CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This final chapter draws together and summarizes the major

conclusions and contributions of this study, many of which have been

discussed in the preceding eight chapters. These are discussed under

four headings: methods and approach; sense of place; sense of place -

defense of place; and approach to planning and development. In add-

ition, since this is an exploratory study and raises many new questions,

this final chapter also identifies some fruitful avenues for future

research.

i. Methods and Approach:

> In contemporary humanistic geography we profess concern with
> probing beyond the superficial, with revealing the meanings,
> values, and intentionalities permeating existence in space.
> Yet there is a regrettable paucity of empirical work in this
> realm. It is time for more of us to venture forth into the
> field. We can contemplate our navels only for so long.[1]

> All formal scientific geography that is concerned with the
> relative location and description of phenomena and regions
> presupposes a geography of immediate experiences of the lived
> world. Such an experiential geography is differentiated into
> places according to our experiences of particular physical
> settings and landscapes and our intentions towards them. This
> is an authentic geography, a geography of places which are
> felt and understood for what they are--that is, as symbolic
> or functional centres of life for both individuals and communi-
> ties. It is a geography that is manifest in a diversity of

[1] Graham D. Rowles, "Reflections On Experiential Field Work,"
in Humanistic Geography: Prospects & Problems, eds. David Ley and
Marwyn Samuels (Chicago: Maaroufa Press, Inc., 1978), pp. 190-191.

> man-made forms and landscapes, forms which are in accord with their physical and cultural settings, which have humanness in their scale and their symbols. Above all it is a geography which is primarily the product of the efforts of insiders, those living in and committed to places, and a geography which declares itself only to those insiders or those willing and able to experience places empathetically.[1]

By investigating one phenomenon of the lived world, sense of place, this study seeks to make just such empirical contributions to experiential and humanistic geography.

Sense of place--i.e., the feeling of belonging in and having a deep emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning--is essentially an individual and subjective phenomenon, which can only be adequately investigated by studying particular individuals and how they relate to particular, personally-significant places. Although, by identifying the major components of sense of place and the dialectical links between sense of place and defense of place, this study seeks to generalize beyond the particular people and particular place under scrutiny, it also emphasizes that such generalizations must remain firmly grounded in individual experience of the lived world. Sense of place, like experience of place generally, is also a multi-faceted phenomenon, which is built-up from various modes of experience: it is formed not only by visual, but also by auditory, olfactory, tactile, kinaesthetic and even taste sensations; and it is fashioned not only by direct perception, but also by memory, fantasy, vicarious experience and so on. Any study of sense of place, therefore, must try to tap these various modes of experience. In addition, it takes time to know a place and to develop a sense of place, both

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[1] E. Relph, Place and Placelessness (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 117.

because the place changes and because the person in the place changes over time (over the course of the day, the year and the years). Any study of sense of place, therefore, must be sensitive to and take into consideration such changes over time. Finally, sense of place is a relatively unexplored phenomenon. Although writers on the subject have illustrated its importance and have drawn examples from many cultures, many periods of time, many parts of the world and many types of places, there has been a singular and regrettable lack of detailed studies of sense of place among people in one place. Because of the nature of sense of place, this study adopts, as much as possible, an experiential perspective—i.e., attempts to understand the phenomena of sense of place and defense of place from the perspective of the experiencing individuals, using their own words and actions as clues to how they relate to their particular place. In addition, in order to explore and understand the complex, holistic, multi-faceted nature of sense of place, this study presents a detailed case study of a particular group of individuals (Toronto Islanders) and how they relate to a particular place (Toronto Island).

In order to satisfy these conditions and to accomplish these ends, the posture of "empathetic insider" was adopted; individual Islanders were the focus of observation, interviewing and document analysis); and a research design which permitted the data itself to suggest new themes and original ideas was formulated and observed.

Notable among the methods employed was participant observation, a method that has been used extensively by anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and others, but only relatively infrequently by geographers. In order to approach understanding the Island from the

posture of an "empathetic insider", to study Islanders' sense of place

and defense of place from an experiential point of view and generally

to understand the full range of meaning that the Island holds for Is-

landers, it was deemed essential to experience intensely Island life

at first-hand (under all conditions, at all times of day and at all

times of year) and to come to know a variety of Islanders at a deeper,

more personal level than would have been possible by other methods.

In addition, in an exploratory study like the present one, a flexible,

open approach was deemed essential--one that would encourage the dis-

covery of new ideas and generate new hypotheses. Flexibility and

ability to get close to the data (to get closer to the subjects' view

of the world) are two frequently mentioned advantages of participant

observation. The participant observation conducted for this study oc-

curred in two phases: living on the Island for a period of several

months one summer; and extensive visiting of the Island over a period

of several years (at all times of year, under all kinds of conditions)

to observe meetings, interview Islanders, attend special events and so

on. The potential advantages (such as flexibility and intensity of

experience), disadvantages (such as possibility of bias and length of

time required), and problems (such as entry, data processing and

stress) associated with this type of research were discussed at

length earlier. For researchers interested in studying sense of place

and other phenomena of the lived-world, participant observation should

be seriously considered.

A second research method deemed essential to this project was

extensive, relatively unstructured, formal, in-depth interviewing--

a method more familiar to geographic researchers than participant

observation. These interviews (with Islanders and politicians) were a vital complement to the participant observation activity, because they enabled countless leads to be followed up in more depth and with greater precision (since all interviews were tape-recorded); because they enabled various observations and various comments made by other members of the community to be corroborated; and because they enabled the research to proceed in areas that would have been impossible to research by participant observation alone (e.g., Island history or private behaviour or privately-held opinions about sensitive topics). The possible advantages, disadvantages (such as lack of representativeness, truthfulness or accuracy) and problems (such as data processing, effect on Islanders' morale and the "conduit problem") associated with this type of research were also discussed at length earlier.

In conclusion, this study attempts to contribute to geographic research not only by its substantive findings (summarized below), but also by its methods and approach.

ii. Sense of Place:

This study of sense of place among Toronto Islanders presents copious evidence (which supplements the evidence provided by other writers on the subject) that sense of place is a phenomenon of importance. Throughout this study, evidence is presented that Toronto Islanders do in fact feel a sense of place. Not only their words (which are quoted extensively), but their actions indicate this: their personal reactions to the destruction of former homes and parts of the Island that used to be inhabited (e.g., illness following upon being forced to move, refusal to return to the site of former homes, breaking down when revisiting the empty sites), their refusal to move in more recent

years, and their long fight to remain on the Island, all indicate that many Islanders do experience a strong attachment to the Island--a strong sense of place. It seems clear, therefore, that where it exists, sense of place describes not a superficial, but a deeply felt and deeply significant link between people and the places they live and or experience. To destroy callously that link (e.g., by eradicating the place as it is known and loved) risks creating serious emotional, social, psychological and even physical health problems. (See also "Approach To Planning and Development" below.)

Beyond this, this detailed study of sense of place among individuals in one particular place concludes that sense of place among these Toronto Islanders is composed of six major components: sense of history, sense of identity, sense of community, sense of environment, sense of control and sense of change. Devoting one chapter to each component, this study describes each component, provides evidence that Toronto Islanders do indeed experience each component, analyzes the Island and Islanders in terms of each component and analyzes the dialectical links between each component and defense of place. (See below "Sense of Place - Defense of Place" for discussion of this latter point.) This study, therefore, demonstrates (by constant reference to detailed observations and comments from individual Islanders) how each general component of sense of place may be applied and analyzed in a particular place and may serve as a guide to conducting future studies of sense of place.

Sense of history is defined as the awareness of and appreciation for the history of a particular place--the people, locations, events, legends and place names significant for that particular location.

Every place, it is argued, has its own history, and knowledge of that history provides a strong link between people and places. In the case of the Toronto Island, that place history is very colourful and distinctive and the Islanders of today are remarkably aware of at least the major facts and events in Island history. That history is outlined from the time of the Indians and Mrs. Simcoe (1793) through to the time of the last major physical destruction (of the Lakeshore houses in 1968). Since that time, the physical character of the Island has remained relatively unchanged. Whether, because their history is so colourful, Islanders' sense of history is, in fact, stronger than that felt by people in other places (and/or by people who manifestly feel a sense of place about other places) could only be determined by future comparative research. Similarly, whether sense of place could be fostered by making place history known, cannot be determined by this study alone.

Sense of identity is defined as the ability of a place to contribute to a person's sense of who he or she is. The sense of identity derived from intimately known places, it is argued, may be the most fundamental, least consciously known, component of sense of place and loss of a particular place to which a person has developed a strong attachment may deal a strong blow to his or her sense of identity, happiness and ability to function. In the case of the Toronto Island, Islanders know that they are "Islanders" and some have come to appreciate the importance of this to them only when they have been faced with losing that Island status. On the Island, the sense of identity has been fostered by such things as the clear boundaries (created by the water), the physical contrast between the Island and the City, the

nature of Island houses (which can be and are decorated and moulded
to reflect the personalities of the occupants), numerous personal
associations, and participating in a strong group identity (created,
for example, by sharing experiences with other Islanders that are
unique, or at least highly characteristic of Island life).

Sense of community is defined as the feeling that one belongs
to and is a part of a group whose members share some common ties, in-
teract to accomplish certain goals and occupy a particular area which
is significant and meaningful to them. It is not argued that all
communities must have a territorial base, but only that, in the case
of a sense of place, the group is grounded in physical space. The
place acts not only as a location, but also as a significant and mean-
ingful focus for the sense of community. Islanders, the evidence in-
dicates, have a very strong sense of community, which has been created
not only by the outside threat of destruction and the battle to defend
the Island (which have indeed drawn Islanders together into a "com-
munity under siege"), but also by having a more widespread need for
mutual aid (not only in political affairs, but also in more prosaic
aspects of day-to-day living) and by sharing a distinctive environ-
mental lifestyle (i.e., patterns of behaviour that are influenced by
environmental conditions like the near-by park, the ferry, the weather,
the floods, the carless streets, the lack of stores and so on). Is-
landers have a rich formal and informal community life, which was
briefly described. Such specific factors as clear boundaries, relat-
ive social and physical isolation, inconveniences (like lack of enter-
tainment and shopping facilities and organizing around a ferry sched-
ule), the boat and other public meeting places, seasonal rhythms

(notably the formative influence of winter), the carless environment,
community values (such as self-reliance, out-of-the-mainstream, con-
server society, lifestyle over workstyle and social mix), images of
the city, suburbia, and small town are all analyzed to show how they
contribute to Islanders' sense of community. Many ideas for future
research could be culled from these sections (e.g., whether and in
what ways isolation or neutral meeting places or carless environments
or seasonal rhythms or contrasting social and physical images con-
tribute to the creation of a sense of community among people in other
places). Finally, the analysis of sense of community on the Island
also identifies various social sub-groups.

