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Yorkville

The atlas comprises three maps that illustrate the transformations of Yorkville during three different periods: the 1860s, 1920-1960s, and the 2020s. The Yorkville area was more of a village in the 1860s. It underwent significant changes from the 1920s to the 1960s due to gentrification. The maps provide an overview of the physical arrangement of the land and how significant events that transpired in the 1960s influenced the development of the present-day Yorkville neighbourhood. We use hand-drawn icons highlighting popular Yorkville destinations aiming to underscore the historical significance of these spots, which have borne witness to pivotal changes in Yorkville. These changes go beyond mere physical alterations; they also encompass shifts in the neighborhood's composition and the experiences of those who inhabit this space. In this essay, we will explore how the function of this space may have evolved and, consequently, how it has influenced the experiences of its users and the public's perception of it. To accomplish this, we will examine public opinions of Yorkville as documented in historical newspapers and assess how modern social media platforms contribute to the promotion and understanding of Yorkville.

As highlighted on the 20th-century Yorkville map, the Penny Farthing and Riverboat Coffee House were among the first coffee houses known for hosting jazz and folk music performances. These venues attracted an influx of artists and epitomized the vibrant, artistic community of Yorkville. Undoubtedly, Yorkville was a remarkable place teeming with cafes, restaurants, and bars, making it unlike any other spot in Toronto at that time. Yorkville served as a home for youth who were advocates of hippie culture and counterculture, as vividly expressed by Ginger, a 17-year-old runaway: "At first, the village just seemed like a wonderland, a Gotland. A lot was going on. You simply couldn't wait to hit the streets after waking up in the afternoon... I believed I would never feel lonely down here" (Breslin, C. 1967, Pg. 34). During that era, Yorkville offered a place where countercultural youth felt welcomed, and artists found a space to create, network, and celebrate. However, it's crucial to note that Yorkville wasn't a utopia for everyone. The Yorkville of the 1960s was described as a community filled with police officers, distressed parents, ministers, and overworked narcotics investigators, as portrayed by a 7-year-old in an interview (Breslin, C. 1967, Pg. 34).

When discussing Yorkville in the 1960s, the first image that often comes to mind is that of hippies and counterculture artists, who were predominantly white, heterosexual males from suburban backgrounds. However, it's essential to acknowledge that marginalized groups were often left out of this narrative (Houle, n.d.). In Stuart Henderson's book "Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto in the 1960s", the author sheds light on the often-overlooked groups in 1960s Yorkville, which

include women, working-class youth, homosexuals, and rural transplants, 'greasers (the sons and daughters of immigrant families), bikers and the so-called weekenders or teenyboppers that acted as "tourists" in the area' (Boudreau, 2013 & Houle, n.d.). In 1964, the scene in Yorkville witnessed the presence of drugs and some minor "rioting", leading to police intervention. This resulted in a media frenzy, with both local and national reporters eager to find any sensational aspect of Yorkville. This, in turn, attracted "weekenders" or teenyboppers seeking a 'place for free love and cheap drugs (Houle, n.d.). Additionally, Henderson's observations reveal that, during this era of free love and sexual liberation, many young women became vulnerable to so-called educated male hippies who used them' for inexpensive, one-night encounters, often offering drugs as an enticement (Henderson, 2011).

During the late 1960s, City Hall considered Yorkville's hippie culture as a "sore on the city", and this situation hurt the housing market (Schabas, J., 2013). As a result, City Hall chose to address these issues by removing them. However, this was not the only concern raised by City Hall. They also permitted land speculators to let properties decay so that they could be sold at a lower price. Yorkville has undergone a significant transformation since its inception and is now known as the third most expensive retail space in North America (Schabas, J., 2013). The area of Yorkville has now become known as a celebrity sighting area, as well as a high-end shopping area rather than a music and arts community. Despite going through significant changes over the years, Yorkville has managed to preserve its roots and integrate them into the present atmosphere of the neighbourhood. In the current era of Yorkville, the neighbourhood still holds its reputation as both an "act" and a place "to see or be seen" (Houle, n.d.). Many artists continue to use this area as a platform to showcase their work and get discovered.

On the map we also include the development of the transit system – the evolution from the three-line Toronto Metro to Bloor subway station. The completion of the Bloor subway station gained Yorkville popularity and marked the beginning of its gentrification journey (Park, J, 2017). Although the construction of the Bloor subway station played a crucial role in the gentrification of Yorkville, it has now become a usual mode of transportation for people commuting to work, going for high-end shopping, or taking leisurely strolls around the neighbourhood. Yorkville's reputation as a high-end shopping district was solidified by the completion of Hazelton Lanes in 1976, the opening of the Four Seasons Hotel in 1978, and the Holt Renfrew Centre in 1979. These developments played a vital role in transforming the neighbourhood into a prime destination for luxury shopping. The Chanel store situated on Yorkville Avenue is a prominent instance of the transformation of Yorkville into a luxury shopping destination. The Two-story Chanel store we know today was built in 1871 as a private residence (Grant, J. 2017).

