From Brickyard to Greenspace: The Production of Nature at the Don Valley Brickworks

by

Paulina Kubara

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Geography

Department of Geography and Planning
University of Toronto

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2017

Abstract

This thesis examines the redevelopment of the Don Valley Brickworks from a former brick-making facility to an urban park. Through an exploration of the social, political, and economic forces that contributed to the production of the site, this thesis demonstrates the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city. Using three theoretical frameworks – the production of nature, production of space, and urban political ecology - this research examines the social and political origins and implications of environmental change, emphasizing the relationship between environmental transformation and social differentiation. The findings of this research demonstrate that the key actors involved in the redevelopment of the site were operating within the context of an urban sustainability agenda, and did not control their circumstances, but rather mobilized based on the resources that they were able to access within their particular context.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Scott Prudham, for his consistent support, patience, and thorough feedback, which helped me craft a stronger paper than I would have on my own. I would also like to thank my committee members, Susannah Bunce and Robert Lewis, for taking the time to give me advice concerning my thesis, and for providing me with constructive comments on my thesis.

I would also like to thank my family for their support throughout my academic career. It has been a long and difficult journey, and I would not have gotten this far without your patience and encouragement.

I am also grateful to the informants who took part in this research project. Thank you for taking the time to share your stories and provide me with the information I used to reconstruct the story of the Don Valley Brickworks.

My friends and colleagues from the M.A. program in the Department of Geography had a major role in making this experience memorable and for helping me make it to the finish line. In particular, a huge thank you to Rachel and Léa for their moral support and for their comments on my work. A special thank you also is due to Hollie for working alongside me in the final stages of this journey, at all hours of the night, and from the other side of the world.

Lastly, I would like to thank Kevin Roy for his unwavering support, patience, and kind (but sometimes tough) words of wisdom throughout this process. I don’t believe that I could have made it to the end without the daily reminders of your faith in my abilities to accomplish this goal.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

The Don Valley Brick Works (DVBW) is a 40-acre urban park in Toronto that was built on the site of what was once Canada’s longest-operating brick factory (Foster, 2005, p. 331). It is located in the Don River Valley, just off of the Don Valley Parkway in what was formerly the Borough of East York (see map below). The DVBW is located just a 15 minute drive from downtown Toronto, providing proximity to the Brick Works’ major market and to the railway (McLean, 2004, p. 210; Simonton, 1986). The site consisted of a quarry that contained vast amounts of clay and shale, as well as a series of industrial buildings in which the bricks were made. For nearly 100 years, bricks produced at the DVBW site were used to build many of the buildings in Toronto, including prominent landmark buildings and structures such as Casa Loma, Massey Hall, the Ontario Legislature, and Osgoode Hall (Foster, 2005, p. 339). With the anticipation of the end of brick-making at the site in the late 1980’s, the owners of the DVBW put the property on the market in 1983 (McLean, 2004, p. 207). Competing proposals for use of the site emerged; in this context, tensions developed over plans for a mixed-use residential development in opposition to plans to create an ecologically restored green space. Following a battle by concerned residents of the neighbouring communities and their many supporters, the Ontario provincial government and Metro Toronto expropriated the DVBW site from the development company that had initially purchased it, and designated it as green space and flood-protection land.
1.1 Objective and Research Questions

This thesis examines the case of the redevelopment of the DVBW into an urban green space, thereby exploring the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city. In particular, I draw on Neil Smith’s thesis on the production of nature, the production of space, and work by geographers writing on urban political ecology (UPE) in order to explain the particular context within which the DVBW was reproduced. This reproduction occurred in a series of stages: the DVBW first began as former post-industrial site, and then almost became a residential/commercial redevelopment, before it was eventually expropriated from the private
development company that had purchased it and redeveloped into a public-private green space. The exploration of the transition of the DVBW to a public-private green space in the context of post-industrial urbanism and the factors that influenced this shift are the focus of this thesis.

When the DVBW was put on the market in 1983, the provincial government failed to provide half of the funds necessary to secure the site for the purpose of flood control: at the time, funding half the cost of such projects was among its responsibilities (MTRCA, 1983, p. B-210). The reason that the provincial government was unwilling to put forward these funds was because the DVBW was being sold for an amount that was higher than its appraised value (McLean, 1989). This resulted in the responsibility of demonstrating the importance of the public acquisition of the site being taken up by the municipal government, Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA)*, and community members with the time, will, and money to do so. These actors operated within a particular ideological and institutional context, and mobilized to contribute to the expropriation of the DVBW, which was a decisive event that prompted the redevelopment of the site into an urban green space.

The context within which the redevelopment of the DVBW occurred involved a repositioning of urbanization processes in relation to the production of nature that moved away from a logic of raw material extraction and processing and moved toward a sustainable city agenda that had two main components:

1) The production and retention of green space that conformed to particular aesthetics of nature that sustained and enhanced residential real estate values; and

* Prior to the amalgamation of Metro Toronto in 1998, the conservation authority is referred to as the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA), while post-amalgamation it is referred to as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).
2) The production and retention of spaces of conservation, in this instance motivated primarily by flood control within the city boundaries, as a response to the contradictions of a prior metabolism of urbanization that enhanced the risk of catastrophic flooding.

In this thesis, I situate the redevelopment of the DVBW within this context in order to explore the factors that were involved in its production as a public-private urban green space. Accordingly, the main research question guiding this study is: *what combination of social, political, and economic forces contributed to the production of the Don Valley Brick Works site as it exists today?* Other research questions that I explore include:

1) Who were the actors involved in crafting the vision and sustainability agenda that ultimately led to the production of this space?

2) What social, political, and economic means did the actors use to deploy the particular vision that they crafted?

3) How did the production of this site contribute to the unevenness of the urban landscape in Toronto?

In order to address the research questions, I identify three significant factors that contributed to the production of the DVBW as it exists today:

1) Political pressure from influential actors;

2) A general change in sensibilities involving a shift toward post-industrial urban metabolisms fueling a sustainability agenda as a response to urban environmental problems. In particular, because of its physical characteristics, redevelopment of the site into a green space was important within the broader shift in flood control and management in Toronto; and
3) Neoliberal restructuring of urban governance that cut provincial funding for environmental projects and increasingly devolved environmental responsibilities to the municipal level.

My research explores these factors in a way that contributes to the understanding of the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city.

1.1.1 Response to Foster’s work

In this thesis, I engage with Jennifer Foster’s (2005) article “Restoration of the Don Valley Brick Works: Whose Restoration? Whose Space?”. Foster’s article is the only peer-reviewed work that critically interrogates the redevelopment of the DVBW, and was the inspiration for this research topic. Through her construction of a “landscape narrative”, which posits that both nature and culture are responsible for shaping landscape form, Foster (2005) explores the transformation of the DVBW from a former brick-making facility to an ecologically revitalized urban green space (p. 333). Foster’s main arguments are: 1.) that the ecological restoration of the DVBW was guided by socially exclusionary practices, and 2.) that “the conservation achievements at the DVBW are an outcome of a mobilized and politically savvy group of local residents whose foremost goal is to prohibit construction of a new mixed-use residential development” (p. 334). Foster thus credits the production of the DVBW to the efforts of the residents of the site’s surrounding community.

Foster’s (2005) article focuses on the post-expropriation period of the DVBW site’s history, specifically examining the restoration of the site from an industrial complex to an urban park that began in 1995 (p. 341). Using the themes of social exclusion, ecological restoration,
and environmental aesthetics, Foster (2005) examines “the particular dynamics that established the Brick Works as a public park, and how early planning and design reinforced elite definitions of the site” (p. 333). Although Foster recognizes that the period immediately following the site’s “industrial legacy” was crucial to the DVBW’s production as an urban park, she glosses over the post-industrial expropriation process in a short paragraph (2005, p. 340-341). By concentrating narrowly on the restoration period, Foster misses some of the historical-geographical context that is essential to the understanding of the production of this space.

My thesis explores a broader combination of social forces that were involved in the production of this site as an urban green space than does Foster’s (2005) work. The majority of this thesis focuses on the period between the unsuccessful attempt by the MTRCA to purchase the DVBW property and the expropriation of the site by Metro Toronto and the Province of Ontario, from 1983-1987. Analysis of this earlier period is followed by a brief discussion of the post-expropriation period, from 1987, to when a non-profit environmental organization called Evergreen signed a lease with Metro Toronto for the operation and restoration of the buildings in 2004. Aside from providing an exploration of the important historical-geographical context surrounding the DVBW’s redevelopment, my thesis fills out Foster’s explanation by drawing on literature that discusses the production of nature, the production of space, and UPE. These literatures contribute to my and Foster’s (2005) discussion on the DVBW by demonstrating how the unevenness of urban environments is reproduced along with the environment itself.

Acknowledgement of the uneven power relationships and outcomes associated with urban processes helps us to understand the role of the key actors involved in the redevelopment of the site by providing insight into the reasons that nature and space become produced and reproduced in particular ways. Foster rightly suggests that elitism and privilege were instrumental factors in
the expropriation of the DVBW and its subsequent redevelopment into an urban green space; however her analysis could be complemented by an exploration of the broader socio-political and economic context, as well as the emerging policy context emphasizing urban sustainability within which the key actors operated. In this thesis, I argue that the actors Foster identified mobilized within the particular context identified above, but importantly, they did not construct the circumstances within which they operated. By downplaying issues of context and contingency, Foster’s account attributes too much causal force to the actions of local elites. My thesis thereby complements Foster’s account by exploring the factors and influences that these actors drew upon in order to shape the production of the site into an urban green space. Actors do not simply control their circumstances, but rather mobilize based on the resources that they are able to access within their particular context. This acknowledgment is important because it can build our understanding of how and why urban environments are produced in uneven ways. Specifically, the case of the DVBW demonstrates how and why particular actors, more so than others, were able to access and utilize the resources that helped them to shape the production of urban natures.

The context within which the key actors mobilized was one of an urban sustainability agenda that emphasized environmental protection in urban areas. In Toronto, an important aspect of this agenda is the focus on flood control and management as a response to a history of flood risk in the city that has been exacerbated by urbanization processes. Within the context of this urban sustainability agenda, the key actors demonstrated that the social values that the site offered – in particular, the geological, historical, and ecological benefits that it provided – were more desirable to Torontonians than the luxury mixed-use residential-commercial development that Torvalley was proposing. Despite the successful incorporation of this sustainability agenda,
the key actors were still operating within a neoliberal context that was characterized by cuts in government funding for environmental projects and the downloading of environmental responsibilities to the municipal level. This is reflected in the redevelopment of the site and how it functions and exists today. Within this neoliberal context, the DVBW could not become the ecologically restored urban green space that was envisioned by the key actors by relying solely on government funding. The need for a public-private partnership in order to redevelop the site according to this vision of sustainability demonstrates that it is unlikely that such spaces can exist through public investment alone. As such, a consideration of the ideological and institutional factors that shape the production of urban green spaces is useful toward understanding of how urban nature is produced and by whom, and how this contributes to the unevenness of urban environments. My analysis thus builds on Foster’s account of the redevelopment of the DVBW by further exploring the context within which particular actors mobilized in order to shape the reproduction of the site.

1.1.2 The Context of an Emerging Urban Sustainability Agenda

The idea of urban sustainability draws on the sustainable development agenda articulated in the Brundtland Commission report of 1987 and its impact on subsequent public policy discourse. At the urban scale, a city may be said to be sustainable if it is able to meet the daily ecological, social, and economic needs of its inhabitants without compromising future generations’ in their ability to meet those needs (Jonas & While, 2007, p. 128). In order to better understand the context within which the key actors involved in the DVBW’s redevelopment were operating, it is important to situate the case within an emerging urban sustainability agenda oriented around this way of thinking as it applied to Toronto at the time. First, and as a caveat, it
is important to acknowledge that the privileging of green space in the context of urban
development and planning in Toronto is not unique to the post-industrial era or the sustainable
cities policy framework, and in fact is much older, even as the specific articulation of nature and
the city have changed. However, the language of “urban sustainability” and a policy agenda
associated with it were emerging in the late 1980’s, and in particular began to be employed as a
public or policy discourse in Toronto after the work of the Royal Commission on the Future of

This commission prompted the emergence of a sustainability agenda emphasizing an
ecosystem approach, bioregional planning, and watershed planning as a response to
rehabilitating Toronto’s water bodies. In his preface to the report, the Commissioner on the
Future of the Toronto Waterfront, David Crombie, discusses the importance of adopting an
integrated “ecosystem” approach to cities that manages the city as a whole system; recognizes
humans as a part of nature; and “uses a broad definition of environments – natural, physical,
economic, social, and cultural” (Crombie, 1992, p. xxi). This is significant because these
conceptions align with the idea of sustainable development more generally. In fact Crombie
(1992) cited the Brundtland Commission’s report of 1987 and its discussion of the need for an
integrative approach to the management of environment and economy. As will be demonstrated
in this thesis, the redevelopment of the DVBW was both driven by, and a part of the emergence
of this sustainability agenda in Toronto in the 1980’s.

The battle over the DVBW occurred alongside, and arguably, within the context of another
shift in the paradigm of urban environmental regeneration: that of the Don River and the
emerging emphasis on flood plain conservation and management in the city. The Don River, of
course, lies within the Don Valley, and flows from the Oak Ridges Moraine to Lake Ontario
(Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 78). As a result of industrial and residential development along its banks, as well as channelization and straightening to accommodate this development, the Don River became polluted and more prone to flooding (Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 83). According to Charles Sauriol, a prominent conservationist who focused much of his work on the Don Valley, activism around the Don Valley began as early as 1906. However, the movement for the restoration of the Don River developed in the late 1980’s. This activist movement was significant because it adopted the approaches associated with the emerging urban sustainability agenda – that is, an ecosystem approach; bioregional planning; and watershed management. Further, the movement was unique in that it moved away from the traditional approach to environmental problems in Toronto that employed “capital-intensive engineering type solutions” (Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 89). The establishment of the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, consisting of both city councilors and local citizens, was a key institutional development. Partnering civil society and representatives of the local state, the task force formulated a distinct approach to the regeneration of the Don River.

Although the movement for the public acquisition of the DVBW focused specifically on the site, the key actors were also concerned more broadly with its place in the Don Valley system and the ecological, social, cultural, and geological value that it held (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication). As will be discussed further, opposition to redevelopment of DVBW for residential/commercial purposes was indeed guided by a NIMBY agenda, but converged in important ways with the emerging agenda of urban sustainability in Toronto. The relationship between these two agendas will be further elucidated throughout this thesis in order to explore in more detail in this case how nature was produced and who controlled the process.
1.2 A Snapshot of the DVBW

The Taylor Brothers, a “pioneer family” in the Don Valley region (The Globe and Mail, 1944, as cited in Otto, 1998, p. 16), founded the DVBW in 1891. Between its founding and closing in 1984, the company had seven different owners and operated under various names, including: the Don Valley Pressed Brick Works, the Don Valley Brick Company, and the Toronto Brick Company (Otto, 1998, p. 2). The high quality of the clay found at the site by the Taylors was a major contributor to the success of the DVBW as a quarry and brick-making facility (Sauriol, 1994, p. 8). The company was unique in that it was one of the first brickyards that produced dry-pressed bricks, and used the most modern machinery and equipment of the time (Simonton, 1986). As was previously mentioned, the DVBW provided bricks that were used to construct many landmarks in Toronto (Foster, 2005, p. 339). However, the site also contributed to rebuilding the city after a devastating event. Following Toronto’s Great Fire of 1904, bricks from the site were used to reconstruct most of the buildings damaged following a by-law that required masonry construction to ensure fire protection (Evergreen, 2016a). During slightly less than a century of operations, the DVBW was among the best known brick manufacturers in Ontario, providing bricks not only for Toronto, but also as far away as Vancouver (Simonton, 1986).
In the 1980’s, many of the manufacturing facilities that were in Toronto moved from the urban core to suburban and exurban locations, and the 1990’s saw a shift toward a more service-based economy in the core of the city (Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 19). In the early 1980’s, the clay and shale at the DVBW were beginning to run out, and accessing more of it would require an extension of the quarry (McLean, 2004, p. 207). United Ceramics Limited (UCL), the company that owned the DVBW, decided that such a project was not worth the investment, and in 1983 placed the site on the market for $9 million. The MTRCA moved to purchase the property to fulfill its flood protection plan; however, due to the refusal of the Province to provide its half of the funding for the purchase of the site before the deadline set by UCL, the property was sold to a private development company called Torvalley Development. Torvalley’s purchase of the site

**Figure 2:** The DVBW quarry in the 1930’s. Photo Bernice Gardner, courtesy Evergreen.
was met with outrage from many members of the neighbouring community (one of the wealthiest in Toronto), some of who banded together and voiced their opposition to the proposed development. Through a combination of political pressure from influential actors, access to political and economic resources, and the creation and deployment of a vision based on an urban sustainability agenda, the DVBW was expropriated and turned into an urban green space, as was originally intended by the MTRCA.

Currently, the DVBW operates as an urban park, and is run according to the term of an agreement between the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Department (Toronto Parks), and a non-governmental environmental organization called Evergreen (Chapman, 2010, p. 55-56). Essentially, the site is owned by the TRCA and managed by Toronto Parks. While Toronto Parks manages the northern, outdoor area of the site, known as the Weston Quarry Garden, Evergreen leases the 10-acre “industrial pad” (the collection of former brick-making buildings on the site) from the TRCA and the City of Toronto. This has resulted in an unusual public-private partnership in which the private partner is, in this case, a private charity rather than a corporation (Kryhul, 2010).

Evergreen was formed in 1991, and focuses on building sustainable cities through “research, design, and collaboration” (Evergreen, 2016b). The organization came onto the DVBW site in 2003 after submitting a proposal to the City of Toronto (D. Stonehouse of Evergreen, February 20, 2015, personal communication). The City was interested in having an outside organization take over the rehabilitation of the buildings on the site, and so put out a call for proposals, for which they received two applications. Evergreen’s proposal was accepted, and the organization entered into a 21-year lease with the MTRCA and the City of Toronto under
which it would revitalize the industrial pad into a community environmental centre. Evergreen runs various types of programming and events on the site, including workshops on urban sustainability and growing local food; a farmer's market; festivals; and a children's garden. Evergreen also rents out the spaces for private events (Evergreen, 2016c). In addition, the organization provides funding, training, and design and maintenance advice for school and community greening projects. Since the portion that Evergreen runs is responsible for all of the programming and public outreach, while the quarry garden at the back of the site is owned and run by the City of Toronto, the site is referred to as the Don Valley Brick Works and the Evergreen Brick Works interchangeably. For the sake of consistency, this paper will refer to the site as the Don Valley Brick Works (DVBW).

1.3 Significance of the Site

The DVBW has become an extremely popular attraction for both local and non-local visitors. The site attracts about 500,000 visitors annually, and it is estimated that up to 3,000 people visit the site daily on busy weekends (Kalinowksi, 2016). The Evergreen Brick Works was named one of the top 10 geotourism† destinations in the world by National Geographic in 2010 (Evergreen, 2016d). The site is regularly updated with new features; for instance, a company called Bullwheel International Cable Car Corp. has proposed to build a gondola in the Don Valley that would pass over the site (Kalinowksi, 2016).

† Geotourism refers to tourism that “sustains or enhances the distinctive geographical character of a place—its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the well-being of its residents” (National Geographic, 2016).
The site holds a symbolic significance for many of the people of Toronto. As will be discussed throughout this thesis, the DVBW fulfills a particular vision of sustainability that is a direct response to concerns from Torontonians over environmental issues such as climate change, loss of green spaces, the risk of flooding, and more specifically the perceived excesses of urban metabolisms that result in degraded environments that are some combination of unhealthy and depleted. The DVBW fits into a model of new urbanism, an “urban design movement to create pedestrian-oriented settlements that also advance social equity and mitigate the environmental impacts of development” (Trudeau, 2013, p. 435). In this context, the site represents an attempt to integrate nature within the city in a way that contributes to the livability of urban areas by providing social and ecological services. In addition, the site provides a space for education and services related to urban sustainability that appeal to environmentally conscious urbanites. For instance, features such as the farmer’s market, emphasis on gardening and local food, and the store that sells environmentally friendly products align with a vision of urban environmentalism that is gaining popularity in cities like Toronto.

The site is also significant because of the public-private partnership involved in its management. A public-private partnership is a cooperative arrangement between one or more public and private sectors to “carry out tasks such as building or operating infrastructure” (Valverde, 2016, p. 200). As noted previously, the TRCA and the City of Toronto Department of Parks, Forestry, and Recreation are responsible for the Weston Quarry Garden, while Evergreen leases and operates the industrial pad. The reason for this arrangement is that after expropriating the DVBW, the City of Toronto and the MTRCA had little money to allocate towards the restoration of the site (G. Armour of Toronto Parks, February 9, 2015, personal communication; Ahermaa, 1996). The industrial pad remained mostly untouched post-expropriation, and was a
corporate liability to the City since it was dangerous in its derelict state and attracted undesirable activities by “kids and vagrants” (O’Neill, 2006). The City of Toronto thus decided to solicit proposals for a private organization to take over the responsibility of renovating the former industrial buildings. As will be discussed, neoliberal restructuring that increasingly devolved environmental responsibilities to the municipal level meant reduced provincial funding for environmental projects. This resulted in the municipality attempting to balance social, economic, and environmental demands while lacking the financial resources to support projects like the DVBW, and thus being forced to turn to private investors for the funding of public green spaces.