Every place has a special combination of environmental features,
such as sights, sounds, smells, kinaesthetics, patterns and rhythms;
but, it is argued, not every place elicits a strong sense of environ-
ment. Sense of environment is defined as a deep awareness of and
strong positive attachment to these distinctive physical features.
The Toronto Island has a particularly rich and distinctive physical
environment and Islanders are highly sensitive to their surroundings --
not only to the large features (like water or sky or weather), but also
to the more subtle nuances (like the pitch of roofs or the curve of
streets or the feel of the boardwalk). Many people seem to have moved
there specifically because of the environmental attractions and, while
other aspects of Island life may become equally important over time
(e.g., sense of community), the physical environment always remains
important. Several reasons why Islanders are so peculiarly attuned
to their environment are identified: for example, the simple fact that
it is an island, the distinctiveness of the individual features, the

marked physical contrast with the City, the closeness to the natural

environment and the lack of cars (the lack of cars--with their fumes,

noise and physical presence--and the need to walk or bicycle both

foster more intimate contact with and awareness of surrounding

environmental features) are all important. A wide range of environ-

mental features and experiences are identified and described--both

natural (such as water, sky, storms, seasons, wildlife, etc.) and

artificial (such as houses, streets, scale, general lay-out, etc.).

In addition, Islanders' images of the City and suburbia are analyzed

in such a way as to clarify their own sense of environment. Finally,

the importance of place names, "hidden landscapes" (i.e., memories

of places which have been radically changed or destroyed but which

still contribute to present sense of environment) and childhood ex-

periences to the formation of sense of environment are also discussed.

As with sense of community, many ideas for future research can be

discovered in these sections (e.g., the degree of importance of phys-

ical contrast or carless environments or proximity to nature for the

development of a sense of environment; the nature of "islandness";

the relation of childhood experience to later environmental values

and sense of environment, and so on).

Sense of control is defined as the feeling that one's relation-

ship with a particular place contributes to one's sense of independence,

competence and self-sufficiency. Where sense of control exists, it

is argued, people are engaged in an active, creative relationship with

their environment, rather than a passive, dependent, even negative re-

lationship, which, far from contributing to their sense of control,

may actually detract from it. It is not argued that life is

necessarily easy in situations where sense of control exists. In fact, life (as in the bush or on the frontier or at sea) may be manifestly difficult. But, the ability to survive under harsh circumstances may itself contribute to a sense or control. Nor is it argued that people who experience a sense of control have complete or even extensive freedom to act. But it is argued that within limited areas of action (such as freedom to decorate or change their living environment, freedom to make decisions about the use of various community facilities), people sense that they have a measure of control over their lives. In the case of the Toronto Island, Islanders place a high value on independence and self-reliance and have expressed a strong desire for a sense of control. This desire for, and attainment of, a sense of control is illustrated by their attitudes toward and use of their houses (Island houses are flexible, owned for the most part by Island residents, and in constant need of repair; Islanders can and do change their home environments to suit their needs and desires and many take pride in being competent to do their own repairs and in exercising control over this aspect of their lives); their attitudes toward inconveniences (some Islanders positively relish the inconveniences of Island life, take pride in overcoming them and see them as powerful inducements to being self-sufficient, independent people); their attitudes toward forming a non-profit housing association (Islanders place such a high priority on homeownership, which many regard as the cornerstone of their sense of control, that they have consistently opposed any housing proposal which would eliminate their homeownership); and their attitudes toward community control (Islanders, over the years, have had a history of identifying various social,

political, educational, recreational, and other needs within the
community and of organizing themselves to deal collectively with
them). Although a number of aspects of Island life contribute to
Islanders' sense of control, some obvious aspects of Island life
drastically reduce it, notably the political situation--the fact that
Metro, not the Islanders, owns the land and has a policy to clear it
to expand the Metro park. Nevertheless, in spite of this political
situation, many Islanders continue to prefer not to own the land,
but to leave it in public ownership (so long as the policy of clear-
ing the land is changed). Land ownership, therefore, does not appear
to be a prerequisite for sense of control. Further investigation of
this point could well prove fruitful, especially because of its
implications for public policy.

Present sense of place is affected both by one's view of the
past and by one's view of the future. Sense of change is defined as
awareness of actual past loss of place or fear of future change or
loss. Both the actual and the potential change, it is argued, may
heighten attachment to and appreciation of a particular place and may
affect each of the other components of sense of place. The change
involved may range from modification of the physical or social envir-
onment through to total destruction or loss of place. In the case of
the Toronto Island, many Islanders have witnessed major changes on the
Island, including the actual loss of homes and former communities.
These losses have given rise to some of the most moving expressions
of sense of place. Since the last major demolitions in 1968, all re-
maining Islanders have been under the threat of destruction. This
acute sense of future change or loss, therefore, is the major focus of

discussion. The Toronto Island, it is emphasized, has been a "community under siege" for many years because of the outside threat of destruction. The most frequently mentioned positive aspect of the threatened change and Islanders' consequent resistance to the threat has been the fact that Islanders have become a stronger, more closely-knit community than they might have been otherwise. Other effects of the uncertainty associated with the threatened change have been less positive: housing conditions have deteriorated (because many Islanders have been reluctant to make major investments in houses they might lose shortly); and the human costs associated with both actual loss (i.e., being forced to move) and threatened loss (including the general uncertainty as well as actual involvement in the political campaigns) have been very real (ranging from weariness and tension through to emotional distress, serious illness and perhaps even death, according to reports from Islanders). Islanders have adopted a variety of methods of coping with the uncertainty and stress associated with the threatened change, which range from moving (although there has been no wholesale exodus) and buying a house elsewhere (although these people do not want to live elsewhere) through to adopting a variety of attitudes (e.g., refusing to believe that Metro would carry out its plan; ignoring the situation; being optimistic, pessimistic or fatalistic; being angry and defiant and resisting the change). Finally, Island children have also been affected by, and well aware of, the uncertain future and their reactions are also discussed briefly.

These six, interrelated components, then, appear to describe fairly comprehensively Toronto Islanders' sense of place and help to clarify the multitudinous important links between people and places.

Beyond this, the literature cited indicates that these six components also seem to apply to other people and other places. The examples presented here are drawn from different scales, different environmental types, different cultures and different eras. There is good reason to suggest, therefore, that they apply not only to the experience of sense of place on the Toronto Island, but to sense of place more generally. Whether these six components do describe sense of place elsewhere, however, (whether, for example, there are major omissions) can only be ascertained by additional research (as discussed below).

Furthermore, although these six components are evident and strongly felt by Toronto Islanders as a group, not every Islander who experiences sense of place necessarily feels equally strongly about each component (e.g., some Islanders might have a stronger sense of environment than sense of community and others might have a stronger sense of community than environment). As emphasized throughout, the individual's sense of place is simply, and fundamentally, individual. But identifying the six components does facilitate describing and understanding these individual sentiments. Similarly, although examples of each of these components may be identified in other places, this does not necessarily mean that all six apply equally well to every other, non-Toronto Island situation. Lighthouse keepers, mountain shepherds or frontier pioneers may have little sense of community, but a strong sense of environment; residents of an urban neighbourhood under threat of redevelopment or of a small village on the urban fringe of a growing metropolis may have little sense of control but a strong sense of community, and so on.

Whether and in what way these six major components of sense of

place are applicable to other situations can only be determined by additional, comparative case studies. But, using these six components as a general scheme to guide the research might well facilitate the description and comparison of different people and their special places (studying, for example, in what ways the sense of place of residents in village A compares with the sense of place of residents in village B or urban neighbourhood C; or comparing the sense of place of residents in small town D over time, at times X, Y and Z, and so on). Would it be possible to identify a small number of model types of sense of place? Are there clusters of components which frequently appear together and interact to create such prototypes? Another broad area of research would involve identifying and investigating situations where people do not appear to have a strong sense of place (e.g., do residents of downtown highrise apartments or of modern suburban subdivisions experience a strong sense of place?) and comparing them to situations where people do have a strong sense of place (e.g., are there any consistent differences?). Only additional research on sense of place can begin to address these questions.

Throughout the body of this thesis, it has been emphasized that the six major components of sense of place which have been identified in this case study of the Toronto Islanders are interrelated. Although the basic objective of this thesis, of course, has been to identify and analyze individual components (and, in turn, to analyze how they are related to defense of place), the analysis of the components also leads to the general conclusion that the individual components identified are distinct, but not separate. They are <u>distinct</u> to the extent that no one component may be subsumed under any other component; but

they are <u>not separate</u> to the extent that they are interrelated in a
complex web of interconnected influences.

Although examples of interrelationships are cited in each of
the chapters on individual components, the bulk of each of these
chapters is devoted to defining the particular component, demonstrat-
int how the Island and Islanders may be analyzed in terms of the
component and discussing the dialectical relationships between the
particular component under scrutiny and defense of place. A logical,
but unfortunate, result of discussing each component separately, is
creating the impression that the components operate in isolation from
one another. A sense of fragmentation is almost inevitably created
as various events or situations are analyzed in terms of one or other
of the individual components. It is useful, therefore, to try to
draw the fragments back together here by briefly analyzing several
specific events or situations drawn from the Island case study in
terms of how they influence and/or are influenced by the several com-
ponents. While it is impossible at this early stage of research into
sense of place to answer many fundamental questions about how these
components interact, it is possible to identify some important aspects
of the relationships and to illustrate a variety of ways that various
components--under various conditions--may interact.

