaret Campbell to shut down the plan. "We said we would go along with the shelter," explained George Starr, president of the Merchant Association, "but that was before the sickness."[88]

Even local celebrities found themselves subject to a new kind of prejudice. Three members of the psychedelic rock band Kensington Market, among the biggest draws on the Toronto scene, were asked to leave a coffee shop on Bloor St. (at Lothian Mews, just adjacent to Yorkville) because they looked like Villagers. "I don't care too much about who we serve," explained Stephen Kefkoto, manager of the Coffee Mill, "[b]ut, you know — the Hepatitis scare. They were obviously Village residents. Usually they don't come in here."[89]

For businesses in the Village, it was not so much a question of turning people away as *attracting* them. On the first Friday after the outbreak was reported, it was estimated that the crowds on Yorkville Ave. were but one-tenth their usual size. Coffee houses and other hangouts were sparsely populated, and dining spots were reporting a dip (by up to 80 percent) in reservations. As Marilyn McHugh (of the Penny Farthing coffee house) put it, "The whole street is down."[90]

By 15 August, blame for the outbreak was ascribed to the lax laws, which had allowed Yorkville to become a hotbed for infection. As a result, City Controllers concluded that "stronger laws [were] needed to put down hippies." Now afforded the opportunity that many on the Board of Control had been looking for — a viable reason (and workable mandate) to rid Yorkville of its hippie population — the move to clean up the district was underway. "As strange as it may seem," speculated Controller Fred Beavis, "this [hepatitis outbreak] may have done a lot of good for Yorkville."[91]

In a sense, Beavis' assumption was correct: hip Yorkville was beginning its long goodbye, fading into the murky twilight of the late 1960s. The hepatitis outbreak was just another signpost along the way, but it was the one which clearly marked the beginning of the end. Following almost a month of constant media and municipal announcements that it was the epicentre of an incurable infection, hip Yorkville would never recover.

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88 *Toronto Star* (14 August 1968). Elsewhere in this edition, a headline ran, "Nail her death certificate all over Yorkville": a man whose wife had been felled by Hepatitis four years previously was anxious to do anything he could to alert people to the dangers of the disease. Neither he nor his unfortunate wife, it should be noted, had ever even been to Yorkville.

89 Ibid. (13 August 1968).

90 *Globe and Mail* (10 August 1968).

91 Ibid. (15 August 1968).

Yet the truth is that the famous Yorkville hepatitis "epidemic" never really took place. When, more than a year later, the Report by the Co-ordinating Committee for the Ontario Department of Health was published, it admitted that the vast majority of the (very few) cases of the illness were easily traced back to the unsanitary practices of intravenous drug users, never more than a small minority in the Yorkville scene, the basic point that Dr. Boyd made all along. In fact, the Final Report concluded that, of the total of 32 patients hospitalized for probable hepatitis during the outbreak, "the 27 who were classified as *probable* [Serum] Hepatitis and the three as *possible* Hepatitis used drugs intravenously. The remaining two, who did not use drugs intravenously, [were] classified as probable infectious Hepatitis."[92] According to one clinical account which was included in the Final Report, only 25 patients with a diagnosis of hepatitis were admitted to Women's College Hospital during the period 3 July to 30 September — a period three times the length of the "epidemic" episode. Of these 25 patients, 20 were male, and the age range spanned 16-27, with a mean age of 19. Only *one* of these patients did not use any drugs, but the remaining 24 *all* used amphetamines intravenously.[93]

All of the turmoil and confusion, the fear and anxiety, it would seem, was massively embellished.[94] There was no epidemic — rather, there was, as the Medical Officer of Health had maintained throughout the three-week panic, a minor outbreak that was virtually confined to intravenous drug users, and had nothing to do with the water, food, or sanitary practices of the vast majority of Villagers.[95]

## The Aftermath

In late summer 1968, amid the din of the hepatitis "epidemic," *Canadian Welfare* magazine published the substance of a speech given to the Women's

92 J.C. Sinclair, "Clinical Aspects, Section II: Review," *Hepatitis in Yorkville, 1968: Report of the Co-ordinating Committee* (Ontario Department of Health, 15 September 1969), 10.