1.3.1 The DVBW and Flood Protection

In order to understand the significance of this site as a green space in Toronto, it is important to discuss it within the context of flood protection. The DVBW site is located within a flood plain, an area located next to a river (in this case, the Don River) prone to inundation after heavy rains or snowmelt. These floodwaters are retained in the flood plain for some time after the flooding event and eventually drain into the nearby river and channels. Flood plains are important geographical features, especially in urban areas, because they facilitate drainage and protect surrounding built-up areas from flooding (Tockner & Stanford, 2002, p. 308). In addition, flood plains are often areas of high biodiversity and biological productivity, making them particularly significant to the ecological health of urban areas.

The importance of protecting green space to act as a buffer against flooding in the Don Valley was amplified after Hurricane Hazel touched down on south-central Ontario on October 16, 1954 (Robinson & Cruikshank, 2006, p. 38). Toronto was especially hard hit, experiencing winds up to 125 km per hour and severe flooding in all of Toronto’s rivers. The results were
devastating: 81 people lost their lives as a result of the flooding and damage caused by Hurricane Hazel; entire neighbourhoods were flooded; and 1800 families in the Toronto Region lost their homes (McLean, 2004, p. 3). Further, the hurricane caused infrastructural damage all over the Toronto Region, with roads, highways, and bridges being flooded and/or destroyed.

Following the devastation caused by Hurricane Hazel, Metropolitan Toronto created the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA) in 1956 (McLean, 2004, p. 8). According to Brian Denney, Chief Executive Officer of the TRCA, the reason for its creation was to protect lands within flood plains from development by designating them as conservation lands (June 18, 2015, personal communication). In order to ensure its success in doing this, the Province of Ontario granted the MTRCA the full power under the Conservation Authorities Act to purchase and, if necessary, expropriate any lands that the MTRCA deemed essential to flood control (McLean, 2004, p. 8). A large portion of the land that the MTRCA identified as necessary for flood protection was in the Don Valley. The MTRCA planned to purchase these lands and zone them for conservation; however, four businesses were operating within this zone. They were: The Don Valley Paper Company, Polyresins Limited, Drope Paving and Construction Limited, and the Toronto Brick Company Limited - owners of the Don Valley Brick Works (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984). At a hearing in the late 1950's, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decided that it would implement a “grandparenting” clause for these four businesses. Rather than immediately zoning these lands for conservation; the businesses in the Don Valley would be permitted to operate until they were no longer to be used for industrial purposes (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984).

The goal of the MTRCA in acquiring the DVBW was to protect it from “unwise” land use that would prevent the land from performing its flood mediating functions, including allowing
flood waters to spread out and thus slow down, but also to provide space to retain floodwaters rather than to have them spill out over urbanized areas. The MTRCA also had a mandate to protect “significant and sensitive land for the benefit of the people of the Region” (MTRCA, 1983, p. B-201). In his interview, Brian Denney mirrors this sentiment, stating: “we had a flood plain interest, we had a natural heritage interest, we had a geological significance interest, but we really didn’t want people living in the flood plain” (B. Denney of the TRCA, June 18, 2015, personal communication). In addition to being significant for flood control, the DVBW site was special because, being the first of the grandparented businesses in the Don Valley to be sold, its fate would set a precedent for the future of the other properties and the Don Valley as a whole (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication). At stake was the MTRCA’s goal of creating “a virtually continuous public open space” within the Don Valley (MTRCA, 1983, p. B-205). The MTRCA’s identification of the DVBW as an Environmentally Significant Area cemented its position as an important site for public acquisition.

1.3.2 Geological Significance of the North Slope

The North Slope of the DVBW quarry is a series of glacial and non-glacial sedimentary deposits that was exposed as a result of the excavation of materials during the brick-making years at the site (The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, n.d.). Geologist A.P. Coleman drew attention to the site and began studying the North Slope over a century ago (Coleman, 1894). This feature is especially significant because it provides one of the most complete geological sequences in the Great Lakes region (Churcher, 1985). Along with the Scarborough Bluffs, this sequence makes up most of our knowledge of the geological history of the region. The site holds great importance to the international geological community, as its deposits are used as a standard that is referred to in the study of other formations (Tovell, 1985). Geology scholars and students
have studied the site extensively; in 1985, Professor Nick Eyles, a geologist at the University of Toronto, estimated that between 500 and 1000 students see the site each year. The unique exposure of the glacial deposits found in the North Slope is found in few other places in the world, making this site particularly important towards education, research, and geological heritage.

![Figure 3: The North Slope at the DVBW. Source: City of Toronto, 2016a.](image)

1.4 Roadmap

The remainder of this thesis continues with a literature review dealing with theoretical perspectives on the production of nature and space and UPE. The following chapter outlines the methodology, research design, research informants, and methods used for the collection and analysis of data toward this thesis. Next, a more detailed chronology of the redevelopment of the DVBW is presented. Relying on primary and secondary documents and semi-structured
interviews, I reconstruct the series of events that resulted in the expropriation of the DVBW, as well as discuss what was done on the site after expropriation until the time that Evergreen took over the series of buildings.

In the following chapter, I discuss the redevelopment of the DVBW in relation to the research questions posed above. To aid in this discussion, I use the literature reviewed for this thesis to support the empirical data by demonstrating that urban nature and space are shaped (or rather, produced) by a combination of socio-political and economic forces, as well as various actors with often disparate agendas. Consequently, the literature will provide the framework to better understand the production of the DVBW site and the underlying causes for the redevelopment of the site as it exists today. To conclude, I provide an overview of the main arguments and conclusions of my thesis. I then identify the limitations of my research as well as opportunities for future research on this topic.
Chapter 2
Literature Review

In order to provide a theoretical foundation for this case study of the production of nature and the transition to sustainable cities in the context of post-industrial urbanism, I conducted a literature review to identify relevant academic papers and books on perspectives pertaining to the production of nature, the production of space, and urban political ecology. The primary goal of this literature review is to provide a theoretical context that will contribute toward an understanding of the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city.

In this thesis, I explore the combination of social, political, and economic forces that contributed to the production of the DVBW site. In order to do so, I build on Foster’s (2005) account of the redevelopment of the DVBW and argue that her analysis would benefit from a deeper consideration of the particular historical-geographical context within which the key actors mobilized to shape the redevelopment of the site. Foster’s account needs to be informed by Smith’s theory as well as UPE theory in order to emphasize how and why the involvement of these key actors contributed to the uneven development of the urban environment. Uneven development refers to the “self-evident truth that societal development does not take place everywhere at the same speed or in the same direction” (Smith, 1982, p. 142). It also refers to the ways in which uneven distribution of wealth, status, and power drive spatial development and redevelopment over time. In the case of the DVBW, as Foster acknowledges, the elite social status of the key actors was an important factor contributing to their success in shaping the redevelopment of the site according to their vision. However, by not acknowledging that there is also a broader set of social, economic, and political forces that the actors operated within, Foster
over-emphasizes the capacity of local residents to effect change without situating their efforts to do so in a broader context.

A consideration of Smith’s theory and UPE theory within Foster’s argument would establish the foundation that “the production of nature implies a historical future that is still to be determined by political events and forces, not technical necessity” (Smith, 2008, p. 48). An analysis of the concrete factors and events associated with the DVBW redevelopment in relation to the abstract discourse of the political events and forces that are discussed in the literatures would demonstrate that this was a more nuanced case of NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard) than Foster suggests. Through a review of the literature on the production of nature, the production of space, and UPE, I provide the political and institutional context through which to understand the efforts, struggles, and successes of the actors involved in the redevelopment of the DVBW that Foster is missing in her account.

I begin with a summary of significant works on the production of nature and space, with a focus on Neil Smith’s (2008) Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space. The production of nature and space are discussed together, as the goal of this thesis is to explore the production of the DVBW as a “natural” space. I then bring in a discussion of relevant works by UPE scholars to interrogate the production of nature and space in order to provide a more concrete understanding of production within the urban context. These works support the empirical data by demonstrating the specific social and political origins and implications of environmental change, stressing the relationship between environmental transformation and social differentiation. Consequently, the literature provides the framework to better understand the production of the DVBW site and the underlying causes for the redevelopment of the site as it exists today.
2.1 The Production of Nature and Space

In *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*, Neil Smith (2008) develops his thesis on the production of nature and ties it in with a discussion on the production of space. Smith sees both nature and space as being produced within the context of capitalism, specifically through the process of labour (Smith, 2008, p. 113). In addition, Smith challenges the abstraction of nature and space from society, and through his discussion of the production of nature and space demonstrates that these dualisms only serve to externalize these elements within the capitalist system (Smith, 2008, p. 50).

Following his discussion of the production of nature and space, Smith moves into a discussion on uneven development. Uneven development “refers not simply to the geography of capitalism but also to uneven rates of growth between different sectors of the capitalist economy” (Smith, 2008, p. 134). Smith posits that the production of nature and space are both tied to the uneven development of capitalism. By this, he means that there are contradictory tendencies toward differentiation and equalization that determine the production of both nature and space (Smith, 2008, p. 133). The theory of uneven development refers both to socio-spatial inequality and differential ability of actors to influence land use-change as well as the spatial differences and unevenness of the landscape that results from these inequalities (Smith, 1982, p. 144). What I am particularly concerned with is the role of class, specifically, how and why certain social classes have access to various resources that allow them to disproportionately influence land use change, and thus urban development and redevelopment over time. Throughout this thesis, I tie the role of class into the inscription of this pattern of uneven development on the landscape. Specifically, I focus on how the privileged positions of the key
actors allowed them to shape the reproduction of the DVBW as a public-private green space, thus contributing to the unevenness of the urban landscape in Toronto.

2.1.1 The Production of Nature

In *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*, Neil Smith (2008) develops his thesis on the production of nature. According to Smith (2008), through the application of social labour, people appropriate nature to produce their own material life in order to fill their needs (Smith, 2008, p. 55). Thus, people are constantly shaping the world around them in myriad ways, and in the process are also being shaped through the relationship with their surroundings (Janzen, 2002, p. 99). This concept seems counter-intuitive to many, as nature is often regarded as that which cannot be socially produced. However, drawing on Marx’s notion of metabolism as the conjoined social and ecological change, Smith (2008, p. 54) emphasizes that humans, in some way, produce nature. Pointedly, Smith (2008) asks an important question: *how do we produce nature and who controls this production of nature?* (p. 89). These questions will be a central focus of this thesis and will be used to interrogate the sustainability agenda that guided the production of the Don Valley Brick Works.

The goal of the production of nature thesis is to challenge the conception of nature as an ontological domain separate from society and culture, forcing us instead to think about the social and biophysical nature in a more integrated, holistic, and relational way (Smith, 2008, p. 50). Smith makes it clear that nature is not external to society, and thus cannot act as an external limit (Eaton, 2011, p. 248). In order to challenge this dualism, Smith (2008) discusses and problematizes the notions of first and second nature. Cicero coined the concept of second nature, and described it as nature that has been produced as a result of human activity. This is in opposition to first nature, which Cicero identified as and external and original nature (Smith,
This dualism survived more or less until the 18th century, when it became evident that second nature was not simply comprised of the materials produced out of human labour, but also “…the institutions, the legal, economic, and political rules according to which society operated…” (Smith, 2008, p. 67). This brings the concept of exchange-value into the relationship with nature, because within the institutions of society, nature becomes a commodity that can be bought and sold.

Rather than seeing first and second nature as separate realms that are in opposition to each other, Smith proposes that we think about this as a dialectic that can only be understood through process of production for exchange. He asserts that, without an understanding of how the labour process leads to the reinterpretation of the usefulness of nature, it is difficult to claim that “on the one hand nature is social while on the other society is natural” (Smith, 2008, p. 68). Although the form of nature is modified by human activity, it is still subject to non-human forces and processes. In addition to this, first nature is now also subject to social forces and processes, resulting in a contradictory relationship between nature and humans, as well as between nature and the development of social relations. It is through this contradictory interaction that nature becomes produced and reproduced within the process of labour.

A shortcoming of Neil Smith’s production of nature thesis is that due to Smith’s close engagement with Marx, he tends to use a “narrowly defined sense of the generative processes that shape nature’s transformation” (Braun, 2002, p. 17). By emphasizing the ways that economic processes contribute to the production of nature, Smith gives little attention to the role of cultural practices more generally in producing nature. Subsequent to the original publication of Uneven Development (1984), Smith commented on this limitation by saying that the definition of production should be extended beyond manual work, economic creation, individual labour,
and the creation of physical objects to include imaginative work, cultural creation, social accomplishment, and productive consumption by subjects (1998, p. 277). Indeed, exchange-value is not the only way that humans transform nature, and so we should consider the different ways that nature is produced within the relation with humans. According to Smith (2011), “whether in direct extraction or in some derivative process, social labour simultaneously alters the form of natural material and human nature alike” (p. 262). This is an important point to keep in mind when discussing the production of urban green spaces, since the social labour pertaining to these places takes various forms, all of which must be recognized in order to fully understand how nature and space become produced and reproduced.

Smith’s work has also been criticized for focusing too much on the abstraction of labour, thus creating a distance between the discussion of the production of nature and the historical and geographic contexts of particular labour practices (Ekers & Loftus, 2012, p. 240). Smith acknowledged the tendency of the literature to discuss nature and labour in an increasingly abstract manner, and calls for a move towards more concrete analyses of the topic. This tendency towards the abstraction of nature and labour derives from the tradition within scientific thought to distance humans from the external world of “nature”, thus separating this external nature from human-made social and historical conditions (Redclift, 1987, p. 225).

Although Smith seeks to shift the conversation from abstract to concrete in Uneven Development, his universal approach to the discussion of the production of nature prevents him from providing a truly concrete treatment of labour under the capitalist mode of production (Ekers & Loftus, 2012, p. 239). In order to provide a concrete discussion of labour and the production of nature, it is important to situate the concrete acts of labour within specific historical and geographical contexts. This means exploring the context of the practical act and
giving appropriate attention to the lives of those who engage in this production of nature (Ekers & Loftus, 2012, p. 240). According to Sayer (1989), the way to do this is to deconstruct the material forms that we take for granted and break them down into their fundamental relations, then explore the historical (and geographical) context of these relations. Through an exploration of the historical and geographical context of the DVBW, this thesis provides a concrete understanding of the ways that nature is produced in the urban context.

In Uneven Development, Smith (2008) gives some consideration to the role of social reproduction in contributing to the uneven development of capitalism. However, he recognizes Heynen’s criticism that this discussion was insufficient (Smith, 2011, p. 261). In addition to this, Smith (2011) acknowledges Julie Guthman’s critique of the discussion in Uneven Development not having enough material grounding in the human body. In response, Smith makes it clear that the concern for him is not so much the human body, but the “social relations within which social bodies and their meanings…are variously made, and conversely how these bodies themselves …can collectively transform social relations” (Smith, 2011, p. 262). Further, Smith (2011) adds that a strong focus on the materiality of human bodies can often result in the discussion focusing too much on the individual and not enough on collective action (p. 261). I agree with both Guthman and Smith to certain extents on these points. While this thesis does not focus on the materiality of the body, it does explore the individual experiences and reflections of the people who were involved in the social and physical redevelopment of the DVBW. By doing so, I demonstrate how the social interactions of these individuals were the catalyst for the transformation of the site. Further, I explore the particular ideological and institutional context within which these individuals mobilized as a collective to enact change. This thesis thus
explores the importance and role of social bodies and collective action in the production of urban nature.

### 2.1.2 The Production of Space

Henri Lefebvre’s concept of the production of space is useful for thinking about how and why certain spaces exist in the ways that they do. More specifically, it helps us to better understand the relationship between humans and space, and how the two impact each other (Karplus & Meir, 2014, p. 181). Lefebvre (1991) argues that space is not the outcome of human labour and social organization, but it is “the origin and source…of the rationality of activity” (p. 72). Social space, on the other hand, is the result of a historically and geographically specific sequence of processes and actions, however it also allows for new actions to occur, suggesting some and prohibiting others (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 73). In this thesis, I approach the production of space at the DVBW through Neil Smith’s discussion of this concept in *Uneven Development*. Smith’s work explores how space is produced within the context of capitalism, specifically, how the abstraction of space from society contributes to its production as a commodity. What I am particularly concerned with is Smith’s consolidation of the production of nature and the production of space, through which he argues that the emergence of a second nature is analogous with the conceptual separation of space and society (Smith, 2008, p. 108). This argument contributes to an understanding of how the set of complex social, political, and economic forces have shaped and reshaped the DVBW, and hence urban nature, resulting in an uneven landscape.

Smith (2008) provides a thorough discussion of the production of space in *Uneven Development*, in which he is critical of the concept of social space and Lefebvre’s treatment of this concept. Smith begins with an examination of the definitions of different types of space.
within geography, and points to why these treatments of space are problematic. It is first important to understand the difference between absolute space and relative space: absolute space refers to “space as a quite independent entity existing separate from matter” (Smith, 2008, p. 94), or empty space that is untouched by humans, while relative space is “not independent from matter, [and] spatial relations are actually relations between specific pieces of matter” (Smith, 2008, p. 95).

Social space represents the separation of relative and absolute space (Smith, 2008, p. 98). Emile Durkheim is responsible for coining the term “social space”, and he defined it as: the field in which social activity and events occur, which is placed in opposition to abstract scientific space that is viewed as strictly physical and “natural”, and separate from social activity (Smith, 2008, p. 103-104). Smith elaborates on this by relating back to the production of nature thesis. He states that social space is a result of second nature developing out of first nature. In order for social space to be distinguished from physical space, there had to be a practical separation of nature from society. The abstraction of social space from natural space is problematic because it reinforces the nature/society dualism, and as was discussed earlier, nature is not external to society and cannot act as an external limit (Eaton, 2011, p. 248). As with the nature/culture dualism, Smith rejects the idea that social space is separate from physical space and argues that all space is produced. In the same way that nature is no longer external to human society, “space is no longer an ‘accident of matter’ but a direct result of material production” (Smith, 2008, p. 107).

In an attempt to challenge the space/society dualism, the concept of the production of space seeks to demonstrate, rather than just assert the unity of society and space (Smith, 2008, p. 106).
Within the production of space, human actions and space are viewed as being unified under the concept of space. This means that geographical space is seen as a social product, and the relativity of space is no longer a philosophical concern but a result of social and historical processes. Although Smith focuses on the physical production of space, he also emphasizes the importance of considering the ways that spaces are produced theoretically – that is, the “meaning, concepts, and consciousness of space which are inseparably linked to its physical production” (Smith, 2008, p. 107). To Smith, the production of nature and space is demonstrated both in the form of landscapes and also in the ways that we think about these landscapes (Prudham & Heynen, 2011, p. 224). As was discussed previously, the idea of second nature emerges out of the separation between nature and society, specifically from the development of social economies that are based on commodity exchange. The development of second nature contributes to the abstraction of space and society, which results in the conceptual development of a socially produced space that exists separately from natural space (Smith, 2008, p. 108).

The more that space is abstracted from society, the easier it is to treat it as a commodity (Smith, 2008, p. 111). This is especially pertinent to our conceptions of urban green spaces. These spaces tend to contradict the dualistic concepts of space and nature, because they are regarded as being simultaneously “social” and “natural”. As a result of the strict separation between nature and society, or absolute and relative space, there is a sense of nostalgia associated with natural spaces (Smith, 2008, p. 116). Part of the motivation for having urban green spaces is to capture some of that nostalgia and bring nature closer to the places that we live, almost as a form of escape from the urban (Duncan & Duncan, 2001, p. 398). This makes critical understandings of space a bit problematic, because while capitalism seeks to create a separation between society and natural space, it does this by producing absolute spaces within
the larger production of relative spaces (Smith, 2008, p. 116). Smith is critical of public green spaces, referring to them as “neatly packaged cultural experiences of environment” (2008, p. 81). This is reflected in the DVBW, which was designed to satisfy a particular image of nature and conservation. The “natural” or absolute spaces that exist today are not an aspect of natural space, but are produced by human activity. These spaces exist because we have chosen for them to serve a purpose, not because we lack the ability to affect or produce them in some way. Space is thus absorbed into the capitalist system as a commodity.

These abstract considerations of space have concrete impacts on the ways that space, particularly urban green space, is produced. As Smith mentions, the meaning that we give to space is related to its physical production (2008, p. 107). In the case of urban green spaces, the ascription of particular types of meaning – usually related to conservation, recreation, and/or aesthetics – contribute to the production of urban green spaces in certain locations. The production of these urban green spaces results in the unevenness of urban landscapes, which is something that Smith only touches on marginally. In this thesis, I use work by UPE scholars to provide a concrete discussion of how the production of nature and space contribute to uneven urban environments. This will be discussed in the context of the redevelopment of the DVBW, which will provide an understanding of how the production of such an urban green space contributes to this unevenness in the context of Toronto.

2.1.3 Significance for Thesis Research

The use of Smith’s theory in this thesis will contribute to providing a theoretical background for the discussion of the redevelopment of the DVBW. As mentioned above, a shortcoming of Smith’s discussion of the production of nature and space is that his treatment of
these topics is quite abstract. On the other hand, I have been critical of Foster’s (2005) work on the DVBW for not being situated enough within a theoretical discussion of the historical and geographical context. Without providing the theoretical foundation to explain the context within which the actors mobilized to shape the redevelopment of the DVBW, Foster’s work suggests that this was simply a case of NIMBYism. In this thesis, I address the gap between Smith’s abstract theory and Foster’s somewhat incomplete analysis by addressing the social, political, and economic forces and influences that the actors drew upon in order to deploy their vision for the redevelopment of the site, as well as situate their efforts within the urban sustainability agenda that was emerging at the time in Toronto.

A contextual exploration of the production of nature and space provides an understanding of the socio-political processes that shape urban environments, which informs the way that we resolve the contradictions associated with urbanization in our attempts to deal with environmental change. By situating these processes within the concrete historical and geographical context of the DVBW, I clarify how the abstract concept of the production of nature and space that Smith discusses has implications for everyday activities and changes that occur on the site.