Interrelations among the various components may be analyzed in
terms of: the <u>specific component(s)</u> involved (under different cond-
itions, naturally, different components may be involved); the <u>number</u>
<u>of components</u> involved (in some cases, only one or two may be vitally
involved; in others, as many as six may be involved); the <u>relative</u>
<u>importance</u> of the components involved (in some cases, all components

identified may be equally important; in other cases, some component(s) may be more important than others); the simultaneity or sequentiality of component influence (in cases where more than one component is involved, the influence may be direct and simultaneous; or the influence may be indirect and sequential, forming a chain of influence containing two or more links); and the positive or negative nature of the association (in some cases, as one component increases in strength, the other increases; in other cases, as one increases, the other decreases).

The following six specific, concrete examples drawn from the Island data may be used to illustrate these general relationships. Here, as elsewhere in the thesis, the emphasis is on analyzing real people and real life events, rather than on speculating on hypothetical relationships, for it is only by analyzing specific events or situations grounded in real life data that genuine relationships can be adequately identified and given meaning. (See Illustration 34, "Examples of Interrelationships Among the Components of Sense of Place".)

Case One:

As the body of this study makes clear, people have moved to the Island for different reasons and, while there, have had different experiences and reactions. For some, the prime attraction has been the environment, for others the community; for some, sense of history has been of great importance, for others it has been of relatively peripheral interest, and so on. As a result, the pattern of component interaction would vary significantly from person to person. The first case illustrates the reactions of one particular Islander who decided

ILLUSTRATION 34
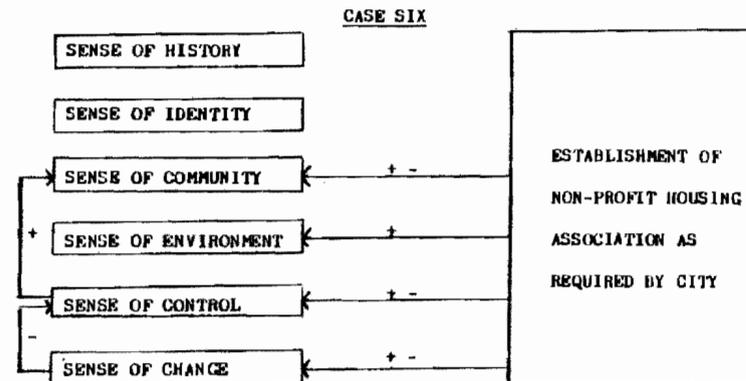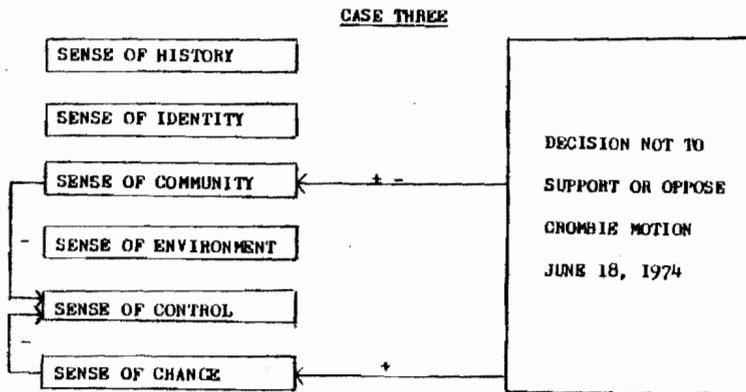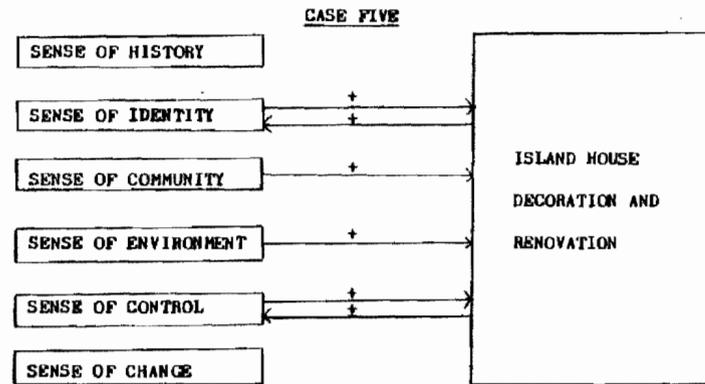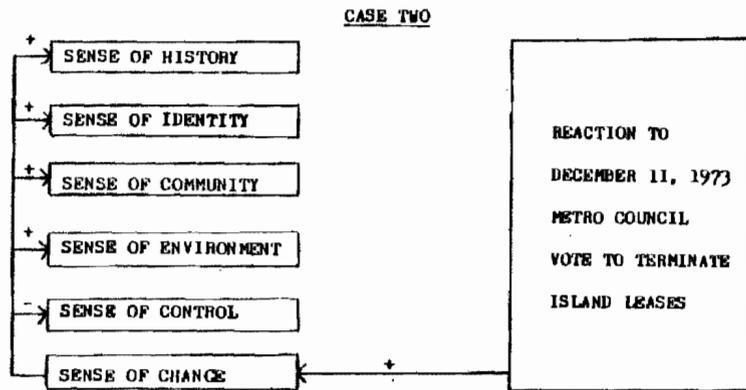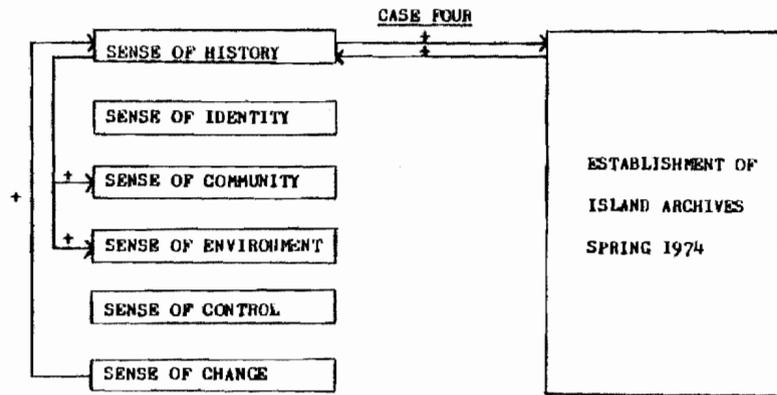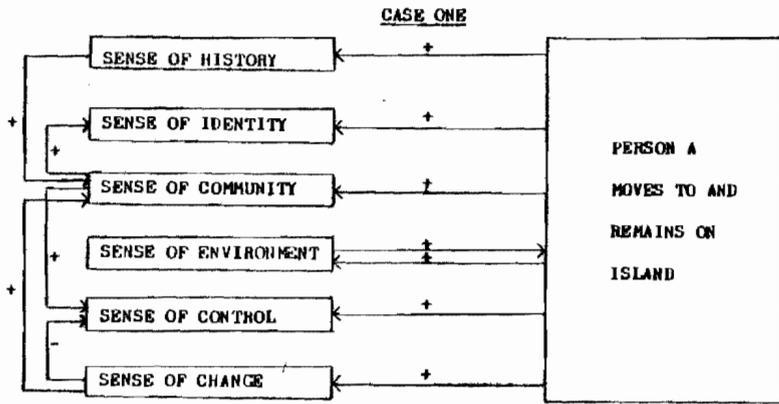
EXAMPLES OF INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE COMPONENTS OF SENSE OF PLACE

to move to and subsequently to remain on the Island during a period of great uncertainty.

For this person, the main attraction of the Island was its environment--especially the water and the cottage architecture, which reminded her of her childhood home. A secondary attraction was the apparent existence of a community (but this, and other less important interrelationships are not diagrammed, because the diagram would become so complex as to be virtually unintelligible). As a result of living on the Island, not only was her sense of environemnt elaborated and reinforced, but each of the other components was, according to her statements and actions, directly and indirectly influenced. For example, living on the Island, working with other Islanders and sharing a variety of hardships with them created a strong sense of community. Having to repair and renovate her house directly increased her sense of control. Working on community projects (including serving on the TIRA Executive) indirectly increased her sense of control; but experiencing the vagaries of political developments indirectly decreased her sense of control. Living during a period of acute uncertainty undoubtedly increased her sense of change (which in turn increased her sense of community by creating a feeling of being in a community under siege). Living on the Island and, more specifically, writing a variety of briefs and pamphlets which described (among other things) the Island's history, directly increased her sense of history; and knowledge of the history of the community itself, indirectly increased her sense of community. Finally, her sense of identity was directly affected by living on the Island (she gradually became an "Islander") and, indirectly, this sense of identity was reinforced and shaped by

being part of a "community" of Islanders and sharing, as she noted, a variety of hardships.

This example illustrates not only a number of complex inter-relationships, but also emphasizes the importance of _time_. While some components may come into prominence rather quickly (e.g., sense of change may be created virtually overnight by the appearance of a threat); other components may take longer to develop (for example, in this case, sense of community and identity). In addition, components may change over time. The importance of time is evident in a number of other cases discussed below.

Case Two:

The second case illustrates reaction to a dramatic, precipit-ating event, like the December 11, 1973 Metro Council vote to terminate Island leases. (Since this sort of event is discussed at length in Chapter Eight, there is no need to give the details here). The Metro vote led to a swift, direct increase in Islanders' sense of change and, indirectly, to an increase in senses of history, identity, community and environment, and to a decrease in sense of control. Here, as in other cases discussed below, sense of change initiates a sequential chain of influences.