93 Caroline Hetenyi and F.M. Hill, "Clinical Aspects, Section I: Clinical Report," *Hepatitis in Yorkville*, 1968, 7-8.

94 Callwood maintains that Anne Keyl did the right thing by raising the spectre of epidemic, because we will never know if she stopped it in its tracks by acting so deliberately. "But she got all the shots, she did it in the Trailer, set up a little clinic there, and everyone thought she was overreacting. But, there *wasn't* an epidemic. So, did she nail it, or was she overreacting? We'll never know, but there wasn't an epidemic." June Callwood, interview by author, 11 March 2005.

95 The immediate fallout from the "epidemic" on Yorkville businesses and hangouts was, as was pointed out above, dire; but it was its combination with the more organic result of the end of summer vacation which served to devastate Yorkville merchants in the following months. According to Bill Clement, "It was the end of August; it was a natural event. Go home, have baths, get haircuts, go to school. I mean: these are *middle class* kids!" Bill Clement, interview by author, 5 March 2006.

Canadian Club by hippiedom's most famous middle-class ally, June Callwood. Discouraged, and nearly hopeless, Callwood's speech unleashed upon her audience of upper middle-class, mostly white and Christian women, a hail of horrific and damning revelations. Opening with a reminder that she had spent the past months playing landlady to Digger House, a shelter designed to house the kind of young people who "disgust" her audience, Callwood's agenda appears to have been to attack her addressees for holding to the erroneous belief that all hip youth were responsible for their lot as street kids. Not so, she explained, before going on to describe these "children" as "society-damaged." The fault for their predicament was, according to her assessment, anyone's but their own.

"Let me tell you who they are," Callwood began:

> They are the loneliest, most frightened people in this land … They are the children of alcoholics and prostitutes and child-beaters; they are the children no one wanted in the first place; they are the children who went to eleven schools and lived in 14 foster homes and can call any woman mother; they are the children of middle class parents whose own despair and ambition and anxiety occupied all their attention, with nothing left over for a child; and of the parents who truly thought that love is something that can be given in the form of toys and television sets.[96]

According to Callwood, this "damaged" youth culture, comprised of unfortunates from all social classes, all walks of life, was "the visible mark of our disgrace [as Canadians]."

But Callwood's pronouncements, vividly realized and rhetorically insistent, were based on a contentious view that "the original hippie movement" (which she brazenly romanticizes) had come and gone, leaving behind a "*new wave* of badly mangled and desolate kids who now form the core of the movement."(emphasis added) Her argument (which she maintains today) was that these "original hippies" — like the "true hippies" mentioned by David DePoe, above — were concerned with "trying to find room somewhere on this crowded earth and practice simple generosity, from the heart and to strangers [sic]," while these new hip kids were merely troubled pretenders to that fine pursuit. "They have the aspiration to be beautiful, loving people," she explained, "but their mental and emotional faculties are almost destroyed. They could imitate, but they could never understand" those "original hippies" and their lofty goals.[97]

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96 June Callwood, "Hippies," *Canadian Welfare* 44 (September-October 1968): 17.

97 A year later, Callwood's writing on the scene had darkened to the point that her feelings of horror, frustration, and helplessness were left exposed, stark, and naked at the fore. "The regulars now," she wrote late in 1969, "are those too tired to move. Plugged into drugs that are killing them slowly, they languish. They came to find love, but it's gone, and what can you do? As they decay, the police pick them over; so do the dealers who cut the product with poisons and the thugs who take the girls and sell them." June Callwood, "Digger House," in W.E. Mann, ed., *The Underside of Toronto* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), 123-30.

