



The New York Times

14 XX

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, 1982

TORONTO

The City Rediscovered

By MARGARET ATWOOD

When I was growing up in Toronto as a child, in the 1940's, I loathed it. I associated it with standing in the slush with dampness seeping through my boots, itchy bloomers, gray muggy skies, old ladies who hit your knuckles with the metal edge of the ruler if you didn't know the way to "Rule, Britannia." Later, when I was in high school, I liked Toronto a little more, though not much. There was a lot to do, a great deal to do, and I was in the wash, the appearance of the city was in the best of the attribute of the theless, I did not.

As I aged, I was not the loathsome. All Montreal was with international finance meant, to Torontonians, who reigned supreme. New York was where the truly sophisticated hung out, and Buffalo was where you went if you couldn't afford the other two. Toronto was... well, Toronto was where you lived when you weren't having fun. The notion of anyone actually visiting Toronto, for any purpose other than to attend the sickbed of a moribund relative, was alien to me. I set my first published novel in Toronto (where else was I to set it?) but was so embarrassed by the location that I never actually named the city and disguised the street names as best I could. Everyone knew that real novels were not set in Toronto.

Toronto has a long history of being loathed. When it was York, as it was known until 1834, it was loathed by the "New Yorks" with good reason.

Queen West
 from, say, University Avenue west to Spadina (though if you want to hit Dufflet's, vendor of spectacular and reasonably priced take-home desserts, you'll have to go a little farther). There's a cluster of good small