Case Three:

The third case illustrates a less dramatic political event and involves fewer components (cases one and two, of course, involved all six components). In June 1974, just prior to the date set by Metro Council for the termination of Island leases, City of Toronto Mayor David Crombie developed a motion which, if accepted, would have saved Island houses, but would have required some residents to leave and all

remaining residents to relinquish homeownership in order to come under a City Cooperative housing scheme. As discussed in earlier chapters, Islanders decided neither to support nor oppose this motion. This political decision heightened Islanders' already high sense of change. In addition, it both increased and decreased their sense of community. By meeting together, discussing the proposal, and making a communal decision on this (and other occasions) Islanders' sense of community was increased; but, to the extent that heated debates erupted and splits arose within the community about appropriate strategy, their sense of community was also probably decreased. Their individual and communal frustration over their inability to "control" politicians (in this case, they had not been very involved in developing the motion) also, indirectly, decreased their sense of control.

Case Four:

Case four traces a situation where sense of history achieves special prominence and sense of change again initiates a sequence of influence. Islanders' strong sense of change in the spring of 1974 heightened Islanders' sense of history which, in turn, inspired a group of Islanders to establish the Island Archives in order to document the Island's history before the Island community disappeared. These people collected a great amount of historical material (old maps, photographs, newspapers, and so on) and mounted a number of public exhibits on the Island and Mainland. Their researching and documenting of the Island's past, directly increased their own sense of history; while their ex-hibits directly increased the sense of history among a wider audience. In addition, by contributing to Islanders' shared knowledge of a common history, their sense of history indirectly increased their sense of

community. Finally, by collecting old photographs, taking a great number of contemporary photographs of Islanders and the Island under a wide variety of circumstnaces (e.g., at different seasons), and exhibiting these photographs, their efforts also probably indirectly increased their own and other Islanders' sense of environment.

Case Five:

Islanders decorate and renovate their houses in very personal ways. Chapter four discusses the theme of "house as symbol of self" and illustrates how Island houses reflect and reinforce Islanders' sense of identity and Chapter seven discusses how Islanders' house care and renovating contribute to and reflect their sense of control. Case five, therefore, illustrates this situation where sense of identity and sense of control achieve special prominence and where the interrelations appear to be more simultaneous than sequential. Naturally, the decorations and renovations also reflect Islanders' environmental values (the scale, materials and so on of the changes) and some of their community values (such as "individuality", "scavenger society" and general ethos of expression), so both sense of environment and sense of community are also directly involved.

Case Six:

As the body of this study indicates, the future of the Island is still in doubt: the present situation of uncertainty might be perpetuated; Islanders might finally be ejected (although the present political climate makes this seem less likely than it has seemed at other times); or a permanent (or long-term) community might be established, with a variety of possible conditions attached to its continued existence (e.g., stringently applied building standards; greatly increased

ground rent; year-round residence only; price controls on house sales).
The final case illustrates what might well happen on the Island if a
permanent community were established under the auspices of the City of
Toronto, which required Islanders to form a non-profit housing ass-
ociation as a condition of continued residence.

Let us assume for the purposes of this discussion that the City
accepts Islanders' proposal that they be allowed to retain homeowner-
ship and form a non-profit housing association to control house prices
(rather than forming a housing cooperative). As earlier discussions
indicate, if Islanders were forced to give up ownership of their
houses, the likely result would be widespread opposition: their sense
of change would be very high; their sense of control very low (both
because of the loss of ownership and because of the imposition of un-
palatable change from the outside); and their sense of community prob-
ably reinforced (a perpetuation of the community under siege condition).

If, however, Islanders were required to form a non-profit hous-
ing association, the pattern would be significantly different. Cert-
ainly, at the outset, as a number of Islanders suggested, sense of
change would be increased, because Islanders would be entering a new
phase and would have to become used to a new situation. Over time,
however, this feeling would probably diminish. In this scenario, sense
of control and sense of community would achieve special prominence
and the effects would be somewhat ambivalent. With respect to sense of
control, to the extent that the association is imposed by an outside
agent (the City), rather than being a voluntary coming together of will-
ing participants, Islanders' sense of control would decrease. (Some
Islanders, however, have already developed and set up a non-profit

association; for them, this process has probably increased rather than decreased their sense of control, because they chose to do it and then did it themselves—the locus of change was internal, not external.) On the other hand, the actual operating of the association—making decisions about a whole range of items—might well increase (or continue) Islanders' sense of control. With respect to the direct effect on Islanders' sense of community, by enabling (indeed, forcing) Islanders as a group to continue to work together and make communal decisions about a variety of matters and by creating the conditions necessary to enable a "mixed community" to continue living on the Island, the forming of a non-profit housing association should contribute positively to Islanders' sense of community. But, to the extent that highly contentious issues arise, splits might appear within the community (along the lines discussed earlier in the thesis) and Islanders' sense of community might be weakened. Whether or not the community is seriously weakened would depend on how these differences are resolved. (As indicated earlier, Islanders, under conditions of outside threat, have demonstrated a great ability to tolerate, absorb and overcome even acrimonious splits.) Finally, since some of the decisions are likely to affect the physical fabric of the Island, Islanders' sense of environment would also affect and be affected by the operation of a housing association.

In conclusion, these brief case studies illustrate the great variety of ways that the components of sense of place may interact even in the context of a single place. They also indicate that, at this particular, exploratory stage of research, no simple hierarchy or overriding model of interaction can be developed. Perhaps future

research (involving further study not only of the Island, but also of other people, places and events) might lead to the development of a more refined and more comprehensive model--might identify, for example, a relatively small number of patterns of interrelationships-- that suggests that under these sets of circumstances, this type of pattern is likely to occur. Additional research, therefore is required to address not only questions dealing with individual components, but also questions relating to the interactions among the components.

iii. Sense of Place - Defense of Place:

A central theme of this study is that there is a dialectical relationship between sense of place (i.e., strong emotional attachment to a place of personal significance and meaning) and defense of place (i.e., specific political, legal and other actions taken to protect a place that is threatened). When a place to which a person or a group of people is strongly attached is threatened in some way, it is argued, sense of place may lead to and condition the nature of the defense of place; and when a place is threatened and defended, that defense of place, in turn, conditions and influences the nature of sense of place. Actions taken to defend a significant place cannot be fully understood without appreciating the nature of the defenders' sense of place; and, similarly, the very actions and experiences involved in defending the place may, in turn, heighten and/or otherwise influence the participants' sense of place. In a situation (like the Toronto Island) where defense of place has occurred, therefore, it is essential to study both the nature of the sense of place (as discussed in the previous section), as well as the nature of the defense of place

and the interactive links between the two phenomena. In addition, it is also argued that in a dialectical relationship between sense of place and defense of place, the concept of threat occupies a position of importance as the catalyst to action, and as a continuing influence. The perceived severity of the threat, as well as its specific nature and general context are all key influences on defense of place. Sense of place, it is emphasized, is not the only influence on defense of place; but it is an important, frequently overlooked influence. In the case of the Toronto Island, this study has presented copious evidence that Toronto Island residents, since the mid-1930's, have responded to outside threats to radically change and/or destroy their special place--the Island as they have known and loved it. It has also presented extensive evidence both that Islanders' attitudes and feelings about the Island (their sense of place) have influenced the nature of their response to various threats (their defense of place) and also that the nature of their defense of place has, over the years, in turn heightened and in many ways influenced the nature of their sense of place. (Specific examples are cited below.)

At a more specific level, this study has presented evidence that each major component of sense of place (defined and discussed in the previous section) has been engaged in a dialectical relationship with defense of place. Drawing examples from the complex political history of the Toronto Island since the 1930's, each chapter dealing with a particular component of sense of place has presented illustrations of these dialectical relationships.

The chapter on sense of history indicates that Islanders' sense of history has had a distinct impact on their defense of place.

Islanders have argued, especially since 1973, that Metro should not destroy a well-established, historic community. They have, therefore, frequently emphasized the historic nature of the Island community in their public statements before various Council and other committees, in their publicity booklets, ads and public events, and so on. This emphasis has been a reflection of both their own sense of history and their assessment of the political climate. Political opponents, it is noted, have tended to play down or deny the historical importance of the Island community, while political supporters, not surprisingly, have been sensitive to it. This chapter also indicates that the Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has sharpened and expanded their sense of history: deliberate attempts have been made to make Islanders aware of their history; doing research for various publications and events has increased their knowledge; and fear of losing the last physical traces of Island history has heightened their desire to document and record that history.

The chapter on <u>sense of identity</u> indicates that Islanders' sense of identity may provide the general motivation for defense of place. Because a threat to change or eradicate a special and personally significant place is also a threat to a person's identity, that person may be strongly motivated to protect and defend that place. On the negative side (from a political point of view) is the fact that Islanders' strong sense of identity--of being "Islanders" and feeling that this is important, even an enviable mark of distinction--has perhaps made Islanders appear to some people (including some politicians) as "arrogant" or "sanctimonious". Some politicians, however, seem to have understood the importance of the link between people and personal

identity and its significance for helping to create a healthy urban environment. They have supported the retention of the Island community (as well as other distinctive communities) partly because the sense of identity is so strongly fostered there. Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had a marked influence on their sense of identity. Simply experiencing the long years of uncertainty and attending long, emotional Council meetings has contributed to individuals feeling like "Islanders". The Island defense has expanded the notion of house-as-symbol-of-self—of using the house as a means of self-expression, for many Islanders have used their houses as personal billboards to advertise their defiance of Metro and their determination to remain on the Island. Finally, actually participating in the defense of the Island may not only have deepened their sense of what it means to be an "Islander", but also may have significantly changed some Islanders' perceptions of who they are: e.g., they are not only "Islanders", but they are also "Island defenders" and even "political activists".

