Cultural Diversity in Mile End: Everyday Interactions between Hasidim and Non-Hasidim

Caitlin J. Alton

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By: Caitlin Alton

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Signed by the Final examining committee:

_____ Chair Wilson Chacko Jacob

_____ Supervisor Steven High

_____ Examiner Erica Lehrer

_____ Examiner Barbara Lorenzkowski

Approved by _____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director
Wilson Chacko Jacob

_____ 2011 _____

Dean of Faculty Brian Lewis

ABSTRACT

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Caitlin Alton

In this thesis I have examined how Hasidim and non-Hasidim interact in Mile End in a microstudy of one street in the neighbourhood, Rue Hutchison. Through this work I provide insight into the broader picture of interculturalism and reasonable accommodation in Montreal. Most people living in Mile End like living in a diverse neighbourhood; however, there is a continuum of adjustment for interviewees in Mile End which reflects how comfortable they are living with Hasidim. Through oral history interviews, ethnography, and a collaborative ethos of sharing authority with interviewees I show places where interactions between Hasidim and non-Hasidim occur, show their importance to residents living in the neighbourhood, and the potential to bring people from different groups into contact or exposure with each other. I believe the most important part of what makes a multi-ethnic neighbourhood work are individual relationships, such as those I developed with my interviewees.

This work makes two unique and important contributions. First, it explores the interactions between these two groups, and their potential for creating mutual understanding. Second, this thesis makes use of an innovative research methodology: a combination of oral history and ethnography. Through oral history I allowed interviewees to share the realities of their day-to-day life and through ethnography I observed how people live and move through the neighbourhood.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to all my neighbours who made this project possible through being interviewed or sharing their time with me. You are all a part of why I like Mile End so much. Special thanks to the Weiss family, and Sarah in particular. I also benefited greatly from encouragement and conversation from my supervisor, Steve High, from the initial idea of this project to the writing and revisions stage. Thank you, Erica Lehrer, for all your support, sharing of ideas, and insight about ethnography. Tessa Jones, thanks for helping me talk through many aspects of my research during our runs in up Mont Royal. I'd also like to express gratitude to Kieran Ryan; you supported and encouraged me in so many important ways throughout this project.

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Introduction

There is a great deal of anxiety in Quebec, like elsewhere in North America and Europe, about immigration and cultural diversity. Race and religion have now joined language as a central preoccupation of Quebec politicians. The degree to which religious or cultural difference should be accommodated by mainstream society has been a political flashpoint in recent years, so much so that the Quebec government named a Commission of Inquiry headed by Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard in 2007 to address the question of whether perceived practices of reasonable accommodation, especially around religion, were compatible with Quebec society's common values and collective norms.[1] The commission wrote that intercultural harmonization practices, necessary when two different groups live together "recognize that the rule of equality sometimes demands differential treatment."[2] As well, the commission emphasized that reasonable accommodation is a legal concept based on general rights set out in *The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. A distinction has been made between Canadian-style multiculturalism (which encourages difference) and Quebec-style interculturalism (which emphasizes integration); in other words, the Quebec government rejects "Canadian multiculturalism" as it is enshrined in Canadian law, emphasizing "interculturalism" or cultural pluralism instead.[3]

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[1] Formally called the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences and often referred to as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission.

[2] Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation Report* (Québec: Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accomodement reliées aux différences culturelles, 2008), 160.

[3] For example, the report cites a January 2007 survey, where "80% of Quebecers said they wanted immigrants to be encouraged to integrate into the culture of the Canadian majority, compared with 44% of the population of the other Canadian provinces" 218, Bouchard-Taylor Report. For studies on Canadian multiculturalism see Gerald Kernerman, *Multicultural nationalism: Civilizing difference, constituting community* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005); Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Engaging diversity: Multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto: Nelson Thomson

Much has been written about the "reasonable accommodation" debate and the work of the Bouchard-Taylor commission, yet the debate is as much a local neighbourhood issue as it is a provincial or national one. Nowhere is this more the case than on Rue Hutchison and with Montreal's Hasidic Jewish community. This thesis concentrates on the everyday negotiation of difference and living together between the Hasidim and non-Hasidim in Mile End. Key questions this thesis sets out to examine are: Is reasonable accommodation attainable with groups who intentionally, and very visibly, set out to separate themselves from the mainstream? Is it possible for cultural groups in Canada to live side by side, or does tension inevitably result? This work qualitatively examines the case of Hasidim in Mile End, through the micro-study of one street and an analysis of how people on this street view their life in the neighbourhood and their day-to-day interactions with each other.

William Shaffir has suggested that the issues of the Hasidic community in Montreal and their relationship with their neighbours, especially those that hit on the sensitive topic of reasonable accommodation in the context of Quebec politics are over reported in the media. He posits that this is because of the position of the Hasidim, "straddling two worlds (attempting to preserve ancient tradition but simultaneously embracing elements of modernity) seems to have heightened their visibility, making them a newsworthy subject."[4] In Mile End and Outremont in the last year, for example, there has been much media attention focused on the Hasidim; this includes the May 2010 reports of illegal importation of alcohol to a Mile End synagogue, protests against the

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Learning, 2002) and Neil Bissoondath, *Selling illusions: The cult of multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto: Penguin Books Canada, 1994).

[4] William Shaffir, "Hassidim and the 'Reasonable Accommodation' Debate in Quebec," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 5, no. 1 (2008): 40.

expansion of the Bobover synagogue on Hutchison in March 2010, issues of government funding for Jewish schools, and the vandalism of a duplex synagogue in 2010.[5] Earlier controversies dealt with Hasidim's use of public space with the construction of an eruv (a symbolic wire/string that transforms space and allows certain work to be done on Sabbath by Hassidim) in Outremont, the YMCA-Satmar synagogue debate on the frosted windows of an exercise room in 2006-2007,[6] and ongoing conflicts around building and expanding residential duplex synagogues in Mile End and Outremont. In this way, popular knowledge about Hasidim in Mile End is derived from media coverage and the public and political discourse which surround these neighbourhood conflicts over religious and cultural difference.

I wanted to talk to people in Mile End who weren't spokespeople, and who didn't feel the need to make public statements about their relationship with their neighbours or the Hasidim. Although many of the people I interviewed did mention some of the political issues discussed above, they were not a major focus of their understanding of how they live as residents of Mile End. My approach towards interviewing my neighbours on Hutchison was deliberate; I allowed interviewees to define the nature of their everyday relationship and contact with their neighbours, rather than focusing on the oft-reported conflict between the two groups. I found my focus on the everyday led to a

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[5] For example see Jan Ravensbergen, "Synagogue, SAQ in alcohol row," *Montreal Gazette* May 24, 2010 sec A and Jan Ravensbergen "Synagogue vandalism a hate crime: police; Outremont's Hassidic community in 'state of angst,' CJC head says," Canadian Jewish Congress Website News, March 23, 2010, http://www.cjc.ca/2010/03/23/synagogue-vandalism-a-hate-crime-police-outremonts-hassidic-community-in-a-state-of-angst-cjc-head-says/

[6] At this YMCA the workout room windows faced into the window of a room of a neighbouring synagogue where young Hassidic men students studied. The YMCA's windows were frosted, de-frosted, and finally covered with adjustable blinds in order to ensure young men were not distracted by women exercising. Currently, there are no blinds on the windows of the YMCA and the synagogue has blocked off its windows. What was perceived to be at stake was the right of the Hasidim to dictate how the YMCA treated women working out.

variety of stories that are not often documented being shared with me about the experience of living in Mile End.

I am primarily interested in interactions between Hasidic and non-Hasidic residents of Mile End and I explore this through my relationship with one Hasidic family, the Weisses, through oral history interviews and neighbourhood ethnography. The first chapter of this thesis reviews the methodology I used in my research, focusing on the self-reflective approach, prioritizing the concept of shared authority. In addition, I explore my friendship with Sarah Weiss and discuss how this influenced the themes I became interested in. Writing about this friendship, I also analyze the fear of assimilation that governs the Hasidic community's interactions with non-Hasidim. The second chapter of this thesis reviews Mile End's Jewish history and analyzes how Hasidic and non-Hasidic residents define neighbourhood boundaries and identity in relation to neighbouring Outremont. The third chapter of this work concludes with an analysis of the everyday interactions in the neighbourhood, especially those that occur on the Jewish Sabbath. I posit that non-Hasidic residents in Mile End go through a process of gradual adjustment and coming to terms with living in a place with a visible minority such as the Hasidim.

For this research project, I was curious to see if I could gain an understanding of how people from each group, Hasidic and non-Hasidic, think about the other and understand the neighbourhood where they live. A growing number of historians are exploring memory and everyday life. My interest in promoting inter-cultural understanding is informed by this focus on quotidian interactions. This project speaks to the idea that neighbourhoods and cultural communities also have their "lieux de

memoire" or constitutive narratives. My thesis was influenced by the dynamic fields of public and oral history, which are growing and expanding definitions of ways to collaborate and share authority. This project represents methodological innovation and a contribution to wider scholarship by combining oral history and ethnography. These ideas and how they influenced my methodology will be discussed in more detail in chapter one.

The street I lived on for the 16 months of my thesis research is densely populated, composed of classic Montreal walkups built wall to wall. Rue Hutchison is the type of street where you recognize your neighbours even if you haven't been introduced; you see them leaving and entering their apartments, coming down the stairs, heading to their cars, or walking on the street.

Figure One: View down Rue Hutchison

I soon came to recognize some of the neighbours who lived within a few houses of me, including my upstairs neighbour, Yannick, and his young francophone family. He and his wife have two young children who I would often see going out to the park. The Greek-Canadian neighbours next door, Billy and Roula, also had older children I would see on the street walking their dog, and I recognized the couple next door who would often sit on the front step and read the newspaper together on weekend mornings. I would interview them all in the course of my research but it was the Weiss family: Chaya, Joseph, and their daughter Sarah to whom I became closest and who showed the most interest in my neighbourhood history project.[7] It was they, who, as we got to know each other, would always give me advice about what to do in Montreal, suggest people for me to interview, and keep me eating honey cookies all summer long. Living in Mile End meant there was often an opportunity for a hello, a nod or a friendly wave to the people who lived nearby. This was something I'd never experienced before in Edmonton, my suburban hometown on the prairies, where homes and lots are big. There, it is easy to drive into your garage and never once think about the person who lives next to you. I once estimated that the number of people living on one side of my Montreal street was about the same as the entire neighbourhood in which I grew up, which is about the same size as Mile End as a whole.

[7] The entire Weiss family is identified with pseudonyms. Interviews for this project were conducted with the option of anonymity; some interviewees requested this as they felt they were talking about sensitive subject matter or did not want to be identified in a published work. Any interviewee that chose anonymity is given a pseudonym, and in some cases, identifying details changed to prevent recognition. In the case of the Weiss family, family structure and relationships were not changed.

Mile End has been undergoing gentrification since the late 1980s, resulting in rising housing prices.[8] It is also known as a home to many artists and "indie" musicians, due to a glut of inexpensive old factory buildings which have been converted into artist studios near the railway tracks in the eastern end of the neighbourhood. Deindustrialization and gentrification are therefore part of the same continuum. Sharon Zukin's work on the different stages of gentrification is relevant to cite here as Zukin writes about urban change, such as the different stages of gentrification, and social change in cities.[9] As former working class neighbourhoods like Mile End gentrify, the identity of the neighbourhood changes; however, Mile End's constitutive narrative still incorporates its working class, immigrant past, as part of the neighbourhood's cachet rests in the diversity on its streets.

In municipal politics and organization, Mile End is currently part of the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough or arrondissement. Its boundaries have changed significantly over time. At one point the name Mile End referred to an area of Montreal that extended to Saint-Zotique Street, including parts of present day "Little Italy". Currently, Mile End is part of the Plateau-Mont-Royal district. As a neighbourhood within a larger municipal district, its boundaries are not officially mandated by the city. However, Mile End is commonly distinguished from the mainly francophone area of the Lower Plateau. Boundaries for delineating Mile End commonly encompass Van Horne Street to the

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[8] For the tax assessment roll for 2011 the Plateau Mont-Royal district had the largest assessment increase of 34.7%. Catherine Solyom, "Montreal Property Values Skyrocket," *Montreal Gazette,* September 15, 2010*,* Opinion Section.

[9] Sharon Zukin, "Culture Capital in the Urban Core," *Annual Review of Sociology* 13 (1987): 129-147; Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: culture and capital in urban change* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982). See also Chris Hamnett, and Drew Whitelagg, "Loft Conversation and Gentrification in London: From Industrial to Postindustrial Land use," *Environment and Planning A* 39, no. 1 (2007), 106-24.

North, Hutchison Avenue to the west and St Denis Avenue to the north-east, and St. Joseph or Mont Royal Street to the south.[10]

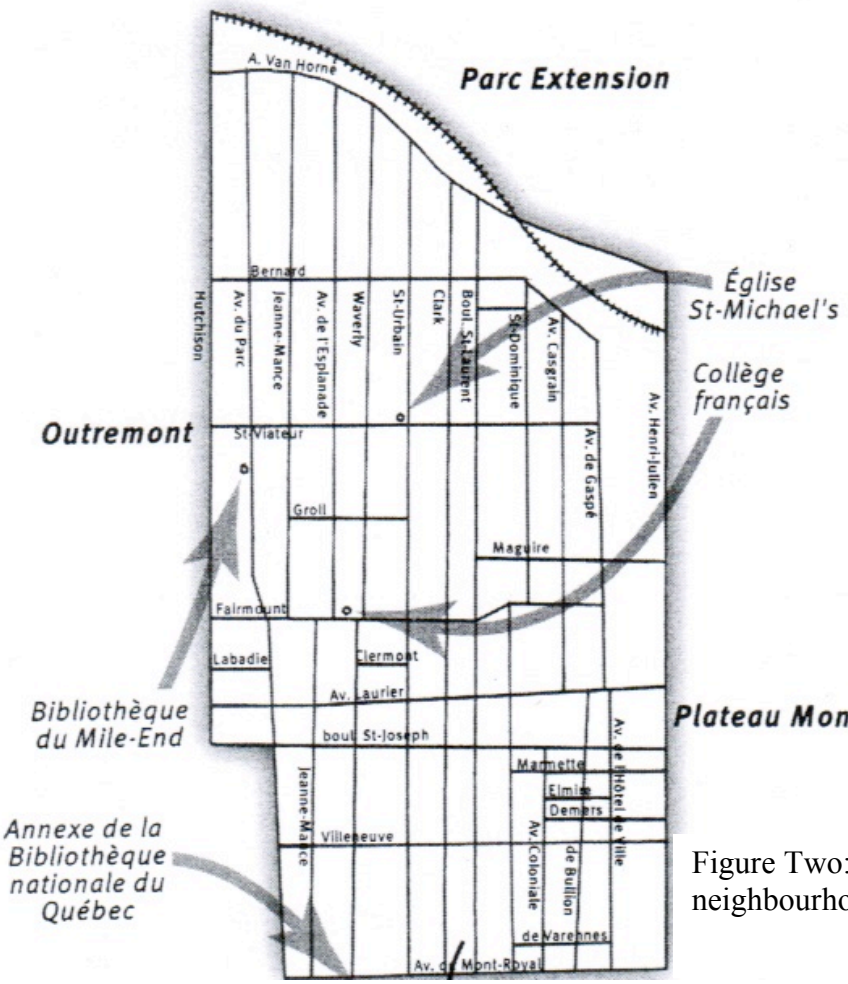

Figure Two: Le Mile End, neighbourhood borders.

People who live in the area create their own borders and have varying ideas about what constitutes Mile End. The second chapter of this thesis will look how interviewees described neighbourhood boundaries between Mile End and Outremont.[11] Mile End, an immigrant-friendly, multi-ethnic, working class community is often defined in opposition

[10] See map, figure 2 taken from Sherry Simon, *Hybridité Culturelle* (Montreal: L'île de la Tortue, 1999), 10. Simon identifies neighbourhood boundaries similar to what I use in this work.
[11] Jordan Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian: Urban Change and Ethnic Life in Postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). Stanger-Ross' writing on Italian immigrant's ethnic enclaves shows the different ways communities create boundaries. Toronto's Little Italy included Italians from all over the metropolitan area while Philadelphia's was a much more distinct and geographically bounded district.

to francophone, middle and upper class Outremont. Rue Hutchison exists in a liminal space, as a borderland between these two communities, and I examine how interviewees conceptualize this through their use of space in both neighbourhoods.

Some basic background on the Hasidic Jews and their arrival in Montreal will be given below. The Hasidic movement started two hundred years ago in Eastern Europe, founded by rabbi Israel Ben Eliezer (also known as the Baal Shem Tov to Hasidim, a name which recognizes his miracle working).[12] Hasidim are a group of Orthodox Jews, sometimes referred to as ultra-orthodox in North America, or Haredi in Israel. Orthodox Judaism is a small minority of the general Jewish population in North America; however, due to their large family size, and low interfaith marriage rates, they are a growing demographic compared to the non-Orthodox Jewish population, which has a lower birthrate. Hasidim are divided into different sects or courts, each with a spiritual leader, called a Rebbe, who is usually part of a familial dynasty.[13] This distinguishes Hasidim from other types of Judaism, although there are individual Hasidim who are unaffiliated with any court.[14] The position of Rebbe is central to Hasidim, along with their mystical beliefs, piety (Hasid means "pious ones" in Hebrew), and specific liturgy, which, among other things, incorporate the belief that singing and dancing can bring one closer to the divine. Different Hasidic sects generally take their name from the different areas in which their rebbes originated in Europe: for example, some of the major groups in Montreal are Satmar,

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[12] Samuel Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewery* (New York, Schoken Books, 1992), 14-21.
[13] Jerome Mintz, *Hasidic People, a Place in the New World (*Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1998), 3.
[14] Ayala Fader*, Mitzvah Girls: Bringing up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009). Fader focuses her study primarily on Bobover and unaffiliated Hasidic Jewish families and provides a good background about what it means to identity as unaffiliated.

Belz, Bobov, Ger, and Lubavitch.[15] These names refer to the areas where the Hasidic rebbes originally came from, most often towns in Eastern Europe; for example, Satu Mare in Hungary (now Romania) for the Satmar or Lyubavichi, in Russia (now Belarus) for the Lubavitch sect. Outside of Montreal, in North America, large Hasidic communities are located in Brooklyn, mainly in Crown Heights and Borough Park, and Monsey, New York State as well as around London, in Amsterdam, and in Israel. Hasidim in Montreal maintain links with these communities through both educational exchanges and family ties. In Montreal, when young Hasidic people get married, the husband typically moves to the city his bride is from.[16] On the stretch of Hutchison my study focuses on, there are three Hasidic synagogues, Bobov, Satmar, and Mesivta, and people from a variety of different Hasidic sects living on the street. In Mile End and Outremont, their populations are heavily concentrated on certain streets such as Durocher, Hutchison, and Jeanne Mance. A survey done in 1997 put the Hassidic population at around twenty percent of the area's total population, and this number has increased in the past 13 years, given the large families Hasidim have.[17]

Compared to other Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews, Hasidim follow stricter interpretations of religious laws, and are much more insular and anti-assimilationist. Hasidim follow strict rules from ancient texts which govern religious matters and day-to-day life, although Hasidim don't make the distinction between these two, believing "the

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[15] The Lubavitch Hasidic sect is the most liberal and is known for its proselytizing efforts to non-practicing Jews and being more open to outsiders. Because of this, many studies of Hassidim focus on this group; however, the Lubavitch do not live in Mile End.
[16] Sarah and Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.
[17] Charles Shahar, Morton Weinfeld, and Randall Schnoor, *Survey of the Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox Communities in Outremont and Surrounding Areas* (Montreal: Coalition of Outremont Hassidic Organizations, 1997), 7.

pursuit of holiness should underlie every action" and be part of daily life.[18] As sociologist and Jewish Studies scholar Samuel Heilman summarizes in his study on the future of American Jewry, Hasidic practices are "contra-acculturative and 'enclavist'", and serve to deify tradition.[19] In chapter one I will review how Hasidic people I interviewed talked about separation from gentile life, the fear of assimilation, and their interactions with non-Hasidic people. To contextualize these beliefs, there is a small body of scholarship about Montreal Hasidim; however, it comes from a variety of academic fields.[20] This necessitates an interdisciplinary approach in reviewing the literature on Hasidim.

In Mile End, the Hasidim form a highly visible minority. As summarized in an article about synagogue expansion in Mile End and Outremont, there are "'spatial" implications of their particular way of life, including the high population concentration in certain areas, their social norms of behavior in public, community institutions and infrastructure such as converted duplex synagogues".[21] To expand, some of the most visible parts of Hasidic life to outsiders include their large families, not talking to or looking at people of the opposite sex on the street, and their distinctive style of dress. For

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[18] Stephanie Wellen Levine, *Mystics, Mavericks and Merrymakers* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 5.

[19] Samuel Heilman, *Sliding to the Right. The contest for the future of American Jewish Orthodoxy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 4.

[20] Relevant works on Montreal's Hasidim include Pierre Antcil, "Un shtelt dans la ville: la zone de résidence juive à Montréal avant 1945," in *Montreal. Tableaux d'un espace en transformation*, eds. Frank Remiggi and Gilles Sénécal, Cahiers scientifiques de l'ACFAS 76 (1992): 419-36, William Shaffir, *Life in a religious community: the Lubavitcher chassidim in Montreal* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston of Canada, 1974), Julien Bauer, "De la déviance religieuse: le sous-systéme Hassidique à Montreal," in *Les mouvements religieux aujourd'hui. Théories et pratiques*, eds. Jean-Paul Rouleau and Jacques Zylberberg, Quebec: Université Laval. Cahiers de recherche en science de la religion 5 (1984): 235-60, and Jacque Gutwirth, "The Structure of a Hassidim Community in Montreal," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 14 (1972): 42-63 focuses on the Mile End area specifically.

[21] Julie Elizabeth Gagnon, Francine Dansereau, and Annick Germain, "'Ethnic' Dilemmas?: Religion, Diversity and Multicultural Planning in Montreal," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2004): 53.