In order to build on Smith’s discussion of the production of nature and space according to a “narrowly defined sense of the generative processes that shape nature’s transformation” (Braun, 2002, p. 17), this thesis draws on the changing connotations of nature as commodity. A discussion of the production of nature and space outside of economic processes and exchange-values is an important move towards extending this theory to encompass the various ways that humans relate to nature. Michael Redclift (1987) suggests that if we want to explore the different ways that the environment is changed under capitalism, it would be worthwhile to highlight the
distinction between production and consumption (p. 228). Redclift (1987) argues that the difference lies in the distinguishing between the changes that are imposed on nature as it enters the production process and those that occur when nature leaves the production process. By framing the production of nature within the context of reproduction and consumption, my thesis contributes to moving this discussion outside the confines of the traditional Marxist treatment of production. Although the DVBW began as a site of economic accumulation and the industrial deployment of wage labour during its brick-making years, the shift to an urban green space demonstrates the production and commodification of nature in a different way. Rather than transforming nature into tangible products for profit as it did in the past, the DVBW has now been produced in a way that transforms nature according to a particular sustainability agenda. My discussion of how these changes occurred and who was involved serves to fill out Smith’s highly abstract theory while building on Foster’s account of the redevelopment of the site.

2.2 Urban Political Ecology

Urban Political Ecology (UPE) is a theoretical framework that adds an “urban” perspective to existing work on political ecology (PE). Political ecology, in turn, is an approach that combines political economy and cultural studies in order to critically interrogate our understandings of the relationship between society and the natural world (Keil, 2003, p. 728). While political ecology deals broadly with rural environments and global environmental issues, the goal of UPE scholarship is to apply the critical approaches found in PE specifically to urban environments. The employment of a UPE approach in this thesis provides an emphasis on the specific social and political origins and implications of environmental change, highlighting the relationship between environmental transformation and social differentiation as examined in and through processes of urbanization. A critical UPE lens will be used to conceptualize the abstract
Theories of the production of nature and space within the context of an urban sustainability agenda in the city of Toronto.

One of the main themes shared by UPE scholars is to challenge dualisms of various kinds, including “the material and symbolic, the natural and the cultural, the pristine and the urban” (Keil, 2003, p. 728, citing Fischer and Hajer, 1999). Rather than viewing these as separate domains, within UPE they are seen as “intertwined and inseparable aspects of the world we inhabit” (Keil, 2003, p. 728). UPE scholars aim to connect disparate literatures on environmental sustainability and environmental politics with urban studies (Heynen, Kaika, & Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 2). Urban environments are commonly overlooked in discussions about ‘nature’ and environmental change, and as a result the socio-environmental dimensions of urbanization have not been fully recognized. UPE scholars consolidate these realms in order to link urbanization and environmental change/politics, emphasizing the politics (i.e., socially uneven) dimensions of environmental transformations, as well as the social production of urban natures (Heynen et al., 2005, p. 1).

A sentiment commonly discussed within UPE is David Harvey’s (1993) idea that “there is…nothing unnatural about New York City” (p. 28). What Harvey (1993) means by this is that nature is actually present in urban areas, and that everything that we characterize as ‘urban’ or ‘human-made’ operates within, alongside, and through that which we consider ‘external nature’. In other words, nature does not stop at the entrance to the city, but permeates the very fabric of the physical, social, economic, and political aspects of urban areas. Yet our ideological reification of cities has having become detached from the domain of nature blinds us to seeing their relational character. Furthermore, spaces that we deem to be “natural” are the product of a complex set of historically social, political, and economic processes. According to Heynen et al.
(2005), cities are systems that are made up of interconnected “socio-spatial processes that are simultaneously local and global, human and physical, cultural and organic” (p. 1). They argue that with the majority of human populations currently residing in cities, it is imperative to recognize that urban areas are important sites of environmental change, and that we need to attend to the urban dimensions of socio-environmental issues. These ideas are a part of the urban sustainability agenda that was emerging in Toronto in the 1980’s, and will be discussed further in relation to the redevelopment of the DVBW site.

An aspect of discussion among UPE scholars is the concept of ‘urban metabolism’, a process of flows and exchanges of matter, value, and representations, which, by their very interactions, make up the social nature of cities (Smith, 2006 in Heynen, 2014, p. 599). The notion of urban metabolism refers to the simultaneous production of social relations and environmental transformation through social labour and social reproduction with a specifically urban context and involving processes of urbanization (Heynen, 2014, p. 599). This social reproduction involves a metabolism between social labour and material nature through which both nature and society are produced. ‘Urban metabolism’ is not a repetitive circulation that results in equilibrium, but rather a sense of creativity – that is, the incorporation of new forms of matter, value, and representations. This creativity results in uneven configurations of urban processes, creating and reinforcing inequalities within urban areas (Heynen, 2006, p. 502). UPE scholars explore how the urban metabolism of particular places results in this unevenness and problematize the social, economic, ecological, and political aspects of the various interrelated processes in order to better understand urban environmental equality (Heynen, 2006, p. 500).

It is through political processes that particular socio-environmental conditions are produced and reproduced, and so an important question within UPE is: who produces these
conditions and for whom (Heynen et al., 2005, p. 2). This is similar to Smith’s question of how nature is produced and who controls this production (Smith, 2008, p. 89), however UPE’s approach to this question is decidedly political. Keil (2005, p. 647) argues that even more attention needs to be paid to the “political” in UPE, as we already have a fairly comprehensive understanding of the material and symbolic ways that nature and society interact within urban environments. The focus of UPE should shift to how the material and symbolic become appropriated within political processes to enact real democratic change. This focus should include a discussion of political recommendations, actions, and the actors involved in these processes. In response to this shortcoming of UPE, a main focus of this thesis is on the political aspects of the redevelopment of the DVBW. Specifically, I explore how various social, economic, and ecological factors influenced the political processes and decisions surrounding the site, and will tease out the roles of the various actors involved. This focus on the political provides an understanding of the role of urban governance in producing urban environments, and ultimately contributing to their unevenness.

The examination of the unevenness of urban environments and urban change is another essential contribution of UPE research (Heynen, Kaika, & Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 10). Due to the underlying political, economic, and cultural processes involved in the production of urban landscapes, it is often the case that more marginalized populations experience the negative impacts of environmental change, while more affluent residents tend to have better access to improved environmental services and resources. UPE builds on the environmental justice movement’s conception of uneven urban environments by exploring more deeply the various processes that lead to this unevenness, as well as who benefits and who suffers from these processes. This relates to the concept of uneven development, emphasizing the ways that the
spatially uneven socio-ecological landscapes result from uneven wealth, income, status, and power, including along race and class divisions, to influence processes of historical-geographical change. A consideration of the processes and outcomes of uneven development helps us further understand how socio-spatial inequality enables more privileged groups and individuals to shape urban development and redevelopment.

Nik Heyen (2003; 2006) employs a UPE approach to studying urban forests in the United States, and finds that more affluent parts of the city have a higher number of trees than do less wealthy areas (Heynen, 2003, p.983). Because trees are tied to land ownership, they represent urban power relations, and their aesthetic serves as a marker of class. For instance, Heynen, Perkins, and Roy (2006, p.7, 12-13) note that in Milwaukee, the city only has the responsibility to provide urban green spaces on public lands. With the increasing privatization of lands, this is becoming more difficult, and as a result the poor will suffer disproportionately in their access to green space because private developers do not usually place urban forests in low-income areas. These examples demonstrate some of the complex factors involved in producing uneven urban environments and will be pertinent towards the discussion of the DVBW’s role in this unevenness later on in this thesis.

An important aspect of UPE that is relevant to this thesis is the concept of the “sustainability fix” (Keil, 2005, p. 245), which was introduced by David Gibbs, Andrew Jonas, and Aiden While (Jonas et al., 2004a, 2004b, While et al., 2004). This concept draws on David Harvey’s idea of the “spatial fix”, in which capital requires a ‘fixed’ space in order to function during a particular point in history, but will have to eventually abandon that space to move onto other spaces in search of expansion and accumulation (Harvey, 2001, p. 25). The “historically contingent notion of the ‘sustainability fix’”, then, is meant to “capture some of the governance
dilemmas, compromises, and opportunities created by the current era of state restructuring and ecological modernization” (While et al., 2004, p. 551). The idea of the “sustainability fix” essentially draws attention to the “selective incorporation of ecological goals in the greening of urban governance” that has emerged in response to “industrial capitalism’s long downturn, the global ‘ecological crisis’, and the rise of popular environmentalism” (While et al., 2004, p. 551; Hajer, 1991, O’Connor, 1998). In other words, this notion problematizes the use of certain “green” agendas in order to address society’s current fixation on trendy forms of environmentalism as a solution to environmental problems.

Within their discussion of the “sustainability fix”, While et al. (2004) also discuss the neoliberal tendency of transferring environmental responsibilities to sub-national levels of government (known as ‘downloading’), particularly to the municipal level, which is characteristic of many advanced capitalist economies in recent decades (While et al., 2004, p. 549). This neoliberal restructuring of urban governance often results in “struggles over land-use, the environment, open space, and the quality of life” (While et al., 2004, p. 553) in suburban and urban areas. Although this thesis does not focus on the broader implications of neoliberalism, this pattern of downloading environmental responsibilities is an important contributor to the production of the DVBW. It will be discussed in further detail in a following chapter within the particular context of Ontario and Toronto in order to elucidate the impacts of such measures on the redevelopment of the site.

When discussing the UPE of urban green spaces, it is important to consider the role of scale in the production of uneven urban environments and vice versa. According to Heynen (2003, citing FitzSimmons, 1989 and Swyngedouw, 1999), “[t]he creation, re-creation, and maintenance of uneven urban environments occur as a result of scale-specific production,
consumption, and exchange decisions made by those who have access to resources and the scalar cross-over effects of those decisions” (p. 980). As a result of this, marginalized individuals who lack access to such resources tend to experience environmental injustices, resulting in a lower quality of life.

The emphasis on scalar dynamics is important because it allows us to tease out the ways that decisions at one scale have impacts on landscapes and people at different scales, but also how scale itself becomes contested, negotiated, and produced. For instance, although decisions concerning urban forests in the United States are normally made at the local level, they are ultimately impacted by forces that operate at regional and global scales, such as neoliberal economic restructuring that favours investment in private projects over public services (Heynen & Perkins, 2005, p. 107) while devolving responsibility to local jurisdictions, re-casting the relationship between scales of political authority. In addition, high levels of functional and political fragmentation at the local level contribute to governance failure on environmental issues (Gibbs & Jonas, 2000, p. 303). This means that although local states may have jurisdiction over a particular area, they may not have the legitimacy to impose meaningful action. By focusing on scale as process rather than as a fixed outcome or static “thing” and “linking the past and possible futures to spatial ‘relations’”, a dynamic view of scalar production provide a better understanding of the “impacts of neoliberalization on local and global environments” (Heynen & Perkins, 2005, p. 102).

Through the discussion of the redevelopment of the DVBW from an urban political ecology perspective, specifically using concepts such as urban metabolism, politics, uneven urban environments, scale, and the sustainability fix, I provide a better understanding of how urban green spaces fit into and contribute to the image of urban sustainability. By exploring the
social, political, economic, and ecological forces that have contributed to the production of nature and space at the DVBW through a critical UPE lens, I provide a concrete example of how the production of urban green spaces contributes to the unevenness of urban landscapes.

2.2.1 Significance for Thesis Research

A UPE approach contributes to my research by providing a more concrete understanding of the everyday socio-political processes that shape urban green spaces and the ways that “nature” is managed within the urban context. As I have identified, Smith’s discussion of the production of nature and space is quite abstract. Thus, the interrogation of these theories using a UPE approach is useful toward understanding how specifically urban nature is produced and who contributes to this production. Since the urban landscapes have become increasingly the source and site of environmental degradation (Keil, 2005, p. 640), understanding how humans produce and reproduce “natural” spaces within cities can help to manage the environmental contradictions associated with urbanization. In addition, a consideration of the production of nature and space through a UPE lens provides insight into how the set of complex forces associated with this production contributes to the unevenness of urban environments. Specifically, it contributes to an understanding of how and why urban green spaces exist in particular locations within urban areas.

An examination of the production of the DVBW as moments of the production of specifically urban nature is important towards understanding the unevenness of urban landscapes. In particular, an exploration of the redevelopment of this site through a critical UPE lens provides a conceptual understanding of the combination of social, political, and economic forces that contributed to the production of the site, as well as how the redevelopment of the site fits into the emerging urban sustainability agenda in Toronto in the late 1980’s. Conversely, the
literature on UPE provides a theoretical basis for understanding how these forces contribute to the production of urban natures and the unevenness of the urban landscape. This allows me to apply Smith’s abstract theory on the production of nature and space to a concrete urban context while providing the theoretical basis that Foster is missing in her analysis of the DVBW’s redevelopment.
Chapter 3
Methods

This section presents an overview of the research methods used for this thesis, as well as justification for those methods, and identification of potential problems with them where applicable. The research for the thesis was based on two qualitative methods: document analysis and semi-structured interviews. First, I undertook archival research to provide historical context and specific factual information about the DVBW project, as well as to identify potential informants. Second, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 key informants in order to explore the first-hand experiences and opinions of the people who were personally involved in this project. The use of these complementary methods allowed me to construct a more comprehensive perspective and narrative, as the interview responses were used to fill in the details of the story in relation to the information gathered from the document analysis, while the latter could be used to support (or in some cases call into question) claims made by interviewees. The documents were also used to fill in factual gaps in the chronology of events and circumstances.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Document Analysis

The analysis of documents and public records is a useful way to gain insight into human behaviour as it provides access to information that may not be offered in interviews (Esterberg, 2002, p. 121). For this reason, archival research was performed at the City of Toronto Archives between the months of February and July 2015. The archives gave me access to various textual and visual materials on the Don Valley Brick Works - including planning documents, newspaper
articles, photographs, maps, minutes from municipal meetings, and personal correspondences between informants in which the site was discussed. In addition to the archival research, a number of the types of documents mentioned above were generously provided to me by five of the key informants who were interviewed for this project.

Data in the form of textual, visual, and audio materials is valuable in a research project such as this one because it provides a context for the data collected in interviews, and also helps provide hypotheses and provisional explanations for events of interest (Clark, 1997, p. 58). As was mentioned above, not all information that is relevant to the research project can be acquired through interviews. This is the case for a number of reasons, including errors or gaps in informants’ memories, or a lack of knowledge of particular aspects of, or facts related to the topic. Memory is also, at least to some degree, subjective. Inevitably, their own positioning may skew the recollections of individuals involved in important events. For this and related reasons, it is important to exercise caution when relying on the memories of key informants and, whenever possible, to triangulate their claims using other research materials. Archival research can also often provide more context and systemic information than informants will necessarily provide, or are even able to provide in some cases. The use of documents is therefore a way to support or dispute information provided by informants in an interview.

Documents, archival or otherwise, provide information on how a particular location has changed over time (Clark, 1997, p. 58). This can be essential in a research project as it allows the researcher to study the evolution of an area during periods of time in which the researcher and potential interview subjects may not have been present. These data may be useful for making links and comparisons between facts and interpretations, which is essential to this research project. For instance, textual materials such as planning documents and newspaper articles
provided me with information on how the DVBW site has changed physically, allowing me to make connections between the physical changes and the socio-political factors that influenced these changes.

Documents are also commonly used in academic research because they add a level of objectivity to the project. Specifically in the case of government publications, official statistics, and materials produced by various organizations or officials, documents tend to be regarded as impartial and factual (Denscombe, 2003, p. 217). However, it is important to be cognizant of problems associated with considering documents to be ‘objective’, as such forms of data are susceptible to issues that may diminish their reliability. According to Scott (1990, as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 140), researchers should consider four criteria in order to assess the quality of documents:

1.) Authenticity, which is concerned with whether the evidence is genuine;
2.) Credibility, which ensures that the evidence does not contain errors or distortions;
3.) Representativeness, which refers to whether the evidence is typical of the time and place being discussed; and
4.) Meaning, which is concerned with the clarity and comprehensibility of the evidence.

The consideration of these four criteria is essential toward determining the value and shortcomings of the documents being analyzed, ensuring their appropriateness to the research project.

Incorporating archival and non-archival documents into this project has strengthened the research greatly because it has given me access to historical and geographical information that I was unable to acquire in the interviews. Moreover, the documents used for this research have also allowed me to contextualize claims and accounts offered by key informants in interviews,
and vice versa. As will be demonstrated in the analysis portion of this thesis, the documents and interviews were integral sources of information and data that supported each other, and allowed for more comprehensive and credible analysis and conclusions.

### 3.1.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

My research methods for this thesis also included semi-structured interviews, which are commonly used in human geography and other social sciences (Valentine, 1997, p. 111). The interviews were conducted with key informants who were formerly and/or are currently involved in the expropriation, planning, construction, maintenance, and management of the DVBW. According to Denscombe (2003), using interviews is appropriate when the researcher wishes to focus on “depth rather than breadth” (p. 165) and is interested in the informants’ experiences. Further, interviews with carefully selected informants are valuable for a research project because they can provide in-depth information about the topic being studied from a small number of individuals (Denscombe, 2003, p. 164). This research project has quite a narrow focus, as it concentrates on the redevelopment of one 40-acre site. Although the discussion presented in this thesis includes an historical overview of the changes that occurred on the site over a span of about 100 years, the main focus and analysis is on an approximately 15-year period involving a limited number of participants. Since the focus of the project is on the redevelopment of the site from a brick-making facility to an urban green space, only people who were involved in the expropriation and redevelopment process were contacted to be interviewed. Because of this focus on the involvement of a small number of people in this DVBW redevelopment, interviews are the best way to acquire in-depth information.

The interviews for this thesis were performed in a semi-structured manner, using a basic script that I had prepared prior to each interview that was tailored to each person based on their
role in the DVBW redevelopment. This method of interviewing allows the informants flexibility in their replies (Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 199), and allowed me to adapt the structure of the interview based on the informants’ replies. According to Bryman & Bell (2016), a semi-structured interview “is designed to bring out how the interviewees themselves interpret and make sense of issues and events” (p. 200). As such, the format allowed me to direct the interviews toward exploration of my initial research objectives, but also allowed me to discover new paths and objectives based on the informant’s responses and stories.

The use of open-ended questions is also advantageous because it does not lead informants to answer in a particular way, but allows them to recall experiences and discuss their opinions on the topic on their own terms (Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 106). This was valuable because the results of this study are presented in the form of a narrative, and incorporating answers that are unique and personal to the informants greatly enriched this narrative. By allowing the informants to share their knowledge and experiences in their own words, I was able to develop a sense of how the production of the DVBW is understood by the people who were involved in its redevelopment.

One-on-one, semi-structured interviews were the best choice for performing this research because they provided me with the opportunity to build rapport with the informants more easily, thus creating a situation in which the informant was comfortable speaking in a more conversational and relaxed manner. The interviews also provided me with the opportunity to meet with informants in a location of their choice, which contributed to the level of comfort and openness achieved in the interviews. I believe this interview tone drew out more complete responses to the questions I asked than would have been likely using other research methods, such as a survey or closed format interview questions for example. The comfortable and relaxed
tone of the semi-structured interviews allowed me to elicit in-depth, meaningful responses that resulted in robust data to analyze for this thesis. It is important to re-iterate, however, that there are potential shortcomings associated with relying on key informant interviews in order to acquire information, including: errors or gaps in informants’ memories, and dishonesty or bias on the part of the informants. It is therefore important to remain cognizant of these potential shortcomings and to rely on other methods and data to reconstruct past events and actions.

3.2 Research Design: Case Study

The research design for this project is in the form of a case study, which involves a “detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 42). This is a case study of the production of nature and the transition to sustainable cities in the context of post-industrial urbanism. The particular case being explored in this thesis is the redevelopment of the DVBW site in Toronto into an urban green space. Case studies are a valuable type of research design because they allow the researcher to gain in-depth insights from an individual case. These insights may be useful in relation to other locations and may have wider implications that may not be evident from more extensive methods (Denscombe, 2003, p. 30). A case study design is more appropriate for the study of UPE and the production of nature and space because it allows exploration of these topics in a concrete way, rather than further abstracting and externalizing nature from society (Smith, 2008, p. 70). By focusing this research study on the specific case of the Don Valley Brick Works, I was able to perform a more in-depth analysis of the unique circumstances of this site and “illuminate the general by looking at the particular” (Denscombe, 2003, p. 30).

However, it is important to acknowledge that structuring this research project in the form of a case study means accepting that the case is not necessarily representative of all or even any
urban green spaces and should not be used to make generalizations about the type of case being studied (Denscombe, 2003, p. 36). A case study represents “one of a type” (Denscombe, 2003, p. 36, citing Hammersley 1992), and it is important for the researcher to make it clear that this type of study is meant to add to the breadth of research on the topic in order to demonstrate ways that abstract theories are applicable to concrete, everyday situations. A focus on the relationships and social processes elucidated from this case study contributes to the identification of themes that are unique to this case study, but can also have broader implications for a wider context.

3.3 Research Informants

The relevant population for this study consists of individuals who were in a position to influence the redevelopment of the DVBW or to be directly affected by it. From this population, I have selected a purposive sample of informants based on my expectation that they are particularly well-positioned to assist me in my research. Three informants were employees of the former MTRCA (now the TRCA), and two others were Metro Toronto (now the City of Toronto) employees who were involved in the project at the time of expropriation and/or redevelopment planning stages. Four informants were members of the community group Friends of the Valley (FOV), which was highly involved in speaking out against private ownership of the site as well as the planning and development process, and one of these members was also from the W. Garfield Weston Foundation, an important donor to the site. The last informant was an alderman on the East York Council during the time of the expropriation. The range of roles the informants had in the DVBW’s development provided a comprehensive sample of information relevant to the particular phase in the site's history being explored in this thesis.