The chapter on sense of community indicates that there are many strong links between Islanders' sense of community and defense of place. Islanders' strong sense of community, it is argued, has provided the general foundation on which they could build a defense of the Island. For many years, Islanders have made direct appeals based on community arguments. This was true even in the early years (in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's), when Islanders alluded to the strength and value of their community when responding to a variety of threats to radically change or destroy the Island as it then existed. Community preservation arguments, like historic preservation arguments, however, only came to the fore after the 1972 municipal elections when a large number of City

Council members (but not of Metro or Borough Council members) was elected on neighbourhood preservation platforms. Since that time, Islanders and their political supporters have relied heavily on the argument that the Toronto Island community is a strong and distinctive community which deserves to be preserved for that reason alone. This argument reflects both Islanders' strong sense of community, as well as their perception of the prevailing political climate. Islanders' sense of community, it is noted, has influenced their political behaviour in other ways. It has enabled them (since at least 1971) to fend off several attempts to divide and conquer the community and to reject a variety of proposals which might have saved part, but not all, of the community. The high value Islanders place on living in a community with a "social mix" has also had a marked influence on their political behaviour: they have emphasized the social diversity of the community in their public statements (both because they believe it is an accurate description and a laudable condition and because they want to counter political opponents' charges that they are a "rich elite" or some other less flattering entity); they have accepted the need for price controls on housing if security of tenure is granted in order to provide the conditions necessary to maintain the social mix; and they have been reluctant to accept any housing proposals that might eliminate certain groups of Island residents (notably summer residents and wealthier residents), including Mayor Crombie's last-ditch proposal in June 1974 (which was rejected by Metro Council anyway). This same social mix, it is suggested, has also had some negative effects on Islanders' political behaviour: e.g., the various splits within the community led to some internal friction and made it difficult on

occasion to develop a united approach in the 1974 Spring Campaign.
Islanders' image of suburbia (as more conservative, less socially
diverse, less socially involving, less tolerant of unconventional
behaviour and less community-oriented than the Island) also influen-
ced their political activity: e.g., during the 1974 Spring Campaign
they dressed and spoke in ways that they felt would be acceptable in
suburbia as they perceived it. They also concluded from this Campaign
that their own sense of community was greater than, or at least sig-
nificantly different from, suburbanites'. Finally, Islanders' strong
sense of community exercised a critical influence on the organization
and conduct of their 1974 Spring Campaign: it provided the solid
foundation on which that campaign was built. (See also pp. 434 ff.)

Most of the Islanders' political supporters, for their part,
have believed in and stressed similar community preservation arguments.
Beyond this, Islanders' political supporters and opponents over the
years have tended to hold very different images of Islanders and their
community. Evidence is presented that while Islanders' supporters
have tended to give great weight to community arguments and to have a
positive image of the Island community (e.g., mostly year-round, soc-
ially-mixed, egalitarian, well-established, etc.), their opponents
have tended to ignore community arguments altogether and/or discuss
Island residents in negative terms (e.g., as a rich elite, squatters,
transients, summer-cottagers, etc.). As is noted, it is sometimes
difficult to believe that the two groups are discussing the same people
and the same place.

Finally, Islanders' defense of place has exercised a strong
influence on their sense of community. As noted in the last section,

Islanders have been a community under siege for many years. The outside threats, combined with the actual process of defending the Island against the threats, has had a strong, largely positive effect on Islanders' sense of community. This has been especially evident since 1974 (the 1974 Spring Campaign is discussed in more detail below): according to Islanders' accounts, as a result of living under the severe threat, working together and sharing a very important common goal, Islanders' sense of community has become stronger. On the negative side, however, is the fact that under such extreme stress, deep-seated differences between groups and individuals may become sharper, more acrimonious and potentially explosive. Under these conditions, unless care is taken, defense of place could reduce, not increase, sense of community. So far, this has not happened on the Island. In sum, this chapter argues that over the years, Islanders' defense of place has significantly strengthened their sense of community.

The chapter on sense of environment indicates that Islanders' sense of environment has also had a marked influence on their defense of place. At the most fundamental level, when the Island environment as they know it has been threatened, Islanders have been strongly motivated to try to defend it. For example, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, Islanders strongly opposed a series of plans which would have radically altered the Island environment. Not only were they defending their own interests, but they also saw themselves as being protectors of the virtues of the Island as it was in order to defend the interests of non-Islanders. They therefore frequently made direct appeals to politicians which were based on the desirability of protecting an existing environment. This approach has continued to the present, when

they have continued to make appeals to protect the Island environment with its carless streets and village atmosphere. Islanders, from the late 1940's to the mid-1960's, also fiercely defended the Island against proposals to provide access for motor vehicles. This long debate represented a fundamental conflict of values between pro-car forces (who saw the car as a sign of progress and wished to bring the Island into the motor age) and anti-car forces (who wished to preserve the Island as a natural refuge away from the ravages of a motor society). Another aspect of the car debate is that Islanders, who have been sensitive to the fact that there is something special about living on an island, wished to preserve this "islandness" and prevent any tunnel or bridge link from being constructed. Finally, Islanders' physical insularity, some have argued, has bred a certain degree of political insularity, although this insularity has been greatly reduced since about 1974.

Islanders' political supporters and opponents, it is argued, have held conflicting environmental values and images of the Island, which have, over the years, influenced their political behaviour. For example, a study of the Island's political history reveals that the two groups have had very different images of the remaining residential areas. Opponents have tended to regard the residential areas as parkland manqué (because it was designated as Metro parkland in 1956) and the remaining houses and occupants as merely an obstacle to be removed in order to achieve parkland in fact. Islanders' supporters, however, have tended to regard the existing residential areas as a remnant of a well-established, historic community which predates the park, is located next to (not in) parkland, and deserves to be

preserved. These two groups of politicians have also held conflicting park philosophies: for Islanders' opponents, park means "pure park" (residents and parkland do not mix) and the whole Island should be pure park; but for Islanders' supporters, parks and residents do mix (at least in this case) and are mutually beneficial. It is not surprising that the two groups have clashed. In addition, Islanders' opponents and supporters have been engaged in a war of environmental images, which reflect these conflicting environmental images, as well as political tactics. The Metro Parks Commissioner's Island tours of the early 1970's, according to some accounts, were designed to reinforce negative images and to support the idea that the houses were simply not worth preserving. Some politicians, it is suggested, were impressed by these tours and, more generally, seemed to be unable to understand how people could live (let alone prefer to live) in a place where the environment was so different from what they regarded as a proper place to live. This conclusion is supported by the subsidy argument: opponents have frequently argued that it would impose too great a burden on the Metro taxpayer to improve the Island environment to an acceptable level: supporters, however, have emphasized that no such expenditures would be required--that they were not trying to recreate a suburban community, but to preserve a very different type of place. Finally, several politicians have made the provocative point that Islanders have been treated differently from other City and Metro residents by politicians simply because they are Islanders and are physically separated from the rest of the City. Nowhere else, they argue, would politicians seriously consider demolishing 250 homes to extend a park.

For their part, Islanders' defense of place, in turn, has had

a distinct impact on their sense of environment. Deliberate attempts
have been made in the course of the political defense of the Island to
sensitize Islanders to different, special aspects of the Island en-
vironment. The 1974 Spring Campaign exposed Islanders to environments
and environmental lifestyles in the boroughs that contrasted markedly
with their own and these experiences both reinforced their negative
images of suburbia and their positive images of the Island. In con-
clusion, Islanders' defense of place has clarified and strengthened
their sense of environment.

The chapter on sense of control indicates that, at the most
general level, Islanders, throughout their political history (since
the 1930's) have adopted an active approach to defending their special
place from outside threats: they have tried to exercise a measure of
control over their future. The impact of Islanders' sense of control
on their defense of place has been demonstrated in other areas. It
has been emphasized that Islanders' sense of control has been attained
in part by the fact that most Islanders own their own homes. The
desire to retain homeownership has had a strong impact on Islanders'
political behaviour since 1973. For example, they rejected the idea
of forming a housing coop which would have removed homeownership and
developed instead a proposal for a non-profit housing association which
would have left ownership with individual Islanders (but would have
controlled house prices). Islanders' desire to maintain homeownership
also made Islanders less than enthusiastic about Mayor Crombie's June
1974 proposal to save Island houses by placing them in a City non-
profit coop. The 1974 Spring Campaign appealed to and relied on Is-
landers' strong sense of control and high level of resentment when

that control has been threatened. (See also below, pp. 434 ff.)
Islanders' defense of place experiences, in turn, have exercised a
strong impact on Islanders' sense of control: sometimes the effects
have been positive, sometimes negative, and sometimes paradoxical.
Evidence is presented that Islanders' attitudes toward politics and
politicians have evolved over the years from respectful deference in
the 1930's to cynical distrust in more recent years. In addition,
the political history of the last decade or so, it is argued, has
been characterized by Islanders' struggle to exercise more control
over their political destiny. Both successes and failures are id-
entified: e.g., in the 1974 Spring Campaign, Islanders exercised more
control over developing and implementing political strategy than ever
before, but political events themselves frequently wrested control
from their hands. Islanders' defense of place, therefore, has both
strengthened and weakened their sense of control. It is worth em-
phasizing, however, that, paradoxically, even their unsuccessful
political experiences may have strengthened their sense of control.
They may have lost on various occasions, but they have not given up
without a struggle. Just making the decision to fight, it is suggest-
ed, is an exercise of will and an expression of personal independence
which, in turn, may increase a sense of control.

The chapter on sense of change indicates that there are a
variety of reciprocal links between sense of change and defense of
place. The main reason Islanders have a strong sense of change itself
is because they have been subjected to a long series of threats to ra-
dically change or destroy the Island as they know it. Some of the
links between sense of change and defense of place, of necessity,

have, therefore, already been discussed--e.g., "community under siege";
various effects of threat and uncertainty, including the human costs
of forced relocation; mechanisms adopted to cope with stress, includ-
ing engaging in the political battle as an antidote. (See above pp.
410 ff.) Study of the long political history reveals that Island-
ers' strong sense of change--i.e., their fear of the radical alter-
ation or loss of their Island--has been the major stimulus for their
battles to save their homes, their community and their special place
from destruction. Without that threat--that fear of change--there
would, of course, have been no need to take action. A number of ex-
amples of Islanders' responding to threats to radically change their
place are provided. It is emphasized, however, that the existence of
a threat to change a place is a necessary, but not a sufficient, con-
dition for defense of place. The threat must be perceived as a severe
one and the political context of the threat must be conducive to
people's taking action. (Neither of these additional conditions seemed
to be in effect during a period in the late 1950's and early 1960's
when Islanders did not take strong, concerted group action to try to
halt demolitions or change the Metro plan.) Finally, Islanders' de-
fense of place, in turn, has increased their sense of change. For
example, at various points in the defense of the Island, Island leaders
have deliberately tried to heighten Islanders' sense of change and to
make the Metro threat as clear as possible to both Islanders and Main-
landers in order to spur them to take action (e.g., a slide presentat-
ion of Centre Island demolitions which was shown at a public forum in
March 1974; and "war games" in October 1978 to prepare for a possible
invasion by the sheriff to evict Islanders).