Hasidic men, this usually includes long black coats, long side curls called *payes*, long white threads called *tzitzis,* and a variety of distinctive headgear including the *shtreimel*, a large circular fur hat worn on holidays.[22] Woman dress modestly, covering the collarbones and elbows, wearing skirts below the knee always with stockings, as well as head coverings when they are married.[23] As Mintz observes, after marriage, a Hasidic woman covers her hair with a kerchief and "whenever she steps from her home she covers her hair with a wig, a wig and a hat, or a kerchief…A woman who spurns these practices runs counter to a community custom which has the force of law and is a powerful social fact of life."[24] While women are typically less visible on the street, they are generally still identifiable, especially to people who live in the neighbourhood.[25]

Figure Three: Hasidic Man on St. Viateur

[22] See Figure 3, of a Hasidic man walking near Hutchison on St. Viateur.
[23] Sarah Weiss Interview July 21, 2010. See Figure 4 of Hasidic women in Mile End during a celebration and parade for the new Torah in Fall 2009.
[24] Mintz, *New World Hasidim*, 65-66.
[25] See Figure 5 showing women and strollers parked outside Satmar Synagogue on Hutchison during a Celebration for a New Torah, Fall 2010.

Figure Four: Hasidic Women During New Torah Parade

Figure Five: Hasidic Women by Satmar Synagogue

On Rue Hutchison, the focus of my study, there are many examples of Hasidic infrastructure. On one street corner there is a kosher grocery store, Jewish bookstore, Jewish owned shoe store, and several synagogues. Mr. Gold, a Hasidic man now in his late 80s, came to Montreal in 1952, as a Holocaust survivor, like most Hasidim of his ages group.[26] Another Hasidic interviewee was born here after his parents immigrated from refugee camps in Europe after the Second World War. Mr. Gold told me that once their community gets built up, it's hard to move. "We must have a synagogue near. We don't travel on Saturday, we don't use the cars, so we have [homes]… near the synagogue, and we're near where we live. But the other people, they don't care… they, they sell here the property, for big money and they move…"[27] Religious and cultural institutions such schools and businesses providing kosher food, religious materials, and special clothing, among other things, all exist to support the Hasidic community in Mile End. In chapter three I explore how business and commerce functions as a space of interaction between Hasidim and non-Hasidim in Mile End.

I conducted eleven formal oral history interviews with nine people over the course of ten months, from October 2009 to July 2010. I also reviewed parts of my thesis and analysis of the interviews with several interviewees, incorporating their feedback into my interpretation. Two of these interviews were with couples. One Hasidic family, the Weiss family, as mentioned earlier, Sarah, Joseph and Chaya, became the focus of my interviews and main conduit into understanding Mile End's Hasidim, and were interviewed multiple times. These interviews were at the heart of my research, and were supplemented with research examining newspaper coverage of the neighbourhood and

[26] Mr. Gold is a pseudonym.
[27] Mr. Gold Interview, July 11, 2010.

issues of accommodation and cultural diversity. I did this through documenting informal conversations, my own experience as a resident in this neighbourhood, and other ethnographic observations including participant observations which were recorded in field notes covering the period from December 2009 to December 2010. As additional research, I attended walking tours of Mile End offered over the summer of 2010 by the Mile End Historical Society.

All of my interviewees (with one exception) lived on Rue Hutchison, between St. Viateur and Fairmount, within a few doors of each other. These were my neighbours; this made it easier to co-ordinate interviews, approach people and, as noted before, have follow-up conversations after interviews. My interest in people's relationships with Hasidim who live in the area was dependent on talking to both Hasidic and non-Hasidic residents of Mile End. Therefore, when the Weiss family was friendly to me and showed interest in my project and openness to being interviewed, I shifted my interviewing strategy with non-Hasidic people to reflect this, interviewing non-Hasidic residents who also lived near this particular Hasidic family. In this way my focus narrowed from examining relations in the entire community of Mile End to dynamics that existed on the street where I lived.

Chapter One

Research Methodologies and Research Strategies

This thesis will explore what people living in Mile End think of their neighbours and how they manage day-to-day encounters with them. Instead of focusing on the flashpoints and conflict between cultural groups reported regularly in the media, I will describe quotidian interactions between Hasidic and non-Hasidic residents in Mile End and attempt to show that contrary to media reports, these two groups live side by side without tension the majority of the time. I was influenced by the idea of ongoing negotiation between residents leading to a "neighbourly equilibrium", as set out by Shauna Van Praagh in her explication of the laws of nuisance and *troubles de voisinage* in nearby Outremont.[28] Furthermore, I posit that the proximity of these two groups engenders interaction, which can, over time, lead to small but positive changes for both the Hasidim and non-Hasidim.

Throughout this study I will explore the 'how' of multiculturalism: how multiculturalism works for residents of one diverse neighbourhood, on the street, on the sidewalk, and during daily interactions. I use the term multicultural to refer to the diversity of cultural groups that live in Mile End. I also say "multicultural" because as Danielle Juteau and others have commented "the actual policies resulting from interculturalism are quite similar to those driven by multiculturalism."[29] Furthermore, people I interviewed were more familiar with the term "multicultural" than

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[28] Shauna Van Praagh, "View from the Succah: Religion and Neighbourly Relations," in *Law and Religious Pluralism in Canada*, ed., Richard Moon, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008) 20-40.
[29] Danielle Juteau, Marie McAndrew, and Linda Pietrantonio, "Multiculturalism à la Canadian and integration à la Québécoise: transcending their limits," in *Blurred Boundaries: Migration, Ethnicity, Citizenship*, eds., Rainer Baubock and John Rundell (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), 97.

"intercultural". Living together, "Individuals recreate themselves in the context of those who live next door and…[i]ndeed, as the neighbourhood is shaped, choices are made by individuals as to whether they want to live with the others in this particular corner of the world."[30] Personal relationships and contact between Hasidim and non-Hasidim are supported by neighbourly proximity of living space.

My focus on the 'everyday' in Mile End included both observing the neighbourhood and asking people about daily interactions. While public history has traditionally focused on public memory as found in museums, monuments and official commemorative activity, a growing number of historians and other scholars are now exploring memory in everyday life and in the built environment itself.[31] With this shift, history and anthropology have been increasingly put into conversation. My own approach involved oral history interviews during which I analyzed people's interpretations of their own lives, their ideas about place, and their own neighbourhood.[32] My examination of everyday life and the local context of how people live in Mile End was achieved through participant-observation. I constantly saw significance in the everyday things around me: who shopped where, which children played together in the street or the back alleys, who talked to whom on the street, who walked around whom on the sidewalk, and what time the three synagogues on Hutchison were alive with chanting and singing. There are three

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[30] Van Praagh, "View from the Succah," 36.
[31] See Talja Blokland, "Bricks, Mortar, Memories: Neighbourhood and Networks in Collective Acts of Remembering," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25, no. 2 (2001): 268-283 and David Atkinson, "Kitsch geographies and the everyday spaces of social memory," *Environment and Planning A* 39, no. 1 (2007): 521-540.
[32] Tim Cresswell*, Place A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Routledge, 1989); Doreen Massey, "Places and their Pasts," *History Workshop Journal* 39, no. 1 (1995): 182-192; Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995); and Simon, *Hybridité Culturelle* and Lucy Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New York: The New Press, 1997).

synagogues on the one part of Hutchison where my study focuses; this concentration meant there was always lots to observe as groups of men and boys hurried down the street to get to the synagogue to pray and study. My thesis thus combines participant observation and oral history interviewing to determine how people spoke of their community and lived in it.[33] Ethnography strengthened my oral historical practice as it allowed me to gain a deep understanding of Mile End as a social space. This, in turn, helped me conduct richer and more detailed interviews, and form ongoing, collaborative relationships with many of my interviewee-neighbours.

This micro-study shows that a street level approach, and taking part in neighbourhood life created a space for dialogue across difference. This was a fluid approach which recognizes that people's understanding and memories are often based in the routines of daily life. My rationale for choosing this approach over other research methods will be described in this chapter. Using a mix of oral history, ethnography, and with an awareness of issues and challenges that come with collaboration and sharing authority with interviewees, I was able to gain an understanding of Mile End that would not have otherwise been possible.

Although I draw generalities about Mile End and Outremont in my study, these are from my interviews with people on Hutchison, a street which serves to divide the two neighbourhoods. The micro-historical approach can be defined as looking at small units as part of a larger history. It is closely associated with social history which looks at history from the point of view of those traditionally ignored by historians, such as

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[33] See Fern Ingersoll and Jasper Ingersoll, "Both A Borrower and A Lender Be: Ethnography, Oral History, and Grounded Theory," *Oral History Review* 15 (1987) 81-202; Edward Murphy and others, ed., *Anthrohistory: Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Disciplines* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011).

women, minorities and other subaltern groups. I was inspired by anthropologist Daniel Miller's micro-ethnographic approach, which focused on the people who lived on one single street. In his book, *The Comfort of Things*, Miller tells thirty people's stories, out of a hundred interviews he did on a single street in South London, the site of his fieldwork for 17 months. Although Miller's thesis speaks against the importance of community, concentrating instead on the importance of possessions and objects to examine meaning in people's lives, his study of a single street gave me confidence to approach my project with a focus on Hutchison to explicate ideas about Mile End and how multiculturalism works there.[34]

Ethnography: Exploring Mile End from my Front Door

Employing participant-observation and writing ethnographic field notes was a purposeful research strategy I used to embed myself in the neighbourhood and think critically about the elements of everyday life I saw unfolding in front of me to gain insight about how people live in Mile End. Participant-observation, a cornerstone of cultural anthropology, is a research method where one "takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture".[35] This technique has a long history in anthropology; however, as an explicit research method it is usually traced back to Bronisław Malinowski's 1920's work in the Trobriand Islands and his documentation of islanders' everyday social life. Participant-observation frequently leads researchers to immerse themselves in another world in order to better understand the local context.

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[34] Daniel Miller, *The Comfort of Things* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).
[35] Kathleen Musante DeWalt and Billie DeWalt, *Participant Observation: A guide for fieldworkers* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001), 1.

The first part of my immersion took place on the street in front of my house, as I tried to become familiar to my neighbours. I made an effort to be known, approachable, and a part of my street. Gardening in the front yard was a good activity because it allowed me to be busy-that is, not just "spying"-and yet still approachable. It enabled many small conversations with neighbours. Being outside and visible on my front step or in the garden helped me develop relationships with my neighbours and observe parts of their daily life. People asked me to water their plants when they were away, take in their mail, and I walked one neighbour's dog during his summer vacation. All of these things made me feel more connected with the neighbourhood and my neighbours, through sharing a part of their lives. This was an unintended side effect of my research that enriched my personal life. Later it became clear that being approachable and friendly opened more doors for my thesis research; for example, I felt more comfortable asking people to be interviewed for my project. I'm not sure why it felt unexpected, but I was surprised at how quickly I felt a sense of familiarity, belonging, and attachment to where I was living based on interviewing people and immersing myself in my study of the area.

The second part of my immersion in the neighbourhood through participant observation took place as I got to know my neighbourhood by walking through it. I went for walks several times a week just for the purpose of observing people, interactions between people, and street life in general. Throughout my time living in Mile End, I also participated in daily life in the neighbourhood, observing what went on in the course of fulfilling my own needs, such as buying groceries, taking the bus, or reading my book in a local park. I wrote down my observations in the form of ethnographic field notes after each stroll. These notes included sensory details such as sound (I often brought a sound

recorder on these walks and recorded sounds on the street), people's movements, interactions, overheard dialogue and personal impressions. I incorporated some of these observations into my thesis when trying to describe the flavour of daily life and how people interact in Mile End. For example, I observed who shopped at which businesses on Park Avenue (which will be analyzed in great detail in chapter three) or when tradesmen left a house with a plastic plate full of food. This helped me learn both the extent and limits of inter-group hospitality and commensality.

My full year of observation in Mile End, that is, experiencing four seasons in the community, exposed me to another layer of life for residents in this neighbourhood and contributed to my sense of the diversity there. Festivals like the San Marziale Festival, held by the Italian community every July, complete with a full marching band and spaghetti dinner, street festivals held throughout the summer on St. Viateur, and Hasidic parades for the celebration of a new Torah, for example, were not everyday events. However, they happened often enough that they did not seem unusual. After all these experiences I had a sense of what people see in their neighbourhood when they walk out their front door. This included French-Canadian families skating together at Outremont Park, McGill students sharing the toboggan hill with Hasidic children, and old Portuguese and Italian couples creating beautiful spots of colour with vegetable patches in their small front gardens throughout the streets of Mile End. The frequency with which I viewed these diverse multicultural displays taught me something about the vibrancy of different cultures in the street life of the neighbourhood.

Obvious public displays, as well as more private encounters and conversations inform street life in Mile End. I first met Patrice, a young, bilingual, thirty-something

professional**,** avid road biker**,** and the only non-Hasidic Jewish person I interviewed, when he was out on his front step on a sunny afternoon reading the paper. While reluctant to consider himself "involved" in Mile End because he only knows his direct neighbours, he described sitting outside on his front step to invite interaction with his neighbours, much as I tried to do when out in my garden.[36] I think enough people with this attitude does give a sense of community on the streets of a neighbourhood and is a small part of the 'how' people live in multicultural communities. My research methods were focused on understanding everyday life in a multicultural neighbourhood through the relationship of Hasidim to non-Hasidim. These intertwined with my own personal goals of being a part of and participating in the community on my street. These complimentary goals were supported by the fact that I lived in the community during my research. Furthermore, my personal commitment helped my intention to learn about how people in Mile End understand their neighbourhood, *on their own terms*. As Clifford Geertz writes, ethnography allows an interpretive study of culture where it is possible "to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them."[37] I was influenced by this philosophy, as a key aspect of ethnography is trying to understand other people's worldview. I acknowledge that this effort changes the lens through which you see your own world.

A very personal aspect of research is that observations change depending on the observer. I prioritized writing my own experiences into my research and decided to write in the first-person, as I am an integral part of the story being told. If history is a story, the part of the story any one of us tells depends on who we are, what questions we ask, what

[36] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010. Patrice is a pseudonym.
[37] Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 16.

themes we focus on and our interpretations of these themes. Barbara Tedlock's reflection on the history of self-reflexivity in anthropology recalls that "public revelation of participatory details of the fieldwork experience is still considered embarrassingly unprofessional by some ethnographers,"[38] and I would argue a similar ethic exists for many historians, even in the field of oral history**.** The voice of all-knowing interpretive authority was what I was reacting against with my decision to write about my friendship and relationships with many neighbours. This conscious choice influenced how I understood the neighbourhood, the questions I was interested in asking, the themes I saw emerging in my research, and my interpretations of what people told me.

As the year progressed, my impressions of the neighbourhood became enriched by the observations of my neighbour Sarah, who collaborated with me and more and more frequently joined me on walks. Sarah's observations about how people looked at us together made me question some of the boundaries between Hassidim and non-Hasidim because it did feel strange, noticing stares from both Hasidic and non-Hasidic people we passed on the street.[39] I asked Sarah if it was so unusual that we would be out in the street talking and sometimes walking together and she replied by talking about interactions between Hasidic and non-Hasidic people:

> The truth is, it's very different, because what are you going to talk about already? You, you, don't, you don't even, you have so little in common! What? We live in the same street? So we'll talk about, I don't know, the work, or the… what are we going to talk about?[40]

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[38] Barbara Tedlock, "From participation to the observation of participation: the emergence of narrative ethnography," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 47, no. 1 (1991): 71-72.
[39] This was something we both noticed, but did not talk about until I brought it up with Sarah in an email. I observed several times when we were walking together on the street.
[40] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21, 2010.

Her reply sounds like something which she had clearly learned, or knew without thinking about. The irony that we always found plenty to talk about when we were together was not something I mentioned in this conversation. However, I did feel the need to confirm that she was comfortable talking and spending time with me. I was worried sometimes that Sarah spending time with me would affect her, for lack of a better word, "reputation" in her community. This was because, as she hints at above, Hasidim do not normally have lengthy conversations, or otherwise become friends with non-Hasidim. Sarah told me not to be concerned, reassuring me that our relationship was okay, it was different, but okay.[41] I think this was because our relationship was part of her way of exploring the non-Hasidic world.

Other observations Sarah made during our walks together influenced what I saw on the streets of Mile End. Through this emic, insider, perspective I came to notice some things that might seem natural to Hasidic people on the street such as the pre-Sabbath rush of Hassidic men hurrying to finish errands, often going home with flowers in hand for their wives. Sarah's "eyes" allowed me to understand different parts of the neighbourhood and reduced its anonymity for me. As I got to know the Weiss family, and became friends with Sarah, it was harder to see Hasidim as unknown others. When I first moved to Mile End I saw Hasidic men, women and children as one large block of black hats and long coats, and unsmiling faces. As I got to know the Weiss family I started noticing there were children who smiled and waved at me as I walked down the street as well as women who would or would not say good morning back to me. This was an effect of my ethnographic approach and getting to know the Weiss family, which prioritized understanding the neighbourhood from a local perspective. Small connections which flow

[41] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21, 2010.

naturally, such hearing children cry through the walls of your apartment or helping push a car stuck in a winter snow bank together make it harder to see people who live near as 'others'. Personal relationships, however minor, are an important part of the how people live together in a diverse neighbourhood.[42] This is an important point and the third chapter of this thesis will analyze the kind of connections and interactions my interviewees described having with Hasidim.

The way Sarah and her family lived with their non-Hasidic neighbours, and how they treated me as a neighbour and a researcher affected my analysis of how people live together on my street. As I began this project several people told me that I should talk to Chaya because she was someone (a Hasidic person) they knew as being friendly. In fact, all of my non-Hasidic interviewees mentioned the perceived friendliness of Chaya, Sarah's mother. Yannick, Roula and Billy respectively described her as "the only one you'll get anywhere with", "friendly, not from Montreal" and "someone who would talk to you".[43] Even before I started interviewing the Weiss family, their reputation for being friendly to their neighbours preceded them. Sarah's family made it clear that they have always considered it a priority to be friendly and greet everyone, especially their direct neighbours on the street. Joseph and Chaya both emphasized to me that they have raised their children with this same attitude. As Sarah told me, "my parents are very big on, you know, being nice to the neighbours, and saying hello and greeting and whatever. You'll see my mother greets everybody!"[44] Inherent in the Weiss' friendliness are two key ideas.

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[42] See Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham eds., *Everyday Multiculturalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) for a place based case studies on the significance of everyday, culinary, and leisure based neighbourhood interactions.

[43] Yannick Roy Interview November 1, 2010, Audrey Tremblay, July 23, 2010, Interview, Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview, November 8, 2010.

[44] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21, 2010.

The first is that the Weisses recognize that non-Hasidim appreciate a degree of sociality from their neighbours, (even if it is just a hello and a wave). The second factor is more pragmatic. Joseph explained that it is smart to have a good relationship with your close by neighbours, as you will likely need help from them someday; Hasidim depend on non-Jewish people for help at times during the Sabbath or on certain holidays. Nevertheless, Joseph wouldn't want neighbours to feel that his family is only friendly to get this help.[45]

Throughout my research, interviewees shared stories with me of smiles, hellos, and the occasional wedding invitation from Hasidic neighbours in equal measure with stories of being ignored and encountering Hasidim who have no interest in any social interaction with them. The Weiss family is not typical in their friendly attitude towards their non-Hasidic neighbours, but their attitude is not out of the ordinary. An article by sociologist William Shaffir, who writes about the Montreal Hasidim, includes comments from several Hasidic people describing how they negotiate levels of friendliness and distance towards their neighbours. Shaffir summarizes their attitudes saying, "hassidim have not made a group decision about how cordial they must be in their relations with non-hassidic neighbours. That is left to individual predilection."[46] Chaya described this perspective to me, albeit from the other side of the divide, describing how she observes non-Hasidim interacting with her:

> Basically the bottom line is that Mile End is a very nice place to be. There is all the multicultural society, and that's why we enjoy it. We have Greek neighbours, we have French neighbours. Some of them will greet us some of them won't greet us. But we don't care if they don't greet us. We don't care. It's their loss [laughs]. [47]

[45] Joseph Weiss, casual conversation September 2010.
[46] Shaffir, "Hasidim and 'Reasonable Accommodation,'"40.
[47] Chaya and Joseph Weiss Interview June 6, 2010.

Chaya's words show her attitude towards greeting and interacting with non-Hasidic neighbours. As non-Hasidic shared stories of varied interactions with the 'other', so did Chaya. Life in the neighbourhood is made up of people making decisions everyday about small things, such as whether to greet a neighbour of not and how it makes them feel if they are not greeted. Through ethnography I tried to quantify people's impressions and understanding of their neighbourhood.[48]

Oral History Practice: Sharing Authority and Prioritizing Reflexivity

Oral history has undergone a series of paradigmatic shifts over the past forty years, according to Alistair Thomson. Initially, oral historians sought to prove the overall credibility and reliability of the interview as a valid historical source, by emphasizing a positivist approach.[49] However, starting in the late 1970s, a post-positivist approach to memory and subjectivity emerged. Exemplified by Alessandro Portelli's work, it was less concerned with "factual" accuracy and focused instead on the layers of meaning which are present in people's stories about what happened in the past. Portelli posits that how people remember what happened in the past is as significant as the event itself, stating: "the discrepancy between fact and memory ultimately enhances the value of the oral sources as historical documents."[50] These kinds of shifts in the discourse of oral history opened the door to ideas like sharing authority, in which flexibility and openness to interviewees and potential project outcomes are important.

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[48] Thanks to Erica Lehrer for the ideas and encouragement she provided about how to incorporate ethnography into my research methodology and practice.
[49] Alistair Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History," *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 53-55.
[50] Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli, and other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 26.

My thesis is informed by growing demands in oral and public history to share authority with interviewees outside of the formal interview space. This idea was developed by historian Michael Frisch in 1990 to describe a collaborative approach to oral history. Frisch writes about the relationship between oral historians and interviewees and how to create a shared authority between them during the research process, interpretation of findings, and in public history outcomes.[51] In 2003, Linda Slopes reviewed how Frisch's original definition of shared authority has been expanded to refer to "'sharing authority' throughout the entire oral history process, from project design to fieldwork protocols to the uses to which interviews are put."[52] In a 2009 special issue of the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Steven High concurs and adds another layer of nuance to this view, suggesting that the term *sharing* authority is a more "expansive" one than the term *shared* authority. This is because it suggests the "ongoing process of dialogue and sharing" as well as the "cultivation of trust, the development of collaborative relationships, and shared decision making"[53] that result from approaching oral history with the goal of sharing scholarly authority.

Sharing authority is a part of a humanistic approach to oral history. This approach is encouraged and supported at Concordia's History Department, where I was first

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[51] Michael Frisch explains this concept in his 1990 monograph *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1990) and more recently, "Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process," *Oral History Review* 30, no.1 (2003): 111-113.