This thesis explores the production of the DVBW into an urban green space, as well as how the employment of a particular sustainability agenda contributed to this production. For this
reason, informants for this project were selected based on their contributions to the sustainability agenda. Due to the narrow focus of this study, I only included individuals who had a direct role in the expropriation of the DVBW. Since the Friends of the Valley were so instrumental in the expropriation of the site, it was important for me to speak to as many members of this group as I could gain access to. In addition, I felt it was essential to interview employees from The City of Toronto and the TRCA who were involved in the DVBW expropriation and redevelopment process, as they could provide me with detailed information on this process from a governmental perspective. Possible informants who were not interviewed for this study include other members of Friends of the Valley, City of Toronto employees, and the planners who developed the master plans for the redevelopment of the site into an urban green space. The reasons that I was unable to speak with these individuals is that they either declined to be interviewed or they are deceased. The small research population allowed me to dedicate more time and effort to each interview and engage in more in-depth discussion with each informant, which greatly enriched the quality of the study.

3.4 Data Collection

3.4.1 Collection of Archival Materials and Other Documents

A substantial amount of the information analyzed for this thesis was acquired through archival research. Using the City of Toronto Archives’ search database, I was able to compile a list of files that were relevant to the case study. After performing the search using a variety of keywords – including “Don Valley Brick Works”, “urban parks”, “urban green spaces”, and “Evergreen Brick Works”, I decided that the list generated using the keywords “Don Valley Brick Works” was both comprehensive and specific enough for this research project. In order to further narrow this large list, I performed a preliminary scan through which I was able to identify
the materials that would be useful to this project and eliminate those that were not. In order to organize the large number of documents, a spreadsheet was created which listed the document titles, file and box numbers, keywords describing the content, and a scale identifying the documents’ relevance to the project.

The materials that were analyzed include: 1.) Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (now known as the TRCA) minutes from meetings discussing the planning and redevelopment of the DVBW from 1957-1993; 2.) documents from 1977-2001 showing the involvement of Michael Prue (an MPP who was mayor of East York from 1993-1997) in the DVBW regeneration project; 3.) photographs taken by the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority of the DVBW from 1965-2000; 4.) site evaluations and feasibility studies for the protection and management of the ecological and geological features of the site from 1988; 5.) letters from various scientists in support of the preservation of the site from 1985; 6.) master plans for the site’s redevelopment from 1989 and 1990; 7.) the DVBW Centre Draft Development Plans from 2004; 8.) heritage landscape files put together by Pleasance Crawford – a landscape-design historian who studied the DVBW – which include notes, correspondence, reports, and other materials documenting the history of the DVBW and the regeneration of the landscape; 9.) 1980’s pamphlets for the DVBW; 10.) posters advertising the DVBW between 1984 and 1997; and 11.) newspaper clippings about the DVBW from 1984 until present day.

A substantial amount of textual material was also generously provided by some of the informants. These materials include: 1.) MTRCA meeting minutes; 2.) newspaper articles that reported on the expropriation and the development process of the site; 3.) early flyers advertising the opening of the DVBW; 4.) planning documents from various stages of redevelopment; 5.)
copies of the master plans for the site’s redevelopment; 6.) a book about the history of the MTRCA/TRCA; 7.) letters and memos shared between individuals and groups involved and/or interested in the Brick Works project; and 8.) various others documents providing information about the expropriation and redevelopment process. This material was analyzed in the same way as the material from the City of Toronto Archives, and was used to provide context and facts to support the stories told by the informants in their interviews. Of course, this material was acquired and analyzed only after I had interviewed the individuals who provided it, and so was not included in the ‘preliminary scan’ of documents described above.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

3.4.2.1 Recruitment and Sampling

I selected the set of informants using purposive sampling, a method in which informants are selected based on their particular experiences or knowledge of the research topic (Esterberg, 2002, p. 93). These informants were identified from documents found in the City of Toronto Archives, specifically; minutes from meetings discussing the expropriation, planning, and development of the site, contact lists associated with these meetings, and memos from the TRCA and Toronto Parks. Contact information for many of the informants was available within the archival material. Informants were contacted by telephone or electronically, either through e-mail or LinkedIn, a professional networking website. They were presented with a letter of introduction explaining the research project, the reason that they were being contacted for this project, as well as information about confidentiality and informed consent. Potential informants who were contacted by telephone received a verbal explanation of the research, and those who were interested in participating provided an e-mail address to which I could send the introductory documents. Upon meeting with the first set of informants, I used snowball sampling to recruit
others. Snowball sampling consists of asking informants who have agreed to meet with you to provide contact information for potential informants whom they believe would be beneficial towards the study (Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 241). Six of the ten informants were recruited through purposive sampling, and the other four were recruited through snowball sampling.

3.4.2.2 Ethics and Confidentiality

When I first contacted informants, I provided them with a Letter of Introduction (see Appendix 2) and a copy of the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix 3). These forms explained to the informant the research to be undertaken and informed them that their personal information and interviews would be treated with the utmost confidentiality: it would only be accessible to me as the principal investigator, and to the academic research supervisor, Scott Prudham. The informants also had the option to waive confidentiality, meaning that they give permission for their names to be used in the final thesis. One of the ten informants chose not to have their name used, and will be referred to according to their job title. Prior to beginning an interview, the informants were provided with two copies of the Informed Consent Form to review and sign, keeping one copy for their records and returning the other to the researcher. The researcher’s copies of the Informed Consent Forms have been kept in a locked drawer in the researcher’s home, and will be kept for five years following the completion of the research.

Interviews were audio recorded with the informants’ consent. Upon completion of the interview, recordings were transferred into a password-protected file on the researcher’s personal computer and deleted from the recording device. Transcribed interviews are also stored in this file. Only the researcher has access to these files, and they will be deleted upon completion of the research project.
3.4.2.3 Interview Process

I interviewed the ten key informants for this project between the months of January and July 2015. The interviews lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour and 30 minutes, with the majority lasting about an hour. Eight of these interviews were conducted in person. I met the informants in their homes, workplaces, or a quiet restaurant, at their convenience. One interview was conducted over the phone, and the last interview was done through e-mail correspondence, as these methods were more convenient for the informants.

The interviews followed a guide (see Appendix 4) comprised of open-ended questions that allowed me to investigate how and why the expropriation and development processes occurred in the way that they did (Valentine, 1997, p. 118). My use of a semi-structured approach resulted in flexibility during the interview process, as the open-ended nature of the questions provided the opportunity for a freer exchange between my informants and myself (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). The interview questions prompted the informants to discuss, in their own words, their personal involvement in the DVBW project, their opinions on the project's development and how it turned out, as well as the original vision for the site and how those who were involved in the planning and construction process deployed this vision. The interview questions also explored how and why this vision was developed as well as any challenges, modifications, and opposition that may have arisen throughout the process. In essence, the semi-structured interviews prompted the informants to help me re-tell the story of the DVBW, allowing me to discuss it in a critical way within my thesis.
3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Analysis of Archival Materials and Other Documents

After compiling a list of the useful archival materials, as described earlier in subsection 3.4.1, I made electronic copies of the documents using a PDF scanner at the City of Toronto Archives. While copying the files, I again briefly scanned the contents of the material to ensure their relevance to my project. Once copied onto my personal computer in PDF format, the documents were labeled and organized according to the system used at the City of Toronto Archives, which lists the box number, file number, and item or series number. This allowed me to easily find items once I had copied them. Once the documents were organized on my personal computer, I performed a thorough reading of all of the material and made notes for the documents within each file summarizing the contents and relevance. At this stage, I was able to further explore the relevance of each file to the project and exclude those that were not useful by labeling them according to their relevance within my notes.

The notes that I created allowed me to easily locate the necessary items within the files while writing the analysis and discussion portion of this thesis. Based on the labels I created identifying the relevance and contents of the documents, I performed an in-depth, critical reading of those that would be included in the research project. After conducting my interviews, I performed yet another, more thorough analysis of the archival materials in order to make connections between the interviews and the archival materials and to fill in gaps within the data. I identified themes within the documents that matched those from my interviews, and compiled a document that outlined how the information from the archival documents related to the interviews. This document was used to provide the structure for the analysis and discussion chapter of this thesis.
As mentioned earlier, some informants also provided me with documents that were used for analysis in this research. All of the documents that were given to me by key informants were set aside until I had completed the interviews and would be able to explore all of the acquired materials at once. My analysis of these documents was similar to that of the archival materials. I began by skimming the documents to identify those that were not relevant and would be excluded from my analysis. Next, I created a word document consisting of point form summaries of each relevant document. The summary notes of these documents were analyzed alongside the archival materials and interview transcriptions in order to identify common themes, connections, and inconsistencies that would be discussed in the analysis chapter of this thesis.

The documents and semi-structured interviews (discussed in the following section) were used to reinforce and corroborate each other, and together the two forms of data allowed me to retell the story from a critical perspective. The analysis of these archival materials has allowed me to better understand the social, economic, bureaucratic, and discursive forces that contributed to the production of the DVBW as an urban green space.

3.5.2 Analysis of Interviews

After conducting interviews with my informants, I transcribed the recordings verbatim using VLC, a simple playback software. Due to the narrative style of this thesis, the interviews were not analyzed and coded in a formal way using qualitative analysis software such as NVIVO, but rather in an instinctive and informal manner. The input of these key informants was valuable to the research because their experience and knowledge provided “particularly perceptive information about the social setting, important events, and individuals” (Bryman &
Bell, 2016, p. 401). Thus, I allowed the key informants’ stories to guide my reconstruction of the narrative rather than trying to make their accounts adhere to the formal coding software.

After transcribing the interviews, I performed open coding on the transcriptions. In open coding, the researcher “work[s] intensively with [the] data, line by line, identifying themes and categories that seem of interest” (Esterberg, 2002, p. 158). In this stage, the notes or codes are fairly unstructured. I read through each transcribed interview and, using the track changes feature in Microsoft Word, placed notes and keywords in the margins identifying the topic or idea of interest being discussed. By ascribing these loose summaries and categories to each section of the interviews, I was able to re-familiarize myself with the data and begin making connections and formulating themes.

Once I completed the open coding stage, I moved on to the development of themes. In this stage, the researcher looks back at the open coding and begins to identify themes that emerge through these initial codes, as well as decide which codes might be most useful in shaping the analysis (Esterberg, 2002, p. 159). The emphases and notes that I created during open coding allowed for the consolidation, as well as comparison and contrast, of multiple informants' accounts, which then allowed me to develop the themes that would be discussed in the discussion section of this thesis.

The next step that I undertook for this analysis was focused coding. Focused coding is much like open coding in that the researcher goes through the data line by line; however, this time the notes created during open coding are organized based on the themes identified (Esterberg, 2002, p. 161). I did this by creating a new word processing document into which I copied portions of each interview (along with their corresponding open codes) and organized
them based on the theme(s) with which they were associated. This was useful for writing up the findings and discussion because I had all of the informants’ responses on a particular topic or theme in one place. The themes identified in the interviews were used as a guide for the subsequent identification of important information and themes within the archival materials and other documents. As mentioned above, the interviews and document analysis went hand in hand, and the use of the two methods to support each other allowed me to construct a more complete story of the DVBW.

The analysis of the data was performed according to an iterative process, in which “data collection and analysis proceed in tandem, repeatedly referring back to each other” (Bryman & Bell, 2016, p. 281). While analyzing my data, I found that my analysis was not proceeding in a linear way, but rather going back and forth between interviews, archival materials, and other documents, at which point a particular theme would begin to develop across the different types of data. This process helped me to identify the relevant themes and to highlight the complexity and intermingling of the various factors, events, and actors involved in the production of the DVBW, which constitute the substance of the findings and discussion chapters of this thesis.
Chapter 4
Chronology

The following chapter presents the chronology of the redevelopment of the DVBW. I focus on the period between the unsuccessful attempt by the MTRCA to purchase the DVBW property and the expropriation of the site by Metro Toronto and the Province of Ontario, from 1984-1987. This is followed by a brief discussion of the post-expropriation period, from 1987, to when Evergreen signed a lease with Metro Toronto for the operation and restoration of the buildings in 2004. The information used to construct this chronology draw from the interviews that were conducted with key informants for this project (cited as personal communication), as well as the documents that were included in the textual analysis described in the methods chapter. Drawing on these sources, this narrative recounts the series of events, important actors, and significant factors involved in the expropriation of the DVBW with particular attention to the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city. Through the recounting of the chronology of the process, I demonstrate the context within which the key actors were operating and elucidate how, through socially privileged connections to political decision-makers and to arenas of power, as well as through the mobilization of a potent emerging urban sustainability agenda, the key actors were able to contribute to the production of the DVBW into a public-private urban green space.

4.1 Purchase of the DVBW by Torvalley Development

In February 1983, the owners of the DVBW, United Ceramics Ltd. (UCL), announced that the clay available for extraction at the site would soon be exhausted, and that they would thus be listing the property for sale (McLean, 2004, pp. 206-207). The MTRCA (1983, p. B-201)
recognized UCL’s decision to sell the site as its opportunity to begin claiming the lands in the Don Valley in order to convert them for public use, and so moved to purchase it. UCL originally listed the property for sale at $9 million. After receiving an appraisal of just under $4 million for the site, Robert Bundy, from Metro Toronto Parks, negotiated with UCL but was only able to secure agreement on a price of $4.2 million – slightly above valuation (McLean, 1989). The fact the amount was higher than the appraised value inhibited the MTRCA’s ability to procure the total funding for the purchase of the site.

At the time of the events described above, municipal acquisition of properties also required the province to put forward half of the funds for the transaction (TRCA employee, February 25, 2015, personal communication; MTRCA, 1983, p. B-210). Although the MTRCA and Metro Toronto were behind the purchase, on October 26, 1983 - four days before the deal was to be finalized - the province announced that it would not approve the project. In a 1984 letter dealing with the matter written to Margaret Scrivener (then a member of provincial parliament (M.P.P.)), Alan Pope (the Minister of Natural Resources at the time) indicated that the property had been appraised at two amounts, $2.7 million and $3.5 million, and so the Ministry would not provide its share of the $4.2 million being asked for the purchase of the DVBW site, as it was over the site’s estimated value. Pope concluded the letter by stating that the Ministry would only provide funds for the property if the MTRCA were able to renegotiate the price to a level between the values in the appraisals.

Just a few days after the MTRCA was prevented from purchasing the DVBW property on October 26, the site was sold to a private developer, Torvalley Development Ltd. (McLean, 2004, p. 208). Torvalley was a Montreal-based development company specifically “set up to acquire and develop the Toronto Brick Co. property” (Freeman, 1984). The Canadian Imperial
Bank of Commerce (CIBC) provided a debenture – that is, a loan unsecured by any collateral (Investopedia, 2016) - for Torvalley’s purchase of the site. The bank put forward up to $5.5 million for the purchase of the property (though the price ended up being $4.2 million) (Crann, 1986, p. 22; Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers, 1984). Although Torvalley had no previous developments, the three individuals leading the firm – Martin Borner, Richard Weldon, and Larry Boland - had development experience in the Toronto and Montreal housing and real estate markets. Weldon, then vice-president of Torvalley, was quoted in The Globe and Mail as saying that his firm’s interests were in “rehabilitating under-utilized urban real estate” (Goederahm, 1984, p. M4). Torvalley’s planned rehabilitation of the 40-acre DVBW site included building a mixed-used residential/commercial development (McLean, 2004, p. 208).

4.1.1 Torvalley’s Proposed Development

In September 1984, Torvalley requested that the Borough of East York establish a working committee for the DVBW in order to “formalize the lines of communication and to involve the abutting communities in the planning of the Brick site” (Johnson, 1984). The working committee consisted of then-Mayor David Johnson, two local Ward 4 Aldermen, and the Presidents of four local ratepayers’ groups - the Governor’s Bridge, Ward 3, Leaside Property Owners, and North Rosedale ratepayers (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984). The purpose of the working committee was twofold:

1. To inform Torvalley of any opposition to the proposal so that the proposal could be modified before it was formally submitted; and

2. To “make the ratepayers’ representatives and the Ward Aldermen feel as though they had been part of the planning process and in this way co-opt the most damaging sources of opposition” (Crann, 1986, p. 2).
Torvalley used the working committee directly, as well as in a somewhat veiled means, to identify and mitigate opposition to their planned reworking of the site, and to garner support for their intended project from politicians and representatives of the community around the development.

The initial proposal for redevelopment presented to the working committee described a relatively densely-packed site that included natural amenities. The following features were included in the initial plan for the site: an office campus with a 25-storey building surrounded by eight 6-storey buildings; a hotel complex; another 25-storey building with three hundred rooms, plus adjacent buildings; eight apartment buildings with 4-8-storeys for four hundred units; thirty five townhouses; eight estate homes; a restaurant and recreational club; two large areas of open space, and a 10-acre lake (Torvalley Development Ltd., 1985; E. Freeman of FOV, personal communication, March 17, 2015). After receiving feedback from the ratepayers and Aldermen, Torvalley altered their proposal to reduce the initial planned density of the site, which was 1.05 times the area of the site (Crann, 1986, p. 2; Torvalley Development Ltd., 1985).

The DVBW site (along with the four other grandparented industries in the Don Valley) was zoned as industrial/open space, meaning that it could be used for industrial purposes as long as the business was still operating. However, once the industry was no longer in operation, the zoning of the land would shift to strictly conservation use (McLean, 2004, p. 206). This meant that Torvalley could not develop the land for residential/commercial use as long as it remained zoned for conservation, and so it had to submit an application to the East York planning and development board to rezone the land from industrial/open space to residential/commercial (Gooderham, 1985, p. M7). The development could only move forward after a zoning change. In the meantime, Torvalley took advantage of a loophole in the zoning designation. Since the
industries that were operating in the Don Valley were doing so under a grandparent clause that would only expire on cessation of the industrial activities, the businesses could continue to operate as long as they desired (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984). For this reason, upon purchasing the DVBW property, Torvalley leased it to a company called Brampton Brick, which continued to operate it as a brick works using clay brought in from elsewhere. As long as the site continued to produce bricks, it could continue to be used in that capacity (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984). Thus, Torvalley used the grandparent clause to its advantage by keeping the site operating with the hopes that the rezoning application would be approved (Crann, 1986, p. 1), as it would be more difficult to downzone after a conservation designation.

Since the DVBW site fell within the MTRCA’s Flood and Fill Regulation lines, development proposals for the site had to be reviewed and approved by the MTRCA (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1984). Torvalley was thus required to consult with the MTRCA about their redevelopment plans to ensure that they were in line with their conservation objectives. During this consultation, the MTRCA recommended that Torvalley be granted a permit to fill the quarry, as they felt that it would be a public hazard should the MTRCA acquire the site in the future (McLean, 2004, p. 208). Although Torvalley initially tried to fulfill the MTRCA’s conservation objectives by including lots of open space, a lake, and other park-like features in their first proposal, their revised plan was missing many of these elements. Those who opposed the development felt that Torvalley had sought the advice of the MTRCA during the presentation of their initial proposal to the working committee in order to make it appear as though conservation was a priority (Crann, 1986, p. 19). The elimination of these features in the revised proposal demonstrated that the MTRCA’s input was not valuable to Torvalley.
4.1.2 Support from East York and Other Influential Actors

Torvalley’s proposal for redevelopment of the DVBW site found support from several influential actors. The actor that was the most invested in the success of Torvalley’s proposed development was the Borough of East York. A major reason for this support lay in the fact that the development would boost revenue for the borough. As the smallest of the region’s cities and boroughs, East York had the lowest commercial and residential assessment in Metro Toronto (Bennett, 1985; Crann, 1986, p.1). Being a large industrial site located in the center of the Don Valley, the DVBW was seen as a good opportunity for redevelopment that could increase municipal services as well as the number of smaller residential and/or commercial properties with the potential for taxation in the area (Bennett, 1985). East York’s economic position, and the possible economic benefit Torvalley’s development on the site could have are two reasons why the plan was supported by the mayor of East York, David Johnson, as well as seven of the eight Aldermen on the East York council.

As mentioned previously, CIBC was willing to provide a debenture to Torvalley for the purchase of the DVBW site, which indicates that the bank was also supportive of the development (Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association, 1984). Eddie Goodman was a director at CIBC at the time, an influential member of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), and had a well-known law firm that represented Torvalley during the expropriation process. Goodman’s support of Torvalley’s redevelopment, combined with his various professional connections, was highly advantageous to Torvalley’s project.

Economic considerations played a major role in the DVBW’s redevelopment. In accordance with the Province’s cost-cutting agenda at the time, an artefact of a larger shift toward neoliberal policies in general (Keil, 2002, p. 588), many of its responsibilities were
restructured and/or transferred to other levels of government. With respect to the DVBW, when the province refused to provide its share of the funds for the site, thus stepping back from its responsibility towards flood control through urban green space acquisition, the obligation was relegated to East York. However, as mentioned, East York was a municipality that lacked the resources, which limited its ability to harmonize the city’s economic, social, and environmental demands.

If the DVBW site were rezoned, Torvalley’s development would improve the borough’s poor assessment and increase the tax base (Crann, 1986, p. 1). However, East York was conflicted about whether to support Torvalley’s redevelopment of the DVBW by changing the zoning of the land. In an article featured in The Globe and Mail, East York Mayor David Johnson denied that the rezoning of the DVBW for residential/commercial use was inevitable, however his quote within the article demonstrates the Mayor’s recognition of the complexity of the issue:

If we lived in a perfect world, (we would) see the ravines all green and see the flowers and trees and people having strolls. We live in a world that has realities, such as this development, and we have to deal fairly and objectively with the present owners [Torvalley]. (Gooderham, 1985, p. M7).