In summary, there is a great deal of evidence to support the proposition that there are dialectical relationships between sense of place (and its six major components) and defense of place.

The numerous examples of interactive links between sense of place and defense of place which are discussed in these separate chapters are taken from various parts of the modern political history of the Island since the mid-1930's. In order to draw these links together to form a more integrated whole, it is useful to illustrate how the generalized model described in Chapter One (Illustration 1, "Dialectical Relationships of Sense of Place and Defense of Place") may be applied to a single case. The Islanders' major 1974 Spring Campaign, therefore, is outlined here. (See Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign".)

First, it is important to look at the threat, which, as noted before, is both a catalyst to action and a continuing influence. The specific nature of the threat was the fact that on December 11, 1973, Metro Council had reaffirmed its policy to evict Islanders in order to demolish their houses and extend the Metro park. The termination date set for Island leases was August 31, 1974. Islanders were no longer protected by even a short lease extension (as they had been in the past) and in order to remain on the Island, they would have to either persuade or force Metro Council to change its policy by the summer (the main focus of the Campaign) or find a way around the policy (e.g., by taking legal action and/or persuading the Provincial government to intervene on their behalf). The perceived severity of the threat was very high. Islanders were well aware that unless they acted, and acted quickly, their years on the Island would soon be over. They were,

ILLUSTRATION 35

THREAT

SPECIFIC NATURE: Metro Council Decision On December 11, 1973
to terminate Island leases on August 31, 1974

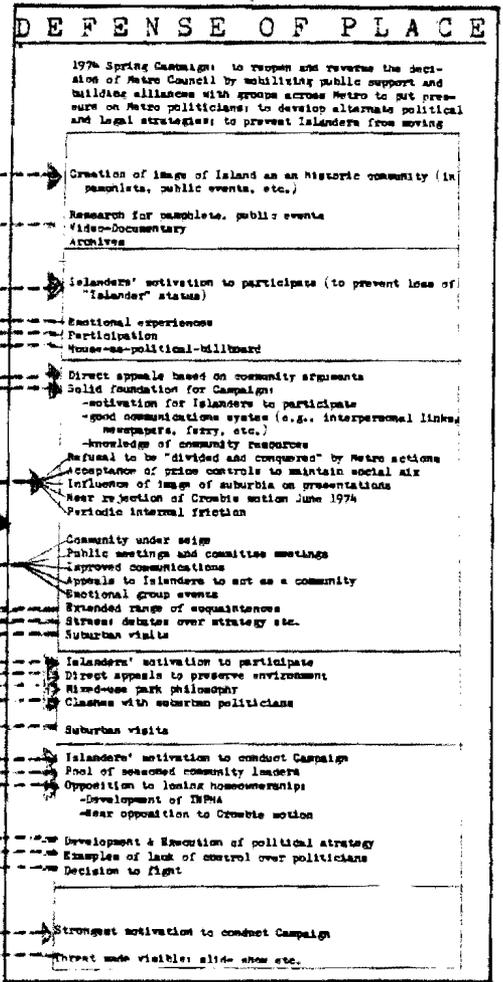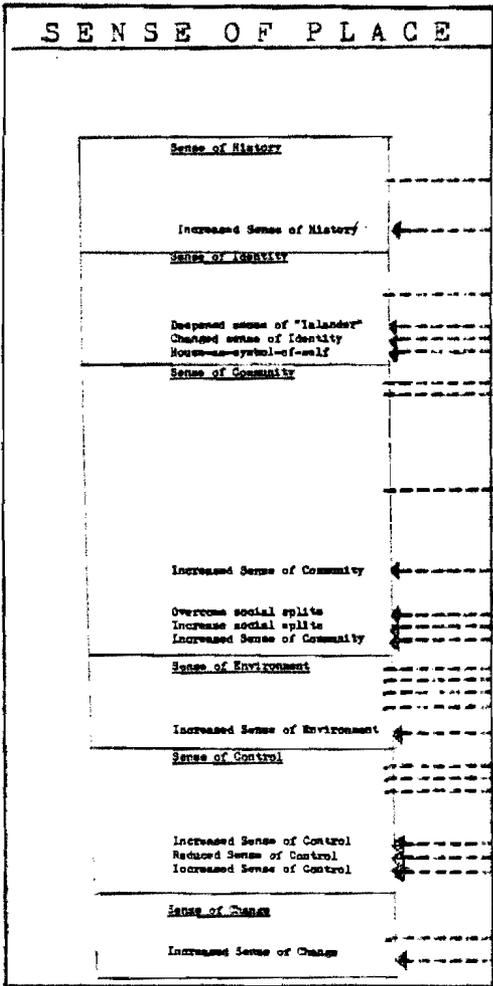PERCEIVED SEVERITY: Very high

CONTEXT : Negative Factors:
-Strong Metro Chairman hostile to Islanders' position
-Strong Metro Bureaucracy "
-Strong Metro Parks Commissioner "
-Long-established Metro policy "
-Long history of bitterness
-Indirect Election of Metro Council
-City-Suburban Split
-Majority of Metro Councillors with conflicting environmental values and images
-Islanders' Alderman hostile to Islanders' position
-Province reluctant to intervene
-Time Constraints
Mixed Factors:
+-Media: 2 papers traditionally anti
1 paper, most broadcast media pro
+-Public Opinion: majority in Metro pro
low level of interest in Boroughs
+-Residents' Groups: active and influential at City
level, but not at Borough or
Metro Council Level
Positive Factors:
+City Council strong pro-Islander position
+Metro Council minority strong pro-Islander position
+Citizens' Movement and Neighbourhood Preservation
Movement near peak in City
+Yacht Club Leases
+No Compensation
+Severe Housing Crisis in Metro
+Municipal and Federal Elections in 1974
+Some Metro Council Members Considering Changing
to Pro-Islander Position
+Community Resources: political experience and contacts,
numbers, organizing ability, wide variety of skills, etc.

SENSE OF PLACE

Sense of History

Increased Sense of History

Sense of Identity

Deepened sense of "Islander"
Changed sense of Identity
House-as-symbol-of-self

Sense of Community

Increased Sense of Community

Overcome social splits
Increase social splits
Increased Sense of Community

Sense of Environment

Increased Sense of Environment

Sense of Control

Increased Sense of Control
Reduced Sense of Control
Increased Sense of Control

Sense of Change

Increased Sense of Change

DEFENSE OF PLACE

1974 Spring Campaign: to reopen and reverse the decision of Metro Council by mobilizing public support and building alliances with groups across Metro to put pressure on Metro politicians; to develop alternate political and legal strategies; to prevent Islanders from moving

Creation of image of Island as an historic community (in pamphlets, public events, etc.)

Research for pamphlets, public events
Video-Documentary
Archives

Islanders' motivation to participate (to prevent loss of "Islander" status)

Emotional experiences
Participation
House-as-political-billboard

Direct appeals based on community arguments
Solid foundation for Campaign:
-motivation for Islanders to participate
-good communications system (e.g., interpersonal links, newspapers, ferry, etc.)
-knowledge of community resources
Refusal to be "divided and conquered" by Metro actions
Acceptance of price controls to maintain social mix
Influence of image of suburbia on presentations
Near rejection of Crombie motion June 1974
Periodic internal friction

Community under siege
Public meetings and committee meetings
Improved communications
Appeals to Islanders to act as a community
Emotional group events
Extended range of acquaintances
Stress: debates over strategy etc.
Suburban visits

Islanders' motivation to participate
Direct appeals to preserve environment
Mixed-use park philosophy
Clashes with suburban politicians

Suburban visits

Islanders' motivation to conduct Campaign
Pool of seasoned community leaders
Opposition to losing homeownership:
-Development of TIPHA
-Near opposition to Crombie motion

Development & Execution of political strategy
Examples of lack of control over politicians
Decision to fight

Strongest motivation to conduct Campaign

Threat made visible: slide shows etc.

therefore, strongly motivated to act. Finally, the context of the

threat, of course, played a key role in influencing both the nature

and the degree of success of Islanders' actions taken in defense of

place. Only the major elements can be briefly sketched here.

On the negative side, there were a number of factors which,

experience proved, militated against success. There was a newly-

elected, strong Metro Chairman, Paul Godfrey, who was eager to prove

himself to be a decisive leader. Although he did not initially seem

to have strong feelings about the merits of the case, he cast his lot

in December 1973 with the Metro majority and the established Metro

policy to evict Islanders and thereafter used his considerable influ-

ence to promote this position. There was a strong Metro bureaucracy

(Metro Councillors tended to defer to the Metro Commissioners) and an

especially strong Metro Parks Commissioner, Tommy Thompson, who was

also determined to promote the eviction of Islanders. Metro, of course,

had a long-established policy to evict Islanders, so the sheer force

of political inertia was against them. There was a long history of

bitterness between Metro (politicians and bureaucrats) and Islanders--

a bitterness which helped to harden anti-Islander attitudes. Metro

Council members were indirectly elected--i.e., they were one-step

removed from their constituents--which meant that they would not read-

ily be influenced by ratepayer or other residents' groups. During

this period, the City and suburban members of Metro Council were war-

ring over a variety of issues and the Island issue was caught in and

exacerbated this cross-fire. A majority of Metro Councillors seemed

to have environmental values and images of the Island which clashed

markedly with both Islanders' and their supporters' and made them

unsympathetic to proposals to retain the community. Islanders' own senior ward alderman and Metro representative, William Archer, was against their position. The Province had the power, but not the desire, to intervene in the matter at this time. And, as noted above, the time constraints on the Campaign were severe.