[52] Linda Slopes, "Commentary: Sharing Authority," *The Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 104. From this same issue see also Alicia Rouverol, "Collaborative Oral History in a Correctional Setting: Promise and Pitfalls," *The Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 61-85 and Daniel Kerr, "'We Know What the Problem Is': Using Oral History to Develop a Collaborative Analysis of Homelessness from the Bottom up," *The Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 27-45. These authors' perspectives on sharing authority as a form of "reciprocal ethnography" was also useful for framing my ideas about the links between ethnography and oral history.

[53] Steven High, "Sharing Authority: An Introduction," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no.1 (2009): 13.

exposed to historian Stacy Zembrzycki's explication of the collaborative relationship she had with her baba (Ukrainian for grandmother) during her PhD research.[54] Zembrzycki's emphasis on sharing authority, and the more personal scholarship exemplified in her writing motivated me to think seriously about the possibilities that sharing authority can offer when someone else is interested and invested in your project, as Zembrzycki's baba was.[55] I used Zembrzycki's research as a jumping off point for thinking about how I could collaborate more with interviewees, especially Sarah, who showed an interest in my project. What also appealed to me about Zembrzycki's work is her honesty and self-reflexivity; I believe this comes from her practice of sharing authority. For example, in a recently published article, Zembrzycki and Anna Sheftel "call for sensitivity and self awareness" as well as an acknowledgement of some of the normally unexpressed limitations in the field of oral history.[56] They reflect candidly on some of the challenges that emerge when carrying out collaborative projects. This kind of reflection about research practices, as well as Zembrzycki's actual practice of sharing authority inspired me to be more reflexive and incorporate sharing authority in my own research.

Taking oral history to a more self-reflexive level also seems to be an important aspect of collaboration and sharing authority. Kathleen Borland has suggested a "move towards a more sensitive research methodology" that recognizes the "variability in

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[54] See *Journal of Canadian Studies Sharing Authority: Community-University Collaboration in Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Engaged Scholarship* 43, no.1 (2009). This special issue features many projects and work from Concordia's History Department (including an article by Zembrzycki) and is a good example of the kind of scholarship that is encouraged.

[55] See Stacy Zembrzycki, "Sharing Authority with Baba," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no.1 (2009): 219-238; Stacey Zembrzycki, "'There Were Always Men in Our House': Gender and the Childhood Memories of Working-Class Ukrainians in Depression-Era Canada," *Labour/Le Travail* 60 (2007): 77-106 and http://www.sudburyukrainians.ca

[56] Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki, "Only Human: A Reflection on the Ethical and Methodological Challenges of Working with "Difficult" Stories," *Oral History Review* 37, no. 2 (2010): 191-214.

meaning in personal narrative performance"[57] based on her experience interviewing and interpreting her grandmother's life story. Borland understands her grandmother's stories in a feminist light at first; however, she is forced to rethink her conclusions when her grandmother challenges her analysis and interpretive authority by strongly disagreeing with her. Borland's reflections are self-reflexive as she rethinks both her relationship with her grandmother and the preconceptions she had at the start of her research. Another scholar, sociologist Pamela Sugiman, reflects on her role in the interviews she has conducted, analyzing specifically what her ethnicity and age bring to the interview space. She compares the different responses her interview population- older Japanese women- had to a white interviewer, fourth-generation Japanese Canadian, and herself, a third-generation Japanese Canadian.[58] Finally, Alan Wong prompts oral historians to remember that reflexive practices can be a reminder about the role of the interviewer and their "positional-ity at all times relative to the narrator and, thus, helps keep the power balanced between those on both sides of the table."[59] Wong comes to these conclusions after setting up an experiment where he was both the interviewee and interviewer in oral history interviews in the course of one day. He does this in order to relate to interviewees' experiences during an interview and further understand some of the power dynamics present in this space. All of the above authors reflect on the influence an individual interviewer can have on the outcome of research conclusions.

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[57] Kathleen Borland, "'That's Not What I Said': Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research," in *The Oral History Reader,* eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (Routledge: London, 1998), 312, 310.
[58] Pamela Sugiman, "Passing Time, Moving Memories: Interpreting Wartime Narratives of Japanese Canadian Women," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 36, no. 73 (2004): 69, note 35.
[59] Alan Wong, "Conversations for the Real World: Shared Authority, Self Reflexivity, and Process in the Oral History Interview," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (2009): 245.

Although I have never done an experiment like Wong's, I recognize that sharing authority means showing respect and aiming for mutual learning to take place on both sides of the interview table. In turn, acknowledging the importance of personal relationships and connections that develop between interviewers and interviewees is part of being self-reflexive. It can influence the kind of interview that takes place. As Valerie Yow reviews, "there are constructs based on gender, class, age, race, ethnicity, and ideology which influence how the interviewer relates to the narrator".[60] I found this in my own research, as I was influenced by the friendships and personal connections I made. I became very close to some of those I interviewed and our collaboration extended well beyond the interview to discussing potential future interview subjects, reviewing my analysis and chapters of my thesis, and sharing ideas about public history outcomes I could pursue. In other cases, however, the conversation ended once the recording device was turned off. This is because, as Sheftel and Zembryzcki discuss, some people do not have the time or interest to share authority, while other interviewees make a strong or personal connection with a project or pieces of research and will deeply engage and collaborate with researchers.[61]

The collaboration that sharing authority encourages prioritizes an empathy or greater understanding between interviewee and interviewer. First and foremost for me, sharing authority meant being open to learning from my interviewees. I would argue this serves to help the researcher understand more about their interviewees' worldview and their everyday experiences. This was another part of why sharing authority appealed to me, with my research goals of understanding the local context of neighbourhood relations

[60] Valerie Yow, "'Do I like them too much?' Effects of the Oral History Interview on the Interviewer and Vice-Versa," *Oral History Review* 24 (1997): 64.
[61] Sheftel and Zembrzycki, "Only Human,"197-198 and 200-201.

and day-to-day life there. During and before interviews with Japanese Canadian women, Pamela Sugiman "emphasized the value that some researchers place on private, experience-experiences that may have been located in family households, in school playgrounds, in circles of friends" in order to make the interviewees feel more comfortable sharing their stories with her.[62] Although I did not do this as explicitly as Sugiman, my interview guide and questions certainly reflected this emphasis as I tried to learn about my interviewee's lives as residents of Mile End. Finally, sharing authority also appealed to me because I saw it as a way to extend my interviews and involve people more deeply in my entire research process. As I have tried to explicate in this section, sharing authority was not a single definable element of my research methodology, but part of an ethos of being self aware and creating relationships with my interviewees that I kept in mind throughout my work on this thesis.

Mobile and Stationary Interviews

Walking interviews helped me share authority and interpret multiple meaning in all interview spaces I used, not just mobile interviews. The first three interviews I conducted for this thesis, with Yannick, Billy and Roula, and Sarah used a mobile interviewing methodology. I walked around Mile End while asking interviewees questions. Mobile interviewing was an interview technique which helped me share authority during the interview by allowing interviewees to direct the places we walked to and the stories they told.[63] Although I ultimately decided not to conduct all of my

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[62] Pamela Sugiman, "Memories of Internment: Narrating Japanese Canadian Women's Life Stories," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 29, no. 3 (2004): 372.

[63] Lyndsay Brown and Kevin Durrheim," Different Kinds of Knowing Generating Qualitative Data Through Mobile Interviewing," *Qualitative Inquiry* 15, no. 5 (2009): 911-930. Brown and Durrheim note it takes interviewees a while to get used to the idea that they will be leading the

interviews with mobile methodology for reasons that will be discussed at the end of this section, this kind of interview gave me a sense of how people understand the places they live in differently. The most vivid example of this happened as I walked down the same street with many different interviewees and heard many different stories. Reviewing the scholarship on mobile methodology[64] was also valuable to me because it highlighted the need for conscious interpretation about the levels of meaning present in interview spaces.

Choices surrounding the physical location of interview spaces can be a rich and valuable source of information; as stated above, I tried to be aware of this in all my interviews. I approached even my stationary interviews with a better understanding of some of the micro-geographies present in them. Sarah Elmwood and Deborah Martin's article emphasizes the importance of interview sites in a research interview as reflective of multiple "'micro- geographies' of spatial relations and meaning".[65] This idea of micro-geography is important because it suggests the geography or physical placement of an interview can be read as reflective of larger social meanings. Chi Hoong Sin's case study on older people's social and support networks in Britain focuses on the same thing: "the local 'here and now' context surrounding the construction of interview data".[66] Sin observes the messages people convey through where they choose to be interviewed and I tried to be cognizant of this myself, recording detailed impressions about the location in my post-interview blogs. What Elmwood and Martin call "micro-geographies" are rarely

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walking interview but once that shift is made, "they assume[d] responsibility for guiding the tour", 924.

[64] Jane Ricketts Hein, James Evans, and Phil Jones, "Mobile Methodologies: Theory, Technology and Practice," *Geography Compass* 2, no. 5 (2008): 1266-1285.

[65] Sarah Elmwood and Deborah Martin, "'Placing' Interviews: Location and Scales of Power in Qualitative Research," *Professional Geographer* 54, no. 2 (2000): 649.

[66] Chi Hoong Sin, "Interviewing in 'place': the social-spatial construction of interview data," *Area* 35, no. 3 (2003): 307.

recorded or included in traditional interview situations.[67] Even when I was not conducting mobile interviews, I tried to remain aware of what the choice of an interview site could reveal about the interviewees' understanding of place and the interview space itself and how it might affect what was said during the interview.

By completing my first interviews in a mobile manner I became more aware of the possible significance interview spaces can have for interviewees. For example, my first interview with Joseph and Chaya took place in Old Montreal, at their suggestion. As we drove there together in their car, I was mindful of the significance that leaving the neighbourhood might have. Were Joseph and Chaya more comfortable talking to me in a space far removed from the Hasidic community, or did I provide them with an excuse to leave Mile End? Or, did they just want a change of scenery and some cool air that hot summer afternoon? Other interview spaces where I tried to be mindful of "micro-geographies" were interviews with Mr. Gold in his home, Patrice on the phone, and Sarah in her business. Sarah's business was her own space, and as a young woman still living at home with her family, perhaps one of the few private spaces that belonged to her alone. Our interview in this space felt very private; we weren't interrupted at all, and I think it helped her reflect on values her parents have taught her because they weren't around to overhear. I interviewed Patrice, a busy young professional, over the phone from his hotel room. He was out of Montreal traveling for business and this was the only time we could find to conduct the interview. He indicated during the interview that he doesn't usually let himself think like this when talking about the neighbourhood and aspects of Hasidic culture he finds troubling. I think that this interview space, which gave some anonymity, made him feel freer to reflect, and speak more candidly than he would have if we had

[67] Elmwood and Martin, "'Placing' Interviews," 649-651.

been face to face. Finally, Mr. Gold's interview took place in his dining room surrounded by pictures of his extended family and different Vishnitz Rebbes. Our interview was interrupted several times by people coming to the door to see him and drop things off. The way he treated these interruptions and more importantly, how he explained them to me, showed me firsthand how he is a leader in the community. A static interview space is not devoid of meaning, as these examples show; in fact, even the non-mobile interview space is often not static at all, with other people, phone calls, and interruptions affecting the flow of the interview.

In addition, walking interviews gave me a sense of what people saw as significant in their neighbourhood, as well as insight into some of their daily routines. They affected me more personally than the more traditional interviews I did; first, they changed the way I moved through my neighbourhood. For example, when I was walking, my eyes would frequently lift to notice the architectural details on the upper levels of triplexes that I had never noticed before, after completing a mobile interview with Billy and Roula. This Greek-Canadian couple with two teenagers and a dog told me a lot about regulations in the neighbourhood relating to architectural preservation. Throughout our interview, Roula would exclaim things like, "Caitlin… Look! Really, you have to see. It's gorgeous, the detail!"[68] as she pointed out some of her favourite doorways, houses, and cornices in Mile End and Outremont. For weeks, stories I had heard became embedded into different parts of the neighbourhood; I would hear interviewees' voices in my head as I walked past the places they had told me about. Second, the suggestions my interviewees made about where to go for coffee in the neighbourhood, a good place to 'people watch' old Italian men playing cards, or the best places to spend my leisure time in Mile End also

[68] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview, November 8, 2009.

had an effect on me by enriching my personal life, and was yet another side effect of my research. Like building blocks, this kind of information also gave me a sense of how people's daily habits and routines influence how they construct their lives as residents in Mile End.

There is a unique sociability inherent in walking together with someone while interviewing; I found this enabled me to make personal connections with interviewees more easily during my walking interviews. Jo Lee and Tim Ingold emphasize walking together with an interviewee "is not to walk *into* but to walk *with*--where 'with' implies not a face-to-face confrontation, but heading the same way, sharing the same vistas…"[69] This focus on sharing and equality is closely related to the sociability of walking. Lee and Ingold write about the motion of falling into the rhythm of another person's footsteps and the familiarity this entails. There is definitely something natural about walking with another person. Jon Anderson notes this in his fieldwork, where "an intimate bond was created between the individuals involved in this facilitated conversation"[70] of bimbling, (his term for having a conversation while walking together). Lee and Ingold believe "there is something distinctive about the sociability that is engendered by walking with *others*…Sharing or creating a walking rhythm with other people can lead to a very particular closeness and bond between the people involved."[71] Walking interviews affected me personally, through the kind of bonds they created with interviewees and because they were were naturally more social events.

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[69] Jo Lee and Tim Ingold, "Fieldwork on Foot: Perceiving, Routing, Socializing," in *Locating the Field*: *Space Place and Context in Anthropology*, eds. Simon Coleman and Peter Collins (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 67.
[70] Jon Anderson, "Talking whilst walking: a geographical archaeology of knowledge," *Area* 36, no. 3 (2004): 258.
[71] Lee and Ingold "Fieldwork on Foot", 69.

Despite all I gained from my mobile interviews, I found the public space of a mobile interview made it difficult for people to talk openly about sensitive subjects and as a result I shifted to interviewing in people's homes. The limits of mobile interviewing as an effective strategy to elicit information about people's relationships with their neighbours soon became clear. After analyzing interview transcripts and recordings, I noticed if these subjects were brought up, it was in an oblique manner.[72] For example, while I was walking through the local park with Yannick and his daughter sleeping in her stroller, he alluded to families with "lots of children…"[73] to refer Hasidic residents of Mile End. In private situations interviewees felt more comfortable and were more candid expressing their views about neighbourhood life. Finally, the last factor that drew me away from using mobile interviews was practical. Realistically, the interviews I conducted with Hasidic men would have been very difficult if not impossible to conduct in public areas. In one case, this was because one interviewee was older and not very mobile himself, but also, and more importantly, because Hasidic men and women do not walk or talk together in public unless they are married or related to each other. Although I observed Hasidic people having small conversations with non-Hasidic people of a different gender, such as a hello or perhaps a woman giving instructions to trades people, a one or two hour in-depth interview on the street would have been very difficult to carry out. Overall, I hope my observations about some of the limits of mobile interviewing will contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the utility of mobile interviewing in oral history.

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[72] Steven High notes "mobility risks becoming a mantra, and is too often invoked uncritically" in *Mapping Memories of Displacement: Oral History, Memoryscapes and Mobile Methodologies* (in press), 1.
[73] Yannick Roy Interview, November 1, 2009.

My Relationship with Sarah and her Family

My relationship with Sarah and her parents as well as what she showed me about the neighbourhood forms an important part of this thesis. It was the Weiss family whom I felt closest to, in particular Sarah, with whom I became friends and who helped me immensely with my research. I conducted multiple interviews with Sarah and her parents and learned a lot about the Hasidic community just by spending time with them. This section will review the friendship I developed with Sarah and outline some of her beliefs which taught me how Hasidim conduct their life in the neighbourhood.

The ten hours of recorded interviews I did with the Weiss family started with a walking interview with Sarah in November 2009. I interviewed her parents in June 2009. Then I took advantage of other opportunities, such as the three hours I spent at their kitchen table in July 2010 talking to Joseph about his memories of growing up in Mile End. These allowed me to go beyond the surface of what I learned in my first interviews. I also cultivated the process of deep listening, whereby I pushed myself to think about what Joseph and Sarah chose to share with me, how it was said, and to ask second-order questions that further illuminated these choices.[74] I tried to discern how I was perceived as an interviewer, as a neighbour, and as a researcher, and to structure my questions with this in mind. I did this to both to show respect and to create trust between us. I recognize that while I feel that I have had a small window into the Weiss family's life, it was only as much as they felt comfortable sharing with me: they were active participants in my research, and as such had their own agenda in speaking to me as well. Whenever I felt as

[74] See Henry Greenspan, *On listening to Holocaust survivors: recounting and life history* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998); Portelli*, The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, and Julie Cruickshank*, Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990).

if I was making assumptions about what I saw or heard, I tried to check with them, (or imagine how they would feel reading my interpretation) and maintain an open relationship that showed my regard for them.

Sarah and I were each other's first Jewish and non-Jewish friends respectively; as such, my friendship with Sarah was based on a good deal of mutual curiosity. The first time I met Sarah was on the day of our mobile interview. Sarah was interested in my project and schoolwork and seemed curious about what I was doing in Montreal, and my life in general. She was also very articulate about her community and change in the neighbourhood, referring to the time when her father grew up here as "the olden days". At the end of our interview I didn't want to say goodbye and lose the connection that had developed during our interview. I felt close to her after this first interview, perhaps because she was near my age and had some of the same interests as me such as cooking and baking. Perhaps, as discussed earlier, my feeling was partly the result of the inherent sociability that walking together engenders. At the end of our interview we exchanged email addresses, and over the next months exchanged email messages, sometimes about what was going on in the neighbourhood, sometimes about what was going on in our lives, and about what we were both cooking. Looking back, I realize that at first I had very little idea of Hasidic people's beliefs and thought of them as Amish, or old fashioned based on how they dressed on the street. I had no idea of what Sarah could or couldn't do: Was it possible to cook Asian kosher food? To watch movies? Do Pilates? (Yes, yes, and yes). In short I was as curious about her life as she was about mine.

In private, through emails (and away from the curious eyes on the street) we got to know each other better before we ever did anything together in public. Sarah is a night

owl and I often stayed up late to do schoolwork, so we frequently wrote emails to each other late at night. It was strange to look out at her house, so close by, and think of her writing an email to me from there. Sarah commented on this: "I think my late-night influence is affecting you through the walls!! (Picture these vibes sort of weaving their way through the bricks... lol)."[75] Mónica Szurmuk has written about the growing popularity of blogs and the creation of online personalities being used as a tool by Orthodox Jewish women for talking about their lives, religious questions and convictions.[76] A similar process occurred through our online correspondence; after a few months, our emails changed to cell phone texts, and then to doing things together in real time and space, like going to movies or for walks. After getting to know Sarah I can say she is a very warm, outgoing, and friendly person. While I can't say for certain why one fall day Sarah agreed to go for a walk and be interviewed about the neighbourhood by me, as our friendship grew, we did talk about some specific reasons we were able to become friends.

The fact that I wasn't from Montreal was important for defining why Sarah and I were able to start talking and build a relationship after our initial interview. For Sarah, the fact I was from Alberta and didn't know much about Hasidim explained why I was so friendly. Sarah explained this to me:

> Sarah: To tell the truth, if you were born in Montreal we probably would not be talking right now.
> Caitlin: Yah
> Sarah: because you wouldn't have made the effort. [2 second pause] They…hmmm, not the effort, it's… it's a mentality thing. Like you came from a different place,

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[75] Sarah Weiss, personal correspondence, email January 12, 2010.
[76] Mónica Szurmuk, "Domesticity and the home (page): blogging and the blurring of public and private among Orthodox Jewish women," in *Jews at home: the domestication of identity*, ed., Simon Bronner (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), 257-286.

> right? I don't know what they're like in Alberta, I'm sure like you know your neighbours inside and out, everybody is very friendly and stuff. No?! [77]

My outsider status, and complete lack of knowledge about Hasidim when I first met Sarah partly help to explain why we were able to develop a friendship. I didn't have preconceptions about Hasidim so I 'made the effort' with Sarah because I liked her. This ignorance permitted me to pass through community boundaries, which Sarah seemed to believe exist for local non-Hasidim in regard to socializing with Hasidim. This is interesting because at other points Sarah talked to me about how the Hassidim in Mile End are socialized to avoid outsiders. Considering that she was raised in an atmosphere of separation from local others, perhaps it was easier to accept me as an alien Albertan, rather than a local non-Jew, a category she had been socialized to avoid.

Another factor that influenced our relationship was the point in her life Sarah was at when I met her. She had been married and was now divorced and living with her parents. She explained this quite directly when I asked about our friendship:

> Sarah: I've never ever been so friendly with a neighbour like I've been with you.
> Caitlin: Mmm hmm.
> Sarah: But that's just cause, like we're close age and…I'm at a different stage in life than I ***was*** ever, so! I don't know, so, I guess maybe that and whatever.

Sarah told me that our friendship was not normal, and that it wouldn't have happened if she had not been recently divorced and separated from most of her friends who were already married or engaged. Her divorce was not something she mentioned to me more than a handful of times, and when I first met her, I assumed that she had never been married. Sarah did laughingly refer to herself as a "young divorcee" and try to display a positive outlook about her new situation. Mintz writes about divorce in Hasidic communities: "while it is easier for couples to separate today than in past times, divorce

[77] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21 2010.

is still seen as a drastic option…[once divorced] you're different."[78] It is something that can affect the whole family and siblings' future marriage choices. Sarah's attitude was that "what was meant to be was meant to be", and she focused on her family, and her work as an employee for a local business in Mile End.