Callwood's case, that whatever the hippies had represented had evaporated sometime after the summer of 1967, although surely refused by many Villagers who were offended by this generalization, gained credence in the context of a post-hepatitis Yorkville. By mid-summer 1969, the conservative daily *The Toronto Telegram* even went so far as to declare that Yorkville's "hippies are gone." The article, entitled "Yorkville Re-visited," took a retrospective view of a by-gone era, an era which was said to have reached its zenith during the highly publicized "Siege of Yorkville" in August 1967, that two-week period characterized by sit-ins, confrontation, and police overzealousness. But, at the *Telegram*, this zenith had come into focus only with a little perspective: "[L]ooking back now from the distance of two years, the famous hippie sit-down in the middle of Yorkville Ave takes on another coloration. It seems, if anything at all, rather quaint."[98] Written on the occasion of the end of the last of the criminal trials of participants in the protest — David DePoe had been recently acquitted of two counts of causing a disturbance — the article reads like a sinister eulogy. Casually reducing the phenomenon of Yorkville youth culture to a quadrumvirate of interrelated (perhaps identical) shorthand, the article related, but certainly did not lament, that since "David DePoe is gone, the hippies are gone, the Yorkville of 1967 is over, [and] the trials have ended," Yorkville can now move on.[99]

If, in 1966, one could be said to be performing "Yorkville" by donning hippie garb and smoking drugs in suburban Lawrence Park, by 1969 to do so would simply be to perform as "hippie." The idea of a specific hip space was losing relevance, ceasing to carry any deeper meaning. Performances of hipness — from the outlandish clothing to the heretofore underground psychedelic music, from the spread of dope through public schools and universities to the liberalization of sexual relations amongst young people — were no longer specifically tied to Yorkville in the public imagination.

And so, the notion of a "Yorkville youth" took on new connotations in these years, as people like Callwood emphasized the essential differences between the new Villagers and the so-called original wave of hip youth who had colonized the Village. No longer was "Yorkville youth" shorthand for "hippie"; by the end of the summer of 1968, it had become synonymous with a certain needy, distressed and alienated portion of the counterculture: its homeless, its disturbed, its junk-sick, its infected. And the truth is that from 1968 to 1970, as developers tightened their hold on the district, as police managed to arrest ever more Villagers on dope offences, as disease and addiction were spread thick as oil on water over the dwindling numbers of young people who haunted Yorkville's all-night restaurants and cafés, the Village community fell into a complicated, and often bleak downward spiral into depression.

98 "Yorkville Re-Visited," *Toronto Telegram* (22 July 1969).
99 Ibid.

Moreover, Yorkville was so closely associated with hip behaviour and identity, an association especially evident in the local press' emphasis on "Villagers" and "Yorkville Youth" as specific identity categories, the death of the Yorkville hippie scene, after the events of August 1968, was read by many observers as the death of the hippie phenomenon itself. It didn't help that most of the Villagers who would otherwise have been spending their days and nights very visibly on Yorkville Avenue and Cumberland Street had found a new, invisible home at nearby Rochdale College. The highly experimental College — an 18-storey apartment complex and "free school" completed in 1968 at the corner of Bloor and Huron Streets, not half a kilometre from Yorkville — began to gobble up Villagers immediately upon its inception in September 1968 (just as the hepatitis scare wound down).

Off the streets, effectively erased from the visage of the city, Rochdale's hip scene operated as a (mostly) self-contained, even self-reflexive unit. Throughout the 1960s the Village scene may have been *metaphorically* cut off from Toronto, tied to a map of meaning that treated it as a circumscribed island of difference within the wider cityscape; but Rochdale actually *was* cut off. Its inhabitants cloistered (some rarely ever left the building!), under a kind of self-imposed exile from the wider community, Rochdale in some ways represents the failure of integrationist politics in the hip world. But, in a very real sense, it *was* the end of the Yorkville scene.[100] Yorkville increasingly appeared as a hip ghost town, its hippies suddenly less conspicuous, less obtrusive, no longer milling about on the sidewalks of Toronto's tiny boutique sector in all their numbers.