Several factors had both positive and negative aspects. For example, while two major daily newspapers (Star and Globe and Mail) had long-established anti-Islander editorial policies, the other major daily (Sun) had a moderatly pro-Islander policy and most of the broadcast media was positive. A sizeable majority of Metro-wide public opinion was pro-retention of Island homes, but the interest and commitment in the suburbs was relatively low. Finally, resident and ratepayer groups were active and influential at the City level, but not at the Borough or Metro Council levels.

On the positive side was the fact that City Council had adopted a strong, pro-Island position in November 1973. A minority of Metro Council (which consisted of most City representatives, including the mayor, and a few borough representatives) was strongly committed to the desirability of retaining the Island community. The citizens' movement and the related neighbourhood preservation movement were near their peak in the City (a major factor which inspired Islanders to act). The Island yacht club leases were up for renewal (and were renegotiated), which created some (but not overwhelming) public outrage and public sympathy. Similarly, the fact that Islanders would receive no compensation not only provided extra incentive for Islanders to fight, but also created a measure of public sympathy. More important, however, were the facts that there was a severe housing crisis in

Toronto, that there would be municipal elections in December (and a
Federal election in July was announced during the Campaign), and that
a few Metro representatives who had voted against Islanders on December
11 indicated shortly after the vote that they might change their minds.
Finally, the Island community itself possessed a number of resources
which were useful to the conduct of the Campaign: e.g., extensive
political experience and contacts (from previous defense of place
actions); numbers (700+ is not a huge group, but, if motivated, it
is large enough to provide personnel for a wide variety of tasks and
even to mount a relatively large demonstration); organizing ability
(as a result of long years of organizing Island activities as well as
previous political campaigns); wide variety of personal and profession-
al skills (legal, financial, planning, public speaking, writing, print-
ing, graphics, etc.) and so on.

It was in the face of this threat and within this political con-
text that Islanders organized their massive campaign to defend their
place. The objective, as noted above, was to change the Metro Council
policy by the summer of 1974 (and, failing that, to devise alternative
defense strategies) and, not insignificantly, to prevent people from
moving away. The major political strategy adopted was to mobilize
public support and to build alliances with groups across Metro which
could, in turn, put pressure on Metro Councillors to re-open the issue
and change the policy. In order to carry out this strategy, a variety
of committees were created (public support, media, finance, solidarity,
legal, etc.), a steady stream of publicity was issued, over 200 trips
to the boroughs were organized, numerous meetings with politicians at
all levels were arranged, major public events were planned and staged,

and an extraordinarily large number of Islanders were motivated to participate in some way. Ultimately, Islanders failed to reach their primary political goal, but they devised alternate strategies, laid the groundwork for continuing the battle, and prevented any mass exodus from the Island. This Campaign provides numerous specific examples of the interactive relationship between sense of place and defense of place. Many of these have been discussed at various points in earlier chapters and are, therefore, only briefly summarized here.

First, consider how Islanders' sense of place and its components have influenced Islanders' defense of place. Throughout this Campaign (e.g., in publications, advertisements, public statements and public events), Islanders' strong sense of history and assessment of the political climate led them to create an image of the Island community as an historic, well-established community with deep roots and to argue that it should be preserved, not destroyed.

Throughout this Campaign, Islanders' strong sense of community was especially important to the conduct of the Campaign. First of all, it inspired them to espouse community arguments--to project an image of the Island as a distinctive, socially-mixed community which deserved to be protected. Beyond this, their already strong sense of community provided a solid foundation on which to build their massive political campaign. Leaders could appeal to the community spirit and sense of responsibility for the community of residents in order to motivate them to participate (in remarkably large numbers) in the Campaign. Islanders felt that they had to participate. Organizers could use and elaborate on the existing communications system (e.g., the interpersonal networks, newspapers, hand delivery system, the block captain

system and the ferry) to transmit information quickly and to mobilize
people (in a matter of hours if necessary) to attend meetings or make
community decisions or participate in demonstrations. Organizers could
tap the diverse talents of the community, because they began the Cam-
paign with a good idea of what resources existed within the community.
In short, Islanders were able to mobilize their forces and mount a
much larger campaign in the short time available to them than would
have been possible if they had not had a strong, existing community
base on which to build. Sense of community influenced their political
behaviour in other ways. Island leaders could generally appeal to the
community as a whole not to let itself be divided and conquered by
various Metro actions. The high priority they placed on social mix
(as well as political pragmatism) led them to accept price controls
as a way of continuing the conditions necessary to maintain that soc-
ial mix if secure tenure were achieved. And their image of suburbia
influenced the way they dressed and presented themselves before sub-
urban audiences. On the other hand, because of their strong sense of
community, resistance to being split and rejection of reducing the
existing social mix, they nearly opposed Mayor Crombie's last minute
effort to save the houses--his June motion that the Island houses be-
come part of a City housing coop. In addition, because of the very
social diversity of the community, periodic conflicts over political
strategy and style periodically erupted and reflected some of the soc-
ial divisions within the community.

Islanders' strong <u>sense of environment</u> also motivated them to
participate in this Campaign to protect something that they cherished.
As in previous years, they painted a positive image of their

environment and made direct appeals to save it because of its distinctive features--notably the carless streets and small village atmosphere. Islanders' sense of environment also contributed to their arguing that the residential areas enhanced (rather than detracted from) the quality of the park by adding to its charm, diversity and safety. Finally, Islanders' particular sense of environment (such as their appreciation for their narrow, carless streets, their archaic lamposts, their occasionally wildly individualistic little houses, their sometimes "primitive" living conditions, their lack of stores and other "conveniences", and so on) clashed markedly with that of their suburban political opponents and coloured debates during this period (as at other times).

Islanders' sense of control has led them over the years to take an active approach to defending the Island from outside threats. In 1974, (faced with a particularly severe threat and a political climate generally favourable to residents' groups becoming active), Islanders once again were strongly motivated to try to exercise some control over their future by conducting their Campaign. Beyond this, their long experience with organizing their own Island activities (social, recreational, self-help, etc.) meant that they already had a ready pool of seasoned community leaders to call on to organize and lead the Campaign. In addition, because many Islanders have tended to regard homeownership as the cornerstone of their sense of control, they have opposed proposed solutions that would eliminate it. During this Campaign, they developed a proposal for a non-profit housing association (INPHA) which would have left homeownership with individual Islanders and they nearly rejected Mayor Crombie's motion (to make them part of

a City coop).

Finally, Islanders' strong <u>sense of threatened change</u> (the most severe threat prior to 1980) provided the strongest motivation for Islanders to design and conduct a Campaign to defend their place. (These relationships are summarized in Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign".)

Second, consider how Islanders' <u>defense of place</u> (during this Campaign), in turn, influenced each of the major components of sense of place. The Campaign sharpened and expanded Islanders' <u>sense of history</u>. Simply doing the research for the various publications and public events directly associated with this Campaign (like the Island portage, which was to have been the theme of the washed-out Spring Festival, or the "Bulldozerama" which was to have illustrated the history of earlier demolitions) led a number of Islanders to investigate Island history more extensively than they would have otherwise. At least one historical documentary was created (on video tape) during this Campaign. This involved interviewing older Islanders who recalled earlier Island history and was shown on the Island as well as elsewhere. Finally, tangentially related to the Campaign was the creation of the Island Archives. A group of Islanders banded together to collect and record Island history. As a result of their efforts, exhibitions of photographs and Island memorabilia were mounted both on the Island and on the Mainland. The fruits of these various research efforts, in short, were spread across the Island and served to heighten Islanders' sense of history.

The Campaign, with its aura of anxiety and multitude of emotional experiences deepened some Islanders' <u>sense of identity</u> as

"Islanders". Participating in the Campaign may also have changed some Islanders' sense of who they were: they became not only "Islanders", but also "Island defenders". Finally, participating in the Campaign enabled some Islanders to give new meaning to the concept of house-as-symbol-of-self, by motivating many to post signs (including the eviction notices distributed by Metro in January and May 1974) and to use their houses as a means of political (as well as self) expression.

The 1974 Campaign had a profound effect on Islanders' sense of community. The sense of being a community under siege was at a fever pitch. In addition, during the Campaign, nearly every Islander became involved. There were frequent public and committee meetings. On-Island communications were improved. Frequent appeals were made to Islanders to defend the community, to act like a community and to present themselves as a solid community. And many highly emotional group events were held (ranging from appearing as deputations before other groups to demonstrating outside City Hall and attending disastrous Metro Council meetings). As a result of this, there was a heightened sense of common purpose, common experience, and common action--in short, a heightened sense of community. This Campaign had both positive and negative effects on the social splits within the community. On the positive side, during the Campaign, Islanders extended the range of their acquaintances and became a more cohesive social unit (e.g., Ward's Islanders came to know more Algonquin Islanders; "old Islanders" worked with and came to know "new Islanders", etc.) But, on the negative side, under conditions of such extreme stress, deep-seated differences between individuals and groups occasionally became sharper, more acrimonious and, unless carefully dealt with, potentially damaging to

community solidarity. Finally, as a result of their experiences in the suburbs (where some Islanders felt that their audiences did not understand or respond well to "community arguments"), some Islanders concluded from this Campaign that Islanders' sense of community was stronger than that found elsewhere.

The 1974 Campaign clarified and reinforced Islanders' sense of environment. During that Campaign, Islanders made over 200 forays into the suburban parts of Toronto in order to meet politicians, residents' groups, and individuals. By exposing Islanders to environments and environmental lifestyles so markedly different from their own, these experiences tended to reinforce their negative images of suburbia and to make them even more sensitive to the distinctive features of the Island environment. Their statements reveal that some Islanders were profoundly impressed by these experiences.