The Mayor’s statement implies that he considered Torvalley’s development as something of a necessary evil, and that the protection of the valley lands was an idealized outcome that was not a realistic option in the given situation. Overall, it appears that East York’s support of Torvalley’s development demonstrates that an increase in revenue through private development was prioritized over the protection of the valley lands.
4.2 Opposition to the Development

While the local government supported Torvalley’s development proposal because it promised economic benefits, the local ratepayers’ groups were not supportive of the plan because they felt the DVBW should become public conservation land as had been originally intended, and not be developed for private interests (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015; F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015; E. Freeman of FOV, March 17, 2015, personal communications). The first ratepayers’ group to oppose the development was the Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association (GBRA) in November 1984. The major concerns for this group were the creation of access roads into the surrounding communities (particularly on Pottery Road in Rosedale), increased traffic, noise, and a decrease in property values for homes in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Rosedale, Leaside, Governor’s Bridge, Moore Park, Thorncliffe, and Bennington heights (Stawicki, 1990, p. B5-B6; Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association, 1984; Gooderham, 1984, p. M4). At an executive meeting concerning Torvalley’s purchase of the site, the Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers decided that should property values in the area surrounding the DVBW fall as a result of the development, the GBRA would file a lawsuit against Torvalley (Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association, 1984). In order to protect its interests towards the public acquisition of the DVBW, the GBRA hired David Smith as their lawyer. Smith’s role in the DVBW story will be discussed in greater detail later in this section. Suffice to say that the GBRA were early entrants in the fight to redevelop the DVBW into green space rather than a mixed-use residential-commercial site, but others soon followed suit.

Once the news of Torvalley’s purchase and plans for the site became more public in the Fall of 1984, other ratepayers’ groups and residents of the community surrounding the DVBW began to speak out against the proposed development (Abbate, 1985, p. M7). One individual,
Frank Pasquill – voiced his opposition to Torvalley’s proposal at one of the public meetings, and subsequently formed the citizens’ group “Friends of the Valley” (FOV) as a response to the proposed development (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communication). The GBRA initially funded FOV, as the ratepayers and the citizens’ group shared the goal of acquiring the DVBW for public use in the form of a green space. However, the GBRA’s and FOV’s motivations towards their shared goal of public green space were slightly different. According to Jeffrey Smyth, the opposition adopted a “two-track strategy, one to represent local interests, and [a] second to represent the broader regional interests that were based on protecting the ravines and valleys from development” (September 21, 2016, personal communication). FOV was interested in the latter. The goal of this strategy was to achieve improved flood control and management - long-term Toronto objectives that had received increased emphasis in the wake after Hurricane Hazel. Although several groups opposed Torvalley’s plan, and the agendas of the groups overlapped in many ways, the groups operated separately from each other.

According to the information collected during interviews for this research, the first two members of FOV were Frank Pasquill and Jeffrey Smyth. Smyth had a personal interest in opposing the development: his home was (and still is) behind the DVBW, at the top of the north slope of the quarry, and the proposed development would have brought townhouses and a road up against the edge of his property (February 24, 2015, personal communication). In addition, Smyth said in interview that he was motivated by the ecological, geological, and social value he recognized the site had, and because he believed that the valley lands should be protected and held in public trust. Within FOV, Smyth represented the GBRA, and so his interests included both the local and broader regional motivations for the protection of the DVBW. Pasquill noted that at the time of these events, he was not a member of a ratepayers’ group; however, he became
involved in the issue at the request of his friend and co-worker, Jeffrey Smyth. Smyth had asked for his help in opposing the development because Pasquill had had previous experience with environmental activism. For his part, Pasquill shared in the broader motivations of protecting the valley lands, and his previous experience and passion for community activism and environmental protection led him to speak out and take a stand against Torvalley’s proposed development (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communication).

Once FOV had established its position on Torvalley’s proposal, Pasquill began to get in touch with other individuals and groups who shared their opinion on the development. Using his own personal connections, as well as suggestions from the prominent naturalist, Charles Sauriol, Pasquill assembled a group of people with interests and expertise that would help FOV achieve its goals (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communication). FOV operated as a discourse coalition, a type of political coalition made up of actors such as politicians, scientists, activists, or organizations that represent these types of actors unified by an approach to issue framing. They also typically have connections to media outlets such as television, newspapers and journals, or even to celebrities. These discourse coalitions develop and “sustain a particular discourse, a particular way of talking and thinking about environmental politics” and thus help to frame issues in the broader social imaginary (Hajer, as cited in Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 10). The groups that were represented among the first members of FOV were: ratepayers, horticulturalists, naturalists, potters, historians, architects, and geologists (The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department, 1987). The wide range of expertise the early members of FOV brought to the table allowed the group to take a more holistic approach to creating their vision for what the DVBW should become. The credentials of these members also provided the
group with connections to influential people within the various communities that each of these members came from (F. Pasquill, January 28, 2015).

### 4.3 FOV’s Efforts Toward Expropriation

FOV was a significant actor whose efforts were very influential toward the decision to expropriate the DVBW. The citizens’ group spent a lot of time, effort, and money to deploy a number of tactics that were effective in convincing the municipal and provincial governments that the DVBW site should be acquired from Torvalley and redeveloped into an urban green space. This section discusses the efforts that FOV made towards the expropriation of the site, including:

1) The creation and deployment of an alternative vision for the site;

2) Community fundraising;

3) The involvement of significant and influential people; and

4) Garnering of public support.

The efforts of FOV and their supporters are an important aspect of the DVBW story because they were a major source of political pressure on East York Council, Metro Toronto, and the Province of Ontario that contributed to the decision to expropriate the site. FOV’s efforts can be described as a form of civic environmentalism, that is, an “environmentalism is driven by a civil society-based activist culture” (Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 19). Civic environmentalism characterizes environmental activism in Toronto, and is an important part of the city’s political regime, which was guided by “reformist politicians, neighbourhood activists, and rate-payer leaders who swarmed city hall in the 1960’s and 1970’s (Molloy, as cited in Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 21). It is important to note that the urban regime in Toronto is strongly based in middle-class centred
politics. Indeed, in the cases of both the regeneration of the Don River and, as I demonstrate, the redevelopment of the DVBW, civic environmentalism had a tendency toward privileging elites (Desfor & Keil, 2004, p. 105). As will be demonstrated in the following section, this factor was conducive to FOV’s employment of the urban sustainability agenda that was emerging at the time and contributed to the group’s success in shaping the redevelopment of the DVBW.

**4.3.1 Creation and Deployment of a Vision**

In order to convince Metro Toronto and the province to expropriate the DVBW site from Torvalley, FOV and their supporters had to use various tactics to demonstrate the need for such an intervention. According to Pasquill (January 28, 2015), rather than simply voicing opposition to Torvalley’s development, FOV judged that it would be more effective to propose a better alternative that would get people excited about what could be done with the site if it were expropriated. Information provided by ten key informants, who had various roles in or relating to the FOV indicates that, although there were a number of ideas for what should happen on the site, there was a consensus among all of the key informants that the land needed to be publicly owned, and that it should become some sort of urban park. Smyth identified the main goal of FOV as being the following:

> This became the central part of our fight: that the zoning was for conservation, and if you were to allow some deviation from that, some modification, then it would open up all kinds of potential development on parkland and ravine… it became very important that there be a precedent set, that land which had been [grandparented] in the ravines would come back into public ownership (February 24, 2015, personal communication).

This objective guided FOV’s vision for what the DVBW should be, and is reflected in the group’s tactics toward the expropriation of the site.
One idea for the site that was being pushed by FOV was a botanical garden that resembled the Butchart Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication; The Globe and Mail, 1985b, p. M4). Butchart Gardens has been recognized in several media publications as one of the most beautiful gardens in the world, regularly wins international awards, was designated a National Historic Site in 2004, and is a major tourist draw to Victoria (Butchart Gardens, n.d.). Significantly, it is a former quarry, making it highly analogous to the DVBW. Bob Bundy of Metro Parks had a model created of the DVBW as a botanical garden, which FOV used to gain support for this vision of the site. In his interview, Smyth discussed presenting the model of the botanical garden to the community:

[Bob Bundy] lent that to us, and we went around, ratepayers groups and social groups, all kinds of people were interested in what the issue was. So I would go with this model from the Metro, and Torvalley would go and tell them how many high-rise buildings and so on they were going to put on the site, and I would come with our vision for the site. And that went on for several months (February 24, 2015, personal communication).

In this back-and-forth way, FOV presented their ideas for an alternative to Torvalley’s development, and gained supporters for their vision. Although opinions varied as to which aspects of the site should be emphasized, the main message that was consistently presented was that this site should not be turned into a mixed-use development, but instead should be a green space that would protect the natural, historical, and geological heritage of the Don Valley and the DVBW.

4.3.2 Community Fundraising

During his interview for this project, Smyth (February 24, 2015) recalled that when FOV first formed, the group sent a letter asking for a suggested $150 donation per household to go towards FOV’s expenses to all of the homes in the neighbourhood. According to Smyth, FOV received donations from 70% of the households that were contacted. These funds went towards
the initial costs of FOV’s efforts, such as advertising and legal representation. The high positive response rate to FOV’s community fundraising campaign indicates that the group enjoyed strong local support for their efforts to oppose Torvalley and use the DVBW site as a green space.

4.3.3 Involvement of Significant and Influential People

According to Pasquill (January 28, 2015, personal communication), FOV built a strong support system for their cause by connecting with other actors who would support the group’s efforts. Early on, FOV identified three aspects of the DVBW they deemed important to conserve – its natural, geologic, and cultural characteristics and history. As mentioned earlier, once FOV was created, Pasquill began contacting individuals from various interest groups - horticulturalists, naturalists, potters, historians, architects, and geologists – with the hopes that they would lend their support to saving the DVBW. This was a strategic move, as according to Pasquill, he chose to contact people who he believed shared in the “common vision” of the DVBW becoming a public green space with certain characteristics that should be protected (F. Pasquill of FOV, July 30, 2016, personal communication). In part as a result of Pasquill’s networking efforts, the members who made up FOV had different individual interests. According to David Stonehouse, who was the staff coordinator of the City of Toronto’s Task Force to Bring Back the Don and later worked for Evergreen (February 20, 2015, personal communication), the varied interests of FOV’s members all contributed to the goal of expropriating the site, and deploying the vision of a public space that would protect the three important criteria listed above. The group was intentionally made up of people who had an interest in preserving these aspects, and knowledge of how to achieve this (Eyles, 1985; McAndrews, 1985; Tovell, 1985; Karrow, 1985).
Another means by which FOV strengthened its cause was by garnering support from influential people. Because FOV itself had limited power to effect change in the community, attracting outside actors who themselves were either in positions of influence or could share access to important resources, leant the organization greater strength. These individuals provided money, political power, and connections to other actors and/or resources, and/or media attention to the cause. Further, these influential actors, and the resources they provided, contributed to the legitimacy of the FOVs argument against Torvalley’s proposed development. The influential actors FOV attracted became involved because they shared in the vision of the DVBW becoming an urban green space, and wished to lend their support to strengthening the opposition to Torvalley.

One notable person who supported FOV’s opposition of the Torvalley plan but was not a direct member of the group was Charles Sauriol, a well-respected conservationist, and the first chair of the MTRCA’s advisory board (McLean, 2004, p. 71). Sauriol did a lot of work toward the protection of public lands, particularly in the Don Valley, and was central in leading a protest to stop the construction of the Don Valley Parkway in the 1950’s. Through this work, he became very knowledgeable about the Don Valley, and had written a number of books about the natural history and significance of the area. Sauriol was very influential within the MTRCA, and his knowledge and recommendations were regarded highly by his peers. According to Smyth, although Sauriol’s busy schedule prevented him from becoming a formal member of FOV, he publicly supported FOV’s cause, and records indicate that he advised the group on the protection of the Don Valley (The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department, 1987). Sauriol’s experience, expertise, and support on the issue were intangible resources that
provided a major advantage for FOV (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015; F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communications).

FOV also gathered more tangible resources from outside actors. For example, the Weston family, who are prominent figures in the Canadian business world, and are particularly influential in Toronto, also opposed Torvalley’s development and wanted the DVBW site to be used as a green space (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication). In his interview, Smyth (February 24, 2015, personal communication) mentioned that the Weston family was a strong supporter of the MTRCA and its endeavours. The Westons likely provided credibility to the cause - an intangible benefit that surely attracted further support.

FOV’s connections to the Weston family also provided it with tangible resources in the form of advertising, and the use of spaces for events. In particular, Camilla Dalglish (August 27, 2015, personal communication), a member of FOV who represented the Toronto Botanical Gardens, is the daughter of W. Garfield Weston and at the time sat on the board of the W. Garfield Weston Foundation. Dalglish used her connections to access resources in order to help FOV gain more support. For instance, she persuaded her husband on occasion to substitute advertisements for FOV’s Valley Rallies (events that FOV held to garner public support) in the space that he purchased to advertise his furniture store in The Globe and Mail (J. Smyth of FOV, July 19, 2016, personal communication). In addition, Dalglish used her position as Chair of the Toronto Botanical Gardens to allow FOV to hold the Valley Rallies at Edwards Gardens, a large botanical garden located in North York in Toronto (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication). As will be discussed later, Dalglish was also able to attract a sizeable donation for the restoration of the DVBW from the W. Garfield
Weston Foundation. FOV rallied actors outside their core group of members, who had access to tangible and intangible resources, which increased the power it had, and/or generated further support, to fight Torvalley’s proposed plan for the DVBW redevelopment.

In addition, FOV was able to increase the reach of their influence through association with other outside actors. David Lewis Stein, an urban planner who was a columnist at the Toronto Star at the time of the events being discussed, also supported the groups that opposed Torvalley’s development. During the battle over the DVBW, he wrote a number of columns following the development of the story. His columns were always in support of FOV and the ratepayers’ struggle against Torvalley and its proposed redevelopment of the DVBW site, which he described in one such column as “one of the last wild and open places in all of Metro” (Stein, 1985, p. A6). Stein’s columns were “part of [FOV’s] media campaign to put public pressure on the Economic Development and Planning Committee to support the historic designation of the North Slope” (Crann, 1986, p. 21). This publicity in the Toronto Star, along with the support of a prominent columnist, served to bring more attention to FOV’s cause, and provided them with more public credibility.

FOV was also fortunate to be represented by a prominent Liberal lawyer, David Smith. Smith was a former Alderman on the Metro City Council, as well as a Liberal Member of Parliament (MP) in the early 1980’s (Library of Parliament, 2016). He returned to the practice of law with the firm Lyons Arbus around the time that the DVBW was sold to Torvalley, and decided to represent the Governor’s bridge Ratepayers and FOV as one of his community efforts (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication). David Smith’s many professional connections, especially within the Liberal Party of Ontario, would prove to be an asset for FOV in the battle over the DVBW, as will be discussed later in this chapter.
4.3.4 Garnering Public Support

Building on the identification and involvement of key stakeholders who shared a common vision, another important tactic was to gain as much public support and attention as possible. An effective way that FOV spread its message and got people’s attention was by holding two “Valley Rallies” on June 12 and 24, 1985 (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication; Crann, 1986, p. 19). At the Valley Rallies, FOV made presentations about its opposition to the development, as well as its ideas for what the site should be. As was mentioned, through Camilla Dalglish’s connections FOV was able to hold these events at Edward’s Gardens (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication).

In addition, FOV’s connections provided the opportunity to advertise the Valley Rallies in the Globe and Mail, a major Toronto newspaper (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24; F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, personal communications). This advertisement allowed the group to reach a larger audience, and hundreds of people from all over Toronto, and as far as Hamilton and Ajax, ended up attending (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication). The events were successful in raising awareness of FOV’s cause and getting people excited about it. By the second Valley Rally, which was about a month after FOV was formed, the group had over 1,000 people signed up who were passionate enough to help petition against the development (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communication; Stein, 1987, p. A13).

In order to ensure the successful deployment of their vision for the DVBW, FOV applied the idea of finding people with “common values” and extended it to the wider public. In his interview, Frank Pasquill states:
I was just kind of the organizing force behind everything else that kind of happened with the Friends and…getting the public on side through that process of finding interested people and so we obviously didn’t go after people who were interested in soccer fields. You had to be choosy (January 28, 2015, personal communication).

By gathering a group of people who were interested in seeing the DVBW become a public green space, FOV could attract public supporters who also identified with their “common vision” (F. Pasquill, January 28, 2015, personal communication). This strengthened FOV’s position and provided them with the ability to apply pressure to the politicians in order to sway decisions in a favourable direction. As Camilla Dalglish put it in her interview, “[the politicians] couldn’t ignore the voice of so many people” (August 27, 2015, personal communication).

4.4 Political Factors that Influenced Expropriation

In the year before the decision to expropriate the DVBW was finalized, a number of important political changes and decisions occurred, particularly at the provincial level. These political factors were instrumental in determining what the DVBW would become. However, the political context that affected the DVBW expropriation and redevelopment is inextricably linked to the concurrent socio-economic and environmental contexts that likewise surrounded the events. This section discusses the politics that influenced the expropriation of the DVBW, which led to the reproduction of the site into an urban green space.

The decisions made at the provincial level by various actors had direct impacts on the urban processes that contributed to the production of this space. As mentioned previously, it was the provincial government that failed to put up its half of the money for the purchase of the site when it was first being sold by UCL in 1983. The Province’s refusal to pay its required share of the sale opened the door for Torvalley to purchase the site (Stein, 1987, p. A13). Stawicki (1990,
p. B5) reports that by 1985 the Conservative government had realized that it had made a mistake in not purchasing the DVBW property when they had the chance, and by allowing it to be sold to a developer. When Torvalley purchased the DVBW site, the Conservative party had been in power in Ontario for 42 years, from 1943-1985 (McDonald, 2005, p. 33). In 1985, Bill Davis stepped down from his post as Premier, and his fellow party member Frank Miller filled his position. During my follow-up interview with him, Smyth (July 19, 2016, personal communication) recalled speaking on the phone with Bob Elgie, a cabinet minister in the provincial government who was from East York, and receiving the news that the provincial government had decided to expropriate the DVBW site. According to Smyth, Elgie promised that the DVBW would be a main issue on the Conservative’s platform in the upcoming provincial election. Smyth and Pasquill both noted during their interviews that the Conservatives’ recognition of the value of the site, and intent to expropriate it, felt like a victory for FOV and the others who opposed Torvalley’s development.

FOV also used political maneuvering to maximize their effective power against Torvalley and its supporters, who were interested in exploiting the DVBW for commercial purposes. In the May 1985 election, Miller’s Conservative government won, but the party lost some of the popular vote that had been held by Davis from the previous election, and they held power by only a small margin (McDonald, 2005, p. 34). The decrease in Conservative seats allowed the Liberals to take power, based on an agreement by the NDP to support the governing Liberals in exchange for cooperation on specific issues, which ended the Conservative’s long reign in the province (McDonald, 2005, p. 34). Fortunately for FOV, the new government was determined to gain the support of voters (Stein, 1987, p. A13). According to Pasquill, FOV had pledged their support to the Liberals and NDP during the election in exchange for promised funding for the
province’s 50% of the expropriation costs (January 28, 2015, personal communication). Ian Scott, who was a cabinet minister in the Liberal government at the time, and also happened to be from Rosedale, agreed to push the issue of the expropriation on the Liberal agenda (The Globe and Mail, 1985b, p. M4). Once the Liberals took power, Ian Scott pushed to have the DVBW site designated an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) by the Province of Ontario (Crann, 1986, p. 20). By backing the minority Liberal and NDP parties, FOV was able to gain leverage with them when the parties acquired power.

The shift in political power at the provincial level also impacted the power relations from a legal perspective. On one hand, Torvalley was represented by a lawyer called Allen Libel of Goodman & Goodman (Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association, 1984), the law firm one key informant identified as having “the best Conservative ties in all of Ontario” at the time (G. Crann, former East York alderman, February 19, 2015, personal communication). When the Conservatives had been in power, these connections had been an advantage for Torvalley, as they increased the company’s chances of having the land rezoned to allow for redevelopment of the site. However, when the Liberal party took power under the Liberal-NDP alliance in 1985, the political atmosphere was reversed. Crann said in interview for this research that this turnaround meant that Torvalley’s legal representation no longer held strong connections to the provincial government, which made it less likely that the rezoning of the DVBW site to a commercial zone would happen. On the other hand, since the well-connected Liberal lawyer David Smith represented FOV, the politics behind any legal decisions were now in their favour. By having support from and connections to the political party that was in power at the provincial scale, FOV had stronger influence over the urban processes that would determine how the DVBW would be produced.
4.5 Historic Designation of the North Slope

The unique completeness of the sediments that constitute the DVBW’s North Slope makes it an extremely important geological feature for education and research (Freeman, 1984). When members of the geological community heard that the North Slope was in danger of being destroyed, as would have been the case with Torvalley’s development, they voiced their concern and provided support to FOV’s cause. A number of renowned geologists from the University of Toronto, York University, the University of Waterloo, as well as from the International Union for Quaternary Research, the Canadian Quaternary Association, and the American Quaternary Association spoke out and wrote letters to East York and Metro Toronto explaining the significance of the North Slope and the detrimental impacts that the loss of this feature would have on not only the geological community, but on our knowledge of Ontario’s environmental and climate history (Eyles, 1984; McAndrews, 1985; Churcher, 1985; Rutter, 1985; Mahaney, 1985; Pewe, 1985).

