

## **Finding Place: MAPPING AS PROCESS...**

A drawing investigation by Annalise Rees

Environmental Issues in the City of Montreal - a workshop run by the Arts & Cartography working group of the International Cartographic Association

Montreal, Canada

September 8 – 10, 2010



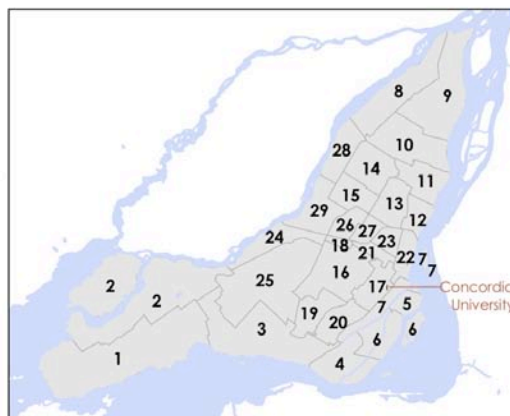
I was recently invited to present my project ***Finding Place*** and participate in a workshop run by the International Cartographic Association in Montreal, Canada. The ICA's cross disciplinary Arts & Cartography working group selected 13 proposals internationally covering a wide variety of approaches to "mapping" such as geovisualization, audiovisual mapping, film studies, photography, drawing, and pervasive games.

The workshop titled: *Mapping Environmental Issues in the City* aimed to encourage and explore interactions between cartographers, artists, designers and practitioners working in various aspects of spatial representation. In exposing cartography to mapping from the arts, and vice versa the intention was to develop new ways of representing and understanding information and places in depth.

In order to reach these goals a specific database was compiled by students at Concordia University, to address environmental issues in the city of Montreal. The database included data relative to health issues, socio demographic profiles, air quality and industrial release. Working with the database each participant devised their own project in response and presented this at the workshop to the rest of the group. With opportunity for questions, discussion, collaboration and reflection each project explored understandings, fears, hopes, emotions and perceptions about places and people through maps.

NUM CLSC zone	% CARDIAC	% COPD (pulmo)	% UNDERWEIGHT	% PRIMATURE	% RETARDATION	% MORTALITY	% RESPIRATORY MORT	% CANCER	% LUNG CANCER	Median income	% Low income	% single parent	% unempl	% No Diploma	% New_mimg
1 Lac-Saint-Louis	0.105	0.267	0.283	0.412	0.270	0.089	0.009	0.058	0.014	93862	9	14	5.9	7.0	3.0
2 Pointe-aux-Lièvres	0.099	0.267	0.390	0.468	0.488	0.083	0.009	0.061	0.027	73813	13	25	6.8	12.0	4.4
3 Donatien-Levesque	0.106	0.475	0.354	0.368	0.504	0.109	0.013	0.068	0.034	60133	22	33	6.4	25.0	4.5
4 LaSalle	0.149	0.463	0.324	0.418	0.504	0.089	0.012	0.072	0.022	55083	24	34	8.3	21.0	5.8
5 Pointe-St-Charles	0.144	0.422	0.414	0.490	0.418	0.114	0.019	0.081	0.041	48914	46	35	12.0	33.0	6.8
6 Verdun	0.179	0.656	0.172	0.478	0.484	0.105	0.017	0.076	0.018	49772	22	40	9.1	21.0	7.9
7 Saint-Henri	0.130	0.538	0.488	0.480	0.594	0.186	0.004	0.072	0.026	61001	41	46	8.8	15.0	5.7
8 Rivière-des-Prairies	0.112	0.383	0.289	0.444	0.498	0.083	0.020	0.063	0.029	63783	11	28	7.2	28.0	2.4
9 Pointe-aux-Trembles	0.123	0.513	0.424	0.488	0.416	0.114	0.014	0.076	0.012	59704	19	31	5.7	25.0	1.2
10 Maissonville/Anjou	0.134	0.534	0.368	0.420	0.589	0.091	0.011	0.076	0.027	57133	23	33	8.3	23.0	4.7
11 Olivier-Guymond	0.136	0.554	0.342	0.478	0.419	0.111	0.008	0.067	0.020	57172	26	33	7.1	24.0	4.3
12 Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	0.111	0.089	0.356	0.400	0.406	0.144	0.022	0.076	0.018	41195	41	42	5.3	27.0	5.5
13 De Rosemont	0.140	0.384	0.366	0.413	0.518	0.088	0.009	0.068	0.025	52877	29	39	8.7	21.0	5.6
14 Saint-Leonard	0.144	0.515	0.316	0.424	0.518	0.071	0.009	0.068	0.021	49101	27	34	18.8	11.0	7.6
15 Saint-Michel	0.117	0.477	0.335	0.420	0.540	0.092	0.010	0.062	0.034	45201	37	47	12.4	34.0	9.8
16 Côte-des-Neiges	0.130	0.210	0.386	0.413	0.518	0.079	0.009	0.054	0.012	51447	34	31	10.2	11.0	13.9
17 Metro	0.114	0.383	0.313	0.390	0.518	0.080	0.012	0.064	0.015	67761	34	38	9.8	1.0	11.8
18 Parc-Extension	0.102	0.249	0.493	0.441	0.481	0.061	0.004	0.052	0.017	66201	31	36	14.1	48.0	18.1
19 Hane-Caplan	0.088	0.101	0.400	0.368	0.518	0.061	0.009	0.068	0.012	65424	21	35	7.4	11.0	6.2
20 NDG-Montreal-Ouest	0.130	0.275	0.318	0.408	0.504	0.084	0.010	0.060	0.018	55647	30	37	9.1	11.0	11.1
21 Saint-Louis-du-Parc	0.080	0.280	0.310	0.408	0.512	0.083	0.008	0.061	0.018	58421	34	48	7.9	13.0	5.5
22 Des Faubourgs	0.117	0.458	0.414	0.492	0.484	0.147	0.018	0.077	0.016	44201	46	35	9.8	13.0	6.5
23 Plateau-Mont-Royal	0.079	0.422	0.354	0.365	0.413	0.144	0.011	0.061	0.008	57179	15	17	9.1	11.0	6.2
24 Bonaventure-Cartierville	0.136	0.267	0.360	0.426	0.512	0.080	0.007	0.061	0.014	49779	30	41	10.0	20.0	12.1
25 Saint-Laurent	0.140	0.287	0.354	0.450	0.540	0.071	0.007	0.061	0.016	53015	30	35	9.7	17.0	13.1
26 Villavie	0.137	0.490	0.310	0.408	0.481	0.079	0.009	0.063	0.027	48114	33	42	9.3	24.0	8.0
27 La Petite-Patrie	0.120	0.548	0.312	0.354	0.518	0.096	0.012	0.068	0.027	46201	34	43	8.3	22.0	5.3
28 Montreal-North	0.137	0.388	0.398	0.368	0.512	0.100	0.012	0.068	0.027	46201	34	43	8.3	22.0	5.3
29 Ahuntsic	0.125	0.429	0.354	0.450	0.514	0.096	0.010	0.062	0.030	57891	38	38	8.7	13.0	7.6