The 1974 Campaign had both positive and negative effects on Islanders' sense of control. During the Campaign, Islanders took far greater responsibility for developing and executing a political strategy than they ever had before. To this extent, their sense of control was increased. But many incidents that occurred during the Campaign revealed a frustrating lack of control. Naturally, moves by the opposition change the nature of the battle and force defenders to respond to, rather than exercise control over, events. But, during this Campaign, Islanders encountered frequent instances of their lack of control, not only over their opponents (as expected), but also over their supporters (e.g., Alderman John Sewell proceeded with a motion at North York Council and lost, in spite of having been asked not to proceed; Mayor Paul Cosgrove filed a motion to reopen the issue at Metro Council

without bothering to inform Islanders). Nevertheless, the Spring
Campaign also reveals the occasionally paradoxical nature of sense of
control: even unsuccessful political experiences may increase sense
of control. Although they did not attain their primary political goal
during this Campaign, Islanders did demonstrate to themselves and
others their capacity to resist. They did make a fundamental decision
to fight and to try to exercise a measure of control over their future.
In this way, even unsuccessful political experiences may increase sense
of control.

Finally, the 1974 Campaign also heightened Islanders' sense of
change. During the Campaign, Island leaders deliberately tried to
increase Islanders' sense of change and to make the Metro threat as
clear as possible to both Islanders and Mainlanders in order to inspire
them to take action. They tried to make the threat palpably real. For
example, the Save Island Homes pamphlet produced for the Campaign con-
cluded with a picture of a pile of rubble that once was an Island home.
(See Illustration 33.) And, at the major public forum held during the
Campaign (in March), a powerful slide show depicting the demolition of
houses at Centre Island was presented. The message was clear: unless
they took quick action to defend their place, this fate awaited them,
too.

In summary, Islanders' action taken in defense of place during
their 1974 Spring Campaign both heightened and otherwise influenced
their sense of place and each of its major components. (These relat-
ionships are summarized in Illustration 35 "1974 Spring Campaign".)

As for future research, there is a great need for additional
case studies of the relationship between sense of place and defense of

place in order to compare and generalize about reactions under different conditions of threat (under what conditions will what kind of threat lead to what kind of action?), different conditions of sense of place (what kinds of sense of place will lead to what kinds of defense of place? e.g., will the "frontier pioneer" described earlier react differently to a threat to destroy his place than a "villager on the urban fringe" or a "working class resident of an urban renewal area"?), and different conditions of defense of place (e.g., are certain kinds of defensive actions--like mass actions as opposed to legal actions--more likely to increase sense of place than others?). Such additional studies are necessary in order to refine the understanding not only of the links between each major component and defense of place (are some components more essential prerequisites for defense of place than others: e.g., to what extent and in what ways might sense of change or sense of control or sense of community be a necessary prerequisite to action?), but also of the possible links among the major components and defense of place (are there any consistent links among components--e.g., does high sense of change resulting from an outside threat tend to reduce sense of control?; do high sense of change, control and community tend to operate together to lead to defense of place?). Certainly, in the case of the Toronto Island, a strong sense of change (resulting from an outside threat that was perceived as severe) combined with a strong sense of community and a strong sense of (and desire for) control have been crucial to Islanders' taking action to defend their place. A second broad area of research would be into the question of what happens to sense of place when defense of place ceases and no future defense of place action is

taken or required? For example, is a sense of community which has been created and/or reinforced by the threat and consequent defense of place deeply-felt and long-lasting, or it is relatively superficial and ephemeral and does it disappear when the threat is removed and the defensive action ceases? Only additional research can begin to asnwer these types of questions.

iv. Approach To Planning And Development:

> It is not possible to design rootedness nor to guarantee that things will be right in places, but it is perhaps possible to provide conditions that will allow roots and care for places to develop.[1]

Sense of place, as this and other studies have indicated, describes a link between people and places that is far from superficial, but is deeply-felt and deeply-significant. The first step toward creating the conditions "that will allow roots and care for places to develop" is to understand the importance of sense of place and to recognize and respect it where possible when it is encountered in the real world. Often the strongest evidence that sense of place exists among particular people in a particular place is their resistance to a plan to alter or eradicate their place. Rather than regarding such resistance as a sign of selfish obstinacy, planners and decision-makers should begin to recognize it as a sign that something more than originally met their eyes is involved. They should re-evaluate their policies, in light of the reactions, to see if there is indeed an over-riding public need to proceed as originally planned (sometimes there is, but often there is not) or if there is, in fact,

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[1]Relph, Place and Placelessness, op. cit., p. 146.

some way to accommodate both the general interest and the particular

interest. In this re-evaluation, the possibility of maintaining the

sense of place among this group should itself be given a high prior-

ity. Callously destroying this highly important link between people

and places not only risks creating serious emotional, psychological,

social and even physical health problems for the particular group of

individuals involved, but also risks reducing the very conditions

which contribute to creating a healthy wider urban (or non-urban)

environment. For, maintaining (and, where possible, helping to create)

sense of place among groups of people, it can be argued, is a funda-

mental building block for creating a viable larger city.

Second, this study underlines the importance of analyzing the

special nature of particular places. In addition to seeking general

solutions to general problems, planners and decision-makers should

also be conscious of the need to seek particular solutions to partic-

ular problems and to create the conditions under which differences and

the resulting variety can emerge and flourish. In the case of the

Toronto Island, for example, rather than automatically adopting the

general view that parks and residents do not mix, planners and decision-

makers should look more carefully at the particular case and what

attractions (and detractions) residents might provide. (The Island

is not like a mainland park. Every park on the mainland has residents

and/or other potential users close to it. Because of this, even reg-

ional parks function as neighbourhood parks as well as regional parks

and may benefit from the daily use and informal policing provided by

near-by residents. But, because it _is_ an island, if the remaining

houses were removed, the Island park would no longer have _any_ residents

or other potential users close-by.)

Third, this study has also emphasized the importance of being sensitive to and as much as possible trying to adopt the perspective of an "insider" when seeking to understand sense of place. With respect to planning and development, it is also important for planners and decision-makers to try to understand places from the perspective of "insiders" so that their plans to change particular places can build on (rather than destroy) sense of place. Too often (as indicated here and throughout the planning literature) planners and decision-makers have held environmental images and values far different from those held by "insiders"--and have acted in ignorance of or even in open conflict with these alternate views. In the case of the Toronto Island, for example some politicians have been surprised and even appalled by the Islanders' physical environment (e.g., the "primitive" conditions; small, badly-paved or unpaved streets; little houses and their occasionally scruffy appearance; and so on) and, for this reason as much as any other, have voted to demolish it. (Similar actions were taken in many urban renewal areas across North America and else-where, which policy-makers regarded as "slums" and as an affront to civic pride and proper administration, as they understood them.) But simply disliking the appearance of some place is insufficient reason for destroying previous links between people and their places. Under-standing the perspective of the "insider" may help to avoid wholesale destruction of this kind. It may also alter and improve plans for development in a whole host of less radical, but still important ways (e.g., retaining, rather than modernizing, old streetlights; retaining, rather than straightening, the curve of streets; retaining rather than

blocking or altering significant views, and so on).

Finally, this study emphasizes that there are six major components of sense of place, and illustrates how they can be used to analyze a particular place. With respect to planning and development, it is useful to keep these six components in mind and see how conditions to promote them might be created in a specific place. For example, since every place has a particular history, residents of a new development or town might be encouraged to develop a sense of history either directly by informing them about that history (in a variety of ways--like exhibitions, publications, local history courses, etc.) or indirectly (by using place names relevant to the place's history or by retaining physical remnants of the past rather than demolishing everything and starting over, etc.). Literally dozens of ideas like these can be culled from the chapters dealing with individual components (e.g., emphasizing distinctive environmental features--like a view, a mountain, a waterfront, an old tree--to foster a sense of environment; creating a carless environment to encourage social contact and sensitivity to the natural environment; encouraging sense of identity and control by authorizing and encouraging people to decorate and alter their house or living environment as they see fit, rather than discouraging or prohibiting them from taking such action; and so on.).

If the Toronto Island community, for example, were to be retained and expanded, this study provides some ideas about how to minimize physical or social disruption. It would be unfortunate, for example, if the existing physical environment were radically altered (e.g., by allowing cars or widening streets or building highrise apartments) or if social splits between "new" and "old" Islanders were to

emerge because a totally different type of community developed. Two
suggestions come to mind. First, some of the new housing could take
the form of solar housing (of a scale, material and design which would
fit in with the existing environment). Beyond this, perhaps a "con-
servation coop" could be formed of residents in this new housing and
residents in some of the existing housing. The coop might provide
space for (or even run) a food coop, as one way to draw people together
and to provide some needed grocery facilities for a permanent expanded
community. This solar housing and conserver coop would probably
appeal to the "conserver ethic" shared by so many Islanders and might
well attract people who would fit in well with the existing community.
The new solar housing itself would perhaps reinforce the image of the
residential areas as a distinctive and special place and might even
act as a positive tourist attraction to draw visitors to the "park".
Second, some of the new housing perhaps could take the form of "shell
housing", which the City (or Metro or other level of government) could
build and sell to people willing and able to complete the shell
(according to guidelines ensuring that the existing physical environ-
ment was not radically altered). Islanders, it is evident from this
study, see themselves as independent, resourceful people (who, for ex-
ample, own their own homes and can care for them without relying on
professionals). Similarly independent, resourceful types of people
might well be attracted by this approach to expanding the community.
In addition, the price of the shells would be low relative to the cost
of finished houses and therefore could attract residents from a broader
spectrum, who would reinforce the existing social mix. (Restrictions
on ground leases, residency requirements and resale conditions could

be developed in order to prevent speculators from buying the shells, completing the houses and reselling them at a profit.)

In conclusion, these, and other, ideas can be generated for the Island, and for other places, by planners, developers and policy-makers who open themselves up to places as "insiders" see them and who seek, not to impose outside solutions, but to work cooperatively and creatively with the people who know the place best.