Hasidic Values of Separation and Fear of Assimilation

Despite the value of being friendly to neighbours, Joseph and Chaya still articulated that staying separate from the non-Hasidic community was a basic value for them. To conclude this chapter I explore how the Weiss family mediates outside influences, especially influences on their children, and fears of assimilation that guide beliefs around the separation of Hasidic culture from the majority culture. These attitudes are important for understanding how Hasidim live their life in Mile End. As Heilman observes during his fieldwork in Israel with Hasidim, there is an "existential angst about the continuing survival of Judaism and Jewish ways of life… *Yiddishkiet* and about its capacity to withstand cultural onslaughts of modern secular society."[79] Guided by ideas like this Joseph chooses how much he and his family will be exposed to outside, or secular influences. This can be a challenge, Joseph commented: "As our world becomes more like one big global village, it becomes hard to keep things out, the young people are curious and old people as well, so everybody is curious, it's difficult." [80] I heard several examples of how Joseph moderates this during my interviews with his family. For example, Joseph is a big sports fan, especially hockey and he follows the Montreal Canadians on TV and radio. This is an acceptable interaction with non-Hasidic culture. In

[78] Mintz, *New World Hasidim*, 186.
[79] Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith*, 13.
[80] Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.

the context of the more 'liberal' manner in which Joseph raised his children, he told me that not everyone would "approve" of watching sports on TV, but it's not too bad, compared to other things that are out there.[81] Nathaniel Deutsch found a similar attitude in his research on how Hasidim use technology in their lives. He concludes "Although [Hasidim] remain ideologically opposed to the idea of progress, they also feel that it is possible to employ at least some technologies instrumentally without subjecting themselves to corrupting influences."[82]

Joseph explained some values of Hasidic society to me in the context of new technology and ways of communicating. He admitted some young people now leave the faith, perhaps because they feel restricted, something that never happened in the past. Joseph related this to a larger theological debate:

> Some people think, some thinkers think... it's because we're trying to close them [youth] off, too bit [sic], a bit too much. Although we don't, we never did that to our children… but, the society as a whole, our society as a whole closes off people and tries to separate them.[83]

Joseph's comments about separation from outside influences being especially important for young people in the community is something many scholars writing about Hasidic educational systems and child raising practices emphasize.[84] Sarah confirmed this, telling me that she had much more freedom once she got married.[85] For example, she was allowed to take job training outside the Hasidic community and felt more freedom to talk with me and come to my house than she ever would have had before she was married.

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[81] Joseph Weiss, informal conversation, July 1, 2010.
[82] Nathaniel Deutsch, "The Forbidden Fork, the Cell Phone Holocaust, and Other Haredi Encounters with Technology," *Contemporary Jewry* 29, no.1 (2009): 18.
[83] Chaya and Joseph Weiss Interview, June 6, 2010.
[84] See Fader, *Mitzvah Girls* and Tamar El-Or*, Next year I will know more: literacy and identity among young Orthodox women in Israel* trans., Haim Watzman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001).
[85] Sarah Weiss Conversation, April 27, 2010.

Acknowledging that closing off young people too much has drawbacks, Joseph has made decisions about the amount of contact with outside influences that was acceptable for him and his family. [86]

Sarah tried to explain to me the danger of interactions with gentiles, and why separation from them socially and from their cultural values is so important in her community. It was interesting to see the rationale she used to explain why separation is essential. Sarah was aware of non-Hasidic standards of politeness related to greeting neighbours as she referred to Hasidim who don't greet their neighbours. She also struggled with the perception, or was aware, that some non-Hasidic people see this attitude as rude. The following extract is quite long, but in its entirety it shows Sarah working to articulate and explain to me the reasons she has been taught this kind of behavior:

> Sarah: You know it's very strange, a lot of people complain, like a lot of times, they complain, "Oh, they don't greet" or you know whatever. You know, they have complaints or whatever. It's not that they're being rude or anything it's *so* not that. It's just that it's not, it's not done, it's just… it's a lack of…[sigh] I don't know what it is, it's not meant to be rude [pause] It's meant to, to just like, like, like separate ourselves from, you know, whatever. I don't know.
> Caitlin: Yeah, I guess that's what I'm asking you about, kind of that separation…and how people… I guess I'm using…
> Sarah: Yeah, people keep it very separate, because there is a big fear, I mean they used to be, if you would be, in the 50s and the 60s, if you would get close to your neighbours, you would also do stuff they are doing and things like that, it's a very tricky road,
> Caitlin: Mmm hmmm
> Sarah: You know it's like a very fine line, what you do then… so parents are always trying to be um, [3 second pause] careful and whatever. So, it's not, it's, I don't know, it's a tough question.[87]

[86] Family roles were not something I discussed specifically with Joseph, but he was the one who initiated conversations about religious rules and holidays, technology, sports, and world events whereas Chaya would normally ask me about my family, food, and my social life. See Mintz, *Hasidic People*, Chapter 6 'Families' for more information. Mintz delineates roles of husbands and wives including details of husband's role as head of the family, determining adherence to religious laws and wives as caretakers of family purity and the household.

Sarah tried to explain why other Hasidic people in the neighbourhood are not as friendly as her family, suggesting that people are afraid of too much contact with non-Hasidic neighbours. My questioning, as non-Hasidic person asking about her community's values confronted her. Maybe she hadn't been asked to think about this before; this might be why she had problems articulating an answer to my question. Sarah talked about a fear of assimilation, presumably learned from her parents. Her answer also shows how she knows how important it is for parents to be careful with outsiders who could influence children.

Joseph and Sarah both emphasized the problem of assimilation in a world with a shrinking Jewish population. Sarah pressed me to understand the enormous fears that govern Hasidic communities behaviour towards gentiles. Sarah articulated this very strongly: "There is a **HUGE** fear of assimilation, I don't know if you realize this with your research, but the rate of assimilation is giant, terrible! Huge."[88] Heilman identifies attitudes such as this as a sectarian enclavist approach to Judaism which "occur[s] when a minority feels it is threatened with assimilation of defilement by contact with the outside world. This is the fear that many Haredim express vis-à-vis [mainstream] America."[89] Although defilement is a stronger word than was ever expressed to me by Hasidic interviewees, Mr. Gold, Joseph, and Chaya all referred to the superiority of Hasidic culture in contrast to typical Canadian, or gentile culture, with its problems. They specifically told me they do not have problems with drugs and drug dealers, with the police, or between adolescent boys and girls due to the strict separation between sexes in

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[87] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21, 2010.
[88] Sarah Weiss, November 22, 2010, editing conversation.
[89] Heilman, *Sliding to the Right*, 5. Haredi is another word for Hasidic often used in Israel.

the Hasidic community. As well, when Sarah and her father heard that one of my professors at Concordia was Jewish, along with someone else in the neighbourhood I interviewed, they were very curious about their level of 'Jewish-ness', or how assimilated these Jewish others were. They asked, for example, if the person I interviewed had a Jewish mother, or if he and other Jewish people I knew celebrated Jewish holidays or kept kosher kitchens. My answers probably served as more of a confirmation of the assimilation that other Jewish Canadian populations undergo. Keeping in mind that my interviewees probably censored themselves to a certain extent when talking to a non-Jewish person with whom they had some relationship with, it is still possible to see how strongly the fear of assimilation was expressed to me.

When I finished my interview with Mr. Gold, the older Hasidic man to whom Joseph introduced me, I asked him if he had anything to say which I had not asked him about. He finished the interview by asserting he has a good relationship with his non-Hasidic neighbours, specifically his Arab tenants as well as a Greek family who he has lived next to for several decades. However, in his closing words he emphasized to me how he moderates this contact, how he affirms the differences between him and these neighbours. He said:

> Mr. Gold: I'm more in the Jewish things, or not in the other …the amalgam/the general population to mix, mixed up.
> Caitlin: Usually there is not very much
> Mr. Gold: Yeah, we are good friends, we have a different kind, different kind, of life. We don't go together, we don't eat together.
> Caitlin: Mm hmm
> Mr. Gold: We say hello and everything… We have a different kind of living, I mean [4 sec. pause]. Saturday we don't drive, even telephone, we don't answer the telephone, no nothing, Saturday.
> Caitlin: Yeah…

> Mr. Gold: go to the synagogue, Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon. Three times a day, Saturday… It's different![90]

As Mr. Gold finds his words, he states his ideas about amalgamation, or mixing of Jewish and non-Jewish people. I think this is significant because he states quite strongly how his lifestyle is different that that of his non-Jewish neighbours. Throughout the interview, Mr. Gold was aware of this, and moderated his responses to me as a non-Jewish interviewer. For example, instead of talking about Passover, he told me about his family's traditions for "Jewish Easter", perhaps because he thought I wouldn't know the significance of Passover. His final point is noteworthy both because it was the note he chose to end our interview with, and because it is a reminder about the differences and separation between his life and the life of non-Jewish people.

Despite this separation I still had a relationship with Sarah and she helped me learn more about the Hasidic community and her neighbourhood. I was open to this with my research ethos of sharing authority in my research process and being reflexive about my relationship with the Weisses and others I interviewed. Along with ethnography and participant observation in Mile End, this research strategy brought me much personal benefit as I developed a sense of the neighbourhood and vibrancy of different cultures on the street around me, became involved in the street life on rue Hutchison, gained knowledge about the area around me and made friendships that will last beyond the writing of this thesis.

People's everyday life in Mile End is made up of small connections that come from people living next to each other and seeing each other everyday. Ideas about separation that Joseph and Sarah articulated to me helped me understand how Hasidim

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[90] Mr. Gold Interview, July 11, 2010.

live in Mile End. Through ethnographic research, oral history interviews, and sharing authority I was able to reveal people's everyday decisions and feelings about living in an diverse neighbourhood and negotiating relationships with each other; greeting a neighbour, or merely sitting on your front step and having a small conversation is important and gives a sense of community, in addition to explaining how people live with others. The following chapters will quantify these kinds of interactions in more detail.

Chapter Two

Mile End's Boundaries, Borderlands, and Jewish History

The streets of Mile End have a distinctive feel to them and rue Hutchison is no exception. The values of diversity in this neighbourhood are compatible with a constitutive narrative about Mile End that includes the area's past as an immigrant friendly place. Despite the segregation of Hasidim on certain streets of the neighbourhood, Mile End is not merely bi-cultural. The pure diversity of Mile End prevents it from being an ethnic enclave; instead it is a multi-ethnic area with a concentration of Hasidim as well as other ethnic groups living side by side. The multicultural feel of the streets is in direct contrast with the other side of Hutchison, where the neighbourhood of francophone Outremont begins. This chapter will review both neighbourhood and social boundaries in Mile End and the role of Hutchison as a borderland. The place of Hutchison as a border between Outremont and Mile End makes it a somewhat liminal, in between space, where people define their own personal neighbourhood boundaries in very different ways. I look at the historical and demographic changes in this area, especially the shift towards Hasidim becoming the majority of the area's Jewish residents as less orthodox Jewish immigrants moved out of Mile End in the 1950s. Then to conclude this chapter, I review local commerce as a space with the potential to expose different groups to each other. I examined Hasidic businesses' holiday signage during the Jewish fall holiday of Succot on the commercial thoroughfare of Park Ave, and in stores located just off it on St. Viateur and Bernard. Through this case study, I analyze what kind of Hasidic stores are welcoming to non-Hasidic customers and which businesses do not cater to non-Hasidic customers, thus

highlighting some further contact zones where interaction and exposure between different groups in Mile End take place.

Hutchison as a Borderland or Mile End versus Outremont

As Rue Hutchison is on the border between Mile End and Outremont, I am interested in looking at how my interviewees described the neighbourhood boundary between Mile End and Outremont. Borderlands is a term often used to explicate the special status of places that exist between national boundaries, where cultures, ideas, and people mix and sometimes meld together. Intermediary zones like these are places of contradiction as well as places where unique hybrid forms not seen on either side of the border are sometimes created.[91] Renato Rosaldo goes beyond the literal definition of borderlands, as a place where national boundaries meet, proposing a definition of border crossings as anywhere cultures meet: "More often than we usually care to think, our lives are crisscrossed by border zones, pockets, and eruptions of all kinds. Social borders frequently become salient around such lines as sexual orientation, gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, politics, dress, food, or taste."[92] Scholarly examination of borders, border crossings, and boundaries encompass a wide spectrum of scholarly literature. My limited exploration of urban and cultural borderlands is brief, but gives an overview of how I tried to think about what interviewees told me about how they move through their neigbourhood and how they see its boundaries.[93]

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[91] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond 'culture': space, identity and the politics of difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 6-23.
[92] Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth*: *The Remaking of Social Analysis* (New York: Beacon Press, 1989), 207-208.
[93] Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera*: *The new Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1991) is an oft-cited study. Andzaldua reflects on the different cultures she has been exposed to as a metstiza woman and of the physical, racial, social, sexual borders between Mexico and the United States; Geraldine Pratt, "Geographies of Identity and Difference:

The neighbourhoods on either side of Hutchison, Mile End and Outremont, are quite different. The side of Rue Hutchison where I live is in Mile End but faces into Outremont. There are some striking physical differences between the two neighbourhoods. Lot sizes are bigger in Outremont. The streetlamps on the Outremont side of Hutchison are green, stylish, and small, while those on the Mile End side of Hutchison are utilitarian, white lamps (see figure six). Other quotidian reminders of distinction exist, such as the different days that recycling is picked up on the curb or the snow is cleared from the sidewalks. These are small differences, but ones that interviewees mentioned to me unprompted. Perhaps this was to show me their neighbourhood knowledge about observable differences between the two neighbourhoods which they felt were significant, or shaped how they understood what it means to live in Mile End versus Outremont on an everyday basis.

Marking Boundaries," in *Human Geography Today* eds. Doreen Massey, John Allen, and Philip Sarre, eds (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), 151-167 and Hastings Donnan, *Borders: frontiers of identity, nation and state* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

Figure 6: Streetlamps on Hutchison

On a sociological level, the differences between the two neighbourhoods are sometimes presented thus: happily multicultural, multilingual Mile End versus the French, elite, insular Outremont. Audrey, a francophone who spent some of her teenage years living in Outremont, confirmed this. She immediately listed all the characteristics she likes about Mile End, but had trouble defining Outremont exactly, "Wow… Outremont is 'Outremont' and Mile End is like, well, I like the different colours. I like the different style. I like the different culture. I like the different everything. I feel

comfortable in it. Across the street is Outremont."[94] All of my interviewees except one, Mr. Gold, came from the Mile End side of Hutchison. Mr. Gold lived in Outremont and described the kind of people (besides his community, the Hasidim) who live there:

> the high French, *meilleur.* Pierre Trudeau was growing up on Durocher. All the big shots, all the big shots of the French were living in Outremont. Still today there are a lot...all the big shots, the executives and things were living in Outremont. For that, when I came here [1958], it was only maybe 10, 15 Jewish families."[95]

Generalizations about the two neighbourhoods certainly have some basis in reality when looking at cases of reasonable accommodation, especially in synagogue building. Outremont does not have the history of being an immigrant or Jewish neighbourhood, as Mr. Gold pointed out, nor are there historic synagogues in the area. Some scholars have analyzed the differences between the two neighbourhoods, from a legal perspective, through examining urban planning regulations, especially before 2002, when the city of Outremont was independent and Mile End was part of Montreal, and on a political level.[96]

Furthermore, local neighbourhood history, at least as it is heard on historical walking tours of both areas, supports the above perceptions of neighbourhood differences. A tour of Outremont given regularly by the private company Kaleidoscope Tours is titled "Outremont: Joyaux de l'urbanisme" and focuses on the area's history as part of the American City Beautiful Movement. The neighbourhood's elegant architecture, beautiful parks, and the prestigious residents who have lived here are all emphasized, from the Beaubien Family to Chamoin Groulx and the architect Aristide

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[94] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010. Audrey is a pseudonym.
[95] Mr. Gold. Interview, July 11, 2010.
[96] See Van Praagh, "View from the Succah"; Gagnon, Dansereau, and Germain,"'Ethnic' Dilemmas?" and Shaffir, "Hassidim and the 'Reasonable Accommodation' Debate".

Beaugrand Champagne.[97] The tour this same company gives of Mile End, "Quartier Mile End, Plus qu'un quartier, un art de vivre dans la diversité" was unfortunately cancelled the two times it was offered in the summer of 2010, but the website advertises it as "le Mile End ne cesse de nous étonner pas [sic] sa simplicité et sa vie harmonieuse où plusieurs religions et cultures se côtoient à chaque jour."[98] Other historical walking tours of Mile End are offered each summer by Mile End Memories, a local historical society, and focus on aspects of the neighbourhood's past, with a substantial interest in its architecture and cultural diversity.[99]

Neighbourhood boundaries revealed in my interviews will be examined in detail to show how residents of Mile End use places in Outremont. Amenities in Outremont, such as public parks and green space, are very accessible to people living on Hutchison, compared to other residents of Mile End who would have to cross busy Park Avenue in order to get access to them. Some residents move throughout both Mile End and Outremont in their daily life. For example, Billy and Roula, the Greek-Canadian couple I interviewed, criss-crossed the Outremont-Mile End border without a thought during the interview. For them it was one neighbourhood and not two. This can be seen on figure seven, a map of our walking interview, which shows our interview route as well as places Billy and Roula mentioned as part of their neighbourhood. The close proximity and importance of Outremont parks was evident during our interview. They regularly used

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[97] Kaleidoscope Tours, http://www.tourskaleidoscope.com/accueil/nos-visites-de-a-a-z/outremont.html

[98] Kaleidoscope Tours, http://www.tourskaleidoscope.com/accueil/nos-visites-de-a-a-z/quartier-mile-end.html

[99] See the Mile End memories website (http://mile-end.qc.ca) for typical tours this group offers during the summer. I took part in two of them in the summer of 2010. Interestingly enough, the pre-war Jewish population featured strongly in the tour I took, but the place of Hasidim in the neighbourhood was censored by our tour guide- eg. 'that's their Mikvah, I'll just point it out, but we won't talk any more about that'.

the parks in Outremont to walk their dog, to practice soccer, and to skate in the winter. They also have fond memories of using the big toboggan hill in Beaubien Park. The schools Billy attended as a child were likewise located in Outremont, and his own children now go to a private school in Outremont as well. Furthermore, the Greek community has institutions in both neighbourhoods.[100] Throughout the interview, Billy and Roula spoke of Greek restaurants and social clubs as well as the times (such as after the 2004 Soccer Euro Cup) when the Greek community came together to celebrate on Park Ave.[101] Looking at the local reveals a complex variety of ways people use space in the area they live and the subjectivity of neighbourhood boundary lines.

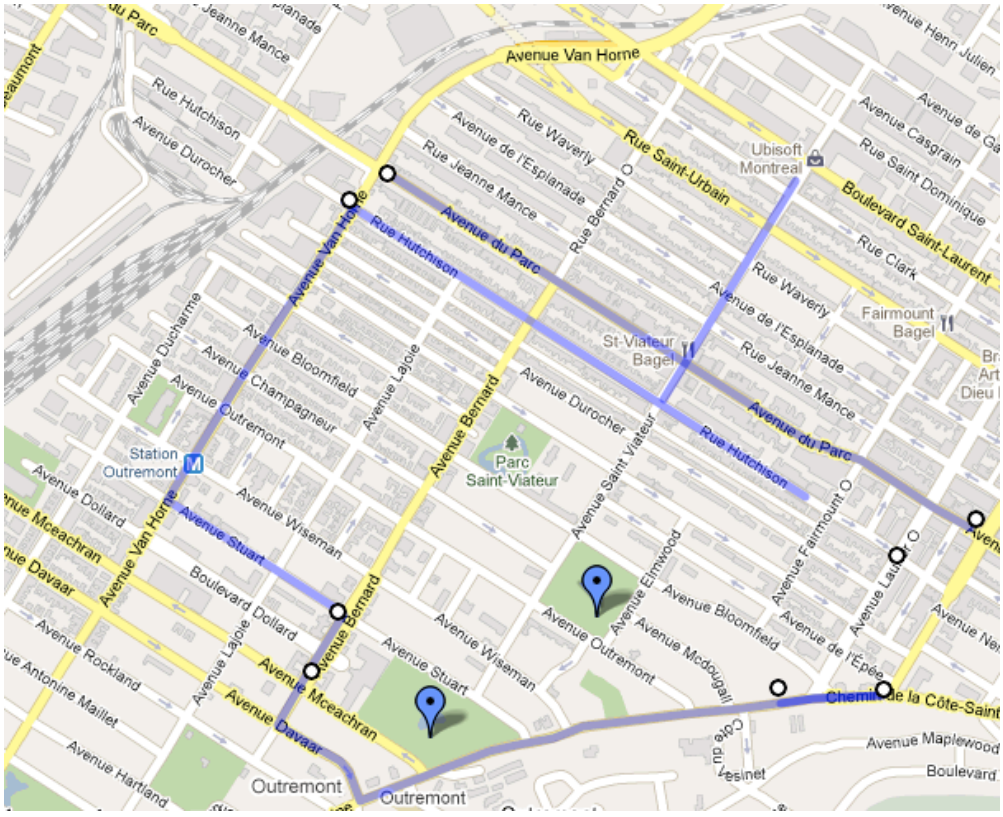

Figure Seven: Billy and Roula's walking interview

[100] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview November 18, 2009. A Greek church is located on Cote St. Catherine and there is a smaller one on St. Urbain which Bill and Roula go to during some holidays.
[101] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview November 18, 2009.

Another interviewee, Audrey, definitely recognized the boundary between Mile End and Outremont. She even said that she is not sure if most people know that Hutchison is the boundary between the two neighbourhoods. In fact, she would consider the dividing line to be Park Ave, which is a major commercial artery, and a more visible border between the two neighbourhoods. When I asked Audrey about what streets made up her neighbourhood she described an area of Mile End roughly in walking distance from her apartment, and said "nothing on the other side [of Hutchison] that's Outremont, just if you turn left past Hutchison, that's Outremont, it's obvious."[102] In the quotation Audrey gives earlier, defining what she likes in Mile End, she emphasizes she feels comfortable in Mile End, whereas Outremont is 'across the street'- in a different place and not somewhere she visits. People make up boundaries between the neighbourhoods which make sense to them and how they move through the city. In this way, from her apartment, Audrey orients herself with her back towards Outremont and walks out into Mile End. Bill and Roula stand at their apartment and look over to Outremonte and Mile End at the same time. Comparing these interviewees' use of the space around Hutchison shows the individuality of place identity.

People also understand borders in ways that are not printed on maps, as Joseph showed me during our interview, identifying parts of the Hasidic community that exists in "Mile End adjacent". "Outremont adjacent" is a term that is used in real estate to give cachet to properties which are located close to this wealthy area. Joseph reversed this phrase while we were looking at a map and defining the boundaries of his community. He insisted on a Mile End designation for his neighbourhood and thus distanced himself from the character of Outremont. Looking at Durocher and Querbes Avenues on a map

[102] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.

he said, “Okay, this is already Outremont, but it’s ours, it's a Jewish area. It sort of coincided with Mile End, you could call it Mile End adjacent.”[103] Joseph was well aware of where official City of Montreal boundaries were for Outremont, but emphasized they didn’t apply to how he would map out his neighbourhood. Hasidic institutions, synagogues, schools, businesses etc. exist in both Outremont and Mile End. Boundaries are not as black and white as they seem on a map. Joseph’s attitude may come, in part, from what he learned in childhood about the two neighbourhoods. He articulated these stereotypes about the two neighbourhoods when I asked him about the kind of people who live in both areas: “People in Mile End have always been the ‘immigrant type’ people who always wanted to get along with each other, Outremont is hoity-toity, high society…they are afraid of the riff-raff coming in.” In this case, Jospeh’s residence on Hutchison is not a space of cultural hybridity. The threat from the kind of people that he perceives living in Outremont doesn’t allow for this. Not only is Outremont a different neighbourhood, as a whole, it represents a group of people who are less welcoming to Jewish immigrants and Jewish people in general. This explains why Joseph would rather understand his community as rooted in Mile End’s constitutive narrative of diversity and welcoming attitude to immigrants.