Here is a condensed version of the database.  
Only some sociodemographic data and health data appear here.  
These data have been aggregated at the level of the 29 health sectors of Montreal (CLSC).  
In the table the values have been color coded based on their rank for each criteria: Darker means higher risk of environmental injustice for this criteria (Note: For median income, higher risk is associated with lower income).  
The map serves to locate the different health sectors using their number (these numbers refer to the extreme left column in the table).

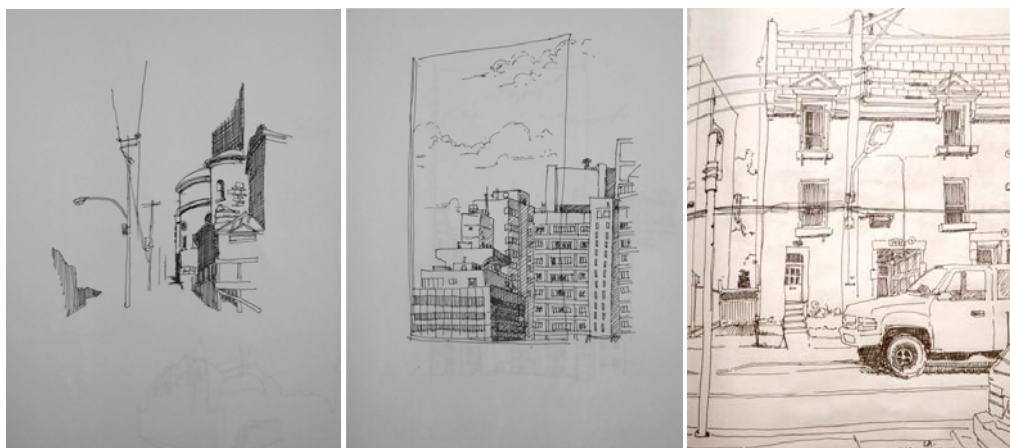


Source: Statistics Canada 2001 & 2006 - Carrefour Montreal, Atlas sante  
Data aggregated by Cristina Romanelli and Roksana Bobyk

With a practice predominantly exploring notions of place and identity through the disciplines of drawing and installation, I faced a difficult task in identifying with the database supplied. The information presented removed from context and without visual reference aside from colour coded maps I found non relational to my own working methods and mode of enquiry. An alternative approach was required, a plan B.

Three flights + one taxi ride + five days + sketchbook + pen = Montreal, this is the problem I posed for myself. In attempt to solve this equation through the production of 'art works' with some eloquence and resonance of place, I required a hands-on direct experience with the city. My path of enquiry explored the possibility and plausibility of mapping focused on process rather than as complete definitive document.

I considered place as somewhere we travel to, something we carry with us and also as something of ourselves that we leave behind, a trace, a mark. Drawing was posed as an act of reconciling space with self/body, enacted through the execution of a series of drawings that formed the basis of my research and interaction with the city.



This path of investigation presented a new framework of thinking in which to consider the act of mapping and the map as document through my practice as a visual artist. I uncovered evidence of the city mapping itself questioning the authority or value of the autonomous in favour of collective authorship and representation. Using the city itself as both database, site of representation and interpretation became integral to my mapping process through interaction and observation.



I used drawing as my primary method of visual interaction and intervention in the city, as a starting point, a way to see, to notice, to observe. Drawings in my sketchbook, temporary drawings on and into site became my trace left on the city and the trace the city left upon me to carry away. Through this strategy I was able to not only think about the city of Montreal, but to think through the city and my experience of and within it.

Ambiguity of experience, uncertainty, the act of discovery and consideration of body as a bridge between being and world suggest the necessity of 'lived experience' to construct meaning within my given practice and methodology. The cartographer's common assumption of the presence of the map separate from and independent of site/location presented me with the opportunity to think otherwise. I began to wonder how removal from location and re-presentation outside of the site of reference question the usability and value of the map and the effective conveyance or communication of meaning.



Searching for appropriate sites within the city to present my idea of the map found that on many occasions I had been beaten to the task. Montrealers had and have been mapping their city collectively in various ways suggesting that multiple viewpoints or perspectives in relation to authorship and audience perhaps may be of more use. Drawing however permitted an intensity of observation, an opportunity to not only look, but to see in the phenomenological sense through the city and its layers.