The Chanel store on Yorkville Avenue has had a significant impact on the social media landscape, in addition to its historical use as a private residence and its current

function as a luxury clothing store. When looking up Chanel Yorkville on Instagram by location, there are over 1000+ images of women posed in front of the chic high-end boutique. Apart from the Chanel boutique, Yorkville's history, art, music, and cafés are also significant drivers of foot traffic in the area, as evidenced by numerous Instagram photos. The blog posts on the Bloor-Yorkville official website have a contributing factor to the foot traffic seen in the area as well as letting people know about events, festivals, holidays, things to do, what to eat, etc. The popularity of Yorkville can be attributed to its "must-go" spots being showcased on social media, prompting people to visit the neighbourhood.

In conclusion, our examination of popular spots in Yorkville, both as reported in historical media and today, has provided us with a comprehensive understanding of the neighborhood's historical development. This understanding has been enriched by the perspectives of those with a connection to this space, including long-time residents who have seen it evolve since their childhood and visitors who seek out the must-visit cafes and bars on weekends. Our series of maps has enabled us to delineate these popular spots that bear witness to Yorkville's pivotal transformation. However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of our maps. Firstly, there was insufficient historical map data available for us to accurately represent the geographical changes in Yorkville since 1860. Consequently, we opted to manually draw the maps and supplement our knowledge with relevant literature. We have presented a cartoonish historical map of Yorkville spanning from 1860 to the present day, primarily created using Figma as our main mapping tool and featuring hand-drawn sketch figures. Hand drawing, though, has its drawbacks, including the time and effort it requires, which can affect the precision of the maps. Nevertheless, since our maps primarily illustrate the historical changes in Yorkville, these limitations do not significantly hinder the audience's ability to grasp the main content.

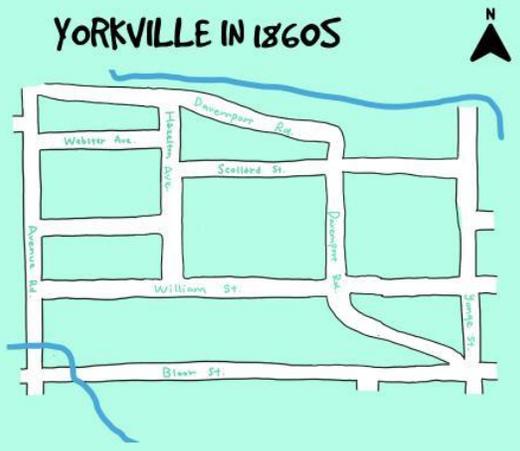
In summary, Yorkville's transformation from a quiet suburban neighborhood in the 19th century to its present status as a vibrant commercial district reflects the profound impact of urbanization and gentrification on a community's identity. It also underscores the importance of historical landmarks and social media in shaping the neighborhood's popularity.

Map

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IKCpLTkcKd-pYucNcSYf297ayl14WiDt?usp=sharing>

YORKVILLE IN HISTORY

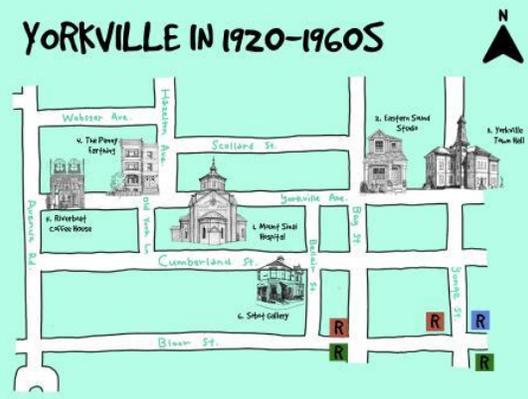
YORKVILLE IN 1860S



MAP LEGEND

-  : Street Row
-  : Water/River

YORKVILLE IN 1920-1960S



MAP LEGEND

1. Mount Sinai Hospital
 2. Eastern Sound Studio
 3. Yorkville Town Hall
 4. The Penny Farthing
 5. Riverboat Coffee House
 6. Sobaj Gallery
-  : Street Row
 -  : Danforth- University-Yonge Route
 -  : Bloor-Danforth Route
 -  : Bloor- University-Yonge Route

YORKVILLE IN 2020S



MAP LEGEND

1. Chanel Store
 2. Mist Garden
 3. Fire Station
 4. Store KIMWA
 5. Residential condo
 6. Hermes
-  : Street Row
 -  : TTC LINE 1
 -  : TTC LINE 2

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