Recent developments on Hutchison with the Bobov Gate David synagogue expansion plans show an instance where differences between the two neighbourhoods are articulated in public and through legal means. Originally the congregation made plans to expand their synagogue in 2004. These plans were held up until a referendum in 2008, where residents of Hutchison on the Mile End side voted to approve the proposal. This decision was challenged in the Quebec Superior Court and the results of the 2008

[103] Joseph and Chaya Weiss Interview, June 6, 2010.

referendum were invalidated. Currently, as of January 31, 2011 the Plateau-Mont Royal Borough has voted to approve this project once again, but another referendum is being planned, one where residents across from the synagogue, on the Outremont side of Hutchison, will be able to vote.[104] Implicit in this court challenge to the synagogue expansion plans is a belief that the referendum in 2008 would not have passed if people from Outremont were allowed to vote in it originally. Although this case is still ongoing, it represents a very vivid example of the two neighbourhood sides pitted against each other in terms of perceived acceptance of diversity.

My interviewees revealed a complex picture of how they use and conceptualize Mile End and Outremont, some of which I have touched on. How residents on Hutchison acknowledged the street as a border, or not, tells us that people's everyday use and conceptions of the neighbourhood are informed by a variety of understandings. For my interviewees, these understandings include what places they visit regularly, what they learned in childhood about the kind of people who live in each neighbourhood, and how they travel and shop in the neighbourhood. Overall, although most people were aware of these neighbourhood boundaries, the way they chose to acknowledge the boundaries shows borders are not as firm as they appear on a map.

Mile End's Jewish History

Most people I interviewed had some conception of Mile End as a neighbourhood which has historically had a large Jewish population. During the first half of the twentieth century, the Jewish population of Montreal clustered around St. Laurent Boulevard, also

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[104] Elisabeth Faure, "Synagogue showdown," *Montreal Mirror* February 17, 2011. http://www.montrealmirror.com/wp/2011/02/17/synagogue-showdown/

known as "The Main", showing the formation of "Jewish ghettos".[105] The writer Mordecai Richler, who was raised in an Orthodox Jewish home on St. Urbain Street in the 1930s and 1940s, uses his childhood neighbourhood as a setting for scenes in several of his novels, such as *St. Urbain's Horseman* and *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz.* Many of the people I interviewed were familiar with Mile End's Jewish history through the lens of these novels, showing a familiarity with Richler's novels and an old Jewish lunch counter/deli located on Fairmount. Yannick, for example, told me about Wilensky's Light Lunch during our interview. He described it as "an old Jewish place that sells very, very strange unique sandwiches that taste like nothing else… And that place is a bit of a landmark of Jewish history in the neighbourhood. You know Mordecai Richler? Some scenes actually take place in that little deli shop."[106] Other interviewees knew that Mile End's two competing bagel shops, one on St.Viateur, and one on Fairmount, were started by Jewish immigrants, or that bagels were a Jewish specialty.

As Mile End grew, so did the Jewish population of Montreal. The town of St. Louis, much of today's Mile End, and Little Italy, was annexed into Montreal in 1910. In 1911, only 3% of the area was Jewish, but this changed rapidly with immigration, and by the 1920s and 1930s, over 50% of the population was Jewish.[107] From the Main, the Jewish population "led the way north to St. Catherine and eventually Mount Royal street. New congregations were founded to accommodate geographic expansion and the explosion of numbers."[108] According to Louis Rosenberg, another statistic which speaks

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[105] Jaques Langlais and David Rome, *Jews and French Quebecois: Two Hundred Years of Shared History*, trans. Barbara Young (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991), 119-121.
[106] Yannick Roy Interview, November 1, 2009.
[107] Susan Bronson, Mile End Memories Walking Tour: Western Mile End, June 12, 2010.
[108] Joe King, *From the Ghetto to the Main: the Story of the Jews in Montreal* (Montreal: Montreal Jewish Publications Society, 2001) as referenced in Montreal History Group, *Negotiating*

to the historical importance of Mile End's Jewish population is that from 1921-1946, the large majority of Montreal's Jewish population (at this time the most important Jewish center in Canada) lived within one mile of Jeanne Mance Park, near the Main, and in Mile End.[109] Many institutions were set up for the Jewish community during this time, including synagogues and other community institutions like the Montefiore Hebrew Orphans' Home, founded in 1918 on 4650 Jeanne Mance (just down the street from Jeanne Mance park) and the Young Men's Hebrew Association, on Mont Royal and Park Ave.[110]

Earlier Jewish immigrants left their mark in Mile End and the Plateau-Mont Royal District. Architecturally there are traces of the Jewish past in Mile End, for example. One research project led by architect Susan Bronson provides a fascinating geographic overview of the historic synagogue architecture existing in the neighbourhood today. As Jewish people moved into Mile End in the early 20th century, synagogues were created by converting residential buildings, commercial spaces, and churches into Jewish places of worship. You can see remains today in Mile End; however, many of the buildings have been demolished, modified or adapted from their synagogue origin. Some examples of synagogues that once existed in Mile End are given next, with numbers corresponding to the photos in figure eight.[111]

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identities in 19th and 20th century Montreal eds., Bettina Bradbury and Tamara Myers (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).

[109] Louis Rosenberg, "Changes in the Jewish Population in the Old Areas of Jewish Settlement in Montreal in the Period from 1951 to 1957," *Canadian Jewish Congress, Research Paper no. 3*, (Montreal: Canadian Jewish Congress, 1958).

[110] Myer Gordon, Judy Gordon, Montefiore Children's Home Canadian Jewish Congress Archives fonds, I0089 1917-2007.

[111] Figure eight is a picture of a panel from Susan Bronson's Exhibit. This and all following information on historic synagogues are taken from this exhibit. Susan Bronson, Exhibit and

Figure Eight: Synagogues in Mile End

The Beth Hillel Shul (11) was housed in a commercial building which has since reverted back to its original purpose; the Kerem Israel Free School and synagogue (28) was housed in a residential duplex, but no traces of it remain. Other synagogues left some minimal architectural traces. When the congregation of the Chevra Thilim Pinsker Torah Shul (22) moved on, they left only the building's double entrance doors as a clue to its past as a synagogue. Yavneh Shul (49) on Hutchison took over the space from a Seventh Day Adventist church.[112] This structure still has Hebrew writing and a Star of David on the exterior today, as figure 1 shows. The B'nai Jacob Synagogue (18) on Fairmont and Jeanne Mance is now the College Français, a private high school. This building retains

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Pamphlet Social and Architectural Diversity of Montreal's Synagogues, "Architectural Diversity",199? On display at the Concordia Institute for Jewish Studies.

[112] Bronson, "Exhibit," Subsection "Changing Locations".

features of its Jewish past, such as the large archway with Hebrew writing, which remain high above the street. Furthermore, although the building is no longer a synagogue, Joseph remembers the Hasidic community renting space in this building from the College Français, when they needed a large meeting place for a visiting Rebbe some years ago.[113] Reminders such as historic synagogue architecture are visible signs of Mile End's Jewish past in the present.

After 1945, less Orthodox or more "modern"[114] Jewish immigrants moved out of Mile End. "Earlier Jewish immigrants left Mile End as the Jewish community grew in numbers and [as] the economic conditions of its members improved," families moved westward in the city.[115] Israel Mendres, a prominent Yiddish newspaper columnist, wrote about this in the 1960s, observing that as the trend to build new suburbs began, "Jewish families were among the first to move away from the centre of the large, bustling metropolis to enjoy fresher air, more space, and better facilities."[116] Mr. Gold emphasized this change in neighbourhood dynamics stating that now the Hasidic Jews are the only Jews here, "the other are in Côte Saint-Luc, Charmondy, Hamstead. Really there are no more [here] from the other modern Jews. No. Only the Hasidic."[117] The overall Jewish population in the one-mile area around Jeanne Mance Park fell from around 65%

[113] Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.
[114] Both Joseph and Mr. Gold referred to earlier Jewish immigrants in Mile End as 'modern'. This is why I use this term as well as calling this population less orthodox (which they would have been compared to Hasidim).
[115] Bronson, "Exhibit," subsection "Changing Locations" and "Building Converted to house synagogues".
[116] Israel Medres, *Between the Wars, Canadian Jews in Transition*, trans., Vivian Felsen (Montreal: Vehicule Press, 2003), 149.
[117] Mr. Gold Interview, July 11, 2010.

in 1940 to 27% in 1958. [118] Joseph remembered these changing demographics as he grew up, talking about the names they used at school for each other:

> We said *Geleen*-yellow- for people that were already here, but less religious, they came to Montreal pre-war. And green for very religious, they opened four schools postwar, when the Hasidic community was coming here. I guess green makes sense, like for 'greenhorn' but I don't know why the name was yellow for the others.[119]

These names show both length of time in Canada and level of religious observance of boys' families living in Mile End. Zembrzycki and Sheftel's interviews with childhood Holocaust survivors new to Montreal found a similar pattern: "they were called 'greener,' 'greenhorn,' 'gayle,' and 'mucky,' among other epithets"[120] which indicated their lower social status in the mainstream Jewish community. Although the overall numbers of Jewish people living in Mile End were falling, Joseph's story reflects the changing pattern of orthodoxy among Jewish demographics during the 1950s and 1960s.

With the exodus of less Orthodox Jews, the Hasidim became the majority of Jewish residents in Mile End. They set up religious and community institutions that support their way of life, synagogues, mikvahs, religious schools and businesses to support their needs (kosher food, modest clothing, and religious garments, for example). However, Hasidic sects did not take over the existing synagogue architecture and instead set up their own synagogues, often smaller and more unobtrusive spaces, built into existing residential duplexes. For example, the Bobover Synagogue on Hutchison, Gate David of Bobov (10 in figure eight), and the Satmar Yetev Lev Synagogue on Hutchison and St.Viateur are housed in former duplexes and an apartment building respectively.

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[118] Bronson, "Exhibit," subsection "Changing Locations".
[119] Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.
[120] Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembryzcki, "'We started over again, we were young': Postwar social worlds of child Holocaust survivors in Montreal," *Urban History Review* 29, no. 1 (2010): 22.

They are both currently in use by the Hasidic communities, and their unobtrusive exteriors reflect the Hasidic philosophy that what goes on inside a synagogue is more important than the synagogue's outside appearance. Even the large Beltz Shul on Jeanne Mance, which takes up three adjoining triplexes, is not an imposing religious structure; it is not immediately recognizable as a place of worship. This is unlike the monumental architectural style of some earlier synagogues, which can still be seen today in the structure of the College Français or the Ukrainian Federation Building.[121]

The Ukrainian National Federation Building on the corner of Fairmount and Hutchison is an interesting example of the transformation of sacred architecture. Today it is in a dance with its past as a synagogue because a local liberal Jewish group uses the space to celebrate holidays. Originally constructed as The Fairmount Methodist Church, it was later converted and became the Chevra Kadisha Jewish Synagogue from 1928-1955.[122] In 1956, this congregation merged with the B'nai Jacob congregation and moved westward. [123] This change reflected the path its congregants were taking as they moved out of Mile End. This building is now owned by the National Ukrainian Federation and it is used as a meeting place for various groups, such as musicians, Hasidic organizations, and other Jewish groups during the year. During Pop Montreal, a music festival, concerts held here attract large groups of young music lovers and their bicycles to the streets of Mile End. At other times, large groups of Hasidim will spill down its steps fresh from an

[121] Figure eight, photos 18 show the College Français is shown during its time as a synagogue and how it stands on the street of Fairmount today, exemplifying the historical layering present in the built environment in Mile End.
[122]Bronson, "Exhibit," subsection "Buildings converted from churches".
[123] http://www.ckbj.org/History.htm. The Chevra Kadisha-B'Nai Jacob Congregation is now located in Snowden, 5237, avenue Clanranald, Montreal.

inspirational women's lecture or engagement celebration. Finally, a local Jewish group, the Mile End Chavurah, uses this space to celebrate religious holidays.[124]

Joseph talked about how he saw current geographic boundaries of different Jewish groups in Montreal, which reflect the historical population shift discussed earlier. According to Joseph, Hasidim live in Mile End and Outremont, Vimy is where the Litvich (Lithuanians) live, and the Lubavitch are in Cote St. Luc, Westbury and near the Decarie; finally, in De Vimy and Darling, the Jews are more modern.[125] Joseph used the word "modern" to indicate Jewish groups that were less orthodox than Hasidim. He said, in short "the more towards Cote Saint Luc you go, the more modern Jews are, though there are still real Orthodox there, they have a shul, synagogue. These people are more modern than us, but they are mostly traditional too in that they keep the Sabbath-but they might go in jeans."[126] Joseph drew a map to show these boundaries and explain the different areas of Jewish Montreal to me. As he spoke, he seemed to realize that he could name specific streets and neighbourhoods where he thought levels of Jewish observance shifted, though he had never thought of this being so geographically bounded before.

In a neighbourhood of immigrants, without an established group of residents there is less of a sense that 'we were here first' as may exist with Outremont's large francophone population. Joseph harkened back to an older Mile End, one of "immigrant times and immigrant ways" when the issues of socializing with neighbours were "never a

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[124] Andrew Princz, "Place to explore, question Judaism Mile end Chavurah," January 22, 2001, *Montreal Gazette*, http://www.montrealgazette.com/life/Place+explore+question+Judaism/4148690/story.html

[125] Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.

[126] Joseph Weiss comments, December 9, 2010. Joseph also explained to me that 'religious' meant you have to keep the Sabbath, follow Jewish Calendar and all holidays, and follow family purity rules (like the Mikvah and a kosher kitchen).

problem, everyone was just working hard and didn't want to be social all the time".[127] In this quote, Joseph was reflecting both on his childhood, the past of Mile End as an immigrant neighbourhood, and on current gentrification of Mile End. Figure nine taken from Germaine's analysis of minority worship spaces in Montreal shows various places of worship in Mile End and Outremont.[128] This reflects the diversity of people who live or have set up religious places in the area. Furthermore, this gives a sense of Mile End's roots as an immigrant neighbourhood where people of many different cultures and religions lived next to each other.

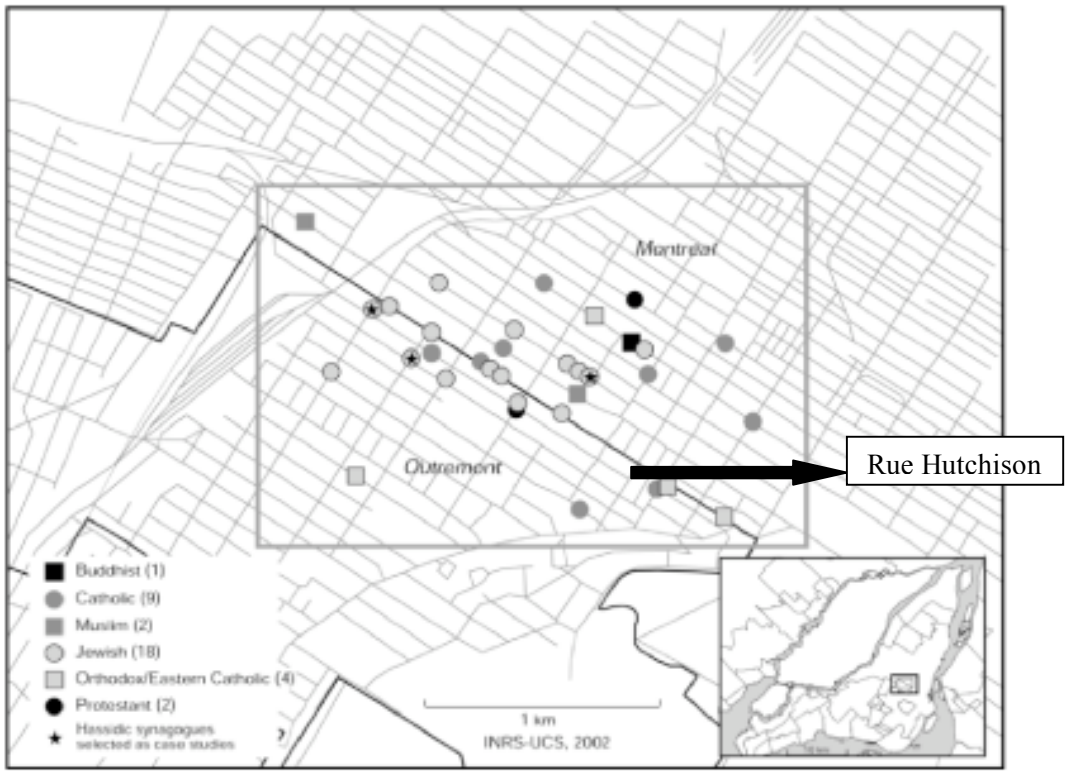

Figure Nine: Hasidic synagogues and other places of worship.

[127] Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.
[128] Annick Germain and Julie Elizabeth Gagnon, "Minority Places of Worship and Zoning Dilemmas in Montreal," *Planning Theory and Practice* 4, no. 3 (2003): 307.

In Joseph's mind, some of the Jewish people who used to live around the Main and in Mile End made the decision to move as they became more prosperous and educated as professionals. This was a time of questioning for his family, and for the development of the Hasidic community in Mile End. As a child, Joseph went to an unaffiliated Hasidic boys' school in Mile End for the first part of the day, and then later in the day, all the Hasidic school boys met to study secular subjects for two and half hours. He shared with me a vivid memory of winning an honour card in recognition for an English composition on 'What I Will Be When I Grow Up'; he wrote about wanting to be a doctor or a lawyer. Then smiling, he said his mother wrote it for him-these were her dreams for him-so he didn't really deserve the award! Joseph really wanted me to understand the mentality of Jewish people at this time:

> This first generation of children that were born to the Holocaust survivors at this time, you didn't know what to do. Go to the Yeshivah, or go to the University. At this time, the Jewish community that was here pre-war became professional and moved away from this area. The question *really* was what would we do? A rabbi was visiting and says 'if you go to university and be exposed to things there, you will be endangering your spirituality, if you don't go to university, you will still earn a livelihood… God will provide'[129]

These kinds of decisions, happening in many different families, show a microcosm of the kind of questions about assimilation Jewish people faced and the historical shift in the neighbourhood population, where Hasidim and Orthodox Jews stayed and other Jewish people moved on.

These kinds of decisions had long term consequences as the majority Jewish population in Mile End today, the Hasidim, are more stringent in their practice of Judaism. Joseph linked this to confidence, noting that his father did not wear religious dress when he first came to Canada as a Holocaust survivor, not wanting to "stick out,"

[129] This quotations and information preceding it is from Joseph Weiss Interview, July 22, 2010.

and only donned the garb and wore a beard when he was older and the Hasidic community was more established in Mile End. As Sarah explained, the Hasidic community in Mile End has grown: It "used to be this teeny teeny community, well, expansion, I mean of the community, has been really big. I mean, not big, but I would say better. It used to be on a smaller scale, now it's bigger."[130] The importance of looking at Mile End's history as a Jewish quarter is extremely relevant. The neighbourhood has changed as less Orthodox Jewish populations have moved out, leaving behind distinctive architecture in some cases. In people's memory of the neighbourhood (going back a generation or so through oral history interviews) immigrants and Jewish immigrants have always been here. This makes it harder for people to argue that Jewish people don't belong here or that Hasidim are alien "others" in Mile End.

Local Commerce as a way of Challenging Social Boundaries: Hasidic Businesses' Attitude Towards non-Hasidic Customers

In this chapter's final section I will examine how Jewish businesses cater, or do not cater, to non-Jewish customers through a discrete analysis of their holiday closure signs. I thought this would be a good way to get a sense of the kinds of places where Hasidic and non-Hasidic customers interact. Through this case study I also hoped to see the degree of knowledge or interest each group has about different businesses in Mile End based on how they wrote holiday closure signs; I posited this method could show good markers of cultural identity. I was influenced by Talja Blokland's observation of the exclusionary role the local butcher shop played in the Rotterdam neighbourhood of Hillesluis, "In theory, anybody was free to enter the shop. In practice, it was a place with

[130] Sarah Weiss Interview, November 22, 2009.

a specific identity that could be interpreted as '*not hallal'* by Muslims".[131] I also talk about a small number of non-Jewish businesses patronized by all residents of the neighbourhood. Although these could be viewed as merely superficial interactions, I posit that these interactions are nonetheless significant because they lead to exposure and challenge the idea of two segregated groups living without contact with each other. This idea is further expanded in the next chapter where other interactions between Hasidim and non-Hasidim are analyzed.

During the Jewish fall holiday of Succot, I walked around Mile End, on Park Avenue, St. Viateur and Bernard and took pictures to record the signs that Jewish businesses put up to inform customers of their holiday hours.[132] The presence or absence of these signs on a place of business was significant as it revealed how businesses did or did not interact or acknowledge their wider non-Jewish surroundings. I had some idea of which businesses were Jewish owned from past interviews and observations I had made on previous Saturdays, when many Jewish stores close for Sabbath. I made my observations on a Thursday afternoon, a regular business day for most non-Jewish shops, which made it easy to distinguish which Jewish businesses were closed. I looked inside the shop doorway for a mezuzah if a shop appeared to be closed but didn't have a sign up.[133] Below I analyze my findings and incorporate information from my interviews about people's impressions of Jewish businesses to corroborate some of my conclusions.

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[131] Blokland, "Bricks, Mortar, Memories," 276.
[132] I say Jewish rather than Hasidic in this section because I cannot know they are Hasidic from outside appearances only.
[133] This is similar to what Oliver Valins does in Manchester to map the residential concentration of the Jewish population he is studying in "Stubborn identities and the construction of socio-spatial boundaries: ultra-orthodox Jews living in contemporary Britain," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 28, no. 2 (2003): 158–175.