In an effort to protect the North Slope, in May 1985, Louise Herzberg of FOV proposed the idea of having it designated as a heritage site (Crann, 1986, p. 20). As a member of the East York Historical and Art Board, she was able to gain support for her idea and the board agreed to refer it to the sub-committee that was responsible for the designations. If the designation went through, this would be the first time in Ontario that a landform would be designated a historic site rather than a building. According to Pasquill (January 28, 2015, personal communication), East York council was hesitant to pass the motion at the August 12, 1985 meeting, as it was unclear whether the Liberal government would move forward with public acquisition of the site: an historic designation of the North Slope would mean that it was protected from development, which would pose problems for Torvalley’s operations. Since East York was supportive of the
development, it did not want to jeopardize it by making a portion of the site off-limits. Instead of making a decision on the matter on August 12, East York Council referred the proponents of the historic designation to the Economic Development and Planning Committee in a month’s time (Crann, 1986, p. 21).

Two things happened prior to the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting set to take place on September 9, 1985 that pushed the outcome of the struggle over the North Slope in favour of designating it a heritage site. First, Torvalley had agreed not to touch the North Slope until September 1985, which gave the opposition more time to fight for its protection. Second, on September 7, 1985 the Province officially announced that it would put up its half of the funds to acquire the property if it were to be expropriated (Crann, 1986, p. 21; Globe and Mail, 1985b, p. M4). At the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting, there was an incredible amount of support for the designation from the geological community. Local geologists were present to explain why the North Slope was so important, and they presented letters from geologists around the world who also supported the historic designation (Crann, 1986, p. 21). The geologists argued that its destruction would have significant negative geologic and educational impacts. Their arguments proved to be convincing to the council.

The final factor that pushed the council to agree to the designation was a comment made by the vice-president of Torvalley, Richard Weldon, on September 17, 1985 at the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting. When asked by Mayor David Johnson to clarify to the council that the North Slope would remain untouched even if a decision was not reached that evening, Weldon replied that Torvalley had given the council more than enough time to make a decision, and that “as far as [he] was concerned the bulldozers would start grading the
North Slope in the morning” (Crann, 1986, p. 22). This revelation was shocking to everyone present, and the in the end, the council voted in favour of a municipal historical designation. In addition, the council voted to request that the Minister of Citizenship and Culture, Lily Munro, designate the North Slope as a provincial heritage site as well. That night, Lily Munro happened to be attending a party at the home of the Liberal M.P.P., Ian Scott, and when she heard about the day’s events, she agreed to move forward with the designation right away. The next day, the provincial government issued a 180-day stop-work order on the North Slope to prevent it from being destroyed by Torvalley (Peterson, 1985).

The geological significance and designation of the North Slope as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) were the final push toward the successful expropriation of the DVBW site. This designation would protect the North Slope for 99 years following the expiration of the stop-work order (The Corporation of the Borough of East York, 1992). Without the designation, Torvalley would have been able to continue their operations on the site, and the North Slope would have likely been destroyed. In addition to the other factors involved in the expropriation of the DVBW, such as FOVs framing of the site as an important historic and cultural site, and their mobilization of key actors and resources, the historical designation of this important geological feature also moved the process along much more quickly.

4.6 The Expropriation

The political pressure that was being placed on the province and Metro Toronto by FOV, the ratepayers’ groups, and their supporters, was strong enough to make the government bodies reconsider their decision to not purchase the DVBW property. In combination, the increasing pressure for the public acquisition of the DVBW, the successful historic designation of the North
Slope, and the fact that the site was no longer for sale, made it clear that the site would likely have to be expropriated soon (Gooderham, 1985b; The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, 1985). On June 11, 1985, the Ontario government announced that it would support the public acquisition of the DVBW (Ministry of Natural Resources, 1985). Another factor that contributed to the expropriation of the site was the approval in October 1985, by the Province and Metro Toronto, of a $48 million valley land acquisition project. This money was set aside for the purchase of a number of important valley lands, including the DVBW (McLean, 2004, p. 208; The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, 1985).

Now that the funds required were available, the MTRCA could attempt to acquire the DVBW (Fitterer, 1985, p. A1). However, because the MTRCA had formally agreed with Torvalley’s request for a permit to fill the quarry, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) believed that this meant the MTRCA was supportive of Torvalley’s development (McLean, 2004, p. 209; Stawicki, 1990, p. B6). As a result, the MTRCA would need Metro Council’s approval to expropriate the property. In November 1985, Metro Council gave the MTRCA the power to expropriate, and on December 15, 1985, the MTRCA officially delivered to Torvalley their intention to expropriate the site (McLean, 2004, p. 209).

Once the MTRCA moved to expropriate the DVBW site, a series of hearings had to occur before the OMB so that it could determine whether the DVBW could be expropriated by the MTRCA. The hearings before the OMB for the expropriation of the DVBW were lengthy, but the expropriation became final on February 20, 1987 (McLean, 2004, p. 210). The reason that these hearings were such a complicated process was because the OMB had to determine the amount of compensation that Torvalley should be given for the site. Because Torvalley’s development proposals had been approved prior to the expropriation, there was an expected
amount of revenue that would have been generated from their development (Stawicki, 1990, p. B5). For this reason, Torvalley was awarded $19 million in compensation for the loss of the property, which grew to $22 million with interest and legal fees, and this sum came from the $48 million land acquisition fund. The remainder of the valley land acquisition funds went towards the acquisition of the other industrial sites in the Don River Valley and watershed, including Domtar and Bates Chemical, as well as several properties in the Humber River watershed, lands on the Rouge River, and the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital site (McLean, 1989).

4.7 After Expropriation

According to a TRCA employee with knowledge on the matter that was interviewed for this research (February 25, 2015), after the DVBW was successfully expropriated, the MTRCA became the official owner and regulator of the property, a role that it still fulfills. This means that it is responsible for emergency planning and in particular evacuation plans in the event of flooding. In addition, Garth Armour (February 9, 2015, personal communication) of Toronto Parks indicated during our interview that although the MTRCA became the owner of the property, Metro Parks became the authority’s co-partner, and has actively managed the site since it was expropriated. This distribution of responsibilities means that Metro Parks had the lead role in the restoration and redevelopment of the DVBW.
Since the municipal and provincial governments ended up paying nearly $18 million more for the DVBW site in 1987 than they would have in 1983, additional funding that could be used for the redevelopment of the site was limited. As a result, initial restoration work focused only on the quarry and surrounding lands, leaving the buildings (known as the industrial pad) untouched until more money could be found (Hough Stansbury Woodland Limited, 1989). Initial funding for the restoration of the site came from a JobsOntario grant of $5 million, as well as private donations from various benefactors, such as the W. Garfield Weston Foundation and the Eaton Foundation (TRCA employee, February 25, 2015, personal communication). The W. Garfield Weston Foundation provided a charitable donation of $843,334 between 1994 and 1997 to go towards the rejuvenation of the quarry lands on the site (MTRCA, 1997). In honour of the
Weston family’s donation, the park portion of the DVBW is called the Weston Quarry Garden (King, 1996, p. 12). The Foundation donated another $620,000 between 2010 and 2015, bringing its total donation to the quarry garden to $1,463,334 (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication).

The initial work that was done on the site was focused mainly on what is now the Weston Quarry Garden, and consisted of wetland restoration. Informants for this research with various knowledge of the restoration indicated that this work involved the rechanneling of Mud Creek, which originally flowed from Downsview Airport in the centre-north of Toronto, and flowed south-east to reach the Don River at the Don Valley Brick Works, but had long been covered by construction (Lost Rivers, n.d.), back into the site. As well, the work included the planting of a wildflower meadow, removal of invasive species, and signage (D. Stonehouse of Evergreen, February 20, 2015; TRCA employee, February 25, 2015; G. Armour of Toronto Parks, February 9, 2015, personal communications).

The amalgamation of Metro Toronto with its six constituent municipalities – East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, and the old City of Toronto – into the City of Toronto (the City) in 1998 delayed the redevelopment of the DVBW (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015; F. Pasquill of FOV, January 24, 2015; TRCA employee, February 25, 2015, personal communications). Since Metropolitan Toronto was no longer in existence, the properties that it managed and owned were left “orphaned” after amalgamation (J. Smyth, February 24, 2015, personal communication). These properties included the Guild Inn, the Roundhouse, and the DVBW. For a few years, the DVBW sat idle and was primarily used by squatters, for lodging, and ‘ravers’, for illegal and illicit parties (Chapman, 2010, p. 56). In 2003, once the City had dealt with some of the internal issues that resulted from amalgamation, it appointed Glenn
Garwood, from its culture department, to get rid of the “orphaned” properties that were considered corporate liabilities (O’Neill, 2006, p. 1). The City did not want to spend money on the redevelopment of the industrial pad at the DVBW, but also did not want the derelict buildings to continue to be used by squatters and ravers, so it decided to commission the redevelopment of the buildings to an outside source (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication; Chapman, 2010, p. 56).

In 2004, the City accepted a proposal submitted by a non-profit organization called Evergreen to redevelop the buildings into an environmental community centre (Adler, 2005, p. 3). Evergreen signed a lease for the 10-acre industrial pad with the TRCA and the City that would expire in 21 years (O’Neill, 2006, p. 1). Construction on buildings began in 2008 and was completed in 2010; however, improvements are still ongoing (D. Stonehouse of Evergreen, February 20, 2015, personal communication). In the years since taking over the industrial pad, Evergreen has revitalized many of the buildings, which are now used for office space, environmental education programming, event space, a café, a store, a community bike shop, and a farmer’s market (Evergreen, 2016c). Today, the DVBW is owned and operated by the TRCA and Toronto Parks, who maintain the 30-acre quarry garden, and Evergreen, who leases and maintains the 10-acre industrial pad.

4.8 Summary

As it exists today, the DVBW is the product of various intersecting political, economic and cultural processes that involved numerous actors with varying agendas. This chapter has provided insight into the socio-political and economic context that led to the DVBW’s purchase by a private development company, and how changes to this context led to a shift in urban
processes that were conducive to the expropriation of the site and its subsequent redevelopment into an urban green space. Through a presentation of the chronology of the DVBW, this chapter has identified the key actors in the site’s redevelopment, and has demonstrated how and why these actors were able to access and utilize particular resources that influenced the expropriation of the DVBW. The following chapter further engages with this chronology to provide discussion of the factors that I have identified as being instrumental towards the production of the DVBW as an urban green space.
Chapter 5
Discussion

In this chapter, I provide a discussion and interpretation of the DVBW redevelopment in light of my research objectives. Through the interpretation and discussion of the findings, this chapter answers the research questions that were posed for this thesis, which are:

1) What combination of social, political, and economic forces contributed to the production of the Don Valley Brick Works site as it exists today?
2) Who were the actors involved in crafting the vision and sustainability agenda that ultimately led to the production of this space?
3) What social, political, and economic means did the actors use to deploy the particular vision that they crafted?
4) How did the production of this site contribute to the unevenness of the urban landscape in Toronto?

These research questions are addressed through the discussion of factors that this study has identified as being instrumental towards the production of the DVBW, which are:

1) Political pressure from influential actors;
2) A general change in sensibilities involving a shift toward post-industrial urban metabolisms fueling a sustainability agenda as a response to urban environmental problems; and
3) Neoliberal restructuring of urban governance that cut provincial funding for environmental projects and increasingly devolved environmental responsibilities to the municipal level.
Throughout this chapter, I draw upon the three theoretical frameworks that were discussed in the literature review – the production of nature, production of space, and UPE – in order to interpret the data collected throughout the research process. The articulation of the findings through this literature will help to demonstrate how we understand production in an urban context. This understanding is achieved through the examination of the social and political origins and implications of environmental change, emphasizing the relationship between environmental transformation and social differentiation.

5.1 Political Pressure From Influential Actors

A major factor that contributed to the expropriation of the DVBW, and thus its production into an urban green space, is the political pressure exerted by various influential actors. Foster (2005) argues that the DVBW site was shaped according to “the particular ideals and preferences of the neighbouring elite community” (p. 331). As was mentioned in the introduction, I do not disagree with Foster on this point – in fact, my own findings demonstrate that elite actors played a significant role in a contested process of producing nature at the DVBW. However, it is important to recognize that these actors did not construct the circumstances within which they operated, but rather mobilized based on the resources that they were able to access within their particular context. In this section, I begin by presenting support for Foster’s argument found through my own research, then move beyond this argument by adding to the existing accounts presented by Foster. Drawing upon the findings I collected in my document analysis and semi-structured interviews, I demonstrate that the political pressure that was applied by the various actors was multifaceted, and extends beyond the mere influence of elites in the neighbouring community.
5.1.1 NIMBYism and Beyond: The Goals of the Opposition Groups

Consistent with Foster’s (2005) main argument, my findings show that a NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) agenda was the primary motivation for the opposition to Torvalley’s development. NIMBYism is the assertion that residents oppose developments simply because they are close to their living spaces, and are therefore guided by a self-serving agenda driven by a desire to protect property values and/or their quality of life (Feldman & Turner, 2014, p. 105). Indeed, the first groups to oppose the development were the local ratepayers’ groups, particularly the GBRA, which was concerned about increased traffic and noise in their constituents’ community, as well as protecting their property values (Governor’s Bridge Ratepayers Association, 1984). These people would have been directly affected by the development, and felt that it would be an undesirable addition to the landscape of their community (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication). Rather than having a mixture of condominiums, townhouses, and low-rise residences in the middle of the valley, the local residents preferred for the DVBW site to be used for conservation purposes, as was originally planned.

When FOV formed and became the dominant voice for the public acquisition of the DVBW, it adopted a much broader argument against Torvalley’s proposed development. The members of FOV recognized that the site and surrounding valley lands had significant ecological, geological, and heritage features that were an important part of the valley system of Toronto. The protection of this system became the main goal of FOV, and by separating themselves from the NIMBY agenda the group was able to gain support from many different people from all over Toronto (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015; J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communications). Although FOV still worked with the ratepayers groups and
valued their interest in the matter, the citizens’ group was concerned with the wider context of the valley lands that extended beyond the DVBW.

Foster (2005) fails to make the distinction between the NIMBY interest of the ratepayers’ groups and the broader ecological goals of FOV, and incorrectly refers to FOV as a “ratepayers’ group” (p. 341). Although FOV was funded by the GBRA, and its vice-president was a member of the GBRA, it is important to differentiate the agendas and tactics of the two groups. According to Smyth, the local residents decided early on that a NIMBY angle would be an unsuccessful tactic, and they felt that such an approach was not representative of the real issue, which was the protection of the valley system (February 24, 2015, personal communication). This clarification of the approach taken by FOV and its supporters is essential toward understanding how and why the political pressure exerted by these actors contributed to the production of the DVBW as an urban green space.

5.1.2 Access to Political Resources

Political pressure by one set of elites was also exerted by their access to various resources that strengthened this group’s influence over political decision-making, such as direct connections to capitalists and other influential actors. According to Frank Pasquill: “quite frankly the reason why this site got saved was because it’s right next to Rosedale and Governor’s Bridge. It’s pretty simple. There are some very wealthy, influential people who could help us out” (January 28, 2015, personal communication). Pasquill’s quote sheds light on one of the important stimuli guiding the redevelopment of the DVBW. The public support of individuals and groups such as the Weston Family, Charles Sauriol, David Lewis Stein, and David Smith brought credibility and attention to FOV’s cause, indicating to politicians that this was an important issue to a powerful portion of the citizenry.
Another political resource accessed by FOV was the financial support from the surrounding neighbourhoods (namely Rosedale and Governor’s Bridge), in the form of a donation campaign undertaken by FOV shortly after the group was formed that provided funds from local households to be put towards advertising and legal fees for FOV (J. Smyth of FOV, February 24, 2015, personal communication). The success of this small donation campaign is owed to the fact that the residents of the neighbourhood surrounding the DVBW are quite affluent, and they were willing and able to support FOV’s agenda. These initial donations were greatly helpful toward FOV’s efforts, not only through financial support, but also through political support from the wealthy residents who contributed to the political sway in favour of the site’s expropriation. This is an important example of a way by which the socio-economic status of a community contributes to higher access to environmental services and resources.

The success of FOV in accessing these political resources demonstrates the unevenness of urban environments and urban change. According to Heynen et al. (2005), the underlying political, economic, and cultural processes associated with the production of urban landscapes also shape socio-ecological outcomes within the city. Specifically, class, gender, ethnicity, or other power struggles are tied up with environmental transformations. Heynen et al. (2005) state: “these metabolisms produce socio-environmental conditions that are both enabling, for powerful individuals and groups, and disabling, for marginalized individuals and groups. These processes precisely produce positions of empowerment and disempowerment” (p. 10). As is reflected in the DVBW case, more affluent residents tend to have better access to improved environmental quality and amenities and also play a role disproportionate to their numbers in shaping urban policy. FOV’s position of empowerment thus enabled the group to access particular political resources that contributed to the pressure it could place on people in charge of decision-making.
5.1.3 Political Climate

The decisions made at the municipal and provincial government levels were instrumental in determining what the DVBW would become; however, the political is ultimately linked to a network of socio-economic and environmental factors. The political pressure exerted by FOV and its supporters had a powerful impact on the political decisions pertaining to the production of the DVBW. This subsection explores the political climate at the time leading up to and during the expropriation of the DVBW. In particular, I discuss the relationship between the political sphere, socio-economic, and environmental factors and how they intertwine and influence each other in dynamic ways.

As was discussed in the chronology chapter, the reason that the MTRCA was unable to purchase the DVBW when it was first put up for sale in 1983 was the provincial government’s reluctance to provide its half of the funding (Stein, 1987, p. A13). This reflects the increasing transfer of environmental responsibilities to sub-national levels of government, or ‘downloading’, particularly to the municipal level, which is characteristic of many advanced capitalist economies in recent decades (While et al., 2004, p. 549). This neoliberal restructuring of urban governance often results in “struggles over land-use, the environment, open space, and the quality of life” (While et al., 2004, p. 553) in suburban and urban areas. This was certainly exhibited in the case of the DVBW, as the relegation of environmental protection to a municipality that did not have the financial resources to purchase the property led to a lengthy and expensive battle over this contested space.

Since the money from the provincial government was required for the purchase of the DVBW, it ultimately held the power to expropriate the land from Torvalley. For this reason, FOV found it important to place political pressure on the provincial government. Through the
use of the tactics described in the previous section, which are: 1.) the creation and deployment of a vision; 2.) community fundraising; 3.) the involvement of influential actors; and 4.) the garnering of support from the public, FOV made it clear that the public acquisition of the DVBW was important to a considerable number of people.

The efforts of FOV captured the provincial government’s attention because it was concerned with appeasing voters. The Conservatives who had held power for nearly 43 years were losing popularity since their “most beloved leader”, Bill Davis, retired shortly before the May 1985 election and was replaced by Frank Miller (McDonald, 2005, p. 33). FOV took advantage of this opportunity by promising votes not only to the Conservatives, but also to the Liberal and NDP parties (F. Pasquill of FOV, July 30, 2016, personal communication). In part by these means, the citizens’ group was able to gain the support of the provincial government regardless of which party won. This tactic proved to be successful, as the Conservative government announced that it would expropriate the site from Torvalley if re-elected (Stawicki, 1990, p. B5). The Conservatives were ousted by the Liberal-NDP accord, and FOV was unsure whether this new government would commit to the public acquisition of the site as the Conservatives had (The Globe and Mail, 1984, p. M4). According to McDonald (2005), minority governments tend to be unstable, and the Liberal-NDP accord “only had a shelf life of two years” (p. 34). This made the new government “eager to please voters” (Stein, 1987, p. A13), and so it chose to focus on issues that were important to a large number of people. Shortly after the election in May, the provincial government agreed to provide the necessary funding for the purchase of the DVBW (Gooderham, 1985b). The tactics employed by FOV and the support the group received demonstrated to the politicians that the public acquisition of the DVBW was important to many Torontonians.
In this section, I have supported Foster’s argument that elitism is a significant factor in the production of the DVBW. However, I have demonstrated that this contested process of producing nature is much more complicated than Foster describes. An understanding of the motivations of the actors and the resources that they were able to access provides a more comprehensive conception of who produces nature, how they produce it, and why. In the following section, I provide further discussion of the context within which these actors operated, and focus on their identification of particular values that were important to Torontonians in order to deploy a vision of sustainability for the site.

5.2 Changing Sensibilities

Another contextual factor that contributed to the production of the DVBW into an urban green space was a general change in sensibilities involving a shift toward post-industrial urban metabolisms fueling a sustainability agenda as a response to urban environmental problems. Specifically, the economic and cultural value ascribed to the site shifted from one animated by the appropriation of raw materials to an aesthetic value in line with emerging sensibilities about sustainable cities in general terms, but also in line with the enhancement of residential property values in adjoining areas. In addition, the production and retention of spaces of conservation was motivated primarily by flood control within the city boundaries, as a response to the contradictions of a prior metabolism of urbanization that enhanced the risk of catastrophic flooding. It is within this context that the key actors mobilized and drew on particular resources in order to effect the expropriation of the DVBW.

Foster makes the argument that the interests of the ratepayers guided the movement for the expropriation of the DVBW. She writes: “while numerous plausible problems were identified as bases of resistance to the proposed Torvalley housing development, it is important to remember
that these were mounted by a modified elite ratepayers’ group whose primary concerns are property interests” (Foster, 2005, p. 348). Although I agree with Foster in her assertion that elite interests were strongly represented in the struggle for the public acquisition of the DVBW, I am critical of her categorization of the entire opposition to Torvalley’s development as “ratepayers”. Foster also mentions that FOV was applauded for having ‘provided’ nature for the city, which I regard as a valid criticism. In the following section, I discuss the ways that FOV’s employment of a broader sustainability agenda was instrumental towards the expropriation of the DVBW. By exploring the nuances of the group’s approach, I demonstrate that its motivations for opposing Torvalley’s housing development are more complex than the desire to protect property values, but also drew on ideological and discursive resources and context that were not solely or even primarily of the group’s authorship.