The hepatitis epidemic (that never was) offered depth and authority to the view that Yorkville and the hippies were played out. The "true hippies" were gone, and the new ones were sick, infected, "damaged." The petals thus off the flower, the Yorkville activity was associated more and more with the new Villagers, people like "Beatle Bill" and "Murray the Speed Freak," well-known to many in the scene toward the end as exemplars of the scourge of speed (methedrine) and indigence in the Village. According to Suzanne DePoe:

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100 Rochdale became Toronto's new epicentre of hip — improving on Yorkville in a variety of ways (no cops, no parents, no politicians, no snow, no money, fewer hassles) and re-creating, apart from live music, the best of what the Village had to offer (plentiful drugs, abundant sex, like-minded young people, a sense of community). Rochdale was the pushbroom that swept through the Village in the late Sixties, carrying most everyone away. See the documentary *Dream Tower* (Ron Mann, National Film Board of Canada, 1994), for a limited but useful overview of the relationship between the end of the Yorkville scene and the rise of Rochdale. See also: David Sharpe, *Rochdale: The Runaway College* (Toronto: Anansi, 1987); Henry Mietkiewicz and Bob Mackowycz, *Dream Tower: The Life and Legacy of Rochdale College* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1988); Ralph Osborne, *From Someplace Else: A Memoir*, (Toronto: ECW Press, 2003).

> Beatle Bill was the most famous speed freak in Yorkville. Oh, and Murray the Speed Freak. There was Murray and Beatle Bill. They're probably dead. They were characters around the Village, so people knew them. They were social. Well, Beatle Bill wasn't social. He was just famous because he did so much fucking *meth* that nobody could figure out how he was walking around, you know? And his teeth were rotten. It's what *meth* does. His general health was terrible. These guys were *young*, too!

In post-hepatitis Yorkville, with Villagers such as these now carrying the "counterculture" mantle, allies of the scene slipped into the shadows, eventually disappearing from sight altogether.

The end days of hip Yorkville saw the hurried development of hotels and other commercial enterprises**,** further distancing the Village from its quaint early 1960s atmosphere. Rents went up, forcing more artists, students, and otherwise under-funded young people further away from the little district. Police crackdowns on drug use (especially speed) were stepped up; biker violence was more common, and gang rapes at their hands were being reported with alarming frequency.[101] When the *Health of Yorkville* report (begun as an offshoot of the hepatitis study of 1968-1969) came out in 1970, it left little doubt as to the sorry state of the majority of the locals it surveyed. But, it also maintained that whatever Yorkville had been prior to the hepatitis outbreak of August, 1968, and whoever its Villagers had been, *it* was no longer anything of the sort, and *they* were all gone.[102] Into the 1970s, Yorkville was quickly developed into the very district the City Fathers had always wanted it to become: a bastion of consumerism and conspicuous affluence.

Ultimately, the hepatitis "epidemic" serves as a lesson in civil responsibility. How often must we fall prey to such "epidemics," such media-driven panics over impending calamity designed to buoy conservative policy initiatives? In this final major episode in hip Yorkville's brief narrative, we see the destructive power of a media-driven system (merely in its adolescence in the late-1960s) which, however unconsciously, uses fear to produce political results. For fear, like liquid, runs downhill; from a trickle to a torrent, its momentum grows steadily.

Be mindful of what you drink.

* * *

101 David DePoe, in recalling the role of bikers in the scene after 1968 emphasized their taste for sexual violence, "The Vagabonds [motorcycle club], I mean, they did things that we didn't like. Like gang rape. You know? They would call girls a *splasher*. And they'd take her to their clubhouse and they'd, ten guys would, y'know, basically *fuck* her, and that's what they did." David DePoe, interview by author, 20 December 2004.

102 Kelner, et al., *The Health of Yorkville*.

**STUART HENDERSON** is revising his PhD dissertation entitled *Making the Scene: Yorkville and the Toronto Counterculture, 1960-1970*. He teaches a seminar on North American youth culture in the Cold War era at Queen's University.

**STUART HENDERSON** révise actuellement sa thèse de doctorat intitulée *Making the Scene: Yorkville and the Toronto Counterculture, 1960-1970*. Il donne aussi un séminaire sur la culture des jeunes nord-américains pendant la guerre froide à l'Université Queen's.