In North America, the Succot holiday is eight days long; for Hasidic people there are two different classifications of days during this holiday which determine the hours of business for Hassidic owned stores at this time. Succot starts with two days of holiday, four days of Chol Hamoed and two more days of holiday. During the two days before and the two days after Chol Hamoed, the same rules as the Sabbath rules apply to Hasidic people; for example, activities such as handling money and operating electricity are prohibited. Sarah explained Chol Hamoed to me as a cross between a regular day and a holiday, where you are not allowed to do certain work or write, but you can do 'regular day' things like shopping for things needed during the holiday or for food preparation.[134] As a result, depending on the business and the service they provided, there were varying hours of opening during the eight day Succot holiday. In addition, Chol Hamoed days are "holiday days," too, in the sense that most people don't want to work during this time, and instead prefer to spend time with family and go on small excursions.[135] These are some of the reasons why the holiday hours for the whole week vary so much between different businesses.

During the Succot holiday, some Jewish businesses on and around Park Ave provided no notification of when or why they were closed; this seems to indicate they do not think about non-Jewish (or non-Succot celebrating) customers or assume that all their customers know their holiday hours. Some of these businesses were predictable, such as the kosher food providers, which are almost exclusively for Jewish customers: the kosher grocery store, as well as the butcher and fish shop on St. Viateur had no signs up showing they were closed. The kosher butcher did have a large poster on the door advertising

[134] Sarah Weiss Interview, November 22, 2010.
[135] Sarah Weiss, comment on reading my draft.

"Yom Tov Specials"; this very specific sign had colourful pictures of meat and Succot symbols and food such as palms, the etrog citrus fruit, and a sukkah.[136] I would argue it was only readily identifiable or readable to people who were celebrating the holiday. There were a few other Jewish businesses which did not provide any signage showing they were closed that were more surprising, because I would expect them to have some non-Jewish customers. This category includes Beau Marche Fabrics and a jewelry store, both on Park Avenue. I don't know why these two stores wouldn't have a sign saying they were closed for the holidays, unless their non-Hasidic customer base is so small, they could tell them personally, or because the owners just didn't care.

Figure Ten: Kosher butcher shop poster (no holiday hours were given).

Other businesses such as the Mirish Boutique on Park Ave, a women's clothing store, and Head to Hose Bonnetarier and Accessoires, on Bernard that were closed with

[136] See figure ten. Yom Tov specials can be read as "holiday specials"

no signage indicating this, were obviously catering to primarily Jewish, or Hasidic customers. Sarah described these respectively as "The only clothing store in the area *really* that we have" and the "store we go for like tights, stockings what else do they sell? Hats, baby stuff, coats, not really coats. More like hats and shoes, they have a little jewelry… scarves, yah, great store, it's nice, helpful."[137] The customer base for these two stores, one that sells modest clothing and one that sells specific types of head coverings and stockings for Hasidic women, is such that they probably do not have many non-Orthodox Jewish customers. Furthermore, Sarah's use of the word 'we', referring to the stores that were owned by Hasidic people in her community, also indicates that these stores are most likely places where few encounters occur between Hasidic and non-Hasidic people in the area.

Lipa's is a very large kosher grocery store near the corner of Park Avenue and St. Viateur. As mentioned above, it was one of the kosher food purveyors that was closed for the holidays, with no sign to indicate this. The slogan above the front door says "Lipa's where smart people shop", and it certainly always seems busy with a crowd of children's scooters outside the door and mothers with their strollers walking to and from it. Their white and brown plastic shopping bags are also readily identifiable and often in the hands of Hasidic people walking through the neighbourhood. All customers of Lipa's would know it was Succot and therefore not shop. Because Lipa's is so big and near a major intersection, it is a prominent Jewish business and non-Hassidic interviewees, both Jewish and non-Jewish, knew about it. Yannick described it as a non-welcoming place that he wasn't sure he was allowed to visit:

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[137] Sarah Weiss Interview, November 22, 2009.

> Yah, we never really know. There is one big grocery store on Park Ave, which is kosher, and uh, but we hardly ever see anyone in there except Hasidic Jews, so we don't really feel welcome. And I think they have pretty much their customers within their community so they don't really try to go and try to find other ones.[138]

Another interviewee, Patrice, who was Jewish but not Hasidic, also described feeling unwelcome at Lipa's. He told me about an incident when he went in to buy matzo for Passover and he felt people in the store refused to serve him.[139] In the context of his experience at Lipa's, he talked about feeling particularly excluded because he was identifiably Jewish, wanting to buy an unleavened product during Passover, but clearly dressed like a "goy" and not part of the Hasidic community.[140]

Other Hasidic businesses, such as a Jewish shoe store on Park Ave, showed its customer base implicitly, with two levels of language and information on their sign. The holiday hours were posted, but only in a way that an extremely literate Jewish person, or Hasidic person could understand. The Jewish shoe store was closed for Succot with a sign on the door saying "Happy Holidays" in English.[141] First, the sign was only in English and Yiddish, not serving the francophone neighbourhood population. Second, this sign showed some pictures of Succot activities but didn't mention the Succot holiday explicitly as a reason for being closed, signaling the sign was for Jewish people who were celebrating Succot rather than non-Jewish people. Third, the Yiddish portion of the poster, in the left hand corner, further indicates the kind of customers that come to this shop: able to read Yiddish and understand Jewish laws. The Yiddish on the sign says that the store will be closed for Chol Hamoed, the in between days of the Succot holiday. All together, this suggests a high degree of insider knowledge needed to see this poster and

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[138] Yannick Roy Interview, November 1, 2009.
[139] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19 2010.
[140] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19 2010.
[141] See photo, figure eleven.

read it as a sign that shows customers when the store is closed. When I looked at the sign closely later, I could recognize that there was a Sukkah shown, but that was all. Sarah was able to pick out many more details in the illustration than I was. She saw the table being set for a holiday meal, because you always use a white table cloth for that, wine, wine decanter, a goblet, and probably some challah on the table.[142] When I first saw it, only being able to understand the English, I didn't know the sign said the shoe store was closed for the entire holiday because I couldn't read the Yiddish or understand what Chold Hamoed meant until Sarah translated it for me.

Figure Eleven: Shoe store holiday closure sign

I posit that some other Jewish owned businesses in Mile End do cater to non-Jewish clientele, and are places of interactions between all residents. In this category is the bakery Cheskies, (which will be described in more detail later) as well as many stores

[142] November 22, 2010, Sarah Weiss comments on my draft.

on Park Avenue: Family Dry Goods, Le Carrousel du Parc, a stroller store, and the Public Mobile cell phone kiosk. All of these aforementioned businesses had signs which mentioned either holiday hours or upcoming hours of closure. They also all had signs that were bilingual in French and English, (with no Yiddish). This could show that they provide service to non-Jewish customers who might stop by and be confused about why a store was closed. Jonathan Evert's case study of ethnic shops in an immigrant neighbourhood in Germany showed that interactions between customers and immigrant shopkeepers can be complex and are based on a number of cultural differences and personal sociability.[143] His focus on "social practices within the shops and how those engaged in these activities make sense of them"[144] show an area of further research in Mile End, especially for certain Hasidic businesses that overtly (at least) seem to respect laws of bilingualism and have a potential customer base which is larger than just the Hasidic community.

There are also commercial spaces in Mile End where non-Hasidic and Hasidic people necessarily have to interact, such as non-Jewish owned businesses. On Park Ave, I often see Hasidic people at the Jean Couteau and Uniprix pharmacies and drug store as well as the Dollarama dollar store. In Mile End there is no Hasidic owned equivalent of these drug stores, although Joseph noted that he considers the Uniprix pharmacy more favourable because it is owned by a Jewish (but non-Hasidic) person.[145] The fruit and vegetable stands/stalls, and the supermarkets such as Park Avenue (PA) and 4 Freres are

[143] Jonathan Everts, "Consuming and living the corner shop: belonging, remembering, socializing," *Social & Cultural Geography* 11, no. 8 (2010): 847-863.
[144] Everts, "Consuming and living," 847.
[145] This pharmacy also had a pharmacist who spoke some Yiddish and was supposedly more familiar with Hasidic culture according to Joseph.

also all places where Hasidic people shop, as fruit and vegetables can usually be purchased by Jewish people without kosher certification.

St. Viateur Bagel shop is another place I have observed interactions between Hasidic people and non-Hasidic people. Before the Jewish holiday of Passover, leavened products called Chametz must be taken out of the house.[146] I observed children, but also a few men, come to the bagel shop and give their bread to the men who work cooking bagels in the large wood fired oven. This is a convenient place to find a fire in Mile End. Without buying bagels, Hasidic people become customers for a few moments every year. They stay and watch to make sure that their bread is burnt in the fire, and then give a small tip to the men. Sarah mentioned being shy about doing this when she was young:

> I only took it like once or twice, because I was always like, I felt so weird going, you know… cause I don't go there, it's not kosher, it's strange it's not like, and I felt funny, like asking someone to please burn the, you know like, whatever, but, um…yah…[147]

Sarah's feelings about going to the non-kosher bagel shop, feeling strange and not sure how to ask someone to burn the bread, could be mirrored with Yannick's feelings, as well as my own feelings about going into most Jewish stores in the neighbourhood; it feels 'weird'.

In marked contrast to Lipa's is Cheskies, a "Heimishe"[148] bakery on Bernard between Park Avenue and Hutchison. This business, a purveyor of kosher baked goods, was one which many interviewees and neighbours talked about as a friendly place. It was the only other Jewish business that Yannick mentioned to me during our interview.

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[146] It's considered a 'nice thing' to burn it the morning before Passover according to Sarah.
[147] Sarah Weiss Interview, July 21, 2010.
[148] A word meaning, 'homely'in Yiddish, but having the connotation of Chasidic. Sarah said it means anyone who comes from a Chassidic background, or more likely, homemade in the context of the bakery sign.

During our interview, right after talking about Lipa's, he waxed on about the pastries that that Cheskies is known for:

> Yannick: But I know they have very nice pastries. This is a nice Jewish bakery, pastry on Bernard street, not far from… from uh, Avenue du Parc. It's called Cheskies. Yah, you should go there, it's good. It's really good and they have you know specialty little sweets and cakes and stuff.
> Caitlin: Mmm, sounds good
> Yannick: It is. It is! [149]

Yannick's enthusiasm was mainly for the quality of the baked goods at Cheskies, but it was also linked to a certain confidence that he was 'allowed' to shop there, a feeling he didn't have at other Jewish businesses in Mile End. In this regard, Cheskies was unique compared to other Jewish owned businesses in Mile End.

The sign on the door of Cheskie's for the Succot holiday closure was both bilingual, in English and French, and informative for customers who weren't familiar with the Jewish holiday calendar. It stated: "Due to our holiday we will be closed Thursday sept. 23 and reopen Sunday sept. 26. Thank you!! ☺ ".[150] Although a few other stores did mention "holiday hours" or " Succot hours", Cheskies was the only one that used the words "our holiday" suggesting that the sign was more for non-Jewish customers. It also indicates that they were thinking about people who might come by the bakery and not be aware of the reason that it was closed. Sarah also mentioned Cheskies to me several times, in multiple interviews, as she elaborates below:

> So then, let's see, over here, so you see there Cheskies, that's a bakery. Delicious stuff. You should try it sometimes. A lot of non-Jews frequent it. It's a great, great bakery. So that's like a real… uh, hotspot. Lines are sometimes huge on Friday just to get everything done before the Sabbath.

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[149] Yannick Roy interview, November 1, 2009.
[150] The happy face is really made out of the two exclamation marks. See figure twelve.

Her description of Cheskies incorporates information about both the non-Jewish and Jewish customers, that it is a friendly place for "non-Jews" to shop and that as a "hotspot" for Hasidic people on the Sabbath. Cheskies is the kind of place where, as Annick Germain notes, "one can see Montréalers of Hassidic Jewish, Italian, Latin American, Jamaican and old stock Québécois origins, low-income families and members of the new middle classes bitten by the "ethnic" cuisine bug all shopping in the same places."[151] At Cheskies, there was also another notice on the door suggesting that the clientele at Cheskies is composed of more than just local Mile End residents. This notice reminds patrons of the importance of plugging the parking meters and states that cashiers are happy to give customers change.[152] Customers who don't know the parking police in the neighbourhood are thus given a friendly reminder so they won't get a parking ticket when patronizing Cheskies. It is unlikely that many Hasidic or non-Hasidic customers from Mile End would drive to this bakery, because parking is so difficult. The Succot holiday sign and the notice about parking on the door of Cheskies further supports the welcoming attitude that interviewees associate with the bakery. Cheskies thus is a good example of the kind of welcoming, diversity-friendly place Mile End is known for.

Cheskies' diverse Jewish, non-Jewish and Hasidic customer base makes it an important space where there is potential for small interactions to take place; it is a space

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[151] Damaris Rose, "Le Mile-End, un modèle cosmopolite?" in Annick Germain and others *Cohabitation interethnique et vie de quartier*, Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Affaires Internationales, de l'Immigration et des Communautés Culturelles, Collection Études et Recherches No. 12., 2005), 95. As cited in Annick Germain and Martha Radice, "Cosmopolitanism by Default: Public Sociability in Montreal," in *Cosmopolitan Urbanism*, eds., Jon Binnie and others (New York: Routledge, 2006), 121.

[152] See photo, figure twelve. This notice has been up for several months.

Figure Twelve: Bakery Holiday Closure Sign

that may encourage some incremental change in the neighbourhood's social boundaries. I observed a diverse Jewish and non-Jewish clientele shopping there.[153]Although the value of a bakery such as Cheskies as a cultural mixing ground should not be overstated, I agree with Germaine's reading of the importance of places like these as a social spaces in the neighbourhood where interactions between different groups take place and cultures intersect. She writes about these kinds of everyday 'shopping' interactions in ethnic grocery stores in Mile End, stating: "Even if the interactions are superficial, difference is rendered more familiar and acceptance of the Other is fostered."[154] This is similar to what Amanda Watson has argued, that "situations of minimal engagement in diverse public

[153] Joseph referenced articles in the *Montreal Mirror* which recommends the bakery to show it is a popular place with everyone.
[154] Germain and Radice, "Cosmopolitanism by Default" 121.

spaces can help to reduce anxieties towards difference."[155] Both Watson and Germain identify the importance of exposure and proximity as a tool to foster acceptance or to render differences less alien. This is not to idealize such spaces, but it does suggest a need to differentiate and explore these kinds of spaces and their potential to challenge neighbourhood boundaries. A business like Cheskies seems to bridge boundaries and exist in a borderland between Hasidim and non-Hasidim with its wide base of Hasidic, Jewish and non-Jewish customers. Recording more of the everyday interactions that people in Mile End experience, be it trepidation about the kosher grocery store or excitement about the deliciousness of the rugelach pastries at Cheskies reveals another layer of interaction and contact between Hasidim and non-Hasidim which is not often documented.

The proximity of neighbours, both in their living and social shopping spaces, could be an important place to think about how regular exposure to diversity is part of a toolkit which helps to foster acceptance or to render 'others' less threatening. The place of Hasidic businesses in the communal social space of the neighbourhood displays their potential as spaces for interaction between different groups and also shows another piece of how diverse neighbourhoods work through everyday interactions. Hutchison's unique location between Mile End and Outremont meant that my interviewees were able to articulate neighbourhood differences quite clearly in some cases. Mile End's historical Jewish population and the idea of Mile End as a place with 'immigrant type' people makes it harder to see Hasidic Jews as the other, unlike the situation in Outremont with French Quebecois concerns about identity and language threatened by an increasing

[155] Amanda Wise, "Moving Food: Gustatory Commensality and Disjuncture*" New Formations* (under review forthcoming). See also Sophie Watson, *City Publics: The (Dis)Enchantments of Urban Encounters* (London: Routeledge, 2006).

Hasidic population. It seems that despite people's differing perceptions of neighbourhood boundaries, part of the definition of Mile End is formed in opposition to that of Outremont. Furthermore, this idea, or narrative formed with recognition of neighbourhood difference is located in Mile End's history. In some ways, Mordecai Richler's quote below about the difference between streets in Mile End still holds true today when moving up from St. Laurent Blvd to St. Urbain, past Park Avenue to Hutchison and into the streets of Outremont.

> *To a middle-class stranger it's true, the five streets would have seemed interchangeable. On each corner a cigar store, a grocery and fruit man. Outside staircases everywhere. Winding ones, wooden ones, rusty and risky ones. An endless repetition of precious peeling balconies and waste lots making the occasional gap here and there. But as we boys know each street between the main and Park Avenue represented subtle differences in income. No two cold-water flats were alike and no two stores were the same either… Of the five streets St. Urbain was the best.*[156]

[156] Mordecai Richler, *The Street* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969), 23. Thanks to David Sworn's Project "Working Class Public History Through Literature: Mordecai Richler" (2006) which brought this quote to my attention and provides an interactive map of Richler's writings as they are located on the streets of Mile End. http://storytelling.concordia.ca/workingclass/WebsiteSections/01Projects/2006/AmandaDaveMaxime/Dave/Website/Index.html

Chapter Three

"Sabbath Hands"

My first point of entry into my thesis research in Mile End was a curiosity and longing to explore the interaction between Hasidic and non-Hasidic Jews. Most studies on Hasidim in Montreal focus on individual Hasidic groups and their lifestyles or use the Hasidic community as a case study to explore larger ideas about the values inherent in religious groups.[157] Jerome Mintz has examined the relationships of Hasidim with their non-Jewish neighbours in New York. He details the relationship between Black, Latino and Hasidic residents, focusing on political struggles, housing issues, and the internal workings of various Hasidic sects in his book about American Hasidim. Writing about Crown Heights, Brooklyn, he states:

> Despite their proximity in the streets, in shops, in apartment house lobbies and hallways, rather than interacting, Hasidim and Latinos often appear to slide past each other seemingly without recognition. Friendship and mutual respect between individuals develop at times, but for the most part contacts are sharply limited.[158]

As I began to interview, I wondered if the situation in Mile End would be analogous to this. The description of people 'sliding' past each other on the street is a vivid image of physical proximity but social distance, and avoidance. Writing about Mile End, Sherry Simon notes this is part of the paradox of urban living: closeness between people in different groups without necessarily much interaction between them.[159]

In order to examine this further, it is important to acknowledge that some social distance is a characteristic of living in big cities. In multicultural neighbourhoods and

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[157] For example, see Jan Feldman, *Lubavitchers as Citizens: A Paradox of Liberal Democracy* (Ithaca: Cornwell University Press, 2003). Feldman is a political scientist and reviews Lubavitch Chasidim and how their beliefs fit into a larger democratic society. For specific case studies on Montreal Hasidim, see the review of key works in the introductory chapter.
[158] Mintz, *Hasidic People*, 249.
[159] Simon, *Hybridité Culturelle,* 21.

even in ethnically homogenous neighbourhoods, sociability between neighbours can be superficial: a balance between privacy and sociability, best characterized as keeping at a 'friendly distance'.[160] Is it possible to analyze interactions between people where neighbourly relations are characterized by social distance, or a delicate balance of interactions? And how to then "develop the idea of the everyday as a way of viewing the spatially contingent, complex and negotiated sense of inter-ethnic relations"?[161] In my interviews I was curious about how people would describe the kind of interactions I noticed doing participant observation everyday on the streets of Mile End. Germain and others' work on the use of public space in Montreal's multi-ethnic neighbourhoods (including Mile End) found "The dominant mode of public sociability in these spaces can be characterized as an essentially *peaceful* but *distant* cohabitation. Little inter-group mixing occurred between different people using these spaces".[162] Building on this work about neighbourhood sociability by interviewing both Hasidic and non-Hasidic people about daily interactions in Mile End, I was able to gain a broader perspective about sociability and the kinds of interactions that occur there in everyday life.

In this chapter I examine the everyday negotiations and balancing that interviewees talked about to characterize their feelings living with Hasidim in Mile End. This helped me get a sense of what I call the continuum of co-existence that residents of

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[160] Graham Crow, Graham Allan, and Marcia Summers, "Neither busybodies nor nobodies: managing proximity and distance in neighbourly relations," *Sociology* 36 (2002): 127–145.
[161] John Clayton, "Thinking spatially: towards an everyday understanding of inter-ethnic relations," *Social and Cultural Geography* 10, no.1 (2009): 481.
[162] Emphasis my own. Annick Germain, "Les quartiers multiethniques montréalais: une lecture urbaine," *Recherches Sociographiques* 40 (1999): 9–32; Annick Germain and others *Cohabitation interethnique et vie de quartier* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Affaires Internationales, de l'Immigration et des Communautés Culturelles, Collection Études et Recherches No. 12, 1995) as cited in Annick Germain and Martha Radice, "Cosmopolitanism by Default", 118. I have used Germain's own English summary of her work, as the original research was published in French.

Mile End move through. Long-term residents typically were more at equilibrium, or at ease, with the kind of everyday negotiations that go on between Hasidim and non-Hasidim whereas newer residents to Hutchison were coming to terms with some adjustments necessary to live in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood. The literature about Hasidim and their neighbours in Outremont and Mile End tends to focus on conflict and anti-Semitism.[163] In this chapter I shift attention from these flashpoints to everyday encounters, particularly those between Hasidic and non-Hasidic people on the Jewish Sabbath.

Sabbath Tasks: the Role of the Shabbos Goy in Facilitating Neighbourhood Interactions

Everyone I interviewed talked about lending a hand to a Hasidic person or family on a Friday night or Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. I think of this phenomenon as "Sabbath hands." Gentiles can use electricity and do various forms of work which are not permitted for Jewish people observing the Sabbath each week. The phenomena of gentiles helping observant Jews has a history in Jewish culture: Jewish people call these helpers "shabbos goy".[164] Yannick told me he thought "That comes from the Torah, it's a rule that has been established two or three thousand years ago and the rule originally

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[163] For literature on interactions between Hasidic and non-Hasidic residents in Mile End and area see Gagnon, Dansereau, and Germain, "'Ethnic' Dilemmas?"; William Shaffir's extensive work, especially the following articles, Shaffir, "Outremont's Hassidim and their neighbours: and eruv and its repercussions," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 44, no.1/2 (2002): 56-71 and Shaffir, "Hassidim and the 'reasonable accommodation' debate". Finally the film "Bonjour! Shalom!" VHS, directed by Garry Beitlel, (Montreal: Imageries PB Itée, 2000) provides excellent insight and background about Outremont, the Hasidim who live there, and people's attitudes towards each other there. Pierre Anctil also writes about the history of Jewish relations Montreal.

[164] For more history of the shabbos goy see Joseph Katz, *The "Shabbes goy": a study in halakhic flexibility*, trans., Yoel Lerner (Philedelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1992) for more detailed Jewish law and interpretation see Ronald Eisenberg, *The 613 mitzvot: a contemporary guide to the commandments of Judaism* (Rockville, MD, Schreiber Publishing, 2005).