5.2.1 Identification of Social Values

The social value of a space refers to non-economic values that a particular place holds for humans, including: ecological, scenic, recreation, and resource protection values (Kline et al., 2004, p. 39). According to Smith (2008), the relationship people have with nature under capitalism is determined by the ascription of social value that is based on abstract logic (p. 70). In the case of the DVBW, the meaning that was given to the site by actors who had particular investments in this space contributed to its production within a capitalist system. Specifically, FOV demonstrated that the social values that the site offered – in particular, the geological, historical, and ecological benefits that it provided – were more desirable to Torontonians than the luxury mixed-use residential-commercial development that Torvalley was proposing.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the groups that were most invested in the public acquisition of the DVBW - FOV, the MTRCA, and Metro Parks — identified three objectives
that they wanted to see preserved and enhanced on the site: 1.) ecological restoration; 2.) geological preservation; and 3.) industrial heritage (G. Armour of Toronto Parks, February 9, 2015, personal communication). These objectives reflected the social values that the groups ascribed to the site and aligned with the vision of urban sustainability policy agenda that was emerging in Toronto in the late 1980’s. These objectives were presented to the public as the goals that should guide the redevelopment of the DVBW.

One of the first things that FOV did to gain support for their cause was to create a vision of what the DVBW should be and “sell” this vision to the public. In order to do this, it was important that the members of FOV share a “common vision”, “common values”, and that they were “committed people” (F. Pasquill of FOV, January 28, 2015, personal communication). As Pasquill describes, the people that he sought out to become involved in FOV were people who ascribed the same meaning to this space, and thus shared in this “common vision”. Pasquill also recalls that in the beginning, there were a number of competing interests for what the site should be. An example of a suggestion that was presented was to turn the site into a soccer field, however FOV wanted to “maintain [the site’s] naturalness” and so distanced itself from such proposals. Pasquill emphasizes that the goal was to find interested people who shared in the common vision of a public green space, and states: “we didn’t obviously go after people who were interested in soccer fields. You had to be choosy” January 28, 2015, personal communication). This exclusion of other interests ensured that the social values identified by FOV, the MTRCA, and Metro Parks would define what the DVBW should become and the relationship that the public should have with the site.

In her article, Foster discusses the notion of cultural imperialism that is presented by Iris Marion Young (1990) in her book Justice and the Politics of Difference. Cultural imperialism
occurs when dominant social perspectives are ‘naturalized’ and presented as the public’s best interests, resulting in the neglect or underrepresentation of other perspectives (Young, 1990, pp. 58-59). Foster asserts that FOV had a lot of control over the planning and design of the DVBW after it was expropriated and taken over by the MTRCA and Metro Parks (2005, p. 344). Based on my findings, it is clear that FOV was very influential toward the production of the site, both theoretically and physically, from the very beginning of the struggle for its public acquisition. This relates to Young’s (1990) notion of cultural imperialism, as FOV’s vision became the dominant perspective for the reproduction of the DVBW. This was accomplished through FOV’s community organizing, activism, and the garnering of support from influential individuals and interest groups whose values aligned with FOV’s vision for the site. However, it is also important to recognize that these key actors operated within a particular context that was conducive to their cause, and that they had access to various resources that contributed to the success of the deployment of their vision for the site.

5.2.2 Fueling of a Sustainability Agenda

As was discussed in the introduction, the movement for the public acquisition of the DVBW was driven by, and was also a part of, an emerging policy agenda and discourse coalition surrounding urban sustainability in Toronto. However, this local agenda was connected more broadly to a vision of sustainable development inspired in significant measure by the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Sustainability in 1987. The struggle surrounding the DVBW coincided with the “second wave” of environmental activism in Ontario, and more broadly in Canada (O’Connor, 2014, p. 153). Based on national polls, the environment was identified as being the top priority by Canadians during the mid to late 1980’s (Harrison, 1996, pp. 117-118). This increase in the consciousness of environmental problems was a revival of the late 1960’s
environmental movement in Canada, which was characterized by an upsurge in the creation of environmental activist groups such as Pollution Probe, which focused its efforts on reducing urban pollution (O’Connor, 2014, p. p.3). This development of environmental awareness and activism was a response to the negative impacts associated with urbanization. According to While et al. (2004):

> By the mid-nineteenth century the growth of the industrial city - itself founded on the production of nature as a resource - was soon accompanied by growing concerns about the environmental and social costs arising from urban industrialization, albeit that reformist political responses were strongly mediated by class attitudes and professional status. (p. 553, citing Mumford, 1961).

This context of increased environmental activism was a major factor in the successful expropriation of the DVBW and its subsequent redevelopment into an urban park. Sustainable development initiatives as a response to environmental problems associated with urbanization, particularly in the context of watersheds, were the focus of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront (Crombie, 1992). This Commission was responsible for shaping and advancing sustainability in Toronto’s environmental policy discourse. The success of the deployment of FOV’s vision for the DVBW is related to its compatibility with the environmental sensibilities that were dominant among the public at this time.

Apart from the emphasis of the various social values of the DVBW discussed in the previous section, FOV also constructed a vision of sustainability for the site. As was mentioned in the chronology chapter, the consensus among FOV members was that the site should first and foremost be an ecologically restored green space. The main concern for the DVBW was that its ecological value would be lost if it were to be redeveloped for residential-commercial use. Smyth expressed this concern in his interview:

> There are precedents and policies and public use of public land, all of these issues are very important, and for a city like Toronto, which is growing so fast, it’s crucial to retain green space where people can come and enjoy wilderness in the middle of the city. It’s
really important. If we’d have allowed it all to be built, where would people go? Where would they walk their dogs? Where would they…where would the deer come? We have deer in the garden at the back here. And the birds come across the lake in the spring, and they settle in this area, feed before they go on up north to build nests. This is really very much part of the natural environment here, and you have to protect that stuff. Developers are not famous for doing that. (February 24, 2015, personal communication).

Smyth’s sentiment evokes a sense of nostalgia and desire to protect what is “natural”. He also identifies “developers” as being the common enemy of FOV, which also reflects the concern over urbanization as being harmful to the “natural” environment discussed by While et al. (2004, p. 553). These concerns emphasize the separation of nature and society, and posit private development for economic gain as the antithesis to the preservation of nature.

The construction of the DVBW as a “natural” space by FOV and its supporters demonstrates the contradictory discourse of the popular sustainability agenda. Synonymous with Smyth’s quote above, every key informant interviewed for this project made reference to protecting the “nature” of the site in some way. In addition, the responses of the informants suggest that they define “nature” as something that is devoid of human development. Ironically, the same informants expressed a desire to bring “nature” back to the site using human intervention. This contradiction is apparent in Pasquill’s discussion of the channelization of Mud Creek onto the site, which occurred during early restoration:

That was one of the struggles we had, but as soon as we got that one, the upside of putting the water through that site was that it created a natural beauty. The birds are now coming in because of the bulrushes, and the trees are growing bigger and bigger, and there’s wildlife going through there. It was a big deal. The water feature of the site is one of the nicest features. But that wasn’t there. It was not there. That’s…we made, we put it there (January 28, 2015, personal communication).

Throughout my interviews for this project, it became clear that the informants regarded the site as simultaneously “natural” in its own right, and deserving of protection, but also as a post-industrial site that required a significant amount of work on the part of humans – themselves - in
order for it to be considered a park.

This demonstrates a problem associated with “sustainability” approaches. The problem stems from our ambiguous definitions of nature. Our views of nature range between the peaceful and harmonious to the chaotic and dangerous (Swyngedouw, 2007, p. 18). Thus, we are unable to decide whether we want to manage nature using methods of ecological modernization such as science and engineering, or to leave nature to find its own equilibrium. The issue with this is that our definitions of “sustainability” and “nature” itself become ambiguous as well, allowing “actors from various backgrounds to proceed without agreeing on a single action” (Krueger & Gibbs, 2007, p. 5). Another problem associated with urban sustainability is that it tends to result in the accumulation of environmental benefits in middle-class communities rather than surrounding lower-income neighbourhoods. In addition, sustainability is often conflated with ecology, and as a result, the particularities of socio-economic processes that contribute to undesirable forms of environmental change can be downplayed or overlooked (Jonas & While, 2007, p. 125). Some of these issues are evident in the case of the DVBW, as the movement was guided by relatively elite, affluent actors who reaped the environmental benefits of having the value of their homes increased by virtue of proximity to a new urban green space.

This contradiction is prevalent in both urban studies and environmental studies, as historically urban areas have been posited as opposite to “natural” areas. Heynen et al. (2005) note that many view the idea of urban environmental landscapes as oxymoronic, which reflects the externalization of nature from society (p. 4). In an effort to consolidate this separation, David Harvey (1993) wrote: “It is in practice, hard to see where “society” begins and “nature” ends… [I]n a fundamental sense, there is in the final analysis nothing unnatural about New York City” (pp. 33, 28). This quote can be understood in two ways: first, it points out that the biophysical processes of “nature” are not only present in, but are the foundation upon which cities are built.
Second, it asserts that produced spaces have particular socio-political histories that shape these landscapes. In the case of ostensibly ‘naturalized’ green spaces such as the DVBW, the historical-geographical context is often overlooked, which is a result of the tendency to categorize places into either “natural” or “social”. The case of the DVBW exemplifies Heynen et al.’s (2005) assertion that acknowledging the particular social, political, and economic factors associated with urban environmental change contributes to an understanding of how uneven urban environments are produced and reproduced (p. 10).

The successful deployment of FOV’s sustainability agenda was due in part to a “sustainability fix” that was (and continues to be) gaining momentum in the post-Fordist era (While et al., 2004, p. 551). In a sustainability fix, urban governance is restructured in order to balance social, economic, and environmental demands, often while lacking the necessary resources to do so. This can result in the selective incorporation of ecological goals that are popular among the public, but may not necessarily be the most ecologically sound (While et al., 2004, p. 566). In the case of the DVBW, the expectations placed on the City to adopt more sustainable initiatives – in this case for flood control - placed pressure on both Metro Toronto and the Borough of East York to expropriate the site. The tensions between environmental, economic, and social demands were evident through East York’s support of Torvalley and FOV’s campaign for the public acquisition of the DVBW. Mayor David Johnson exhibited signs of these tensions through his quote in the Globe and Mail, in which he recognized the ecological importance of preserving green space, but said he was siding with Torvalley in order to gain the badly needed tax revenue that their redevelopment would bring to the Borough (Gooderham, 1985a, p. M7; The Globe and Mail, 1985a). In the end, FOV’s employment of a sustainability agenda, the poor strategy of Torvalley, and the decision by the new Liberal government to allow the MTRCA to expropriate the property contributed to the redevelopment of the DVBW into an
urban green space rather than a residential/commercial development.

The struggle over the DVBW occurred at a time when environmental protection within the urban context was a high priority to Canadians. Due to a decrease in unemployment rates in the mid to late 1980’s, the Canadian public turned its attention to the environment (Harrison, 1996, p. 118). It is impossible to say whether the public acquisition of the DVBW would have received as much support and attention had the context been reversed; however, it is evident that the sustainability agenda presented by FOV reflected the environmental sensibilities of the public at the time. These changes in environmental sensibilities are further reflected in the changing capacities of the MTRCA, which will be discussed in the following section. In particular, I explore the tactics used by FOV to deploy their vision in order to provide an understanding of how it became the dominant perspective for the site’s redevelopment.

5.2.3 Deployment of a Dominant Vision

After assigning particular social and ecological values to the DVBW, FOV had to get the public to support their vision for the redevelopment of the site. In his interview, Pasquill discusses how the writing of Saul Alinsky, an American community organizer and writer, inspired FOV’s approach to opposing Torvalley’s redevelopment of the DVBW (January 28, 2015). Alinsky (1971) writes about the identification of a “common enemy”, which allows the group to work toward a common goal. According to Alinsky, an effective way to bring about change is to provide a “constructive alternative” rather than simply voicing resistance (1971, p. 110). Pasquill identified with this sentiment, and so encouraged FOV to clearly present an alternative idea to what Torvalley was proposing to do with the site.

When Torvalley purchased the DVBW site, it was aware that this portion of land was zoned for conservation and that it was previously intended to be a public green space. Larry
Boland of Torvalley was quoted in a Globe and Mail article as saying that the company is working on a development proposal that “can satisfy most of the public objectives” (Goederham, 1985b). As mentioned previously, Torvalley included ‘natural’, park-like aspects in the first proposed development that they presented to the ratepayers’ groups, but after receiving support from the groups they eliminated these elements in the revised proposal (Crann, 1986, p. 2). Thus, the attempt was to sell an image that would play to people’s desires of having nature in the city, but the final product would not turn out as was initially promised. By acknowledging the social values that were important to the community surrounding the DVBW, Torvalley and East York moved to develop a piece of land that was zoned for conservation in order to satisfy their agenda for developing the land.

Figure 5: Old buildings at the DVBW park. Source: Hans Boldt, 2009.

Through the identification of social and ecological values that were important to the public in the DVBW, FOV successfully deployed a vision for the redevelopment of the site that was
more desirable than what Torvalley was proposing. Prior to the struggle over the DVBW, the public was unaware of many of the significant elements of the site (Crann, 1986, p. 20). For instance, FOV brought a geologist in to speak about the unique geological value of the North Slope at public meetings regarding the DVBW. As was discussed in the findings chapter, the outrage that was exhibited by the geological community and its supporters was powerful enough to convince the council to vote in favour of historic designation, which was an important step towards securing the public acquisition of the rest of the DVBW site (Crann, 1986, p. 22). In addition, Louise Herzberg of FOV used her position at the East York Historical and Arts Board to push for the designation of the DVBW as a historic site based on its industrial heritage. Thus, having members who were knowledgeable about such topics and who had connections to useful resources was an important asset to FOV’s cause. The social values of ecological services (primarily flood control) and geological and historical preservation happened to be important to Torontonians at the time, which contributed to the successful deployment of FOV’s vision.

The following section discusses how neoliberal restructuring of urban governance contributed to the context in which the DVBW was sold to a private development company, expropriated by the provincial and municipal governments, and redeveloped into a public-private green space. An exploration of this context contributes to the understanding of how and why the DVBW looks and operates the way that it does today, and provides insight into how “the environment” is managed within a neoliberal city.

5.3 Neoliberal Restructuring of Urban Governance

The production of the DVBW into the site that it is today is, in part, a result of increasingly neoliberal governance in Ontario. According to John Shields and Mitchell Evans (1998), since
the mid 1970’s Canadians have shifted their concern from the failure of the market to the failure of government intervention in this market failure (p. 11). This has been conducive to the dominance of neoliberal ideology, which supports decreases in particular areas of government spending in the public sector and an increased role of the private sector in providing goods and services. Indeed, since the 1980’s there has been an increase in austerity and neoliberal restructuring across the federal government, provincial governments, and municipal governments in Canada (Keil, 2002, p. 588). I argue that such neoliberal measures played a major role in shaping the DVBW throughout its transition, beginning with the purchase of the site by a private developer to its production into a public-private urban green space. In this section, I describe the neoliberal context within which the purchase of the DVBW by a private developer occurred in order to provide an understanding of how the key actors mobilized to oppose the private ownership of the site.

The major impacts of this neoliberal governance on the environment were reduced budgets for provincial and local agencies responsible for protecting the environment and natural resources, and “extensive restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of the provincial and municipal governments, and the private sector” (Winfield & Jenish, 1998, p. 129). This meant a reduction in funding for environmental projects and the downloading of environmental responsibilities to the municipal level. The provincial government’s refusal to provide its half of the funding for the purchase of the DVBW, as it had previously promised, reflects these cuts to spending on environmental projects. Land acquisition for flood control had been greatly underfunded since the inception of a provincial program geared toward such projects in the 1950’s (Walker, 1985, p. M4). Although the public acquisition of flood plain lands had become a priority in Toronto following Hurricane Hazel, the MTRCA struggled to receive federal and provincial funding for the purchase of necessary lands. This meant that the MTRCA had to
expend ample amounts of energy and resources toward proving that the lands it had identified as necessary for flood protection were worthy of government funding (McLean, 2004, p. 39). In order to better understand the effects of neoliberal restructuring on the production of the DVBW, it is important to consider the role of the MTRCA and its efforts to acquire the site in the face of this restructuring.

5.3.1 The Role of the MTRCA

The MTRCA was the agency that was initially responsible for the public acquisition of the DVBW and became the owner of the property following its expropriation from Torvalley. As such, its authority in acquiring the DVBW for public ownership was significantly undermined by the neoliberal restructuring of urban governance. Although its power was limited due to a lack of funding, the MTRCA remained a key player throughout the battle for expropriation and the redevelopment of the site. An exploration of the changing authority and role of the MTRCA is important toward understanding the impacts of neoliberal measures on the production of green spaces in Toronto.

The creation of the MTRCA was a significant step toward the conservation of lands for flood control in Metro Toronto. Bill McLean (2004) of the TRCA writes that an “urban boom” had taken place following WWII during which more bridges were being built, and an increasing amount of people began to live and work in the flood plain (p. 3). During Hurricane Hazel, the bridges contributed to rising waters by creating dams from the debris, trees, cars, and building fragments that had clogged them. The fear of ecological crisis caused by this increased development prompted Metro Toronto to create the MTRCA, which was mandated to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood and consequences of flooding in the future. In order to reduce the risks of flooding, the MTRCA was granted the power to purchase and expropriate lands for flood
control; however, it was forced to rely on the funding of the provincial and municipal governments for the acquisition of such properties (McLean, 2004, p. 207-208). The MTRCA’s power was thus limited by its lack of direct access to the funds needed to secure the properties it needed to satisfy its mandate. This arrangement created the illusion of power at the local level while ultimately keeping the decision-making in the hands of the provincial government.

The illusory power structure, with the MTRCA ostensibly independent, contributed to the “sustainability fix” in Metro Toronto because it created the further illusion of green urban governance that had the ability to fulfill ecological goals to address society’s interest in a green agenda. Although the MTRCA was created by Metro Toronto, it was and is not a government body with the ability to create and enforce laws. The MTRCA is “jointly responsible to Metro and the provincial government” (Hunter, 1989), and so its ability to accomplish conservation goals is restricted by its need to appeal to these governments for funding. Drawing on the concept of the sustainability fix, environmental management is moved from the sub-national level of government to the urban level, which changes the ways that nature and space are produced (While et al., 2004, p. 550). To this point, While et al. argue: “the politics of urban development is becoming increasingly dependent on the ability of local political and economic elites to manage, if not necessarily resolve, ecological demands emanating from within and outside the urban area” (2004, p. 564). This is reflected in the case of the DVBW, as the initial failure of the provincial government to provide its half of the funds to secure the site for the purpose of flood control resulted in the need for the municipal government, MTRCA, and community members to convince the provincial government to eventually acquire the DVBW for public ownership.
I argue that the efforts of the key actors involved in the struggle over the DVBW were part of a backlash against this neoliberal restructuring of urban governance. The means employed by the key actors in deploying the sustainability agenda that they had crafted had a significant impact on the authority of the MTRCA to successfully acquire the DVBW site for conservation. In a Globe and Mail article, MTRCA Chairman William Foster discussed the lack of provincial funding toward land acquisitions for flood control (Walker, 1985, p. M4). Foster explained that since the inception of the program as a response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Hazel in 1954, valley land purchases had not received much attention from the province. In 1985, the province approved a $48 million land acquisition program, of which a large portion was allocated toward the expropriation costs for the DVBW. Foster describes the new land acquisition program as a continuation of the first program in the 1950’s that had experienced underfunding.

The approval of the new land acquisition fund was a result of mounting pressure to protect valley lands from increasing development. Based on his discussion with the MTRCA’s Craig Mather for a Globe and Mail article, Walker states: “the [MTRCA] is convinced that as the tide of development flows ever closer to Metro’s valley lands, the pressure to open those lands to builders will increase” (1985, p. M4). FOV’s goal mirrored this sentiment, as it saw the DVBW site as significant because it was the first of the industrial sites in the Don Valley to be put up for sale, and thus its outcome would set a precedent for the remainder of the sites in the Don Valley. To this point, Pasquill explained in my interview with him:

But that was essentially the task of FOV: to stop the development at the Brick Works, because that was the thin edge of the wedge from the developer’s [Torvalley] point of view. If they could get one of the sites to be classified as okay because it was an urban valley, then the rest would simply fall into place. And they would overturn the original [zoning] legislation, essentially because the [municipal] government didn’t have the
money to do the expropriation. That was what it was all about, getting the money (January 28, 2015, personal communication).

Although the MTRCA had the goal of protecting all of the valley lands when it initially tried to purchase the DVBW in 1983, it was unsuccessful in acquiring the site. I argue that the success of the DVBW’s expropriation is due in part to the employment of a particular sustainability agenda by influential actors – particularly FOV and the assemblage of professionals and social and political elites they were able to attract in support of their cause. Changing sensibilities around urban metabolism led to the resurgence in concerns over the protection of valley lands for flood control, making the public acquisition of the DVBW a top priority for Torontonians. The vision of sustainability presented by FOV aligned with these changes in sensibilities, which contributed to the public’s support of the group’s agenda. This context added to the political pressure placed on the provincial government to provide the appropriate circumstances that resulted in the expropriation of the DVBW site.