[literally] was you can't light a fire but they sort of interpret it to adapt it to modern life."[165] This is fairly accurate, and interpretations of ancient rules from the Talmud with regard to modern technology govern Hasidim's lives during the Sabbath. Generally, people I interviewed knew that on the Jewish Sabbath Hasidic people could not turn on electricity, if not the specific reasons why.[166] Billy and Roula described in detail some things they have been asked to do over the years for neighbours:

> Roula: Close the stove
> Billy: turn on the heating
> Roula: last time they wanted us to help them with the elevator on a Saturday... I think one of the funniest requests I got asked was to call the hospital on a Saturday, to find out if someone's sister had given birth! [laughs] because they couldn't use the phone![167]

Everyone I interviewed had experience with being asked for help by a Hasidic person on the Sabbath during at least one point in their time living in Mile End.

These stories about Sabbath hands were either told unprompted, in the context of information interviewees thought would be useful for me as a new resident to Mile End or were the first thing mentioned when I asked about interactions interviewees had with Hasidim. This suggests that this topic is something interviewees had talked about before with other neighbours. Furthermore, Patrice told me that these are the kinds of things that neighbours (that is, non-Hasidic neighbours) discuss frequently, and that it's a "constant topic of conversation". This could be because interacting with Hasidim is a shared social experience for non-Hasidic residents in Mile End. Perhaps these stories were told to help initiate me to a tradition of neighbourhood sociability that depends on talking about the 'other'. There was a certain aspect of curiousity combined with a 'one-upmanship' in

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[165] Yannick Roy, Interview November 1, 2009.
[166] It is forbidden to start a new electrical circuit, which is similar to fire.
[167] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview, November 8, 2009.

how these stories were told, too; people wanted to share what they thought was the most interesting or obscure thing that they had been asked to do by the Hasidim.

Being invited into a neighbour's house as a shabbos goy is a unique form of interaction between Hasidic and non-Hasidic people, one that allows the visitor a glimpse into a Hasidic home. As stated earlier, this was a universal experience for my interviewees, and I believe a fairly common experience for non-Jewish residents of Mile End. I had this experience with other families besides the Weisses. During one of the many neighbourhood walks I did in the course of my participant-observation in Mile End, a young girl approached me on a Friday evening at dusk. It was a strange feeling being asked to enter an unknown family's house and instructed on what to do there, to "turn this timer on, turn that air conditioner off, turn the oven on…" But I also felt as if I was being given a small glimpse into someone's life, noticing the family pictures on the wall, the food set out and covered in the kitchen for when the men came back from Shul, the table set with candles lit in the dining room and the way the younger children looked at me curiously as the older girl led me around the house to complete the tasks that needed to be done. This experience shows how the role of the shabbos goy is managed to limit contact: there was no small talking or regular discourse; I was only being used as a tool to get certain tasks accomplished.

On the other hand, whenever I was asked into the Weiss family house to do something on the Sabbath, I felt welcomed and appreciated. Throughout the year, Chaya asked me to help her with various tasks such as turning the oven to Sabbath mode, changing the timers on the lights or switch the thermostat on and off. When I was at their house once during the fall holiday of Succot, turning the oven on, Chaya told her

grandchildren to say hello to me while I was in the house, and Jospeh, noticing how shy they were acting said to them mildly, "Go on. She won't bite!"[168] Chaya often sent me home with a plate of sweets as a thank you. These small interactions and the way I was treated in their home, made me feel more comfortable and less like the "shabbos goy" I was with the previously mentioned Hasidic family. Interactions I had with the Weiss family were different from my interactions with other Hasidic families I did not have a relationship with.

I found non-Hasidic interviewees often interpreted their interactions with Hasidic people in the neighbourhood differently, depending on the length of time they had lived in Mile End. The clearest example of this is how Patrice and Yannick, both living in Mile End for fewer than five years, talked about Hasidic-initiated interactions on the Jewish Sabbath. Yannick felt that being asked to do things for Hasidic people on their Sabbath was unusual and it made him feel uncomfortable. To him, these Sabbath interactions seemed to symbolize the lack of integration in the neighbourhood. Yannick repeatedly used the words 'strange' and 'strangers' and lowered his voice during our interview when talking about the interactions he and his family have had with Hasidic people. This is shown below in two excerpts from our interview:

> Yannick: Yah, they're pretty much on their own. Pretty much the interaction can get a bit funny, because they have… [lowered voice] very, very strict and *very strange* religious rules that they have to go by.
> Yannick: And sometimes they are going to ask us to go inside their homes and push buttons that they need. They needed my father-in-law to push the button because they were not allowed to do it themselves. So, sometimes they ask us *strange* things like that.
> Caitlin: Yah, yah.
> Yannick: And they're actually pretty grateful, you know, they say thanks. But as I said, they keep contacts with us to a minimum.[169]

[168] Caitlin Alton, Notes, September 23, 2010.
[169] Yannick Roy Interview November 1, 2009. Italics are for my own emphasis.

Although Yannick's statements are not overtly negative they show he is still coming to terms with differences and, what he perceives as 'strangeness' from living in close quarters with the Hasidim. The examples that Yannick shared with me about the Hasidim indicate that he is still getting used to living with neighbours who are different from him. Yannick didn't see the Sabbath tasks as bringing him any closer to his Hasidic neighbours; in fact, they emphasized the separation he feels between his life and theirs.[170]

When Patrice, another newer resident, mentioned being asked to help Hasidic people on Sabbath, he reflected on the overwhelming insularity of the Hasidim in Mile End. He relayed specific examples of pushing an old man in a wheelchair and activating the elevator to a third floor triplex as tasks he has done for Hasidim on the Sabbath. This led him to meditate on something that no other interviewee brought up. He wondered if a Hasidic person would do the same for him, if he asked them for a favour. He even asked if he would save "one of them" from a burning apartment, because he had honestly thought that they wouldn't do the same for him.[171] I felt as though these were really honest thoughts that he was sharing, both with me, but also with himself.

Patrice mentioned several times during the interview that he was voicing certain ideas he had thought, but never discussed with anyone; he mentioned that thinking like this sometimes makes him uncomfortable. Laughing, as if to dismiss the seriousness of the idea, he wondered if thoughts like this made him a Jewish anti-Semite.[172] Amanda Wise notices the lack of appropriate language to express this same kind of discomfort during her interviews with European-Australians in a diverse suburb of Sydney which has

[170] In fact, except for Chaya, he didn't even refer to Hasidic people using the word 'neighbours' in our interview.
[171] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.
[172] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.

had a large influx of Chinese migrants. She states that "living with otherness is not something that is always entirely easy. Rather, it inevitably involves varying levels of discomfort. Yet there seem to be few possibilities in the use of everyday language to explore this discomfort that do not involve racist evaluations."[173] Patrice reflected this discomfort in our interviews as he struggled to express his conflicting feeling towards Hasidim while not wanting to sound anti-Semitic. Perhaps the difficulty he had articulating these thoughts was also related to the fact that Patrice is Jewish, yet, feels no affinity or recognition of this by this large Hasidic community in Mile End. He felt that he would never be welcomed in their synagogues, nor, that the courtesy he has extended to them by doing Sabbath tasks would ever be reciprocated. Comments like those of Yannick and Patrice show interviewees struggling to balance their feeling about the insularity of Hasidim with their personal feelings about diversity in Mile End.

Long-term residents on the street, in contrast to Patrice and Yannick, felt their interactions with Hasidim made them more a part of the street they live on. Audrey has been living in Mile End for over twenty years and like other interviewees when I asked her about her interactions with Hasidim, the first thing she mentioned were the times she has helped Hasidim out on Sabbath. She started by enthusiastically sharing a memorable experience at a Hasidic women's house she was invited into one night: "it's interesting because normally people don't invite you into their house, so you just get to kind of, see a little window…I didn't have a conversation with her because, I guess, I wasn't supposed to stay there with, but anyway…"[174]. Sometimes one positive impression with Hasidim can shape the way residents conceive of their other interactions with them. Audrey

[173] Amanda Wise, "Sensuous Multiculturalism: Emotional Landscapes of Inter-Ethnic Living in Australian Suburbia," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 6 (2010): 922.
[174] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.

mentioned another time that she had acted as a shabbos goy with her Hasidic neighbours, a few doors down from her on Hutchison:

> I remember it's the man who asked me to come in to help, and the woman was inside, *very nice***,** very, very, very, very nice from her, she just says hi, and she said something, but you know, I could feel that she was uh, she wasn't shy, she was a warm person.[175]

This was just a single experience, but she brings it up when I ask her about interactions with Hasidim and smiles at the memory; it stayed with her and she recalls it favourably. The atmosphere in this woman's home and her personal warmth struck Audrey. During our interview when she told this story she was at her most animated. Otherwise she chose her words carefully. This could indicate that this experience made a strong impression on her, or that because it was such a strong and positive memory, it influences how she views and understands her other interactions with Hasidim. In a similar way, as I got to know Sarah's family, this relationship coloured my other interactions with Hasidim during the year. I also benefited by hearing about the experiences of long-term residents with Hasidim during our interviews. Their knowledge about the neighbourhood which they shared with me, and my close relationship with the Weiss family allowed me to fast-forward my adjustment process to the neighbourhood, so my attitude towards living with Hasidim more closely reflected that of long-term residents. As well, due to my general research on Hasidim I was able to satisfy some of my curiousity about their beliefs in a way newer residents like Yannick weren't able too. He persisted in seeing them as strange and different.

Billy, Roula, and Audrey, all long-term residents of Mile End, talked about feeling as though they are recognized or chosen specifically by Hasidic people to help out

[175] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.

on Sabbath. By extension, they feel more a part of the neighbourhood during these interactions with Hasidic people. As Audrey said: "I'm sure that they choose, they choose who they ask though. I'm sure that they've seen you around, and that's why she asked you to come in, because I don't think they'd ask anyone."[176] Audrey believed that the Hasidic people who approach her for help have "seen her around" and recognize her as someone who will give a friendly response to their query, and as someone who they trust in their home. Roula described a similar sentiment to that of Audrey's feeling of being recognized by Hasidim in the neighbourhood. Roula believes "they know Billy by now, they come over and ring the doorbell"[177] and ask us for help. Overall, these connections initiated by Hasidic people with long-term residents were explained in a positive light and appeared to make the residents feel a sense of belonging and a part of the place in which they live.

It is particularly interesting that Roula told me Hasidic people come over and ring their doorbell; other interviewees only described being approached on the street. Billy's status as a resident for 40 years on the street, along with the fact he is an anglophone and perhaps more approachable than a long term francophone resident, seem to support the feelings that he and his wife have about being chosen specifically to help Hasidic neighbours. Billy had a unique understanding of his interactions with Hasidic people. He thought a further reason why they would know him or approach him was because he grew up here and has lived here all his adult life. He and Roula discussed this:

> Roula: So, like they find, I think, they know Billy because he's been so long in the neighbourhood,
> Billy: yeah,
> Roula: they've seen him come and go... and grow!

[176] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.
[177] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview, November 8, 2009.

> Billy: Yeah. They've seen me as a teenager [laughs] with all my crazy cars...
> Caitlin: There are people who remember you from when you were young?
> Billy: Oh yeah. Oh yes! Yes…[178]

In this conversation, Bill was certain that Hasidic people recognized him, living on the street as long as he has. He also told me later in the interview that he recognized various Hasidic families or people who, although he might not know personally, he had seen around all his life. This suggests that a level of familiarity between Hasidim and non-Hasidim develops the longer one lives in Mile End and that this relationship can be seen as positive and engendering a sense of a shared neighbourhood. The idea of being recognized during these interactions is significant because newer residents I interviewed typically described these kinds of interactions as more isolating.

As discussed earlier, Yannick described the strangeness of shabbos goy requests and emphasized that acting as a shabbos goy made him more aware of the separateness between his family and the Hasidim. Yet, Yannick also expressed his admiration for the Hasidic cultural community around him. He said, "Yes, obviously, it's very *strange.* In a way there is something I can't help but admire about it because they find a way to block out the modern world. It's very impressive the way they stick together."[179] By blocking out the modern world and prioritizing intra-group relationships, the unsaid implication was that they also excluded him and his family from many possible interactions. Yannick followed up stories of shabbos goy interactions with another issue he is coming to terms with. Yannick wished his children could play with the many Hasidic children on the street; however, he understood this was impossible: "They don't really want to establish contacts with our kids. I don't know what their parents tell them, but obviously they just

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[178] Roula Marinos and Billy Kontogianos Interview, November 8, 2009.
[179] Yannick Roy Interview, November 1, 2009.

think of us as *strangers*."[180] These words were said with a lot of regret and sadness. Yannick grew up in a small town in New Brunswick with lots of children and cousins to play with. In one respect, he sees the close-knit Hasidic community with its many children as similar in this regard. His sadness, therefore, comes from a realization that his own children will not have the same opportunities he had as a child. This understanding shaped how he interpreted the only personal interactions he has ever had with Hasidic people, that of doing things for them on the Sabbath. Yannick's admiration of the Hasidic way of life combined with his sadness and curiosity about their foreign lifestyle shows that interviewees are always balancing their feeling about Hasidic people and their way of life. Newer residents, especially, showed that they were working through their feelings and figuring out what they think about Hasidim's way of life.

The Continuum of Adjustment: Different Attitudes to Living with Hasidim

What emerged through my interviews with newer residents of Mile End is that balancing feelings and negotiating questions about values that contact with Hasidim engenders is difficult. As Wise has written, "little recognition has been given to the fact that sharing real places -contact zones, if you like- is not always an easy thing to do. It is something we learn to do through practice and everyday negotiation".[181] I suggest this practice of everyday negotiation is part of the continuum of adjustment residents learn about by sharing space in the neighbourhood with Hasidim. The longer you live in the neighbourhood, the more comfortable you are with the balancing that goes on between personal beliefs about difference and pragmatic realities about everyday living with

[180] Yannick Roy Interview, November 1, 2009.
[181] Wise, "Sensuous Multiculturalism," 935.

difference. To explain this process, I posit that there is a continuum of adjustment that non-Hasidic residents experience living in Mile End.[182]

This differences I noted between newer and long-term residents is significant because it reflects different interviewees' points on the continuum of adjustment. Although both Yannick and Patrice were aware of the neighbourhood's cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic status when they moved here, they are still getting used to it. Patrice was aware of the diversity in Mile End, and was attracted to the variety of restaurants, coffee shops and the vibrant street life Mile End provides, but it was not the main reason he moved here. That decision was based more on property values and porximaty to other parts of the city.[183] It could be argued that although newcomers have an awareness of the diversity in the neighbourhood, they do not anticipate the everyday negotiations or adjustments that come from living with this diversity: in other words, from the outside, it is easier to see the positive, multicultural street life than visualize the challenges living side by side with difference sometimes brings. A specific example of this kind of unanticipated challenge was Patrice's questioning of his own Jewish identity initiated by his interactions with the Hasidim on his street.

Longer term residents accept that there have always been Hasidim and Jewish residents here and this is seen as part of the neighbourhood's atmosphere. A widespread image of Mile End as "a cosmopolitan, working-class, immigrant neighbourhood...One of Montreal's oldest immigrant reception areas [which] has long had a culturally diverse

[182] Of course, this continuum could exist in different ways for the Hasidim coming to Mile End from less ethnically diverse enclaves and Hasidic communities, but my interview base was not big enough to draw conclusions about the Hasidic community.
[183] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.

population."[184] This diversity is present in the architecture of the neighbourhood, with remnants of Jewish synagogues, as reviewed in chapter two, different summer festivals, and the value of supporting diversity that long-term neighbourhood residents articulated. These values, forming part of Mile End's identity, were also stated in opposition to the kinds of people and attitudes that exist in neighbouring Outremont.

This is a different pattern than what Talja Blokland identifies with elderly residents of Hillesluis, a neighbourhood in Rotterdam. In Hillesluis, Blokland found older residents are threatened by an influx of new immigrants and remember a more unified version of the neighbourhood's history, where local memories are used to connect some and exclude others. Furthermore, in Hilleluis' local community museum, newer residents, identified as community activists by Blokland encouraged "a discourse of tolerance" in exhibitions about the neighbourhood's history and tried to "promote understanding of cultural diversity, pointing out that in the early days the neighbourhood also had a variety of customs and habits and that everybody had been a 'stranger' at some point."[185] Older residents appropriated this interpretation to their own framework of understanding of the neighbourhood: they thought "newcomers of today needed to adopt to the dominant Dutch culture."[186] My research reveals a different pattern than Blokland's study which showed older neighbourhood residents as less tolerant of diversity. This could be, in part, because in Mile End Hasidim make up a part of the group of older residents and also because memories of the neighbourhood have always included immigrants. In Hillesluis, the elderly residents remember the neighbourhood's past as more unified; main differences in the past were class-based rather than ethnicity-based, and the memory of

[184] Gagnon, Dansereau, and Germain,"'Ethnic Dillemas?'" 59.
[185] Talja Blokland, "Bricks, Mortar, Memories," 276.
[186] Blokland, "Bricks, Mortars, and Memories," 276.

even these differences has faded with time.[187] More importantly, as developed in chapter two, Jewish people had an important role in Mile End's immigrant history.

This thesis has been concerned with how to understand interactions between people in Mile End; the best way to understand everyday interactions I have documented thus far, may be to think of Hasidim and non-Hasidim as different groups with some potential for familiarity, but not community. The way long-term residents described their memories of interacting with Hasidic people on the Sabbath in Mile End shows that small everyday, or even occasional, social interactions on the Sabbath, make the Hasidic community seem more familiar. Social interactions are an important part of what can be used to build up and define community in historical terms.[188] However, a caution is needed. In a place like Mile End, a diverse neighbourhood full of different cultural and ethnic groups, there can be a danger of overemphasizing the importance of community, or trying to use the framework of community for different groups which are not cohesive and have a limited frame/space where interactions take place. This is why I more often use the term "neighbourhood" when writing about relationships in Mile End.

The kind of interactions that I have outlined in this thesis, those that happen on the Jewish Sabbath and in businesses on Park Ave, do create or lead to the potential for familiarity between Hasidim and non-Hasidim, but as Blokland states, "Familiarity is not to be mistaken, though, for a solidary, cohesive community."[189] Ash Amin posits this as well, based on his research on everyday experiences and encounters which were sparked after race riots in Britain's northern mill towns of Oldham, Burnley, and Bradford. To

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[187] Blokland, "Bricks, Mortars, and Memories."
[188] As reviewed in John Walsh and Steven High, "Rethinking the Concept of Community," *Social History* 32, no. 64 (1999): 255-257.
[189] Blokland, "Bricks, Mortars, Memories," 272.

understand diverse urban spaces it can be helpful not to use the framework of community, rather seeing neighbourhoods as

> simply mixtures of social groups with varying intensities of local affiliation, varying reasons for local attachment and varying values and cultural practices…mixed neighbourhoods need to be accepted as spatially open, culturally heterogeneous and socially variegated spaces that they are, not imagined as future cohesive or integrated communities.[190]

Amin also writes about the importance of allowing different groups to become engaged in their communities and projects that can encourage this. I'm not sure this would work in Mile End, because generally the Hasidim are not interested in engagement. Despite the myriad of different interactions described in this chapter, I am not sure it is accurate to describe the Hasidic people as part of a 'community' with non-Hasidic residents of Mile End, but I think it is possible to see non-Hasidic residents incorporating their interactions with Hasidic people as a part of the community they live in.

Newer residents typically had more to adjust to than older residents who had been living with Hasidim for all of their time in the neighbourhood, or in the case of Bill, all his life. Although both Yannick and Patrice talked about the multicultural and multi-ethnic character of the neighbourhood as something they were aware of before they moved here, they were still coming to terms with what it meant to live in a place where, for example, your children would have fewer playmates.

Patrice related another incident that involved himself and three Hasidic men which he interpreted as further evidence of the insularity of the Hasidic community in Mile End. In this case, Patrice saw the men standing and talking on the sidewalk ignoring an empty purse by their feet. Patrice thought this purse was clearly the result of a robbery

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[190] Ash Amin, "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity," *Environment and Planning A* 34 (2002): 972.

or mugging and immediately called the police who came right away and interviewed him and the Hasidic men.[191] Patrice felt offended that these Hasidic men did not acknowledge or do anything about the purse and he felt they decided because the purse, or the incident that led to it being left and spilled open on the sidewalk, didn't involve them, (or the Hasidic community as a whole) they would not have anything to do with it. This story was particularly important and he has come back to this incident often thinking that if his house were being burglared the Hasidic people across the street would just watch.[192] They wouldn't feel like doing anything about it because his house is not a Hasidic house, his house is not part of their community or their interest in the neighbourhood. This is striking because Audrey and Patrice live virtually next door to each other; the Hasidic neighbours across the street are one and the same. While Patrice feels very isolated and apart from them, Audrey feels sure that they look out for her, recognized her and her daughter and would tell her if anything unusual was happening to her apartment.[193]

It is possible this kind of understanding only comes when you live in an area for a long time. When you can get past the strangeness of a different cultural community or the feeling that their beliefs diametrically oppose your own, you feel more comfortable living with differences around you. Patrice's story above showed him struggling with these ideas. I also got some sense of this from Audrey during our interview when I asked her multiple questions about relationships in the neighbourhood and she emphasized her comfort with the Hasidim saying, "Obviously it's something I notice, I'm used to it, that's for sure! Um, I'm really used to it… Personally, myself to now, I live very, uh, I'm

[191] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.
[192] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.
[193] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.

very at ease with it."[194] As another long term resident explained it to me, "if you live here, if you have kids here, if you continue living here, then you understand they're [Hasidim] not living their life to piss you off or offend you, it's just the way they live their life."[195] Patrice has only lived here for three years and his attitude was very different from this.

Although, I can only make observations from my small sample size I think the attitude of people who decide to live on Hutchison for the long term, show a more 'live and let live attitude'. I would suggest this kind of tolerance could be generalized as something that develops or is learned when you live in Mile End for a long time. For example, when I asked Audrey about anti-Semitism in the neighbourhood, her answer showed how she lives in Mile End with a sense of acceptance towards others who have different lives than her:

> Audrey: It is quite a different community and it, I understand people are not comfortable with it, and I'm not saying I'm necessarily completely comfortable with it. But I can, I mean, [7 second pause] they're here you know…
> Caitlin: you can live with it?
> Audrey: yeah, up to now, yes. It's not something that bugs me, ever. [196]

Part of Audrey's understanding of Mile End is that it is the Hasidim's neighbourhood too. She explains this sense of tolerance without discounting that she is not entirely comfortable with everything associated with the Hasidic community. However, like other longer term residents she believed with time you stop viewing the Hasidic communities' actions as something done directly against your own beliefs and if not, you move on.[197]

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[194] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.
[195] Andrew, casual conversation, June 2010
[196] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010
[197] Most interviewees talked about people moving away from Mile End when their families expanded and they wanted more space. Other residents talked about the temporary nature of student renters who come and go as well.

Time gives possibility for non-Hasidic residents to get past the strangeness of a group with very different cultural practices, and see them as a part of the place they live in. Long-term residents of Mile End do not necessarily have a more cohesive sense of community than newer residents, as they still mentioned some issues that make them uncomfortable; however, they are successful at negotiating a way of living that fits with the model of social distance that characterizes urban living.

A Smile from the Window: Other Everyday Interactions

Like other long-term residents, Audrey talked about recognizing and identifying with some of her Hasidic neighbours. She told me one of my favourite stories about the kind of relationships, or even just quotidian patterns my interviewees were used to with their Hasidic neighbours. Audrey described her interactions with the young Hasidic woman who lives next door. They often share a smile or a greeting when they are both in their kitchens, and on the front balcony. This is due to what Audrey called the "shared airspace" between their apartments. This is part of the small connection or awareness that she gets from just living next to this Hasidic family, "Yah, because I see them in their house, from my window, in my kitchen, so I smile. Actually it always reminds me that they are there in a way, because I see them every day… just by watching I can see them in their kitchen." [198] I too felt a shared affinity whenever I was in my kitchen preparing dinner and looked over to my Hasidic neighbours and saw them moving about in their kitchen at the same time.[199] These neighbours also give her a sense of security because they always leave fluorescent lights on, and she feels this may deter potential burglars. As Amin concludes, "There is an emerging consensus that a crucial factor [for interethnic

[198] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.
[199] Although some triplexes have been remodeled, many (at least on Hutchison) were built around the same time and share the same basic layout of long front hallway and kitchen at the back.

understanding] is the daily negotiations of difference in sites where people can come to terms with ethnic difference".[200] The sense of "sharing" a glance through a window, security, and identification that Audrey feels with her Hasidic neighbour shows that there are many different kinds of familiarity and understanding that living next to each other can engender.

Small changes can result from different groups living next door to each other, whether this is a small reminder of similarity, like the shared smile in kitchen at the same time or Audrey's increased knowledge about Hasidim and their different sects. Audrey articulated several times in our interview that she thinks that the Hasidim in Mile End are not a monolithic entity. This came out when Audrey once wanted to help a small Hasidic child who was lost and wandering on the street on a very hot summer day. She took this child to an older Hasidic woman across the street, whom she recognized:

> I went to, and I asked her, do you know that kid? And she said 'No, I don't know her, she's not from my community…but go ask Chaya if it's her community.' So, I went to Chaya's house, and it was her husband who answers me and he said 'Don't worry, we'll find, we'll figure it out, we'll make a few calls, and we'll know who.' Because he didn't know her [the child] precisely but, he said 'I'll figure it out…' So, actually that's how I knew that there was more than one community. And afterwards, I heard that there's like six or seven different communities at least, and maybe it's more…[201]

She also told me she believes these different Hasidic groups have different attitudes towards interacting with non-Hasidic people and has read a book that a local Hasidic woman published about her everyday life as a mother in order to learn more about them.[202] Audrey feels most non-Hasidic people who see Hasidim on the street don't necessarily know this, as it's something she didn't know about when she first moved

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[200] Amin, "Ethnicity and Multiculturalism," 967. See also Judith Allen and Goran Cars, "Multiculturalism and governing neighbourhoods," *Urban Studies* 38 (2001): 2195-2209.
[201] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.
[202] Audrey Tremblay, Interview, July 27, 2010. This book she refered to is called *Rather Laugh than Cry: Stories from A Hasidic Household* by Malka Zipora.

here. Rather, she has learned this from her experiences interacting with Hasidic people in Mile End over the years. She has had time to have multiple experiences with Hasidim, to think, and to learn about Hasidim. This is an example of the kind of positive change that comes from living in a diverse neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood residents learn to negotiate and balance their feeling about Hasidim; sometimes this leads to small changes occurring as well. Patrice was the interviewee who was most articulate about the questions of 'balance' that he feels he faces as a resident of Mile End. Patrice referred to rumours he had heard that the snow is not cleared from 'Jewish' streets if it falls on Sabbath or that parking tickets would not be given on Jewish holidays- and he wasn't sure how he felt about this.[203] He was also the one person I interviewed who used the phrase "reasonable accommodation" in relation to living with the Hasidim. He has thought about Mile End in the context of individual residents' rights versus the Hasidim's right to follow certain practices, but he has not come to any conclusions about what is the right way for him to approach this. Many stories he told during the interview expressed a mixture of frustration and confusion about Hasidic practices in the neighbourhood, as he articulated:

> It is hard enough to get along with people, so why build up other walls? The more barriers, the harder it is to know and understand other cultures and people, that's what drives me batty about ideologues like them. At this time, I'm not sure if I'm frustrated or confused. At times…… let's be honest, I'm frustrated. They are not friendly, and I'm frustrated by what exists, this mutual frigid acceptance. [204]

The questions and discomfort he faces about his own liberal values, and the limits of localized place sharing, confront him during everyday life in Mile End. Like Yannick, on the continuum of adjustment to living with Hasidim, Patrice is still grappling with how

[203] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.
[204] Patrice Cohen comments on thesis draft, December, 2010.

comfortable he feels with a group that intentionally shuts itself off from Canadian society and which he sees as unfriendly and isolated.

Patrice gave me another example of how he is slowly internalizing this balancing act and coming to terms with what it means to live in Mile End, even at times taking a strong stand for the diversity in the neighbourhood. He made it clear that despite the kinds of questions we were discussing, he also respects and values the right that all people have to have some of their cultural or religious practices accommodated as Canadian citizens. To this end, he described protesting "against anti-Semitic protestors that were against synagogue expansion on Hutchison. A few years ago, they had a protest, brought their children with them, and I went to show I was against them…I gave some quotes to the news, media that was there".[205] Patrice also told me about engaging "anti-Hasidic people" in conversation who came to his door to try get support for the referendum against the expansion of the Bobov synagogue.[206] I would argue that both of these examples show a positive change in Patrice's continuum of adjustment because they show values that are important in a diverse neighbourhood, mainly, standing up for or with your neighbours. Patrice was able to do this on an important neighbourhood issue because his beliefs about equality took precedence over feelings and questions he has about accommodating Hasidim.

I conclude this section about positive changes that can occur from everyday contact with some examples from Sarah to show what kind of small changes might occur when Hasidim live in a multicultural neighbourhood. Sarah asked me about as well as told me about places in the neighbourhood that were not really open to her as a Hasidic

[205] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010.
[206] Patrice Cohen Interview, July 19, 2010. Further details of this situation were discussed in the previous chapter.

woman. This is how I came to think that living in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood can lead to small changes for both Hasidim and non-Hasidim. Walking down Park Ave one summer night, we passed Café Gamba; Sarah said " Oh, you should go in there sometime, it's a really cool place." I was confused, because this was not a Jewish coffee shop, and surprised that Sarah would know about this café. When I expressed this surprise to her, Sarah told me that she had read a memorable review of it in the *Montreal Gazette*. I told her, yes, I had been there a few times and she asked me what it was like inside--was it indeed 'cool'? I realized as a non-Hasidic interviewer, I had assumed exclusivity, that the Jewish businesses and parts of Mile End were all she knew about. When she showed me she did think about other places in the neighbourhood that assumption was challenged. Just because she didn't go to these places, she is still exposed to them and her awareness of them reveals that she considers how non-Hasidim, socialize and live in Mile End.

Restaurants are possible places for interactions- could restaurants ever be a meeting ground and place for exposure and change for Hasidim in Mile End? The case study of Basil restaurant in Brooklyn provides an interesting example for future developments. Although it is not expressly forbidden, Sarah told me it is "just not done" to go into non-kosher restaurants, partly because there would be no reason to do this: "things in there are not kosher, so why would you go there?"[207] In fact, she seemed to think this was a pointless question for me to ask. Sarah could not tell me if most Hasidic people would be curious about non-kosher restaurants in Mile End because this isn't something people talk about. However, compared to Hasidic neighbourhoods in New York, places she visits often to see family, Sarah believes Mile End is more diverse

[207] Sarah Weiss, comment on reading my draft November 22, 2010.

because there are more non-kosher restaurants here. In Brooklyn and Monseigny, upstate New York, (where some family live) there are many more kosher food restaurants and it is much more common for people to eat a meal outside their home.

Basil Pizza & Wine Bar in Crown Heights, Brooklyn was featured in the New York Times recently as a restaurant that was bringing together Hasidic, black and yuppie gentrifiers in Crown Heights, a neighourhood with a large Lubavitch Hasidic population. The article outlines how the owner of the restaurant, Danny Branover, a Lubvacitch Hasid from Jerusalem, opened the restaurant as a "cross cultural experiment" creating a place that observant and Chassidic Jews as well as the gentrifying young people in the neighbourhood would all feel comfortable eating."[208] This kind of experiment has yet to come to Mile End. A place where Hasidic and non-Hasidic people could eat together could facilitate conversations and further interactions. This is something which the Mile End Hasidim's values of separation wouldn't support. The Lubavitch are known as the most liberal of the Hasidic sects, and they do not live in Mile End; the Hasidic groups here are more segregated. I showed this article to Sarah and she thought the article and the restaurant was an interesting idea, but not something that would happen in Mile End because the Lubavitch are liberal, not like 'us'. It's "not like we don't interact, just that we're not going to drink coffee or eat together…"[209] with non-Hasidic people. This restaurant is an interesting example, as it shows a difference in the kinds of Hasidic non-Hasidic interactions in Mile End and Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

Finally, Jospeh articulated some surprise when he read about other neighbours feeling that the Hasidim were unfriendly or unwelcoming in their businesses. He thought

[208] Frank Bruni, "Shared Plates, Keeping it Kosher," *New York Times Magazine*, Sunday October 10, 2010, Page MM64.
[209] Sarah Weiss, comment, reading a draft of the paper, November 22, 2010.

that this was not the way that Hasidim should act towards people they live with. In order to explain some reasons for this, he offered an interesting explanation, which included the uniqueness of Mile End. Jospeh told me, to take the Satmar congregation, for example, there are probably about 200 men here that have come from other parts of North America (mainly New York) or Europe to Montreal when they got married. Maybe some of these men who come to Mile End are not as familiar with living with a more mixed group of people around them; this is why they may not seem friendly to their neighbours.[210] Hasidim from more enclavist and 'less mixed' communities may not be as friendly towards non-Hasidic others, or merely not exposed to as much difference in their day-to-day lives. In this way, the diversity of Mile End is a positive thing for the Hasidic community, promoting a more open attitude or at least the chance of exposure to difference.

Overall, stories told in the neighbourhood show there is very little knowledge about Hasidic people by outsiders, non-Hasidim. There are moments of neighbourly contact, smiles, greetings, and glimpses into their homes, stolen while doing tasks on the Sabbath. These are interpreted in an overall neutral, or positive framework by long-term residents. In Mile End there is no larger community connection that encompasses both Hasidim and non-Hasidim and, furthermore, not a lot of social interaction. Differences seem to be accepted as part of daily life in Mile End, especially for long-term residents who are well along the continuum of adjustment to living and negotiating life with different neighbours. There are, however, opportunities for interaction, and I posit these moments are important to examine, both because they are moments of exposure to the other, sometimes leading to small changes, and because they are not often documented.

[210] Joseph Weiss, comments after reading draft. December 10, 2010.

These changes may not be documented because they occur over a long period of time. After living in Mile End for fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five years, interviewees talked about how they interact with Hasidim and what that means to them, from lending an occasional hand on Sabbath to recognizing other residents on the street. To take the example of children again, all of the long-term residents I interviewed had children who had grown up in the neighboourhood and were now teenagers living here. They did not talk about how they wished their children could play with Hasidic children, like Yannick did and instead emphasized time and co-existence in their stories of their relationships with Hasidic people in Mile End. Returning to the idea broached at the start of the chapter, do different groups in Mile End slide past each other? There are interactions that take place, and I do not believe that non-Hasidic people avoid Hasidim, but life in a busy, multi-ethnic, urban neighbourhood means that there is little sense of community between the two groups.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have examined how Hasidim and non-Hasidim interact in Mile End. This work makes three unique and important contributions. First, it explores the interactions between these two groups, and their potential for creating mutual understanding. Second, this work provides insight into the broader picture of interculturalism and reasonable accommodation in Montreal. A third unique contribution this thesis provides is in the research methodology: a combination of oral history and ethnography. Through oral history I allowed interviewees to share the realities of their day-to-day life and through ethnography I observed how people live and move through the neighbourhood. Although relations are distant, proximity of living spaces on Rue Hutchison allows an opportunity for dialogue, and gives people a chance to learn about each other. There is a continuum of adjustment for interviewees in Mile End which reflects how comfortable they are living with Hasidim. Through examining how interviewees talk about interactions in their everyday lives, I found people coming to an understanding of what it means to live, accomodating difference.

In a diverse neighbourhood such as Mile End, relationships and exposure between Hasidim and non-Hasidim are important because they create the potential for mutual understanding. Examples of this include the knowledge Audrey has acquired, over her 20 years living here, about the Hasidim, a small but positive change, or the Hasidim who recognize Billy and his family and often ask him for help on the Sabbath. Hasidim see non-Hasidim as a limited part of their neighbourhood, and choose the level of interaction they will have with gentiles. However, non-Hasidic people incorporate Hasidim into their idea of what it means to live in Mile End, for example, by sharing

stories of Sabbath tasks.

My exploration of interactions discussed how shared spaces provide opportunities for interaction. This thesis has shown there are places where interactions occur between Hasidim and non-Hasidim; these small encounters can be significant. I have explored the places these exist, in local businesses as examined in chapter two, and through the role of shabbos goy, in chapter three. Shopping experiences at Cheskies and 'sabbath hands' interactions are important because they provide the opportunity for exposure and contact with the other, rendering difference more familiar. It is important to understand these kinds of interactions: in an everyday way, they show how people move through and incorporate Hasidim into the neighbourhood they live in.

As discussed in chapter three, non-Hasidic residents in Mile End have a variety of perceptions about Hasidim and can be placed at different spots on the continuum of adjustment to living with Hasidim. Long term residents, in particular, have accepted differences, or learned to ignore aspects of Hasidic culture that make them uncomfortable. This acceptance may mean making certain accommodations and adjustments, such as tuning out aspects of Hasidic culture that are uncomfortable, as Patrice is coming to terms with doing, or accepting that children won't have as many playmates, as Audrey, Billy and Roula have done. The level of acceptance towards Hasidim is a continuum and all residents share an equal level of comfort in these differences.

The immigrant history of Mile End provides an openness to difference. As explored in chapter two, this neighbourhood's history, perceptions of it as an immigrant-friendly place, and how interviewees see the neighbourhood's boundaries in opposition to

Outremont are important findings revealed in this thesis. A focus on how people understand place identity, the built environment, and Mile End's Jewish history area reflect the kind of research outcomes that grow from an interest in place in the field of public history. How people described their relationship to other residents, to the neighbourhood as a whole, and to next-door Outremont reveal the complexity that comes from living in a diverse neighbourhood. At the same time, it also provides an intimate picture of residents who accept Hasidim as part of the neighbourhood, as people who have always been here and have a place in Mile End.

This thesis provides insight into the broader picture of interculturalism and reasonable accommodation in Montreal. As Sarah said, "I am not sure what this stupid term reasonable accommodation means. It sounds vaguely disquieting. Like, the French were here first and they have to 'accommodate' our presence… most people who live here don't have this problem, so I'm not sure it's a good term to use in Mile End." [211] Most people in Mile End seem to accept negotiations and possible discomfort that come with living in proximity to the Hasidim as part of living in Mile End.

The phrase "reasonable accommodation" was not used more than a few times during all of my interviews, but when it was invoked, it brought up questions. Patrice, a newer resident to Mile End, was still figuring out how he feels about living with Hasidim and where he stands on the continuum of adjustment. He used the phrase "reasonable accommodation" to reveal some of his frustrations and confusion about the behaviour of the Hasidim and how they isolate themselves from others in the neighbourhood in a "mutual frigid acceptance". [212] Most of Patrice's frustration comes from having certain

[211] Sarah Weiss Interview, February 2, 2011.
[212] Patrice Cohen Comments to thesis draft, December 13, 2010.

expectations about how residents of Mile End should behave which the Hasidim don't live up to. In Mile End, the Hasidim are trying to create an enclave of their own and have their own expectations about behaviour in the neighbourhood: they set the terms for any interaction with gentiles in accordance with their beliefs about separation and fears of assimilation.

I have come to believe the most important part of what makes a multi-ethnic neighbourhood work are individual relationships. My interviewees' relationships with Hasidim in the neighbourhood, particularly their close Hasidic neighbours, the Weiss family, opened a door to a level of understanding and acceptance. Furthermore, my relationship with Sarah and her family made me feel that, one by one, personal relationships and interactions between Hasidim and non-Hasidim can influence how people feel a part of the neighbourhood. This relationship and my experience with the Weiss family was not necessarily typical, but I found a strong friendship with a Hasidic woman about my age, Sarah, and it was our similarities first, and then our mutual curiosities about the differences between our lives which were always a topic of conversation between us when we did things together.

Another important contribution this thesis makes is in research methodology. Through my friendship with Sarah, I became interested in and receptive to the idea of sharing authority. My relationship with Sarah and her family influenced my research methodology, as analyzed in chapter one. My reflections on our relationship encouraged me to be reflexive as an oral historian and an ethnographer, and allowed me to gain a different perspective on the neighbourhood by seeing it through Hasidic eyes. As Sarah told me, "I think you can just put out theories, like your paper is not the definitive bottom

line about Mile End, it's an evolving relationship/issue-like you're friends with me now…"[213] Small changes, personal relationships, and friendship between Hasidim and non-Hasidim show the importance of individual interactions in broaching difference between groups.

In the eyes of many non-Hasidic people, there is an air of mystery and secrecy that surrounds Hasidic life. Curiosity and a desire to learn more about my Hasidic neighbours was one of my motivations in starting my research. Being intensely immersed in Mile End for 16 months living, researching, and interviewing, gave me a window into Hasidic life. I think I 'fast forwarded' through the continuum of adjustment that many long term gentile residents make in the neighbourhood. I gained the benefit of my interviewees' years of combined experience living in the neighbourhood with Hasidim, as well as the knowledge they thought would be critical for a newcomer to Mile End.

The relationship between Hasidim and non-Hasidim in Mile End is certainly evolving. The kind of interactions that take place between people living in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood may change as the population of Hasidim continues to grow and as newer residents become more used to living and negotiating diversity. In the long term, residents will likely become more comfortable living with difference. At the same time, however, as synagogues are expanded, or referendums are passed to block their expansion, tensions could also grow. Although people I interviewed on Hutchison did not have a problem with synagogue expansion or any of the other 'contentious' issues related to accommodating Hasidim in the neighbourhood, they also admitted that they could change their minds. As Audrey said of her relationship to Hasidim: "I'm not saying I'm necessarily completely comfortable with it. But I can, [live with it] up to now, yes. It's

[213] Sarah Weiss, Personal Conversation, February 2, 2011.

not something that bugs me, ever."[214] Long-term residents seemed more comfortable with their place in the neighbourhood. They also had more knowledge and fewer questions about the Hasidic way of life as well as more of an acceptance for Hasidim's presence in Mile End.

An area of future work arising from this thesis could be making some of the knowledge gained accessible to others in the neighbourhood. This could take the form of an audio walking tour or audio documentary. A project like this would both inform residents and answer questions about some of the secrecy that surrounds Hasidic life. Part of the work of this thesis was to categorize and show places where interactions between Hasidim and non-Hasidim happen or have the potential to happen. A public history project would, therefore, contribute to public debate and the discourse around reasonable accommodation by showing how residents explain their everyday interactions with Hasidim. It would also educate residents about Mile End's history and Hasidim in general.

Another area for further research includes comparing attitudes of the Hasidic population of Mile End with more enclavist Hasidic communities. This would be a way of examining the attitudes of Hasidim towards non-Hasidim in a more in-depth manner than my micro-study (with mainly non-Hasidim interviewees) was able to do. Joseph mused about this diversity as a unique aspect of Mile End, and Hasidic opinions about the neighbourhood are underrepresented in the literature about Mile End. It could also reveal some differences between Mile End's Hasidim, who are exposed to more difference on an everyday level on the streets of Mile End compared to Hasidim in other, less diverse communities. The most striking area for further research is an exploration of how

[214] Audrey Tremblay Interview, July 27, 2010.

Hasidim view interactions their gentile neighbours, while espousing an ideology of separation from non-Hasidim they live with in Mile End. This thesis has touched on the potential of this subject through interviews with one Hasidic family that values being friendly to their neighbours. How do other Hasidim negotiate these interactions? Finally, I hope this project has shown there is potential in interdisciplinary research techniques revealing the possibility of incorporating oral history into urban anthropology and using ethnographic techniques to deepen oral history practice.

This thesis has, thus, tried to present a picture of one small part of Hutchison street and the residents who live there, both Hasidic and non-Hasidic, and how they understand their neighbourhood and interactions with each other. Through oral history interviews, ethnography, and a collaborative ethos of sharing authority with interviewees I show places where interactions between Hasidim and non-Hasidim occur, show their importance to residents adjusting to living in the neighbourhood, and the potential to bring people from different groups into contact or exposure with each other. If it is true that it takes a village to raise a child, perhaps it is also true that it takes small interactions to create a neighbourhood. Contact, no matter how small, is not insignificant and can radiate outwards, creating mutual awareness and comprehension, with a potential to bring people closer together. Without contact and interaction with others, cultural groups risk becoming isolated from each other in enclavist settlements. In Montreal, the Tasher Hasidim in Boisbrand, isolated on the periphery of the city, serves as an example of this. Individual interactions, personal relationships, and contact between groups can forge understanding. This is of the utmost importance because these kinds of interactions form the threads of a larger tapestry which makes up a functioning multicultural society, one

that is comfortable with its citizens' diverse cultures, traditions, and religions.

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