5.3.2 Neoliberalism and the Production of the DVBW

Despite this ostensible success in the opposition to neoliberalism in the form of private ownership and reduced funding for the site, the key actors were still operating within a neoliberal context, which greatly shaped how the site was ultimately produced. The approval of the $48 million land acquisition fund by the Province and Metro Toronto was intended for the purchase of several properties, including the DVBW (McLean, 2004, p. 208). The other properties that were purchased using this fund include Domtar and Bates Chemical (located in the Don Valley), as well as several properties in the Humber River watershed, lands on the Rouge River, and the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital site (McLean, 1989). However, due to the high costs associated with the expropriation of the site, a large portion of this fund (nearly $22 million) went toward
the DVBW. $19 million of this amount was awarded to Torvalley as compensation for their investment, with the rest going toward interest and legal fees (Stawicki, 1990, p. B5). Despite losing a site that could have generated high revenue, the private developer walked away with a large sum of money that, interestingly, came from a provincial-municipal public land acquisition fund. This points to the pervasiveness of the neoliberal context in shaping the production of the DVBW.

This neoliberal context continued to shape the production of the site after it was expropriated from Torvalley, and plays a major role in the way that the site operates today, further contributing to the uneven development of this urban environment. This is consistent with Foster’s (2005) analysis, which credits the conservation achievements at the DVBW to the elite residents of the surrounding neighbourhood. However, as I have argued throughout this thesis, the actors were operating within a context in which there was a shift in relation to the production of nature that moved away from a logic of raw material extraction and processes and moved toward a sustainable city agenda, or, a changing connotation of “second nature”. The actors thus drew upon the factors and influences within this context in order to shape the production of the DVBW as an urban green space rather than constructing the circumstances of this production as Foster suggests.

Due to the shortage of government investment in the site, much of its redevelopment was dependent on private contributions. Although the provincial and municipal governments committed a significant amount of money to the redevelopment of the DVBW following its expropriation, a large amount of funds came from charitable organizations such as the Conservation Foundation of Greater Toronto and private donors such as the W. Garfield Weston Foundation and the Eaton Foundation (McLean, 2004, p. 210). The W. Garfield Weston
Foundation is the most notable donor to the site, and these donations are honoured through the naming of the outdoor portion of the site as the “Weston Quarry Garden” (King, 1996, p. 12). The Foundation has donated over $1.5 million toward the restoration of the quarry garden, and this donation came with certain conditions (C. Dalglish of FOV and the Weston Foundation, August 27, 2015, personal communication). These conditions were: that two groups – the Garden Club of Toronto and the Canadian Wildflower Society – assist with the redevelopment of certain areas on the site, and that no pesticides be used on the quarry garden (TRCA employee, February 25, 2015, personal communication). This meant that the site was being largely being shaped by this private donor, contributing to the unevenness of the urban environment.

![Figure 6: Evergreen’s community environmental centre. Source: DTAH, 2016.](image)

Another discernible impact of neoliberalism on the DVBW site is the presence of Evergreen. Despite government funding and significant donations, there was a shortage of money for the redevelopment of the entire site. In particular, the former brick-making buildings
that make up the industrial pad were neglected and as a result, were derelict for a number of years following the expropriation of the site (O’Neill, 2006, p. 1). For this reason, the City of Toronto and the TRCA entered into a public-private partnership with a non-profit organization called Evergreen. Evergreen operates on a self-sustaining business model that requires the incorporation of profitable elements present on the site, such as the store, café, and farmer’s market. According to David Stonehouse, who worked for Evergreen from 1990-2014:

[Evergreen] didn’t want Evergreen Brick Works to depend on government support, and so it built into its plans the various accessory uses. So a restaurant, a café, a store, space for events and space for meetings and conferences and so on and so forth. And then rent space too. So there was a whole thing there around setting up the social enterprise (February 20, 2015, personal communication).

By distancing itself from government support and relying on a business model based on the generation of profit, Evergreen has contributed to the commodification of the DVBW. This demonstrates a shift in the connotation of the commodity/exchange value of nature from raw material extraction and processing to one of ecological service provisioning, specifically through the sale of a particular vision of urban sustainability.

5.4 Summary

An understanding of the ideological and institutional context within which the key actors operated is important toward informing our understanding of how urban environments become produced in uneven ways. With regards to the DVBW, Foster begins this discussion in her paper, however she provides an incomplete account of the factors that contributed to the redevelopment of the site. I have added to Foster’s account through an explanation of the redevelopment of the DVBW with reference to important influences that she does not address. I began with an elucidation of how the key actors drew on various political, social, and economic influences and
resources available to them within their particular context in order to enact change. I then moved into a broader discussion of this context in order to demonstrate that the actors did not construct their circumstances, but were drawing on an urban sustainability agenda that was gaining traction in Toronto at the time.

Despite the successful incorporation of this sustainability agenda, the production of the DVBW and the efforts of the key actors were still constrained by a neoliberal context that was characterized by cuts in government funding for environmental projects and the downloading of environmental responsibilities to the municipal level. This is reflected in the redevelopment of the site and how it functions and exists today. Within this neoliberal context, the DVBW could not become the ecologically restored urban green space that was imagined by the key actors by relying solely on government funding. The need for private investment in order for the site to be redeveloped in its entirety demonstrates that public investment in such spaces is not always enough for them to operate according to the vision constructed by the particular actors. As such, a consideration of the ideological and institutional factors that shape the production of urban green spaces is useful toward understanding of how urban nature is produced and by whom, and how this contributes to the unevenness of urban environments.
Chapter 6
Conclusions

This thesis has examined the case of the redevelopment of the DVBW into an urban green space, thereby exploring the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city. The redevelopment of the DVBW occurred within a particular context that involved a repositioning of urbanization processes in relation to the production of nature that moved away from a logic of raw material extraction and processes and moved toward a sustainable city agenda. A discussion of this context is instrumental toward an understanding of the transition to sustainable cities in the context of post-industrial urbanism. Accordingly, this thesis has addressed the following research question: what combination of social, political, and economic forces contributed to the production of the Don Valley Brick Works site as it exists today? Other research questions that were explored include:

1) Who were the actors involved in crafting the vision and sustainability agenda that ultimately led to the production of this space?
2) What social, political, and economic means did the actors use to deploy the particular vision that they crafted?
3) How did the production of this site contribute to the unevenness of the urban landscape in Toronto?

In order to address the research questions, I identified three significant factors that contributed to the production of the DVBW into a public-private urban green space. These factors are:

1) Political pressure from influential actors;
2) A general change in sensibilities involving a shift toward post-industrial urban metabolisms fueling a sustainability agenda as a response to urban environmental
problems. In particular the redevelopment of the site into a green space was important within the broader shift in flood control and management in Toronto; and

3) Neoliberal restructuring of urban governance that cut provincial funding for environmental projects and increasingly devolved environmental responsibilities to the municipal level.

The discussion of these factors has been linked to literature on the production of nature, the production of space, and UPE in order to provide a theoretical foundation to explain the context within which the actors involved in the redevelopment of the DVBW were operating. By recounting the chronology of the site’s redevelopment, I have identified how this site was produced and who controlled this production, which is a concrete approach to the production of nature thesis that Smith’s work is missing. However, by engaging with Smith’s theories and with works on UPE, I was able to demonstrate why particular actors are able to shape urban nature more so than others.

In order to build on the story of the redevelopment of this site, this thesis has engaged with the article by Jennifer Foster (2005) entitled “Restoration of the Don Valley Brick Works: Whose Restoration? Whose Space?”. In her article, Foster explores the socially exclusionary practices involved in the restoration of the DVBW site in Toronto (2005, p. 331). I have used this article as a starting point for my thesis, and argue that Foster’s arguments are valid as far as they go, but leave important elements of the story incomplete and in need of further elaboration and context. Crucial among these other factors are the acknowledgment of the particular context, factors, and influences that contributed to the site’s redevelopment that I have identified throughout this thesis. Through an engagement with the selected literatures, I have contextualized Foster’s account to show that the DVBW’s redevelopment was a more nuanced case of NIMBYism than she describes. Furthermore, my thesis fills in an important gap in
Foster’s research, which I identify as the exploration of the process leading up to the expropriation of the site from the private development company that had purchased it. This important historical-geographical context is essential toward an understanding of the production of the DVBW into a public-private urban green space.

6.1 Significance to Wider Context

This thesis has wider implications related to urban governance pertaining to conservation initiatives for risk management. My identification of the neoliberal restructuring of urban governance, which resulted in the responsibility of acquiring the DVBW for flood control being relegated to the municipal level, demonstrates the need for provincial and federal funding for projects relating to environmental protection, especially in cases of risk management. The public acquisition of the DVBW, along with other industrial sites in the Don Valley, was identified as being important for flood protection in Toronto. Despite this, the provincial government decided that it would not contribute to the purchase of the site due to it being priced over the appraised market value (McLean, 2004, p. 207).

The public acquisition of the DVBW was significant because, being the first of the four grandparented industrial sites in the Don Valley to be put up for sale, the outcome of its purchase would set a precedent for the other sites (Walker, 1985, p. M4). The purchase of the DVBW by a private development company and its subsequent rezoning for residential/commercial use would have opened up the opportunity for the rezoning of the other industrial sites. This would allow for the building of housing and commercial developments in flood prone areas of the Don Valley, which would not only be a public hazard in this area specifically, but would also result in increased flooding of the surrounding communities. For these reason, the public acquisition of the DVBW site was a significant milestone towards flood protection in Toronto.
As has been discussed throughout this thesis, the expropriation and production of the DVBW into a public-private green space was largely guided by the efforts of a group of politically motivated actors, in particular, the citizens’ group called FOV. However, I have also demonstrated that these actors mobilized within the context of a shifting connotation of the production and commodification of nature. Specifically, this shift from raw material provisioning to ecological service provisioning and the support of real estate values was part of an urban sustainability agenda. The production of this space according to this vision of sustainability crafted by these influential actors thus contributed to the unevenness of the urban landscape. The significance of this thesis, then, is that it demonstrates the importance of government funding for the public acquisition of environmentally significant lands. This will diminish the need for such environmental projects to be taken upon by elite citizens who have the power and resources to shape the production of urban green spaces according to their interests, and will thus contribute to more equitable urban landscapes.

6.2 Research Limitations and Future Directions

Due to the narrow scope of this research project, there were a number of areas that I was not able to explore within my thesis. In addition, certain circumstances beyond my control prevented me from interviewing certain people, which limited the amount of data I was able to collect. In this section, I discuss the limitations of my research project along with future directions for research on this topic that arose from these limitations.

Due to time constraints and the need for a narrowed focus appropriate for the length of this thesis, I had to limit the types of people that I requested to interview. My research informants represented only one side of the DVBW story; in particular, I did not seek to interview members of Torvalley Development Ltd., politicians from East York who supported Torvalley’s proposed
development, or individuals who wished for the site to become something other than a green space (ie. advocates for the site to become a soccer field). Another limitation in terms of research informants was that some individuals that I requested to interview declined based on personal reasons. Other potential informants did not have publicly available contact information, and a few have passed away.

I recognize that this narrow pool of research informants may have resulted in bias in my study; however, the perspectives of the individuals that I interviewed were appropriate for the narrow scope of my project. Since I was interested in exploring the vision for the site and the sustainability agenda that contributed to its production as an urban green space, I felt that I should narrow my focus to the interests and efforts of the actors who contributed to the deployment of this agenda. In particular, I wished to focus on the actors who were instrumental towards the expropriation of the DVBW site, and to explore how they did this.

In response to these limitations, future research on the DVBW could explore other sides of the argument for the production of the site by including the perspectives of the groups mentioned above. An exploration of these perspectives would provide an interesting juxtaposition against the perspectives of the key informants that I interviewed as it would provide a more complete understanding of the opposing viewpoints.

Another shortcoming of my research project is the limited discussion of the role of Evergreen towards the production of the site. Evergreen’s incorporation onto the site has resulted in significant physical, social, and economic changes. Since the focus of my thesis was on the expropriation period, which was about 20 years before Evergreen came onto the site, I was only able to discuss the organization in my introduction in order to set up the context for the site. I believe that an exploration of Evergreen’s role at the DVBW could constitute an entire thesis on its own, which is why I would recommend this as a future direction for research on the site. In
particular, it would be interesting to explore Evergreen’s business model and its role in the neoliberal public-private partnership with the TRCA and the City of Toronto.

The identification of the limitations present within my research project presents opportunities for future research on the DVBW that would contribute further to an understanding of the production of urban green spaces. Being a site with such a complex and controversial history, the DVBW can provide unique insight into the achievements and challenges associated with the reproduction of post-industrial sites into green spaces within an urban context.

6.3 Final Conclusions

The DVBW is a site that has been reproduced a number of times throughout its existence. This reproduction has always been contingent upon the deployment of particular vision for the site by influential actors. The study of its most recent redevelopment into an urban green space is significant towards an understanding of the relationship between the production of nature, processes of urbanization and urban political economy, and uneven spatial development in the city. This understanding has concrete implications for the importance of public funding for urban green spaces and the production of more equitable urban landscapes. Although the DVBW is just one example of the revitalization of a post-industrial site into an urban green space, an interrogation of the social, political, and economic factors involved in its production can be useful towards informing future rehabilitation of such sites.
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Appendix 1 – Recruitment Script

Researcher: Hello. My name is Paulina Kubara. I am a Master of Arts candidate at the University of Toronto. I am working on a project called “The Politics of Conservation at the Don Valley Brick Works.” I am interested in interviewing you as part of this project.

I would like to interview you for about an hour. The interview would be confidential and scheduled at your convenience.

I would like to send you a letter of introduction that briefly describes the project and what your participation would entail.

Would you prefer I e-mail the letter or send it in the mail?

What (e-mail) address would you prefer I send it to?

After you have had a chance to read the letter, please let me know when and where you would like to meet for an interview. I could also call again next week if you prefer.

Thank you for your time.

Good bye.
Appendix 2 – Letter of Introduction

Dear (potential participant):

I am currently conducting a research for a project entitled, “The Politics of Conservation at the Don Valley Brick Works”. I am a Master of Arts Candidate in the Department of Geography, University of Toronto.

I am interested in discussing your involvement in the planning and design of the Don Valley Brick Works in Toronto. The redevelopment of brownfields into green spaces is a growing practice, and as you know, the revitalization of the Don Valley Brick Works was one of Toronto’s most prominent and costly projects. Through my research, I wish to explore the process that led to the redevelopment of this site into what it is today. Specifically, I will be looking at planning documents, media coverage, and reports from the City of Toronto as well as groups and organizations that were involved in this project in order to piece together the story of the Don Valley Brick Works. I hope that my research will help contribute to an understanding of the social forces that are involved in green space creation. You have been selected to participate in this study based on your involvement in the project. Your interview is expected to contribute to the study by providing insight into the process, discuss some of the questions.

Results from the study will be published in academic geography and other scholarly journals. When the research is complete, you will receive a summary of the findings if requested by e-mail or mail. Your participation is greatly appreciated and will further my understanding of the perceptions and reality of living in Detroit.

Interviews will last approximately an hour. They will be very informal and in a conversational style. I want to hear your thoughts and experiences, so you are encouraged to introduce issues you feel are important.

The interview will tape recorded. All information you provide will be treated confidentially. Unless you grant permission, your name will not appear in any publications stemming from the research, nor will it be associated with any information you provide.

If change your mind about participating you may withdraw at any time and any information you provided will be immediately destroyed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will contact you in the next week or two to discuss this project, and set up a potential interview.

Thank you,

Paulina Kubara
Master of Arts Candidate, Department of Geography, University of Toronto
(647) 504-6989
paulina.kubara@mail.utoronto.ca
Appendix 3 – Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form – The Politics of Conservation at the Don Valley Brick Works, Toronto

Principal Investigator: Paulina Kubara, Department of Geography, Sidney Smith Hall, Room 5047, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, M5S 3G3, Canada. Tel: (647) 504-6989. E-Mail: paulina.kubara@mail.utoronto.ca

Supervisor: Prof. Scott Prudham, Department of Geography, Sidney Smith Hall, Room 5007, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, M5S 3G3, Canada. Tel: (416) 978-4975. E-Mail: scott.prudham@utoronto.ca

Purpose:

This research study examines how and why the Toronto Brick Works site was redeveloped into the Evergreen Brick Works, a community environmental centre. The focus of the study is to explore the production of green spaces and the combination of social forces that are involved in this production.

Confidentiality:

Any information resulting from this research study will be kept strictly confidential unless otherwise agreed to by the participant. Access to confidential information will be limited to Paulina Kubara and Prof. Scott Prudham. Participants will not be identified by name in any reports of the study, unless otherwise indicated.

Contact:

If you have any questions or want any further information about this study, you can contact Paulina Kubara or Prof. Scott Prudham with the contact information above. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant you may contact the University of Toronto Ethics Review Board at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or by phone at (416) 946-3273.

Consent:

- I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.
- I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.
- I consent to participate in this study.

I waive confidentiality:       Yes    No
I would like a recording of this interview: Yes    No

Signature ___________________________  Date ___________________________

Participant

Signature ___________________________  Date ___________________________

Principal Investigator
Appendix 4 – Interview Guides

Interview Guide for Friends of the Valley

Part A: Identification of Participant and their Role

1) Tell me a little bit about your role in starting FOV. Why was this important to you?
2) How long were you involved in FOV and the DVBW redevelopment project? Are you still an active member of the group?
3) What was your role within FOV? Tell me a little bit about your responsibilities.
4) What was your role as a member of FOV with regards to the Don Valley Brick Works revitalization?

Part B: Opinions and Views on the Don Valley Brick Works

5) Why were you so opposed to Torvalley’s purchase of the site and their plans to use it for residential development?
6) For many years, the site was idle and not much was going on. How do you feel about this?
7) What are your opinions on the development plans for the DVBW site? Specifically, the master plans of 1990 and 1995, Evergreen’s development of the industrial pad, etc.
8) What do you think about the way that the BW turned out?
9) What are your thoughts on the redevelopment process?
10) Is there anything you would have liked to be done differently throughout the process?
11) Do you think this was the best choice for the redevelopment of the Brick Works? Why or why not?
12) What factors contributed to the successful expropriation of this site?
13) What was the political atmosphere at the time? How did this affect the project?
14) What is the provincial and local significance of the DVBW? Why was this project significant, other than for your personal reasons?
15) What makes this site special?
16) What lessons have we learned from the DVBW?
17) Do you think this is an example of a successful green space? Why or why not?
Part C: Involvement of the group in the project

18) What was the goal of FOV? Specifically for the DVBW, what did the group want to see happen with this space?

19) How did your own goals and ideas for the Brick Works align with or differ from that of the group?

20) What did you, along with FOV, accomplish with regards to the project? Ie. What did the group contribute that was actualized?

21) I know that you were involved with the BW Project Planning Committee following the expropriation of the site. Can you tell me a little bit about the role of this committee and your role within it?

22) Did FOV contribute to the planning and design process? If so, how?

23) Do you feel that the concerns of FOV were heard and considered by the planning team?

24) Tell me about the relationship between FOV and the other bodies that were involved: the planning team, the City of Toronto, etc.

25) Is FOV still involved in the Don Valley Brick Works? If so, in what ways?

26) Can you suggest anyone else that you think might be interested in speaking with me?
Interview Guide for TRCA/Toronto Parks Employees

Part A: Identification of Participant and their Role

1) What was your role in the DVBW project and how did you become involved in it?
2) When did you work on the redevelopment of the Brick Works?
3) How long were you involved in the project?
4) What was the role of the TRCA/Toronto Parks in this project? Initially, during expropriation, and afterwards until the present?

Part B: Planning and design

5) Why did the TRCA/Toronto Parks decide to take on this project? Why was this an important site to acquire?
6) What were the TRCA’s/Toronto Parks’ goals for the site? What purposes was it meant to serve?
7) Did this change throughout the process?
8) What contributions did the TRCA/Toronto Parks make in terms of ideas for development of the site? How many of these ideas were actualized?
9) Did the TRCA/Toronto Parks contribute in any way to the master plans of 1990 and 1995, Evergreen’s development of the industrial pad, etc.
10) What were the responsibilities of the TRCA/Toronto Parks for the site?
11) What was the structure of the team? Tell me a little bit about how it was to work together. What types of people were involved?
12) How did the role of TRCA/Toronto Parks change throughout the process? What factors affected this?
13) Can you tell me about the relationship between the TRCA and the other groups involved in the development ie. The City of Toronto, Metro Parks, FOV, Take Back the Don.
14) How much influence, if any, did residents, citizens groups, clubs, community members, etc. have in the planning and design process?
15) What factors contributed to the success of the expropriation of the site?
16) What was the political atmosphere at the time? How did this affect the project?
17) What other sorts of political factors impacted the progress of the project?
18) How did amalgamation change the role of the TRCA/Toronto Parks and the other groups in the development of the site?

19) What challenges, changes, or compromises had to be dealt with along the way?
   • Note for researcher: possible answers will discuss issues such as: financial, community opposition, red tape, legal, etc.

20) What lessons have we learned from the DVBW?

21) What do you feel is the major accomplishment of this project and the Brick Works? (both the process and the final product) What has it done for the city?

22) What makes this a significant project? What precedents did it set for green spaces in Toronto?

23) How has the TRCA/Toronto Parks used these lessons and applied them to other projects? Other brownfield projects?

Part C: Opinions and Views

24) What was your opinion on the original decision to build condominiums on the site? Did you oppose this proposal?

25) For many years, the site was idle and not much was going on. How do you feel about this? What were the reasons for this?

26) What do you think about the way that the BW turned out?

27) What are your thoughts on the redevelopment process?

28) Is there anything you would have liked to be done differently throughout the process?

29) Do you think this was the best choice for the redevelopment of the Brick Works? Why or why not?

30) What is the provincial and local significance of the DVBW?

31) What makes this site special?

32) Do you think this is an example of a successful green space? Why or why not?